

Sri Krishna Kathamrita



Bindu

Issue 542

Shiva, the Greatest Devotee of Krishna





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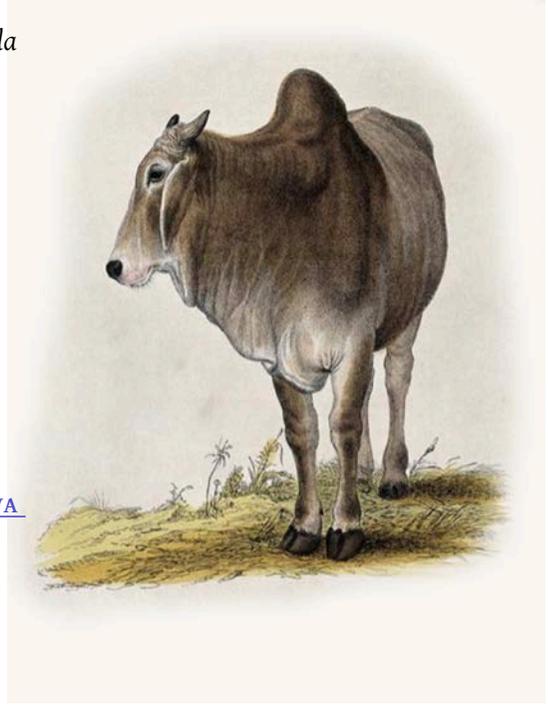
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LORD SHIVA IS THE GREATEST VAISHNAVA



His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

In this article we pose certain commonly asked questions about Lord Shiva, with answers from the teachings of Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

In what way do devotees of Lord Krishna offer respect to Lord Shiva?

It is said, *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* — Lord Shiva is the best of all devotees. Therefore, all devotees of Lord Krishna are also devotees of Lord Shiva. In Vrindavan there is Lord Shiva's temple called Gopishwara. The *gopīs* used to worship not only Lord Shiva but Katyayani, Durga, as well, but their aim was to attain the favor of Lord Krishna. A devotee of Lord Krishna does not



disrespect Lord Shiva, but worships Lord Shiva as the most exalted devotee of Lord Krishna. Consequently, whenever a devotee worships Lord Shiva he prays to Lord Shiva to achieve the favor of Krishna, and he does not request material profit. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.20) it is said that generally people worship demigods for some material profit — *kāmais tais tair hṛta jñānāḥ*. Driven by material lust, they worship demigods. But a devotee

Cover: "Lord Shiva Offers Prayers to Radha Krishna".
Unknown artist. Gita Press. Gorakpur, 1950s.

Unknown artist, 19th century, Rajasthan



A young lady worshipping Lord Shiva in his liṅga form

never does so, for he is never driven by material lust. That is the difference between a devotee's respect for Lord Shiva and an *asura*'s respect for him. The *asura* worships Lord Shiva, takes some benediction from him, misuses the benediction, and ultimately is killed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards him liberation. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 4.24.30)

Should devotees of Krishna discourage others from worshipping Lord Shiva?

Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, in Winnipeg there is one very pious East Indian man who for many years has been worshipping Lord Shiva. His wife is also a chaste woman and a sincere follower, and her parents were worshipers of Lord Shiva. This man is reading your *Bhagavad-gītā*. He visits our temple. I have given him the first volume of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* canto four that discusses Lord Shiva a great deal. He has read in one of your purports that Krishna is more pleased when you worship his devotee than when you worship him directly. And Lord Shiva is a very great devotee of Krishna. So this man has now interpreted that to mean that if he worships Lord Shiva nicely then actually he is pleasing Krishna. He is experiencing some difficulty because of this and I'm not quite sure how to instruct him.

Prabhupada: But if he accepts that Lord Shiva is a devotee of Krishna, then by worshipping Lord Shiva he will be benefited. If he thinks that Lord Shiva is independent, then he will not be benefited.

Devotee: I've got him to accept that Lord Shiva is a devotee of Krishna, but there's no practical instruction in his worldly activities coming.

Prabhupada: No, *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*: "Amongst the *vaiṣṇavas*, Sambhu, Lord Shiva, is the greatest *vaiṣṇava*." So we worship Lord Shiva as a *vaiṣṇava*. We give respect to *vaiṣṇavas*. So why not Lord Shiva? Lord Shiva is a big *vaiṣṇava*. Generally, the devotees of Lord Shiva consider Lord Shiva is

INAUGURATOR OF THE WORSHIP OF RADHA

*pr̥thivyām prathame devī suyajñena ca pūjitā
śaṅkareṇo paḍiṣṭena puṇya-kṣetre ca bhārāte*

On the earth, however, Radha was first adored by the humans on the advice of Lord Shiva. (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, *Prakṛti-kaṇḍa* 1.161)



Unknown artist. Circa 1800.

The water of the Ganga falling down from the head of Lord Shiva



Unknown artist

Parvati worshipping five-headed Lord Shiva

independently God. That is offensive. If you know that Lord Shiva is also a devotee then you can give more respect to Lord Shiva. Krishna will be pleased.

Devotee: But Srila Prabhupada, he does not chant Hare Krishna. He chants *om śivāya namaḥ*.

Prabhupada: That's all right.

Devotee: It's all right?

Prabhupada: He will gradually become a devotee. When God, Lord Shiva, will be pleased upon him he will advise to worship Krishna.

Devotee: He is already trying to follow in your footsteps. Just before I left he said that he will try once again to chant sixteen rounds of Hare Krishna *japa*. He has tried already. He has a taste for...

FIVE HEADED SHIVA

*bāhyajñānaṁ tanna kiṁ cid dhyāyato mān divānīśam
mannām mad-guṇārī bhaktyā pañca vaktreṇa gīyate*

[Krishna said:] Since he is always engaged in meditation on me, he remains unconcerned with the outside world. He always recites my glories from all his five heads. (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti-kaṇḍa* 13.28)

Prabhupada: If he simply understands that Lord Shiva is a *vaiṣṇava*, and if he worships Lord Shiva, then he will get the benefit. (Room Conversation, Chicago, 9 July 1975.) 🍌

VAISHNAVA WORSHIP OF SHIVA



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Sri Ramanuja's followers are strict, unalloyed servants of Lord Vishnu. When I was traveling in South India and entered the Minakshi temple in Madurai, the godless followers of Durga asked me question after question. "O great soul!" they said. "You look like a *vaiṣṇava*, so why are you going to a temple of the goddess?" I cited *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* – that Shambhu is a topmost *vaiṣṇava* and I wished to have his *darśana* and offer him my obeisances. Thinking like this I also went to Shivakanchi. There Lord Shiva's followers threw a similar question at me, because in South India, no *vaiṣṇava* enters the temple of any demigod but goes only to the temples of Lord Vishnu. In the temple of Lord Vishnu, the five-god worshipers see him as equal to the other four demigods.

Sri Madhva's followers know that the demigods are devotees of Lord Vishnu. They know that Lord Vishnu is supreme, so they worship the demigods with the remnants of Lord Vishnu's worship. In the north of Udupi there is a place where Sri Vishnu *śīlā* is placed on top of Shiva and worshipped. Below the hand of Lord Ananta Padmanabha there is a deity of Shiva. Demigod worship and respecting ancestors are not disregarded in the Sri Madhva *sampradāya*, yet the Madhvites are not in favor of material synthesis in the form of five-god worship. 🍌

— From a lecture on 7 October 1924 on the appearance of Sri Madhvacharya at the Sri Madhva Gaudiya Math, Nababpur, Dhaka. Found in *Śrī Vaktṛtāvālī*. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Kolkata. 2014.

NATURE OF LORD SHIVA



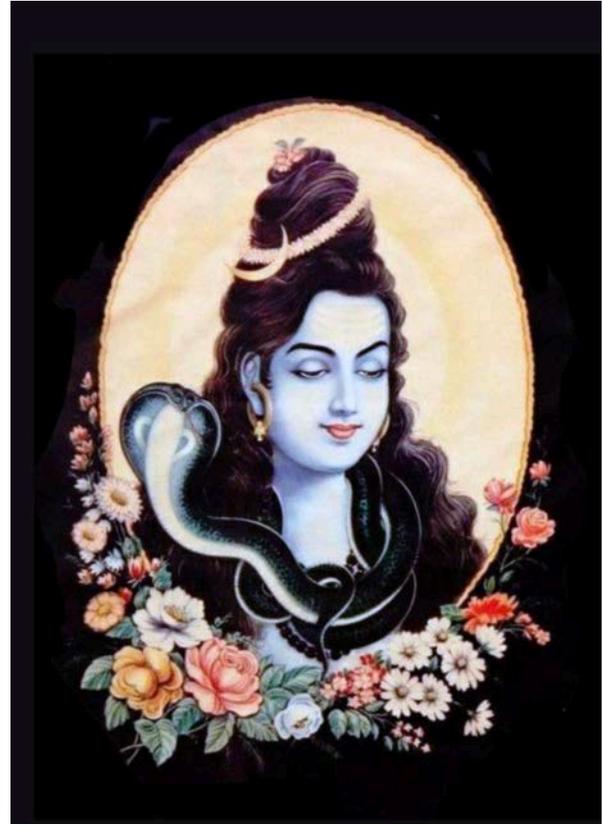
Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Bhaktivinoda-vāṇī-vaibhava is a collection of the teachings of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, and published in 1938. The book is in the form of a series of questions composed by the compiler, with answers extracted from Thakur Bhaktivinode's teachings. The following are some extracts from chapter 22.

What are the activities of Lord Shiva?

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam verses such as *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* glorify Shambhu as a *vaiṣṇava*. The purport of such statements is that Shambhu unites with Durga-devi according to his own time potency and the will of Govinda. Thus, he accomplishes his tasks. In many scriptures, headed by the *tantras*, he teaches religious duties that are a ladder for the *jīvas* of various qualifications to come to *bhakti*, devotion. By Govinda's sweet will, Shambhu [indirectly] protects and sustains *śuddha-bhakti*, pure devotion, by preaching the doctrine of *Māyāvāda*, illusionism, and intellectual or imaginary fabrications of the scriptures.

The fifty qualities of the *jīva* are present within Shambhu in copious proportion, and five more great qualities unattainable by the ordinary *jīva* are also found in him in partial proportion. So Shambhu cannot be categorized as a *jīva*; he is the lord of *jīvas* (*īśvara*) although he partakes of the nature of a separated part (*vibhinnāmśa*) of the Supreme Lord. (Commentary on *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.45.)



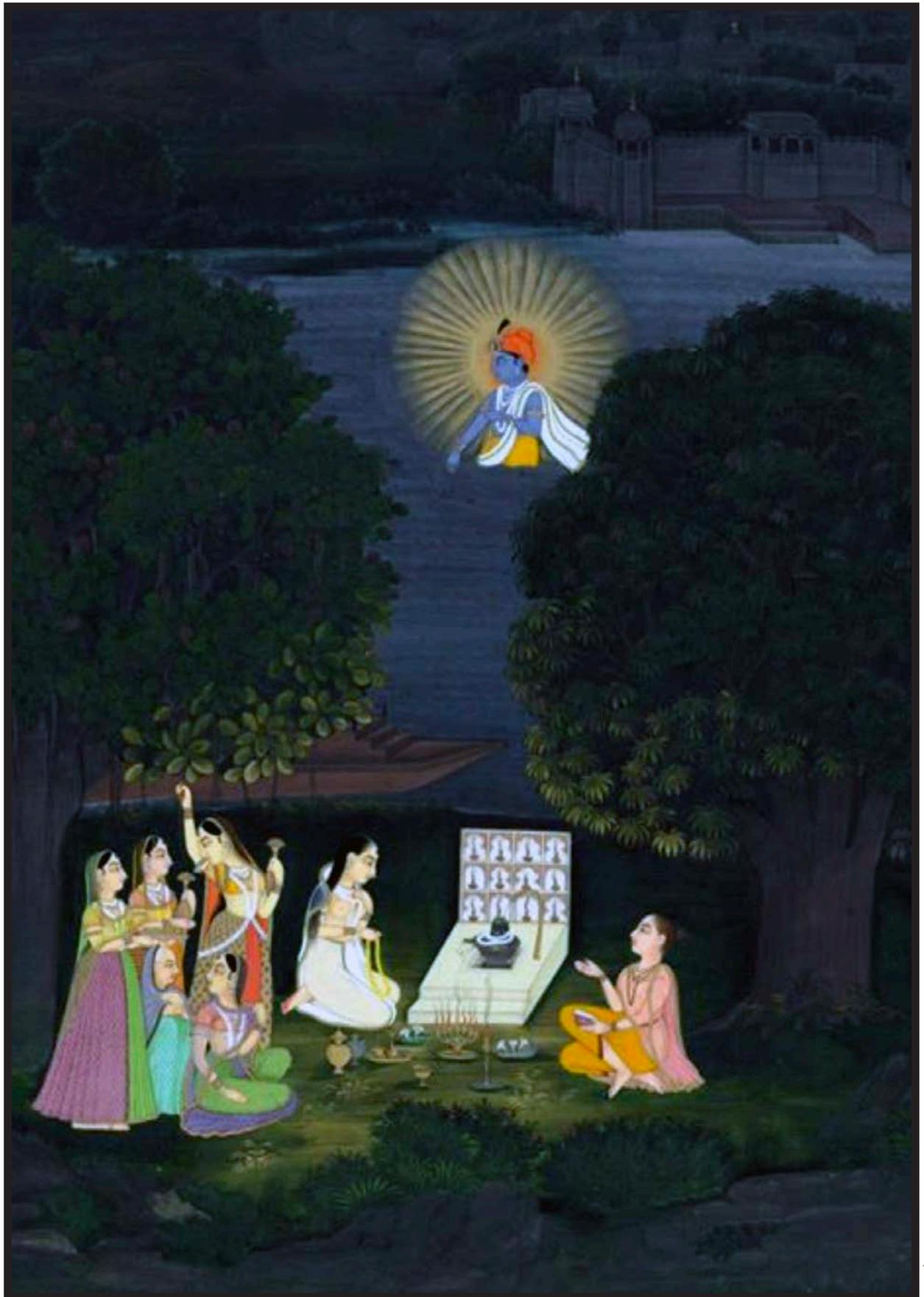
Unknown artist.

Is Lord Shiva a separate truth from Krishna? What is the difference between *Sadāśiva* and *Rudra*?

Shambhu is not another God separate from Krishna. Those who hold such a biased view are blasphemers of the Supreme Lord. Shambhu's control is subject to the control of Govinda, and so they are not really different from each other. Their nondifference is illustrated by the example of milk transformed into yoghurt by the addition of an agent; similarly, the Lord becomes transformed into another form. That form is dependent.

The material quality of inertia (*tamoḡṇa*), the quality of minuteness of the marginal potency, and a minute degree of a mixture of divine cognizance (*saṁvit*) and ecstasy (*hlādinī*) — all these elements combined constitute a particular transformation. The plenary portion of the Supreme Lord that is amalgamated with this transformation constitutes the halo of the divinity of *Sadāśiva*, the masculine generative organ of Lord Shambhu, and from Shambhu, Rudradev is manifest. (Commentary on *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.45.) 🍌

— From *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava*. Chapter 22. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Published by Isvara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.



Unknown artist. c. 1800

The gopīs pray to Lord Shiva to grant them association with Krishna

HOW VISHNU GAVE HIS NAMES TO THE GODS



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

*namaḥ śivāya rudrāya namaḥ śakti-dharāya ca
sarva-vidyādhīpataye bhūtānām pataye namaḥ*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, Lord Shiva, or Rudra, who are the reservoir of all potencies, the reservoir of all knowledge, and the master of everyone.

Purport by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada: It is the system for one to offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord. Lord Shiva is the incarnation of ignorance, one of the material modes of nature.

In this section of the *Bhāgavatam*, Kasyapa Muni is speaking about the rituals and procedures of *payo-vrata* worship. He is instructing his wife Aditi that she should chant these *mantras*, all of which are directed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu.

In his purport, Srila Prabhupada says that one should offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord. And Lord Shiva is one of the *guṇa-avatāras* — Lord Vishnu is the incarnation of *sattva-guṇa*, the mode of goodness, Brahma is the incarnation of *rajo-guṇa*, the mode of passion, and Shivaji is the incarnation of the mode of ignorance, *tamo-guṇa-avatāra*.

But sometimes some confusion arises here due to the misinterpretation of the *māyāvādīs*. *Māyāvādīs* don't know *tattva*. Therefore, they say Shiva, Brahma, and all demigods are also *bhagavān*, like Vishnu. Because they don't come under this bona fide disciplic succession, hearing process, they never hear from the bona fide *ācārya*. They adopt the ascending process.

There are two processes followed for attempting to understand the supreme truth — the ascending process and the descending process. The absolute truth can only be understood through the descending process, *śrota-pāramparyā* — hearing from the bona fide *ācārya* who has heard from his guru. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6.14.2) states, *ācāryavān puruṣo veda*. He is *ācāryavān puruṣaḥ* who has heard from and taken shelter of the *ācārya*. Out of causeless mercy, the *ācārya* imparts *tattva-jñāna* unto one who has pleased him by service and submissive inquiries. *Ācārya* is one who has heard from his *ācārya*,

and that *ācārya* is one who has heard from his *ācārya*. This is the descending process. *Śabda-brahman* descends.

Misconception of the Mayavadis

The *māyāvādīs* don't follow this process of hearing from a bona fide *ācārya* in disciplic succession. They adopt the ascending process to try to understand the absolute truth. They try to understand the absolute truth by the thinking process, by dint of their own material knowledge, scholarship, merit and speculation. But one cannot understand Krishna in this way. In the tenth canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29), Lord Brahma has said:

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānuḡrhitā eva hi
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan*

O Lord, only one who has gotten a little mercy of your lotus feet can understand your *tattva*. Those who speculate about you cannot understand you even after many, many lives — *ciram vicinvan*.

But the *māyāvādīs* do not follow this process. For example, it is found in *śāstra* that names such as “Brahma”, “Rudra”, “Shiva”, and “Indra” are included amongst the names of Lord Vishnu. Since *māyāvādīs* do not know *tattva*, they misinterpret such *śāstric* statements and create confusion by saying that all of the demigods are also Vishnu, the Supreme Lord. But what is the real *tattva* behind it?

Names of Vishnu

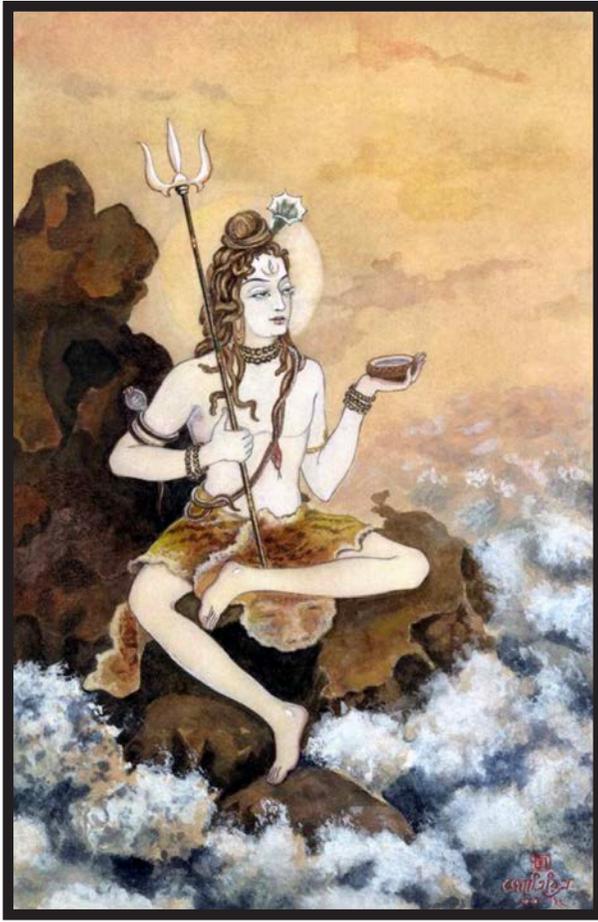
Srila Baladev Vidyabhushanpad says (*Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.12):

*sahasra-nāma-stotre śarva-śiva-śambhu-rudrādi-
śabdā viṣṇu-nāmāni paṭhyante. teṣāṁ tatra
pravṛttau nimittāni cōktāni brahmāṇḍe,*

LORD OF THE DEVOTEES

*āśutosaḥ sa bhagavān śaṅkaraś ca satām gatiḥ
bhaktā-dhīnaś ca bhakteśo bhaktātmā bhakta-vatsalaḥ*

Lord Shiva gets pleased easily, is protector of the noble people, is under the command of the devotees, Lord of the devotees, the soul of the devotees, and is loved by his devotees. (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti-kaṇḍa* 13.25)



Shiva drinks the ocean of poison

*rujam drāvayate yasmād rudras tasmāj janārdanaḥ
īśanād eva ceśāno mahā-devo mahattvataḥ*

*pibanti ye narā nākaṁ muktāḥ saṁsāra-sāgarāt
tad-ādhāro yato viṣṇuḥ pinākīti tataḥ smṛtaḥ*

*śivaḥ sukhātmakatvena sarva-saṁrodhanād dharāḥ
kṛty-ātmakam idaṁ viśvaṁ yato vaste pravartayan*

*kṛttivāsās tato devo viriñśā ca virecanāt
bṛmhaṇād brahma-nāmāsāv aiśvaryaḥ indra ucyate*

*evaṁ nānā-vidhaiḥ śabdair eka eva trivikramaḥ
vedeṣu sa-purāṇeṣu gīyate puruṣottamaḥ*

In the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-stotra*, the thousand names of Lord Vishnu, you will find that “Sharva”, “Shiva”, “Shambhu”, and “Rudra”, are all names of Vishnu. The *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* describes that Lord Vishnu, Janardana, controls Rudra. Therefore, Lord Vishnu is known as “Rudra”. Lord Shiva works under the control of Lord Vishnu, therefore Shiva is known as “Ishan”. “Ishan” is also a name of Lord Vishnu. One of the names of Shiva is “Mahadev”. “Mahadev” is also a name of Lord Vishnu because he is the Lord of the Lords, the Lord of Shiva and Brahma. “Śiva” means, “all-auspicious”, or “all-good”. One of the names of

Lord Vishnu is “Shiva” because he is all-auspicious and all-good. “Hara” means, “one who annihilates”. Thus, one of the names of Lord Vishnu is “Hara”. One of the names of Lord Shiva is also “Hara”, because he annihilates. “Bṛhat” means “very great”. Thus “Brahma” is also a name for Lord Vishnu. And because he is full of all opulences, so his name is also “Indra”. Thus the one same Lord Trivikrama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is glorified by various different terms in the Vedas and *Purāṇas*.

Baladeva Vidyabhushan in *Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.13 explains with evidence from the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*nārāyaṇādini nāmāni vinānyāni sva-nāmāni
druhiṇādibhyo dadau*

*kṛte nārāyaṇādini nāmāni puruṣottamaḥ
prādād anyatra bhagavān rājevarte svakaṁ puram*

Lord Purusottama kept some names for himself, like “Narayana”, etc., and others of his own names he gave to the demigods:

A king keeps a palace for himself and he gives residential quarters to his ministers and subordinate officers. Like that, Lord Vishnu keeps some of his names like “Narayan” for himself, and other names he gives to demigods because they are his subordinates.

Baladeva then comments on further evidence from the *Brahma Purāṇa*:

*catur-mukhaḥ śātānando brahmaṇaḥ padma-bhūr iti
ugro bhasma-dharo nagnaḥ kapāḷīti śivasya ca
viśeṣa-nāmāni dadau svakīyāny api keśavaḥ — iti
svakīyāni rudra-viriñcy-ādīni ca*

Lord Kesava also gave away these particular names, even though they are actually his own. He gave “the one with four heads”, “the one with hundredfold bliss”, and “the one born from a lotus” to Brahma, and “the fierce one”, “the one who wears ashes”, “the naked one”, and “the one with a skull” to Shiva.

Thus his own names include the names “Rudra”, “Virinchi”, etc.

Why did Krishna Worship Shiva?

The *Mahābhārata* describes that Lord Krishna worshiped Rudra, Shivaji. Why? It is said that he prayed for a son to be born from his wife Jambavati. That son was Samba. The *Mahābhārata* also says that all of the demigods have come from the body of Rudra, and therefore Rudra is *paramēśvara*. This is because Rudra is one of the names of Vishnu. One should understand



Painting by B. K. Mitra. Gita Press.c. 1955

Why did Krishna worship Shiva?

these things in *tattva* — why Krishna worshiped Rudra, Shivaji, and why it is said that all of the demigods came from the body of Lord Shiva. Lord Rama also worshiped Shiva. Before going to Lanka to kill Ravan, before building the bridge over the ocean, Lord Rama worshiped Shivaji. In Rameshwaram there is a Mahadev Shiva temple known as “Rameshwar”, meaning the *īśvara* (lord) of Lord Rama. Lord Rama said, “I worship My master, My lord, Rameshwar Shiva.”

What is the purport behind Krishna’s worship of Lord Shiva? Two reasons are there: One reason is to teach people that devotees should be worshiped. Lord Shiva is a *vaiṣṇava* — *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* — to teach people, Krishna worships him. Krishna thinks, “Unless I worship Shiva, the people won’t worship him.” Krishna says in the *Gītā* (3.23), *mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ* — “O Arjuna, although I have nothing to do here, if I don’t act, then people won’t, because they will follow me.” Why has he to do anything? Krishna says, “I am completely full. I don’t feel any deficiency. Why shall I engage in activity? People are engaged in their activities to fulfill their deficiency. But I have no deficiency. Why shall I engage in activity? Because, unless I do so, people won’t act.” So here in this verse [see beginning of this article] it says, “I worship Shiva, who is a *vaiṣṇava*, to teach people that a devotee should be worshiped.

Krishna offered worship to his dear friend and dear devotee Sudama Vipra. He offered *ārati* to him, washed his feet, and sprinkled that water on his head. Why? Because Sudama Vipra is a very dear devotee. Krishna is showing that he should be worshiped. In the *Bhāgavatam* (9.4.63) Krishna said to Durvasa Muni, *aham bhakta-parādhīno* — “Though I am supreme, still I am subordinate to my devotee. Although I am supremely independent, I am dependent on my dear devotee. I am the supreme controller, but I am under the control of my devotee. He has bound me up.”

Krishna accepts the bondage of love. The dear devotee binds up Krishna with the rope of love in his heart. Although Krishna is almighty, he has no power, no strength, to break this bondage. In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.32.22) he said, *na pārāye*, “I cannot break it.” I have no power. This bondage of love is so tight. This is *bhakta-vātsalya*, because he is so dear to his devotees. So in order to teach people that Shivaji as a *vaiṣṇava* should be worshiped, he offered worship to him.



Painting by Keshav. 2002

Krishna worshiped his devotee Sudama Vipra

“I Worship Myself”

The second reason why the Lord sometimes worships Shiva is described by Krishna to Arjuna in the *Nārāyaṇa Tantra* (quoted in *Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.22):

*aham ātmā hi lokānām viśveṣām pāṇḍu-nandana
tasmād ātmānam evāgre rudraṁ sampūjayāmy aham*

*mayā kṛtaṁ pramāṇaṁ hi lokaḥ samanuvartate
pramāṇāni hi pūjyāni tatas taṁ pūjayāmy aham*

*kaṁ hi viṣṇuḥ praṇamati kasmaicid vibudhāya ca
ata ātmānam eveti tato rudraṁ bhajāmy aham*

O beloved son of Pandu, I am the soul of all the worlds. Therefore, in the beginning of creation I worship myself as Rudra. The whole world follows the precedent that I set. It is those who set a proper example who are worshipable. Therefore, I worship him. Vishnu offers respect to Brahma and to certain demigods. Thus I worship Rudra, since he is actually myself.

Krishna says, “O Arjuna, I am the soul of the universe, *viśvātmā*, but I worship Lord Rudra. Why?”

DEARER THAN MY LIFE

*sudarśanaṁ śivaś caiva mama prāṇādhika-priyaḥ
brahmaṇḍeṣu na tejasvī he brahmannanayoḥ paraḥ*

[Krishna said:] O Brahmin both the *Sudarśana-cakra* and Shiva are dearer to me than my life even. There are none more glorious than them in the universe. (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti-kaṇḍa* 13.26)



Lord Nrisimhadeva manifested out of the śiva-linga

That is my own worship. By worshipping him, I worship myself, I worship my soul.”

Shiva and Nrisimhadev

The *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* describes how a demoniac person once forced a *vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇa* to worship Lord Shiva. That *vaiṣṇava* thought to himself, “Lord Shiva is the incarnation of the mode of ignorance and Lord Nrisimhadev kills this ignorance.” So he worshipped Shiva with the mantra, *om nṛsimhāya namaḥ*. Seeing this that demoniac person drew out his sword to cut off the *vaiṣṇava*’s head. When he drew his sword, Lord Nrisimhadev suddenly came out of that *śiva-linga* and cut off the head of that person. This story shows that Lord Nrisimhadeva is there in Shiva. Therefore, Krishna says, “I worship Rudra,” meaning, “I worship myself. I worship myself because whatever I do, people will follow. In order to teach people, I am doing.” Krishna says in *Gītā* (3.21):

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow.

Krishna is the supreme authority, the supreme truth. So he says, “Therefore I establish this truth. Unless I worship Rudra, people won’t do so.”

This is the purport behind Krishna’s worship of Shivaji, one reason is to teach people that Rudra — Shivaji, as a devotee, *vaiṣṇava*, should be worshipped, and the second point is that Krishna says that “By doing so, I worship myself.”

You Must Inquire

Some confusion may arise as to whether the demigods are also the Supreme Lord. The *Māyāvādīs* say like that, based on certain *śāstric* statements. This verse [see the beginning of this article] says, “I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, O Supreme Personality of Godhead Shiva, or Rudra...” The Supreme Personality of Godhead is also Shiva and Rudra. What does it mean? There is a purport behind it. *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas* have given this *tattva*. It is very subtle. If one knows this *tattva*, then there will be no confusion for him. Otherwise there will be confusion.



Unknown artist

Brahma, Shiva, and Lakshmi worshipping Lord Vishnu

Srila Prabhupada has not quoted all these things. He has only given a hint. Then you will have to inquire as to why it is so. Inquiry should be there. He left it for you, just to inspire you, to see how inquisitive you are. The *ācārya* does like that. If you have no inquiry, how can you get the answer? If you have no inquisitiveness then it proves that you are superfluous and careless, that you are not

serious. You say, “Yes, yes, yes.” but you are not going deeper and deeper to the deepest regions. You are not inquiring, so how can you get it? Baladev Vidyabhusan has given all of these answers in his book *Siddhānta-ratna*. Unless you go to that book, how can you understand this topic? 🍌

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar. 11 July 1992.

HALF VISHNU HALF SHIVA



As a manifestation of Sadasiva, Lord Shiva is an *amśa-avatāra*, part of Krishna, and in that sense they are non-different. They are also considered to be non-different since Shiva is the greatest worshiper of Krishna. Sometimes to show how intimately related they are, they manifest the form known as Hari-Hara, which is half Vishnu and half Shiva.

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, *bhūmi khaṇḍha* 83.37-38, Lord Shiva tells Maharaja Yayati:

antaraṁ nāsti rājendra mama viṣṇor na samśayaḥ

O lord of kings, have no doubt, there is certainly no difference between Vishnu and myself.

*yo 'sau viṣṇu-svarūpeṇa sa vai rudro na samśayaḥ
yo rudro vidyate rājan sa ca viṣṇuḥ sanātanaḥ*

There is no doubt that Vishnu is the form of Rudra and Rudra is the form of Vishnu. You should know, O king, that Rudra is always the same as Vishnu. 🍌 — MD.

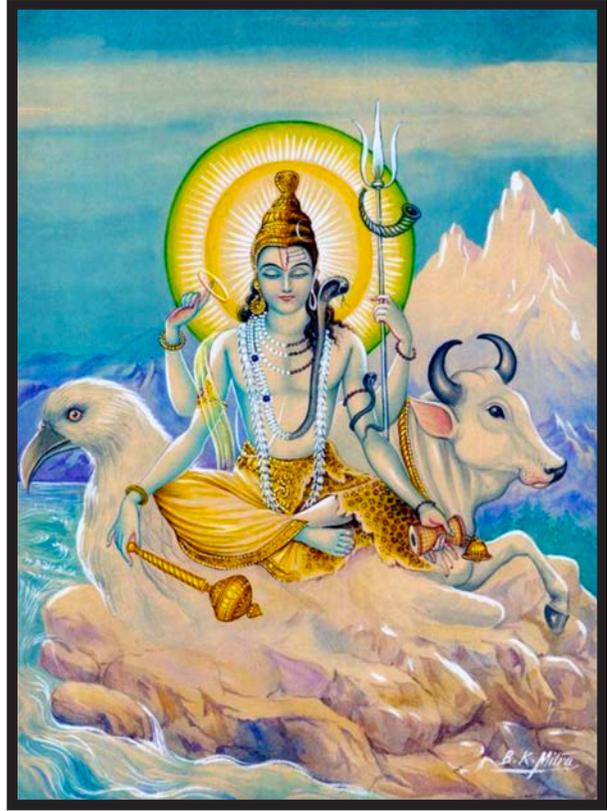
THE MYSTERIOUS LINGARAJ



The ancient deity of Bhubaneswar Shiva, described by Srila Murari Gupta in his *Śrī Caitanya-carita* and by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta in his *Caitanya Bhāgavata* purports, is more widely known today by the name “Lingaraj”. Lingaraj is the doorkeeper to Sri Kshetra, Jagannath Puri Dham.

For the majority of Hindus, including the followers of Lord Shiva, Lingaraj is the king (*rāja*) of all *lingas*. He is worshiped as the chief of the *dvādaśa-lingas*, the twelve *lingas* situated in different places of India considered by the faithful to be the twelve most important manifestations of Lord Shiva. The *dvādaśa-lingas* are described by Lord Shiva in the *Śiva Purāṇa* and in the *Nandi Purāṇa*. Shiva says there, “I am omnipresent, but I am especially found in twelve forms and places.” The *dvādaśa-lingas* are:

1) Somanath, near Veraval, Gujarat; 2) Mallikarjunam, in Sri Sailam, Andhra Pradesh; 3) Mahankaleshwar, along the Kshipra River in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh; 4) Omkareshwar, at Mandaleshwar on the Narmada



Painting by B. K. Mitra. Gita Press. c. 1955

Hari-Hara, half Vishnu and half Shiva

River in Madhya Pradesh; 5) Kedarnath, in the Garhwal Himalayas, Uttarakhand; 6) Bhima-shankar, north of Pune, Maharashtra; 7) Vishwanath, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh; 8) Triambakeshwar, on the Godavari in Nasik, Maharashtra; 9) Vaidyanath, near Deogarh, Bihar; 10) Nageshwar, near Dwaraka, Gujarat; 11) Rameshwar, in Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu; and 12) Gushmeshwar, near the Ajanta-Ellora Caves in Maharashtra.

Gaudiya Vaishnavas see Lingaraj as the greatest devotee of Krishna — *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ* (*Bhāg.* 12.13.16). They remember Lord Chaitanya’s visit to Bhubaneswar, his ecstatic dancing in front of Lingaraj, and his accepting the *prasādam* of Lingaraj. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta comments about the *prasādam* of Lingaraj Mahadeva: “With his thousand mouths, even Anantadeva is unable to describe the glories of this *mahā-mahā-prasāda*, which is the remnants of Sri Ananta Vāsudev’s remnants.”

Although the process of offering Ananta Vāsudev *prasādam* to Lingaraj has long since been discontinued, interestingly there are still many strict *vaiṣṇavas* who continue to honor Lingaraj *prasādam*. This is very unusual because generally *vaiṣṇavas* do not take the remnants of Lord Shiva. To understand why some of them do so in Bhubaneswar, one must more deeply examine the position of Lingaraj and the way in which he is worshiped.



Unknown photographer

Lingaraj temple complex in Bhubaneswar



Unknown artist

Main entrance to the Lingaraj temple in 1847



Courtyard of the Lingaraj temple

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta has written, “The deity of Sri Bhubaneswar within the main temple is a combined form of Sri Hari [Vishnu] and Hara [Shiva].” This is described by Srila Vyasadev in *Skanda Purāṇa* (2.2.12.97). When Narada Muni was bringing Indradyumna Maharaj to Puri to have *darśana* of Nila Madhava Jagannath, he told the king that before entering Puri he should first worship Bhubaneswar Mahadev:

*liṅgaṁ tribhuvaneśaṁ taṁ mahā-snānena pūjayan
atulāṁ prītim ālebhe viṣṇor advaita darśanaḥ*

After taking a holy bath, he worshiped Tribhubanesha *liṅga* — Shiva, the lord of the three worlds, at Bhubaneswar. Indradyumna Maharaj relished matchless pleasure as he saw the non-difference between Lingaraj and Vishnu. — *Skanda Purāṇa*

Lingaraj’s identity as Hari-Hara is evidenced in some interesting ways. In India, temples of Krishna and his Vishnu incarnations traditionally bear a *cakra*, Krishna’s disk, on the top of the temple. Temples of Lord Shiva and other deities are generally recognized by the *triśūla*, Shiva’s trident, on top of the temple. Because Lingaraj is considered to be Hari-Hara, there is both a *cakra* and a *triśūla* on top of his temple. Garuda is not found in temples of Lord Shiva, which usually only have a bull known as Nandi. However, as noted by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, “After crossing the lion-gate there is a Garuda-stambha, on the top of which a bull and Garuda are situated.” The Lingaraj *paṇḍās* say that the fact that both are found at this temple is another indication that Lingaraj is both Hari and Hara, Vishnu and Shiva.

According to the Lingaraj priests, the ancient *śiva-liṅga* at the temple there has a *śālagrāma-śilā*

(the worshipable deity of Lord Narayan in the form of a stone from the Gandhaki River in Nepal) within it. Sri Vasudeva Puja Panda, presently the priest in charge of offering *bhoga* to Lingaraj, says that when they offer foodstuffs to Lingaraj, following ancient tradition, they also offer to the *śālagrāma* inside of the *liṅga* using the *gopāla-mantra* for Lord Krishna.

Finally, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta has expressed another even more intimate conception of Lingaraj, “The *rūpānuga-vaiṣṇavas* consider Sri Bhubaneswar to be the form of the energy of Srimati Radharani (*śrī gopālinī-śakti-rupa*) and pray to him for the service of the divine young couple, Sri Radha-Govinda.” Sri Bhakti Kusum Sraman Maharaja, a disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta and author of the biography, “Prabhupada Srila Sarasvati Thakura”, has on pages 202-203 described Srila Sarasvati Thakur’s visit to Bhubaneswar on 22 June 1922. He says that as soon as the devotees arrived at the Bhubaneswar train station, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta immediately offered his obeisances and recited a *praṇāma-mantra* to Gopishwar Mahadev in Vrindavan:

*vṛndāvanāvani-pate jaya soma soma-
maule sanandana-sanātana-nāradeḍya
gopīśvara vraja-vilāsi-yugāṅghri-padme
prema prayaccha nirupādhi namo namas te*

O Shiva, O gatekeeper of Vrindavan! O you who are accompanied by Uma (Parvati)! O you who carry the moon in your hair! O lord worshipped by Sanandan-kumar, Sanat-kumar, and Narada Muni! O Gopishwar, the worshipable deity of the *gopīs*! Desiring that you bestow upon me love for the lotus feet of the divine couple Sri Sri Radha Madhava, who perform joyous pastimes in Vraja, I offer my obeisances unto you again and again. — Srila Viswanath Chakravarti’s *Śrī Sankalpa-kalpadruma* 103. 🍊 — MD

BESTOWER OF AUSPICIOUSNESS

*śiva-svarūpo bhagavān śivādhiṣṭātr devakaḥ
śivaṁ bhavati tasmāc ca śivaṁ tena vidurbudhāḥ*

Lord Shiva is the Lord of welfare. Because of his being the Lord of welfare, he is known always by the people as the bestower of welfare. (*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti-kaṇḍa* 13.30)



Unknown artist

THE UNUSUAL DRESS AND TEACHINGS OF LORD SHIVA



Adapted from Śrī Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa, chapter 235-236

Parvati said, “O lord, you once told me that one should avoid speaking with *pāṣaṇḍīs*, atheistic demons, and that doing so is worse than talking to *caṇḍālas*, outcastes. Please tell me what the symptoms of such persons are and what signs they wear on their bodies.”

Shiva replied, “Those persons who, deluded by ignorance, describe any other deity as being superior to Vishnu, the Lord of the world, are said to be *pāṣaṇḍīs*. Those who, although they do not belong to the *vānaprastha āśrama*, use skulls, decorate their bodies with ashes and bones, have non-Vedic marks, matted hair, and wear garments of tree bark, are said to be *pāṣaṇḍīs*. Those Brahmins who are devoid of the marks

and symbols dear to Vishnu, such as conches, discs, and vertical-lined *tilaka* worn on the forehead, are said to be *pāṣaṇḍīs*. That Brahmin who does not follow the practices given in the *śāstras* should be known as a *pāṣaṇḍī* and should be condemned by all people. Those who have no devotion for the Lord are said to be *pāṣaṇḍīs*. One who behaves as he likes and offers oblations into the fire for the worship of deities other than Lord Vishnu should be known as a *pāṣaṇḍī*, for Lord Vishnu is the enjoyer of the fruit of all sacrifices and is the deity of the Brahmins. He who considers Lord Vishnu as equal to other deities such as Brahma and myself, Rudra, should always be called a *pāṣaṇḍī*. That Brahmin, who with his speech, body, and deeds does not recognize Vishnu, is a *pāṣaṇḍī*. What is the use of saying much in this regard? Those Brahmins who are not devotees of Vishnu should never be asked any questions, should never be talked to, and should never be seen.”

Parvati said, “O lord, O best of the gods, I want to ask you something secret. Through love for me,



Unknown artist

Parvati said, "My dear husband, śāstras condemn using skulls, decorating the body with ashes, and wearing skins of animals. Yet, you do all of these things. I don't understand."

please answer. I have a great doubt. The śāstras condemn using skulls, decorating the body with ashes, and wearing skins of animals. Yet, you do all of these things. Why are these things condemned? O lord of the gods, O highly intelligent one, due to women's natural fickleness I am asking you these questions. It may be that due to your great power you do not have to follow the śāstric injunctions you just described, but previously you had not instructed me in this way. Therefore, O lord, please pardon my question."

Inquired thus by Parvati in that lonely place free from people, Lord Shiva explained to her the great secrets of his own behavior. Shiva said, "O goddess, please listen carefully. I shall tell you a very wonderful secret. You should not repeat what I am about to tell you to common people. I shall tell you this since your body is not separate from mine. Long ago, in the age of Swayambhuva Manu, there were many great demons like Namuchi [The demon Namuchi is described in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 8.11.23-40.] who were very powerful and valorous heroes. All of them were devoted to Vishnu, acted purely, and were free from all sins. They followed the practices laid down in the Vedas. Seeing this, all of the gods headed by

Indra were greatly frustrated. Overcome by fear, they approached Lord Vishnu and took shelter of him.

"The devas said, 'O Kesava! Only you can conquer these great demons who cannot be conquered by all of the gods and who have washed off their sins with penance.'"

Lord Shiva continued, "Hearing the frightful words of the demigods, Lord Vishnu, Purushottama, consoled the devas, and said to me, 'O Rudra, O you of mighty arms, O you who are the best of the gods, for the purpose of deluding the enemies of the demigods, prepare a course of conduct to be followed by pāṣaṇḍīs. Narrate to them the dark Purāṇas, which will take them astray. O intelligent one, you should create holy texts that will cause the demons to become confused.

"Through devotion to me, and for the good of the world, you should approach atheistic sages such as, Kanada, Gautama, Sakti, Upamanyu, Jaimini, Kapila [not to be confused with Kapila, the son of Devahuti], Durvasa, Mrikandu, Brihaspati, Bhargava, and Jamadagni. Exert upon them your power of suggestion. Being infused by your power they will become powerful pāṣaṇḍīs. There is no doubt about it. Empowered by you, these Brahmins will narrate



Unknown artist. Pahari painting. Late 18th c.

Parvati offering a muṇḍa-mālā (garland of skulls) to Lord Shiva



Lord Shiva wearing wooden pādukās,
shoes traditionally worn by yogis

to the three worlds the *Purāṇas* and doctrines in the mode of ignorance. O Shiva, on your person you should bear symbols like a skull, animal skins, ashes, and bones. Dressed in this way you should fully delude everyone in the three worlds. You should also inaugurate the *pāśupata* order [the *pāśupatas* are a group of followers of Lord Shiva] with its divisions like *kankāla*, *śaiva*, *pāṣaṇḍa* and *mahāśaiva*. Through these persons you should preach a doctrine whose followers wear no particular identifying marks and are outside the Vedic fold. Wearing ashes and bones, they will be bereft of higher consciousness and will consider you to be the greatest god.

“Taking to these doctrines, all of these demons will become averse to me in a moment. There is no doubt about it. O powerful Rudra, in every age, in my different incarnations I too shall worship you to delude the demons. Following these doctrines, they will undoubtedly fall down.”

Lord Shiva then told Parvati, “O beautiful one, after hearing Vishnu’s words, although I am a good speaker, I became helpless and silent. Then, offering my obeisances to Lord Vishnu, I said, ‘O Lord, if I do what you have said, it will certainly lead to my destruction. It is not possible

for me to carry out this instruction, yet your order is not to be disobeyed. This is very painful.’

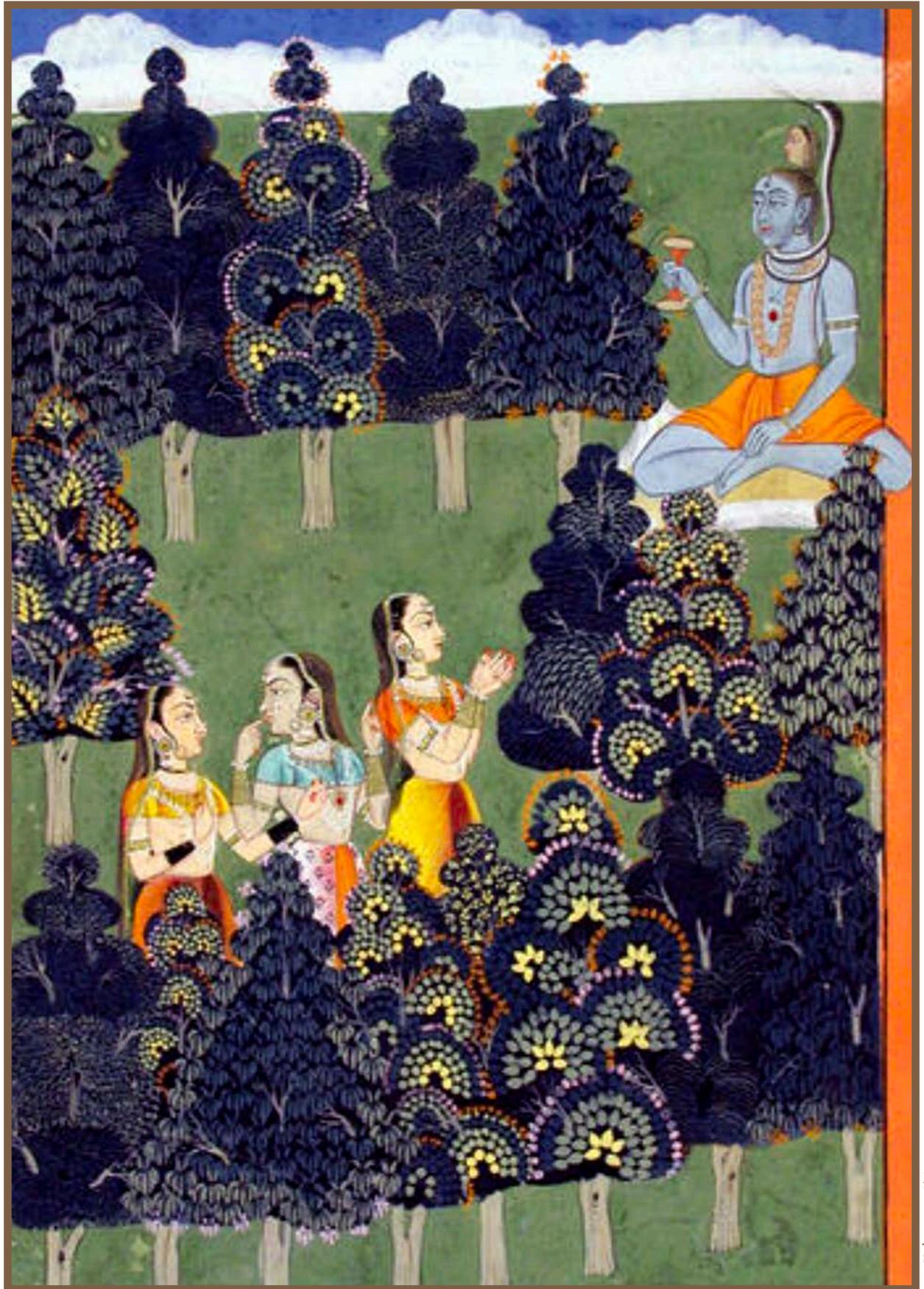
“O goddess, hearing my words, Vishnu spoke in such a way to restore my happiness. He said, ‘This will not be the cause of your destruction. Do as I order you for the good of the demigods. I shall also give you the means to maintain yourself while you are preaching these demoniac philosophies.’ Then, with compassion, Lord Vishnu gave me the prayers known as *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*. Vishnu said, ‘Installing me in your heart, utter my indestructible mantra. This very powerful six-syllable mantra is transcendental and awards liberation to those who worship me with devotion. There is no doubt about this.’

indīvara-dala-śyāmaṁ padma-patra-vilocanam
śaṅkhāṅga-śārṅgeṣu-dharaṁ sarvābharaṇa-bhūṣitam
pīta-vastraṁ catur-bāhuṁ jānakī-priya-vallabham
śrī-rāmāya nama ity evam uccāryaṁ mantraṁ-uttamam
sarva-duḥkha haraṁ caitat pāpinām api mukti-dam
imaṁ mantraṁ japan nityam amalas tvaṁ bhaviṣyasi

I offer my obeisances to him, dark like the petal of a blue lotus, with lotus-petal eyes, holding a conch, a disc, and the *śārṅga* bow, adorned with all ornaments, wearing yellow garments, having four arms, and who is the dear lord of Janaki, Sita-devi. The topmost mantra, ‘*śrī-rāmāya namaḥ*’, should be chanted. It removes all lamentation and gives salvation even to sinners. One who regularly chants this mantra will be free from all contamination. [6.235.44-46]

“All of the sinful reactions due to wearing ashes and bones will all be destroyed and everything will become auspicious due to reciting my mantra. O best of the gods, being pleased I shall destroy all sin. By my blessings, devotion to no other god than me will arise. In your heart, worship me, who is the Supreme Being. Obey my order. Due to love for me, everything will be auspicious for you.’ Having thus ordered me, O goddess, he dismissed the hosts of gods who then returned to their own abodes. The gods led by Indra then requested me, ‘O Mahadev, Shiva, quickly perform those beneficial acts as instructed by Lord Vishnu.’”

Mahadev then said to the goddess Parvati, “O auspicious one, for the good of the gods I took to the way of the *pāṣaṇḍīs* and started wearing skulls, hides, ashes, and bones. O auspicious one, as instructed by Vishnu, I distributed the tamasic *Purāṇas* and the *pāṣaṇḍī* Shiva doctrines. O sinless one, by entering Gautama and other Brahmins with my potency I



Unknown artist

The gopīs worship Lord Shiva



Unknown artist. Kalamkari painting

Lord Ramachandra worships Shiva at Rameshwaram

proclaimed texts outside the Vedic fold. Adopting the system I gave, all of the wicked demons became averse to Lord Vishnu, and were enveloped in ignorance. Applying ashes to their bodies and performing severe penances, they stopped worship of Vishnu and worshiped only me with flesh, blood, and sandalwood.

“Receiving boons from me, they became intoxicated with power and pride. They were very much attached to the objects of the senses and were full of lust and anger. In that condition, devoid of goodness, they were defeated by the *devas*. Bereft of righteous paths, those who resort to this doctrine of mine always go to hell.

“O goddess, thus this behavior of mine is only followed by me for the good of the gods. Following Vishnu’s order, I decorate myself with ashes and bones. O goddess, these external marks are meant only for deluding the demons. In my heart I always meditate upon the Supreme Lord Vishnu and always chant his mantra. By chanting this great six-syllable mantra we always taste the eternal nectar of ecstatic joy. O lady with an auspicious face, I have answered

all that you have asked me. Affectionately I ask you, what else do you desire to hear?”

Parvati said, “O sinless one, tell me about the *tamasic* scriptures that were composed by the Brahmins bereft of devotion to the Lord. O Lord of the demigods, please tell me their names in sequence.

Lord Shiva replied, “O goddess, please listen. In sequence I shall tell you about the *tamasic* texts. Simply by remembering them even wise persons become deluded. First, I myself proclaimed the *Śaiva*, *Pāśupata*, and related texts. After my power had entered him, Kanada preached the *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy. Similarly, Gautama preached *Nyāya*, and Kapila preached atheistic *Sāṃkhya*. Brihaspati preached the much-censured *Cārvāka* doctrine, and Vishnu, in the form of Buddha, proclaimed the false teachings of Buddhism to destroy the demons.

*māyāvādam asac chāstrāṇi pracchannāni bauddham ucyate
mayaiva kalpitāni devi kalau brāhmaṇa-rūpiṇā*

Māyāvāda philosophy is an impious, wicked belief. It is covered Buddhism. My dear Parvati, in Kali-yuga I



Krishna stealthily steals a garland that Radha is offering to Lord Shiva

Unknown artist



Lord Shiva dances ecstatically in kirtana with his associates

assume the form of a *brāhmaṇa* and teach this imagined philosophy. — 6.236.7

*apārthaṁ śruti-vākyānāṁ darśayan loka-garhitam
sva-karma-rūpaṁ tyājya tvam atraiva pratipādyate
sarva-karma-paribhraṣṭair vaidharma tvarṇ tad ucyate
pareśa-jīva-pāraikyaṁ mayā tu pratipādyate*

This *māyāvāda* philosophy deprives the words of the holy texts of their actual meaning and thus it is condemned in the world. It recommends the renunciation of one's own duties, since those who have fallen from their duties say that the giving up of duties is religiosity. I have also propounded the identity of the Supreme Lord and the individual soul. — 6.236.8-9

*brahmaṇaś cāparaṁ rūpaṁ nirguṇaṁ vakṣyate mayā
sarva-svaṁ jagato 'py asya mohanārthaṁ kalau yuge*

In order to bewilder the atheists, in Kali-yuga I describe the Supreme Personality of Godhead to be without form and without qualities. — 6.236.10

*vedānte tu mahā-śāstre māyāvādāṁ avaidikam
mayaiva vakṣyate devi jagatām nāśa-kāraṇāt*

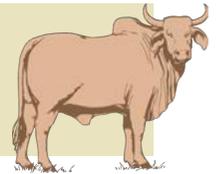
Similarly, in explaining *Vedānta*, I describe the same *māyāvāda* philosophy in order to mislead the entire population toward atheism by denying the personal form of the Lord." — 6.236.11 [As described in the seventh chapter of the *ādi-līlā* of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, while speaking to Prakasananda Saraswati

and the *māyāvādī sannyāsīs* of Benares, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu cited these texts to show how Lord Shiva had come in Kali-yuga as Sripad Sankaracharya to propound the philosophy of monism. Cited translations of texts 7, 10 and 11 are based on the translations of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada as found in his purport to Cc. *ādi* 7.110.] 🍊

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THE NAMES OF SHIVA AND KRISHNA



As described in this issue (Page 7: "How Vishnu Gave His Names to the Gods"), the intimate connection between Krishna and Lord Shiva extends even to their names. In his text and purport to *Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta*, (1.2.86) Srila Sanatan Goswami also speaks about the intimacy between the names of Shiva and Krishna:

*kṛṣṇāc chivasya bhedeḥ mahā-doṣa-karī matā
āgo bhagavatā svasmin kṣamyate na śive kṛtam*

To consider Lord Shiva different from Krishna is a serious spiritual deviation. The Personality of Godhead tolerates offenses against himself, but not against Lord Shiva.

Purport: Lord Shiva is described as a recipient of Lord Vishnu’s mercy, but this does not mean that the two Lords are different from one another in the same way that Lord Vishnu differs from the jīvas. The Padma Purāṇa includes the *Nāmāparādha-bhañjana-stotra*, a list of ten offenses against chanting Lord Vishnu’s names. Therein it is said:

*śivasya śrī-viṣṇor ya iha guṇa-nāmādi sakalāṁ
dhiyā bhinnāṁ paśyet sa khalu hari-nāmāhita-karaḥ*

“One who sees differences between any of Lord Shiva’s qualities and names and those of Sri Vishnu is an antagonist to *hari-nāma*.” (*Padma Purāṇa, Brahma-khaṇḍa* 25.15)

Lord Vishnu cannot tolerate offenses against Lord Shiva, because Lord Shiva is the greatest of Lord Vishnu’s empowered incarnations. Lord Shiva is especially empowered to distribute in the material world the elevated tastes of pure devotional service.

While describing this second offense to the holy name in his *Mādhurya Kādambinī*, Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur also speaks of the non-different nature of Shiva and Vishnu:

Those without knowledge in the matter may say that Vishnu is the Lord, not Shiva, or they may say that Shiva is the Lord and not Vishnu: “Since I am a devotee of Vishnu, I will not give regard to Shiva.” —or vice versa. Absorbed in such arguments, such people also commit

offenses to the holy name. If such offenders can become enlightened by a devotee with thorough knowledge of the matter, then they can realize in what way Shiva and Vishnu are non-different. With this realization, and by doing *nāma-kīrtana*, they can nullify their offenses. 🍊

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PRAYERS TO LORD SHIVA



*ohe kṣetrapāla śiva tumi dayāmayā
kṛṣṇa-bhakti deha more ha-iyā sadaya*

O Kshetrapala Shiva, protector of the Dham! You are certainly very merciful. Being kind to me, please give me love for Krishna. (Originally this verse was found on the wall behind the deities of Gopishwar Mahadeva at the Yogapitha. It is ascribed to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur.)

*śrīmad-gopīśvaraṁ vande śaikaraṁ karuṇā-mayam
sarva-kleśa-haraṁ devaṁ vṛndāraṇya-rati-pradam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Gopishwar, who is merciful Lord Shiva himself. He removes all troubles and grants spiritual love in Vrindavan. (Śrī *Bhakti-ratnākara* 5.3741. Srila Narahari Chakravarti states that this is the prayer that the *gopīs* used to worship Gopishwar Mahadeva.)

*mudā gopendrasyātmaja-bhuja-pariṣvaṅga-nidhaye
sphurade-gopī-vṛndairyamiha bhagavantaṁ praṇayibhiḥ
bhajadbhīstair bhaktyā svama bhilaṣitaṁ prāptama cirād
yamī-tīre gopīśvaramanudināṁ taṁ kila bhaje*

“To obtain the jewel of being embraced by the arms of Vrajendra-nandana Shyamasundara, the *gopīs*, who possess firm, loving, intimate attachment for Sri Krishna, joyfully worshiped Sadashiva with great devotion and had all their internal desires fulfilled without delay. Daily I worship that Gopishwar Mahadev who resides on the bank of the Yamuna.” (Srila Raghunath Das Goswami’s *Śrī Vraja-vilāsa-stava*, verse 87.) 🍊



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