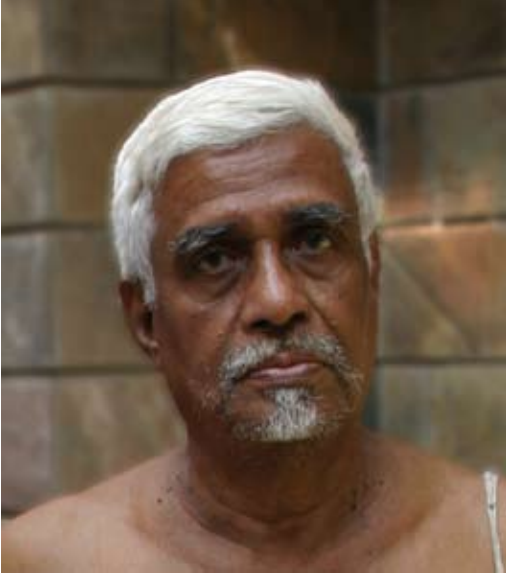




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„पुराणम् इत्येव न साधु सर्वम्“.

Bannanje Govindacharya on the Editing of Texts of the Mādhva Vaiṣṇava Tradition and Writing in Sanskrit



Vidyāvācaspati Bannanje Govindacharya is perhaps the publicly most visible and best known Sanskrit scholar in Karnataka. He is the editor of the most authoritative edition of the collected writings of Madhvācārya¹ (1238-1317), the founder of the school of Vedānta that is commonly known as Dvaitavedānta and whose followers speak of themselves as Mādhvas. Most of Govindacharya's work and writing concerns this tradition of Viṣṇuīte philosophy and religion;

as editor of the collected works of Madhva, and being well-read in the commentatorial literature of the tradition, he is one of the foremost exponents of Dvaitin thought today. He is also highly appreciated by the general public as a speaker in Kannada and Sanskrit on topics of religious and cultural interest, and he has made innumerable lecture tours throughout southern and central India and also in the Middle East, Australia and the USA.

In the following interview, taken in Udupi (usually called 'Rajatap̄thanagara' in Sanskrit) in October 2007, Govindacharya speaks about reactions to his editing and publishing of the collected writings of Madhva in the 1970s (thereby also recovering two previously unknown writings by Madhva) and the reasons why religious conservatives rejected the redaction of the oldest existant manuscript, written by Madhva's own pupil Hṛṣikeśatīrtha and found in Śrī Palimāru Maṭha, Udupi. These reasons may appear odd to most readers, but they are interesting and illustrative of the nature of traditional scriptural

¹ Śrī Ānandatīrtha Bhagavatpāda [Śrī Madhvācārya]. *Sarva-mūla-granthāḥ*. Edited by Bannanje Govindacharya. Udupi: Akhila Bhārata Mādhva Mahāmaṇḍala, 1969-80.

training in the Mādhva tradition today and show what kinds of resistance a researcher may face from the religious orthodoxy. He also shares some thoughts about why one should wish to write Sanskrit, and about his current and future projects.

Govindacharya is a productive and award-winning author in Kannada, and in recent years he has also returned to writing in Sanskrit. Besides bringing out a new annotated Kannada translation of the Madhva Vijaya², the classical hagiography of Madhva by Nārāyaṇapaṇḍitācārya, he has also edited and published the Sanskrit text together with a commentary by the original author, two other commentaries by older commentators, and a new Sanskrit commentary by himself as well as lengthy appendices on prosody and aspects of Mādhva doctrine, together with excellent indices, making it the best edition of the text available.³ This was followed by his Upaniṣaccandrikā (prathamamayūkhaḥ)⁴, containing the text of six Upaniṣads together with Sanskrit commentaries by Madhva, Vāmanapaṇḍitācārya⁵ and himself, with similar appendices. His considerations in writing his own commentary certainly differ from the interests of most non-Indian scholars, but are illustrative of an Indian exegetical practice that has been in existence for at least several centuries.

The following transcript attempts to reflect modern, living, spoken Sanskrit, hence it does not always follow the Pāṇinian rules of sandhi, and the syntax gives an impression of Govindacharya's very lively and agile use of Sanskrit for expressing himself. For ease of reading, a liberal use of virāmas and avagrahas has been made.

2 Nārāyaṇapaṇḍitācārya Śrīmadhva Vijaya. Kannaḍada kannaḍiyalli: Bannaṅje Gōvīṁdācārya. Udupi / Bangalore: Īśāvāsya pratiṣṭhāna, 2006 (2nd revised edition; 1st edition 2005).

3 Śrīnārāyaṇapaṇḍitācāryaviracitaḥ Śrīmadhva Vijayaḥ. Saṁpādaḥ Bannaṅje-padopāhva Ācāryagovindaḥ. Udupi / Bangalore: Īśāvāsya pratiṣṭhāna, 2003.

4 Upaniṣaccandrikā (prathamamayūkhaḥ). Śodhayitā-saṁpādayitā Bannaṅje-padopāhva Ācāryagovindaḥ. Udupi / Bangalore: Īśāvāsya pratiṣṭhāna, 2005.

5 Vāmanapaṇḍitācārya was the grandson of Trivikramapaṇḍitācārya, who was a direct disciple of Madhva, and the son of Nārāyaṇapaṇḍitācārya.

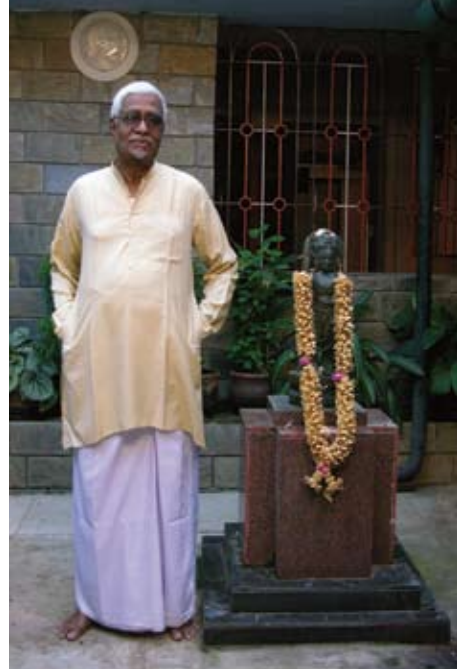
MIZ: रजतपीठनगरस्थे श्रीपलिमारुमठे श्रीमन्मध्वाचार्याणां साक्षाच्छिष्येन श्री हृषिकेशतीर्थेन लिखिता माध्वसंप्रदायस्य सर्वमूलग्रन्थानां मूलपाठस्यैकैव प्रतिलिपिरस्ति, यत्संपादकत्वाद् भवता ख्यातिः प्राप्ता। तन्मुद्रणात्तु संप्रदायस्थेभ्यः पण्डितेभ्यो हर्षो नाभूत्। तेषु ग्रन्थेषु मध्वाचार्याणां पूर्वमज्ञातं कृतिद्वयमस्तीति कोपकारणं, न च हर्षकारणमभूत्। कस्माद् एतत्? भारतवर्षे तादृक्संशोधनकार्यविषये को ऽभिप्रायो वर्तते?

Bannanje Govindacharya (BG): आचार्यमध्वेन विरचिताः सर्वे ऽपि ग्रन्थाः – प्रायः तस्य मूलपाठः – तस्य साक्षाच्छिष्येन हृषिकेशतीर्थेन लिखितः मौलिकः पाठः संप्रतिः एक एव उपलभ्यते, स ताडपत्रे लिखितः श्रीपलिमारुमठे वर्तते। वस्तुतः संतोषकारणम् इदं, विस्मयं जनेत्, मध्वाचार्याणां साक्षाच्छिष्येन लिपिबद्धः कृत इति संशोधकानां महत् प्रमोदस्थानम्। तथा ऽपि कश्चन दोषो ऽस्ति विद्वत्सु। तादृशः पाठो ऽत्रास्ति, मया एतस्य संपादनं प्रकाशनं च कृतम्; अपूर्वं पाठं दृष्ट्वा माध्वसमाजे प्रमोदातिशयेन संतोषेण नृत्येयुः इति मया निरीक्षितम्। ओ, तथा नासीत्। न को ऽप्यनृत्यत्। परंतु – “किम् इदं, कथम् अङ्गीकर्तव्यम्, एतावत्पर्यन्तं यः पाठो ऽस्मभिरधीतः स एव पाठः।” तदानीं तस्य नामान्तरमभूत् – “इदं हृषिकेशतीर्थपाठ इति न, इदं बन्नंजेपाठ” इति तस्य प्रथाऽऽसीत्। एवं लेखनानि प्रकटितान्यासन्। ‘तत्त्ववाद’ इति पेजावरमठेन प्रचलितायां पत्रिकायां लेखनम् आसीत्, तत्र “इदं हृषिकेशतीर्थपाठ इति

न वक्तुं शक्यते, किन्त्विदं बन्नंजेपाठ” इति उच्चैर्घोषितम्। हृषिकेशतीर्थेन तन्न लिखितम्, तत् पुस्तकं हृषिकेशतीर्थेन कृतं न, केवलं मया वृथा उच्यते, तत् कश्चन प्राचीनः पाठ इति तैरारोपः कृतः। तस्य कारणम्, मूलकारणम्, इदानीं मध्वाचार्यरचितानां ग्रन्थानां यत्र यत्र अध्ययनं प्रवर्तते तत्र सर्वत्र तस्याध्ययनस्य मूलं किम्? जयतीर्थकृतव्याख्यानम्।¹ जयतीर्थकृतव्याख्याना-नुसरेण माध्वग्रन्था अधीयन्ते। तस्मात् जयतीर्थयतिना यः पाठः स्व्यक्रियत स एव मूलपाठ इति सिद्धान्तस्तेषां सर्वेषाम्। अतो जयतीर्थपाठाद् भिन्नो ऽन्यः पाठः हृषिकेशतीर्थेन लिखित इत्युक्ते तेषां तद् विश्वसितुमशक्यमासीत्। कथं जयतीर्थपाठः अशुद्ध इति? कथम् उच्येत? तस्मात्, नाऽयं हृषिकेशतीर्थपाठः, किंतु बन्नंजेपाठ इति प्रथाऽऽसीत्, खण्डनं मण्डनं सर्वम् आसीत्।

एवं तत्र ग्रन्थद्वयम् अपूर्वम् उपलब्धम्। तिथिनिर्णय इति, न्यासपद्धतिर् इति। तत्रापि तेषां किम्... अहो! सप्तत्रिंशद् ग्रन्थान् चकार इति एका प्रथा वर्तते। ग्रन्थमालिकास्तोत्रम्

1 The commentaries of Jayatīrtha (1365-88) are so popular among Mādhva paṇḍitas that he is popularly referred to as the *ṭīkācārya*. His *ṭīkā*s, however, are based on a different redaction of Madhva's writings, known as the *pracalitapāṭha*.



Bannanje Govindacharya in the inner court of his Udupi home.