

## THE AGE OF THE DIFFERENT BHASHYAMS ON THE VEDANTA SUTRAS.

The editor of the *Brahma Vidya*, a Journal in Sanskrit and Tamil, devoted to the exposition of Sankara's Philosophy, in answering a question as to the priority of the different commentaries on the *Brahmasutras*, places Srikantha before Sankara. This fact does not seem to be well-known to European scholars as it ought to be; and as the writer is impartial so far as Srikantha is concerned, and expresses the old and genuine traditional view of the matter, we have thought it fit to lay before our readers a translation of the whole article.

“There are now in current use five commentaries on the Vyasa Sutras. They are those of Sri Nilakanta Sivacharya Swamigal, of Srimat Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya Swamigal, of Srimat Ramanujachariar, of Srimat Ananda Tirtar or Madhwacharyar, of Vallabhacharya. Besides these, there are two other commentaries belonging to the Advaita School, namely *Baskariyam* and *Yadariyam*. Of these, we have seen an old copy of *Bhaskariyam*, in the Sanskrit Library, Vedanta Divartani, established in Tiruvalankadu in Mayaveram Taluq. Will any friend intimate to us if this is still found there? Of the other, *Yadaviyam*, we have only heard in stories. From what we gather from some of the ancient commentator's statements, there was one commentary called *Bodayana Vritti* ascribed to Bodayna Muni. This is difficult to get in whole now. Besides, we understand there is a commentary in recent times composed by a Veerasaiva, and native of Bellary District, Somanadaradittiyar and hence called Somanathiyam. There are two means of determining their relative priority among them, *i.e.*, by means of the history of each Acharya, and by means of their works. By these tests, Srimat Nilakanta Sivacharya's commentary appears to be first. Because, this Mahatma's doctrine is *Vishistadvaita*; to refute him *i.e.*, to establish the identity of Jiva and Brahman, Srimat Sankaracharya quotes the very words of the other; besides, his history shows that Sankara met Nilakanta, who had already written his Saiva Bhashya, at Gokarna; and also because Srimat Appaya Dikshita Swamigal in his work *Sivadvaita Nirnayam*, states that Srikantha's Bhashya was first, and Sankara's commentary was next. Next comes *Yadariyam*. Because, we read that Sri Ramanuja was learning under Yadavacharya, and became dissatisfied at the interpretation of Sutras, according to Sankara, and so wrote his own commentary refuting both Sankara and Yadavacharya; and also because, Vedantacharya in his stotra called *Yatirajapaddati* praises Ramanuja as one who refuted both *Sankara's* and *Yadavacharya's* Systems. In many places in the latter commentary, sentences from Sankara's occur. Srimat Ananda Tirtar's comes next. Because in his history, he is said to have refuted the writings of 21 commentators, and especially that of Sankara, and in some respects, that of Ramanuja also. Every body knows that Vallabhacharya's is quite recent. Because, many of those who became the disciples of Balaswamigal, when he visited South India, are still alive, and this Balaswamigal was a disciple of Vallabhacharya. But, though we do not know positively any thing as to the age of *Bhaskariyam*, yet in as much as it belongs to the Advaita School, and explains the text with reference to Upanishad texts, and it does not quote from any other commentators, and as we find passages in Srikantha's Bhashya on *Pasupada Adikarana*, very much like his, and the introduction to Srikantha's states that Srikantha removes by his commentary the doubts created

by the commentaries of Purvacharyas. We may conclude this commentary is brief to that of Srikanta. So it is, that people speak of Bhaskariyam as even prior to that of Vidyananyar's Veda Bhashya. This Bhaskarachariar being a Vaishnava, it appears that Ramanujachariar has adopted portions of his commentary. Srimad Bhodayana's is prior to all; because, other commentators have quoted him here and there. From this we say, Bodayana's is first; Bhaskariyam, second; Sri Nilakanta's third; Sri Sankara's fourth; Yadaviyam, fifth; Ramanuja's sixth Madhwacharya's seventh; Vallabiyam is eighth; Somanadiyam, ninth (p.p. 89 to 91).

We hope, from the above fact Prof. Deussen will see fit to retract his opinion that Vishistadvaita, Dvaita, &c, are the misinterpreting variations of Sankara's Advaita.

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