

Empower Your Mind: A Study of Manobala Pañcaviṃśikā

This paper examines “Manobala Pañcaviṃśikā,” a modern yoga text composed by Ācārya Mahāprajña (1920-2010). Comprising twenty-five verses in Sanskrit, the text explores practices aimed at empowering the mind. Ācārya Tulasī (1914-1997), the ninth head of the Jain Śvetāmbara Terāpantha sect, introduced a new order within Jain monkhood, known as “samaṇa-śreṇī,” in 1980. Notably, when the first group of Samanis embarked on their inaugural journey abroad, Tulasī tasked Mahāprajña with providing guidelines to Samanī Smita Prajña and Samanī Madhur Prajña to help them overcome the challenges and potential loneliness of their overseas travels.

This paper delves into the practices outlined in the “Manobala Pañcaviṃśikā” that were intended to empower the minds of the Samanis. It argues that these practices are rooted in common yogic traditions with global recognition. However, Ācārya Mahāprajña’s contribution lies in presenting these practices through a Jain lens, aligning them with Jain principles and values. An intriguing feature of the text is the recurring phrase “manobal pravardhte” in its verses, emphasizing the pivotal role of strengthening the mind.

This study contributes to our understanding of how ancient practices can be adapted and applied within specific cultural and religious contexts to foster mental resilience and well-being. By focusing on “Manobala Pañcaviṃśikā,” it sheds light on the intersection of yogic principles and Jain philosophy, offering valuable insights for those interested in the intersection of spirituality, mindfulness, and empowerment.

Author: Ms SAMANI, Punya Pragya (FIU)

Presenter: Ms SAMANI, Punya Pragya (FIU)

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