

From Worshipping God to Becoming God: A Theistic Teaching of Pāśupata Yoga in the Īśvara Gītā

Friday 24 May 2024 09:15 (30 minutes)

Abstract: This paper aims to explore the concept of theistic yoga in the Īśvara Gītā (8th century CE) which is believed to be a Śaiva text, especially a Pāśupata philosophical text. Many yogic texts do not accept the concept of God (Īśvara) or sometimes prescribe the worship of Īśvara for the attainment of liberation, but Īśvara is not conceived as the almighty Īśvara with Omni-attributes rather it is deemed as a helping agent in the spiritual path of Sādhana. I argue that while many yogic texts rule out the possibility of a creator God and God's liberating power, the Īśvara Gītā holds that God is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of this universe and enjoins the practice of Pāśupata Yoga, which results in liberation by the grace of the God. Pāśupata Yoga is the means not only of worshipping the Lord but also of becoming the God himself, and Īśvara is not only the means but also the end of the spiritual journey of a Pāśupata Yogi. In the Īśvara Gītā Śiva is the Pāśupati, Master of Beasts, who instructs a group of sages about the highest truth and the means to realize it through the practice of yoga. Śiva says that he himself is supreme, the source of creation for all other gods, and the ultimate focus of yogic concentration.

Author: BHATTACHARYA, Susanta (Pedagogical University of Krakow)

Presenter: BHATTACHARYA, Susanta (Pedagogical University of Krakow)

Session Classification: Institutionalisation