

March 4, 1978 Class on Symbolism with Baba Hari Dass

Edit notes: The following was typed from notes handwritten at the time of the class. Comments in square brackets are generally those of the typist. Comments in parentheses are likely that of the reader. There was editing for format and IAST transliteration of Sanskrit terms.

Brahmā as golden embryo = sattva. Has no beginning. Dwells in center of earth. Indestructible: akṣara, which is also the name given to letters of alphabet. Speech is indestructible instrument of knowledge = Sarasvatī. Breath precedes speech.

Akṣarapuraṣa = satpuraṣa.

What carried the saṁskāra? Creation. Everything was there in saṁskāra form.

How creation starts? It's a saṁskāra. Any action makes a saṁskāra.

Prajāpati = creative (used as a name for any of the three male deities) = lord of progeny.

Satya [or sattva?] = water.

Yajña: All creatures are born of an offering of life, and are in the end themselves sacrificed.

Originally there were only three aims of life: dharma includes mokṣa.

[Babaji wrote:]

When you have the three, you desire the fourth.

[Reading continues:]

Brahmā has four heads (after one was burned by fire of Śiva): giver of dharma, artha, kāma, and mokṣa, four aims of life: righteousness or virtue, success or wealth, pleasure, and liberation.

Brahmā holds mālā = all knowledge; kamaṇḍalu = ambrosia churned from ocean, nectar of immortality

Brahmā rides swan = peace, purity, jīva.

Brahmā seated on lotus from Viṣṇu's navel: creation. Viṣṇu then represents guṇa in balance = Maheśvara. Sattva and tamas, with help of rajas, created the universe. Brahmā is seated on his own creation = self-born.

Śeṣa (serpent) represents time = kriyā śakti. Time is in Viṣṇu's control.

Remnant residue of creation = Om̐, kuṇḍalinī at base of mūlādhāra.

Both Śeṣa under Viṣṇu and kuṇḍalinī in mūlādhāra are coiled three and a half times.

After original creation and destruction, Viṣṇu fell asleep on coiled serpent on waters. Water is a more solidified form of gasses, ether. Creation produced water and breath.

Blue color of Viṣṇu = tamas.

Lakṣmī sits at Viṣṇu's feet, with Brahmā on lotus with stem from Viṣṇu's navel.

Viṣṇu holds lotus, mace, conch, and cakra (discus)

Veda symbolize all written knowledge. Mālā represents knowledge beyond words.

Sudarśana (beauteous sight)

Cakra (discus) = action, and sahasrāra (cohesive tendency): universal mind, protection, sattva (jñāna, fire: destroys ignorance), hriṃ in center, mājā around outside; 6 spokes = 6 seasons [in India]

Conch = instigator of creation, revolving

Lotus = moving universe, ahaṅkāra held hanging down symbolizes pravṛtti is upright for the first creation

Viṣṇu has golden lock of hair on left breast

- jewel on chest = consciousness, the soul of the world
- long flower garland = mala, representing maya, five elements:
- pearl = water ruby = fire
- emerald = air
- bluestone = earth
- diamond = ether
- earrings = alligator, symbolize two kinds of knowledge:
 - intellectual = sāmkhya = mortality
 - intuitive = yoga = immortality
- amulets = three aims of worldly life: righteousness, success, pleasure
- crown = temple of creation, 7 lokas (decks), śrī cakra from top has three concentric circles, a maṇḍala.

Bhṛgu's footprint on Viṣṇu's chest: Bhṛgu went around testing the gods to see which was greatest.

Rāma is presiding deity of tretā yuga (second [counting forward]).

Kṛṣṇa is presiding deity of dvāpara yuga (third [counting forward]).

This material is licensed by Sri Rama Foundation under a Creative Commons: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license. The rights of use and limitations can be found at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.