

Abstract No 01

The Pentadic Universe in the Sanskrit Text of *Saivagamas*

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In the integral vision of the *Saivagamas* the world is seen to be composed of consciousness (*cinmaya*), flooded with light, made of light and permeated with light (*prakasa*), but though being consciousness in essence a substance is seen and experienced as insentient. The question baffles us why being consciousness in essence it is perceived as insentient. To this question the answer given by the *Saivagamas* is that the substance is apparently seen to be insentient in so far as it does not have self-reflection of its own. Only because of the absence of self-reflection some substances are considered insentient and are therefore relegated to the level of matter but some others on account of self-reflection, are raised to the highest excellence of spirit, the sentient beings. In *Saivagamas* specially in the non-dualistic *Saivagamas*, no such dichotomy of spirit and matter exists, rather it sees it as an integrated whole. The *Saivagamas* also do not like to classify the whole into *asti*, *bhati*, *priya*, *nama* and *rupa* like the *Vedantins* stigmatizing the world of the name and form to be negated, conceiving it to be *illusory* while accepting only that aspect of Brahman which is being, consciousness and bliss. But the ideal vision of the *Saivagamas* is to see everything as the One, not many. It explains *Saivagamas* of the *Upanisadas* the entirety, not multiplicity (*nana*) because in this integral vision there is no such diversity that is not in essence light (*prakasaparamartha*). The universe as it shines before us consists of two aspects- the one is signifier called *vacaka* and the other is paramarsa, the process of cognition manifesting itself in the *vacya*, the signified consciousness. In the *Agamas* the accepted number of principles is thirty-six but even there the scheme of grouping them into five divisions can be possible. So the *Agamic* thinkers not only see the presence of five categories in the gross level of their manifestation but also on the subtle level. To conclude we may say that the *bhutas* (*elements*) are thought to be the basic elements of the world-the world of pain and pleasure. But to the *agamic* thinkers they should be utilized in a different way in order to attain the ultimate goal of life. We have discussed that the *bhutas* have gross, subtle and the highest forms. To the aspirant the base from which he starts his *sadhana* and tries to see the dynamic form of it everywhere in order to achieve his aim of *Sivahood*.

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