

KSEMARAJA'S PRATYABHIJNA HRIDAYAM
AND SAINT AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS:
THEIR POINTS OF CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

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of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

by

PACHECO A. POLESTICO


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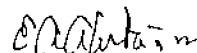
This Thesis entitled "KSEMARAJA'S PRATYABHIJNA HRIDAYAM AND SAINT AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS THEIR POINTS OF CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE" prepared by PACHECO A POLESTICO in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION

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MR. PACHECO A. POLESTICO

DEDICATION

**To
Noy Monding,
my
late Father,
who
sired us
and
fed us
through the
proceeds
he earned from
playing
volleyball.**

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to present the points of convergence and divergence between Ksemaraja's Pratyabhijna Hridayam (The Secret of Self-Realization) and Saint Augustine's Confessions, and elucidate how the study may contribute to the Filipino students' progress or development from material to spiritual preoccupation

The study employed both the comparative and contrastive approaches relative to the interpretative analysis of the aforementioned works. The former approach focused on fundamental similarities between the two works, highlighting such features as they situate their basic insights within a common frame. The latter approach stressed the differences between them, particularly in relation to the works' respective pursuit of specifics associated with their all-embracing theme of the soul's movement from darkness to light, that is, from non-awareness to awareness of the human self and its true or spiritual nature.

The points of convergence that resulted from comparing the two works were seen in their fundamental construal of reality, earthly or human existence, and interesting references to fire and/or light. Their points of divergence surfaced relative to their manner of presenting the development of the major theme mentioned above, the references to incarnation (as well as karma) in Ksemaraja's work (which are not in Augustine's), and the reliance in Augustine's work on, among other things, the mediating agency of Jesus where salvation or liberation is concerned (which is not in Ksemaraja's). The contributions of this study to the Filipinos' progress from earthly to spiritual existence were glimpsed in this study's directing, among others, the students' consciousness to the nature of Reality, the journey of the soul, and its struggle towards Godhead.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

Modern education has been frequently criticized for having often emphasized the acquisition of vocational skills at the expense of liberal or humanizing knowledge that can be had from reading and learning great works of literature. The proponents of skill acquisition seem to believe that technical or vocational education ensures graduates to right away find jobs after graduation. The implication is that liberal education does not prepare students enough to be able to find work after graduation. This view, however, as some educators have observed, will prove disadvantageous to students, for in the absence of a well-rounded liberal education attained from the study of great and humanizing works of literature, they lose the chance to know the "soul" of the educational process.¹ The soul, as every educational theorist knows, is what invites students to look into their inner selves, so as to realize what kind of persons they are or have become.

With technology taking a quantum stride, and comfort or convenience fast becoming the overriding concern of modern day human beings, one cannot help but feel the weakening of human capacities for self-examination. The unexamined life, as is commonly asserted, is, of course, not worth living. It is only through introspection, or the examination of the self or one's inner world, that human beings can deal with the pressing or important issues of existence, one of which is how humans may best spend their time or life. Miguel de Unamuno, who has constantly struggled for eternal life, leaves one clue in his poem, 'The Christ of Velazquez,' when he writes "only in

fighting for heaven” shall humans “be able to live in peace”² Fighting for heaven is fighting for the preservation of values that are associated with not merely human but also humane existence. These values include, among other things, the training of the intellect and the disciplining of the will, so that the body becomes subservient to the spirit. In this respect, the fight naturally occurs first in the inner self of individuals, and to prepare well for this fight, one has to look into that self, without deserting one’s awareness of what one wants or wishes to register as he or she surveys the self, for, here, the ideal humane predilections reside.

The same awareness, according to such Eastern belief as Hinduism, operates after a person’s death: the post-death awareness it is said to be cognizant of the entire events that have transpired in the deceased’s human lifetime, and registers the areas of shortcomings that become the sources of lessons for the soul. In such Western faiths as Christianity (such as Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, for instance, among others), the same life review occurs and is noted by one’s post-death consciousness.

The mortality of human life is what greatly tortured the thoughts and feelings of the world’s first known epical character, Gilgamesh.³ When Gilgamesh’s friend, Enkidu, dies in the epic tale, the former sets out to look for Utnapishtim, believed to be an immortal, who has lived before, and survived, the Great Flood. When Gilgamesh asks Utnapishtim to give him (Gilgamesh) the secret of immortality, Utnapishtim tells the hero to dive for a magical weed growing at the bottom of a river. Later, however, Gilgamesh loses the weed to a serpent. If one among many possible interpretations of this loss is that the human being cannot successfully become a custodian of everlasting life, one may also juxtapose the other view that, perhaps, the lost weed is the soul or