

A HALF-YEARLY JOURNAL OF ADVAITA-VEDĀNTA

# *The VOICE of* ŚAṆKARA

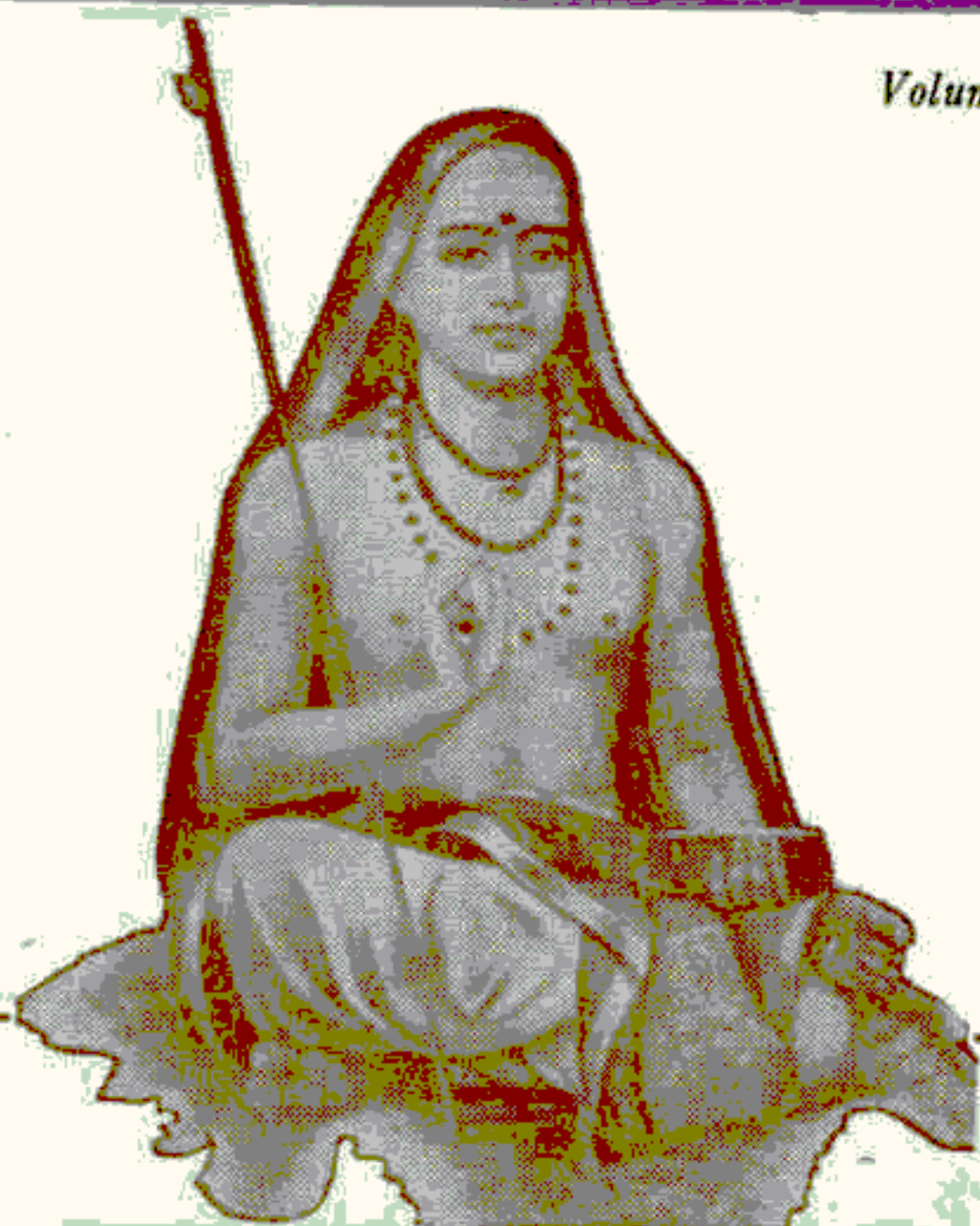
śaṅkara-bhāratī

*Chairman, Advisory Board*  
*V. R. Kalyanasundara Sastri*

*Editor*  
*R. Balasubramanian*

*Volume EIGHTEEN*

*Number TWO*



*July*

*1993*

esā śaṅkara-bhāratī vijayate  
nirvāṇa-saṁdāyini

victorious is the voice of śaṅkara,  
leading, as it does, to liberation.

The Voice of Śaṅkara  
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## FROM THE EDITOR

The late Dr N. C. Krishnan was the Secretary of Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre ever since its inception. He was also the Editor of *The Voice of Śaṅkara* for quite a number of years until his sudden demise. He was associated with a number of cultural and social organizations. Besides his professional work as a leading Chartered Accountant, he was able to function with incredible ease and efficiency both as the Secretary of Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre and the Editor of *The Voice of Śaṅkara* published by the Centre. He had an abiding interest in Sanskrit and was devoted to the study of Indian philosophy in general and Advaita Vedānta in particular. He studied, sitting under the feet of Bhāṣya-bhāvajña Sri Varahoor Kalyanasundara Sastri, the *bhāṣyas* as well as *prakaraṇa-granthas* of Ādi Śaṅkara.

In connection with the Birth Centenary Jayanti of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī, Dr N. C. Krishnan brought out a Special Number of *The Voice of Śaṅkara* in January 1993. We regret that after the demise of Dr Krishnan there has been, due to unavoidable reasons, inordinate delay in the regular publication of the journal. With the guidance and blessings of Their Holinesses Sri Sankaracharyas of Kanchi Kamakoti Pitham, Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre will continue to publish *The Voice of Śaṅkara*. We seek your support and patronage.

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN

*Editor*

**Our Reverential Pranams to the ACHARYAS of  
Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Pectam**

Our Reverend Parents to the ACHARYAS of  
Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham



THE VOICE OF  
SANKARA





## HOMAGE TO ŚAṆKARA

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[156]

आदौ तु साधनचतुष्टयहेतुभूतं  
पश्चाच्छ्रुतार्थपरिचिन्तनसाधनञ्च ।  
अन्ते च दृश्यरहितात्मसुखप्रदं ते  
श्रीशंकरार्यं मम देहि पदावलम्बम् ॥

*ādau tu sādhanacatuṣṭayahetubhūtam  
paścācchrutārthaparicintanasādhanañca  
ante ca dṛśya-rahitātma-sukhapradam te  
śrīśaṅkarārya mama dehi padāvalambam.*

Oh Śrī Śaṅkara, the great Preceptor! the shelter at your pair of lotus feet—(i) helps one at first, acquire the *sādhanacatuṣṭaya* (the knowledge of the distinction between the eternal and the non-eternal; dispassion towards the enjoyment of results both here and hereafter; acquisition of mind-control, sense-control, etc.; earnest desire to gain *mokṣa*), (ii) then forms the

means of reflection of essential truths of scriptures, and (iii) in the end yields the enjoyment of Self-realisation free from the experience of the seen world. So, Oh Śrī Śaṅkara! may you offer me succour at your pair of lotus feet.

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विद्यानिधे विशदितानतचित्तपद्म  
 विद्याप्रदाननिरताङ्घ्रिसरोजपूज ।  
 विष्ण्वीश भेदमतिवारणपञ्चवक्त्र  
 श्रीशङ्करार्य मम देहि पदावलम्बम् ॥

*vidyānidhe viśaditānata-cittapadma*  
*vidyāpradānaniratāṅghri-sarojapūja*  
*viṣṇvīśa-bhedamativāraṇapañcavaktra*  
*śrīśaṅkarārya mama dehi padāvalambam.*

Oh the Storehouse of Knowledge-Supreme, Oh Ācārya who makes the lotus heart of devotees bloom, Oh Śaṅkara who has performed worship at the lotus-like feet of great saints that were ready to impart knowledge, O Preceptor who has vanquished the knowledge of difference between Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva — just as a lion attacking an elephant, Oh Śrī Śaṅkara, kindly give me refuge at the pair of your lotus-like feet.

Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhinava Nṛsimhabhārati  
 in *Śrīśaṅkarāryapadāvalambastava*



*Golden Adorations to the  
Jagatguru Sankaracharya of Kanchi  
marking his Birth Centenary*





## HOMAGE TO THE SAGE OF KĀNCĪ

---

V. Kutumba Sastri\*

धन्याष्टकम्

धन्या वयं निरुपमानतपोनिधेस्ते  
संन्यासधर्मनिकषोपलजीवितस्य ।  
वेदोक्तधर्मनिचयस्य पुनः प्रतिष्ठा-  
सत्रे सुदीक्षितवतो नु समानकालाः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries; you are the incomparable embodiment of penance; your life is a touch-stone for prescriptions of *sannyāsa*; you initiated yourself in the life-long sacrifice of upholding and re-establishing various *dharmas* prescribed by the *Vedas*. 1

धन्या वयं ननु गुरो ! करुणारसार्द्रे  
गाम्भीर्य-निर्जित-महोदधिके सुशान्ते ।  
तेजस्विनी प्रतिफलत्परमात्मबोधे  
द्रष्टुं त्वदीयनयने हि समानकालाः ॥

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\* Professor and Head, Department of Sanskrit, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry-605 014.

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries; to see your eyes, which are moistered with compassion; which defeat the ocean in their depth (*gāmbhīrya*); which are peaceful and resplendent; which reflect your experience of the ultimate Reality, *i.e.* *Paramātman*. 2

धन्या वयं ननु गुरो ! मृदुमन्द्रधीर-  
गाम्भीर्यवन्ति विशदानि लघूनि चैव ।  
धर्मादि-तत्त्वगण-सूक्ष्म-सुबोधकानि  
श्रोतुं त्वदीयवचनानि समानकालाः ॥

O Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries; to listen to your words which are soft, low in voice, full of conviction (*dhīra*), and profound in their meaning; which are clear, brief in form, and which interpret scores of subtle concepts such as *dharma*. 3

धन्या वयं ननु गुरो ! भवता सहैव  
राष्ट्रस्य लौकिकविचारगणस्य चैव ।  
वैयक्तिकस्य सुखदुःखचयस्य वार्ताः  
वक्तुं प्रसादमनुभोक्तुमनन्यकालाः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries to talk to you about worldly matters related to the nation, about various mundane issues, about matters of personal joys and sorrows; and to receive your favours and blessings. 4



धन्या वयं ननु गुरो भवतः पदाब्ज-  
 मुद्राङ्कितं तदन पूततमं शिवं च ।  
 श्रीभारतस्य महितं रजसां चयं नः  
 स्पष्टुं शिरोभिरवसाम समानकालाः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have lived as your contemporaries; to touch the dust of the land of great India — with our heads — which is great in itself and made most pious and auspicious by the imprints of your lotus feet. 5

धन्या वयं ननु गुरो भवतः पवित्रे  
 सञ्चारपूतभुवने चरणे विशाले ।  
 संसारभीतजनताश्रयदेऽनुसृत्य  
 गन्तुं कियन्ति च पदानि समानकालाः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries to walk a few steps following your feet; which are pious; which made the country sacred by their treading on it; which are large, and tend to give refuge to the entire mankind, frightened of the cycle of births and deaths. 6

धन्या वयं ननु गुरो ! भवतोऽतिलोकं  
 भास्वत्प्रभावलयितं तपसा कृशाङ्गम् ।  
 शान्तं चलं मह इवाप्रतिमं च साक्षात्-  
 कर्तुञ्च रूपमनघं हि समानकालाः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we to have been your contemporaries; to behold your holy form; which is non-earthly; which is encircled with resplendent light; which is thin because of penance; which is quiet and peaceful; which is like moving light and which is indeed unique. 7

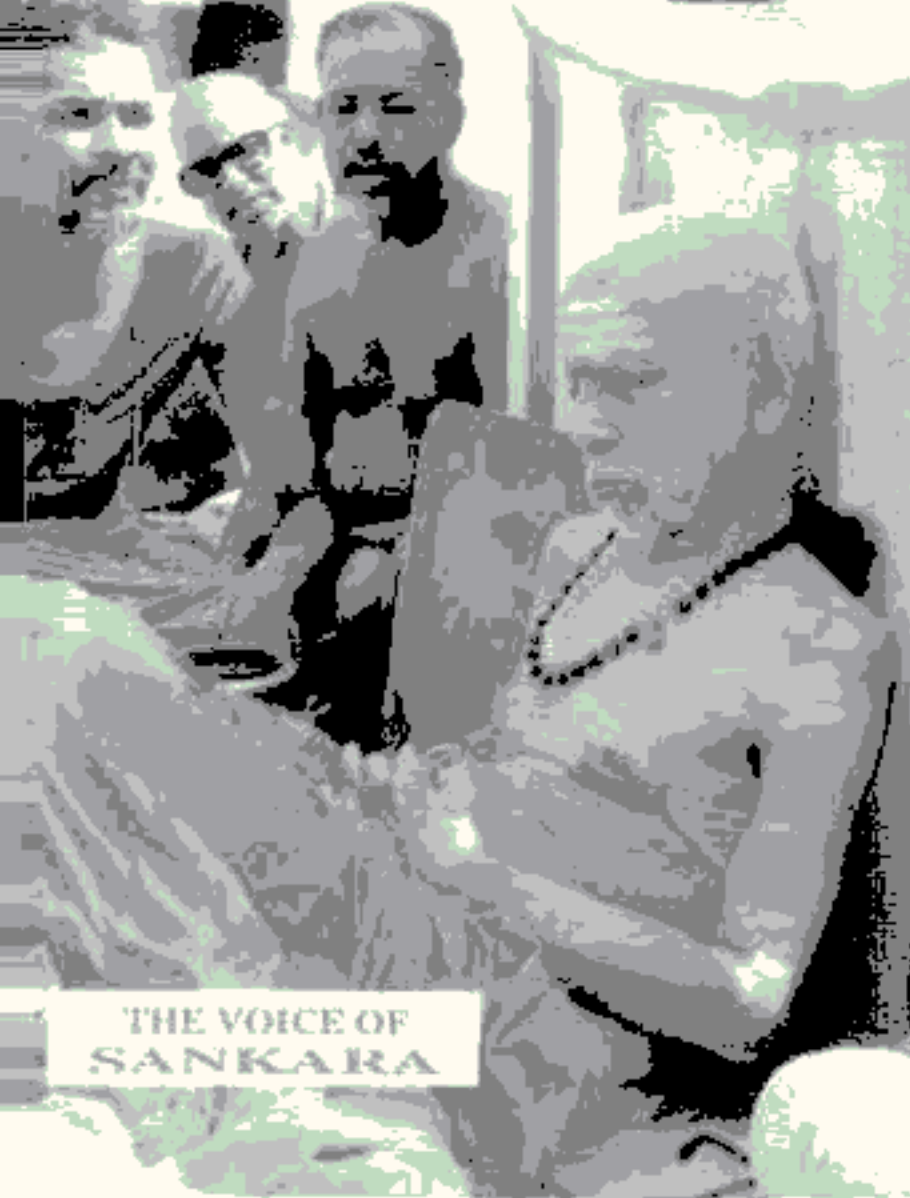
धन्या वयं तव नु सन्निधिमात्रकेण  
 धन्या वयं तव हि दर्शनसेवनेन ।  
 धन्या वयं सदुपदेशविधेस्तवैव  
 त्वद्विप्रयोगवशतस्तु वयं त्वधन्याः ॥

O! Guru! Blessed, indeed, are we by your mere presence before us. Blessed, indeed, are we by beholding you and serving you. Blessed, indeed, are we by your righteous discourses. But, unfortunate, indeed, are we because of your separation from us. 8

**HIS HOLINESS PARAMACHARYA in various moods.**

1900 10100 E. A. TALLEMANA, 22121 DE 211





THE VOICE OF  
SANKARA





## THE SAGE OF KĀNCĪ

(Continued from *VOS* XVIII, 1 — Jan. 1993)

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*T.M.P. Mahadevan*

After the *navarātrī*, the Ācārya delivered discourses every evening after the *pūjā*. Thousands of people listened to these in pin-drop silence. Seated on the *siṃhāsana*, the Ācārya would remain silent for some time. Then, slowly he would commence to speak. It was not mere speech; it was a message from the heart, each day. With homely examples, in an engaging manner, he would exhort the audience to lead a clean, simple, unselfish and godly life. The essentials of Hindu *dharma*, the obligatory duties, the supreme duty of being devoted to God, the harmony of the Hindu cults, the significance of the Hindu festivals and institutions, the cultivation of virtues, and the grandeur of Advaita, formed some of the themes of these discourses.<sup>7</sup> Those who were not able to listen to these speeches had the benefit of reading reports of them everyday in “The Hindu” and “The

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7. These have been published in three parts : 1. *Śrī Śaṅkarācārya Svāmigaḷ Aruliya Nonmoḷigaḷ*; 2. *Śrī Śaṅkara Vijayam*; 3. *Śrī Jagadguruvin Upadeśaṅgaḷ* (Śrī Kāmakoṭi Kośasthānam, Madras).



Swadesamitran.” The Ācārya’s teachings enabled the listeners and readers to gain the experience of inward elevation.

During his stay in the city, the Ācārya visited some of the educational institutions such as the Rama-krishna Mission Students’ Home, the P.S., Hindu, and Theological High Schools. He advised both teachers and students to be devoted to the sacred task of educating and learning respectively. Before leaving the city, he blessed some of the eminent scholars and devoted leaders by the award of titles: Mahāmahopādhyāya S. Kuppuswami Sastri received the title *Darśana-kalānidhi*, Sri K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar, *Dharma-rakshāmaṇi*, and Śrī A. Krishnaswami Aiyar, *Paropakāra-cintāmaṇi*.

Tiruvorriyūr near Madras, is a most sacred place. It has been for centuries the favoured resort of *mahātmās*. The temple of Tyāgeśa and Tripurasundarī is an ancient one. Ādi Śaṅkara installed the *Śrī-cakra* in this temple. Even to this day the *arcakas* that officiate at the shrine of Tripurasundarī are Nambūdiris. There is an image of Śaṅkara in the inner *prākāra* of the temple. Several of the heads of the Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha chose to live at least for some time at Tiruvorriyūr. In the Śaṅkara Maṭha there, the *adhiṣṭhānas* of two Ācāryas of the Kāmakoṭī Pīṭha are to be seen. Our Ācārya visited Tiruvorriyūr and made the holy place holier.

Leaving Madras, the Ācārya went to the South again in order to participate in the *Mahāmakham* festival at Kumbhakoṇam in March 1933. Since the *vijaya-yātrā* was still in progress, he did not enter the





**King Birendra of Nepal and Shri R. Venkataraman,  
Former President of India receiving the blessings of  
THEIR HOLINESSES**

King, Brenda of Nepal, and Bill P. ...  
Former President of India ...  
THEIR FOLLOWS







Maṭha at Kumbhakoṇam; the camp was set up in Tiruviḍaimarudūr. From there, he went to Kumbhakoṇam on the festival day and took the ceremonial bath in the Tank. About six lakhs of people thronged to Kumbhakoṇam that day to participate in the festival that comes once in twelve years. After the *Mahāmakham* the Ācārya continued to stay for some months at the Śaṅkara Maṭha in Tiruviḍaimarudūr. According to tradition, when Ādi Śaṅkara visited this holy place and had *darśana* of Śrī Mahāliṅga-svāmī in the temple, there appeared Śiva's form from the Liṅga, raised the right hand, declared three times that "Advaita alone is the truth", and disappeared. In 1933, our Ācārya celebrated the Śaṅkara Jayantī at Tiruviḍaimarudūr.

For a long time the Ācārya had had the intention of visiting Chidambaram. But, for over two hundred years no previous Ācārya had gone there, the reason being that the Dīkshitaras of the Temple of Śrī Naṭarāja would not let even the Ācāryas of the Śaṅkara Maṭha take the sacred ashes straight from the cup as was the custom in all other temples as a mark of respect shown to the Pīṭha. Many of the devotees of Chidambaram, however, wished very much that the Ācārya should visit Chidambaram; and the Ācārya too wanted to have Śrī Naṭarāja's *darśana*. Accepting the invitation of the devotees, he arrived at Chidambaram on May 18, 1933. A great reception was accorded to him by the inhabitants of Chidambaram including the Dīkshitaras. The devotees of the Ācārya were rather apprehensive of what might happen when the Ācārya visited the temple in regard to the offering of *vibhūti*. The Ācārya, however, was utterly

unconcerned. All that he wanted was to have Śrī Naṭarāja's *darśana* as early as possible. He resolved to go to the temple early in the morning; having asked one of his personal attendants to wait for him at the tank, he went there alone at 4 a.m., had his bath and *anuṣṭhāna*, and when the shrine was opened he entered and stood in the presence of Śrī Naṭarāja absorbed in contemplation. The Dīkshitar who was offering the morning worship was taken aback when he saw the Ācārya there. He sent word to the other Dīkshitar; and all of them came at once. They submitted to the Ācārya that they were planning for a ceremonial reception, and that they were pained at the fact that none of them were present in the temple to receive him that morning. The Ācārya consoled them saying that he had gone to the temple to have the early morning *darśana* of Śrī Naṭarāja, known as the *viśvarūpa-darśana*, and that he would be visiting the temple several times during his sojourn in Chidambaram. The Dīkshitar honoured the Ācārya in the same manner as he is honoured in the other temples. And, at the earnest request of the Dīkshitar, the Ācārya stayed in the temple for a few days and performed the Śrī Candramaulīsvara-pūjā in the thousand-pillared Maṅṭapa. The devotees had the unique experience of witnessing *pūjā* performed, at the same place, to two of the five *Sphaṭika-liṅgas* brought by Śaṅkara, according to tradition, from Kailāsa — the *Moksha-Liṅga* of Chidambaram and the *Yoga-Liṅga* of Śrī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha.

The 1933 *cāturmāsya* and *navarātrī* were observed at Tañjāvūr. A Śaṅkara Maṭha was established there mainly through the munificence of the Tañjāvūr



Junior Prince, Pratapa Simha Raja and Śrī T. R. Joshi. The preparation for the Ācārya's northward journey to Kāsī had by now been completed. A number of years earlier the Ācārya had commissioned a youth Śrī Anantakrishna Śarmā to go to Kāsī on foot. He had to walk the entire distance and send notes regarding the route and places *en route*. He should learn Hindi before he returned and could do the return journey by rail. Śrī Anantakrishna Śarmā carried out the instructions in the letter and in spirit. It took six months for him to reach Kāsī. Aged *sannyāsins* like Brahmānanda Sarasvatī and revered scholars including Mahāmahopādhyāya Ananda Saran and Pratap Sitaram Sastri, Agent of the Sringeri Maṭha, sent their letter of invitation to the Ācārya of the Kāmakoṭi Pītha on behalf of the citizens of Vārāṇasī; Mahāmahopādhyāya Chinnanaswāmi Sāstrī, Professor of Mīmāṃsā in the Banaras Hindu University, read out the letter of invitation in the Chidambaram camp of His Holiness.

A representative Committee had been formed at Vārāṇasī headed by His Highness the Mahārājā of Kāsī, with Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, the Mahāmahopādhyāyas, distinguished scholars, and other eminent men as members. The citizens of the Spiritual Capital of our country were eagerly looking forward to the visit of our Ācārya, who had already made the *saṅkalpa* for *kāśiyātrā*.

In conformity with the past practice observed by the previous Government, the Government of Madras issued a notification to the Governments of other States, and the native States to accord due honour and

all facilities to the Ācārya and his entourage during his journey to Kāśī.

The journey commenced in the second week of September 1933. The Ācārya proceeded northwards, covering about twenty miles each day. While camping at Kurnool, the Ācārya thought of going to Śrī-sailam which is regarded as the Southern Kailāsa. Here, the Lord Śiva appears as Mallikārjuna-liṅga, and Pārvatī as Bhramarāmbikā. The Liṅga is one of the twelve *Jyotir-Liṅgas* in the country. The holy place is counted among the eighteen Śakti-pīṭhas. The *sthala-vriksha* is the Arjuna tree (The two other sacred places which have the Arjuna as the *sthala-vriksha* are Tiruviḍaimarudūr, also known as Madhyārjuna in Tañjāvūr district, and Tiruppuḍaimarudūr, also called Puṭārjuna in Tirunelveli district). The *tirtha* at Śrī-saila is Pātāla-gaṅgā (the counterpart of Ākāśa-gaṅgā at Tirumalai). Ādi Śaṅkara has sung in praise of Śrī Mallikārjuna in his *Śivānanda-laharī*. Our Ācārya delights in reciting these verses — especially the 50th verse: 'I adore Mallikārjuna, the great Liṅga at Śrī-saila (the Arjuna tree entwined by jasmine creepers on the beautiful mountain) who is embraced by Pārvatī (which is auspicious), who dances wonderfully at dusk (which blooms profusely in the evening), who is established through Vedānta (whose flowers are placed on one's ears and head), who is pleasing with the loving Bhramarāmbikā by His side (which is grand with eager honeybees humming around), who shines in the repeated contemplations of pious people (which always wafts good scent), who wears serpents as ornaments (which embellishes those who seek enjoyment), who is worshipped by all the gods (which is the best of flower-trees), and who ex-



presses virtue (and which is well-known for its high quality)."<sup>8</sup>

Taking with him only a few attendants, the Ācārya went by boat up to Peddacheruvu, and from there walked the remaining distance of eleven miles uphill. He reached Śrī-saila on the 29th of January 1934, went to the temple, and stood before the Deities for a long time reciting verses from the *Śivānanda-laharī* and the *Saundarya-laharī*. After spending a few days at Śrī-saila, the Ācārya returned to Kurnool. During the difficult Śrī-saila journey through dense forests, the Chenchus, members of a wild hill-tribe, gave every assistance and protection to the visiting party. They considered the Ācārya's presence in their midst a great blessing.

Crossing the Tuṅgabhadrā at Kurnool, the Ācārya entered the Hyderabad State. He reached the Capital of the State on the 12th of February 1934. The people and the State officials including the Chief Minister vied with one another in paying their homage to the *Jagadguru*. At the command of the Nizam, the State Government undertook to meet one-day's expenses of the Maṭha. Every facility was provided for the conduct of the daily *pūjā*, etc. During the Ācārya's stay in Hyderabad a Sanātana-dharma-sabhā was held; it was attended by many prominent scholars. In his inaugural address to the Sabhā, the Ācārya emphasized the need for safeguarding the *Dharma*, reminded the Hindus of their duty to follow the rules of conduct, and asked the people to hold the *paṇḍitas* in high esteem.

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8. There is a pun on the words of this verse. The discription may be taken as applying to both the great Liṅga and the Arjuna tree.

As the journey from Hyderabad northwards would be a difficult one—through wild forests and uninhabited areas—a large part of the entourage consisting of carts, cattle, attendants and others, was left behind; this part rejoined the group that accompanied the Ācārya, after four years, in Andhra Pradesh. Leaving Secunderabad on the 24th of April 1934, the Ācārya reached a place called Soṇṇā on the banks of the Godāvarī on the 5th of May, and had his bath in the sacred river.

What was then known as the Central Provinces was the part of India which lay next in the Ācārya's itinerary. In May that year Śrī Śaṅkara Jayantī was celebrated at Bendelvādā on the banks of a tributary of the Godāvarī. After spending a few days at Nagpur in June, the Ācārya travelled through the country of the Vindhya mountains. It was an arduous journey in burning summer, through practically waterless tracts. The members of the party braved all difficulties with cheer, their sole aim being to serve the Master in the fulfilment of the resolve to complete the pilgrimage to Kāśī. After crossing the Vindhyas, the Ācārya reached Jabalpur on the Third of July 1934, and had his bath in the sacred river Narmadā. Journeying quickly thereafter, the Ācārya arrived at Prayāga (Allahabad) on the 23rd of July 1934. At the outskirts of the holy city, the prominent leaders of the place headed by Mahāmahopādhyāya Gaṅgānātha Jhā received the Ācārya with due ceremony. Thousands of people lined the route of the procession, uttering the words "Victory to the great Guru!" (Gurumahārāj-ji-ki Jai!).



On the 25th of July 1934, the Ācārya immersed the sacred sand he had brought from Rāmesvaram in the holy waters at Prayāga, the place of *Trivenī-saṅgama*, the confluence of the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā, and the subterranean Sarasvatī; and gathering the holy water in vessels, he had it sent to the places of pilgrimage in South India. By these significant ceremonial acts, the Ācārya made it known to our people how custom and tradition are expressive of the spiritual, as well as geographical, unity of India. On the 26th of July, the Ācārya commenced the *cāturmāsya* at Prayāga. For the *Vyāsa-pūjā* that day, many devotees assembled there from the different parts of the country. During this *cāturmāsya* period, a conference of Scholars was held in the immediate presence of the Ācārya. Several *paṇḍitas* of North India participated in the deliberations of the Conference, and received the Ācārya's blessings.

From Prayāga (Allahabad) to Kāsī—a distance of eighty miles—the Ācārya travelled by foot. He entered the most holy city of Kāsī on the 6th of October 1934, and was received by the citizens in their thousands, headed by the Mahārājā of Kāsī, Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, and others. About a lakh of people participated in the procession that day, many of them uttering the full-throated cries of victory, "Jagadguru-Mahārāj-jī-ki Jai!" Unprecedented crowds—a record in the history of the city—gathered to greet the visiting Ācārya. A glowing account of Kāsī's reception to the Ācārya was published in the Hindi newspaper "Pandit" dated the 8th of October 1934. Among other things, it said that the joy of the people knew no bounds when they beheld the beaming face of the great ascetic, and that the procession and

the mammoth meeting were unprecedented in magnificence and splendour in the history of the holy city within memory.

Kāśī, the city of the Lord Viṣvanātha and Śrī Viśālākshī, is considered to be one of the seven *moksha-puris*. The holy Gaṅgā flows here in a northward direction, and in the form of a crescent. The city is the resort of saints and scholars. Kāśī is also known as Vāraṇāsī, because it lies between two tributary rivers Vāraṇa and Asi. It was in this city near the Maṅikarṇikā Ghaṭṭa that Ādi Śaṅkara wrote his commentaries. It was Kāśī that proclaimed him as the Jagadguru. It was from there that he started on his *dig-vijaya*. And so, our Ācārya's visit to Kāśī was full of supreme significance. On the very day of his arrival there, the Ācārya had *darśana* of the Lord Viṣvanātha and Śrī Annapūrṇā. On the 7th of October, after a bath in the Gaṅgā at the Maṅikarṇikā Ghaṭṭa, he performed the Candramaulīśvarapūjā in the Lord's temple itself. From the 9th October onwards, the *navarātri* festival was celebrated. On the Vijayadaśamī day, the Ācārya visited the Dakṣiṇāmūrtī Maṭha on the other bank of the Gaṅgā. On the 9th of February 1935, in response to Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya's request the Ācārya paid a visit to the Hindu University. In his welcome address consisting of five verses in Samskrit, Pandit Malaviya referred to the fact that the Ācārya was adorning the Kāñcī-pīṭha established by Śrī Śaṅkara, and that his fame and grace born of his great wisdom, austerity, compassion, generosity, etc., had spread far and wide in this sacred land, and requested His Holiness to bless the assembled University community by



his words of advice. Addressing the teachers and students in felicitous Samskrit, the Ācārya pointed out that the end of education is to gain peace of mind, and that it is by acquiring wisdom that one realizes immortality. Commending the laudable efforts of Pandit Malaviya in founding the Hindu University, the Ācārya said that the main objective of *āstika* education should always be kept in view in planning the details regarding the courses of study, etc., and expressed the wish that the University should train and send out leaders of thought and action who would set an example in ideal living for the masses of the people to follow. In his concluding speech, Pandit Malaviya said that while from the legends regarding Ādi Śaṅkara they knew that the great Master visited Kāsī and saved the world through his wondrous works, they now had the rare experience of seeing with their own eyes in Kāsī the Ācārya who was an *avatāra* of Ādi Śaṅkara.

The Citizens of Kāsī organized a meeting in the Town Hall on the 9th of March 1935, to offer their reverential homage to the Ācārya. Addresses in different languages were presented to the Ācārya and several scholars spoke hailing his visit to Kāsī. The Ācārya said in his speech that he had undertaken the journey, following in the foot-steps of Ādi Śaṅkara, that he was pleased with the boundless enthusiasm of the people, and that his prayers to the Lord Visvanātha, Śrī Viśālākshī, and Śrī Annapūrṇā were that Their grace should make the entire world march on the road to goodness.

A conference of the eminent Paṇḍitas and Daṇḍi Sannyāsins of Kāsī was held on the 9th of March

1935. A similar conference of the Paṇḍitas of Bengal led by the grand old Mahāmahopādhyāya Kamalanayan Tarkaratna was held at Calcutta. Over one hundred and thirty scholars met. The conference sent as its representative Śrī Mahāmahopādhyāya Durgasaran to Vārāṇasī to invite His Holiness to visit Calcutta, and to convey its considered view acclaiming the high status and the greatness of the Kāmakoṭī pīṭha at Kāñcī.

Leaving Kāsī on the 18th of March 1935, the Ācārya reached Patna (Pāṭalīputra) on the 24th of April. The English Daily of the place, "The Searchlight," wrote in its issue dated the 28th of April: "Bihar accords a cordial and respectful welcome to Jagadguru Swami Sankaracharya of Kamakotipitam. Heir to a great and honoured tradition, Swamiji Maharaj is an object of veneration to Hindus all over India and his presence in our midst is a rare privilege ... We have no doubt Swamiji's message will leave an abiding impression on all who receive it, for what he has to say is the result of study and Tapas." The Ācārya blessed the people of Patna by observing the Śaṅkara Jayantī there; the citizens participated in the *pūjā*, meetings, etc., wholeheartedly.

The next important place of visit was Gayā. Arriving there on the 20th of May 1935, the Ācārya bathed in the Phalguni River, and had *darśana* of the Viṣṇu pāda. On the 25th of May, he went to Buddha Gayā and saw the Bodhi Tree and the Temple of the Buddha and also the tiny Śivaliṅga in a low flooring in front of the large idol of the Buddha, said to have been consecrated by Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavat-pāda. A great place of pilgrimage in Bihar is



Deogarh (Vaidyanātha Kshetra). On June 21st, the Ācārya visited Deogarh, went to the Temple and stood for a long time in meditation before the *Svayambhu-Liṅga* and Śrī Girijā-devī.

After brief halts *en route*, the Ācārya reached Calcutta on the 13th July 1935. The premier city accorded to him a rousing welcome. The Ācārya observed the *cāturmāsya* from the 17th of July at Kali Ghat. In an Address presented on behalf of the Committee of the Kali Temple, Darśanasāgar Śrī Gurupāda Śarmā said that after founding the Maṭhas in the various parts of our country, Ādi Śaṅkara established a Maṭha at Kāñcī, that the present Śaṅkarācārya whom they had the honour to receive was on a peripatetic tour of India following in the footsteps of Ādi Śaṅkara, and that through the grace of Śrī Paramesvara and Mahā Kālī the tour should be completed victoriously after planting firmly in the land righteousness and piety. In his reply, the Ācārya stated that he accepted the reverence shown as a representative of Ādi Śaṅkara, and blessed all the assembled people. On behalf of the Brāhmaṇasabha of Bengal, an address of welcome in Samskrit was presented on the 23rd of September. The address, which was read out by the eminent scholar Paṇḍita Pañcānana Tarkaratna, paid a glowing tribute to the Ācārya who by his grace was leading the people on the path of righteousness, referred to the sanctifying effect of the gracious visit to Calcutta, pointed out the significance of the title "Indra Sarasvati" which belongs to the Ācāryas of the Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha, and praised the manner in which His Holiness has performed the *vijaya-yātrā*, following the example of Ādi Śaṅkara.

*Navarātrī* or *Daśarā* (called *Pūjā* in Bengal) is the most important festival for the Bengalis. The Ācārya performed the *navarātrī pūjā* in September-October at Calcutta, delighting the hearts of thousands of devotees there. In the third week of October, the All-India tour was resumed. A steamer took the Ācārya and the entourage on the rivers, Dāmodar and Rūpnārāyaṇ which are tributaries to Ādigaṅgā. The Ācārya reached Midnapore in response to the earnest request of the people of that place on the 27th of October 1935. Midnapore at the time was the spearhead of the revolutionary nationalist movement. Many young men—especially college students—were behind prison-bars as detenus. And, the town was under curfew restrictions. The authorities, however, relaxed some of the restrictions to enable the people to receive the Ācārya and participate in the religious functions connected with the unique visit. Coming to know of the Ācārya's presence in Midnapore, many of the detenus desired to meet him. They obtained permission from the British officer in charge of the prison for this purpose; but the condition imposed was that they should return to the prison before 6 p.m. that day. When the detenus reached the Ācārya's camp late in the evening, the Ācārya had just then retired for brief rest after the day's *pūjā*. After waiting for some time, the young men started going back to the prison, disappointed. Meanwhile, the Ācārya came out and on learning about what had happened, sent for the detenus. They came again, prostrated before the Ācārya, and prayed to him for his blessings for the gaining of independence for the country and for the welfare and happiness of the people.



Kharagpur, where the well-known Railway Workshops are situated, and Tatanagar, the Iron and Steel-town, were the places which the Ācārya visited, after leaving Midnapore. Then followed the tour of the Native States in Bihar. While in Keonjar Garh, the Ācārya visited the temple dedicated to Dharaṇī Devī, The Image of the Goddess, according to the records of the State, was brought from Kāñcī by one Govind Bhanj Deva. In Mayurbhanj State, the Ācārya had *darśana* of the Mahā-Liṅga in the Vāraṇesvara Temple at the State Capital, Bāripadā (Mayurbhanj State). In Rāj Nilgiri State, at a place called Sujanāgaḍ, there is a temple of Śrī Chaṇḍī Devī, where the *vāhana* is the boar instead of the usual lion. The Ācārya visited the temple, and halted in that place for four days.

Entering the Cuttack district of Orissa, the Ācārya arrived at Jajpūr on the 4th of April 1936. Jajpūr is famous for its antiquity and sanctity. The place is referred to in the *Mahābhārata* as *Virājapīṭha*, one of the eighteen *Śakti-pīṭhas*. The river Vaitaraṇī flows in a north-ward direction here. There are twelve main temples and many smaller ones — each exemplifying in a marvellous manner the ancient skill in architecture. Because there resided at this place over one hundred Somayājins, about two centuries ago, it came to be called Jājpur (Yājīpuram). The Ācārya spent five days in this historic town, and then proceeded to Cuttack, the district headquarters. That year's Śaṅkara Jayantī was celebrated there. On the 3rd of May 1936, the Ācārya visited Sākshī-Gopāl, about which there is a legend current in Orissa. Two Brāhmaṇa pilgrims went to Kāśī from Kāñcī;



one of them was old and the other young. The old one promised to give his daughter in marriage to the young man on their return to Kāñcī; this promise was made in Mathurā at the shrine of Gopāla. The old man, however, did not keep his promise. The youth lodged a complaint with the king. Asked if there was any witness, he said that Gopāla was his witness, and went to Mathurā and brought the Lord with him. The stipulation was that the young man should not look back, as Gopāla was following him. On the outskirts of Kāñcī, the young man violated the stipulation. Gopāla transformed himself into an image at the very place. Later, the image was brought from there to Sākshī-Gopāl by a king of Purī.

After visiting Sākshī-Gopal, the Ācārya proceeded to Purī Jagannāth. At the end of a grand procession, a ceremonial reception was given to him at the Govardhana Maṭha. The other Advaita Maṭhas of Purī, viz. Śaṅkarānanda Maṭha, Śivatīrtha Maṭha, and Gopālatīrtha Maṭha, also associated themselves with this function, and co-operated in the arrangements connected with the Ācārya's visit. The Ācārya visited the temple of Jagannātha, and at the request of the scholars of the Mukti-maṅṭapa Sabhā, sat on the Pīṭha in the Maṅṭapa and blessed the assembly. In a speech delivered in Samskrit, the Ācārya said that he regarded the honour shown to him as belonging to Ādi Śaṅkara whose holy Feet are worshipped by all, and who made the false doctrines disappear from the land by establishing the supreme Truth. On the 6th of May 1936, the Ācārya bathed in the Mahodadhi (the Eastern Sea) at Purī; it was the auspicious

Pūrṇimā day. On the 9th, he inaugurated a Paṇḍita-sabhā; several elderly speakers recalled the visit of the Sixty-fifth Ācārya of Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha, Śrī Mahadevendra Sarasvatī, fifty years earlier, and said that they were having the unique privilege, again, of receiving in their midst the Sixty-eighth Ācārya.

The journey through the Chilka Lake area was an arduous one. High mountains, thick forests and sandy wastes had to be crossed. Walking at the rate of twenty-five miles a day, the Ācārya with the tour-party arrived at Chatrapūr on the 17th of May 1936; at this place which is on the sea-coast at the southern end of the Lake, there is a temple of Ādi Śaṅkara. The *cāturmāsya* which commenced on the 4th of July was observed at Berhampur. The *navarātrī* festival was celebrated in October at Vijayanagaram. At a largely attended meeting on the 31st of October, the Ācārya spoke on Advaita, explaining that there was no difference between Hari and Hara, that saints like Samartha Rāmadās gained *mukti* by following the path of *Hari-Hara-Advaita*, that those who adopt the path of knowledge attain *Jīva-Brahma-Advaita*, and that the goal is the same for both *upāsanā* and *jñāna*.

Simhāchalam is an ancient pilgrim centre in Andhra. On a picturesque hill is situated the ancient temple of Śrī Varāha Nṛsimha. On the 4th of November 1936, the Ācārya visited this shrine, and spent some time in meditation near the *Gaṅgadhārā Falls*. Three days later, the Ācārya reached Viśākha-patnam, the harbour-town. After touring in the district of Vizag, he journeyed through the Godāvarī area. The *cāturmāsya* in 1937 was observed in Palacole. The next important place of halt was



Rajahmundry on the banks of the Godāvarī. On the auspicious *Mahodaya* day on the 31st of January 1938, the Ācārya bathed in the sea at Kākināḍā.

The Andhra districts to receive the Ācārya next in sequence were Krishna, Guntur, and Nellore. At Vijayavāḍā, the Ācārya had his bath in the Krishna River. The 1938 *cāturmāsya* was observed in Guntur. During this period, the well-known Vyākaraṇa Paṇḍita Śrī Pulyam Umāmahhsvara Śāstri offered to the Ācārya a poetical composition in Samskrit, consisting of one hundred and seventy verses. From November 1938 to January 1939, the Ācārya was in Nellore. After visiting Veṅkaṭagiri, he went to Kālahasti and Tirupati again. In April 1939, Śrī Śaṅkara Jayantī was celebrated at Buggā. After having Śrī Subrahmaṇya's *darśana* on the Tiruttani hill, the Ācārya reached Kāñcī on the 2nd of May 1939.

From Kāñcī, the Ācārya proceeded to Chidambaram *en route* to Rāmesvaram. The sand collected at Rāmesvaram in September 1992, it will be recalled, was immersed in the holy waters at Triveṇi-Saṅgama (Allahabad) on the 25th of July 1934. The sacred water of the Gaṅgā that was gathered there was now to be offered to Śrī Rāmanātha as *abhisheka*. On the 10th of June 1939, after bathing in the Agni-tīrtha, the Ācārya went to the temple, and the *abhisheka* was performed duly. With this was concluded the Ācārya's Gaṅgā-yātrā. From the next day onwards, for over six months, the Ācārya observed silence. But the tour-schedule was continued, as also all the activities connected with the Maṭha. After re-visiting many places in Ramnad, Pudukkoṭṭai, Tiruchi, and

Tañjāvūr, the Ācārya returned to Kumbhakoṇam, from where he had started out on his *vijaya-yātrā* twentyone years earlier. The 29th of June 1939 was a red-letter day for the citizens of the town; there was no end to their joy in receiving the Ācārya again into their midst.

### 7. *Consolidation and Furtherance of Our Ancient Dharma*

The twentyone years' All-India tour had paved the way for taking concrete steps towards the consolidation and furtherance of our ancient *Dharma*. In the years that have followed, the Ācārya has given the lead in several directions for bringing together the different sections of Hindus, for the promotion of Vedic and Vedāntic studies, for the due observance of religious ceremonies, and rules of conduct as prescribed in the Śāstras, for deepening the spiritual life of the people, for rendering service to the sick and the disabled, and for universal welfare.

In 1939, the Ācārya had an organization of *Mudrādhikārīs* set up, with a view to serve the people in a comprehensive way. The *Mudrādhikārīs* are representatives of the Maṭha in the different places. Among their functions are: to enlist the co-operation of the people in keeping the temples in good repair, to see to it that temple-worship is performed in the proper order, to arrange for popular expositions of the *Purāṇas* on Ekādaśī days, to bring together all classes of people in such corporate activities as digging tanks and wells, dragging the temple-car on festival days, etc., and cattle-care. In order to implement this programme and ensure the best possible results, the Ācārya toured the villages in the Tanjāvūr district,



and other places several times, and convened periodical conferences of the *Mudrādhikārīs* to instruct them personally.

Under the guidance of the Ācārya, several of the old temples came to be renovated, and *kumbhābhishekams* were performed. The *kumbhābhishekam* for the temple of Śrī Baṅgāru Kāmākshī at Tañjāvūr, after renovation, was performed in June 1941. In Tiruvānaikkā (Jambukesvaram), the ancient temple of Pañcamukhesvara (Liṅga with five faces) was in ruins. When the Ācārya visited the place in 1943, he had the accumulated rubbish and wild trees that had grown there removed, marvelled at the uniqueness of the temple, arranged for renovation, and had the *kumbhābhishekam* performed in 1943. The renovation work of Śrī Kāmākshī Temple at Kāñcī had been in progress for some years. On the completion of the work, the *kumbhābhishekam* was performed on a grand scale on the 7th February 1944. In the temple itself that day, over fifty-thousand devotees had gathered to witness the ceremony. To mark the occasion, the *Mūka-pañcaśatī*, a moving hymn of devotion to the Devī, was published by the Kāmakoṭi Kośasthānam.

In order that the evils caused by the Second World War may not oppress the people and distort their minds, the Ācārya suggested to the temple-authorities, and managements of religious charities, in 1942, that the *Śrī-Rudra* and *Śrī-Vishnu-sahasranāma* be recited and *arcanas* performed in the temples. Accordingly, in many temples, this suggestion was carried out. In April 1942 at Pūvanūr near Mannārguḍi, an *Ati-Rudra-yāya* was performed, in the immediate presence of the Ācārya, for the purpose of

securing the welfare of all people. In September, the performance of the *yāga* was repeated at Nattam in Tiruchi district where that year's *cāturmāsya* was observed. While touring in this district, the Ācārya visited Śaṅkara-malai which is at a distance of thirty miles to the west of Tiruchi town; there is a Mahā-Liṅga established on the hill here, similar to the one of the Śaṅkarācārya hill in Kashmir. On the day of this visit — the 2nd of March 1943 — the Ācārya drew the attention of the people there to the striking similarity. The next *Ati-Rudra-homa* was performed in February 1949, at Tiruviḍaimarudūr. As on previous occasions, people in their thousands participated in the performance of this *yāga* and received the Ācārya's blessings. The *navarātri* also was performed at Tiruviḍaimarudūr. After that, the Ācārya stayed during October-November, 1949, at Kuttālam and went everyday to Māyūram for *Tulā-snānam*.

The Vedas constitute the basic scriptures of the Hindus. It is through the preservation of the Vedas that Hindu culture has been preserved in spite of the vicissitudes of history. In recent times, the cultivation of skill in Vedic recitation and Vedic studies have been neglected because of alien influence and conditions of modern life. In order to offset the forces making for deterioration the Ācārya asked devotees to start Veda-dharma-paripālanasabhā. Under the auspices of this Sabhā, which was started in 1944, annual conferences of Vedic scholars are held in the various parts of the country, examinations are conducted in Vedic literature and prizes are awarded to successful candidates, maintenance is provided for selected Vedic scholars, institutions for teaching the



Vedas are set up and run, and every possible assistance is given for the preservation of Vedic culture. In 1955 at Kāñcī where the Ācārya was staying at the time, a conference of eminent Vedic scholars was convened, and seventeen *paṇḍitas* in Ṛg, Yajus and Sāma Veda were selected from all over the country and honoured with presents and awards.

The consolidation of Advaita through his *bhāshyas* and numerous Vedāntic manuals, and through teaching by example and precept, was the greatest gift Ādi Śaṅkara conferred on the entire humanity. The central mission of any institution which owes its foundation to the great Teacher should be to spread the knowledge of Advaita. The Jagadgurus of Śrī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha have, in various ways, rendered invaluable service to the cause of Advaita. An important measure designed to promote studies in Advaita was taken when the Parama-guru of our present Ācārya inaugurated, in 1894, at Kumbhakonam, the Advaita Sabhā. Besides the annual conferences of Advaita scholars, award of studentships for the study of Advaita, arranging for courses in Advaita according to a syllabus, publication of works on Advaita, and of a journal "Brahma Vidyā", are among the activities of the Advaita Sabhā. The first conference was held in 1895 in the immediate presence of His Holiness the Sixty-sixth Ācārya; eminent scholars headed by Mahāmahopādhyāyā Śrī Rāju Śāstrī participated in the deliberations. Learned discussions and *vākyaṛtha* in Samskrit and popular lectures in Tamil form regular features of these conferences. Examinations are held in Advaita śāstra and prizes are awarded to successful candidates. Presents are given to them every year if they attend the conference. The Golden Jubilee of



the Sabhā was celebrated in February 1945, at the Kumbhakonam Maṭha in the presence of our Ācārya. He commended the work of the Sabhā, and explained the essentials of Advaita-Vedānta: The basic truth of Advaita is that the Self (Ātman) alone is real, and that all else is *mithyā*. Not understanding the implication of the words *mithyā* and *māyā*, the critics find fault with Advaita. Although ultimately the world of plurality is not real, it is not that it is not useful. Because the world of *māyā* is useful until the onset of wisdom, it is vested with empirical reality (*vyāvahārika satya*). It is in this world, and while living in it, that we have to strive for and gain release from bondage. The true *moksha* is the attainment of all-selfhood, in this very life, by the removal of *māyā* through knowledge. The followers of the different religions think that their particular mode of worship alone is the true mode. But we who follow Advaita believe that it is same God that is attained through any of the religious modes, and that devotion to God is essential for realizing the truth of Advaita. In conclusion, the Ācārya referred to the fact that teachers of Advaita have appeared at all times and in all the different parts of the country, and have left behind immortal works on Advaita: and he declared that it was our duty to study those works and gain the wisdom that is contained in them. To mark the occasion of the Golden Jubilee, a volume entitled "Advaita-akshara-mālikā", containing fifty-one essays on Advaita written in Samskrit by various scholars, was published. Two other books one in English and the other in Tamil, containing articles on Advaita were also published on the occasion.

Ten years later, in March 1956, the Diamond Jubilee of the Advaita Sabhā was celebrated at

Śivāsthānam near Kāñcī, where the Ācārya was staying at the time. Addressing the conference, the Ācārya observed that the aim of the Advaita Sabhā was to spread the light of the Self as revealed in the Upanishads, that those who adopted Advaita as their way of life should look upon all-beings as they would on themselves, and render some service or other every-day to the afflicted and the distressed, and that they should investigate the cause of dispute among religious cults and seek to eliminate it.

It is on the basis of Advaita that the conflicts among religious cults could be removed. With sympathy and understanding, it will not be difficult to realize that, it is the same God that is worshipped under different names and forms. The special contribution of Hinduism to the world's history of religions is the truth that there are as many modes of approach to Godhead as there are minds. And, yet, on account of misunderstanding and narrowness, the followers of the different cults of Hinduism have indulged in quarrels sometimes. In South India, exclusive claims have been advanced, for instance, on behalf of Vaishnavism and Śaivism. While the Āḷvārs and Nāyanmārs were universalistic in their outlook, their later followers introduced narrow distinctions and dogmatic partisanship. Our Ācārya wanted to give a concrete form to the movement for unity and co-ordination as between the Vaishnavas and the Śaivas in Tamil Nādu; and accordingly, the idea of Tiruppāvai — Tiruvembāvai — Shaḍaṅga — Conference was hit upon in 1950. Śrī Āṇḍāl's *Tiruppāvai* and Śrī Māṇikkavācakar's *Tiruvembāvai* are sung in the Vishṇu and Śiva temples respectively in the month of Mārgaḷi (Mārgasīrsha). The Ācārya had a conference of scholars in these



sacred texts organized at Tiruviḍaimarudūr in December 1950. It was a unique experience to listen to the Vaishnava and Śaiva scholars speak from the same platform. On the last day of the conference, the Ācārya spoke explaining how the goal of all the cults was the same, even as the end of all the rivers was the sea. He declared: "The redeeming Reality is one and the same. We may seek to reach God through several ways. But while marching on these diverse paths, we must not forget the fundamental unity of Godhead. If we are obsessed with diversity, there is no happiness." The Ācārya further showed how it is the state of plenary happiness and freedom from fear that is the significance of the images of the dancing Naṭarāja and the reclining Viṣṇu, and concluded saying that in realizing this truth the recitation and study of the *Tiruppāvai* and the *Tiruvembāvai* would be supremely helpful.

On another occasion speaking on the same theme, the Ācārya observed:

"Because two people worship different manifestations of One Supreme Being, there is no warrant for their quarrelling with each other. The Śiva-purāṇas extol Śiva and the Viṣṇu-purāṇas extol Viṣṇu. But a proper understanding will remove the misconception. The praise of a particular manifestation in a Purāṇa is to be understood in its context and not as absolute. How can there be a higher or lower, superior or inferior when in reality there are not two, but it is only One God manifesting differently? We must not forget that there are works which proclaim the oneness of Śiva and Viṣṇu, of Hara and Hari. It has been declared that the enemies of Śiva are the enemies of Viṣṇu too, and *vice versa*.



“Among us there is the concept of the *ishṭa-devatā*, of the particular form of God which one chooses for his worship and meditation. To get the One Supreme, you must start from some manifestations of It, and you choose it as your *ishṭa-devatā*. Another man may choose some other manifestation. As each progresses in his devotion and concentration, he will be led on to the One where the differences disappear. That has been the experience of great sages and saints. A true Śiva-bhakta has no quarrel with a true Viṣṇu-bhakta.

“In this connection it is good to remember two devotional hymns one in praise of Viṣṇu and the other in praise of Śiva sung by devotees of the different persuasions. They are the *Tiruppāvai* of Āṇḍāl and the *Tiruvembāvai* of Māṇikkavācakar. Both of them deal with awakening the sleeping devotees of God from their slumber before dawn. The language and the substance of the two hymns show a remarkable similarity bringing forcibly to our minds that, in the ultimate analysis, from the point of view of the devotee there need be no difference in respect of Śiva or Viṣṇu. A devotee of one manifestation is a devotee of every other manifestation. That is the way to establish devotional harmony. All the theistic schools of our religion have stemmed from the Vedic religion which proclaimed: “That which exists is One; the sages speak of it variously.” The substance is ultimately one; its shape and name may be as various as you please.”<sup>9</sup>

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9. Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī, *Aspects of Our Religion*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1966, pp. 42-44.







(1) महाभारत का अंश

महिमा अथवा श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(2) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(3) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(4) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(5) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(6) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(7) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(8) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(9) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(10) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(11) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा

(12) महाभारत का अंश

श्रीकृष्ण की कथा









The unity-movement has been gaining in popularity since its inception. Encouragement is given for children to learn to recite the two poems. In the month of Mārgaḷi, the two poems are broadcast from the temples. All India Radio has also been cooperating by arranging for the singing and exposition of these two moving hymns. In the different parts of Tamiḷ Nāḍu, Tiruppāvai-Tiruvembāvai meetings are held during the month. At the meeting held in Māyūram in front of Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti Shrine, on the 8th of December 1952, the Ācārya pointed out that recent research has brought to light the fact that in distant Thailand (Siam) the Tiruppāvai — Tiruvembāvai festival is even now celebrated, although the people there do not seem to be aware now, of its significance. The festival is being observed to propitiate Lord Viṣṇu and Śiva. The festival occurs there at the time of Ārdrā-darśana, and the swing-festival is also observed, as here, in connection with it. Here, in Tamiḷ Nāḍu, we do not call the Ārdrā by the name Tiruppāvai — Tiruvembāvai, but the Thais call it so. Only, the name occurs there in a slightly mutilated form — Triyembāvai-Tripāvai. Drawing a lesson from the Thai festival for our people, the Ācārya observed that we should revive and popularise the tradition which we have forgotten, and which the Thais still observe, having received it from us.

Religion is the basis of Hindu culture; spirituality is its backbone. What are considered elsewhere to be secular arts, such as sculpture and dancing, are here in India regarded as sacred. Hindu culture in all its aspects spread far and wide in the past. The evidences of its influence are even now to be found in widely



distant countries from Egypt in the West to Java and Bali in the East. Speaking about the pervasiveness of Hindu culture at a meeting at the Kumbhakoṇam Maṭha, in January 1947, the Ācārya dwelt on the need for the resuscitation of the traditional arts and crafts. These should be revived and popularized, bearing in mind that all of them serve the purpose of strengthening faith in God, faith in spiritual values. The temple is the centre of the ancient arts and crafts. Architecture, sculpture, and iconography go into the building of temples and the making of images. The directions for these arts are to be learnt from the Āgamas — Śaiva, Śākta, Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra. It is from the same sources that the *arcakas* have to know the correct procedures of temple-rituals and worship. Popular discourses on the Epics and Purāṇas used to be given mainly in the temples, and on occasions of temple-festivals. The folk-songs, dances, etc., have for their themes the religious stories as related in the Epics, etc. The Ācārya wanted to institute an organization which would work for the revival — leading to a renaissance of the ancient skills and arts relating to the temples. He had a *Sadas* arranged for, for the first time in 1962, during the *cāturmāsya* at Ilayāttaṅguḍi, the Akhila-Vyāsa-Bhārata-Āgama-Śilpasadas. Scholars and specialists in the various fields covered by the wide scope of the *Sadas* are invited to present papers and give expositions at the annual sessions of the conference. Besides the traditional *paṇḍitas* in the Āgamas and experts in Śilpa, some foreign scholars also take part in the *Sadas*. The *arcakas* are asked to discuss and settle points relating to rituals and worship. Arrangements are made for cultural programmes consisting of *puppet-show*, *shadow-play*, *ōṭṭam-tuḷḷal*,

*yaksha-gāna, burra-kathā, villup-pāṭṭu, kathaka, etc.* The *Sadas* has become now a permanent annual feature. It was held at Nārāyaṇapuram (Madurai) in 1963, at Kāñcī in 1964, at Madras in 1965, and at Kālahasti recently in 1966, where the Ācārya observed his sixtieth *cāturmāsya*.

One of the most significant achievements in the last few years is the bringing together of the Heads of the Dharma-Pīṭhas in South India in periodical conferences with a view to formulate and execute concerted measures for the safeguarding and furtherance of Hindu institutions and practices. This has become possible through the initiative and leadership of our Ācārya. In this endeavour, the Hindu Religious Endowments Board is offering its whole-hearted cooperation. The objectives of the conference of the Dharma-Pīṭhas are to strengthen the forces that make for *āstikya*, to project before the people the true image of Hindu-dharma, to work for the consolidation of the Hindu society, and to persuade its members to follow the path of virtue. Despite minor doctrinal differences, there is much that is common to the various Hindu denominations; and it is good that the Heads of the different *sampradāyas* have come together to remind the people constantly of their common heritage, fundamental duties, and the final goal of spiritual freedom.

The 'rice-gift' scheme formulated by the Ācārya is being implemented in several areas. According to this scheme, in each household, everyday before starting to cook rice, a handful of rice along with a paisa should be put into a pot kept for the purpose. Once a week the rice and coins should be collected by the



Association in each street or locality constituted under the scheme. The rice thus gathered should be handed over to the temple in the neighbourhood for being cooked and offered to the deity as *naivedya*. The cooked rice that has been consecrated should be sold in packets to the poor people of the place at a nominal charge of 10 paise per packet. The amounts collected thus and the gift-coins gathered from the charity-pots should be utilised towards meeting the cost of fire-wood and for paying the temple-cook for his services. This scheme will benefit those who give as well as those who receive. Those who give will have the satisfaction of having made their daily offering to God and their less-fortunate brethren; and those who receive will have their hunger satisfied and thoughts purified through partaking of the consecrated food.

One of the most distressing phenomena is the crude way in which Corporation or Municipal servants dispose of the dead bodies of Hindu destitutes. The Ācārya has repeatedly exhorted the well-to-do Hindus to do their duty for those who are unfortunate in life and unfortunate in death also. Arranging for the proper cremation or burial of the dead bodies of destitutes is of the greatest importance. By such service, as the Ācārya points out, one obtains the merit of performing the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice (*anātha-pretā-saṁskārāt aśvamedha-phalaṁ labhet*). This is one of the functions of the Hindu-mata Jīvātma-kaiṅkarya Saṅgha organised at the instance of the Ācārya. The members of the Saṅgha have to arrange for the last rites of the destitutes who die in hospitals or prisons or on the streets. Among the functions of the Saṅgha are: weekly visits to hospitals for distributing the Ācārya's *prasāda* (*vibhūti* and *kuṅkumam*) to patients



and making them think of God who is the Great Healer; offering the *Tulasī* leaves, Gaṅgā-water, etc. to those who are on the verge of death, and performing Śrī-Rāmanāma-japa staying by their side; going to the villages one day every week for explaining to the people the essentials of Hindu-dharma; and arranging for frequent talks on ethical living and spiritual disciplines for the benefit of those who are behind prison-bars.

Some of the other activities and institutions which owe their inception to the Ācārya, in recent times, are: the institution of "Weekly Worship" enabling the Hindu community of each place to visit the local temple collectively once a week and perform *bhajans*; the setting up of the Amara-bhāratī-parīkshā-samiti to arrange for the instruction in Samskrit for beginners, conducting periodical examinations, and awarding certificates and prizes; the starting of the Madras Samskrit Education Society at Nazarethpet near Madras for the promotion of studies in Samskrit; the publication of *Advaita-grantha-kośa* compiled by a *yati* of the Upanishad Brahmendra Maṭha, Kāñcī, who has been serving the Ācārya for a number of years in many a way; and the building of Ādi Śaṅkara Memorial Maṅṭapas at important places of pilgrimage, to which we shall refer later.

One of the major causes for our cultural decline was foreign domination. This cause was removed when our country gained political independence from British rule on the 15th of August 1947, under the leadership of Mahātmā Gāndhi. But political emancipation cannot be an end in itself; it must lead on to a new flowering of the Soul of India. In a message

issued on the day of Independence, the Ācārya said: "At this moment when our Bhārata Varsha has gained freedom, all the people of this ancient land should with one mind and heart pray to the Lord. We should pray to Him to vouchsafe to us increasing mental strength and the power for making spiritual progress. It is only by His Grace that we can preserve the freedom we have gained, and help all beings in the world to attain the ideal of true happiness... For a long time our country has striven for freedom; by the Grace of God, by the blessings of sages, and by the the unparalleled sacrifices of the people, freedom has come to us. Let us pray to the all-pervading God that He may shower His Grace so that our country will become prosperous, being freed from famine-conditions, and the people will live unitedly and amicably without any communal strife." The Ācārya also appealed that the people should cultivate the cardinal virtues, ridding themselves of passions and violent desires, and that they should by inward control and spiritual knowledge seek to realize the Self.

### 8. *At Kāñcī*

After touring intensively in the southern districts, especially in Tañjāvūr, visiting even the remote villages, in pursuance of the implementation of programmes for religious awakening among the people, the Ācārya arrived at Kāñcī on the 22nd of June 1953, and made a stay of three years there.

The Ācārya wanted to select a successor to the Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha, and train him for the great tasks and duties associated with the headship of the Pīṭha. The choice fell on a young disciple, Subrah-



manyam by name, the son of Śrī Mahādeva Aiyar who was an official of the Southern Railway at Tiruchi. From his early boyhood, Subrahmanyam had been receiving Vedic education at the Maṭha itself. He was about nineteen years of age in 1954. The Vedic rituals connected with initiating him into *sannyāsa* and imparting to him the *mahāvākya-upadeśa* by the Ācārya took place at Kāñcī from the 19th to the 22nd March 1954. Thousands of people had gathered in the holy city for witnessing the unique ceremony on the 22nd of March. The young disciple stood hip-deep in the Sarvatīrtha Tank as soon as the Ācārya had arrived there, and discarded the insignia and attire of the *pūrvāśrama*. Then he donned the *kāshāya* cloth and repaired to the shrine of Śrī Visveśvara where the Ācārya imparted to him *mahāvākya-upadeśa*. He was given the *yoga-pañṭam*, 'Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī'. From that day onwards he has been with the Ācārya as the First Disciple, receiving the necessary guidance in the performance of the many duties associated with the Pīṭha and its ever increasing sphere of spiritual service to the people.

On the 18th of May 1954, the Ācārya's *shasṭī-abda-pūrti* (sixty-first birth-day) was celebrated all over the country. In a message to the disciples who had gathered at Kāñcī that day, the Ācārya asked them to do their utmost to preserve the Vedic lore, to spread the spirit of devotion among the people, and to make endowments of lands, etc., for charitable purposes. To make the auspicious occasion Śrī Śaṅkara's *Brahma-sūtra-bhāshya* with notes was published by the Kāma-koṭi Kośasthānam.

(to be continued)

## PHILOSOPHICAL TRUTH\*

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*G. R. Malkani*

*Truth is the pre-eminent value*

It will be generally admitted that truth is the highest value for philosophy. It dominates the rest of our life. Our will and our feeling automatically conform to the state of our knowledge. If we feel and act in ignorance of the truth, we can never realize the highest value in those spheres of our experience. We shall be internally in bondage to certain false conceptions of reality, and thus act and feel wrongly. Hence the pre-eminence of right knowledge or *samyak-darśana* for the realization of all other values. We can only love truly when we know truly. To see the face of truth is to rejoice in the truth. Similarly, we can only act truly, when we know truly. Knowledge destroys all impure desires and blind passions. It makes us truly free in all that we do. Knowledge alone can make us free, — *jñānād-eva tu kaivalyam*. *Bhaktiyoga* and *Karma-yoga* are not mere alternatives to *jñāna-yoga*, but they are subsidiary to it and attain their

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\* A part of the presidential address in the Indian Philosophical Congress Session held at Patna in 1949. Courtesy, Indian Philosophical Congress.



highest consummation only after it. This explains the preoccupation of the typical Hindu philosopher with metaphysics to the almost complete exclusion of ethics. His metaphysics swallows up ethics. Ethics is like a post-script in a metaphysical enquiry.

The problem of truth arises because what we know is something to *us* only; it is not *in-itself*. Reality is something in itself, not relative to us. It is only such reality that is the proper subject-matter of knowledge. Phenomenal reality or reality that is relative to us is not, properly speaking, known at all. It is conceived, not known. We are in the habit of thinking that metaphysics seeks the knowledge of ultimate or super-sensible reality. This is only a faulty way of stating the true business of metaphysics, which is to achieve knowledge that is true to reality as it is in itself or knowledge that is *vastu-tantra*. When this is done, the problem of knowledge is solved, and there is no ultimate reality left that demands to be known.

Truth belongs to the theoretic consciousness. When we purge this consciousness of all volitional and affective elements, we ought to get at the truth. That these elements mixed up with cognition is proved by the epistemological theories of realism and idealism, which emphasise just those non-cognitive elements, and thus give us a warped account of knowledge. According to idealism, thought gives form to reality, — informs it and makes it knowable. It is the intelligible element in reality, the rest is all darkness and is not known at all. As a consequence of this view, knowledge is held to be an internal relation, so that knowing makes a difference to the object known.

This is clearly the case in the volitional type of experience, where the agent determines the act, the subject determines the object. This idealism confuses cognition with volition, and still boasts of a theory of knowledge and of truth.

Again, the idealists hold that reality is neither subject nor object, but a unity of both; it is subject-object. This is the character of all feeling. Feeling is just a unity of this sort. It is found in aesthetic appreciation. An object is not beautiful *in itself* and independently of all subjective appreciation; nor does this appreciation *create* beauty in the object. Here then the idealists confuse knowledge with feeling. They over-emphasise the non-cognitive elements, and thus misinterpret knowledge. They have a theory of knowledge based upon a perverted view of knowledge.

The realists shift the emphasis to the object, which is all to the good. But they commit other sins. The intrinsic unrelatedness of the object, assumed by them, is only a dogma. It is not known, and can never be proved. As Prof. K. C. Bhattacharyya says, "There is no knowledge of the circumstance of unrelatedness but only an extra-cognitive awareness of it." The object, according to the realists, is externally related to knowledge. If they were right, perceptual error should become impossible; for the object of perception *is* in-itself and independent of the perception of it by definition. "If this is a perception, then this is true." He will be a bold man who will subscribe to this dogma. The independence and the unrelatedness of the object therefore which is *not known*, but only believed, and believed falsely, is taken by the realists



to be an actual and accomplished fact of knowledge. The whole problem of knowledge would be solved, if we could show a simple case of perception where the ideal of knowledge was completely realised, *i.e.* where subjective interference was wholly absent and our awareness was determined by the object and nothing but the object after the well-known conception of the *tabula rasa*. We could then have, in perception, the absolute standard of truth, and the problem of truth would no longer be on our hands.

It might be argued that there are after all certain limitations inherent in our human situation. We cannot be omniscient. Nor can we jump out of our subjectivity and contact things as they are in themselves. We must therefore accept the appearances of things as they come to us with the humility appropriate to our embodied and finite existence. Any knowledge is true, and objectively true, till it is proved otherwise by further experience. We consider this an argument of despair. It cuts at the very root of a philosophical approach to the problem. We philosophise, in order to get rid of our subjectivity, not to accept it resignedly. If, as Plato says, we are confined within the cave of our subjectivity, and can only perceive the shadows on the walls of our mind, let us at least agree not to call the shadows "truth", till we have had an opportunity to look beyond the walls of our cave, and compare the shadows with the reality in all its wholeness and nakedness. It is the business of philosophy to strike down the walls of the cave, and to free the individual from his self-imposed shell of ignorance.

*True knowledge must be self-evidently true*

We contend that truth is not an extraneous character of knowledge, so that one piece of knowledge should require to be confirmed by another. Knowledge ought to be self-evidently true. It is different with falsehood. No piece of knowledge can reveal its own falsehood. Falsehood is only revealed by another piece of knowledge which corrects it. In other words, falsehood is revealed by truth, but truth itself is self-revealed. If truth itself required to be revealed by another piece of knowledge which was true, there would be the fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum*: "Each piece of knowledge is true, because another piece of knowledge which confirms it is true, and so on ad infinitum; and since there is no last term in this series which is true in itself, the truth of any particular piece of knowledge cannot be established." The coherence theory of truth, which involves mutual support of propositions in a systematic whole, is equally vicious for the same reason. Falsehoods can be no less coherent than truths. The fact is that truth does not require to be coherent with anything. It is *svataḥ-pramāṇa*, not *parataḥ-pramāṇa*. Any piece of knowledge therefore which is open to doubt, or which requires confirmation is, less than the truth, and is not the truth.

But what is the truth? Empirically, we can only get truth, which is *probable*, and which is true *now*. It is always open to cancellation. Empirically knowledge is mediated knowledge. It is knowledge through the idea. Such knowledge can never be *vastu-tantra*. It is *kalpita* or determined by the idea. The idea gives form to the object, creates the dualism of the subject



and the object, and makes any direct contact of our awareness with reality impossible. In other words, knowledge at the level of discursive thought cannot be true knowledge. There must be some other kind of knowledge which is qualitatively different from it. We may call it for convenience the level of rational intuition. For thought here ceases to idealise, and becomes intuitive. It no longer functions through the senses, and is not associated and mixed up with imagination. It is pure thought reflecting reality as such. It rejects every sensible and every ideal element in our contact with reality; and through this negation, it rises to the direct perception of a higher reality and reveals itself as self-evidently true. The object as such is negated; and truth shines as true for all time, or eternally true. It is knowledge *sub specie aeternitatis*. We know the world in God, and *as God*. *Sarvam idam Brahmaiva.*

### *Subjective Illusions*

Our condemnation of all knowledge of objective reality may appear exaggerated. Objects of external perception have been doubted by most philosophers, but not objects of internal perception or mental objects as they are called. When Descartes doubted everything, he did not doubt the fact of thinking. A conscious or mental fact cannot be doubted. But it appears to us that introspection is not a superior form of knowledge. Introspection involves mediation no less than any other form of supposed direct awareness, and as such its testimony is open to doubt. As a matter of fact, its object is never co-present with it. It only knows the recreated image of a past event which was never known in the past. The idealistic dictum that all knowledge is mediated knowledge has no exception

in the phenomenal sphere; and Kant showed that mental facts were no less phenomenal than facts of nature.

Mental facts may be no exception to the almost universal subjectivity of all our knowledge. But can they ever be *illusory* like objects of external perception? We think they can be equally illusory. *What is taken to be a case of knowledge for example may be only an illusion of knowledge.* Knowledge ought to be true knowledge. That is the only real knowledge there is. And yet we have doubted all so-called knowledge of objects. Is it anything more than an illusion of knowledge?

It may here be argued that knowledge itself can never be illusory. It is only an object that can be illusory. The snake-appearance may be illusory; but the fact that I *saw* the snake-appearance cannot be illusory. We think that this is a wrong analysis of our knowledge of the snake-appearance. If that appearance is illusory, my belief that I really *saw* it is a false belief. I never really saw it, I only *imagined* it. I confuse this imagination with seeing.

What is true about knowledge can be shown to be true about feeling and willing as well. There too we suffer from illusions. We may believe, and believe falsely, that we are really willing, *i.e.* willing freely, while in truth we are being determined by the dead weight of desire, etc. Our freedom may be illusory only. We conclude that scepticism has scope over all facts, whether subjective or objective, physical or mental. What it cannot touch is what cannot be known in the objective attitude, if anything is left for



knowledge after we have negated both the subjective and the objective which are necessarily correlated.

*Beyond the subject and the object*

All theories of truth given by European philosophers are based upon the idea that we know truth when we know anything empirically. They merely seek to justify what is taken to be true knowledge in one way or another, through science or common-sense, but which philosophical reflection condemns as subjective, open to doubt, and a species of untrue knowledge. How can we have a *theory* of truth, unless we first *know truth*? Knowledge of the truth is the primary object, a theory of truth is secondary and even superfluous.

The question which we should ask is, is anything left of reality when we have negated both the subjective and the objective? It appears to us now that negation is never absolute and that we cannot negate everything. If we merely negate, there is at least the negation. If we negate the negating, we are either setting up another level of un-negated reality, or we are in the region of pure non-being where negating has no meaning. This non-being which is the negation of all negation, cannot be a matter of knowledge or intuitive realization. Or if it is so conceived, as Mādhyamika Buddhists do, it can only be a *state of being* induced by withdrawing from both affirming and negating.

All negation is relative. When we negate, we take up a position which remains un-negated. If, for example, we negate an illusory appearance, we do not negate objectivity as such. The snake-appearance,

being realised as illusory, is negated. But we still believe that there is some object there, which illusorily appears. We may go a step forward. We may negate objectivity as such, because we realise that it is a product of an act of the mind, or that it is ideal in character, being defined by thought. This creation of the mind cannot be reality, and it cannot be a fit subject for knowledge. We negate it. But when we have negated all objectivity as such or the pure object, we have not negated the negating. The negating is the logical function of thought. We may negate even this as a subjective phenomenon, that is not literally known, but only ideally reconstructed. When however we have negated the logical function of thought, the 'I' that negates still stands. It is reality that nobody can deny or disown. Nobody meaningfully says, 'I am not', while he would be quite prepared to deny the existence of everything else. But we can go beyond the assertion of the 'I', and reduce it to a phenomenal object that can be negated. The only significant use of the word 'I' is in respect of the speaker, who distinguishes himself from the hearer, *i.e.* from 'you'. I am aware of myself only as I distinguish myself from the 'not-I'. The 'I' is a phenomenon, an object of a kind, although a most intimate object which passes as my very true ultimate Self. "It is always found either in identity with this Self, or it is not found at all and remains in abeyance."

Kant went as far as this, in his epistemological account. The empirical 'I' was not the reality itself, but only a phenomenon. The non-phenomenal and transcendental functions of reason might be the ultimate reality behind the 'I'. But they could not be



known in the ordinary sense. They were more logical than metaphysical. Hegel merely carried this argument to its logical conclusion. The logical forms were transformed into metaphysical entities, and metaphysics was reduced to logic. For Kant himself, there was no reality behind the empirical 'I'. The transcendent, permanent and substantial Self was only an idea of reason. This is, in our opinion, sheer dogmatism and lack of critical thinking. When I have become aware of the empirical ego, or *ahankāra*, and negated it as a phenomenon, have I not retreated further inwards? I have rejected the ego itself as external to my real Self, as a mere object that emerges and also disappears, and which I have wrongly confused with the true Self. When everything is negated, this Self is not negated. It is the limit of negation; for it is the supreme subject, which does not present itself to thought and is no phenomenon of any kind. It is beyond the duality of the subject and the object which it illumines or reveals. If there is a sense in which this could be said to be known, a reality which is by its very nature immediate and not open to the mediating activities of thought, there would be a level of knowledge which ought to reveal the self-evident truth to us.

*Can there be an unmediated awareness of reality?*

It is often argued that any kind of immediate awareness, even if it is possible, cannot be reliable or true. Our knowledge begins with judgement. What is prior to judgement is nothing to us. We can only go forward and develop the judgement. If the judgement is false, we should correct it; if it is one-sided, we should supplement it. The ideal of truth can only be a mediated

and discriminated awareness made immediate. This is only possible when the process of supplementation and transformation has reached its limit, and we know the whole. The mediating idea may then be found to be superfluous. Reality may be known as an all-inclusive Whole above the level of thought in a sort of Absolute Experience on the analogy of feeling. Alternatively, the idea itself becomes concrete, because it is the very Whole. To know reality as the Concrete Universal is to know it for what it is. All the content of reality is ideal content; and in the end, the idea as object is known as the reflection of the idea as subject. This idea of self-consciousness is the ideal of ultimate truth.

We cannot agree with this view. The idea does not require to be supplemented, it requires to be cancelled. No amount of ideal content can add up to reality, which is qualitatively distinct from the idea. The idea is ours and subjective, reality is in itself. Every idea, therefore, however inclusive, is just false. It requires to be negated. Supplementation is out of the question. If we add one erroneous view to another they will not cancel each other out. Errors can cohere and confirm each other as we often find witnesses do in law-suits. Besides, a mediated awareness can never be made immediate through supplementation. An infinity cannot be covered by any number of finite distances, and must always remain undiminished howsoever far we carry the process; even so, reality cannot be grasped in its concreteness through one-sided views or abstract ideas. Howsoever much we may claim to know in terms of the idea, an infinite distance still divides us from reality. It is the distance that divides reality in itself and the appearances of it manufactured



by the mind, or the distance, that divides truth from falsehood.

We reject this idealistic approach to the problem of truth. It is based upon our knowledge of nature which is necessarily mediated. But this is not the only knowledge that we have. There is another kind of direct knowledge we have, and it has very different implications. It is the intuition of 'I' or *aham-pratyaya*. This intuition is quite common-place; in fact so common-place, that no one seems to take it very seriously, and few appreciate its significance. This significance consists not in the correlativity of 'I' to 'this' — which is generally admitted, but in the absolute opposition of the two. This opposition is so clear-cut and unmistakable that it has been compared to the opposition of light and darkness (*tamaḥprakāśavat*). The two can never reside in the same locus. It is impossible therefore for anyone to assert consciously "this is I". No doubt, we often quite carelessly and recklessly identify ourselves with some kind of object such as the body and its characteristics, thought, etc. But a little reflection immediately corrects us. Anything that we can contemplate as object is just what we call the 'not-I'. Here then is a form of reality that never does present itself before our thought. If we want to know it, we can never know it in the objective attitude, or as mediated by the idea. It is essentially something immediate by its nature. It is because we seek to know it in the objective way, as something that can be presented to thought, that it appears to us a mythological entity. Many have sought to deny its existence or to explain it away. We however contend that it is the key to the higher form of knowledge which we

seek. "Know Thyself" may be found to be the very quintessence of philosophic wisdom. The Self may be the Truth that shall make us free.

*Truth consciousness in a higher level consciousness that is yet to be borne*

The intuition of the self or *aham-pratyaya* is only our starting point for the knowledge of the truth. There is no simple awareness of Truth. Truth is only born through a great effort of thought or rational midwifery. It is the result of discrimination, criticism and negation. Truth is a *value*. It is not a *fact*. A fact is something crude. Any believed content would be a fact. We know facts without being conscious of it. We can never know Truth without being conscious of the same. Truth is the product of reflective thinking or a crisis in theoretic life. It involves, therefore, a new awakening, or a new birth, the birth of a self-conscious awareness of Truth as such. It is the end of our philosophical adventure, not its beginning. The common intuition of the self, on which we have laid so much emphasis, merely provides a new dimension for our reason. Reason, ordinarily, is concerned with the study of the object. It has scope in physical, biological, mental and social sciences. It has no vital question about the subject as such. It treats the subject, at best, as some kind of ultimate fact to be accepted, but which has no content that we might seek to know. It is taken as a kind of attenuated object, too thin, too subtle, and too evasive for explicit awareness. The least said about it, the better.

This evaluation of our ordinary empirical thinking has got to be reversed. We have become reflectively aware that all science, with its subjective



approach, can never give us the truth in a literal sense; and anything less than literal and pure truth is ultimately a form of error. The intuition of 'I' opens a whole new realm of the spirit of us.

*Ādhyātmika vidyā* has its own different problems and its own methods of tackling them. It does not seek to build up or imagine a *theory* of truth. All theories are mere conceptual structures which have a use for science, but no use for philosophy. Philosophy seeks to know the truth itself. It is an effort not as *explaining*, which is always misguided, but at seeing the truth. This, it does, not through any abstract argument, but through the inwardisation and the deepening of our experience, so that what everybody knows becomes more significant and more luminous.

If philosophical thinking aims at a higher kind of knowledge of a species of seeing, it is more akin to what may be called transcendental or rational psychology than to transcendental logic; for we can only see what is there already by a shift of attention, we cannot see what thought has imported into reality. There are various species of seeing but the seeing which philosophy aims at is different from them all and in a class by itself. We see the sensible object. But this seeing is mixed up at all stages with interpretative elements, so that we cannot say what is the object in itself and what is contributed by the subject. In fact, there is no such thing as object in itself. The poet and the mystic are also said to see. But they only see what they have visualised vividly in their imagination. They have high-strung temperaments. The scientist sees but he sees only in a metaphorical sense. It is a flash of imagination in which a mere mental suggestion or hypothesis clears up the mist of thought.

The philosopher has no use for poetic imagination. He subordinates imagination to the pure light of reason, in order to see what is. Imagination gives us a sense of freedom. It is at the basis of most of our joys. But it is no instrument of truth in its nakedness. It has its use in philosophy as in all theoretic activities. It accentuates certain issues, visualises possibilities, invests problems with a new meaning and importance, and it provides the over-tones of joyful appreciation and wonder when the truth is seen. But as a *method* of philosophical knowledge, it must be rigidly suppressed and kept under control. The philosopher sees the truth, because the truth has caught him, enslaved him. He cannot but see it. He has no option. His seeing is pure. It imports nothing into what is seen, but gets everything from it. There is no other seeing like it. It is seeing the truth face to face. The philosopher and the seer are not two persons, although a line can be drawn between them in a loose way: The true philosopher must be a seer, although a seer may not be a philosopher. The philosopher-seer is in fact the greatest among the seers. His reason is disciplined to the highest standard, and it accepts nothing which is not absolutely true. The seeing is not divorced from reason, but it takes reason with itself, and transforms it into a higher form of intuition, the so-called intellectual intuition of God.

### *The place of sādhanā*

It is sometimes argued that spiritual discipline of *sādhanā* is something more precious than philosophical knowledge. It supervenes after the business of philosophy is over, and it carries the philosopher a step further in the realization of the truth. I cannot agree



with this view. There are certain spiritual qualifications no doubt (*sādhana-catustaya*) which are presupposed by a serious philosophical enquiry, or what may be called *Brahma-jijñāsā*. But they are subsidiary to the enquiry itself, and by themselves they carry us nowhere. There is another kind of discipline which comes after the truth is known, and which is called *nididhyāsana*. This too is in a sense a subsidiary affair. It is merely the humbler effort of the mind to keep in fact what has been attained through philosophic effort, to persist in the philosophic vision, and to transform it into a living and all-embracing feeling. It is a form of drilling of thought to stick to the game right to the end. Truth does not *reveal itself* through this discipline. It is merely made to *rule over* the mind by reforming and transforming the rebellious tendencies and the false ways of thought. It is because of this high conception of philosophy, as giving us the saving knowledge, that it is regarded in India as the apex of all other forms of knowledge. It is not an empty intellectual game to please the curious, or to provide tricky arguments for the mere logician, or to dazzle the simple-minded with learned discourses on high and abstract themes. It is the instrument for the highest kind of enlightenment for the more serious-minded and the more reflective species of mankind, that seek in truth the satisfaction of their highest ideal of theoretical and practical life. It is that truth, which, when realized, leaves no other value unachieved, or yet to be achieved. We can close the chapter of our life with the happy ending that our very will, the source of all our restless activities, is rendered sub-

missive and peaceful, because there is nothing left that it can aspire after. Verily, True is the *summum bonum*; and if we, as philosophers, are true to our profession, there lies our goal.

My stand through-out has been that of Advaita Vedānta of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya; and if any of my arguments are found similar to those of Professor K. C. Bhattacharyya, it may be taken for granted that I am to that extent indebted to him.



## ASPECTS OF ADVAITA \*

### I. PURE ADVAITA: THE LOGICAL AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

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*P. N. Srinivasachari*

#### *Section I. Ajātavāda (Theory of Non-Origination)*

The dominant motive of Advaita as *Adhyātma-vidyā* or *Brahmavidyā* is the metaphysical enquiry into the nature of the thinking self as contrasted with that of the visible and tangible universe. Advaita turns the vision inward and its method is essentially subjective and psychological and not objective. *Ātmā* is the inmost reality and it is veiled by *avidyā* and when the veil of *avidyā* is removed, *ātmā* shines by itself. *Avidyā* is the lapse from *vidyā* but really there is no such lapse or self-loss, as what is is, and what is not is not. Such *ātma-vidyā* is the acme of knowledge and all other *vidyās* are *aparavidyās* or lower knowledge. According to the traditionalist, *Śāstra* is the only source for the realisation of *ātman* as it alone has specialised in spirituality and as the other *pramāṇas*, *pratyakṣa*, and *anumāna*, deal only with perceptual and conceptual

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\* Courtesy: *Sri Krishna Library Series-8*, Sri Krishna Library, Mylapore, Madras, 1949.

knowledge. *Sāstra* is more than the word of the *āpta* or reliable person, and is impersonal, eternal and infallible and by literally, following its authority, *ātman* can be realised as *ekam eva advitīyam*, one without a second.

This method of the traditionalist as indicated already betrays a gradual lapse from pure philosophy to theology and is the way to dogmatism and bigotry. Theology is a deductive development of scriptural texts and it often degenerates into blind faith and worship of words. When there is a conflict of texts, they are often twisted by the commentators to suit their own preconceived ideas. By making reason subservient to authority, the theologian ceases to think for himself and slavishly accepts the conclusions of others who are equally blind, and both the teacher and the taught fall into the ditch. The Advaitic rationalist, therefore, rejects theology and blind belief and insists on the need for independent enquiry as the foundation for pure philosophy. He accepts *sāstra* only in so far as it does not contradict reason or *buddhi*. The Advaitin relies on the natural light of reason, analyses every kind of experience and seeks to find out the inner self that is at the back of experience. Even the word of God is to be rejected if it does not fit into reason. In his "System of Vedānta," Paul Deussen thinks that Śaṅkara's exposition of Advaita is mixed up with theology and therefore seeks to bring out the pure or esoteric philosophy of Advaita. Some modern Advaitins who are deeply influenced by the dialectic method of Nāgārjuna and Bradley discern close affinity between the teachings of the latter and Advaita and reject the traditional method. They are convinced that, in this age of science which is a protest of



reason against superstition. Vedānta should be freed from theological prejudices and presented in a disinterested and scientific way. Advaita alone can be thus interpreted and presented as a philosophy based on pure reason, and Gauḍapāda may be regarded as the chief exponent of this philosophy. Gauḍapāda was the *guru* of Govinda, the *guru* of Śaṅkara (788-820 A.D.). His *Kārikā* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, the basic text of Advaita, is primarily a critique of Pure Reason employed by the metaphysically-minded monist to prove that non-duality or *turīya* consciousness is alone real and that duality is unreal, fictitious and non-existent. The *Upaniṣad* or the *āgama* is only an account of the Advaitic experience of the *ṛṣis* and not a theological authority. By a criticism of the concept of causality and the three states of consciousness, the *Kārikā* seeks to bring out the illusoriness of the world and the reality of the non-dual absolute. The non-Advaitic theories are declared to be self-contradictory and to cancel one another. Advaita then stands self certified.

The *Kārikā* is divided into four chapters as already stated—(1) *Āgama* or scripture, (2) *Vaitathya* or falsity, (3) *Advaita* or pure consciousness, and (4) *Alātaśānti*. The first chapter explains the three states of consciousness with their experiences, namely, *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājñā* and the fourth state of *turīya* or Advaita. The second chapter points out that the world and its manyness are non-existent and that ideas of difference and non-difference are also imaginary and non-existent. The third affirms the nature of Advaita as the dissolution of duality and distinction. *Alātaśānti* (or the extinction of burning charcoal)

states the nature of pure consciousness divested of its appearances. The four chapters deal with the same truth that non-duality is real and duality is illusory like a magical elephant (*māyāhastī*). In pure Advaita there is no dissolution, no beginning, no bondage and no *mukti*.<sup>1</sup>

Though Advaita is rationalistic and is reached by speculation, it insists on certain disciplines and *sādhanas* as the essential requisites for realising the non-dual consciousness. They consist of the triple conditions of discrimination (*viveka*), detachment (*vairāgya*) and moral discipline based on self-control, and these conditions are all-comprehensive because they include the purification of thought, feeling and will. By deep philosophic thinking, the *mumukṣu* or seeker after truth knows that the non-dual Brahman is real and the pluralistic world, false. What is rejected logically as false is also renounced as a thing that has only a perishing value. Desiring a thing and finding it unpleasant go together and all desires for objects here and the world yonder are therefore to be abandoned. Thus *viveka* leads to *vairāgya*. The ethical requisite is philosophy applied to practical life and it consists in the control of the senses and the mind, coupled with indifference to the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain. The third requisite consists of six virtues, *sama*, *dama*, *uparati*, *titikṣā*, *samādhāna* and *śraddhā* (tranquillity, self-restraint, renunciation, patience, concentration of the mind and faith).

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1. Gauḍapāda, however, accepts common sense where he speaks of *namaskāra* to Brahman according to *balam* or strength. — "Compromises in the History of Advaitic Thought", page 23.



Thus equipped with these *sādhanas*, the *mumukṣu* seeks to regain his Advaitic consciousness by awakening from his age-long dualistic slumber. *Mukti* is not a new state of freedom that is won by effort, but is self-realised. It is *Brahmajñāna* or *jñāna* that is Brahman; *jñāna* is not an attribute of Brahman but is Brahman.

*Ajātavāda* states that being *is*, and non-being *is not*. Dual consciousness is *avidyā* and non-existent, and non-duality consciousness alone is real. What is non-existent at the beginning and at the end must be non-existent also in the middle. The world of *nāmarūpa* (pluralistic universe) is non-existent because it does not exist at the beginning and at the end. The unreal cannot be produced by the real and the real cannot be produced by the unreal. Whatever can be abstracted from reality does not belong to reality. This theory may be called acosmic. But it is not nihilistic because it refers to the fullness of being as opposed to non-being due to ignorance. The method of *Ajātavāda* is purely negative and it consists in the examination of the causal category and its elimination or rejection. The theory of causality is erroneously said to be innate and universal and is called the basis of all scientific and philosophic knowledge. But this view is untenable because it can be shown by closer analysis to be self-discrepant, illusory and non-existent. It bristles with fallacies and antinomies and has no validity or value at all. The relation between cause and effect can be either external or internal or both. It cannot be external as externality implies absence of relationship. It cannot be internal as internality excludes difference. It cannot be both as it would be self-contradictory. The effect cannot be produced out of nothing as creation out of nothing is impossible. There is no transi-

tion from non-being to being or from being to non-being. If the cause is prior to the effect, then it can be continuous with it and be contained in it. The two cannot be simultaneous as they are independent. The effect is neither continuous with the cause nor different from it. To say that the cause is real and the effect not real destroys the whole theory of causality.

The theories of creation based on the law of causation are self-contradictory and they cancel one another. The negative logic employed by *Ajātavāda* which lays bare the self-stultifying character of causality is clearly brought out in its devastating criticism of the cosmological accounts of the origin of the world.<sup>1</sup> The Advaitin as a pure monist abandons the creationistic view as the very idea of causality arises from *avidyā* which is non-existent like the son of a barren woman. The theories known as *ārambhavāda*, *pariṇā-mavāda* and even *vivartavāda* are futile and prove nothing. Creation out of nothing is impossible as something cannot come out of nothing. The atomistic pluralism of the Vaiśeṣika fails to bring out the unity of the universe and its spiritual meaning and value. The Sāṃkhya view of *prakṛti* as the cause of the world makes evolution mechanical and purposeless and the dualism it creates between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* is opposed to the truth of non-dualism. The Nyāya view of *Īśvara* as the first cause of the world makes Him extra-cosmic. The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā doctrine of *apūrva* makes a mechanical approach to the problem of creation and

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1. According to the gloss on the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, Chap. IV, 42 the causal category is employed for the benefit of persons of gross intellect.



should be replaced by Uttara Mīmāṃsā or Vedānta. Vedānta marks the transition from the enquiry into *dharma* to the enquiry into Brahman.

Even the Vedāntic views are equally untenable as they fail to account for the relation between *Īśvara* and the world. The theistic view makes the creator different from the creature and ignores the unity of the two. But if *Īśvara* is the immanent ground of the universe, He is in it and of it and suffers from its imperfections. The *līlā* theory that the world process is a sport to *Īśvara* makes it a show which precludes moral earnestness so essential to spiritual effort. To avoid all these objections, the non-dualists say that creation is *vivarta* (illusory) and not *pariṇāma* (evolutionary), but even their views carry no conviction. Some say that Brahman is changeless, that the world evolves from *māyā* and that it is thus entangled in duality and dualism. Others attribute the world process to Brahman and *māyā* and have to face the self-contradiction between the two. Still others believe that the objective world of space-time-cause evolves from the *māyā*-ridden *Īśvara* and the subjective world of the mind-body from the *avidyā*-ridden *jīva*. The problem of creation thus becomes more confused, when it is mixed up with the question of the origin of ignorance and evil. The existence of a merciful God cannot be reconciled with the fact of evil and unmerited suffering. To say that evil is due to *avidyā* and that *avidyā* is inexplicable is a confession of the futility of philosophic thinking. *Ajātavāda* therefore boldly says that there is no *mūlāvidyā* or *māyā*. It denies creation, bondage and *mukti*. Advaita is self-certified knowledge and

therefore it is not a problem that demands solution. Pure consciousness shines by itself and seeks no outside light to illumine it.

Causality is traceable to *māyā-avidyā*, but *māyā-avidyā* is no positive entity. It is neither thinkable nor unthinkable but is non-existent. It is not the appearance of reality but is rejected as naught. It is non-existent like the son of a barren woman or the square-circle. Brahman is pure consciousness and self-explanatory. It is Being as such and has no becoming. It is the substance that exists by itself without any content and the so-called attributes have no substantiality or reality. Brahman as cause *is* and the effected Brahman *is not*. The final proof of Advaita is Advaitic experience. It cannot be grasped as a theory or a view nor glimpsed as a vision. It is not the state of mere being like a block of stone nor blank. It transcends relational thought and even the distinction between the absolute and the relative does not exist. When true knowledge thus springs up, even *Veda* ceases to be valid and ultimately, there is neither *Veda* nor *vāda*. Like an imaginary city in the sky, the world of *cit* and *acit* is non-existent. Brahman alone is real and *jagat* is false or non-existent; Brahman shines as eternal, self-effulgent consciousness and is bliss itself beyond the distinction of the experient and the experience, as revealed in *turiya* or pure consciousness beyond the states of waking, dreams and dreamless sleep.

“*Turiya* is not that which is conscious of the subjective, nor that which is conscious of the objective, nor that which is conscious of both. It is not that which is simple consciousness nor that which is a mass of sentience, nor that which is all darkness. It is unseen,



transcendent, incomprehensible, uninferable, unthink-able, indescribable. It is the sole essence of the consciousness of the self, the negation of all illusion, the ever peaceful, all-bliss, without duality.”<sup>1</sup> *Turiya* is *aja* (without any origin or end), *advaita*, *prapañcōpaśama* (acosmic), *sānta* (the peace that passeth understanding). It transcends even the distinction between *jāti* and *ajāti*. *Dvaitajñāna* is *māyā-mātra* (non-existent), Advaita is self-realised.

Pure consciousness is neither created, nor modified and transformed, nor is it even obscured by *avidyā*. Being does not come from non-being, non-being does not come from being. Being does not come from being and non-being does not come from non-being. In other words, what is, is and what is not, is not. The world is *vaitathya asat* or non-existent like the sky-flower and illusory elephant and *ātman* is beyond the logical distinctions of being and non-being. There is neither beginning nor end, neither bondage nor *mukti*, neither one nor many. The *Tejobindūpaniṣad* says: “The world may be said to exist if one could be frightened by the words of the son of a barren woman; if an elephant could be killed by the horns of a hare; if one’s thirst could be quenched by the drinking of the mirage.”<sup>2</sup> “The wild Airāvata (Indra’s elephant) is tied up in a hole at the corner of a mustard seed. A single mosquito fights with a herd of lions within the cavity of an atom, The young one of a bee has swallowed Mount Meru lying on the seed of a lotus. Know, O Nidagha, that this *jagat* or world is as illusory as these.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. *Māṇḍ. Up.*, Chap. I, 7.

2. *Tejobindūpaniṣad*.

3. *Mahōpaniṣad*.

## Section II. Subject Philosophy or Singularism

The identity consciousness of *ajāti* affirms the self-existence of non-duality and the non-existence of duality. This view may be called *Pūrnaism* as contrasted with acosmism and nihilism. The only definition of Advaita is an "experience-definition" or *anubhava* which transcends thought and its theoretic activity. But the Advaitin as such is also a philosopher who is obliged to explain the method by which we can go from duality to non-duality. He is engaged in an enquiry into the nature of *ātman* or *ātmavicāra* by a rational demonstration of the truth of Advaita and the falsity of *Dvaitajñāna* or dualistic thought and it is an important variety of Pure Advaita. The keyword of *ātma śāstra* (*mahāvākya*) is furnished by the *Upaniṣad*, namely, "*Prajñānam* or Pure Consciousness is Brahman,"<sup>1</sup> and it is the 'I' thought in which thought is analysed away and the 'I' shines by itself for ever. *Prajñāna* transcends the outer physical world of space and time and the inner psychic world of 'I' and 'mine' which are illusory. It is changeless, eternal and infinite. The criterion of Pure Advaita is the principle of non-contradiction or non-sublation. Whatever cannot be abstracted or sublated is non-duality and whatever can be abstracted or sublated is duality. As Bradley says, "If you predicate what is different, you ascribe to the subject what is not and if you ascribe what is non-different, you say nothing at all." There is no thought without difference and duality, and with difference there is no reality. *Ātmavidyā* presupposes the distinction between *ātmā* and *anātmā* or the self and the non-self and the possibility of transcending

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1. *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, VI. i. 7.



this distinction by the removal of *avidyā* or the innate obscuration of Truth. The true 'I' is the one without a second and the false 'I' is illusory like the snake idea superposed on the rope. True knowledge arises when the false is annulled and not absorbed or transmuted; the non-self is stultified and non-existent. In following this method, the Advaitic thinker proceeds from the objective to the subjective, from the gross to the subtle and from dualistic consciousness which is thinking with something to non-duality or pure thought. The cosmological problem with its theistic solution has no attraction for him and he prefers the psychological approach to that of cosmology. He recognises only two kinds of reality or truth, namely, *prātibhāsika satya* like the dream world and *pāramārthika satya* or absolute truth, and dispenses with *vyāvahārika satya* or the phenomenal reality of the space-time world. The *ātman*, the inner self, is identical with Brahman, the Cosmic Self. Whether the philosopher enquires into the *ātman* or seeks Brahman, the result is the same, owing to their identity; but the former method has a fascination to the pure Advaitin as it offers full and free scope for rational study. He prefers the way of Bradleyan speculation to theological faith.

The enquiry into the nature of the *ātman*, *adhyātmavidyā*, is not a mere intellectual speculation, but a process of introversion based on *viveka* and *vairāgya*. The Advaitic philosopher discriminates between *ātmā* and *anātmā*, dissociates himself from the non-self by renouncing the outward-looking standpoint and realises his eternal and infinite nature. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyakoṇiṣad*, Yājñavalkya initiates his wife, Maitreyī, into the nature of *ātman* in the im-

mortal words, "Verily a husband is not dear that you may love the husband, but he is dear because of the love of the self. The objects of enjoyment in the world like husband, wife, riches and so on are dear on account of the self. Verily the *ātman* is to be seen, to be reflected on and realised."<sup>1</sup> By *śravaṇa*, the vision is turned inward and the self is analysed introspectively. *Manana* is the process of arriving at clear and distinct knowledge and *nīdīdhyāsana* is the vanishing of all the *vāsanās* or cessation of *citta* activity. Owing to the false limiting adjuncts of *avidyā*, namely the body, *manas* and egoity, the one eternal and infinite Self imagines itself to be the subject and object of experience and undergoes misery and death. But really the *ātman* is the one without a second; and there is no other seer but he, who is beyond the subject-object relation. This truth is established by the idealistic interpretation of the world of *nāmarūpa*, the knowledge of the true 'I' as contrasted with the counterfeit ego and the realisation of the transcendental state of *turiya* by the analysis of the three states of consciousness. The world is first shown to be *my* idea or creation. The 'I' is then distinguished from the 'me'. The subject *dr̥k* is proved to be different from and opposed to the object, *dr̥śya*. There is only one 'I' or the seer and the objects are its semblances. Lastly the three states of consciousness are proved to be self-contradictory and the fourth state of *turiya* alone is declared to be true. Though the method is subjective, it is free from the faults of subjectivism and the ego-centric fallacy, and it has the merit of simplicity as it proves the illusoriness of the false 'I' and the truth of the

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1. *Br Up.*, II. iv. 5.



absolute 'I'. What is required is the ceaseless thinking on thought till the *tripuṭī* of thinker, thinking and thought ceases to be and consciousness shines in its self-effulgence.

### *An Idealistic View of Reality*

Pure Advaita rejects realism and insists on an idealistic interpretation of the universe. The realist says that the external objects are out there and are independent of the mind. The idealist denies this view and holds that the world is only a mental construction or creation. The Advaitin utilises similar arguments employed by the western idealist and the Buddhist in refuting the reality of the external world consisting of persons and things. The existence of a thing consists in its being perceived and it is only in the medium of consciousness. The so-called external object is only a cluster of sensations and all sensations, primary as well as secondary, are only in the mind. The choir of heaven and the furniture of the earth are only *my* ideas. The world of space is an extension of the sensation of extensity that is in me and the world of time is likewise a succession of events that are mental. Space and time are only forms of the mind and they adhere to the mind and are anterior to the objects. The blue that appears to be external is only the sensation of blueness and there is no difference between a succession of events and their mental transition. The world is really not space *and* time, but is space-time and is relative to the observer. The theory of relativity of knowledge leads to relativism and subjective idealism. The forms of idealism like objective idealism and absolute idealism are only attenuated

forms of subjective idealism and the true subject transcends the subject-object relation. The world of space-time—cause is not an idea in the objective sense but is *my* idea. Idea as such is only an empty abstraction, but it is truly an idea in my mind. The object is a projection of my idea; it is idea externalised. “The world of *nāma-rūpa* is created by me, sustained by me, and is merged or dissolved in me.” The cosmos is a *kalpanā* or imaginary creation without any substantiality or permanence. What is called *ākāśa* or elemental ether is a projection of *manas* and a reflection of *cidākāśa* or pure consciousness. The so-called visible and tangible universe is the creation of *avidyā* and is a phantom and not a fact. Even the idea of a creator is a creation of the religious imagination and is not philosophically real. Idealism thus furnishes a background for the abolishing of the *vṛttis* and the apprehension of *ātman*.

The idealistic view in its different aspects is expounded by the followers of Śaṅkara. Maṇḍana or Maṇḍana Miśra (800 A.D.) is the author of ‘*Brahma Siddhi*’. Maṇḍana developed in an idealistic way, the dialectical method employed first by Śaṅkara and later on by the great dialecticians like Śrī Harṣa and Citsukha and he used it in the refutation of the perception of difference. He also held that the *jīva* is the locus of *avidyā* which obscures the nature of Brahman and it has Brahman as its object or *viśaya* and this mutual dependence is beginningless. He thinks that the *Śabdādvaita* of Bhartṛhari has some affinities with Advaita, and rejects Śaṅkara’s view about the antithesis between *karma* and *jñāna* in favour of a certain type of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*, Prakāśānanda



(1550-1600) developed. As against the realistic view of Prakāśātman the subjective idealism of *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭivāda* and affirmed that a thing existed only when it was perceived, *Esse is percipi*. For example, blue and its awareness are one and there is no external object apart from the cognition. The dream state is purely mental and there are no extra-mental objects. Likewise, in the waking state, the so-called external object is only a mental state and there is really no distinction. The whole world is thus only a psychic modification and has no reality outside the mind. This view has affinities with the idealism of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* and is perhaps derived from it. The category of causality has no meaning or value in pure Advaita as pure consciousness has nothing to do with the causal relation. It is *avidyā* that gives rise to the notion of the duality of *dr̥k-dr̥śya* and when it is dispelled, darkness disappears and *ātman* shines by itself and is positive bliss.

Suresvara (800 A.D.), the author of the *Naiṣkarmya-siddhi*, maintains the purity of Advaitic philosophy and holds the view, unlike Maṇḍana, that *avidyā* has somehow its origin in pure consciousness and not in the *jīva*, is experienced in dreamless sleep and is destroyed in *mukti*. According to his view which is called *Ābhāsavāda* there is no *bimba-pratibimba* relation between Brahman and *jīva* but there is only *bimba*. He refutes like Śaṅkara the views of the Mīmāṃsaka and the Bhedābheda-vādin like Bhartṛprapañca, and he says that *karma* and *jñāna* are opposed and that there can be no co-ordination between the two or *samuccaya*. Sarvajñātman (900 A.D.), a follower of Suresvara, further develops his view. *Ajñāna* has its locus or object in full consciousness and the illusory

appearances of *Īśvara*, *jīva* and *jagat* are produced by *avidyā* that somehow exists in Brahman. Brahman is self-identical and pure bliss though there is a ladder as it were in the concepts of causality.

A classic exposition of the idealist aspect of Advaita is given in 'Yogavāsiṣṭha' in which the Sage Vasiṣṭha instructs Śrī Rāma to follow the path of free enquiry into Truth untrammelled by blind faith in scripture and attain *jīvanmukti*; it is said that Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha was deeply influenced by the negative logic of Gauḍapāda and that it enables the idealistic thinker to go beyond the world of *vṛttis* to a state of *mauna* emptied of all *vāsanās* or mental modifications. The world of *nāmarūpa* is a *bhāvanā* or imagining, like a conjuror's trick or *Indrajāla* or the creations of the dream state and is false, futile and non-existent like the son of a barren woman. It is the *manas* that creates the world-show and sustains it (*utpatti-sthiti*); it alone appears as subject and object, and it can be controlled and stilled and attain peace or *upaśānti*. Pure consciousness is now veiled by *avidyā* and it poses and opposes itself and finally regains its repose. Mind control (*citta-vṛtti-nirodha*) and breath-control (*kumbhaka*) go together and when the *yogī* has subdued his mind-body, he sublates it and becomes a *sthitaprajña* as the *Gītā* says and becomes free. He is in the world but is not of it. He attains *mukti* progressively in seven stages. In the first three stages, *avidyā* appears as the concrete world in the waking consciousness and the object is *avidyā* objectified. In the fourth stage *avidyā* becomes attenuated and the world appears like a dream; the fifth stage is like dreamless state. In the higher states, consciousness unveils itself and returns to its own pure and pristine state of *turiyātīta*. In this way,



the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* teaches the philosopher to go from the world of *vāsanās* by a process of analysis and abstraction to the state of stirless peace or *nirvāsana mauna* state. It is the fulness of being and not non-being or negation and it is the void without the *vāsanās*. The teaching of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* stresses one aspect of Śaṅkaravedānta and it is untenable to say that it resembles *viññānavāda* and is different from Śaṅkara's view.

### *The 'I' Philosophy*

The metaphysical and metapsychical enquiry into the *ātman* is a world-destroying meditation on the true 'I'. It is called *ekātmavāda* or singularism and is contrasted with *ekajīvavāda* or subjectivism. The *ātman* is the one without a second and is self-effulgent and infinite and changeless, but is enveloped by the cloud of unknowing and *avidyā*, which is somehow caused by it and so imagines itself to be the changing non-self or *anātman*. *Avidyā* stains the white light of the shining self or *svayamjyotis*; it distorts the one and divides it into the many by the process of veiling and variation known as *āvaraṇa* and *vikṣepa*. The so-called emanation of the *ātman* into the five *kośas* of the self, reason, consciousness, life and matter is really a process of increasing envelopment till pure consciousness is perverted into the joyless state of inert material existence. *Ātmavicāra* reverses the process and it consists in lifting the veils. The false 'I' is eliminated and the true 'I' is affirmed. Matter is dull, dead and inert and the gross body made of the five elements is the *ātman* made gross and mechanised. Life is higher than matter as it is self-originated and not externally caused, but it is devoid of consciousness. *Ātman* is not

even *manas* or the subtle body, as consciousness is a momentary mental modification without any stability. *Ātman* is not even *viññāna* or reason; as reasoning by itself leads to ultimate doubts and discontent. Self-consciousness is not necessarily the consciousness of self-hood. The self or the *jīva* is higher than *viññāna* as it is an entity that thinks, feels and acts and thus imparts unity to the varying physical changes and psychical presentations in the psychophysical organism. But even self-hood or personality has no stability or identity, as there is no personal identity in the cases of multiple personality or dissociation of personality. Besides, as the *jīva* is finite and encased in *avidyā*, it has no freedom. Thus, by the elimination of the five *kośas* of matter, life, consciousness, reason and self-hood, the Advaitic philosopher rejects the false views of *ātman* like materialism, vitalism, mentalism, rationalism, and personalism. But the process of elimination is not yet complete as the "I" freed from the obscuration of the five *kośas* may be stranded in aloneness or the *Sāṅkhya Kaivalya*. The 'I' is not a silent spectator that witnesses nothing and does nothing but it is the infinite and self-effulgent *ātman*. It cannot be even called soul, spirit or self, as these terms presuppose the polar opposites of body and matter, and are relative and self-contradictory. The *ātman* somehow mistakes itself for the *anātman* as an individual mistakes the post for a person. It poses as the non-self, is opposed by it and finally returns and reposes in itself. By lifting the veils of the *ātman* successively, the non-self is negated and the self is affirmed. When the thinking process is thought away, the thinker alone remains as *pūrṇa* and *śūntam*.



Says Maharṣi Aṣṭāvakra: "The whole universe emanated from me and it is destined to end in me like the waves disappearing in the sea. Oh! joy, I bow down to my eternal self as I am alone without a second. Oh! joy, I bow down to myself who have all or nothing." As the *Upaniṣad* says "Verily I extend from below, from above, from behind, from before, I am all this."<sup>1</sup> That can be comprehended by thought or language.

### *The Subject Philosophy*

Another aspect of the philosophy of the 'I' may be called the subject philosophy based on the distinction between *dr̥k* or the seer and *dr̥śya* or the object of presentation and the possibility of the *dr̥k* dissociating itself from the subject-object relation. *Ajñāna* objectifies the subject and its *jñāna*. The *Upaniṣadic* saying that the knower cannot be known serves as the key thought to the subject philosophy. The objects perceived by the self, physical and psychical, are not true as they are like things experienced in dreams. They are the not-self opposed to the self and are therefore unreal. But the self is self-positing and is free from bondage. However, the subject appears to be objectified by *avidyā* and is subjected to misery. The *kṣetrajñāna* alone is real and the *kṣetra* or the object of experience consisting of the three bodies is an imaginary creation like the snake idea superimposed on the rope. The moment we think the 'I', negation enters into being and the 'I' becomes the 'me' or the not-self. The 'I' falsely imagines itself to be *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *aḥaṅkāra* which form the 'me'. Even the bodily self

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1. *Ch. up.*, 7-25.

and the social self form the object and are only the illusory properties of the *avidyā*-ridden self. The contents of the conscious self are different from the self that is aware of them, and they are only its semblances. The subject does not pervade the object but is perverted by it. The subject is the sole reality and it never enters into any relation, internal or external. The real is neither true nor false but it is only the idea of the real, of which the attributes of truth and falsity, are predicated. The whole world of *jagat*, *jīva* and *Īśvara* in so far as it is a presentation of dualistic consciousness is an object of experience and is only an idea of the real and not the real itself. Even the distinction between *dr̥k* and *dr̥śya* arises from the confusion of *avidyā* and its self-contradiction. The philosopher should abandon the objective outlook and become the eternal *sākṣī* or spectator of all time and existence. The witnessing *ātman* is different from the *baddha-jīva* like light and darkness.

The *jīva-sākṣin* is like the lamp on the stage which illumines the actors and the audience at once and is self-luminous in their absence: it illumines the *jīva*, the inner organ or the *antaḥkaraṇa* and also the objects and shines by itself. It is merely a looker on, though it seems to be an actor owing to its false identification with the *antaḥkaraṇa* on account of *avidyā*. The *sākṣin* is mere subject and not *jīva*, it is objectified and appears as subject-object. When the subject withdraws itself from the subject-object consciousness, the *vṛttis* vanish and the 'I' alone shines by itself as the one without a second. The logical conclusion of the subject philosophy or singularism is what is known as *Ekajīvavāda* or the theory of the single self. As the 'I' exists by itself and



there is only one 'I' in the world of experience, the *jīva* is one and *avidyā* is equally indivisible. The *jīva* is one as the super *jīva* or cosmic *jīva*, and the so-called other *jīvas* are creations like dream images and are mere imaginings. In another sense the *jīva* is one though it functions in many bodies. It is the *jīva* as a reflection of Brahman. The one 'I' is distorted by *avidyā* and divided into many *jīvas* which seem to be numerically distinct but are really illusory and non-existent. The *jīva* is three-fold, the *prātibhāsika*, the *vyāvahārika*, and the *pāramārthika*. The first is the illusory 'I' like the dream consciousness; the second is the phenomenal self that experiences the waking state, and the third is the absolute 'I' that is never sublated by something more real than itself. The distinction between the three states or kinds of the *jīva* is itself fictitious as the subject shines for ever in its secondless state. It is identical with its intelligence and is absolute; its existence and essence are one.

### *Section III. Avasthātraya Method*

The analysis of *avasthātraya* or the three mental states is closely allied to the enquiry into the nature of the self or the knower or the subject and its importance to pure Advaita lies in its analogical proof of the reality of non-duality and the illusoriness of duality. It is the method by which consciousness frees itself from its psychic functions and limitations. By a process of spiritual induction, Indra intuited the meaning of the truth imparted to him by Prajāpati, namely, that the *ātman* is the eternal self beyond the three states of consciousness as pure consciousness beyond the subject-object relation.

According to the common sense theory of the objective, Reality is what is given in the waking consciousness as the world in which we all live, move and have our being. It is out there whether we know it or not. It is external to or independent of consciousness and is therefore extra-experiential or extramental. Experiencing makes no difference to the facts experienced. In the waking state, the self dwells mainly in the *shūla śarīra*; the senses come into contact with the external objects; and the self becomes aware of the external world and experiences them as they are. The realistic philosopher therefore concludes that the external world is real and that truth consists in the conformity of ideas to the outside objects. In the dream state, the self is no longer in contact with the real things given in the waking state, but it lives in a mental world made of previous impressions registered in the *sūkṣma śarīra*. The dreamer does not feel that he is the seer but feels that he sees it and is therefore different from the dream objects which are unreal. Freed from the shackles of the gross body and the constraint or necessity of thought, the dreamer creates his own objects with the materials gathered in the waking state and experience the pleasures and pains arising from such creations. Dreams are fleeting psychological states; and as they do not fit in with the spatial and temporal order of the world and its causal unity and have no coherence, they are unreal. The idealist, however, thinks that the external world experienced in the waking state is also a mental construction and is not different from dreams. The so-called things are only thoughts and are mere subjective states though they seem to have more sensory vividness and practical value. In sound sleep, consciousness is



abolished and the self knows nothing, feels nothing and wills nothing. It is consciousness without content. Indra says to his *guru* that in sleep the self goes to utter annihilation and sees no good in it as in that state there is no distinct subject-object "functioning dually and therefore nothing at all."<sup>1</sup> But, as the Upaniṣad says, the self is not destroyed in deep sleep as it rests in Brahman and enjoys its bliss freed from the distractions of dualistic consciousness. The same soul continues after sleep owing to the fact of recognition and personal identity (*ātmānusmaraṇa*), as in the feeling "I am the same as I was before." The state of senselessness arising from swoon or anaesthetics differs from sleep, as in such states even reflex actions are suspended and the patient is not affected by any pain and is practically dead. But even then the self persists in its own being and is united with the true Brahman. The nihilist who says that in sleep and stupor, the self is abolished is wrong as what is annulled is not the self but its dualistic working. Some non-dualists go from the realistic theory of the objective to subjectivism and from duality to non-duality and then according to them in *turīya* there is no going or goal. Others assign to *suṣupti* the last place in the scale of empirical experience as it is a state of *tamas* where *avidyā* alone resides in posse. The former affirm *ātman* by analysing away *avasthātraya* and the latter describe entry into *samādhi* by *yogic* introversion. But in both case *avasthātraya* is duality, actual or possible and *suṣupti* and *turīya* are poles apart like nescience and *jñāna* though they are non-dual consciousness. Where there is duality, there is delusion and misery, and where there is no duality, there is no

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1. *Vide Ch. Up viii. 3.12.*

delusion or sorrow. Its basic principle is that of *apaccheda* which holds that what cannot be stultified or eliminated is pure consciousness or *turiya*. *Turiya* is super-consciousness in the sense that consciousness which is distinct, dim and latent is self-contradictory, and sublatable, and pure consciousness is non-sublatable. In the waking state consciousness pervades the external objects and is a subject-object relation and the pervading self is called *viśva* or the bodily self. It has phenomenal reality and is more true than dreams though it is finally sublated in pure consciousness or *turiya*. In the dream state the senses are in a state of rest and the dream images stored up in the subtle body or the subconscious region take wild and fantastic shapes and the dreamer called *taijasa* creates these psychic changes which seem to have sensory vividness as long as they last. Dreams have their own coherence and reality and sometimes have a prophetic value. Sound sleep is not the abolition of consciousness as there is a vivid recollection that the sleeper slept soundly, but the sleeper who reposes in *avidyā* in its causal or potential state, called *prājñā* has no consciousness of distinction or duality; sleep is a mere mass of nescience but it is free from duality and subject-object consciousness. *Suṣupti*, therefore, affords an analogical proof of *turiya* and non-duality and it is strengthened by the observational method of *anvaya* and *vyatireka*. Where there is subject-object consciousness there is duality and misery as in *jāgrat* and *svapna* and where there is no subject-object consciousness, there is non-duality and bliss as in *suṣupti*. The difference between *suṣupti* and *turiya* is the difference between *ajñāna* in its latent state and *jñāna* in its fullest sense. Though the three states are psychologi-



cally continuous, they are philosophically self-contradictory and illusory (*māyā-mātra*) and point to self-transcendence as the true state. The realism of the waking state is incongruous with the mentalism of the dream state and both are different from the nihilism of the sleep state. The 'I' is one though its states vary and vanish. The dream experiences are stultified in the waking state and proved to be fictitious and the *vṛttis* of the waking state are stultified in the super-conscious state of *turiya*. There the 'I' wakes up from *avidyā*, from subjectivity and objectivity and shines as pure contentless consciousness beyond the distinction of the knower, the knowing and the known. *Turiya* transcends *tripuṭī* and cannot be described as a totality of the three states. Advaita is beyond mathematical additions as well as metaphysical distinctions. The pure 'I' is free from the confusions of *āvarana* and the distractions and distinctions of *vikṣepa*. It is the void without the *vṛttis* and the *vāsanās* and is the *pūrṇa* or the fullness of being.

The logical intellect of the pure Advaitin is not satisfied with the examination of the three states of consciousness. The analysis is further continued until it leads to the seven stages of *ajñānas* or *ajñāna bhūmikās* known as *bījajāgrat*, *jāgrat*, *mahājāgrat*, *jāgratsvapna*, *svapna*, *svapnajāgrat* and *susupti*. There is a gradual transition from the gross to the subtle and the subtle to the causal state. The first is the *bījajāgrat* or potential waking state which is the root of the subject-object experience and it is the seed of all semblances. The second is *jāgrat* in which egoity sprouts into self-consciousness. It becomes *mahājāgrat* when the 'I' sense is concretised and projects itself into the world of space-time. The fourth is *jāgratsvapna* in

which the creations of the waking state become a prolonged dream. *Svapna* is dream experience as pure subjective experience. In the sixth state known as the *svapnajāgrat*, the memory of the past appears like a long reverie. In the last stage of *susupti*, the objective or the dualistic consciousness is in its most attenuated but subtle form. It is *ajñāna* in an unanalysable causal state. *Ātmajñāna* is the stultification of *ajñāna* and of *jñāna* itself. The Advaitic introspectionist points out seven stages of progression from *ajñāna* to *jñāna* and employs the familiar illustration of ten illiterate men crossing a river and counting all the nine people except the counting man and thus missing the tenth. In the first stage of *ajñāna* the ignorant man says, 'I do not know the *ātman*' just as the illiterate man says 'I do not find the tenth man.' *Ajñāna* deepens into *āvaraṇa* or dense ignorance arising from the feeling that there is no *ātman* at all, just as the feeling arises that there is no tenth man at all. In the third stage, *āvaraṇa* leads to confusion, *vikṣepa bhrānti*, when the *ātman* is mistaken for *anātman* and *anātman* for the *ātman*. These three strata of *avidyā* produce the ills of bondage and form the lowest levels of life. The next four stages are a progression in knowledge starting with *viveka* and ending with *ātmajñāna*. The *mumukṣu* has *parokṣa jñāna* when his *āvaraṇa* is removed by *āptavākya* or the knowledge imparted by the *guru* that the *ātman* is real and can be realised just as it is true that there is the tenth man. What is inferred in a mediate way is immediately intuited and then *parokṣa jñāna* develops into *aparokṣa jñāna* and destroys *ajñāna* as well as *āvaraṇa*. The direct consequence of this *jñāna* is *bhrāntināśa* in which the confusion is dispelled by self-realisation. In the last stage known as *ānanda-*



*prāpti* there is not only the removal of doubt and sorrow but positive bliss and peace. In this way the cause of *bhrama* is fully analysed in order that the cure may be effected. There is not only the cessation of *avidyā* but its cause also is eradicated. *Avidyā* is *tuccha* or non-existent and *ātman* is ever existent.

### *Advantages of Ātmavicāra*

The advantages of Pure Advaita as a philosophical discipline and knowledge may be summarised and appraised. It is self-knowledge by self-reliance and not by dependence on an outside agency like the grace of God. Its idealistic interpretation of the world avoids the defects of materialism and solipsism. The philosophy of the 'I' has its starting point in self-consciousness, and, in its development, it steers clear of the ego-centric fallacy. The subject-philosophy rightly stresses the superiority of self-knowledge over the knowledge of the world and it has the merit of overcoming the evils of subjectivism and solipsism. The analysis of the *avasthās* leads to the enjoyment of the peace or quiet of *turīya* which passeth all understanding and escapes the pitfalls of quietism. The criticism that Advaitic idealism is borrowed from or allied to Buddhistic *viññāna-vāda* or *śūnya-vāda* is not justifiable, historically or philosophically. Gauḍapāda follows the *Upaniṣad* and not Buddhism in his exposition of the *turīya* state. He no doubt adopts the idealistic method of Buddhism when he rejects realism and theism but he checks its subjectivistic and nihilistic tendencies by his insistence on the reality of the experience of *turīya* and *Brahma nirvāna* as contrasted with the bare *nirvāna* of Buddhism. The world is *śūnya*, but *Brahman* is

*pūrṇa* and when the unreal is found to be non-existent, the real is self-realised. Pure Advaita has, however, more affinity with Buddhistic rationalism than with theism and theology. The philosopher is required to avoid the obstacles to introversion like *laya*, *vikṣepa*, *kaṣāya* and *rasāsvāda*. *Avidyā* is a lapse from *vidyā* and no lapses arising from slothfulness and quiescence should be justified or acquiesced in. The outgoing tendencies of the mind should be arrested and the outlook should be transformed into insight. As every attachment has its reaction in aversion, the distractions arising from these opposites have to be stopped. The major defect or evil in the method of Advaitic introversion is in mistaking the stages of inner quiet for the stopping place. The life of passion should be changed into self-restraint. There are many phases of contentment in the process of stilling the *vāsanās* and seeking *sānti* and the peace of *turiya*. False contentment often masquerades as *mauna* and is therefore to be rejected. *Avidyā* has its chief allies in worldliness, bodily attachment and the conceit of learning and these three *vāsanās* known as *dehavāsanā*, *lokavāsanā*, and *śāstra vāsanā* should be destroyed root and branch. The sovereign remedy prescribed by pure Advaita to overcome these obstacles is thinking on thought till thinking is transcended and it is philosophically preferable to the ascetic suppression of desires, psychic sublimation and passive withdrawal of the mind from the sense plane. The *Upaniṣad* prescribes the way known as *asparśa yoga* or the meditation on *ātman* beyond what is contacted by the senses and conditioned by the categorising thought. The Advaitin who has



thus subdued his mind by ceaseless *vicāra* has every reason to enjoy his inner victory and proclaim the glory of *ātmajñāna* thus: "I am the formless and unconditioned. I am not the three states of consciousness. I am above *saṅkalpa* and its cessation. I am not the world of duality. I am without attributes and action. *I am Brahman*, consciousness absolute and bliss absolute."

The ontology of 'OM' as epitomised in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* in terms of sound symbolism marks the three main stages in the development of consciousness. It is the orthography of absolutism or pure consciousness. 'OM' or *praṇava* consists of three *mātrās* A U M and is a symbol of the progression of consciousness in its triple states from the gross to the subtle and from the subtle to the causal till it is self-transcended in *turīya*. *Viśva* is 'A', the throat sound that signifies the waking outgoing all-self. *Taijasa* is the middling rolling sound 'U' which stands for the subjective dreaming self and *prājñā* is the lip sound 'M' that represents the non-dual *prājñā* in the dark state of dreamless sleep. *Praṇava*, the pervading sound is *amātra* the transcendental state of *turīya* beyond relational thought in its explicit and implicit forms. Some non-dualists think that *turīya* does not refer to abstract monism or bare identity-consciousness but to concrete monism which explains it as the transcendental that is immanent in *avasthātraya*, as a unity in trinity or as the timeless that is in time. But the monists who accept the logic of negating the false, point to *turīya* as consciousness without content. Both

are agreed that when Brahman is aimed at and hit by *praṇava*, the mind goes beyond the *mātrā* stage and becomes *amātra* or *turiya*. *Turiya* is attaining what is already there.

Pure Advaita has the supreme merit of a clear and logical analysis of consciousness and also a psychological description of its different stages. The cosmological and ethico-religious aspects of Advaita seek to emphasise what is perhaps implicit in Pure Advaita.

(to be continued)



## THE MAHĀTMĀ AND THE WORLD\*

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*N. Jayashanmukham\*\**

In Sri Aurobindo's opinion the philosophical poems in Indian literature constitute a class by themselves, "combining a supreme philosophical genius with a remarkable literary talent, not indeed creations, but noble and skilful constructions, embodying the highest possible thought, using well all the weighty, compact and sparing phrase of the classical Sanskrit speech, achieving the harmony and noble elegance of its rhythms." He goes on to add that "these merits are seen at their best in poems like the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* attributed to Śaṅkara."<sup>1</sup> Though the merits of this 'admirable' poem are many, here we are mainly concerned with one, namely, the 'highest possible thought' embodied in it.

### 1. *The Question*

The *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* as we know, is a verse treatise on the nature of *jīvanmukti*. It offers two accounts about the *jīvanmukta*—in the one it shows how a bound

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\* Courtesy: *Mother India*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, February 1994.

\*\* 21/22, Surya Kanti Nagar, Pondicherry-605003

soul becomes liberated even while it lives in the body and in the other it describes how a liberated soul serves the world by helping the bound souls to come out of their bondage and live in freedom and peace. In other words, it teaches how a *jīvanmukta* is not only a *muktātmā* put a *mahātmā* as well. Though the text speaks of these two as the two aspects of a *jīvanmukta*, we do not understand how they can exist side by side in the same person without contradiction. For the text repeatedly affirms that one becomes a *jīvanmukta* by *systematically severing all connections with the world. If he is to possess his soul by renouncing the world, how can he return to the world and work for the deliverance of others? If he returns to the world for the sake of helping his fellowmen, does he not get bound by the world and become dispossessed of his soul? If he does not, how?*

## 2. Freedom from Bondage

There are two things which account for man's bondage: one, the delusion that he cannot live without the world; two, the delusion that he is nothing more than his body. Strictly speaking, the first is the result of the second. The text says that the body is the abode of all delusions. *śarīraṁ mohāspadaṁ* (73). As long as we believe that we are not different from the body, so long we look upon the world as the source and support of our existence. Living in these delusions we live in bondage to the body as well as to the world, *dehādi-bandhaḥ* (548). We become free only when these delusions are destroyed.

He who identifies himself with the external world is subject to misery after misery, *upaiti duḥkhopari duḥkhajātaṁ* (331). Therefore, the first step to destroy



this identification is the removal of the external world by living in absolute aloofness, *bahirnirodhaḥ* (335). The next step, which is the culmination of the first, is to give up the habit of dwelling on external objects, *bāhyānusandhiḥ* (334). And the third and final step is to constantly dwell in one's true Self, *svātmānusandhiḥ* (334).

As long as we believe that the external world includes all objects except our body, our endeavour to be free from the bondage to the world will be inconsequential. We must recognise that our body too, like other things of the world, exists as a perceived object, *paridr̥śyamānaḥ* (155). We are identified with the body even as we are with the objects of the world, *mohāt ahamiti śarīraṁ kalayati* (140). The identification with the body, like the identification with the world is destroyed in three stages: first, by leaving the body at a great distance even as one does an outcaste (287) and severing all connections with it, *na me dehena sambandhaḥ* (500); secondly, by totally ceasing to think of the body, *naiṣa smaryatām* (414); thirdly, by transferring the identification from the body to the true Self, *cīdātmani sadānande dehārūḍhām ahaṁdhiyaṁ niveśya* (290).

By practising this discipline with regard to both the world and the body one becomes a liberated soul even while living here, *jīvanmuktaḥ*. He is now established in Brahman which is his true Self and sees nothing else but Brahman, for everything perceived as having objective existence, *i.e.* the body as well as the world, has vanished from his vision, *na dr̥śyate kaścīdayam* (398).

### 3. *Helping Others*

To help others in distress is the true nature of a great soul, *mahātmā* (38). He helps them to cross the ocean of birth and death as he has himself crossed it. The text says:

तीर्णाः स्वयं भीमभवाणव्वं

जनानहेतुनान्यानपि तारयन्तः (37)

His help is spontaneous and without an egoistic motive. He is like the spring and the full moon, for they bring happiness to the world without any motive (38). The *mahātmā* is indeed a *jīvanmukta*, but greater than one who cares for his own liberation, *muktātmā*.

To help other bound souls in the world is to establish a positive connection with the body and recognise it as an effective instrument of selfless work, as also to take the external world into account and pay attention to the conditions of other living beings. How is it possible for him to accept the body which he rejected as the abode of delusions and the world which he gave up as the source of all miseries? Further, how does he take note of suffering humanity or how does he act in the world for the sake of helping his fellowmen? For he sees nothing but Brahman — neither the world nor the body which is the instrument of action.

If there is an answer to this question, it must be somewhere in the text itself and our work is to find the relevant passage or passages which suggested the answer.



#### 4. *The Mukṭātmā and the Mahātmā*

Let us now look at the *jīvanmukta* a little more closely and notice how he dissolves his bonds. As long as one lives in the waking state the soul is ignorant of its true nature and subject to the delusions of that state. Therefore the text suggests that the soul be lifted out of the waking state and kept in a higher state where it is aware of its true nature, *svasvarūpa* (31), and where the play of delusions is completely suspended by keeping the sense-organs in abeyance. The soul's entry into this higher state is made possible by a steady concentration on Brahman called the *nirvikalpa samādhi*. When the soul enters into the higher state, it realises its oneness with Brahman and enjoys the bliss of freedom, *nirvāṇa sukham* (70). The text says that there is no other way except the *nirvikalpa samādhi* by which the soul is to be delivered, *nānyathā* (365). As liberation is attained by keeping the sense-organs in abeyance, the soul thus liberated is spoken of as a *jīvanmukta* who lives mostly in the trance state, forgetful of the world, *vismṛtaprāyaḥ* (428).

As I have shown elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> to become free by entering into the higher state through the *nirvikalpa samādhi*, though indispensable in the beginning, is not the ultimate goal of life. To leave that trance state without losing one's conscious identity with Brahman and establish oneself in the waking life without allowing its delusions to distort one's perception of the world is indeed the highest goal to be achieved by a knower of Brahman. The text says that one who achieves this goal is the best among the knowers of Brahman, *brahmavittamaḥ* (554).

Let us see what the text says on the question of mastering the conditions of waking life. Look at the following verse:

लीनधीरपि जागर्ति जाग्रद्धर्मविवर्जितः ।  
बोधो निर्वासनो यस्य स जीवन्मुक्त इष्यते ॥ (429)

We cannot find a better passage than this in support of our view that the ultimate goal of a *jīvanmukta* is the conquest of waking life. It clearly says that though the *jīvanmukta* is fully identified with Brahman in the trance state (*līnadhīrapī*), he gives up that state and returns to the practical world and stays there fully awake (*jāgarti*). That is, he lives in the midst of sense-organs fully awake and active. By returning to the waking state he does not become dispossessed of the knowledge of Brahman, but with that knowledge he conquers all the limitations of waking life (*jāgraddharma-vivarjitaḥ*). Hence the passage concludes that a *jīvanmukta* is one whose waking state (*bodhaḥ*) is without the latent impressions that impose the delusions of the body and the world through the sense-organs (*nirvāsanaḥ*). Such is the highest state of a *jīvanmukta*.<sup>2</sup>

Thus a *jīvanmukta* has to ascend not one but two steps. The first step is to live in the trance state and become a liberated soul, *muktātmā*, and the next step is to return to the practical world and live as a great soul conquering the limitations of waking life, *mahātmā*.

### 5. The Answer

The answer to the question how a *jīvanmukta* helps his fellow beings in the world depends on how we see him.



As a *muktātmā*, he is mostly in trance, forgetful of the world. None of the things of the world is seen by him, *na drśyate kaścidayam* (398). His aim is to be exclusively united with Brahman. He may occasionally step into the practical world. But such occasions are viewed as cases of compromise with his aim rather than opportunities for conquering the conditions of waking life. Hence he hardly takes note of the conditions of others or helps them attain liberation.

As a *mahātmā*, he is established in the waking life. He has destroyed all the limitations of this life with the fire of knowledge, *bodhavahniḥ* (47). Though he is always lodged in his Self, he is not indifferent to the world. On the contrary, he is compassionate and helpful. He helps others to dissolve their bonds and enjoy freedom. For he is a friend of all, *bandhuḥ* (33). When he helps others, his help knows no barriers. As he lives purifying all things here, *pāvayan-vasudhām sarvām* (577), neither the body nor the world can do him any harm.

### NOTES

1. *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (1971), p. 309.
2. *Brahmavidyā* (Adyar: 1992).

## THE GLITTERING GREAT STAR HAS SET

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*A. Kuppuswami*

Pūjyaśrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Svamī, the 68th Ācārya of the Kāñcī Śaṅkarācārya Maṭh shook off His mortal coils in the Mokṣapurī Kāñcī in the afternoon of the 8th of January, 1994 and attained eternal bliss. Biographical accounts of Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpādācārya have hailed him as the incarnation of Śrī Paramesvara. Many a thinker and scholar has believed and still believe that the sage Ācārya, Śrī Candrasekhara, is verily a re-incarnation of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara. The union of the great *guru* with the Supreme Being has no doubt left the mass of devotees in darkness and grief. Anantānandagiri, author of the earliest and fully available biographical account of Ādi Śaṅkara, founder of the Kāñcī Maṭh and other monastic institutions at cardinal sacred centres of Bhārata, has stated in the 74th *prakaraṇa* (chapter) of his work (in all printed and manuscript versions) that “The World Preceptor (Ādi Śaṅkara), desiring to leave for his own abode, once, sitting in Kāñcī, absorbed his gross body into the subtle one and having reduced himself to the size of a thumb, attained eternal bliss and remains as the all-pervading ‘*cit*’ to this



day.” Perhaps these words of the scholar-biographer may serve as a source of consolation for the grief-stricken devotees who have been closely associated with the Ācārya for long and even those who had just a single *darśana* of the Sage.

A glorious era in the spiritual history of India has ended. The name and fame of the departed great Preceptor has pervaded all the world over. He has been admired and revered not only by Hindus and Indians, but also by people professing different faiths and belonging to many a foreign country. In fact, Śrī Candrasekharendra was the greatest *Spiritual Luminary* of this 20th century. It may be said that he has lived through most part of this century as a guiding light to millions of devotees. Words are inadequate to portray the multi-faceted personality of the great Guru.

The great Ācārya has shone as a “living God” to the vast mass of his devotees, as an austere ascetic among ascetics, as a master scholar amidst erudite scholars, as a giant amongst philosophers, as an astute statesman to administrators and politicians seeking guidance, as a multi-linguist in the midst of philologists, as an unsurpassed thinker to foreign scholars, as a helping hand to the poor and the needy, and above all, as a source of solace to the suffering humanity. No wonder, ordinary devotees, scholars, scientists and people of all walks of life and belonging to different parts of the world have been paying respects to the Saint, all through his life-time.

The Guru Deva’s simple, disciplined, and austere life, his extraordinary knowledge of *śāstra* and ancient

literature, his in-depth knowledge of music and other fine arts, his knowledge of a number of western and eastern, ancient and modern languages, and sciences as well, his razor-sharp intellect and his prodigious memory have earned for him an elevated place amidst the religious heads of the present century. Recently, the Ācārya of the Śṛṅgeri Maṭh has paid tribute to the departed Ācārya of Kāñcī thus : “Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Svāmī was a great *Tapasvin* and the guiding light of millions. He was a learned scholar well-versed in the *śāstras* and an embodiment of compassion.” The Jeeyar Svāmī of the Ahobila Maṭh, on knowing about the *videhamukti* of the Ācārya, stated that, “*Sanātana Dharma* has lost the main pillar in the *siddhi* of the Paramācārya of Śrī Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭham, Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Svāmīgal. This is a big loss to the entire humanity. But the example and ethos set by Him will show the right path. For many centuries that will be the blessings in this time of our grief.” It is worthy of note that the heads of the important Śaiva-siddhānta Maṭhs — the Tiruvāvaḍuturai, Dharmapuram, and Tondaimandalam Ādhīnams — were seen sitting in front of the mortal remains of the Ācārya and singing the *Tēvāram* hymns, in the night of 8th January.

The Saint-Ācārya of Kāñcī shone as the symbol of national unity. His notion of peaceful and happy co-existence not only did endear men of diverse walks of life, people of different communities, faiths and many countries, but also created a feeling of unity and universal brotherhood amongst all sects, castes, religions, and classes of society. The Sage’s life has been marked by his dedication and service to God



and humanity at large. He stood as a symbol of our ancient culture because of his untiring efforts to keep it intact for posterity. He was the embodiment of moral and spiritual values. His message of love and kindness towards all living beings has been exemplary.

Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara, founder of the Kāñcī Maṭh and other monastic institutions, by his prolonged and wide tours all over the country, by his preachings and by the legacy left over by him in the shape of a number of world-appreciated works of philosophy and otherwise, has left an indelible impression on the minds of myriads of our countrymen. And Śaṅkara's name and fame have gained an outstanding and conspicuous place in the history of India.

Pūjvasrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī, 68th preceptor from Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda, founder of the line of Kāñcī Ācāryas, has made another indelible mark on the minds of mankind and his name and celebrity have enriched the pages of world history.

Our reverential homage to the Great Ācārya, who has become one with Brahman, can only be in sincerely and devoutly following His teachings, in revering the great monastic institution at Kāñcī over which its illustrious founder, Śrī Śaṅkara and his replica, the 68th Ācārya, Śrī Candrasekharendra, have presided and in paying our respects to the successive heads of that institution.

## THE REAL TREASURE OF INDIA

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*Prema Nandakumar*

There was Ādi Śaṅkara who was born in Kaladi and within a span of thirty-two years ushered in a tremendous Vedantic resurgence all over India. There was Abhinava Śaṅkara (788-839) who was born in Chidambaram and became famous for his *digvijayas* establishing the supremacy of Advaita. Indeed, there have been many Sankaracharyas who have given rich sustenance to our *sanātana dharma* in the past, as all the incumbents of the spiritual thrones of Śaṅkara Maṭhs are called Sankaracharya and most of them have brought great lustre to the title.

In our own times we have had Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī as the Sankaracharya of Kanchipuram Maṭh whose reign spanned almost the whole of this century. He was made the 68th Sankaracharya of the Kāmakoṭi Pīṭham at the age of thirteen in 1907. After a few years of shastraic studies at the rural retreat of Mahendramangalam, he assumed full reigns of the Pīṭham on reaching his 21st year. For the next seven decades, he lived the life of



an exemplary sannyasin and a peerless teacher. He taught by lectures and by silence; by precept and practice.

The Paramācārya's ability as a spiritual luminary was gauged quite early in his pontifical career. Writing about his immense knowledge even seventy years ago, the famous editor, K.S. Venkataramani said :

“Sits lofty the spiritual eminence of Śaṅkara on his brow. Lambent beams the light of cosmic intelligence on his face. He is full of knowledge. Such is the acquisitive power of the meditative mind, he knows everything — from the imperial craft of British statesmanship to the travail agonies of Soviet Russia, from the scientific method of agriculture in modern Japan to the most trivial sartorial fashions of the day at Paris.”

Down the arches of the years, the Paramācārya remained the noblest of teachers yet the finest of students. He never stopped his education. The several conference-seminars (vidwat sadas) that were held by him were so many flowerings of his questing soul. At the same time he was gifted with a rare absorptive power. Hence knowledge acquired by him was invariably transformed into life-sustaining wisdom. Like the sun above, he drew in all information, removed the dross that clings even to the best of secular and sacred knowledge, and poured it forth as crystalline messages to help the ethical, moral and spiritual growth of his followers.

The Paramācārya's discourses were always listened to with rapt attention by millions for he had an uncanny ability to gauge the mood of the audience,

come down to their level of understanding, hold them by his hand and rise with them again in consciousness. Urban and rural audiences, scholars and illiterates, the sophisticates and the have-nots, traditionalists and reformists, men, women, children: the Paramācārya could talk to them all and speak directly to them. Literature, art, sociology, history, architecture, folk culture: there was God's plenty in his choice of subjects.

In the recent decades his lectures have been recorded and these volumes are a great blessing for the common man. At a time when he finds himself caught in the labyrinthian maze of conflicting ideologies, life-styles and beliefs, the Paramācārya's words offer an unflickering kindly light to move out of the encircling gloom. If the 20th century has often been associated with World wars, erosion of moral values and the communal divide, it has also had the singular good fortune of the presence of the Paramācārya, the Guru who was Incarnate Wisdom.

The most important aspect of the Paramācārya's wisdom relates to the concept of the Guru. He has often spoken of the high place a spiritual teacher has in a man's life. Granted that life on earth is often a series of complexities and disasters, man needs to hold on to someone visible lest he be carried away by the floods of passion and sorrow. That 'hold' is one's Guru, Acharya. Like the Paraclete, the Guru connects the mortal man to his immortal origin, God. An absolute surrender to the Guru leaves man freed of all worries. To those who question such total faith in a Guru when one's destiny is God who is beyond Time, the Paramācārya says :



“Instead of considering the Guru and God as different personalities, if we think the Lord himself has come as our Guru, there is no need for two separate devotions, i.e., to God and to the Guru. You can offer total surrender to the Guru-God.”

“One who is able to achieve devotion to the Guru as for a God is known as a Mahātman: through such devotion he gains the knowledge of the Self (Atma-jnana).” The different facets of the Guru idea as enunciated by the Paramācārya can now be approached through the excellent translation of R. G. K., published in a sumptuous volume, *The Guru Tradition* (1991). The linguist in the Paramācārya notes the variants of the word such as *vattiyar* and *acharya*. Though *vattiyar* is used in a somewhat pejorative sense, the Paramacharya points out that *vattiyar* has but derived from another noble term, ‘upadhyaya’. Drawing our attention to the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, he pleads for such sterling qualities in the teaching fraternity of these days. He also makes a fervent plea for ‘in-house’ training (gurukulavāsa) for at least one year for the boys of today:

“We need a social awakening to create an order in which the teachers will be happy to keep their students in their homes and teach them. This awakening will similarly induce parents to send their children to live with such teachers. I ask for your help in this matter. The well-to-do must contribute to the education of children of poor families who cannot afford to pay a dakshina. Poor parents are more likely to send their children for gurukulavāsa. To help them, small groups consisting of ten people or so could be formed.”

There is much in what he says, for the commercialisation of education in this century has made education a selfdefeating process. What use all the city-sophistication of our degree mills, when no personal involvement is witnessed to bridge the worlds of the teacher and the taught? If the students have not learnt to relate themselves to the teaching fraternity, how are they going to feel related to their larger community? How will they feel responsible for the society in which they live?

As with his own life, the Paramacharya wanted every one of his listeners to be a life-long student as well. Side by side with earning a salary and maintaining a family, each adult should develop a hobby with serious involvement:

“If you are interested in linguistics, you may learn grammar, Nirukta etc. If your interest is in debate you may learn Tarka. Are you fond of music? Learn to play the vina, the mridanga or the jalataranga. Or be trained in vocal music. Or else get hold of a chisel and learn to sculpt. Many have handled the chisel and the hammer and the result is there for all to see: the gopurams rising to the heavens and proclaiming to the world that the civilisation of India is as lofty as the sky.”

The Paramacharya's advent gave a beneficent turn to the religious life of the Hindus. He tirelessly spoke out and acted for inter-religious harmony. As a first step, he sought to narrow down the great divide between Saivas and Vaishnavas. He felt it childish to hang on to apocryphal stories which sought to exaggerate differences. In his speeches, he always



played down such instances, he did not deny the existence of such tales but he brushed them aside as of no relevance. For instance, he had great respect for Tirumazhisai Alwar though the Alwar has given vent to anti-Shiva sentiments. Like a divine honey-bee, the Paramācārya was interested only in collecting matters of *śreyas* for the community. Hence he says:

“The first three Azhvars — Poykaiyazhvar, Peyazhvar and Bhutattazhvar — were great devotees of Vishnu but they spoke highly of Shiva also. It showed the importance they gave to amity between the Saiva and Vaishnava sects. There is reason to believe that Tirumazhisaiyazhvar was the first to speak as a Vira-vaishnava. One should not speak depreciatively of the great. But Tirumazhisai Azhvar has said things with a view to belittling non-Vaishnava deities. But in his works like *Tiruccanda Viruttam*, *Nanmukhan Tiruvanthathi* we see his great devotion for Vishnu and his insights into the higher yoga. I spoke to you about *ananyabhakti* or exclusive devotion to a deity. We may satisfy ourselves by believing that this Azhvar spoke disparagingly of non-Vaishnava deities so as to foster exclusive devotion to Vishnu. Let that be.”

It became a life-time mission for the Paramacharya to bring the Shaivites and Vaishnavites together, for after all, was not the great Sankaracharya also the author of ‘Bhaja Govindam’ and ‘Kanakadhara Stotram’? The Paramācārya was never tired of making use of literature, history and archaeology to drive home the truth that the Vedic religion is one. He said:

“The Pallavas, whose capital was Kanchipuram, were adherents of the Vedic tradition. In the true Vedic tradition equal importance is given to the worship of Shiva and Vishnu. The Pallava kings called themselves ‘Paramamaheswaras’ (great devotees of Shiva) as well as ‘Paramabhagavatas’ (great devotees of Vishnu). Besides, not forgetful of the third of the Trimurti, they also described themselves as ‘Paramabrahmanyas.’ In the beginning, when they built temples they gave a place in them to Brahma also. But the worship of Brahma did not become integrated with our religious tradition and faded out.”

When Professor H. Nakamura asked him why Śrī Śaṅkara’s commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Gīta* referred only to Vishnu though the followers of Śaṅkara worshipped Shiva, the Paramācārya gave clarifications with maternal compassion. Originally there had been only two religions in India: the Sramana (Buddhism) and the Smarta (Vedism). While Kumarila Bhatta and Udayanacharya countered vehemently the atheistic world-view of Buddhism, Śaṅkara “synthesized the *Veda Pramāna* and the knowledge of *Iswara* by his Advaita Vedānta Philosophy of *Sarvam Brahma* — God is in everything and everything is in God; in other words, everything is God, and ultimately established the identity of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma*.”

This was but at the plane of metaphysical debate. As for the common people, they simply followed family traditions of worshipping some form of the Supreme as Shiva, Vishnu or Shakti. The Advaita philosophy was common to Saivites and Vaishnavites. When Sri Ramanuja, Madhwacharya, Chaitanya and



others appeared, many people became their votaries. Those who still paid allegiance to Sankaracharya were mostly followers of Shiva. But it also happens that there are Vaishnava Advaitins even today:

“Now, take the case of this Mutt itself. Whenever a *Srimukha* is issued, it concludes with the *Ācārya*’s sign, *Narayana Smriti* — *Narayana* or *Vishnu* is invoked — though I perform *pooja* to *Siva* and smear my body with *bhasma*. Whenever any person prostrates before me, I respond by uttering, ‘*Narayana, Narayana*’.”

An extension of the *Paramācārya*’s attempt to forge *Saiva-Vaishnava* unity was the propagation of *Tiruppavai-Tiruvembavai* singing. He convened an eight-day conference in 1950 which saw lectures on *Saivism* by *Vaishnava* scholars and discourses on *Vaishnavism* by *Saiva* scholars. With the need for communal integrity at heart, the *Paramācārya* spoke feelingly at the valediction:

“The sacred *Ganga* flows East; the *Narmada* flows West. The *Mahanadi* flows North from South. Many rivers flow in all directions; all finally fall into the sea. Wherever they go, the sea surrounds them. Likewise we worship God in many ways. Though the routes are different, the goal is the same. While going in different ways we should not forget unity and give up the oneness of God. Once we think of differences there will not be bliss. It is a matter of happiness that devotees of all the branches of *Vaidiki* religion are taking part in this conference. Such conferences should continue in many places. Let us all forget our ills and grief and think of God. Let there be divine Light.”

Making a fervent plea for the study and recital of the Saiva Tirumurais and the Vaishnavite Prabhandhas and analysing the need for diverse ways of worship, the Paramācārya made insightful remarks on the subject :

“There is a thread of unity in the diverse aspects of our religions. Let us realise that and get benefited. Though the paths are different the goal is the same. Rivers should flow in all directions; only then would people prosper. At the end, all the rivers should merge at one place. Hindu religion which is eternal, teaches a variety of concepts and enables people to attain the same goal according to each one’s ability... It is wrong to say that religion begets strife. True religion will never lead to strife. Without the base of religion, political and economic problems would increase and bring about danger. Therefore worship of God is necessary for man. The Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai are thus invaluable.”

The message of the Paramacharya, of course, goes much deeper than religious symbols. He indicated that these externalities but constituted the first step in one’s spiritual life. If his advice to people to eschew perversions like dowry and conspicuous consumption sought to humanize man, his advice on spiritual matters sought to divinise the human being. “Materialism must be balanced by idealism,” he told Paul Brunton and said India had the needed spiritual wealth to show the way in this regard:

“And if there were more men who had found spiritual light in the world, it would spread more quickly. India, to its honour, supports and respects



its spiritual men, though less so than in former times. If all the world were to do the same and to take its guidance from men of spiritual vision, then all the world would soon find peace and grow prosperous."

Can this principle be indicated in a capsule term? The Paramacharya could do in a trice as when he was speaking to Sir Paul Dukes about how a few could set up an example for the many:

"In all that you do, let love be the sole motive. Any deed must be with reference to another. Action implies the acted-upon as much as the agent. Let action be out of love. I am not here referring to Gandhian gospel of Ahimsa. There may be situations which demand violent action. Punishment, for certain, may be necessary. Even wars may have to be waged. But whatever be the nature of the action, the agent must act out of love. Passions such as desire and hatred, anger and malice must be totally eschewed. If love becomes the guiding principle of all deeds, then most of the ills of the world will vanish."

The Paramacharya added: "This you may carry with you as the message of the sages and saints of India." The same message of love for fellow-beings in his poem *Maitrim Bhajata* which rang out from the United Nations venue in the clear, golden voice of M. S. Subbulakshmi :

"Cherish friendship that conquers all hearts!  
See others as your own self ;

Give up war, avoid competition.  
Eschew aggression upon others,  
for that is wrong.

We have Mother Earth to grant all our  
desires.

We have the Lord as a compassionate father.  
O people! Hold on to self-control,  
Charity, compassion.

May the entire human family achieve well-  
being."



## THE PLACE OF REASONING IN ADVAITA

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*B. R. Shantha Kumari\**

### 1. *Introduction*

Indian philosophy is not the outcome of a disinterested pursuit of knowledge to satisfy one's intellectual curiosity, but the fruit of a pragmatic endeavour to terminate sorrow (*duḥkha*) permanently. It seeks to liberate one from the finitude faced in daily life which is one's existential predicament. In this direction, the philosophical triangle constituted by the sentient beings (*jīva*), the spatio-temporal world (*jagat*), and a super-human power or god (*Īśvara*) becomes the subject matter for philosophical investigation. Experience (*anubhava*), reason (*yukti*), and revelation (*śruti*) afford the data for metaphysical discussion (*tattva-vicāra*), and gaining a knowledge of Reality (*tattva-jñāna*). Each school of philosophy postulates metaphysical categories (*tattvas*) or "first principles" in terms of which the constituents of the philosophical triangle are interpreted. The postulation of the

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categories is not arbitrary because evidence for their existence has to be adduced, their characteristics (*lakṣaṇas*) have to be described, and practical methods (*sādhanas*) formulated for their attainment. Hence, the metaphysics of any school on the one hand influences its epistemology (*pramāṇa-vicāra*), and on the other hand it determines its axiology.

Indian epistemologists or “*pramāṇa* — theorists”, in the words of Matilal, classify all knowledge (*jñāna*) under two broad heads — (a) lower knowledge (*aparā-vidyā*), and (b) higher knowledge (*parā-vidyā*). The lower knowledge encompasses all forms of rational knowledge, and pertains to what is empirical (*vyāvahārika*). The higher knowledge is intuitive knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of the trans-empirical Reality (*pāramārthika*).

Any system of knowledge (*śāstra*) has to spell out four criteria (*anubandha-catustaya*) — its content (*viśaya*), purpose (*lakṣya*), fruit (*phala*), and the qualifications which entitle one to undertake its study (*adhikārins*). In the case of Advaita: (a) the content for metaphysical inquiry is, as Śaṅkara puts it, Brahman alone is Real, the world is illusory, and the soul is no other than Brahman (*brahma satyaṃ jagan mithyā, jīvo brahmaiva na aparah*), (b) the purpose is to liberate the soul from the bondage (*bandha*) caused by ignorance (*avidyā*), (c) the fruit of inquiry is, negatively speaking — the transcendence of the travails of transmigration (*saṃsāra*); or positively speaking — the attainment of liberation (*mokṣa*) or eternal bliss (*paramānanda*); the qualified person is one who is equipped with the fourfold qualification (*sādhana-catustaya*) as part of the preliminary discipline. The fourfold qualification



encompasses discriminative knowledge between the eternal and the non-eternal (*nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka-jñāna*); dispassion (*vairāgya*); the six virtues (*ṣaṭsam-patti*); and a hankering for liberation (*mumukṣutva*). Hence, we see the fundamental importance of reason in the Advaita scheme for liberation.

## 2. *The Pramāṇa vyavasthā*

All cognitions or knowledge-situations imply three factors (*tripuṭi-samvit*) in the form of a knower (*jñātā*), the known (*jñeya*), and knowledge attained through an appropriate means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). Advaita admits six *pramāṇas*, viz. perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), comparison (*upamāna*), verbal testimony (*śabda*), postulation (*arthāpatti*), and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). The function (*vyāpāra*) of these *pramāṇas* is restricted by a dichotomous demarcation of their duties (*pramāṇa-vyavasthā*). Advaita upholds that, except the verbal testimony of scripture (*śruti*) which has trans-empirical validity (*pāramār-thika-prāmāṇya*), all the other five *pramāṇas* have only empirical validity (*vyāvahārika-prāmāṇya*). Hence, in matters noumenal or spiritual, scripture alone is the final authority.

In his *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, Suresvara gives reasons to show why, except scripture, the other five *pramāṇas* cannot reveal the self. Perception cannot reveal the Self, because it can give us knowledge only of what is gross (*sthūla*), material (*jaḍa*), and external (*parāk*); but the Self is subtle (*sūkṣma*), sentient (*cit*) and most internal (*pratyak*). For inference to be possible two conditions must be fulfilled — there must be a knowledge of the subject as qualified by an attribute

(*pakṣa-dharmatā-jñāna*), and a knowledge of the invariable relation that exists between the perceived attribute and the object of inference (*vyāpti-jñāna*). Since the Self is attributeless (*nirguṇa*), homogeneous (*ekarasa*), neither possesses nor is related to any quality or mark (through which it can be inferred in the same way as fire is inferred from smoke); inference cannot reveal the Self. Comparison cannot give us a knowledge of the Self because there is nothing like, different from, or equal to the Self with which the Self can be compared, for the Self is one only without a second (*ekam eva advitīyam*). Postulation, too, fails to reveal the Self, because it operates on the basis of difference (*bheda*), viz. what is to be made known (*upapādyā*) through what is known (*upapādaka*). Non-cognition which gives us knowledge of non-existence (*abhāva-jñāna*) cannot reveal the Self, because the Self is a positive category (*bhāva-padārtha*). For these reasons, the Self falls outside the scope of the five *pramāṇas* having only empirical validity. Hence there cannot be a conflict between these five *pramāṇas* and scripture, because their content, and realm of validity are entirely different. If there is a conflict, then the conflict is only between a pseudo-pramāṇa (*pramāṇa-ābhāsa*) — wherein the relata exist in a sublator-sublated relation (*bādhaka - bādhita sambandha*), e. g. rope-snake cognition — and a genuine-pramāṇa, and not between two genuine *pramāṇas*. In this way, Advaita reconciles the apparent conflict between the *pramāṇas*.<sup>1</sup>

According to Advaita, a *pramāṇa* is needed only when the objects are not self-revelatory, but the Self is self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*) and self-established (*svataḥ-siddha*). Therefore, while the Self reveals all other



objects and also itself, it cannot likewise be revealed by anything else (*avedyatve sati sva-ītara avabhāśakatvam svaprakāśatvam*), because there is nothing other than the Self which can reveal the Self. Moreover since the Self is pure consciousness (*caitanya*), and always the subject of knowledge, it is wrong to suppose that the Self is an object of knowledge (*prameya*) like a table, or a tree. According to Advaita, for something to be an object of knowledge, two conditions must be fulfilled: (a) the Self or consciousness must be present — *phala-vyāpyatva*, and (b) there must be an appropriate mental mode (*vṛtti*) to manifest it, *vṛtti-vyāpyatva*. In the case of the Self only one of these conditions is fulfilled, i. e., the Self or consciousness is present, but there is no corresponding mode to reveal it. Therefore, the Self cannot be an object of knowledge at all. In addition to this, what is mediate (*vyavahita*) and external to one alone can be an object of knowledge. But the Self is most internal, in fact, it is the very Reality in one's being. Hence the Self cannot be the content of a *pramāṇa*. On the contrary, the functioning of all the *pramāṇas* presupposes the Self because the Self is pure consciousness by nature, and what is presupposed is as good as proved. Also, what is instrumental (*parārtha*) in the enjoyment (*bhoga*) of others is known by a *pramāṇa*, and then enjoyed. But the Self has intrinsic validity (*svārtha*), and is sought for its own sake because it is bliss (*ānanda*) itself, and, no other than the highest and perfect (*pūrṇa*) Brahman which is trans-linguistic and trans-rational. Therefore, the Self cannot be revealed by any *pramāṇa*. According to Advaita when *avidyā*, the only obstacle in the path of Self-Knowledge, is negated, the effulgent Self shines in all its splendour.

### 3. *The Certitude of a Pramāṇa and Tarka*

Although Advaita admits six *pramāṇas*, scripture alone is considered to be a *pramāṇa*, and all the other five *pramāṇas* are *pramāṇas* only for the sake of courtesy (*upacāra*). Advaita stipulates that a *pramāṇa* is a means of valid cognition (*pramā-karaṇam pramāṇam*). A valid-cognition (*saṁyag jñāna*) is that cognition whose content is unsublatable (*abūdhita viśayaka jñānam pramāṇam*), and new (*apūrvā*). Since the *Vedas* are super-human (*apauruṣeya*) in origin, they are free from doubt (*saṁśaya*) and error (*viparyaya*) — the defects (*doṣas*) of human origin, and their content — Brahman, is unsublatable. Moreover the knowledge that the Self is identical with Brahman (*jīva-brahma-aikya-jñāna*) is novel, and can be got only from scripture. Hence the *Vedas* alone can convey infallible knowledge of the Self, and they can never be denied by any logician.

According to Nyāya, an argument (*tarka*) is a kind of reasoning through which we formulate a probable hypothesis (*ūha*) when the real nature of something is unknown, and there is scope for such a hypothesis. Since reason generates only a probability and not a certainty, it is not an independent *pramāṇa*, but only strengthens a *pramāṇa* by being its subordinate. For example, one may doubt whether the soul is eternal or non-eternal. Then one argues that if the soul is non-eternal, then the view that the soul experiences the fruit of actions done in previous lives, and that one must do good deeds to have a happy future becomes insignificant and meaningless. Hence on rational grounds, one understands that the soul must be eternal. This probability vindicates the scriptural view that the Self is eternal.



According to Advaita, the conclusions deduced rationally by logic are not final because they can be refuted by other logicians who are more intelligent. Moreover there is no single logician who is accepted as the best logician by all logicians; and we cannot assemble all the logicians of the past, present, and future at one place and time so that they may together arrive at a final conclusion.

#### 4. *The Status of Tarka*

Since Advaita is interested only in absolute and incorrigible certainty, and not furthering a mere corrigible probability, it conforms to scripture and does not admit reason as an independent *pramāṇa*. But this does not mean that reason is unimportant or unnecessary, for reason is necessary but not sufficient. The Reality which reason tries to comprehend is neither logical nor illogical but trans-logical. Hence the reason why scripture says that speech and mind return unable to comprehend Brahman (*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*).<sup>2</sup> To quote K. S. Murty, "by itself reasoning is useless, while by themselves mere scriptural statements cannot clear doubts and produce conviction."<sup>3</sup> Hence there is a need to conduct metaphysical inquiry along scriptural lines (*śrutyanugṛhīta tarka*), if such inquiry is to be fruitful (*sārthaka* ; otherwise one may get lost in the jungle of bad logic *kutarka*), and become a victim of heresy (*aśāstrya* ; Vidyāraṇya in his *Pañcadaśī*, II. 31, illustrates this by saying, "These Buddhists, merged in darkness, and seeing through the one eye of inference and neglecting the authority of the *Vedas* reached only the nothingness."<sup>4</sup>

*anādytya śrutim maurkhyādime baudhāstamasvinaḥ  
āpedire nirātmatvam-anumāna-aikya cakṣuṣaḥ.*

Hence reason and revelation are like the two eyes of the soul for gaining a holistic vision (*darśana*) of Reality.

According to Vācaspati, logic is in conformity with scripture, when: (a) it is dependent on scripture, (b) it explains the purport of scripture, and (c) it is not opposed to scripture. This kind of logic destroys doubts and misunderstandings after the true state of affairs is known through scripture.<sup>5</sup> In this way, reason serves as an indispensable aid in unravelling the purport of scripture and is subservient to it. Therefore, “*śruti* is what is helped, *yukti* or *tarka* is what helps... it should be regarded as subsidiary to *śruti* and *anubhūti*.”<sup>6</sup> All this does not imply that Advaita is dogmatic. It only tries to guide a wayward intellect, and help it attain the highest good (*śreyas*) - Brahman, by suggesting the strategy to be adopted in its spiritual journey. “The students of Vedānta are required to place faith in *śruti*, even as the learners of science must begin with a sense of confidence in the scientific theories formulated by the master-minds in the field. The final test in Vedānta, however, is experience, just as in science the arbiters of theory are said to be facts.”<sup>7</sup> Hence the faith in scripture emphasized by Advaita is only methodological. Reason helps us to confirm the scriptural truth in one’s own experience through intuition, by negating, through the method of co-presence (*anvaya*) and co-absence (*vyatireka*), all the non-eternal psycho-physical phenomena superimposed on the Self.

##### 5. *The Kinds of Tarka*

Śaṅkara in his *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* speaks about two kinds of *anvaya-vyatireka*.<sup>8</sup> They are :



- (a) *pada anvaya-vyatireka* — here we identify that words like “*ātma*”, “*caitanya*”, “*prajñānam*,” “*brahma*”, “*sat*”, etc. indicate the noumenal Self or the pure Self; and that words like “*gantā*”, “*jñātā*,” “*kartā*” “*bhoktā*”, etc. refer to the empirical Self or the Self conjoined with the body-mind-sense complex; and
- (b) *padārtha anvaya-vyatireka* — here the Self is distinguished from the not-Self through:
1. the *dr̥ḡ-dr̥śya anvaya-vyatireka* — the argument is that whatever is seen (*dr̥śya*) as an object of knowledge cannot be the Self. The body, mind, senses, and ego are seen by the Self. Therefore they are different from, and cannot be the Self.
  2. the *sākṣī-sākṣya anvaya-vyatireka* — this argument upholds that whatever is revealed by another is material and presupposes a sentient revealer. The body, mind, and senses are material. Therefore there must be another sentient entity which reveals both the presence and absence of the body, mind, and senses as their witness (*bhāva-abhāva-ubhaya-sākṣin*).
  3. the *āgamāpāyi tadavadhi anvaya-vyatireka* — this argument shows that anything which has an origination and destruction, i.e. is mutable is not-Self. The body, mind, and senses are mutable. Therefore, they are different from-Self, and are not-Self.

- 4 the *anuvṛtta-vyāvṛtta-anvaya-vyatireka* — this argument reveals that while the Self alone is invariably present in all the three states of experience — waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), and deep sleep (*susupti*), — the latter are only sometimes present. Therefore, the latter are unreal, and the Self alone is eternal and Real (*sat*).

### 6. *The Importance of Tarka*

According to Advaita, the soul is in its essential nature identical with Brahman, whose nature is existence (*sat*), knowledge (*cit*), and bliss (*ānanda*). Due to ignorance, the soul forgets its true nature (*svarūpa*) as essentially identical with Brahman, and wrongly identifies (*adhyāsa*) itself with the body, senses, and mind constituting the not-Self. It then considers itself as the knower, enjoyer, etc. of the external world and suffers the sorrows of transmigration. The bondage of the soul arises from a confusion of the enduring and eternal Self with the not-Self. This state of affairs can be terminated only through absolute certitude about the illusory nature (*mithyātva-niścaya*) of all the psycho-physical phenomena of the world, and intuition of one's essential identity with Brahman.

Advaita is a metaphysics of experience, because it analyses ordinary human experience at all levels — waking, dream, sleep — to isolate the Self from the not-Self. The aim of all inquiry and analysis is to arrive at the apodictic Self, by eliminating the not-Self masquerading as the Self. This is accomplished through the technique of co-presence and co-absence. An inquiry into the three states of experience (*avasthā-*



*traya-vicāra*) shows that the three states of waking, dream, sleep, and the reality of the objects cognized therein differ from one another. While the Self alone is invariably present in all the three states, the body, senses, mind, and their objects are only sometimes present and sometimes absent. Hence the latter are non-eternal, and the Self alone is eternal.

Being able to discern the eternal Self from the non-eternal or not-Self is foremost among the fourfold criteria which qualifies one to undertake an inquiry into the nature of the Self (*ātma-vicāra*); because a mind overwhelmed by diversity must not be deluded by its superficiality. One who is lacking in this fourfold qualification is debarred from undergoing the threefold final discipline consisting of the study of texts (*śravaṇa*), rational reflection (*manana*) on them, and contemplation (*nididhyāsana*) on their purport.

A seekar embarking on the final discipline initially believes that the diversity is real. This misconception is negated by making one realise by rational arguments involving analogies that the Self is different from the not-Self, and that the not-Self is illusory and the Self alone is Real through a process of induction. Advaita employs the rope-snake analogy (*rajju-sarpa-nyāya*) to explain how the non-dual Brahman appears as the world of objects, and the crystal-red-flower analogy (*japā-kusuma-nyāya*) to explain how the infinite Brahman appears as the finite soul. Like the "snake" superimposed on the rope, all the psycho-physical phenomena are mere superimpositions (*adhyasthas*) on the non-dual Brahman. What the rope is to the "snake" Brahman is to the world. When the right knowledge of rope is attained, the "snake" ceases to

exist; so also when one has right knowledge of the Self, plurality ceases to exist. Just as the rope does not undergo any change (*pariṇāma*) at any time — before the “snake” was seen, while it was cognized, and after it is sublated, so also Brahman does not undergo any change at any time — before the pluralistic world is perceived, while it is perceived, and after its apparent reality is sublated; because Brahman is immutable (*kūṭastha*) and eternal. All change takes place only in the mind of the individual and not in Brahman the supreme substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of all the psycho-physical phenomena. This analogy is an example of an unconditioned error (*nirupādhikabhrama*). Just as a colourless crystal appears red when a red flower is placed beside it; so also when Brahman gets conditioned by *avidyā*, it appears as the soul. Once the red flower is removed, the crystal “re-gains” its colour; so also when *avidyā* is sublated by Self-knowledge, the soul “re-attains” Brahman. This analogy illustrates a conditioned error (*sopādhikabhrama*).

In the final discipline for attaining Self-knowledge, reason negates the not-Self in two stages — “as a part of *śravaṇa*, before the instruction on the principal texts of the *Upaniṣads*, the *mahāvākyas*, and subsequently as *manana*, after the instruction on *the mahāvākyas*.”<sup>9</sup> The application of the six criteria for eliciting the purport of scripture (*ṣaḍ-tātparya-liṅga*) itself involves reasoning for harmonising the initial and concluding passages (*upakrama-upasamhāra*) of a text, for noting its novelty (*apūrvatā*), for discriminating the eulogistic and condemnatory parts (*arthavādas*), for justifying the purport (*upapatti*), etc. Therefore, reason has a very important role to play in the inter-



pretation of scriptural texts for deriving their purport — the identity of the Self with Brahman, and dissolution of the world of duality (*prapañcasya pravilayaḥ śabdena pratipādyate*),<sup>10</sup> otherwise the texts will appear unintelligible and nonsensical (*anartha*) if their implications are abandoned (*śrutahāni*) and their unintended sense (*aśruta-kalpanā*) is adopted. Hence to avoid this, a teacher instructs one by clarifying the meanings of the words of the text (*padārtha-śodhana*) which involves the application of the method of co-presence and co-absence.

Finally, the purport of the major texts of scripture is imparted to the seeker. But listening to the import of the major texts itself does not ensure an immediate knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of Brahman, because there are obstacles hampering the attainment of Self-knowledge. They are: (a) doubts about scripture as a means (*pramāṇagata-sandeha*) to liberation. This is overcome by the mediate knowledge (*parokṣa-jñāna*) got through scripture itself; (b) doubts about the nature of the Self (*prameyagata-sandeha*) which is sought to be attained. This is negated by rational reflection, whose function is two-fold — it not only exposes the untenability of the rival views of the opponent, but also instils in one the conviction that the Advaita view alone is true. Here reason reveals the non-eternal, through a process of deduction, because one refutes rival views and defends one's own theory by proffering arguments from scripture;<sup>11</sup> and (c) due to the force of latent impressions (*samskāras*) of old habits, there is the arising of misconceptions (*viparīta-bhāvanā*) in the form of perception of plurality, and reality in the physical phenomena. These are destroyed by constant contemplation on the non-dual Self.

According to Advaita, although *avidyā* is opposed to all logic (*sarva-nyāya-virodhini*) with regard to its—ontological status (*sattā*), cognition (*pratīti*), and existence (*sthitī*);<sup>12</sup> yet like a mirage (*mṛgatṛṣṇā*), *avidyā* has got only apparent existence (*pratibhāsa-mātraśarīratvāt*). It exists only as long as it is not inquired into, and hence it is described as “*avicārita-siddha*”. Once it is inquired into as suggested by Advaita, it ceases to exist like darkness before the rising sun. In this way when all the obscuring “cobwebs of ignorance and prejudice” are swept by the “broom of doubt” and inquiry,<sup>13</sup> the effulgent Self enshrined in the cave of the five sheaths (*pañcakōśas*) reveals itself. In this way, reason indirectly aids intuition to directly comprehend the Self. Therefore, reason is not opposed to intuition, for intuition includes the intellect and transcends it. Advaita is not barren intellectualism or mere mysticism. It is a synthesis of the head and the heart, for a vision (*darśana*) of Brahman. Like the two wings of a bird, reason and revelation function as the two wings of the soul in its edifying spiritual flight to eternity. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, Advaita is “a system of great speculative daring and logical subtlety. Its austere intellectualism, its remorseless logic, which marches on indifferent to the hopes and beliefs of man, its relative freedom from theological obsessions, make it a great example of a purely philosophical scheme.”<sup>14</sup>

#### NOTES

1. *Vide* R. Balasubramanian (Ed. and Tr.), *The Naiṣkarmyasiddhi of Sureśvara*, University of Madras, Madras, 1984, p. 309.

2. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, IV. 1.



3. K.S. Murty, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1974, p. 163.
4. Swahananda, *The Pañcadaśī of Śrī Vidyāranya Swāmi*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1980, p. 43.
5. *Vide* K. S. Murty, *op.cit.*, p. 150.
6. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Gauḍapāda*, University of Madras, Madras, 1975, p. 88.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
8. *Vide* R. Balasubramanian (Ed. and Tr.) *op. cit.* p. 224.
9. T.P. Ramachandran, *The Concept of the Vyāvahārika in Advaita Vedānta*, University of Madras, Madras, 1980, p. 158.
10. Maṇḍana, *Brahma-siddhi*, IV, 3.
11. T.P. Ramachandran, *op.cit.*, pp. 160-161.
12. Sureśvara, *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, III. 66.
13. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *op.cit.*, p. 86.
14. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, The Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990, p. 445

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7. Swahananda, *The Pañcadaśī of Śrī Vidyāranya Swāmī*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1980.



## ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE WORLD IN ADVAITA

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*M. Venkatalakshmi*\*

According to Advaita, Brahman is the only reality. Advaita seeks support from *śruti* in order to establish its position. The Advaitins hold that *śruti* conveys the idea that reality is one when it says that Being (Brahman) is one only (*ekameva*), without a second (*advitīyam*). It implies that there is no diversity at all. Brahman is beyond all differences (*bhedas*), viz. *sajātīya*, *vijātīya*, and *svagata*.<sup>1</sup> Brahman, the ultimate reality, is devoid of all these differences, since all these are empirical distinctions. The word “*ekam*” excludes *sajātīya-bheda* and *svagata-bheda* and “*advitīyam*” excludes *vijātīya-bheda*.<sup>2</sup>

The Advaitins reject the view that plurality is real. To them, plurality spoken of in scripture is not *ultimately* real: in other words, plurality is only at the *vyavāhārika* level and so it is spoken of figuratively. Oneness alone is real. The opponents, on the other

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hand, hold the view that oneness is used figuratively. The Advaitins, however, reject this view by quoting the relevant texts from the *Upaniṣads* which go to prove the unreality of the pluralistic phenomenal world. The *śruti* text denies diversity when it says, "In it there is no diversity."<sup>4</sup> The knowledge of diversity is condemned in the *Upaniṣad* when it declares, "He (who sees diversity) goes from death to death."<sup>4</sup> *Śruti* holds the view that the perception of plurality is due to illusion (*bhrama*) and that plurality, therefore, is not real.

Advaita establishes the non-dualism of the reality by ascribing *mithyātva* to the world of plurality (*Brahma satyam jaganmithyā*). Here, the word "*mithyā*" is used in a technical sense by the Advaitins. It means that which is neither real nor unreal. Hence, it is indescribable or indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*).

Advaita establishes *mithyātva* by means of two arguments, *viz.* (1) the argument of *drśyatva*, (2) the argument from *vyāvartamānatva*. These arguments will be discussed a little later. To the question, "Why is it that we experience the illusory world of plurality?" the answer is *avidyā*, which conceals the truth (*suppressio vers*) and projects the false (*suggestio falsi*). The latter is called superimposition (*adhyāsa*). *Avidyā* conceals the essential nature of Brahman and projects the world of plurality on it. This projection is a form of superimposition.

The *śruti* text also declares that Brahman is the source of the whole universe: that is to say, Brahman is the cause of the world. In order to determine the ontological status of the world, it is necessary to under-



stand the cause-effect relation between Brahman and the world. For the Advaitins, cause alone is real, while the effect is only an appearance. So, to explain the ontological status of the world in Advaita, we have to discuss the criterion of reality, the theory of superimposition, and the theory of causation.

### *Criteria of Reality*

One can arrive at the true nature of the world by formulating the criteria of reality and by applying them to the world. According to Advaita, "real" is that which is free from contradiction at all times, or, in other words, that which is not subject to sublation in all the three periods of time (*trikālābādhyatva*). Brahman is not sublatale. It is existence unaffected by time. It is truth uncontradicted. It is what it is. It does not *become*, for it just *is*. It is the perfect Being, the full. It is self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*). It is self-existent (*svatassiddha*). Hence, Brahman alone is real. On the other hand the world is subject to sublation. It is not self-luminous, self-caused, or self-existent. Hence, it is not real.

"Unreal" is that which is not given in our experience at all, either in the past or in the present; nor can it be an object of experience in the future; for example, the sky-flower, hare's horn, barren woman's son, etc. The world cannot be regarded as unreal, since it is given in our experience till the knowledge of Brahman dawns on us. The objects of the world which fulfil the demands of our pragmatic life have the objectivity of their own. Hence, the things of the world cannot be categorized either under the category of "is" or that of "is not". Here, Advaita brings in the third category, *viz.* "*mithyā*" in order to explain

the things of the world. The empirical world is called *mithyā* since it is neither real nor unreal. We cannot say that it is both real and unreal, since it will violate the law of contradiction. So the world is different from both real and unreal. It is indescribable, indeterminate. It is *sadasadvilakṣaṇa*.

### *Two Arguments to Prove the Mithyātvā of the World*

Two of the arguments formulated in Advaita to prove the illusoriness of the world will be stated here. What is called the *mithyātvā anumāna* makes use of cognizability (*dr̥śyatva*) as the reason (*hetu*) to prove the illusoriness of the world. According to this argument, anything that is cognized is illusory. A brief explanation of the cognizer-cognized or subject-object relation will be helpful in this connection. In every cognition there is a cognizer which cognizes a given object. The cognizer is the Self, which is always the subject. Advaita maintains that the Self can never become an object of knowledge. If it were an object of knowledge, it cannot be real, for anything which is an object of knowledge, that is to say, anything which is cognized, is *mithyā*. Śaṅkara formulates the argument which proves the illusoriness of the world by the following argument using *dr̥śyatva* as the reason (*hetu*):

The given object of the world is illusory.  
Because it is seen.

Whatever is seen is illusory, e.g. a dream-lion.

In the above argument a dream object is given as a proving instance in support of the invariable relation (*vyāpti*). It is admitted that whatever is seen in dream experience is illusory because it suffers sublation by



the waking experience. In dream (*svapna*) there is cognizer-cognized relation. Everything that is cognized in dream appears to be real so long as the dream experience lasts. It is only when the person wakes up that the object cognized or experienced is said to be not real. What is the reason for saying that the object cognized in dream is not real? The answer is that it suffers sublation at the waking level. So, the dream object which is cognized (*dr̥śya*) is illusory. In the same way the objects of waking experience are also illusory, because they are cognized. It may be noted that the above argument implies two other arguments which may be stated as follows:

Whatever is cognized suffers sublation.

The objects of waking and dream experience are cognized.

Therefore, they suffer sublation.

Whatever suffers sublation is illusory.

The objects of waking and dream experience suffer sublation.

Therefore, they are illusory.

So anything that is cognized suffers sublation and whatever suffers sublation is illusory.

Let us now consider the second argument which makes use of *vyāvartamānatva* as the reason. According to Advaita, only the Self is invariably present in our experience, whereas the not-Self, whatever it may be, is not invariably present in our experience; that is to say, the not-Self is sometimes present and sometimes absent. All objects which are cognized both at the waking and dream experience are physical body, senses, and the mind — all these come under the

category of the not-Self. It is wellknown that a lion of waking experience is absent in dream experience, while a dream-lion is absent in waking experience. Again, the physical body and the senses which function at the waking level are absent in dream. While the mind is functioning at the waking and dream experience, it is absent in deep sleep experience. It means that all these objects are sometimes present and sometimes absent; they are, that is to say, characterized by separability (*vyāvartamānatva*). The argument may be stated as follows:

The objects of our waking experience are illusory.

Because they are characterized by separability.

Whatever is characterized by separability is illusory, e.g. a dream-lion.

### *Superimposition*

In Advaita the theory of superimposition plays a crucial role. It is through the concept of *adhyāsa* that Advaita tries to explain the problem of erroneous perception. The Advaita analysis of the argument from illusion is unique. It is not necessary to go into an elaborate discussion of the different theories of erroneous perception we have in Indian epistemology. While for other *pramāṇa*-theorists the object of erroneous perception is either *sat* or *asat*, for the Advaitins it is *mithyā*. Hence, the Advaita theory of erroneous perception, which forms a class by itself, is unique. Advaita explains the problem of erroneous perception through superimposition. The relation between Brahman and the world, which is a metaphysical



problem, is also explained in terms of superimposition. If we take the stock illustration of rope and snake, we can say that, what the rope is to the snake, Brahman is to the world. In other words, the theory of superimposition is made use of in the explanation of both epistemic and metaphysical problems.

Śaṅkara defines superimposition (*adhyāsa*) as “the apparent presentation, in the form of remembrance, to consciousness of something previously observed in some other thing. That is to say, *adhyāsa* consists in the apparent presentation of the attribute of one thing in another thing; consequently the given object is not cognized as it is, but differently.

It is necessary at this stage to determine the ontological status of the rope-snake, *i. e.* the snake which appears in the rope. Advaita holds that, while the empirical snake is real, the rope-snake is illusory. An object which is empirically real such as a tree and a table belongs to the *vyāvahārika* realm. It possesses empirical reality (*vyāvaharika-sattā*). On the contrary, an object such as a rope-snake and a dream-lion is illusory (*prātibhāsika*). It possesses phenomenal or apparent reality (*vyāvahārika-sattā*). Brahman-Ātman, by contrast to empirical reality and phenomenal reality, is *pāramārthika*. It is, therefore, spoken of as possessing *pāramārthika-satta*. It may be noted that this way of characterizing Brahman-Ātman is contextual. Brahman-Atman is called *pāramārthika-sattā* because we speak of *prātibhāsika-sattā* in the case of some objects and of *vyāvahārika-sattā* in the case of some other objects. Hence, in the Advaita tradition there is the theory of three levels of reality — phenomenal, empirical, and absolute. Certainly, it is not the

case that reality possesses levels. Brahman or the Self, the sole reality, does not admit of distinctions such as levels or degrees. On the contrary, it is only our experience that admits of levels or degrees.

According to Advaita, an object which is superimposed on something else due to *avidyā māyā* has no reality or status of its own other than that of the substratum on which it is superimposed. In the rope-snake example, the rope is the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) and the snake is the superimposed (*kalpita*) thereon. The superimposed object derives its reality from its substratum. That is why it has got a dependent existence, which is no existence at all, a dependent reality which is no reality at all. So long as the substratum remains concealed and not known, the superimposed object has existence and is known. What we have said above in respect of rope-snake holds good in the case of Brahman-world relation. Brahman is the substratum on which the world is superimposed; and so the latter has only a dependent existence, a dependent reality. To say that it is *mithyā* is to say that it has a dependent existence, which is conveyed here by the expression "*vyāvahārika-sattā*". This, however, does not mean that the empirical world does not exist. When the Advaitin admits that even an illusory object such as a rope-snake exists which is "private", how can he deny the existence of the world of space and time, which is "public"? The logic of Advaita, it may be stated here, proceeds on the basis of the principle, "perception is a matter of existence," anything, that is to say, that is perceived or experienced must be admitted to be existent and real, though the reality that is accorded to such an entity cannot be ultimate



or absolute. Such an entity may be either *vyāvahārika* or *prātibhāsika*. But what is *prātibhāsika* (e. g. a rope-snake) or *vyāvahārika* (e. g. a tree) is *mithyā* because it is cognized and sublated. Though the empirical world, unlike a rope-snake or a dream-lion, is not sublated at this point of time, it is in principle sublatable. When the truth of Brahman-Ātman is known, the empirical world gets sublated. That is way Gauḍapāda says that, when the truth of oneness is known, plurality ceases to be (*jñāte dvaitam na vidyate*).<sup>5</sup>

### *Theory of Causation*

To explain the appearance of the phenomenal world, the Advaitins advocate the causal theory of transfiguration (*vivārta-vāda*). According to it, the material cause produces the effect without undergoing any change is its being whatsoever. Material cause, it may be stated here, is of two kinds — that which produces the effect through undergoing transformation (*pariṇāma*) and that which produces the effect without undergoing transformation (*vivārtah*). For example, clay, through undergoing transformation, is the material cause of pot, whereas rope is the cause of the appearance of snake without undergoing any transformation. So, while the former is called the transformative material cause (*pariṇāmi-upādāna-kāraṇa*), the latter is called transfigurative material cause (*vivarta-upādāna-kāraṇa*).

Advaita admits both kinds of material causality. Which kind of material causality is to be pressed into service depends upon the problem to be tackled. What is distinctive of Advaita is not the theory of transformation, but only the theory of transfiguration.

As a general principle, Advaita holds that, while cause alone is real, the effect is an appearance and is, therefore, *mithyā*. There is the *Upaniṣadic* text which says, "An effect (*vikāra*) which arises through speech is only a name; the clay alone is real."<sup>6</sup> The example of clay and pot is given in the text in the course of the enunciation of the principle of cause-effect relation with a view to establish the reality of cause vis-a-vis the effect. Since pot arises through the modification of clay, it is a *vikāra*, a modified thing. What exists really is only clay; if so, the pot, a modified entity, exists only in name. In this example, clay is said to be real because it is the cause. What holds good with regard to clay is true with regard to every entity which is a cause. Every cause we are familiar with is itself an effect. If so, the pursuit of cause-effect enquiry (*kārya-kāraṇa-vicāra*) will lead us to the final cause, the First Cause, which is the ground of the entire universe. On the basis of the view that cause alone is real, Advaita maintains that Brahman-Ātman, which is the ultimate ground, the ground of all grounds, is real. It follows that the world which is a projection of a *māyā* on the infinite ground is *mithyā*.

Advaita is a philosophy of standpoints. From the empirical standpoint, the world is real, but from the transcendental level, it is not real. The world of names and forms becomes unreal only for the realized person, since he visualizes only Brahman, the one immanent principle, in everything. He realizes that all this is Brahman. He does not perceive any diversity since he realizes that diversity is only a false appearance of *Sat*, the non-dual principle. But the world remains very much true for an ordinary person.



NOTES

1. *Sajātīya-bheda* is the difference seen among the members of the same class. *Vijātīya bheda* refers to the difference between species of two classes. *Spagata bheda* refers to the internal differences in an object.

2. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI, ii, i.

3. *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, 24, 4-19.

4. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 2.1.10.

5. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.2.1.

6. Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, 1.18.

## PURE CONSCIOUSNESS — THE SUBSTRATUM OF SUPERIMPOSITION OF MIND

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The Advaitin holds the view that *jīva* is a blend of Pure Consciousness and mind. And the blend is a superimposed one. This implies that Pure Consciousness is the substratum of the superimposition of mind. Śrī Vyāsatīrtha raises several objections against this view and these objections have been answered by Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī.

### *First Objection and Its Examination*

The First objection raised by Śrī Vyāsatīrtha against the theory of the superimposed relation between mind and Pure Consciousness and the latter serves as the substratum is this: if the relation between the Pure Consciousness and mind is admitted to be a superimposed one, then Pure Consciousness must be admitted to be the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind. Pure Consciousness, however, cannot serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind. It is because in order that a factor—shell (say) may serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition

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of silver what is required is that the shell must be manifested in its general nature as 'this' and it should not be manifested in its specific nature of shell-ness. In the same way, if Pure Consciousness were to serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind, then there must be the manifestation of its general nature and non-manifestation of its specific aspect. Pure Consciousness, however, is free from any characteristic feature — general or specific, and hence there is no possibility of the manifestation of general nature and non-manifestation of specific nature in its case. The result of this argument is that Pure Consciousness cannot serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind.<sup>1</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī answers the objection set forth in the foregoing paragraph by stating that it is true that Pure Consciousness is free from any *real* characteristic either general or specific. But this does not preclude the possibility of its serving as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind and other objects of the world. It is because we do have apparent characteristic features — general and specific in Pure Consciousness. The latter, according to the *Upaniṣads*, is unconditioned reality, unconditioned bliss and unconditioned Consciousness. But we have to assume a distinction between the unconditioned aspect and the aspects of reality, bliss and Consciousness on the basis of our experiences and the corresponding expressions of the forms 'unconditioned bliss is not manifest', and, 'reality, bliss and Consciousness are manifest'. Such a distinction between the unconditioned aspect and the aspects of reality, etc., is only apparent and not real. It is this unconditioned aspect

that is admitted to be the specific feature of Pure Consciousness, while the aspects of reality, bliss and Consciousness are taken to be its general features. Since unconditioned aspect is not manifested as being present in the objects of the world we may take it as the specific feature of Pure Consciousness. The general feature of Pure Consciousness is thus manifested, while its specific is not so, and so the Pure Consciousness could serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind. It must be noted here that this distinction of the general feature and specific feature in regard to Pure Consciousness is only apparent and not real.<sup>2</sup>

### *Second Objection and Its Examination*

The second objection Śrī Vyāsatīrtha raises against the Advaita view that there is erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness and the latter serves as the substratum is this: in the case of erroneous cognition of silver upon shell, the latent impression born out of the experience of silver which is present elsewhere, which is real, and which is known as *pradhāna* that is the cause. In the same way, in the case of erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness, there is the need for latent impression born out of the experience of mind which is different from the one that is the object of erroneous cognition and which is real. If the Advaitin admits the existence of a real mind to account for the erroneous cognition of mind, then his basic position that everything apart from Pure Consciousness is non-real will be lost. If, however, mind which is different from the one that is the object of erroneous cognition were admitted to be non-real then one cannot have latent impression born out of



valid knowledge of mind. As a result there cannot be the erroneous cognition of mind at all. Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī summarizes the objection of Śrī Vyāsatīrtha thus:

*viśvam yadi kalpitam syāt tadā sapradhānam syāt,  
na caivam, tasmānna kalpitamiti.*<sup>3</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdanana Sarasvatī answers the above objection by stating that there is the erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness when one comes back to the waking state from that of deep-sleep. And latent impression born out of the experience of mind which one had prior to the state of deep-sleep accounts for the erroneous cognition of mind when one comes back to the waking state. The mind which was the content of the erroneous cognition prior to the state of deep-sleep serves as the *pradhāna*. And latent impression born out of erroneous cognition of the *pradhāna* too can serve as the cause of yet another similar erroneous cognition. For, what is required for the erroneous cognition of an object is the latent impression arisen out of mere cognition of *pradhāna* and not the reality thereof.<sup>4</sup> In the present case, one has the latent impression born out of the experience of mind which too is the content of earlier erroneous cognition, and so there could be the erroneous cognition of mind, and Pure Consciousness could serve as the substratum.

### *Third Objection and Its Examination*

The third objection which Śrī Vyāsatīrtha raises in regard to the Advaitin's contention that there is erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness and the latter serves as the substratum is this: in the case of erroneous cognition of shell-silver, similarity

between the substratum of the erroneous cognition, namely, the 'this' element of shell and the content of the erroneous cognition, namely, silver is noticed. In the same way, if it is contended by the Advaitin that there is the erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness, then there must be similarity between Pure Consciousness — the substratum, and mind — the content of erroneous cognition. Similarity between two objects is identified on the basis of the presence of same qualities or actions in both the objects. Pure Consciousness which is considered to be the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind by the Advaitin is free from any quality or activity. And so there is no possibility of identifying qualities or activities common to both Pure Consciousness and mind. The result is that we cannot treat the two as similar to one another. The contention of the Advaitin that there could be the erroneous cognition of one as another even without similarity as in the case of crystal as red substance, Śrī Vyāsatīrtha contends, is wrong. It is because the erroneous cognition of crystal as red substance is an instance caused by a limiting adjunct—a red flower. It is *sopādhikādhyāsa* and instances like this do not require cognition of similarity. But the erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness is caused without the intervention of any limiting adjunct. This is a case of *nirupādhikādhyāsa* like shell-silver and instances like this definitely require knowledge of similarity between the substratum of erroneous cognition and the content of it. Thus, in every case of erroneous cognition, cognition of similarity between the substratum of erroneous cognition and the content of it is a necessity. Since similarity cannot be had between Pure Consciousness and mind there can be no



erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness. And Pure Consciousness need not be considered as the substratum.<sup>5</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī answers the objection raised by Śrī Vyāsatīrtha thus: knowledge of similarity is not at all a criterion for erroneous cognition. Śrī Vyāsatīrtha himself has admitted that in the case of erroneous cognition caused by the intervention of limiting adjunct (*sopādhikādhyāsa*) knowledge of similarity is not at all required. But he insists that in the cases of erroneous cognitions such as shell-silver, etc. which are not caused by the intervention of limiting adjuncts (*nirupādhikādhyāsa*), knowledge of similarity, is a must. The erroneous cognition of mind upon Pure Consciousness is one such instance and so similarity is essential which, however, is not present. Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī points out that it is not an invariable rule that erroneous cognitions of *nirupādhika*-types require knowledge of similarity. The erroneous cognition of yellow colour upon the conch is an instance of *nirupādhikādhyāsa* and there is no similarity between the yellow colour that is the content of erroneous cognition and the conch which is the substratum of erroneous cognition.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of erroneous cognition of shell-silver, we have the knowledge of the substratum as 'this' caused by sense-contact with the object in front, defect in the form of *tūlājñāna* which is a derivative of primal nescience — *mūlāvidyā* and which is present in the consciousness conditioned by the shell and latent impression born out of experience of silver earlier. And, similarity between the content of erroneous cognition and the substratum of it does not govern all

cases of erroneous cognitions, although it is present quite accidentally in the case of shell-silver cognition. It is helpful in reviving the latent impressions no doubt; but on this ground it cannot be taken as a necessary factor in the rise of erroneous cognition. It is because latent impressions can be revived even by unseen merit or demerit and not necessarily by similarity alone.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Fourth Objection and Its Examination*

The fourth ground on the basis of which Śrī Vyāsātīrtha objects to the concept of erroneous cognition of mind and other factors upon the Pure Consciousness and the latter serves as the substratum is this: the causal aggregate that leads to the rise of erroneous cognition of mind, etc., must involve within itself a defect. If it is held that erroneous cognition of mind, etc., arises from mere causal aggregate and no defect is attached to it, then the origination of invalidity of such an erroneous cognition must be held to be intrinsic. Not only this. The direct knowledge of Brahman which arises from the major texts of the *Upaniṣads* that are not associated with any defect must be treated to be erroneous in nature, which, however, is not the case. To overcome this difficulty, the Advaitin has to admit that erroneous cognition arises from a defect. And if that defect is admitted to be nonreal in nature, then being erroneous, it also would be admitted to have been caused by another defect which too for the reason adduced now must have been caused by yet another defect; and so on, *ad infinitum*. To get over this difficulty, the Advaitin must hold that erroneous cognition arises from a defect that is real. In that case, the cognition that arises from such



a defect cannot be erroneous in nature. Hence the so called erroneous cognition of mind, etc., is not at all possible; and the view that Pure Consciousness is the substratum of such an erroneous cognition is not sound.<sup>8</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī answers the objection set forth above thus: *avidyā* is beginningless; and, so in respect of its cognition no cause is required. This means that there is no necessity to admit a specific cause in the form of a defect in respect of the erroneous cognition of *avidyā*. Mind, etc., have a beginning and so in respect of their erroneous cognition we do accept *avidyā* as the cause. Since the erroneous cognition of mind, etc., is caused by *avidyā*, its invalidity cannot be viewed as intrinsic in respect of its origination.

Further the criticism that the defect which is the cause of erroneous cognition is non-real or erroneous would require another cause thus leading to the fallacy of *infinite regress* would not be applicable in the present case, as *avidyā* which is admitted to be the defect is beginningless. It does not require and, in fact, cannot have a cause.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Fifth Objection and Its Examination*

Śrī Vyāsātīrtha argues that Pure Consciousness is held to be the substratum of the cognition of mind, etc., on the assumption that the latter is erroneous or non-real or *mithyā*. If it were conceded that the latter is *mithyā* then its absolute non-existence must also be present in the Pure Consciousness. It is because an entity — silver (say) is admitted to be *mithyā* as its absolute non-existence is present in the substratum where it is located. In the same way, mind, etc., if

they are treated to be erroneous or *mithyā*, then it goes without saying that their absolute non-existence too is present in the substratum, namely, Pure Consciousness. When such is the case, there is no need for any effort on the part of the soul to get rid of mind, etc., which along with their characteristics constitute bondage.<sup>10</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī points out that it is true that there is absolute non-existence of mind, etc., and their cognition in Pure Consciousness. Their non-existence is eternally attained no doubt. But because of *avidyā*, it is unattained *as it were*. Hence they are viewed as not attained. On the removal of *avidyā* by the direct knowledge of Brahman, the absolute non-existence of mind, etc., which is eternally attained and which remains unattained *as it were* is attained *as it were*. Hence effort on the part of the soul to attain the direct knowledge of Brahman is necessary. After the rise of the direct knowledge of Brahman or Pure Consciousness we too maintain that there is no need for any effort to get rid of mind, etc., and their cognition.<sup>11</sup>

### *Sixth Objection and Its Examination*

The sixth objection of Śrī Vyāsātīrtha to the view that Pure Consciousness is the substratum of erroneous cognition of mind, etc., is this: the Advaitin holds the view that the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness resulting from intense meditation (*nididhyāsana*) removes bondage which is only the relation of mind and its characteristics to Pure Consciousness. If mind and its characteristics are erroneously presented or superimposed upon the Pure Consciousness, then they



cannot be removed by the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness resulting from intense meditation upon the latter. It is because unseen demerit (*durita*) is admitted to be removed by the direct knowledge of a chosen deity resulting from an intense meditation upon the latter. And the unseen demerit is never admitted to be erroneously presented in the deity.

Further the sight of *setu* with prayerful trust associated with unseen merit born out of several religious observances is admitted to remove unseen demerit. The latter, however, is not admitted to be erroneously present in or superimposed upon the *setu*. In the same way, mind and its characteristics are admitted to be removed by the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness that results from intense meditation upon the latter; or they are admitted to be removed by the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness associated with unseen merit arising from the pursuit of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. In either case, mind and its characteristics need not be held to be erroneously present in or superimposed upon the Pure Consciousness. The latter, therefore, need not be assumed to be the substratum of the cognition of mind, etc.<sup>12</sup>

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī rejects the objection of Śrī Vyāsātīrtha thus: the silver that is erroneously presented upon a shell is noticed to be removed by the direct knowledge of the substratum which functions under the aspect of one having validity. From this we can deduce a rule that an entity whose valid knowledge is the sublating factor of another factor is the substratum of the erroneous cognition of the latter. The valid knowledge of Pure Consciousness is the sub-

lating factor of mind, etc., and their cognition. The latter, therefore, are erroneously present in the Pure Consciousness. The direct knowledge of the chosen deity born out of intense meditation upon the latter removes the unseen demerit not under the aspect of one having *pramāṭva* or validity but under the specific aspect of one having for its content an entity that is instructed to be meditated upon. The unseen demerit is not totally removed thereby; but it exists in its causal form, in the same way as a propitiatory act when performed does not remove the unseen demerit but makes the latter remain in its causal form without yielding forth its result, the sight of *setu* with a prayerful trust does not remove the unseen demerit but only makes it remain in its causal form. The unseen demerit, therefore, is not held to be erroneously present in the chosen deity or *setu*. The latent form of unseen demerit too will be removed by the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness. The latter removes it under the aspect of one having validity (*pramāṭva*). Hence it is admitted that unseen demerit is erroneously present in the Pure Consciousness.

Śrī Vyāsātīrtha has said that the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness aided by the unseen merit born out of the pursuit of *śravaṇa*, etc., will not remove mind, etc., and their cognition if the latter were admitted to be erroneously present in the Pure Consciousness.

Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī points out that the Advaitin never subscribes to the view that the unseen merit born out of the pursuit of *śravaṇa*, etc., removes mind, etc., and their cognition. On the other hand,



he admits that it facilitates the rise of the direct knowledge of Pure Consciousness which is the sole means of the removal of *avidyā*. Thereby there takes place the removal of the erroneous cognition of mind, etc., upon the Pure Consciousness.<sup>13</sup>

### Conclusion

Śrī Vyāsatīrtha is of the view that Pure Consciousness cannot serve as the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind, etc. Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has rejected the objections raised by Śrī Vyāsatīrtha. It comes to this: Pure Consciousness is the substratum of the erroneous cognition of mind, etc., through *avidyā*

### NOTES

1. *Nyāyāmṛta*, p. 374. See *Advaitasiddhi* (with the *Nyāyāmṛta* of Vyāsatīrtha), ed. Swami Yogīndrānanda, Saddharma Prakasana Pratisthanam, Benaras, 1977.

2. *Advaitasiddhi*, pp. 374-375.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

4. *ibid.*, pp. 377-78.

5. *Nyāyāmṛta*, p. 382.

6. *Advaitasiddhi*, p. 383.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Nyāyāmṛta*, p. 384.

9. *Advaitasiddhi*, p. 385.

10. *Nyāyāmṛta*, p. 392.

11. *Advaitasiddhi*, pp. 392-93.

12. *Nyāyāmṛta*, pp. 393-94.

13. *Advaitasiddhi*, pp. 394-95.

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संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-

स्विन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।

अत्यासन्नसुधाम्बुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-

त्पेषा शङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*samsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūtadāhavyathā-  
khinnānām jalakāṅkṣayā marubhuvi bhrāntyā*

*paribhrāmyatām*

*atyāsannasudhāmbudhiṁ sukhakaram brahmādvayaṁ*

*darśayaty-*

*eṣā śaṅkarabhārati vijayate nirvāṇasandāyini.*

To those who are afflicted, in the way of the world, by the burning pain given rise to by the scorching sun-shafts of misery, and who through delusion wander about in the desert (of worldliness) seeking water — showing the felicitous ocean of nectar, which is very near, the non-dual *Brahman*, this — the Voice of Śaṅkara — is victorious, leading, as it does, to liberation.