

A HALF-CENTURY JOURNAL OF ARTS, LITERATURE & SCIENCE

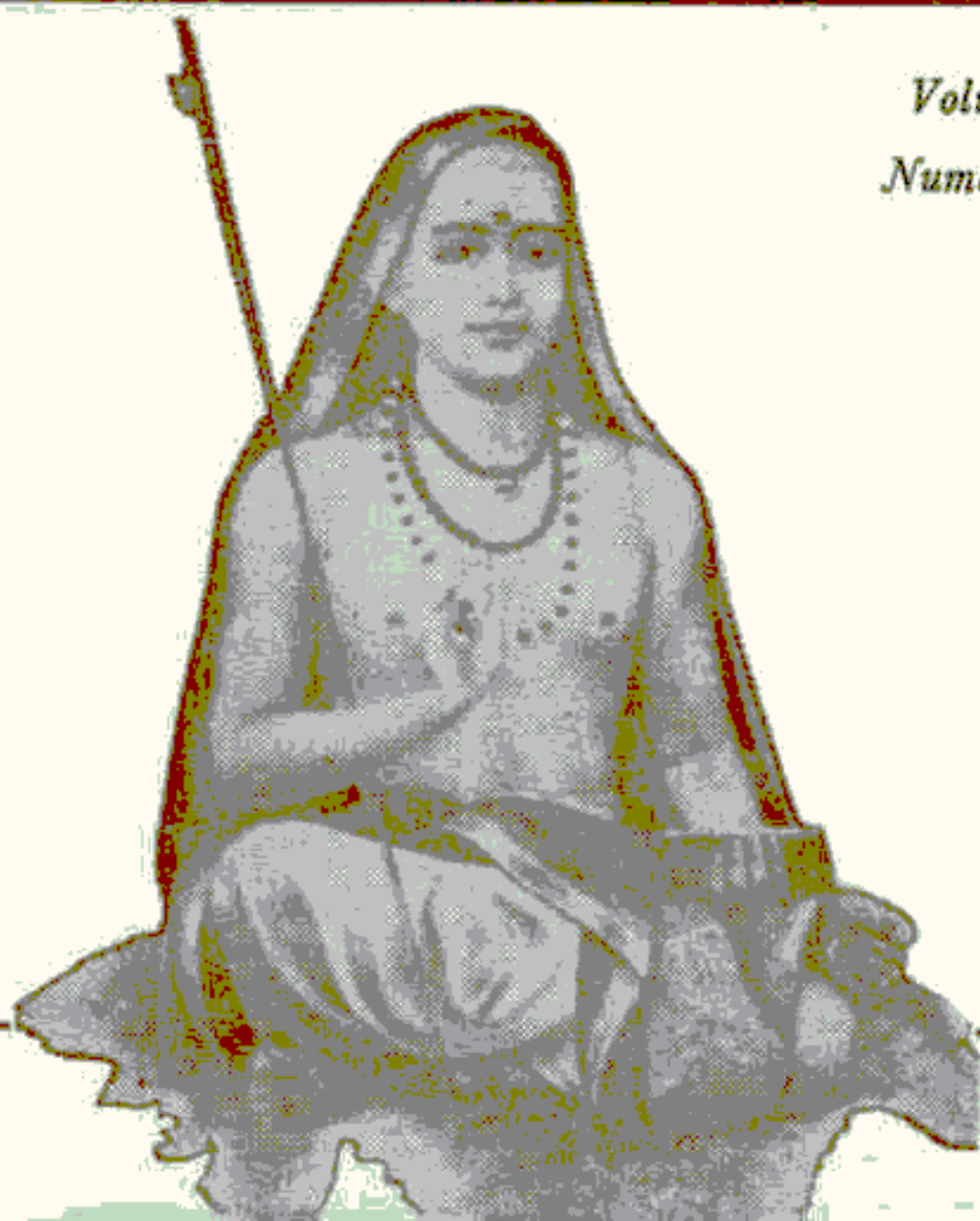
The VOICE of ŚĀNKA RĀ

Śāṅkara-bhāratī

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Editor
R. Balasubrahmanian

Volume NINETEEN
Numbers ONE—TWO



January & July

1994

esā śaṅkara-bhāratī vijayate
nirvāṇa-saṁdāyini

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

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ŚĀṆKARĀ

śaṅkara-bhārati

Chairman, Advisory Board
V. R. Kalyanasundara Sastri

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HOMAGE TO ŚAṄKARA

[158]

दक्षेण पाणिकमलेन विबोधमुद्रां
अन्येन नम्रवरदानसमर्थचिह्नम् ।
विभ्राण पद्मनिभनेत्र कृपाम्बुराशे
श्रीशङ्करार्य मम देहि पदावलम्बम् ॥

*dakṣeṇa pāṇikamalena vibodhamudrām
anyena namravaradāna-samartha-ciḥnam
bibhrāṇa padmanibhanetra kṛpāmburāṣe
śrī śaṅkarārya mama dehi padāvalambam.*

Oh Śrī Śaṅkārācārya! You are holding the *cinmudrā* (the emblem of full-blown knowledge) on your right lotus hand, and on the other the symbol of *varamudrā* (your supreme power to fulfil the desires of your devotees). Oh Lord with lotus-like eyes! Ocean of Compassion! may you kindly give me the support of your lotus-feet.

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श्रीकालटोघरणिभूषणभूतजन्मन्
 जन्मादिदुःखविनिवारणबद्धदीक्ष ।
 कारुण्यपूर्णनयनावनिदेवभाग्य
 श्रीशङ्करार्यं मम देहि पदावलम्बम् ॥

Śrī-kālatīdharanībhūṣaṇabhūtajanman
janmādi-duḥkhavinivāraṇabaddha-dīkṣa
kāruṇyapūrṇanayanāvanidevabhāgya
śrī śaṅkarārya mama dehi padāvalambam.

Oh great Preceptor! Śrī Śaṅkarācārya! You have made your advent at the holy place of Śrī Kālaḍi, the great ornament of the whole Earth. You have taken the great vow of relieving the people from their miseries of birth, etc. Oh Śrī Śaṅkara whose eyes are full of compassion! Oh Lord born as a result of the fortune of all twice-borns (gods on Earth)! may you kindly lend the support of your lotus-like feet to me, the humble devotee.

Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānanda Śivābhīnava Nṛsimhabhārati
 in *Śrīśaṅkarāryopadāvalambastava*

THE SAGE OF KĀÑCĪ

(Continued from *V.O.S. XVIII, No. 2, July, 1993*)

T.M.P. Mahadevan

The Golden Jubilee of the Ācārya's ascension to the Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha was celebrated on the 17th of March 1957, at Kalavai where he had ascended the *Pīṭha* in 1907. In the course of a message, the Ācārya observed:

"We know today that half a-century has passed. There is not much use in reviewing all that we have been able to do in the past fifty years. On the contrary, we should bestow our thoughts on what we have to do in the remaining years that are given to us by God in this life. What is it that has to be done by us? What has to be done is to gain the state of freedom from all action. But, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord declares repeatedly that the state of freedom from action cannot be obtained by remaining quiet (without performing our duty). It is by performing action that the state of actionlessness can be realized. What is that action which is very intense, by which actionlessness is to be achieved by us? In answering this

question, we recollect and remind you of the Bhagavatpāda's command: 'Let action be performed well; thus let God be worshipped!' Let us then perform our allotted actions. It is the performance of allotted actions that constitutes service to the Lord, worship of Him, and becomes the means to obtain His Grace. Therefore, performing our respective duties and thus worshipping the Lord, we shall gain the Supreme Good."

9. *Since 1957*

In the history of the city of Madras, the years 1957-59 constitute an unforgettable chapter; for, during these years, the Ācārya stayed in the city — visiting it after a lapse of twenty-five years — and blessed the people by his benign presence, by the daily *pūjā*, performed to Śrī Candramaulīsvara and Śrī Tripurasundarī, and by his after-*pūjā* discourses. An enthusiastic and reverential welcome was accorded to His Holiness the Jagadguru, when, accompanied by his Principal Disciple, he arrived in the city on the 23rd of September 1957. Sri V. Ramakrishna Aiyar, Deputy Chief Reporter to "The Hindu," Madras, to whom was "assigned" the task of reporting the ceremonial welcome, records his personal experience on that glorious night as follows:

"As I had not the good fortune of receiving the *darshan* of His Holiness previously, I went to my 'duty' in a professional attitude, little realizing the unique experience that awaited me. The first sight of His Holiness sent a thrill through my body and brought about an indescribable mental revolution. A glance from that shining benevolent eyes and a comforting

gesture from the hand, which caused a wave of peace to engulf one, made me surrender myself to him unreservedly.

“I could have discharged the duty assigned to me that day to the satisfaction of my office, by covering the reception accorded to His Holiness at ‘Farm House’, by Mr Kasturi Srinivasan and the members of his family and prominent citizens constituting the Reception Committee, and then winding up my report by mentioning that His Holiness and Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī were taken in procession in decorated palanquins to the Samskrit College, indicating the route taken by the procession. But I found myself unable to move away from that divine presence and without any conscious effort on my part, I followed the procession, noting down everything that happened *en route*. It was only after His Holiness retired late in the night at the Samskrit College that I managed to drag my feet home.”¹⁰

Thousands of devotess listened with rapt attention to the Ācārya’s after-*pūjā* discourses. It was a new experience of exaltation and ennoblement each day. To watch the Ācārya perform the *pūjā* was itself a unique participation in the adoration of the Divine. After the evening *pūjā*, the Ācārya would come to the platform and sit there in silence for a while. One was often reminded of Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti whose mode of *upadeśa* is silence. But, in order to bless us who cannot understand the language of silence, the Ācārya would begin to speak after

10. *Ācārya’s Call*, Madras Discourses, Part I, Introduction, pp. iii and iv (B. G. Paul & Co., Madras, 1964).

preparing the ground through silence. The speech would flow effortlessly, without the least trace of artificiality. Into the content of the speech would go the most ancient wisdom as well as the results of the latest research in a variety of disciplines. Above all, every word of the Ācārya's utterances would have as its support authentic inward experience. The entire audience would sit spell-bound, drinking in every syllable and accent and their deep significance. Those who could not listen to the discourses in person, for some reason or other, had the benefit of reading reports of them in the newspapers such as "The Hindu," and "The Swadesa Mitran."¹¹

The following is a brief account of the significance and gist of the Ācārya's teachings:

"True to the appellation *Jagadguru* (World-teacher,) Ācārya's teachings are meant for the entire mankind. Even when they are addressed to the Hindus, they are applicable *mutatis mutandis* to the followers of other faiths. Advaita, whose consolidation was the great life-mission of Ādi Śaṅkara, has no quarrel with any religion or spiritual perspective. No one is excluded from its portals. The plenary experience which is Advaita is the common goal of everyone. Inheriting this most comprehensive outlook as the Ācārya does, one finds no difficulty in accommodating

11. The discourses have been subsequently published in book form : (1) *Ācārya Svāmigalin Upanyāsaṅgal*. In three parts (Kalaimagal Karyalayam, Madras); (2) *The Call of the Jagadguru, Śrī Saṅkarācārya of Kāñcī*. Discourses compiled by Sri P. Sankaranarayanan (Ganesh & Co., Madras, 1958); (3) *Ācārya's Call, op., cit.*

apparently divergent points of view elevating them at the same time with the lever of Advaita experience.

“Advaita is not a school among schools of thought. As the Ācārya says, sages belonging to different traditions and religions have had the Advaita-experience; and they have shared their experience with others. Tattvarāya Svāmī was a Madhva; Mastān Sāheb was a Muslim. Even those thinkers who profess to oppose Advaita turn out to be contributors thereto; and all of them speak the language of Advaita. This shows that the expansive heart of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara accommodates all views on the ultimate Reality and all approaches to it. Though other systems may quarrel with Advaita, Advaita does not quarrel with them.

“It is in the context of Advaita that the Ācārya’s varied teachings fall in place. His exhortation for work for the common-weal, his advice for the adoption of simple and clean modes of living, his repeated invitation for offering worship to God in any of His myriad forms, his recommendation of the practice of concentration and meditation, his advocacy of the study of Vedānta and the realisation of its truth — all these are to be understood as relating to disciplines that lead to Advaita-experience.

“There is an unfounded criticism that Advaita accords no place to God in its scheme. The truth, however, is that, even the Advaita outlook one gains only through the Grace of God. There is nothing strange, therefore, in the Ācārya’s teaching, through example and precept, that the most important item in one’s daily programmes should be divine worship,

Those moments in one's life are in vain which are unrelated to the endeavour to bespeak the blessings of the Lord.

“As a spiritual discipline, the worship of one's chosen form of the Deity is indispensable for one's progress towards enlightenment. Especially at the initial stages it serves as the go-cart which helps the child to learn to walk. While praying one may ask for the fulfilment of one's personal ends; but the best prayer is that which asks God to dower the entire world with His blessings; for the devotee of the Lord should look upon all mankind as one.

“A theme which recurs frequently in the Acārya's speeches is the plea for inter-religious understanding. There is no meaning in the rivalries between the different faiths. The attempts at religious conversion are like those of the drivers of all sorts of conveyances at the railway station to “catch” passengers. While the behaviour of the drivers is understandable, that of the protagonists of religions is meaningless. As the God of all religious denominations is one, there is no need to give up one religion and adopt another. This does not mean that all the religions are uniform; uniformity is not important; what is important is unity; and all our faiths are united in proclaiming the supreme reality of the One God. The religions are like the arches of a bridge. To a man standing under a particular arch, that one would loom large and the others would appear small. But the fact is that all arches are similarly constructed and are of the same dimension. As God cannot be different, why should there be decrying of any religion? The religions are many only to cater to the different tastes of men.

This should not lead to religious fanaticism and hatred.

“The grandeur of Hinduism is that it consciously recognizes the unity of religions. That the different religions are not contradictory of, or antagonistic to, one another, but are only aspects of one Eternal Religion, is not a mere theory or abstract speculation with the Hindus; it is an article of faith. It is a tragedy, therefore, that there should be religious quarrels among the Hindus themselves. A major division in Hinduism is that between Vaishnavism and Śaivism. The Acārya is never tired of pointing out that, according to all our Scriptures and the teachings of all the great masters, Śiva and Vishnu are one. Our ancients have taught us in several ways the unity of Godhead. The conceptions of Naṭarāja and Raṅgarāja are complementary to each other. In fact, Brahmā, Vishnu and Śiva are but different aspects of the same Deity. A similar complementariness is to be noticed in the idea of God as male and female, as father and mother. The integrated views of the Deity as *Harihara*, and as *Ardhanārīśvara*, have a deep significance, and take us nearer the supreme truth.

“A resurgent and strong Hinduism is necessary not only for the salvation of the Hindus but also for the betterment of the world. The *Veda* which is the basic scripture of Hinduism is not a sectarian text. Whatever truth was declared by any great prophet can be traced to the *Veda*. On the river-banks of the Vedic *dharma*, the various religions are like the bathing-ghats. In the distant past, the Vedic religion was spread throughout the world. Gradually other religions appeared in the other parts of the globe,

each emphasizing some aspects of the religion of the *Veda*. To India belongs the privilege of preserving the ancient *dharma* in its purity and comprehensive nature.

“A disciplined and ordered life is what is taught in the *Veda*. The main Vedic disciplines are: performance of one’s duties (*karmānuṣṭhāna*), cultivation of the cardinal virtues (*śīla*), worship of the Deity (*upāsana*), and acquisition of wisdom (*jñāna*). To live like an animal, eating, sleeping, and begetting, is to prostitute the precious human birth. We must learn to put a curb on the animal propensities, and purify our minds. By good deeds we must convert the material goods into religious merit (*punya*) which alone is legal tender in the worlds to come. Earning and hoarding should not become the ends of life. A career-oriented education is no education. What should first be inculcated in young minds is respect for *dharma*. There is no point in asking people to increase their standard of living; what should be aimed at is improvement of the quality of life. The frail mortal cannot improve his life by self-effort alone; he must seek God’s Grace through worship and meditation. It is by bathing in the holy waters of meditation that the mind gets cleansed of its impurities. The mind so cleansed develops the power of discrimination; it gains the ability to distinguish the real from the unreal, which paves the way for the dawn of wisdom (*jñāna*).

“*Jñāna* is the fruit of the tree of life. The man of wisdom, the sage, is the ideal of man. He has no attachment and aversion; praise and blame are equal to him. He does not sink under the weight of so-called

troubles. A heavy log of wood becomes light when immersed in water. Let the troubles be sunk in the waters of *jñāna*, they will cease to be troubles. To the *jñānī* the supreme Self is the sole reality. As the dolls in the Daśarā exhibition are all clay in their insides, so are all things the *Paramātman* in substance for the *jñānī*. There is no bondage for the *jñānī*; he does not fall again into the tract of *samsāra*. *Moksha* or release is not a *post mortem* state; it is the eternal nature of the Self. The *jñānī* realizes this; and hence there is no more travail for him. The *Tryambaka-mantra* compares release to the separation of the cucumber fruit from its stalk. This fruit does not fall down, but gets detached from the stalk, or rather, the stalk gets itself detached even without the fruit knowing it. This 'cucumber *mukti*' is the goal of everyone. Those who have realized it are the *jñānis*.

“Such *jñānis* have appeared at all times and in all places. Their presence is a blessing to the world. Thousands of people profit, even without their knowing, by contact with a *Mahāpurusha*. There is no discord or divergence of views among the wise. The peace that passeth understanding is what they spread. Let the people resort to them for gaining liberation from the fetters of finite existence.”¹²

Every moment of His Holiness's life is spent in the service of Ādi Śaṅkara, in conveying the Great Master's all-comprehensive and soul-saving message to the people at large. With a view to remind the people of Śrī Śaṅkara and his spiritual mission, His

12. From the present writer's review of the book, *The Call of the Jagadguru, op. cit.*

Holiness has been causing Śaṅkara Memorial Maṅṭapas to be constructed during the last few years, at important places of pilgrimage. The first to be so constructed is the one at Rāmeśvaram. After participating in the *Kumbhābhishekam* of Śrī Baṅgaru Kāmākshī at Tañjāvūr on the 7th of April 1963, the Ācārya proceeded to Rāmeśvaram for the consecration of the first Śaṅkara Memorial Tower there. The consecration ceremony took place significantly on the Śaṅkara Jayanti Day, the 28th of April 1963. As the day dawned, the Ācārya accompanied by Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī, went to the temple of Śrī Rāmanāth and performed the *pūjā* himself. After the *pūjā*, he proceeded to the newly constructed Śaṅkara Maṅṭapa for the *Kumbhābhishekam* ceremony. The sanctified waters in the *Kalaśas* were taken out in procession. The Ācārya himself accompanied, fanning the *Kalaśas* with specially prepared *chāmaras*. After Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī had performed the *abhisheka* to the five *Kumbhas* adorning the dome of the tower, the Ācārya entered the shrine and performed *pūjā* in sequence to Śrī Hanumān, the twelve Jyotirlingas, the Dakṣiṇāmūrti-Yantra, and Ādi-Śaṅkara and his four disciples; finally, he consecrated the image of Śrī Sarasvatī in the Sarasvatī Mandira attached to the main shrine just behind the Maṅṭapa. The entire Memorial is a graceful structure with representations of holy sages and preceptors whose sight would bring back to one's memory the unique grandeur of India's culture. As one rises from the Agnitīrtha after a sanctifying bath, one beholds the Memorial Tower and the various features thereof. Each aspect elevates the mind of the onlooker. The central figure of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara surrounded by his

disciples impresses the pilgrim as representing all that is best and noblest in India's heritage.

In connection with the *Kumbhābhishekam*, a *sadas* was held that night. Addressing the audience, the Ācārya explained the significance of the installation of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara. With a smile, he observed in a lighter vein: "Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara was a wandering Ācārya moving quickly and frequently from place to place. He had travelled throughout this sacred country. Today Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara has assumed a fixed seat in Rāmesvaram, the *dakṣiṇāmnāyakshetra*, the southern-most *dhāma* of all the *dhāmas* of Bhārata-varsha. To the four corners of India he carried his message; but from today onwards the people of India from all over will be coming to him at Rāmesvaram, and after touching his *Pādukā* placed in front of the Maṅṭapa, will receive the message and inspiration from him." The Ācārya thus gave the reason why Rāmesvaram had been chosen as the first place for the installation of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara. There is the shrine of Āñjaneya built in front of the Maṅṭapa. After adoring Śrī Āñjaneya, one worships the twelve Jyotir-liṅgas which Ādi Śaṅkara himself had worshipped at the respective *dhāmas* in the country. The Śrī Rāmanātha Setu Liṅga has been appropriately installed as the first of the twelve Liṅgas. One then comes to the shrine on the top adorned by the Image of Ādi Śaṅkara and the representations of his four disciples. The Śaṅkara image is placed on a high pedestal so that every person who takes a dip in the Agni-tīrtha would have Śaṅkara's *darśana* when he turns back to the shore. The result of this *darśana* would be, as pointed out by the Ācārya, that through

Śrī Śaṅkara's grace one could get rid of nescience and gain the plenary wisdom.

Tiruvīḍaimarudūr, also called Madhyārjuna, is a notable place of pilgrimage connected with Ādi Śaṅkara's *dig-vijaya*. When Śaṅkara visited this place, he desired that the Mahāliṅga at the temple should itself declare the truth of Advaita so that the doubt in regard thereto lingering in the minds of some people might be dispelled. In response to the Jagadguru's prayer, the Lord Śiva appeared out of the Mahāliṅga, raised the right hand, and proclaimed the truth of Advaita three times thus: '*satyam advaitam; satyam advaitam; satyam advaitam.*' Our Ācārya wished that this greatly significant incident should be adequately represented in sculpture so that people would easily remember it. A *Vimāna* over the entrance of the local Śaṅkara Maṭha was put up, and within it were installed sculptured figures of the Mahāliṅga with the right hand raised and of Ādi Śaṅkara with palms joined. In the central courtyard of the Maṭha a shrine was constructed and in it was installed Śaṅkara-pādukā. Our Ācārya accompanied by Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī participated in the *Kumbhābhishekam* of this new Memorial, which took place on the 5th of December 1963. A special feature of the ceremony was the *archana* performed to the *Pādukā* with 108 laced shawls, which were subsequently presented to the *paṇḍitas*.

In the Śrī Maṭha at Kāñcī, a new sixteen-pillared hall was constructed, and therein were installed the Images of Ādi Śaṅkara and his four disciples, and the Guru-pādukā. The Ācārya arrived at Kāñcī on the 26th of February 1964, after a tour of the southern

districts. On the next day, the 27th of February, the consecration ceremony was performed.

At Kanyākumāri, the land's end, where the eternal virgin Mother presides, a Memorial Maṅṭapa for Śaṅkara was built. The *Kumbhābhīshekam* for this was performed on the 31st of May, 1964.

Śrī-Śaila, the Holy Mountain, in Andhra Pradesh is one of the most sacred Śiva-sthalas. We have already referred to the visit of our Ācārya to this place in 1934 during his *viṣṭāyā-yātrā*, and to the fact Ādi Śaṅkara had also visited it. A fitting Memorial Maṅṭapa for Śaṅkara has been built there. And, our Ācārya went to Śrī-Śaila in March 1967 for the consecration ceremony. Arriving there on the 8th of March, the Ācārya and Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī had their bath in the sacred Pātāla-gaṅgā, and thereafter *darśana* of Śrī Mallīkārjuna Mahāliṅga and Śrī Bhramarāmbikā in the temple. On the 9th of March, which was Mahāsivarātrī, Ēkādaśa-rudra-homa was performed. The *Kumbhābhīshekam* of the Śaṅkara-Maṅṭapa took place on the 22nd of March, 1967.

At Rishikesh near Lakshman Jhula, where the Gaṅgā descends to level-ground, a temple for Śrī Śaṅkara has been constructed. This was consecrated on the 14th of May 1967, the Śaṅkara Jayantī day.

At Kurukshetra, the Images of Śrī Śaṅkara and of the Gitopadeśa have been installed. Among the other places of pilgrimage where arrangements are in progress for Śaṅkara Memorials are Tryambaka where the Godavarī has its source, Prayāga where there is the confluence of the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā,

and the invisible Sarasvatī, and Badarī on the Himalayas where Nara and Nārāyaṇa observe perpetual *tapasyā* for the welfare of the world.

The following words of the Ācārya bring out clearly the supreme importance and value of Śrī Śaṅkara and his message to India and the world: "There is no *avatāra* greater than Ācārya Bhagavat-pāda. Even from childhood he travelled throughout the land, from the Setu to Himalayas, from Rāmesvaram to the Himalayas, and established the six faiths. If one wishes to know the real truth, one should study the Ācārya's works. There is no country where the Ācārya's commentaries are not known. Is it possible to measure his greatness? His fame has been sung even in stone. The spade of the archaeologists has unearthed in the far-eastern countries several precious inscriptions. In them there is reference to 'Bhagavān Śaṅkara.' The following verse is from one of those inscriptions.

*niśṣeṣa-sūri-mūrdhāli-mālā-
liḍhāṅghripañkajāt.*

The meaning is: 'the seekers of the truth all over the world bow their heads before Śaṅkara. Their bowed heads are like the bees that do not wish to leave the tender latus-feet of the Master. The heads of all the wise ones, the realized souls, in the world have found a harbour at the holy Feet. "Thus the inscription."

During the period of the Ācārya's stay in Kāñcī in 1953-57, his second visit to the city 1957-59, and in subsequent years, several foreigners — scholars and savants, spiritual seekers and religious leaders, expo-

nents of the Arts and even diplomats—have had interviews with the Ācārya, thereby gaining first-hand knowledge of the immortal tradition of India. What Professor Milton Singer, of the University of Chicago, said after meeting the Ācārya in 1955, expresses precisely the feeling of all those from abroad who have had the privilege of conversing with the Great One. This is what the Professor said: “Before I went to India I had heard and read much about the great ‘soul force’ of its holy men and saints, but I had assumed that this was something in the ancient past. And it was not until I had met Sankaracharya that I realized it was still a part of the living force of Hinduism to-day.” In his book, *The Lotus and the Robot*, the well-known writer Mr. Arthur Koestler records his impressions of a meeting which he had with the Ācārya in 1959, and speaks in glowing terms of the smile that transformed the Ācārya’s face into that of a child: “I had never seen a comparable smile or expression; it had an extraordinary charm and sweetness”. Mr. Arthur Isenberg of the United States of America, reminiscing about the evening which he had the privilege of having with the sage of Kāñchī, speaks about “*his eyes, which looked at me with a mixture, or rather a fine blending, of intelligence, kindness and compassion*, while at the same time somehow reflecting a most gentle sense of humour.” He further says, “I had the definite sensation of being in the presence of a man thoroughly at peace with himself, a sage. This impression grew to conviction during the course of the three and half hour conversation that night on 20th April, 1959.” Regarding the manner of the Ācārya’s conversation, he writes, “Almost from the start I was impressed by a most

remarkable habit which the Ācārya practises. Not only does he never interrupt a question (which would be remarkable enough!) but he invariably pauses about a minute or more before answering. His reply, when it comes, clearly shows that it was preceded by reflection: it is invariably concise and to the point." Miss Eughina Borghini, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, who was among those who attended the first Āgama-Śilpa-Sadas at Iḷaiyāttaṅguḍi in 1962, has this to say about our Ācārya: "I consider the day I first saw His Holiness as a day of great fortune in my life. I consider that in him Jesus has come again into this world. He is an image of love. From the moment I saw him, the light of his grace gave me maturity to understand clearly some of the aspects of spiritual life and religious teachings. His Holiness lives just like Jesus, homeless and devoted to a life of renunciation, and with his contemplation, worship, penance, and teachings working for the welfare of mankind. I shall bow at his feet and be always adoring him." Dr. Albert B. Franklin, the U.S. Consul-General in Madras, saw the Ācārya for the first time in the Madurai Mīnākshī Temple during the *kumbhābhishekam* in 1963. In these striking words he records what he saw and the deep impression it made on his mind :

"A stir in the central portion of the temple yard before the gilded Vimanam under which the Goddess Meenakshi is henceforth to stay, attracted out attention. The V.I.P's in that area parted respectfully to let an old man with a beard and a long stick come through. He approached the ladder leading to the top of the Vimanam. It was the Sankaracharya. The old man approached with halting steps, his head

turning from side to side as if he wanted not to miss any detail of his surroundings. Who was he? He has a name, he has a dwelling place, he has an age, but in fact, he is every man and he is as old as man's ponderings. He is the man of faith who has given away all that he had and follows only his faith. *He is symbol of that renunciation which is at the heart of all religions, and which Christ himself demanded when asked by the rich young man "What must I do to be saved?"* So, here, at this time, in the temple, he is more than the most highly placed of the V.I.P. guests. With a vigour surprising in so old a man, he seizes the railing of the ladder in a long fingered, bony hand and rapidly climbs seven or eight rungs to a point from which he can reach the top of the Vimanam with his stick. He remains, a central figure throughout the ceremony."¹³

We reproduce below the report of an interview which a British author and a French savant had with the Ācārya on the 26th of February 1958, in Madras, as a typical illustration of such meetings:

"The time fixed for the interview was 9 p.m. Sir Paul Dukes arrived at His Holiness's camp at Thyagarayanagar at 8-30. He was conducted to the place of the interview which was an open space beneath a row of palms. There was a spread of hay whereon in the centre was placed a wooden plank which was to serve as the seat for His Holiness. Struck by this, for him, unusual situation, Sir Paul remarked that this was a romantic setting for the new experience which he was looking forward to. Presently, the French-

13. See *The Jagadguru*, edited by Dr. V. Raghavan (Jaya Chandra, Madras-28), p. 101.

man, M. Philippe Lavastine, arrived escorted by a few Indian friends. He seemed evidently moved at the prospect of meeting a great scholar-saint.

“It was a little past nine. Our attention was drawn to the direction from where a mild torch-light flashed. His Holiness was coming slowly, with those unself-conscious steps which are uniquely his. About half a dozen devotees who were following him stepped back, as His Holiness sat on the wooden plank, asking the group that was waiting for him to sit down, by a graceful gesture of hand. The two guests sat at a short distance from His Holiness, with the interpreter in between them. The stage was now set for the interview.

“Sir Paul Dukes was the first to be introduced, as the author of two books whose titles are *The Unending Quest*, and *Yoga for the Western World*. His Holiness asked Sir Paul as to what he meant by the unending quest. The Englishman said that in his own case the quest had not ended yet. In the case of the average Westerner, he added, it is thought that the quest ends once a particular church was accepted. Sir Paul’s view was that this was not so. Explaining the meaning of the *unending quest*, His Holiness observed: ‘If the quest is external, there would be no end to it. It would be like the quest after the horizon—a hallucination. If the quest is inward, then it would end with the discovery of the true Self. In a sense, even this latter quest may be said to be unending in that its object is infinite.’

“The Frenchman was then introduced as one interested in the study of our temples and the *purānas*

in connection with his researches into the institution of kingship. M. Lavastine himself explained what his central problem was. In ancient times the temporal and the spiritual were united in the institution of kingship. There was no division of the secular from the sacred. Probably, most of the ills of the modern world are traceable to this division which now obtains. The French scholar thought that a study of the history of the South Indian temples might throw light on the question of the relation between temporal power and spirituality.

“His Holiness enquired if M. Lavastine had heard of the saying: *rājā dharmasya kāraṇam* (The king is responsible for *dharmā*). As His Holiness was giving an illuminating explanation of this saying, the two visitors were observed moving close to him, with their attention fixed on every word of his. Although His Holiness was speaking in Tamil, he used a profusion of English words, to help the interpreter in his task, and also the visitors in their understanding of him. Not accustomed to squat cross-legged, the Western visitors were stretching their legs forwards. The interpreter touched the knees of the Frenchman, in order to indicate that he could fold his legs. Observing this, His Holiness told the interpreter that there was no need for this restraint. It was difficult for the average Westerner to squat. The way in which the visitors sat did not matter. They were like children in this respect. Why restrain them? How gracious of His Holiness to have made this observation! Is this not a true sign of a *Mahātmā*?

“Explaining the Samskrit saying, His Holiness said: It is natural that man should seek to satisfy his

wants like hunger, thirst, and a place to rest. There are duties which an individual has towards himself, the social group and the nation. Ordinarily the performance of these duties remains on the level of satisfying the creaturely wants. But there is a way of performing these duties which will elevate everyone concerned spiritually. That is *dharma*. And it is the duty of the king or the state to see that the citizens are provided every opportunity for spiritual growth and progress. That is the meaning of the saying: *rājā dharmasya kāraṇam*".

"The Frenchman said that he wanted to study Samskrit in the traditional Indian way, directly from a teacher, without the aid of books. His Holiness expressed his appreciation of this wish, and remarked 'Even in India that tradition has all but disappeared. The old way was not to confuse the ability to read and write with scholarship. Even the greatest scholars did not know how to read and write.' Here, one of the visitors cited the instance of Śrī Rāmakrishṇa who could not even sign his name properly in Bengali. His Holiness continued: 'I am referring to even secular scholars. Writing was the special art of a small class of people called *kaṇakkars*. They were good calligraphers. But the rest of the people, for the most part, were not literate. Eminent mathematicians, astronomers, physicians, Vedic scholars—these could not read and write. Learning was imparted orally and was imbibed by rote. The method has its own excellences, and could be revived with profit, within certain limits.'

'Would His Holiness favour the revival of all that is old and ancient?', asked Sri Paul Dukes. His

Holiness replied that what was good and of value was worthy of revival. There was no need for any propaganda. This is not to be done that way. If a few people would set an example in their personal lives, this would catch on; and a time may come when the West also would emulate. And, when there is recognition from the West, our people may wake up and see something grand in their own past.

“One last request,” said Sir Paul, “What would be the message from His Holiness that could be carried to the West?” His Holiness remained silent for a considerable length of time. He was indrawn, with eyes half-closed, and absorbed in contemplation. At the end of that period he spoke in slow, measured tones: “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 the Gandhian gospel of *ahimsā*. There may be situations which demand violent action. Punishment, for instance, 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.” “This,” added His Holiness, “you may carry with you as the message of the sages and saints of India.”

“Thus ended a memorable interview with one who is the embodiment of all that is most noble and and sublime in the spiritual culture of India. Enjoying the aroma of the virtues of gentleness and cour-

tesy, one could see the light of wisdom beaming forth from those enchanting eyes, as one listened to words which were true and at the same time pleasing.”

Royal visitors from Greece had memorable interviews with His Holiness at the Kālahasti Camp on the 4th and 5th of December, 1966. Her Majesty Queen Frederika, Queen-Mother of Greece and Her Royal Highness Princess Irene came as seekers of truth; and they thought it supremely worthwhile to undertake this long journey, and were richly rewarded. The following is the gist of the interviews—the questions asked by the Royalty and the instructions given by His Holiness:

1. Q. Your Holiness! I am able to meditate with a measure of success while awake. But, the meditative experience does not come in dreams. What should be done to retain this attitude in the dreams also?

A. One need not worry about the kind of dreams one has. One who practises meditation in the waking state, may not, when he goes to the dream state, experience the meditative attitude. The dreams may relate to non-spiritual phenomena. But the spiritual seeker should not be troubled over these; he should not think that such dreams constitute an impediment to his spiritual life. To think so, and to be troubled mentally would be an obstacle. What the seeker should be careful about is the waking life. He should devote as much of it as possible to the spiritual quest. If his endeavours in the waking state are in the direction of the Spirit, then gradually in dreams also one's spiritual nature will be reflected.

It is not dreams that affect waking life; it is the other way about. One who is fair-skinned in waking life usually dreams of himself in dreams as having fair skin. If he has dark-skin, in dream also he has a similar complexion. Thus, it is the experiences of waking state that get reflected in dreams, although in odd and queer forms. So, if the aspirant is vigilant in his waking state, and strives constantly to remember the Self, gradually in dreams also the same attitude will get reflected. If he succeeds in rendering his waking life free from violent passions and base desires, in course of time his dreams also will become placid and full of peace.¹⁴

2. Q. Will Your Holiness be pleased to prescribe a technique by which the concentration and equanimity of the mind may be facilitated?

A. Normally one breathes through one of the two nostrils, right or left. It is possible to change the breathing from one nostril to the other by effort. If the breathing is through the right nostril, and if it is to be changed to the left, what one should do is to put pressure on the right side of the body, which could be done by resting the right palm on the ground and making the body lean on that arm. For a change from the left to the right, the pressure should be put on the left side. Before the actual change takes place, the breathing would be through both the nostrils for a short time, say, two seconds. This is what may be

14. See the *Pañchadaśī*, a manual of Advaita (IV, 82). Relinquishing contrary thoughts, if one meditates without interruption, he would achieve meditation even in dreams, etc., because of the residual impressions.

called equalised breathing. If one practises to observe the equalised breathing, its period will become longer and longer. And, the equalised breathing will facilitate the gaining of mental balance and equanimity. The more one practises this, the greater will be the progress in achieving the balance of mind, and the ability to remain unperturbed.

3. Q If the surroundings are not salutary, if there are people who are hostile to one's mode of life, if everywhere one sees evil and wickedness, what should one do?

A. One may be surrounded by wicked people who are treacherous and evil in their ways. But one should not be impatient with them, or show hatred towards them. On the contrary one should have sympathy for them, and compassion. No person is wicked by nature, but circumstances and upbringing make him so. There is no reason, therefore, to hate him for what he has been made into. And also, an aspirant should not have hatred for anyone. He should reason thus: "Since the wicked person is so because of circumstances and upbringing, he is to be pitied rather than hated. What would I do if some one whom I hold dear, say, my son, turns to evil ways? I would strive to correct him through love. Even so should I treat the stranger. In fact, there is no stranger for a truth-seeker; for all are his kindred. What would be my plight if I had been born and bred in those evil circumstances? I too would be behaving in a wicked way. So, let me see the same Self in the wicked man; let me not hate him."

4. Q. What is the distinction between the *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* stages in *samadhi*? And, what is *sahaja-samādhī*?

A. *Savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* are stages in the path of concentration and meditation. In what is known as *savikalpa-samādhī*, the mind is steady without any distraction, contemplating its object wholly absorbed therein. In *nirvikalpa samādhī*, which is the goal of yoga, the mind ceases to function, and vanishes once for all leaving the self to shine forth alone. In Advaita too the path of meditation is recognised; but here the object of meditation is the distinctionless Brahman. What is called *sahaja-samādhī* is realised through the path of inquiry. It is the natural state of Self-realization, and one of utter unconcern for the fleeting phenomena.

5. Q. What should a leader do in regard to customs, usages, etc.? Even after he finds them to be not of any benefit for himself, should he follow them?

A. Those who are the leaders of a group, society, or state, should not neglect the established religious customs and usages. For themselves, they may not be in need of church-ceremonies, for instance, their advance in spirituality may not require these. But if they begin to neglect them, the people for whom the rituals are really helpful will also start neglecting them. This would be setting a bad example. In the words of the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "The wise one should not unsettle the minds of those who are ignorant, and are attached to action; on the contrary, he should encourage them to perform, by himself doing the appro-

priate actions well and with diligence." It is a duty cast upon the leaders and those that are at the top to lead the people from where they are, and not to refrain from participation in the traditional ways of worship.

Recording the indelible impression of the interviews and the unique blessing gained by the *darśana* of His Holiness, Her Majesty has observed thus:

"The two days we spent in his company will never be forgotten. There was pure spirituality. What strange fate has brought us close to him!"

Expanding the same impression, and reminiscing on what has been aptly described as the meeting with Perfection, Her Royal Highness says:

"Since some time now I find myself in a situation where there are no more questions to ask (except for details). Yet, identification with the Self is far from constant. Nevertheless the practice of application will also contribute in making it more permanent so that there is really no problem. Then I believe that Fate brings things when time is ripe. And what came as Fate's great gift was this meeting with Perfection whose blessing is more than I am able to cherish without being deeply moved.

"He mentioned that the astronauts must have experienced outwardly that which is usually felt inwardly by spiritual seekers — an outer mystic experience. We had the Grace of having both the outer and inner mystic experience in His presence and we are thankful for it. He appeared as the vivid link

between Spirit and matter, a link (for the seeker) which showed that they are not separate. The world of appearance with this Sage, who quite obviously was a guest in the frail body, was there, but the Essence, with which the guest is identical, was there too, demonstrating that the world is not different from it. His gaze made the self cast off all the bonds of the ego, thus unveiling a pure reflection of what those eyes are identified with. How can the beauty of this be witnessed with dry eyes?

“The greatness of His blessing was so immense that this human container was incapable of holding it without its overflowing which resulted as tears. Tears of utter fulfilment which washed away the container, causing it to dissolve, for a while, into the Reality He symbolizes.”

Dr Paul Brunton, an account of whose interview with His Holiness has been given earlier, has sent the following message on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the *Pīṭhārohaṇa*.

“About forty years ago I sat in the presence of His Holiness Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Kāmakoṭi Peetham. The soundness of his graciously given advice, answers, explanations, and his direction of my footsteps towards the late Śrī Ramaṇa Maharshi, was proved by later experience and study. There was also a feeling of the great importance of this meeting with him. Somewhere in ‘A Search in Secret India’ I wrote of the mystical vision which followed during the night and the great upliftment which was felt at the time.

“I have often thought of him during the intervening years and there is no doubt in my mind that he is a sanctified being, a channel for higher spiritual forces. At the same time he is an upholder of religious values, which it would be regrettable for India to lose under the pressure of modern life, with its industrialism and materialism.

“Those scientifically educated young Indians who have no use for their own religion and regard it with disdain should take a lesson from the West which has gone through an equivalent experience already, but now has to retrace its way.”

The American Consul-General, Dr A. B. Franklin, paid the following tribute to His Holiness, while presiding over a meeting held in Madras as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, on the 28th of February, 1967 :

“We are living in a unique time in the world’s history, when things are happening on so many different levels that, if we are caught up in any one of these levels, we are likely to be completely mistaken about the whole. On one of these levels (the one which most interests me) the West, my West, is arriving laboriously, after centuries of search by our most brilliant minds, at philosophical knowledge which was both implicit and explicit in India thousands of years ago. The greatest miracle of the human spirit is the sum of knowledge found in the body of lore which we collectively term the Vedānta. His Holiness, sixty years ago, abandoned the multitude of other levels of human existence, contest, involvement, to devote himself to this Truth.

“If we meet here to-day to honour him because of the sixty years of his accession to the title of Holiness, I believe that this is immaterial to him. I believe that he is as far beyond the titles and honours of this world as we, on our side, are in need of honouring him, as a way of symbolising our awareness of the Reality he represents for us.

“It is hard for me to find a tribute in words which expresses my feeling of admiration and gratitude towards His Holiness. Those of us who deal in words as commodity or as a tool of trade, learn to mistrust them. Especially do we mistrust words as a means to describe a living, changing force, or personality, and like your remote ancestors we learn to mistrust words of a means of describing ultimate things. Perhaps the most appropriate thing I can say on this occasion is a very simple thing. I come from a very God-fearing portion of Christian America, that is to say, New England. Our earliest great philosophers in that blessed corner of the earth, were among the very first westerners to appreciate the fact that the Vedānta, far from being an outworn creed, was a vast and joyous experience that lay ahead of us. Not only do I come from that corner of the earth which bred Emerson and Thoreau, whose spirits are with us here this evening, but I am one of a long line—long as our lines in America go—of ministers and teachers. When this line started, back in the seventeenth century, ministers and teachers were usually the same individuals. It gives me pleasure to be able to say, in these circumstances, that, though some of my ancestors were in their day the subject of controversy because of their beliefs, just as Emerson was in his day, yet not one of them would question the

appropriateness of my being here this evening. For them as for me, the spirit whom we are celebrating, represents the highest aspirations of mankind."

It is difficult to reduce to words what one feels about the unique greatness of our Ācārya. His very presence in our midst is a blessing. The solace that countless devotees receive from his words is inexpressible. When one thinks of His Holiness, one is reminded of the definition of "The Guru" given by Ādi Śaṅkara in his *Praśnottara-ratna-mālikā*:

*ko gurur-adhigatatattvaḥ
śishyahitāyodyataḥ satatam.*

"Who is the Guru? He who has realized the Truth, and who is always intent on the disciples' good."

For sixty years His Holiness Śrī Chandrasekharendra Śarasvatī has adorned the ancient Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha as the Sixty-eighth Ācārya in succession to Ādi Śaṅkara. May this spiritual rulership continue to shower its many blessings on the entire world!

SIXTY-ONE OF THE MANY BLESSINGS CONFERRED BY HIS HOLINESS ON THE WORLD

1. 13th February 1907 — Ascension to the Pīṭha at the village of Kalavai in North Arcot district.

2. Grand state reception with full military honours at the Pudukkoṭṭai state border town of Mañjuvāḍi by Vijaya Raghunātha Thoṇḍaimān, Regent Counsellor, Venkatarama Das Naidu, Dewan,

and other officials together with Radhakrishnan, mathematical genius.

3. 1908 — His Holiness paid respects to His Parameshthī guru at the latter's Adhishthānam at Ilaiyāttaṅguḍi on *Vaiśākha-chitrā-paurṇamī anusha nakshatra* day which happens to be the birth-day of the Parameshthī guru.

4. 1908—Octogenarian Śrī Muthu Ghanapaṭhī who had at his own expense imparted Vedādhyayana to numerous pupils at Tiruvaivāru Kshetra received His Holiness with more than fifty of his disciples while His Holiness was on His way to the Kumbhābhishekam of Akhilāṇḍesvarī temple at Tiruvānaikkā.

5. 1908—Kumbhābhishekam of Akhilāṇḍesvarī temple at Tiruvānaikkā. Adorned the Goddess with the ear-rings (*tāṭaṅka*).

6. 1909—Reception with military honours and by Vidvāns and others at the palace of the Mahārāshṭra princes of Tanjore, H. H. Jijamba Bai Saheba and Queen Ramamba Bai Saheba and at Sarasvati Mahal. His Holiness was then taken in procession along the four royal roads seated on golden howda on the royal elephant.

7. 1909—Led by Mahārāja Śivāji and Prince Pratāpsimha of Tanjore, His Holiness was taken seated on an elephant into Kumbhakonam town. His Holiness then took bath in the Mahāmakham tank.

8. 1911 — Installation of the image of Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda at Lālguḍi (Tiruchi district) in the presence of Paṇḍitaratna Sundararāma Śāstrī

of Mysore state, Chidambaram Mahāmahopādhyāya Harihara Śāstrī, Mylapore Mahāmahopādhyāya Mīmāṃsā Venkatasubba Śāstrī, and other eminent scholars.

9. 1911 to '13—*Śāstravichāra* at Mahendramangalam on the banks of Akhaṇḍa Kāverī in Tiruchi district.

10. 1916—Lakshadīpam at Kumbhakoṇam Śrī Maṭha during the auspicious occasion of Śrī Śāradā Navarātri. Separate Lakshārchanas to Durgā, Lakshmī and Sarasvatī who were seated on separate rathas. Among those who offered archana was Karungulam Krishṇa Śāstrī of Tirunelveli district.

A vidvat sadas was held in which great scholars like Mahāmahopādhyāya Mannārguḍi Yajñasvāmi Śāstrī (grandson of Mannārguḍi Rāju Śāstrī), Mahāmahopādhyāya Krishṇa Śāstrī, Chidambaram Mahāmahopādhyāya Daṇḍapāṇi Dīkshitar participated. A Music Sabhā was also held in which Ramānāthapuram Pūchi Iyengar, Kumbhakoṇam Pañchāpagesa Śāstrī, Palladam Sañjīva Rao, Madurai Pushpavanam, and many other musicians participated.

His Holiness was then taken in procession on an elephant, witnessed by lakhs of people. The Head of Tiruppanandāl Kāsī Mutt personally presented Rupees Five thousand to His Holiness.

11. 1921—Mahodaya-snānam at Vedāraṇyam.

12. Stay at the palace of Śrī Govinda Dīkshita, and journey to Kumbhakoṇam for holy bath at Mahāmakhā tank.

13. 1922—Performed Navarātri pūjā at Dhanushkoṭi. On the next full moon day His Holiness after taking saikatam (sand) at Dhanushokoṭi reached Rameśvaram, performed pūjā at the sannidhi of Sethumādhava, and bound the saikatam in the customary manner.

14. 1923—Kumbhābhishekam at Tiruvānaikkā. His Holiness invested Goddess Akhilāṇḍeśvarī with the repaired ear-rings (*tāṭaṅka*). Śrī Sadāsīva Tawker of Tawker and Sons had donated precious gems for the said repair. Śrī Tepperumānallūr Śrī Annadāna Śivan performed annadāna to thousands.

15. 1924—Heavy floods in the Kāverī threatening to link up with the overflowing Coleroon. His Holiness was at that time observing Chāturmāsya at Tiruvaiyāru Pushyamaṇḍapam on the banks of the Kāverī. By His Holiness's blessings and the cooperation of the general public the whole place was saved from the floods.

16. 1927—Establishment of the Adhiṣṭhāna of His Holiness's Pūrvāchārya at Vaḍavaṁbalam village on the banks of the South Peṇṇār in South Arcot district.

17. 15th October 1927—Mahātmā Gāndhi paid his respects to His Holiness at Nallicheri village in Palghat.

18. 1928—Darśana of Śrī Guruvāyūrappan and bhikshā by Guruvāyūr Devasthānam through His Highness the Zamorin of Calicut.

19. 25th January 1931—Darsana of Kāñchī Śrī Kāmākshi. Mooted the idea of renovating the temple.

20. March, April, 1932—Darsana of Śrī Veṅka-tesvara at Tirupati. Performed Sahasrakalasābhishekam for the Lord. Bhikshā by the Tirupati Devasthānam through the Mahant to His Holiness with all temple honours such as umbrella, śesha-vastra (32 cubits), etc.

21. 1932—Chāturmāsya at Buggā in Chittoor district. Renovation and Kumbhābhishekam of the temple there and installation of the image of Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya.

22. 1932—Navarātri mahotsava at Madras Samskrit College and establishment of the Bhāshya-vijayamaṅṭapam. His Holiness's Bhāshyappravachana on the Vijayadaśami day. Śrī Rajendra Prasād paid his respect to His Holiness.

23. 1933—Camp at Tiruviḍaimarudūr, known as Madhyārjuna, and holy bath at Mahāmakham tank at Kumbhakoṇam.

24. 1933—Chāturmāsya at Mukāsa mansion in Tanjore. Procession on a richly caparisoned elephant on Visvarūpayātrā day. Navarātri also was celebrated at Tanjore. Beginning (*aṅkurārpaṇam*) of the practice of writing of Śrīrāmajayam, Śivanāmam, Muruganāmam, and the like. His Holiness commenced His northward journey to Vārāṇasī.

25. Darsana of the Lord at Śrī Śailam.

26. 1934—Reaching Prayāga His Holiness performed pūja to the saikatam (sand) brought from Rāmesvaram in the presence of Lord Prayāga Mādhava and mixed the same in the holy waters of Prayāga, at the place of the confluence of the Gaṅga, the Yamunā, and the antarvahinī Sarasvatī. Gathered the holy water in vessels for abhisheka to Ramanāthasvāmī of Ramesvaram and to deities at other temples of South India.

27. 1934—Navarātri utsavam at Kāsī reaching the same walking all the way from Prayāga. Welcome address presented by Pandit Madan Mohan Mālavīya at the Benaras Hindu University. *Abhinandanapatra* presented by paṇḍits who included several Mahāmahopādhyāyas.

28. 1935—Meeting at the Kāsī Town Hall attended by many sannyāsins and scholars including several Mahāmahopādhyāyas. A *praṇatī patram* was read and presented to His Holiness by Mahāmahopādhyāya Giridhara Śarmā of Jaipur, Rājasthān.

A big portrait of Śri Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda with His four immediate disciples was taken in procession around the town by the scholars themselves and installed at Kāsī Viśvesvara shrine. His Holiness followed the portrait on foot.

An image of Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya made of white marble was installed in the compound wall of Kāsī Viśvesvara temple.

16th February 1935—The Rāja of Kāsī presented a *Rajapatra* to His Holiness at a gathering of Vedic scholars at the sāṅga—Veda Vidyālaya.

29. 1935—*Danḍasparśa* (touching with the staff) of the Muṇḍapṛshṭa stone at Gaya.

30. 1935—Chāturmāsya and Navarātri utsava on the banks of Ādi Gaṅgā at Calcutta. Welcome address by the members of the Bengal Brāhmaṇa Sabhā and Kālighāṭ Nirvāha Sabhā. Presentation of Address by Mahāmahopādhyāyas of Calcutta.

31. 5th May 1936—Arriving at Purī, His Holiness camped at the Śrīmaṭha of Purī Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya Svāmigal. Took holy bath in the sea and had darśana of Lord Jagannātha. At the request of the Rājā of Purī His Holiness took His seat in the temple and received the welcome address presented by the members of the Vidyālaya Sabhā of the Devasthānam.

32. Śaṅkarajayantī at Mukhāmalā—East Godavari. Brahma Saptāham.

33. 1939—Abhisheka to Śrī Rāmanāthasvāmī of Rāmesvaram with the holy waters of the Gaṅgā taken at Prayāga.

34. 30th June 1939—His Holiness entered the Śrī Maṭha at Kumbhakoṇam. Vyāsa pūjā, Navarātri pūjā, and Śatachaṇḍī homa were conducted at the Maṭha.

35. 4th June 1941—Kumbhābhishekam of Śrī Baṅgāru Kāmākshī temple at Tañjāvūr.

36. 1942—Atirudra home at Pūvanūr near Mannārguḍi

37. Vyāsa pūjā, Atirudra home, and Śatachaṇḍī homa at Nattam village.

38. Vyāsa pūjā and Navarātrī pūjā at Tiruvānaikkā. Kumbhabhishekam of Pañchamukhesvara shrine. Pārāyaṇa of the four Vedas was held, Atharvaṇa Vedins having been specially brought from Kāśī for this purpose. Recitation of the whole of Nālvar Tamiḷ Tirumuṇai set to paṇ metres was also conducted.

39. 1944—Kumbhābhishekam of Kāñchī Kāmākshī temple on the completion of the renovation work. To commemorate the Kumbhābhishekam the Śrī Kāmakoṭi Kesasthānam brought out an edition of the *Mūka-Pañchaśatī* with Śrīmukham.

40. 1945—Inauguration of the Veda Śāstra Paripālana Sabhā at Kumbhakoṇam on the auspicious occasion of the Mahāmakha. The Golden Jubilee of the Advaita Sabhā was also celebrated at the same time. In commemoration of the Golden Jubilee three works were published, namely *Advaita-akshara-mālikā* in Samskrit, *Ponvilāmalar* in Tamil, and Golden Jubilee Publication in English. In honour of the Guru and Paramaguru Adhiṣṭhānas a trust in the name of Kalavai Brindāvanam Paramaguru Svāmigal was established with the contributions of several devotees.

41. 1947—Completion of the silver chariot (*ratha*) of Śrī Kāmākshī; Celebrated the Rathotsava.

42. 1949—Atirudra and Vyāsa pūja at Triuviḍaimarudūr.

43. 1951—Inauguration of the Veda-Bhāshya-Vidvat-Sanmānam.

44. 22nd March 1954—His Holiness' consecration of the disciple.

45. The Shasṭīabdapūrti of His Holiness. In commemoration of this auspicious occasion a *Bhūdāna* trust was established with the help of several devotees.

46. 1956—Diamond Jubilee of the Advaita Sabha was celebrated at the place known as Śivāshānam near Kāñchīpuram. (It is worthy of mention that in the *garbhagrha* of the temple here is a sculpture depicting Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda offering daṇḍavandana (obeisance with the staff) to Lord Somāskanda). Many works of Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya which had not been published till then were brought out on the occasion of this Diamond Jubilee.

47. 1958—Consecration of Śrīmaṭha at Old Mambalam in Madras and the installation of the pādukas of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda therein.

48. His Holiness awarded a grant for the translation of Kālidāsa's Śākuntalam into Tamil.

49. 1960—His Holiness inaugurated the Madras Samskrit Education Society; then arrived at Aḍayapalam village near Āraṇi for the *Kumbhābhishekam* of the temple there.

50. 1960—Kumbhābhishekam of the Śiva temple built by Śrī Appayya Dikshita at Aḍayapalam.

51. 1960—Kumbhābhishekam of Śrī Akhilāṇḍesvarī temple at Tiruvānaikkā.

52. 3rd June 1961—Officials and Āsthāna Vidvāns of the Cochin Royal Palace presented to His Holiness the great Nyāya and Vedānta classic—*Brahmānandīya-bhāvaprakāśa*, personally edited and published by His Highness Śrī Rāma Varma Parīkshit Tampurān, the Mahārājā of Cochin.

53. 1962—Inauguration of the Akhila-Vyāsa-Bhārata-Āgama-Śilpa at Ilaiyāttānguḍi.

54. 1962—Publication of *Kolarupatigam* of Śrī Jñānasāmbandhasvāmigal.

55. 4th July 1962—His Highness the Mahārājā of Travancore paid his respects to His Holiness at Ilaiyāttānguḍi.

56. 7th April 1963—Kumbhābhishekam of Baṅgārukāmākshī temple at Tañjāvūr.

28th April 1963—Installed the images of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya and His four immediate disciples at Agni Tīrtha in Rāmesvaram under the *Vimāna* constructed for the purpose.

28th June 1963—Kumbhābhishekam of Madurai Mīnākshī temple.

1963—Sadas at Nārāyaṇavaram.

5th December 1963—Installation in the Śrī Maṭha at Tiruviḍaimarudūr of the images of Mahāliṅga-mūrti and Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya depicting the tradition that Mahāliṅgamūrti conveyed to Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya through an ethereal voice (*Aśarīrivāk*) His confirmation of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya's Advaita doctrine in the words '*satyam advaitam*'.

57. 31st May 1964—Under the instructions of His Holiness images of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya and His four immediate disciples were installed at Kanyākumāri in the place between Āmbikā temple and the sea. Vedic scholars were specially sent from the Śrī Maṭha for this purpose. A Vimāna maṭṭapa was also constructed

58. February 1966—The Mahārāja of Mysore, Śrī Jayachāmarāja Wadiyar Bahadūr paid his respects to His Holiness at the House of Śrī Śaṅkararāma Iyer at Adyar, Madras.

59. Under instructions from His Holiness Vedic scholars sent from the Śrī Maṭha installed at the place in Kurukshetra where the *Bhagavad-gītā* was imparted to Arjuna a white marble sculpture depicting a chariot with the Hanumān banner and drawn by four horses with Arjuna seated inside and Śrī Kriṣṇa outside as charioteer.

4th and 5th of December 1966—Her Majesty Queen Frederika, Queen-Mother of Greece and Her Royal Highness Princess Irene with Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan had memorable interviews with His Holiness at Kālahasti.

60. March 1967—Darsana of the Lord at Ahobilam, Mahānandī, and other places. Installation in the Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya Vimānam at Śrīsailam of the images of Ādi Śaṅkara and His four disciples, His pādukas, and the image of Nartana Vināyaka. A Kumbhābhishekam was then performed to this shrine.

61. May 1967—Under instructions from His Holiness a *Vimānam* was constructed near the bridge over the Gaṅgā at the place known as Lakshmaṇa Jhūla, on the route taken by Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya to Badari.

SIXTY-ONE CHĀTURMĀSYAS

1.	Plavaṅga	— 1907 —	Kumbhakonam
2.	Kīlaka	— 1908 —	Tiruvānaikkā
3.	Saumya	— 1909 —	Kumbhakonam
4.	Sādhāraṇa	— 1910 —	Kumbhakonam
5.	Virodhikṛit	— 1911 —	Tiruvānaikkā
6.	Paritāpī	— 1912 —	Mahendramaṅgalam
7.	Pramādiśa	— 1913 —	Mahendramaṅgalam
8.	Ānanda	— 1914 —	Tiruvānaikkā
9.	Rākshasa	— 1915 —	Kumbhakonam
10.	Nala	— 1916 —	Kumbhakonam
11.	Piṅgala	— 1917 —	Kumbhakonam
12.	Kālayukti	— 1918 —	Kumbhakonam
13.	Siddhārthi	— 1919 —	Veppattūr
14.	Raudrī	— 1920 —	Māyurum
15.	Durmatī	— 1921 —	Kadirāmaṅgalam
16.	Dundhubhi	— 1922 —	Āvuḍaiyārkoil
17.	Rudrotkāri	— 1923 —	Tiruvānaikkā
18.	Raktākshī	— 1924 —	Tiruvaiyāru
19.	Krodhana	— 1925 —	Ilaiyāttāngudi
20.	Akshaya	— 1926 —	Kāttumannārkoil
21.	Prabhava	— 1927 —	Kaṅjikkodu
22.	Vibhava	— 1928 —	Tiruvēḍagam
23.	Śukla	— 1929 —	Maṇalūrpettai
24.	Pramodūta	— 1930 —	Pūśamalakuppam
25.	Prajotpatti	— 1931 —	Chittore
26.	Āṅgirasa	— 1932 —	Buggā

27.	Śrīmukha	— 1933	—	Taṅjāvūr
28.	Bhava	— 1934	—	Prayāga
29.	Yuva	— 1935	—	Calcutta
30.	Dhātu	— 1936	—	Berhampur
31.	Īśvara	— 1937	✱	Palacole
32.	Bahudhānya	— 1938	—	Gudtur
33.	Pramādi	— 1939	—	Kumbhakonam
34.	Vikrama	— 1940	—	Tuvaraṅkuricchi
35.	Vishu	— 1941	—	Nagapattinam
36.	Chitrabhānu	— 1942	—	Nattam
37.	Subhānu	— 1943	—	Tiruvāṅaikkā
38.	Dhāraṇa	— 1944	—	Eśaiyanallūr
39.	Pārthiva	— 1945	—	Tirukkarukāūr
40.	Vyaya	— 1946	—	Kumbhakonam
41.	Sarvajit	— 1947	—	Vasanta Krishna Puram
42.	Sarvadhāri	— 1948	—	Vēṅkaṭādrī Agaram
43.	Virodhi	— 1949	—	Tiruviḍaimarudūr
44.	Vikṛiti	— 1950	—	Tiruviśainallur
45.	Khara	— 1951	—	Muḍikoṇḍān
46.	Nandana	— 1952	—	Sāttanūr
47.	Vijaya	— 1953	—	Kāñchī
48.	Jaya	— 1954	—	Kāñchī
49.	Manmatha	— 1955	—	Kāñchī
50.	Durmukhī	— 1956	—	Kāñchī
51.	Hevilambī	— 1957	—	Kāñchī
52.	Vilambī	— 1958	—	Madras
53.	Vikāri	— 1959	—	Vānagaram
54.	Śārvarī	— 1960	—	Kāmānayakanpālaiyam
55.	Plava	— 1961	—	Ilaiyāttāṅgudi
56.	Śubhakṛit	— 1962	—	Ilaiyāttāṅgudi
57.	Śobhakṛit	— 1963	—	Nārayaṇapuram
58.	Krodhi	— 1964	—	Kāñchī
59.	Viśvāvasu	— 1965	—	Kāttupalli
60.	Parābhava	— 1966	—	Kālahasti
61.	Plavaṅga	— 1967	—	Rājahundry

MAN'S DUTY *

His Holiness Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī

The souls that are in the world are called 'living beings'. Living beings are those that are endowed with life (*prāṇa*), 'prāṇa' is life. Therefore, all beings endowed with life are called 'living beings.' All living beings are always engaged in doing something or other. Every living being is ever seen to be busy doing some act or other. The ant is always on the move. The snail does something or other. The bird remains flying or eating something. Man goes to office and does his work. Or, he ploughs and rears crops. He is seen engaged in similar other works. Not even one person remains without doing some work or other. The Lord says this in the *Gītā*:

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api
jātu tiṣṭhaty-akarmakṛt (iii, 5)*

The meaning of this passage is : Not even one man at any time remains without doing some work or other.

* Courtesy : Hindu Samaya Manram, Kanchipuram - 631502.

Thus, we observe in the world man doing always something or other. For a man who lives in a small village, there are only a few things to do. For one who resides in a big town, there are innumerable things to do. Why should all be doing something or other thus?

It is only when we are doing something that we are without misery. In order to be without misery, many things have to be done. In order to gain happiness also, many things have to be done. Nothing is so difficult as remaining quiet without doing anything. In order that we may thus do things, there is something within prompting us. Some one has placed 'hunger' in all of us. That 'hunger' prompts man saying 'Do this,' 'Do that'. If we remain doing no action, the stomach pinches. One has to procure the medicine for removing the disease called 'hunger', and so one has to do things. And, again, after several days, it comes. But, this disease called 'hunger' is not like that. There is great difference between the diseases which, after having been cured, come after many days. For this disease, the medicine should be administered at each part of the day. In order to procure this medicine, everyone has to work. If the tiger kills the antelope or cow, it is for curing this disease. It is for the same purpose that man acts many roles and tries to be clever. If he is hungry, he procures rice, cooks and eats it. For procuring rice, he works. If the body is to be preserved, one has to work. It is not possible to remain without work even for a moment.

If one remains without any work, one's body would become useless. If one is a wealthy person, it

does not mean that he should sit idle without work. It is such a person that has many things to do. Anxiety haunts him always that the loans that he has given should be safe. In order to ensure this he has to attend to several things. More than a Brāhmin who lives by gathering rice-grains by alms everyday, a wealthy man who has property worth ten lakhs is active. There is no end to the work he does.

Thus, there are many kinds of work that a man does. The things that he does for the sake of his own body constitute one kind. Another kind consists of things that he does for the sake of those who belong to him. Children, wife, father, mother, and other persons have been entrusted to his care. There are things which he has to do for them. Over and above these, it may be that he owns a cow and a dog; if these attachments increase, there may be a cat. And, there are things to do for the sake of the farmer who looks after his land, his servants, and others. After these, there are items of business connected with the village community. Just as keeping the house neat and tidy is the responsibility of the family which live in it, managing the affairs of the village is the responsibility of its inhabitants. A family may consist of ten members; in a village there may be a thousand persons. Just as a man should attend to matters connected with his family, he should also attend to the affairs of his village. And, then, there are many things which have to be done for the welfare of the country.

Thus, there are several categories of action. Of these, cleaning the teeth, washing the clothes, bathing, eating, etc. are for the sake of one's body. Building a

house, cleaning it, acquiring the accessories for running it, etc. are for the sake of the household, i.e. they are for the sake of those who belong to one's self. Digging a canal, repairing a tank, building hospital, making adequate arrangements for the village community, and the things that are to be done for the country's welfare are known to all these days.

Among the things that we do, there are, besides those that are for feeding ourselves, the duties towards others. Those who have ability should protect the weak and the disabled: this is the way of the world. The weak and the disabled are entrusted to the care of those who have ability to protect them. A man who has the ability brings up his child. When he becomes old and decrepit, he is taken care of by his son. Thus, the process of change is natural to the world. This is characteristic not only of the humans but also of the birds and other living beings. The birds and the animals look after their young ones. This characteristic is seen among the small creatures also such as insects, cats, and monkeys.

Things go on happening in the entire world. Man does many things; he gets involved in each of them: he earns money; he seeks co-operation; he digs canals; he builds hospitals; he attends to the affairs of government; he derives ways and means for removing the sufferings of people. Sacrificing some of his own interests, he works for the common-weal and also attends to his own affairs. He goes to his fields; he works in his office. Thus, he does many things for earning a living.

The things that are necessary for man are of three categories. For satisfying hunger there is required food; then, for protecting one's self from the sun's heat, cold weather, etc., and for covering one's body, there are required clothes; and, for shelter and rest, there is required a house. These are of greater necessity than other things. Besides these, whatever a man acquires is for the sake of maintaining his children, arranging for their marriage, etc.

Apart from what a man has to do for acquiring the three essential things, he has to be active in regard to other things also. He has to procure his daily food, repair his house when it gets damaged, and stitch his clothes when they get torn. But he also secures the essential things required for the others entrusted to his care. He procures food for the appeasement of the daily disease, hunger, eats himself and makes others eat. There is a particular aptness in describing *hunger* as disease and food as medicine.

kṣud-vyādhiśca cikitsyatām
pratidinam bikṣauśadham bhuyatām
svadvannam na tu yācyatām
vidhivasāt prāptena santuṣyatām,
sītoṣṇādi viṣayatām na tu vṛthā
vākyaṃ samuccharyatām
audāśīnyam abhīpsyatām
janakṛpānaiṣṭhūryam utsrjyatām

(*Sādhana-pancakam, v. 4*)

Ācārya Śaṅkara enjoins in this sloka: "Take treatment for the disease called hunger." A man with disease would take only that amount of medicine that

is necessary for the cure of the disease. He would continue to take the medicine that is good to taste. Besides, he would go in for the medicine that does not involve great cost. Similarly, one should take only that quantity of food which is essential for the satisfaction of hunger. And plain food should be enough. This is the meaning expressed in the *śloka*.

We have thus seen that man has to do several things both for his own sake and for the sake of others. Besides these, he does also certain extraordinary things. We shall see what some of these are. One man sets up a cross and builds a church. There nothing is seen which would appease his hunger. Another person wears a garland of *rudrāksha* heads and smears his body with the sacred ash. With these, will he be rid of his hunger? Or, will these add anything to his dress? Yet another man puts on the mark of Viṣṇu. These doings do not fall within the essential things of which we spoke. These are not necessary for the satisfaction of hunger, or for one's clothes, or for the house. They are not at all necessary for the protection of those who are entrusted to one's care. These are things that are extra. A man takes a *pañcapātra* (small vessel of water) and *uddharani* (spoon) and makes some noise, and does something. He performs what is known as *śrāddha*; he invites *Brahmanas* and feeds them. By these acts, will his hunger be satisfied? Will the rains come to make his fields fertile? Nothing of that sort will happen. Bringing stone from hills, man builds temples. The temples are not used for providing him with shelter. The temples remain locked during the nights. They are not even useful for seeking shelter against rain. Of what use are they?

Some persons perform several deeds in the name of religion. Some fight for the sake of religion; even heads get broken. Do not such actions appear as unnecessary over and above what are required for man?

Smearing one's body with the sacred ash, wearing *rudrāksha* beads, building temples, performing *Śrāddha*, feeding the *Brahmans*—can we not say that all these are extra actions? Of what use are such actions? As if these are not enough, there are *bhajana* parties functioning in this city (Madras) since some years past. They do involve great strain for the throat. There is no relation whatsoever between their *bhajana* and their office work. The act of *bhajana* goes on without being necessary. Do not all these actions appear to be quite unnecessary?

Are these really unnecessary? Why should they be performed? What is their use? We shall now ponder over these questions.

Why does man earn money? Will it not do if he gets his hunger satisfied everyday? If he goes to some household and asks for food, he gets it. He could eat also in charity homes. No one thinks: "There is food to be had; why receive pay?" If a choice is offered between one measure of cooked rice and ten rupees, a person would choose the latter. Why? Is it not that he requires only food? What for is money? Cooked rice could be kept for another meal. But money could be used for fulfilling one's needs ten times. A man prefers that which could be used for several days.

To a boy who goes to school, his mother gives cooked food for his mid-day meal. If we are travel-

ling to a distant place, we take with us rice and other accessories.

In former times there were no railways. There were no quick means of transport. On account of these, our troubles only increase. Train fare, hotel charges, charges for bus, coffee, etc — all these involve expenditure of money. Besides these, if we go to a new place we spend money for buying new things. All these expenses are incurred now-a-days. In former days when one travelled, there was no expense at home on food. And, by walking, there was strength for the legs.

I remember, now, of one who lived long ago in this manner spending very little. There was one Krishna Ayyar in a place called Chittur near Palghat. He started a Bank. Out of the income from the Bank, he founded and maintained a Vedic School wherein over seventy students studied. In those days the students who completed their studies there used to come here and continue their studies in this Samskrit college founded by V. Krishnaswami Ayyar. Among those who thus started schools there was another by name Muthu Ganapathi: he lived in Tiruvaiyaru. He arranged for Vedic study for about a hundred or a hundred and twenty boys. He also saw to their proper boarding, etc. He used to levy a penalty on those who were working under him when they committed mistakes, fund the money thus collected, and maintain the school out of the interest therefrom. One day an officer visited that school. Seeing the boys he said: "Oh, what a waste! Why should these boys be rendered useless for life? What is the use of impounding them like a herd of sheep for ten years?"

No way is being shown to them to earn a living. If they had been taught English, they would have benefited greatly." A person who was then by his side replied: "By keeping these boys here without sending them to learn English, half the expenses are saved. If they had been made to study English, money would have been spent on costly dress, hair dressing, a bicycle, etc. All that money has now been saved. Had they learnt English and begun to earn, half their salary would go to meet these unnecessary expenses. Now, that has been avoided. As for earning the other half of such salary-amounts, we are showing them the way here. Even if they fail to learn anything here, they will gain by not having turned their attention to English." These instances have been given in order to show that there were people in those days who lived great lives by spending economically.

Even in those days people would take with them enough rice if they had to travel fifty miles. The quantity of rice, etc., would increase with the increase in distance.

No one thinks: "It is enough if I have my food today. Why should I worry about tomorrow?" We gather even today the things required for tomorrow, thinking that if tomorrow we do not have the requisite ability we would be put to trouble. If we do not think of to-morrow's comforts, then there would be no need for money. In this Matha, the servants were being given wages in the form of food at first. But they were not very much satisfied. They thought that if they were given rice, it would be better. They could then use the quantity of rice required for themselves and sell the rest. Now, they are being given

rice. It is only the dullwitted person that would receive what would last for a few days: the intelligent man would prefer things that would last for many days.

Thus, when we gather things for later use, we calculate on the basis of the number of days during which we would be happy. Is it one day? One month? One year? How much do we put by? Is it a thousand? A ten-thousand? The more we are able to gather, the better it would be for our happiness. But all do not know for how much time they could live happily. The last day has been fixed by God. Yet, we want to be happy always.

After the limit - the last day we referred to above - will the money and other accessories we gather here help us to be happy? These will be useful only as long as our present body lasts. After that, they will become useless. The works that we do are intended to help us remain happy later on. We should do things that will make us happy always. It is true that the works that we do at present should be done. Besides these, we must also do that which will keep us off from misery always. We do not die at anytime. Only the body dies. Therefore, we must do even now that which will keep us in happiness always. There is no source of solace after death. Just as we insure even now for the future, we must do the things necessary even now.

We are at the foot of a mountain. We have with us one thousand rupees. And that too in cash consisting of paise-coins. A number of thieves approach us with evil intentions. A great turmoil is about to take

place. If we could cross the mountain and reach the other side, we would be safe. In such a situation, a person comes and asks for exchange of cash for a thousand rupee note. What would we do then? Immediately, we would give him the bag containing cash and receive the note, and crossing the mountain get to safety. Only, that note should be such that it would be valid in the country beyond the mountain. Our story is similar to this man's. If we make use of our present strength and resources and do things that would be useful later, we shall meet with no difficulties.

One may ask: "We should be happy here. How is it certain that we shall exist later?" The answer to this question is "Suppose we exist, should we suffer?"

nāsti cen-nāsti no hāniḥ
asti cen-nāstiko hataḥ

In this verse, this is what is stated. The *āstika* says: "We shall exist even after this life; therefore, we should do good works now." The *nāstika* asks: "Where is the certainty that we shall exist?" The reply is: If we do good works now, we shall gain if we exist afterward, and we shall not lose if we cease to exist. On either alternative, there is no misery for the *āstika*. If it is true that we shall exist, it is the *nāstika* who will be in trouble.

Therefore, it is always good to do good work. When we have to go on a journey to another place, we should keep ourselves in a happy mood. If we do not do things that will make us happy after we have departed this body, we shall have to suffer. The

things that we have to do in order to avert this (suffering) we can learn through discretion. If there are no immediate results for the acts that we do at present, the results will come later. What Newton has stated has been explained a long time ago by our great men with reference to the soul. That every action has a reaction is declared clearly in our *Śāstras*.

The Christians do not accept the doctrine of re-birth. Yet, some of the things that they say show that even without their knowing they admit re-birth. What they say is this: After leaving the present body the soul waits for the Judgement Day, and as judged, it goes either to Heaven or to Hell in accordance with its past deeds. Although the physical body which is the locus of pleasure and pain lies here dead in the coffin it, takes on another body and experiences pleasure or pain (in Heaven or Hell). We refer to such a phenomenon as re-birth. Just as for experiencing pleasure and pain in that body, there is the present body which is the locus of deeds that are the cause, even so, for the present birth and its experience of pleasure and pain, there must have been a previous birth as providing the cause.

It is, therefore, necessary that we should do something that would be useful even after the present birth. What I referred to earlier as extra things are those which we do for the purpose of being happy always. Acts such as wearing the sacred ash and *rudrākṣa* beads, and performing *Śrāddha* are done for keeping ourselves happy always. The more we do such things, the more they will do us good.

Besides the things that we do for the sake of our welfare in the present life, we should do those things also which will secure our welfare for crores and crores of years, in fact, for ever. The currency will not be valid in Russia. If for all countries there is a single king, there will be a single currency bearing his insignia which will be valid everywhere. For all the fourteen worlds, there is a sovereign-ruler. He is God. There is currency which is legal tender in all His dominions. That currency will be valid everywhere and always. What is that? That, verily, is *dharma*.

Before leaving Ayodhya for the forest, Rāma went to Kausalya to take leave of her. Is it not the practice that a mother gives edibles to her son who is starting on a journey, so that he may eat them on the way? What is to be given to a son who is to be away for fourteen years? Kausalya did not know what to give. After pondering deeply she said;

*yam paḥlayasi dharmam tvam
dhr̥tyā ca niyamena ca,
sa vai rāghavasardula
dharmas-tvam abhirakṣatu*

(*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*, xxv, 3)

“O Raghava! There is nothing that I could do to protect you. There is only *dharma*. That *dharma* will protect you, which you have been preserving with courage, constancy, and regularity. That is the only blessing that I can give.” If we preserve *dharma*, it preserves us in turn. The *dharma* is the Law in God’s universal empire. Besides, what we do normally for the sake of children, parents, village,

country, etc., we should also do those things which would bring lasting happiness to the soul. Let us see what those things are.

Whatever we do, we should do dedicating to God. God is the limit of all knowledge. If we dedicate our deeds to Him, those deeds would give us lasting happiness. If those deeds are not novel, but the ones which our forebears had handed down from generation to generation, their performance would be easy. Even if we have to do something bad, if we do it, not for filling our stomach but as something extra, dedicating to God, that will become *dharma*.

Which *dharma* should we follow? We are soaked in the *dharma* which has been followed by our great men for generations, for a long time. As a matter of experience, we can say that they gained happiness. It is enough if we follow that *dharma*. If we cast about for something new, it will be a vain endeavour; and there will be the doubt whether that new thing is good or not. Therefore, to follow the *dharma* which is meant for us and which our great men adopted as the rule for their lives is good.

It is thus clear that we should do something extra which is not for the sake of our stomach, or for our family, or for our village, or for our country. That thing should be what has been handed down to us through generations. We should do that, after dedicating it to God and with courage and regularity. That is *dharma*. That will give us happiness for ever.

Whatever we do with our mind, speech, and body – the three instruments of action—all that should bear *dharma*. We should acquire *dharma*, the spiritual

currency, in exchange for all the money that we possess. All the powers that we have must be expanded in augmenting it which will be valid at all times and in all places. What Kausalya described to Rāma as his talisman is that, Rāma had to face formidable obstacles. He overcame them through *dharma*.

Man should always do things that will uplift him. Among the animals, all except man are invertebrates. They are referred to as *tiryak* animals. It is man alone that grows vertically. His form show that he is superior to the other animals. If he follows the way of *dharma*, even the animals would support him. If he adopts the path of *adharma*, even his brothers would desert him. This is illustrated in the story of Rāma. In the following *śloka* this is clearly explained:

*yānti nyāyapravṛttasya
tiryanco'pi sahāyatīm,
āpanthānam tu gaccantām
sodaro'pi vimuncati.*

(*Anrgharāghava nātaka, I, 4*)

Because Rāma followed the way of virtue, even monkeys helped him. Because Rāvaṇa adopted the ways of vice, even his younger brother broke away from him. Although Rāvaṇa was in his own kingdom, surrounded by his armies, he could not be saved. For a man of virtue, there is well-being everywhere.

Therefore it is *dharma* that will protect one. Apart from what we do for satisfying our desires, anger, etc. apart from what we do for earning a living, we should do extra deeds—those which were done by our forebears—with courage and regularity: they will give us happiness.

ŚAṄKARA AND LALITĀDVAITA*

— T. M. P. Mahadevan

‘Advaita’ is the name for the plenary experience —experience that is free from limitation and division, experience that is the non-dual Self. The voice that carries the message of Advaita, most successfully and succulently is that of Śaṅkara, the great Master who came to open a new chapter in the history of mankind—a chapter that promises hope for all, guarantees universal salvation. Considerations of time and space do not in any way limit Advaita. Śaṅkara says in one place that the moderns too can have the experience of non-duality even as the sages like Vāmadeva had in the past. In another place he declares that the great knowers (*mahājñānāḥ*) are those who have conclusive knowledge that the supreme Self is one and unoriginated, the same in all; and he includes women too among the great knowers (*stryādayo’pi suniścītāḥ*). The great Master’s one aim was to see that the treasure of Advaita was made available to the widest commonalty. In a discourse in Samskrit,

* Courtesy : The South Indian Samskrit Association, Madras.

the Sage of Kāñcī says that the Lord Śaṅkara converts even the commonest of men into the supreme Self:

*pāmaramaṇi paramātmānain karoti bhagavān
śaṅkaraḥ*

In his Hymn to Śaṅkara, Toṭakācārya addresses the Great Master thus in a verse:

“By Thee the masses have been made happy, O Thou who hast a noble intellect skilled in the inquiry into Self-knowledge! Enable me to understand the wisdom concerning God and the soul. Be Thou my refuge, O Master Śaṅkara!

*bhavatā janatā suhitā bhavitā nijabodha-vicāraṇa-
cārumate.*

*kalayeśvara-jīva-viveka-vidān bhava śaṅkara
deśika me śaranam.*

Śaṅkara wrote extensive commentaries on the three foundational texts of Vedānta, viz. the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the *Brahma-sūtra*, in order to show conclusively that their sole purport is non-duality (*advaita*). In these commentaries which are characterized by clarity and depth, he demonstrates the untenability of alternative interpretations and also the unacceptability of the pluralistic standpoints such as those of Śaṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika by using dialectics. He proves also how the ritualists (Mīmāṃsakas) are mistaken in their understanding of the Veda as teaching ritual as the means for gaining not only prosperity here and in a hereafter, but also the ultimate human end which is release (*mokṣa*). Śaṅkara's genius finds perfect harmony in the teaching of the Vedāntic texts: the teaching as expounded by him is that

Brahman, the supreme Self, is the sole reality, that the world of plurality is not real, that the so-called individual soul is no other than the non-dual Brahman, that the realization of this truth is release, and that the means to Brahman-realization is knowledge (*jñāna*).

For the benefit of the seekers after the truth, Śaṅkara wrote, besides the *bhāṣyas*, independent manuals like the *Upadeśasāhasrī*, the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* and the *Ātmabodha*. The purpose of these works is to make the understanding of Advaita easy. What impelled the Great Master to compose these manuals was his unbounded compassion for suffering mankind. For those who are afflicted by wandering aimlessly on the burning desert sands of *samsāra*, it is the blessed and victorious *voice* of Śaṅkara that shows that the solace-affording ocean of nectar which is Brahman is within easy reach.

*samsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūta-dāhavya-
thākhinnānām jalakāṅkṣkyā marubhuvi bhrāntyā
paribhrāmyatām*

*atyāsanna-sudhāmbudhiṃ suhakarām brahmādva-
yam darśayatyeṣā śaṅkarabhāratī vijayate nir-
vāṇa-saṁdāyinī.*

However easy the mode of teaching Advaita may be made, the aspirant has to possess the necessary competence to receive the light that the teaching imparts. At the commencement of the *Ātmabodha*, Śaṅkara says that this treatise is written for the sake of the seekers after release, whose sins have been destroyed through austerities, who have gained calmness, and who are free from attachments.

*tapobhiḥ kṣīṇa-pāpānām śāntānām vitarāgiṇām,
mumukṣūṇāmapekṣyo' yam ātma-bodho vidhīyate.*

Those who can derive the utmost profit from this salutary teaching are the *sannyāsins* who have secured purity of mind through the performance of obligatory duties, who have turned away from the pleasures of the world, who have become quiescent, who have an intense longing for release, and who take a delight in scripture.

*hitam-upadeśam ādriyantaḥ vihita-nirasta-samasta-
citta-doṣāḥ,*

*bhava-sukha-viratāḥ prasānta-cittāḥ śruti-rasika
yatayo mumukṣavo ye.*

For the sake of those who have yet to gain discrimination and dispassion through single-hearted devotion to God, Śaṅkara composed moving hymns replete with *bhakti-rasa*, such as the *Haristuti*, the *Śivānanda-lahari*, and the *Saundarya-lahari*. The very fact that Śaṅkara has sung of the Godhead in its myriad forms shows that, according to Advaita, worship may be offered to the Supreme in any of its modes—as Viṣṇu, Śiva, or Devī, and the same result thereby gained, which is the cleansing and the unification of the devotee's mind and heart. It is to be noted that the end which Śaṅkara has in view in his devotional hymns is to lead the devotee to Advaita-realization. A verse in the *Hari-stuti* reads thus :

“I worship that Hari who is called Brahman, who is attained by devotees as the God that is non-different, all-full, and as resident in the heart, who is unborn, subtle, and indisputable, the Lord whom the

Brahman-knowers know through meditating as self-established, and who is the destroyer of the darkness of *saṁsāra*.”

*yam brahmākhyam devamananyam paripūrṇam
hṛtsthām bhaktair-labhyam ajam sūkṣmām
atarkyam
dhyātvātmasthām brahmavidō yam vidurīṣām
tam saṁsāradhvānta-vināśam harimāḍe.*

In a verse of the *Śivānanda-laharī*, the Master, speaking on our behalf, addresses Śiva thus :

“O The Source of Auspiciousness, O Teacher of the world! Impart to my mind the teaching that leads to happiness !”

*śainbho loka-guro mādiya-manasaḥ saukyopadeśam
kuru.*

In another verse of the same hymn, the result that is gained by devotion to, and meditation on, Śiva is stated thus :

“O Crescent-crested Lord ! Through Thy Grace the beginningless nescience has been removed from the heart, and charming knowledge has been made to take its seat there. Thy lotus-feet, which bring auspiciousness and are the repositories of liberation, I meditate on and adore.”

*ādyaṁvidyā hṛdgatā nirgatāsīd-
vidyā hṛdyā hṛdgatā tvatprasādāt
seve nityam śrīkarām tvat-padābjām
bhāve mukterbhājanām rājamaule.*

The solicitousness of Godhead as the Devī (World-Mother) in granting to the devotee the realization of

identity is so beautifully extolled in a verse of the *Saundarya-laharī* thus : The devotee earnestly desires to supplicate to the Mother saying "O Bhavāni! Mayest Thou cast Thy merciful glance on me, Thy servant." He has uttered only the first two words *bhavāni tvam*. The Mother takes the first word not as one of Her names, but as a verb, and construes the request of the devotee as meaning 'May I be Thou!' And, at once She bestows on him the status of identity with Herself—the status that is adored even by Hari, Brahmā and Indra, who pay obeisance to Her by bowing down with their brilliantly crowned heads:

bhavāni tvam dāse mayi vitara dr̥ṣṭim sakaruṇām
iti stotum vāñchan-kathayati bhavāni tvamiti yah,
tadaiva tvam tasmai diśasi nijasāyujā-padaṅgīm
mukunda-brahmendra-sphuṭa-makuṭa - nīrājita-
padam.

In the worship of Godhead, the recitation of the divine names has the pride of place. There are litanies of a thousand names of Godhead as Viṣṇu, Śiva, Devī, and so on. On the one thousand names of Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara has written a commentary showing how these names reveal Viṣṇu, not as a sectarian God, but as the supreme non-dual Brahman. The *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma* occurs in the *Mahābhārata*. The litany of one thousand names of the World-Mother as Lalitā belongs to the *Brahmāṇḍa-purāna*. In the same *Purāna* there is a shorter litany consisting of three hundred names, *Lalitā-trīśatī*; and on this hymn Śaṅkara has written a beautiful commentary. Here, he shows how Devī Lalitā is the same as Brahman, the non-dual reality; and the teaching of Advaita

imparted in this commentary is so easy to comprehend that it would not be inappropriate to describe it as *Lalitādvaita*.

In the course of his explanation of the three hundred names of Lalitā, the World-Mother, Ācārya Śaṅkara covers the entire range of spiritual disciplines from the worship of the Mother in womanly form to the contemplation of, and meditation on, the attributeless non-dual Brahman resulting in realization which is release. He supports his explanation of the names with a profusion of citation from the *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and other Vedāntic texts, thus demonstrating how *Śrī-vidyā*, the worship of the Mother, is in complete conformity with Vedānta; and how this discipline leads the devotee to the ultimate goal in a way that is easy as well as sure.

The *Śrī-vidyā* worship of the supreme Deity in the female form, especially in the form of the universal Mother is supremely significant. Godhead, as such, has no gender. And so, any gender may be applied to it. A Tāntrika text says :

“This is neither woman nor man, nor what is neuter, nor what is inert.”

neyam yoṣit na ca pumān na śaṅḍho na jaḍaḥ smṛtaḥ

A hymn addressed to Śakti in the *Mahākāla-saṁhitā* runs thus :

“Thou art neither girl, nor maid, nor old. Indeed, thou art neither female, nor male, nor neuter. Thou art inconceivable, immeasurable power, the

Being of all that exists, void of all duality, the supreme Brahman, attainable in illumination alone.”

As a step to reach the stage where the distinctionless Brahman is realized as beyond designation by the use of genders, the discipline that is taught is that the Deity may be conceived in any form. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, the Supreme is addressed thus :

“Thou art woman; Thou art man; Thou art the youth and also the maiden; Thou as an old man totterest with a stick; being born, Thou stayest facing all directions!”

*tvam strī tvam pumān asi tvam kumāra uta vā kumāri,
tvam jīrṇo daṇḍena vañcasi tvam jāto bhavasi sarva-
tomukhaḥ.*

After quoting this *mantra* in his commentary on the name *ekākṣari* (22), Śaṅkara observes that the variety of forms is rendered possible by the conditioning adjuncts (*upādhi*). He also cites in this context a *Smṛti* text which reads thus :

“Think of the *Devī* as of the form of woman; or as of the form of man; or meditate on Her as without parts and as of the nature of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss.”

*strīrūpām cintayed-devīm puṁrūpām athaveśvarīm,
atha vā niṣkalam dhyāyet saccidānanda-vigrahām.*

Our attention is drawn also to the passage from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* where all the three genders are used with reference to the Self :

seyam devataikṣata...tat satyam sa ātmā

“This *devatā* thought...that is *satyam*, that is *ātman*.” Here, in this passage, *devatā* (*deity*) is in the feminine gender; *satyam* (truth) is in the neuter gender; and *ātman* is in the masculine gender.

Of all the forms in which Godhead may be worshipped, the form as World-Mother has a unique advantage. If Śiva is the Father Śivā is the Mother. For facilitating devotion, the supreme Reality splits, as it were, into Śiva and Śivā. But even thus, the truth of non-separateness is unmistakably evident. Śivā or Lalitā is Grace and Beauty personified. She is the Queen-consort of the supreme Brahman (*parabrahma-mahiṣī*), the Beloved of Īśvara, the supreme Power of the three aspects of Godhead, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra (*Īśvara-vallabhā*, 50). She is the beloved of Śiva (*hara-priyā*, 104), and is adored by Him (*harā-rādhyā*, 105). If Śiva is of the nature of existence-consciousness (*sat-cit*), the *Devī* is of the nature of bliss (*ānanda*).

saccinmayah śivah sākṣāt tasyānandamyī śivā

And thus, the *Devī* is said to have for Her body half of Śiva's (*Īśvarārdhāṅga-śarīrā*, 52). She is Śiva's Power (*Īśa-śaktiḥ*, 59), and is inseparable from Him.

The womanly form of the Deity is transcendently beautiful. The name Lalitā (62) means She who is absolutely beautiful, ‘Incomparable beauty’ (*atyanta-saundaryavatī-anupama-saundarya*). She has a form that is most entrancing (*kamravīgrahā*, 17 : *lalitā-rūpā*). Several of the names give a glowing description of the

appearance of the *Devī*. Her features, Her ornaments, Her qualities—all indicate that She is Beauty incarnate. She is beautiful in every limb (*sarvāṅga-sundarī*, 130; *lāvanyaśālīnī : sarvāvayava-sādhāraṇa-sundara-bhāvayati*, 187). Every part of Her body is supremely beautiful (*labdhātīśaya-sarvāṅgasaundarya*, 273; *sarva-mano-hara-mūrtivatī*). In many of the names descriptive of Her form, comparisons are attempted. But in every case what is compared is superior to what is compared with. For instance, in the name *elāsu-gandhi-cikurā*, (30) the *Devī*'s coiffure is said to have the perfume of cardamom. But, this does not mean, as Śaṅkara points out, that the perfume meant here is physical; and also, the implication is that not only the hair but the entire body of the *Devī* carries divine perfume. Similarly should one understand the other comparisons. Her looks are like the lotus-petals (*kaṁja-locanā*, 16); they are like the looks of the deer, directed on all sides (*harinekṣaṇā*, 103). Her face is like the moon (*kalānātha-mukhī*, 149). Her throat is like a conch, marked by three lines (*kambukaṅṭhī*, 157). She has a creeper-like body (*latā-tanuḥ*, 24). She moves gracefully like the swan (*hamsa-gatiḥ*, 162). She has a lustre like that of the pomegranate flower, red mixed with white (*lasaddāḍima-pāṭalā*, 66). Her effulgence puts to shame masses of hibiscus flower (*kāntidhūta-japāvali*, 155). Her shining colour is like that of flowing lac (*lākṣārāsa-savarṇābhī*, 189). She is red all over (*sarvāruṇā*, 138). The parts of Her body are replete with brilliant signs of auspiciousness, indication of divinity (*lakṣaṇojjvala-divyāṅgī*, 69). She wears all over ornaments of pearl and other precious gems (*sarvābharāṇa bhūṣitā*, 140). She has womanly graces like modesty, and motherly virtues like limitless

compassion (*lajjādhyā*, 79; *kāruṇyavygrahā*, 153). She is *sarvamaṅgalā* (124), the plenitude of auspiciousness, the supreme good.

The worship of, and meditation on, the beautiful form of the Mother will serve to draw the mind of the devotee away from what is ugly, discordant, and untrue. It will ultimately lead to the realization of identity with the *Devī*, for that is the goal of all worship. There are subtle modes of worship such as contemplating the Deity in the form of a *yantra* or *cakra* consisting of linear designs, and in the form of a *mantra* or sound-formula. The queen of the cakras is the *Śrī-cakra*. Interpreting the name *kāmakoti-nīlayā* (259), Śaṅkara says that it means that among the ninety-six pīṭhas it is the *kāmakoti*, i.e. *Śrī-cakra* that is Her abode (*kāmakotiḥ śrī-cakram ity-arthah*).

The supreme *mantra* of the *Devī* is the *pañcadāśī* consisting of fifteen letters, in three groups. The first group is *vāgbhava-kūṭa* with five letters; the second is *kāmarāja-kūṭa* with six letters; and the third is *śakti-kūṭa* with four letters. Each of the three hundred names of the *Devī* forming the *Lalitā-triśatī* begins with one of the letters of the *pañcadaśī-mantra*. Each letter constitutes the first letter in twenty names; and thus there is secured equal distribution of all the fifteen letters. The last letter in each of the three groups is *hrīm* which is called the *māyā-bīja*, the most significant seed-letter (*bījākṣara*) for the *Devī*. As *hrīm* occurs thrice, there are sixty names with this as the first letter. While explaining the significance of these names, Śaṅkara shows how *hrīm* is the most appropriate sound-symbol for the *Devī*.

Hrīm is a compound letter consisting of four letters: *ha-kāra*, *repha*, *īkāra*, and *anusvāra*—*ha*, *ra*, *ī*, and *m*. The signification of these four letters is variously explained.

(i) *Ha-kāra* which is the seed-letter for space (*ākāśabīja*) is Śiva. Like space, Śiva is undefiled. *Repha* is the seed-letter for fire (*vahni-bīja*). It expresses *Īśvara* who is endowed with the power (*śakti*) to manifest the world. Hence, *ha-kāra* combined with *repha* represents the pure consciousness (*śuddha-caitanya*) which is delimited as the cause. *Īkāra* is *manmatha-bīja* which represents *Viṣṇu* who is the cause for the preservation of the world. The *anusvāra* signifies the resolution of the world in that very cause. Thus, *hrīm* indicates the qualification *per accidens* of Pure Consciousness, which is causality in regard to the origination, sustentation, and dissolution of the world. The *Devī* is *hrīmkāra-lakṣaṇā* (86).

(ii) *Hrīm* which is *māyā-bīja* signifies *prakṛti*. *Ha-kāra* means white; *repha*, red; and *īkāra*, black. Three colours stand respectively for *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* which are the constituents of *prakṛti*. As signifying thus, *hrīm* is *māyā* which is the nature of what is unreal, inert, and miserable. Yet, when *māyā* is pierced through and is considered as the ornament of the *Devī*, it leads to the knowledge of the Deity as Pure Consciousness. The *Devī* is *hrīm-vibhūṣaṇā* (89).

(iii) *Hrīm* is derived from the root *hr* 'to take away'. The *Devī* is *hrīm* because, while being the basis of all ends such as lordly powers, She removes them and is realized as being of the nature of the final goal which is release (*mokṣa*) (99).

Hrīmkāra is indicative of Brahman both as endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) and as attributeless (*nirguṇa*). Just as *Om* is the sound-symbol for Brahman, so is *hrīm* for the *Devī*—*hrīm* which is one of the five praṇavas (*śrīm*, *hrīm*, *klīm*, *aiṁ*, *sauḥ*). The *Devī* is *hrīmkāra-cintyā*. She is to be contemplated as *hrīm* (98).

In some of the names the glory of *hrīm* is sought to be brought out by the use of appropriate similes. The Divine Mother is the crest-jewel of *hrīm* (*hrīm-śikhāmaṇiḥ*, 204). She is the flame of the sacred fire in the sacrificial altar of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-kundāgni-śikhā* 205). She is the soothing rays of the moon of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-śaśi-candrikā*, 206). She is the radiance of the blazing sun of *hrīmkāra* (*hrīmkāra-bhāskara-ruciḥ*, 207). She is the dazzling lightning in the rain-bearing cloud of *hrīmkārā* (*hrīmkārāmbhoda-cañcalā*, 208).

The Divine Mother is variously described as the sprout of the tuber of *hrīm*; as the ultimate goal of *hrīm*; as the swan sporting in the deep well of *hrīm*; as the peahen in the garden of *hrīm*; as the deer in the forest of *hrīm*; as the creeper in the plant-bed of *hrīm*; as the parrot in the cage of *hrīm*; as the lamp in the porch of *hrīm*; as the lioness in the cave of *hrīm*; as the bumble-bee in the lotus of *hrīm*; as the honey in the flower of *hrīm*; as the cluster of blossoms on the tree of *hrīm*.

hrīmkāra-kandāṅkurikā hrīmkāraika-parāyaṇā,
hrīmkāra-dīrghikā-hamsī hrīmkārodyāna-kekīṇī
hrīmkārāraṇya-hariṇī hrīmkārāvālavallārī,
hrīmkāra-pañjara-śukī hrīmkārāṅgaṇa-dīpikā.

*hrīmkāarakandarā-simhī hrīmkāraṁbhoja-bhṛṅgikā,
hrīmkāra-sumano-mādhvī hrīmkāra-taru mañjarī*
(209-220).

In the closing verses of the *Trīsatī*, some more similes are given; and one of the names that occurs in this context is *hrīmkāra-vedopaniṣat* (294), which means that the *Devī* is the *upaniṣat*, i.e. *brahma-vidyā* of the *Veda* which is *hrīmkāra*.

As we have seen, the supreme Deity (*paradevatā*) is the same as Brahman both as endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) and as devoid of attributes (*nirguṇa*). Referring to the use of the word *ca* (*and*) in the *Trīsatī*, Śaṅkara says that the conjunctive signifies that although Brahman is *nirguṇa*, it is also *saguṇa*.

*cakāraḥ nirguṇa-brahmaṇo'pi saguṇa-brahma-
viśeṣaṇa-sadbhāva-samuccaya-paraḥ sarvatrāpi*
draṣṭavyaḥ (22).

The *Upaniṣads* present a twofold definition of Brahman—definition *per accidens* (*taṭasthalakṣaṇa*) and definition of the essence (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*). The definition *per accidens* is that Brahman is the cause of the origination, sustentation, and dissolution of the world. Brahman or Godhead is not merely the efficient cause; it is also the material cause; it is the whole and sole ground in regard to the world-manifestation (*abhin-nanimittopādāna-kāraṇa*). Brahman, again, does not become the world through transformation or change (*pariṇāma*). It only appears as the world (*vivarta*).

Commenting on the name *eka-prābhava-śālinī* (40), Śaṅkara says that the *Devī*'s unique rulership is like the potency in the banyan-seed which is responsible

for the future tree. He also observes that the lordship on the part of the Pure Consciousness in regard to the world is its qualification *per accidens*. Thus, the causality attributed to the supreme Deity is unhindered and independent (*nirañkuṣa-svatantra-jagat-kāraṇatva*). Again, while explaining the meaning of the name *īkṣaṇa-srṣṭāṇḍakotih* (49) Śaṅkara says that Brahman, being both the material and the efficient cause, manifests the world out of itself, just as a spider produces a web out of its own body. Thus, the *Devī* who is the Godhead creates the world, preserves it, and destroys it, without any outside help or auxiliary. She is the maker of all (*sarva-kartrī*, 125), sustainer of all (*sarva-bhartrī*, 126), and destroyer of all (*sarva-hantrī*, 127). She is the sovereign cause for the disappearance, continued appearance, and re-appearance of the world (*laya-sthity-udbhavēśvarī*, 183). She is omnipresent; She is of the nature of all; She is the substrate of all (*sarvagatā*, 136; *sarvātmikā*, 132; *sarvādhārā*, 135).

The essential definition of Brahman is that it is existence-consciousness-bliss (*saccidānanda*). Existence, etc., are not the qualities of Brahman; they constitute its essence. The three terms, *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, do not involve mutual difference so far as their implication is concerned. Existence is not different from consciousness; and consciousness is not different from bliss. But difference arises only in regard to the manifestation of Brahman. In all things and beings, living and non-living, conscient and inconscient, the existence-aspect is manifested. In conscious mental modes, whether pure or impure, the consciousness-aspect is manifested. The bliss-aspect is manifested

only in pure mental modes. Godhead as the *Devī* is identified specially with the bliss-aspect of Brahman. Several names in the *Trīsatī* speak of the Devī's nature as bliss. The supreme Deity is *Kalyaṇī* (2), i.e. pure bliss or happiness (*ānandaika-vigrahavatī*). She remains as a mass of bliss (*kalyāṇā-śaila-nilayā*, 4). She is, to the sages, the supreme form of beauty which is of the nature of bliss solidified as it were (*kamanīyā*, 5). She is of the one consistency of bliss and consciousness (*ekānanda-cid-ākṛtiḥ*, 25). She is faultless (*anavadyā*, 129), because she is existence-consciousness-bliss. She is the essence of happiness that is the same all-through (*sama-rasā*, 222).

Existence, consciousness, and bliss are positive terms. But as applied to Brahman, they should not be interpreted in their ordinary sense. Such terms indicate the nature of Brahman by negating their opposites, as 'not this', 'not this' (*atad-vyāvṛtti-svarūpa-pratipādanena*). The *Veda* does not expound the nature of the Deity as thus and thus (*evamīty-āgamābodhyā*, 26). The *Upaniṣads* convey to us the knowledge of Brahman *via negativa*.

The *Devī* is the goal as well as the way, Brahman as well as *brahma-vidyā*. She is the destroyer of ignorance and ignorance-bred defects (*kalmaṣaghñī*, 8). She removes the defilements of *kali* (*kalidoṣa-harā*, 15). *Kali* stands for all that is evil and bad. It is because of the influence of *kali* that there are false doctrines spread widely. It is the *Devī* as *brahma-vidyā* that dispels all untruth and error. It is She that bestows on the devotee the sovereign status of liberation (*ekāta-patra-sāmrājya-pradā*, 35). She grants *mokṣa* which is desired by all, and which is Her own nature (*īpsitārtha-*

pradāyinī, 43). She confers the status of Godhead on the seeker by dispelling ignorance which is responsible for the notion that God and soul are different (*iśvara-ātva-vidhāyinī*, 45). She is the import of the *mahāvākya*, 'That thou art' (*tattvam asi*)—*sarva-vedānta-tātparyābhūmiḥ* (224). She destroys the darkness that is lodged in the heart (*hārda-santamasāpahā*, 171). She is the giver of bliss, the supreme felicity (*harṣa-pradā*, 169).

The great Master, Śaṅkara, has given us, through his commentary on the *Lalitā-triśatī*, all that we require to reach the goal of non-duality. *Lalitā*, the supremely beautiful Mother, is the truth of non-duality (*advaita-tattva*). The Advaita as taught by Śaṅkara in the *Triśatī-bhāṣya* is easy and beautiful (*lalita*).

ASPECTS OF ADVAITA*

— P.N. Srinivasachari

PURE PRACTICAL ADVAITA THE COSMOLOGICAL APPROACH

Section (i) : Māyā and Avidyā-Īśvara and Jīva

Pure Practical Advaita is midway between Pure Advaita which is a rational enquiry into truth and Practical Advaita which adopts the ethico-religious method. It has its own advantages as a separate study. As *parā vidyā* or supreme monistic idealism it is contrasted with *aparā vidyā* or knowledge of the lower realm of empirical reality. Pure Practical Advaita is to be distinguished as a philosophical enquiry into Brahman (*Brahmajijñāsā*). Pure Advaita seeks to establish the truths of *nirguṇa* Brahman, *vivartavāda* and *jīvanmukti* as contrasted with the theological ideas of *saguṇa* Brahman, *pariṇāmavāda* and *kramamukti*. While Pure Advaita is *ātmavicāra* or the introspective enquiry into the self which may be called the philosophy of the subject, Pure Practical Advaita is *Brahma-*

* Courtesy : Sri Krishna Library Series—8 : Sri Krishna Library, Mylapore, Madras.

vicāra or the Subject-object philosophy. Pure Practical Advaita accepts the supreme authority of the *Upaniṣads* and also the need for rational exposition and arrives at the conclusion that Brahman is impersonal, and self-established. It recognises the distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā*, *Īśvara* and *jīva* and the plurality of the *jīvas* or empirical selves and defines *mukti* as freedom even during embodiment and not freedom from embodiment as a far-off event. Its chief doctrine is *adhyāsa* or superimposition which declares that Brahman falsely appears as the world of *nāmarūpa*, just as the shell appears as silver. The principle of the degrees of truth and reality is utilised and the approach to the problem is not only psychological as in Pure Advaita but also cosmological. Though the Absolute is pure consciousness in the *pāramārthika* level, it also appears as the phenomenal world (*vyāvahārika satya*) and as the apparent and the fictitious real like the shell-silver illusion (*prātibhāsīya satya*). Reality is beyond relational knowledge and illusory appearance. The *mumukṣu* with his monistic disposition and discipline is both a metaphysician and a practical Vēdāntin. He not only speculates on the nature of existence but also has a direct experience of truth. The *mukta* knows Brahman because he is Brahman, as knowing and being are one.

The truths of Pure Practical Advaita have their foundation in *Śāstra* or Vedic authority but they are not dogmatically derived from it. Faith in *Śāstra* is verified or confirmed by reason or metaphysical thinking which is, however, different from logical analysis or *tarka*. The conclusions arrived at by the logical intellect have neither fixity nor finality on account of

the self-contradictions that are inherent in the process of thinking itself. Thinking is a subject-object relation leading to ultimate doubts but Brahman is beyond any such relation and the Veda alone enables us to get a direct and true knowledge of Brahman and be free from all doubts and difficulties. Like sunlight dispelling darkness, Vedic knowledge removes *avidyā* and reveals the nature of the self-existent Brahman. Philosophic enquiry is, however, essential to such knowledge though its method is largely negative. The philosopher proves the truth of *nirguṇa* Brahman by proving what it is not, by the method of *neti neti*. Truth is non-contradictory and absolutely true but there are relative truths and even the Veda admits of degrees of truth till the absolute is realised as revealed in the *mahāvākya*, "Thou art that," "I am Brahman." *Ātman* is pure consciousness, but it is obscured by *avidyā* and appears as *jīva*. Brahman is the absolute beyond the world of space-time-cause, but it is veiled by *māyā* and appears as *Īśvara*. Advaita is identity of the *jīva* and *Īśvara* by negating *avidyā*. Consciousness of *Parāvidyā* or *Brahmavidya* teaches the Advaitic truth that Brahman is *sat-cit-ānanda* and the *jagat* is *anṛta*, *jaḍa* and *duḥkha*, the opposite of truth, consciousness and bliss. It is the aim of the *Vedānta Sūtras* as *Śārīraka Śāstra* to teach that Brahman is pure intelligence-bliss though it appears in variegated fictitious forms, just as a magician, by his magical power, assumes different shapes which are seeming and not real. *Śāstra* alone removes the false ideas of duality and distinction. When the self identity of Brahman is intuited, even scriptural authority has no validity and the Veda is no Veda

Brahman

Brahman is defined *negatively* as *sat-cit-ānanda* which really means the opposite of *anṛta, jada, duḥya* but it is no definition at all as Brahman is indeterminate or *nirguṇa* and *niravayava*, featureless and formless. Every kind of determination limits the limitless and is a negation of reality. To define Brahman is to get entangled in the self-contradictions of relational thought and dualistic consciousness. Brahman is the 'that' without the 'what': it is the absolute without qualities. The three terms *sat, cit,* and *ānanda* are therefore not attributes of Brahman but are intended to deny the nature of predication itself. *Sat* is Being without Becoming and it transcends the category of time in the sense that it is the eternal that denies entirely the temporal process. To say that Being as such is an empty abstraction and that it becomes concrete by entering into non-being is to lapse into *avidyā* and the logical way of thinking. Becoming presupposes an end to be realised and it therefore betrays the marks of finitude and falsity. Being is not even the highest generalisation of experience, as such a process is also a defect of logical thinking. Brahman is therefore what *is* or *sat*. What is *sat* is also *cit* or *nirviśeṣa cinmātra* or pure consciousness that is beyond the subject-object consciousness. Existence and consciousness or Being and Knowing are one. Bare Being devoid of consciousness is nothing and Being cannot be a predicate as it is presupposed in the subject. Every kind of experience is a subject-object relation and as relation is relation of terms and is also external to them, it is self-contradictory and false. Brahman is consciousness as such and it never lapses into the self-conscious, the sub-conscious or the unconscious. It

is self-luminous and shines by itself and is in itself. What is *sat-cit* is also *ānanda* and it means that Brahman is bliss itself and not blissful. The adjective 'blissful' limits the nature of Brahman and such a limitation is a defect of thought and is due to *avidyā*. Pleasure, happiness and blissfulness arise from the distinction between the experiencing subject and the experienced object, and this duality is traceable to *avidyā*. Bliss can never be predicated of Brahman as it may mean that it is a new quality that is not in Brahman. Thus Brahman is *sat-cit-ānanda* or being-consciousness-bliss-absolute. The absolute or the infinite is one without a second and it is self-contradictory to think of three absolutes. The absolute is thus Being which never becomes; it is the Knower which never lapses into the known; and it is Bliss beyond pleasure-pain.

Māyā

The central truth of Advaita is the reality of Brahman or *ātman* and the unreality of *jagat* which is *māyā* or *avidyā*. Like Brahman and *ātman*, *māyā* and *avidyā* are the objective and subjective versions of the same principle. How the one appears as the many is the crux of monistic thought and *māyāvāda* is the attempt to conceive the inconceivable and solve the insoluble problem. The question is itself illegitimate and inadmissible and the solution lies in the dissolution of the problem by Advaitic experience. The philosophic intellect, however, demands a rational explanation of *māyā* and various attempts are made to bring out the implications of *māyā*, as cosmic confusion, that somehow resides in Brahman and veils the *ātman*. Pure Practical Advaita considers *māyāvāda* in a two-fold way as the illusion theory and the limitation

theory by employing the similes of the sun and its reflection in the mirror and of the ether and its limitation. Brahman is absolutely homogeneous pure consciousness, but somehow it seems to divide itself into the world of *nāma-rūpa* and the finite centres of experience like the magician creating the magical illusions. The world of persons and things from dust to the deity is a projection of cosmic nescience like the fugitive shapes of the cloud. *Māyā* overspreads Brahman as a cloud overspreads the sun. Just as clay as such is clay and its modifications are mere names without any reality, Brahman exists in itself and by itself, but its so-called differentiations are mere appearances or apparitions. *Māyā* seems to veil the nature of Brahman and make it evolve into the pluralistic universe but really Brahman is changeless like the sun beyond the reflections. The categories of thought like quantity, quality and causal relation are illusory creations of *māyā*, the counterfeit of Brahman and have the nature of 'as if.' Negation like '*neti, neti*' brings out the falsity of the finite and the sole reality of the infinite. The mathematical view of whole and parts is figurative and imaginary as Brahman is partless and homogeneous. Likewise, the idea of causality results from nescience and the view that the world is the effect of Brahman is mistaken as the effect is an illusory manifestation of the cause and does not exist. Brahman is self-related and self-caused and identical with itself. Cosmic nescience has its locus in Brahman though Brahman is not affected by it. Brahman is the basis of this baseless world.

Avidyā

Avidyā is the innate obscuration of true knowledge and is the subjective version of *māyā*. What is true of

the macrocosm is also true of the microcosm and *māyā* is the whole of which the parts are *avidyā*. In the classical instance of the shell mistaken as silver, the silver idea poses as the real, but it is a misconception or mal-observation. Likewise, pure consciousness is misconstrued and imagined to be the changing ego or *jīva* and is traceable to intellectual deformity and the myth-making tendency of the mind called *avidyā*. *Avidyā* conceals reality under the pretence of revealing it. It not only veils the real but also creates variations in it. It divides the one into the many and creates a confusion between the one and the many. Difference is unthinkable and illusory. 'By predicating difference to the real, we ascribe to it what is not and by predicating what is not different we predicate nothing.' The *jīva* is Brahman and it is due to *avidyā* that identity is misjudged and imagined as duality and that the knowledge of duality leads to delusion and the sorrows of *samsāra*. *Avidyā* is a real experience of every one as is shown when he says, 'I did not know anything while I was asleep.'

Owing to *avidyā*, the idea of the object or non-self is superimposed on the subject which is pure intelligence and the notion of the subject is wrongly ascribed to the object. *Adhyāsa* is defined as the apparent or illusory presentation in some other thing of something previously observed and remembered. The given is misinterpreted as a preconceived idea. The inner self is the witness of the psycho-physical changes in the body, but the qualities of the five *kośas* are imputed by mistake to the immutable self, as when a man says, 'I am stout, I am deaf, I pant for breath, I enjoy the rose, I will do it, I am an agent.'

Brahman is *sat-cit-ānanda* but it is misjudged as *anṛta*, *jaḍa*, *duḥkha*, or unreal, unconscious and miserable. Thus every judgment is a misjudging of reality due to the obscuring power of *avidyā*. In the stock example of the illusory snake, the false judgment exists as the given. Later, it is proved to be an illusion. Likewise, the world is felt to be real. In the light of scriptural knowledge, it is known to be an illusion. It is not *vikāra* but *vivarta*. The world is not an evolution from Brahman, but it is only its perversion due to the trick of thought or *avidyā*. Thus *adhyāsa* and *vivarta* arise from *avidyā* conjointly. The transition from *avidyā* to *vidyā* is the transition from confusion to corrected knowledge.

Māyā-Avidyā

Brahman is self-luminous and it is the self which never really becomes the non-self or the object. *Īśvara* and *jīva* are appearances of Brahman caused respectively by *māyā* and *avidyā* which stress the *vikṣepa* or creative side of nescience and the *āvaraṇa* or its veiling side respectively. *Māyā-avidyā* somehow exists as appearances or illusory manifestation of reality and this duality seems to end in dualism. But the *māyā-vādin* himself admits the difficulty as an inexplicable mystery. Just as in the rope-snake example, the snake idea exists and is felt to be real, is then thought to be self-contradictory and unthinkable and rejected as non-existent, *avidyā* is felt to be real and is then rejected as *tuccha* or nothing. It is neither *bhāva-rūpa* or positive nor *abhāva* or negative nor both and is therefore indeterminable (*sadasad-vilakṣaṇa*, *anirvacanēya*). It cannot be positive as it ceases to exist at the onset of *Brahmajñāna*. It is not not-existent as it is now felt to be real and it cannot be real and unreal as

the two are contradictories. As Bradley says, we cannot on the one hand accept anything between non-existence and reality. Error is neither, but it attempts to maintain a third position which appears nowhere to exist and it somehow exists. False appearance is nothing and it is not real. This dilemma seems insoluble; appearance is as twilight or quasi-existence. *Māyā-avidyā* is thus real-unreal, a true lie, and how or why the absolute Brahman appears or divides itself thus is a mystery to us. But though *avidyā* is thus unaccountable, it has an end when it is sublated by *jñāna*. The enquiry into the doctrine of *māyā* and *avidyā* leads gradually to their elimination.

*Section (ii): Bimba-pratibimba-vāda or Reflection
Theory and Avacchedavāda or Limitation Theory*

How the one appears as the many is metaphysically indefinable but it is, however, describable figuratively or analogically in terms of the reflection theory (*bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) and the limitation theory (*avaccheda-vāda*). According to the reflection theory, pure consciousness is self-effulgent, immutable and eternal. But when it is reflected in *māyā-avidyā*, it appears as *Īśvara-jīva*. Like the reflections of the sun in a watery surface or in the mirror and like the reflections of red colour in white crystal, Brahman is distorted by nescience into the infinite-finite. The reflected images of the sun expand and contract with the agitations of the watery-surface, but the sun is not affected by these changes. Just as when one reflected image of the sun trembles another does not tremble,¹

1. *Śaṅkara Bhāṣya on the Brahma Sūtras*, II-iii-50; III-ii-15, 18.

so when one *jīva* is *karma*-ridden, another need not on that account be *karma*-ridden. Like lamp-light on the stage, the *sākṣin* may shine steadily, and does not flicker. *Māyā* seems to stain the white light of eternity and break it into the many-coloured forms of *nāmarūpā*. The absolute makes eyes at itself in a mirror but the original is the same without any change. When one reflected image of the sun trembles, another image is not on that account agitated. Likewise, when one *jīva* 'as the apparition of Brahman,' seems to suffer, another is not thereby affected.

Padmapāda (820 A.D.) was a disciple of Śaṅkara; he wrote a commentary called *Pañcapādikā* on the *bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara on the first four *sūtras* and is in favour of the *bimba-pratibimba-vāda* which says that the *jīva* is a reflection of Brahman. Like a picture on the canvas, *avidyā* reflects Brahman and produces the image of *ahamkāra*. It is not bare negation like sky-flower but is a reflected image like the redness of a flower in a crystal and is a positive obscuring something (*bhāva rūpa*). His view was further developed by Prakāśātman (1200 A. D.) in his commentary on *Pañcapādikā* called *Pañcapādikā-vivarana* and he says that Brahman is both the support and the object of *avidyā* (*āśraya* and *viśaya*) and that the *jīva* is a reflection of *Īśvara* (or Brahman) in *ajñāna*. He thus continues the tradition of Suresvara and his disciple Sarvajñātman and it is called the *vivarana* line.¹ It is opposed to the view of Vācaspati which holds that *avidyā* has Brahman as its object or *viśaya* and the

1. Das Gupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, p. 103.

jīva as its locus or *āśraya*. The *Vivaraṇa-prameya-saṅgraha* of Vidyāraṇya (1350 A. D.) is a further exposition of the *vivaraṇa* tradition and it holds that pure consciousness is ever present in all the three states as the eternal light or *svayam jyotis*. Brahman reflected in *māyā* is the cause of the appearances of reality. In his *Pañcadaśī* he compares Brahman to white canvas and the world to a picture painted on it. The one shines for ever but the many is its reflection seen through the dome of many coloured glass which stains the white light of eternity. Vimuktātman (1200. A.D.) had already employed the analogy of paintings on the canvas to bring out the relation between appearances and reality. According to the *avacchedavāda*, *avidyā* is not a medium of reflection but a limiting adjunct, which finitises the infinite. Brahman is seamless consciousness, but it seems to be measured and sundered. As Śaṅkara says, ether is all-pervasive but it seems to be limited when it is enclosed in jars and water-spouts.¹ The Bhāmatī remarks that the absolute, the partless, is limited as it were by *avidyā* like ether enclosed in a jar. Brahman exists in three forms in the finished state of *Īśvara*, *Kūṭastha* and *jīva*. *Īśvara* is the Inner Ruler like the ether in the sky or cloud-land consisting of water particles (*meghākāśa*). *Kūṭastha* as the *jīva-sākṣin* is the spectator of the bodily shows resembling ether in water (*jalākāśa*). *Jīva* is like the ether enclosed in the jar (*ghaṭākāśa*). Thus the measureless is caught up, as it were, in the medium of mind-body and appears to be conditioned. Vācaspati Miśra (850 A. D.) is a follower of Śaṅkara, who, in his work

1. Śaṅkara Bhāṣya on the *Brahma Sūtra*, I-iii-7; II-i-14, 25.

called *Bhāmatī* upholds this view. He says that *avidyā* has its support or locus in the *jīva* though it has Brahman as its object or *viṣaya*. Brahman is the cause of the world and *māyā* is its instrumental cause and it seems to divide itself into the manifold of finite centres of experience. Every *jīva* has its own *avidyā* and the origin of such *avidyā* is psychological and indescribable. The *jīva* depends upon *avidyā* and is depended upon by it and the cycle goes on without any beginning and is indescribable. *Avidyā* is positive and it is due to it that the world merges in *praṇaya* and emerges in *śṛṣṭi*. Objects are external to the mind and are not its creations. Brahman is self-effulgent and it is never really obscured or contradicted. Just as when the limited space becomes one with the universal space, the finite becomes identical with the Infinite when the veil of *avidyā* is removed. According to both the theories, the absolute is one and its appearances are many. The former theory regards Brahman as self-luminous (*svayam-jyotis*) and *jīva* and *Īśvara* as reflections of the absolute. The latter regards Brahman as the infinite (*ananta*) and *jīva* and *Īśvara* as due to the limitation of the absolute. The two theories, through the two similes employed by them, try to conceive the inconceivable and thus give some idea of how Brahman becomes *Īśvara* and *jīva*.

The nature of *Īśvara* and *jīva* and their relation may now be determined in the light of the reflection and limitation theories. According to the former *Īśvara* is the reflection of Brahman in *māyā* in its *sāttvika* aspect and the *jīva* is the same Brahman enveloped by *avidyā* or *antahkaraṇa* in the *rājāsic* and *tāmasic* aspect of nescience. *Īśvara* is the idea of the absolute and not the absolute itself and the idea varies

with different view-points. (1) Like the magician creating magical illusions, *Īśvara* is the *māyin* that causes the cosmic illusion of *nāmarūpa* but is not affected by *māyā*. He is the actor appearing in various costumes and playing many parts and yet remains outside the shows and semblances. He is beyond *māyā* (*māyātītaḥ*). *Īśvara* with super-excellent limiting adjuncts rules the *jīva* with inferior limiting adjuncts. He is like the king on the throne who, falling into reverie, fancies that he hunts in the forest, becomes a hunter, marries a girl of the tribe, begets children, kicks a child and wakes up; but really all this is an illusion and not real. (2) As the first-born of cosmic nescience he is the arch-illusionist in the world fiction, and becomes a *samsārin* on a cosmic scale and undergoes sufferings in infinite ways. Even the omniscience of *Īśvara* becomes nescience on a cosmic scale. (3) Brahman is infinite and changeless. But when the element of plurality which is fictitious enters into the infinite, it becomes a whole of parts and changes fully or partially. *Īśvara* in this view is related to the *jīva* like the wood to the trees. *Īśvara* is the aggregate or totality of appearances or the sum of semblances (*samaṣṭi*) and the *jīva* is like the *trees* in the wood, the individualised form of nescience (*vyāṣṭi*). The difference between *Īśvara* and *jīva* is only one of degree and not of kind. Both are subject to the limiting adjuncts of nescience and the defects of dualistic consciousness. But *Īśvara* and *jīva* are entities, cosmic and psychic.

The *jīva* is the reflection of Brahman in *avidyā* and the *antaḥkaraṇa*. The *antaḥkaraṇa* is called *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *aḥamkāra*, having respectively the qualities of distraction, determination, remembrance

and egoity. Owing to a plurality of *avidyās* there is a plurality of *jīvas*. This view is known as *nānā-jīva-vāda* or the theory of many selves as contrasted with that of *eka-jīva-vāda* or the theory of the single self. Though *avidyā* is one, it has parts and creates various *jīvas*. *Avidyā* causes the *jīva* and is caused by it and the relation is inexplicable like that of the seed and the tree. The causal relation is itself the effect of *vidyā* and is inconceivable. The *jīva* is defined as an entity that is fictitiously hypostatized by *buddhi*, its limiting adjunct. It claims to be the finite or atomic self having the qualities of intelligence, moral freedom and enjoyment. But the claim is not real. Finiteness is falsely superimposed on the infinite. The *ātman* is *sat-cit-ānanda*. But the qualities of cognition, conation and feeling are falsely ascribed to pure consciousness, that is beyond all qualities and relations. The changeless *ātman* appears as the changing *jīva* like the trees that seem to the railway passenger to move. *Ātman* appears to be *anātmā* when we say "I am stout," "I breathe fast," "I suffer from pain," "I will do that work." These are qualities of the body and the mind which are falsely ascribed to the self which is beyond the five *kośas*. The *jīva* is Brahman, but it deceives itself and erroneously feels that it is different from Brahman.

Illusion in the objective or collective and the individualised or subjective forms of *māyā* and *avidyā* causes *Īśvara* and *jīva* to evolve from the subtle to the gross in the three states of consciousness, *susupti*, *svapna* and *jāgrat*. What is true of Brahman in the macrocosm or *aṇḍa* is also true of *ātman* in the microcosm or *piṇḍa* owing to the identity of Brahman and

ātman. The objective and the subjective are one. *Īśvara* is the counterfeit of Brahman in the causal state as the sum of semblances. The *jīva* is a single semblance in the state of sleep and is called *prājñā*. In the psychic state of dreams the aggregate of *jīvas* is called *Hiraṇyagarbha* and the particularised emanation of the same is known as *taijasa* or the vital self. In the passage from the dream world to waking consciousness the totality of the *jīvas* is called *virāṭ* or the all-self and the individual is called *viśva* or the bodily self. Thus *Īśvara* and *jīva* which are a mere potentiality in the state of sleep and dream creations in the psychic world wake up in the physical universe. *Virāṭ* is the totality of all physical things and He evolves after *Hiraṇyagarbha* or *Sūtrātmā* as the sum of subtle bodies or *prājñā* and prior to it is *Īśvara*, the illusory highest in the causal state. The whole process is illusory or an objective show. Likewise, *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājñā* are illusory shows which evolve from the gross to subtle. The seed of *samsāra* shoots forth, sprouts and grows into a tree which can be uprooted and destroyed only by *asaṅga* and *jñāna*. In all cases *Samaṣṭi* is the cosmic entity and *jīva*, the psychic one.

The philosophy of Pure Practical Advaita is not only a critical study of its meaning by logical thinking but is also a *sādhana* leading to *Brahmajñāna* based on *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. *Śravaṇa* is knowledge of the text imparted by the *guru*. The Advaitic truth contained in the *mahāvākya*, 'Thou art that' is established with the aid of the six *Mīmāṃsā* rules of textual exposition known as *upakrama-upasaṁhāra*, *abhyāsā*, *apūrvatā*, *phala*, *arthavāda* and *upapatti*. The beginning and end of the thesis in the *Upaniṣad* convey the same truth that *jīva* is Brahman. The same con-

clusion is brought home to the mind nine times by means of nine instances (*abhyāsa*). Its novelty (*apūrvatā*) is indicated by the suggestion that *advaita-jñāna* is not inferred but scripturally initiated. The value of the experience (*phala*) consists in the attainment of freedom from the ills of *samsāra*. The text glorifies the value of Advaita by exposing the defects of *bheda-jñāna*. *Jñāna* is also justified rationally (*upapatti*) by inference and example.

The text is to be construed in the light of its implied, as opposed to its literal, meaning, according to the principles of *jahad-ajahad-lakṣaṇa* or affirmation of truth by the elimination of the contradictions. *Tat* in the text refers to *Īśvara* who is omniscient, omnipotent and all-pervading and *tvam*, to the *jīva* that is ignorant, impotent and atomic. When the contradictions arising from *māyā* and *avidyā* are removed, *Īśvara* and *jīva* have their implied meaning, namely, pure consciousness, and they are identical. Brahman reflected in *māyā* appears as *Virāt*, *Hiraṇyagarbha* and *Īśvara* and the same Brahman reflected in *avidyā* appears as *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājña*. When the illusion is removed, *jīva* as *kūṭastha* and *Īśvara* as *Īśvara sākṣī* are one. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman and there is no longer any duality or delusion. In this way *śravaṇa* establishes the faith in the truth of the *mahāvākya*, 'Thou art That,' 'I am Brahman.' *Manana* is meditation on the meaning of this truth and its apperception and the conviction is enforced by employing the *pramāṇas*. The conclusion that *jīva* and *Īśvara* are one is arrived at with the aid of the *hetu* or middle term that both are *sat-cit-ānanda*. By *upamāna*, it is proved that *kūṭastha* and Brahman are one like the ether in the pot and all-per-

vading ether. By means of *anupalabdhi* it is shown that in deep sleep there is no dual consciousness. *Nididhyāsana* is the ceaseless thought on Brahman, the partless or infinite (*akhaṇḍa*) and this is known as *savikalpa samādhi*. In this way *śravaṇa* removes *pramāṇa asambhāvanā* regarding scriptural knowledge. *Manana* dispels *prameya asambhāvanā* regarding Advaita knowledge. *Nididhyāsana* eliminates every possibility of *viparīta bhāvanā* due to the mistaken idea that the body is Brahman. The *mumukṣu* tries to free himself from *samsāya* and *viparyaya* and he has a clear and distinct idea of the truth that the *ātman* is Brahman.

The *mumukṣu* gradually acquires *viveka* and *vairāgya* and begins the meditation of *nirguṇa* Brahman as symbolised by the *praṇava*. He discriminates between *ātman* and *anātman*, feels that *ātman* is beyond the five *kośas* and the three states of consciousness and acts on his conviction. *Avidyā* causes *adhyāsa* and makes the self identify itself with the non-self and suffer from misery. By *viveka* and *vairāgya* these mistaken notions are turned upside down and the process of veiling is arrested. To explain the process in a modern way, the Hegelian method of thesis, antithesis and synthesis is reversed and rejected. What is called synthesis is becoming or *samsāra*. Antithesis is opposed to being and is therefore false and being or identity consciousness alone is real and it is the corner stone of Advaita. The philosopher retraces his steps, rejects commonsense and realism and the mentalism of the dream state and even the apparent nihilism of deep sleep and seeks the transcendental state of *turiya*. Pure consciousness is beyond the subject-object relation based on the distinctions between *jīva* and *Īśvara*

in the three subjective and cosmic states of consciousness symbolised by three letters of the *praṇava*, and consciousness comes to itself in *turīya* when the *jiva-sākṣin* and *Īśvara-sākṣin* are identical. Objective consciousness is sublated and the subject shines by itself as basic truth. Meditation on *nirguṇa* Brahman is different from the method of self-analysis employed by pure Advaita and the worship of *saguṇa* Brahman as insisted on in the scheme of practical Advaita.

Mukti in this aspect of Advaita may be viewed as disillusionment or enlightenment and this view brings out the fact that *Brahmajñāna* dispels *avidyā* just as light dispels darkness. *Mukti* is immediate or intuitive relation of *nirguṇa* Brahman here and now and is not the attainment of *kārya* Brahman in a world yonder. The idea of a goal to be attained in *Brahmaloka* is anthropomorphic and has no meaning in Advaitic *mukti* which is eternally self-realised and not newly acquired. *Mukti* is not merely the denial of difference or *dvaita* but the monistic affirmation of identity. Just as the proposition 'This is that Devadatta' refers to self-identity by the elimination of spatial and temporal differences, the *mahāvākya* 'Thou art that' connotes the identity between *jīva* and *Īśvara* by removing the self-contradictions and illusions arising from *avidyā* and *mayā*. When the rope is perceived as sush, the erroneous illusion that it is a snake disappears. Though *mukti* is instantaneous in the case of the ripe *mumukṣu*, it is gradual in the case of the average seeker. Each *mahāvākya* has, therefore, its own meaning and value in the process of disillusionment. The truth of identity-consciousness is imparted to the disciple by the *guru* in the text, 'Thou art that'. The next *vākya*, '*Prajñāna* is

Brahman' is meant for *abhyāsa* or practice. The sentence 'This *ātman* is Brahman' reveals the intuitive knowledge of Brahman and the most important *mahāvākya* 'I am Brahman', expresses the immediate experience of *aikyajñāna*. In this way *ajñāna*, *āvaraṇa* and *bhrānti*, the triple errors of *dvaitajñāna* are removed by immediate knowledge or *aparokṣajñāna*. The *mukta* is no longer bound by any *karma* and in a sense he is the spectator of all time and existence.

Pure Practical Advaita deals also with the *sādhana*s by which *mukti* is gained; and the whole process of endeavour and enlightenment is said to consist of seven stages or *saptajñānabhūmikās* known as *śubhecchā*, *vicāraṇā*, *tanu-mānasa sattvāpatti*, *asamśakti*, *padārthabhāvanā* and *turīya*. *Subhecchā* is the spiritual aspiration of the *sādhaka* (or *mumukṣu*) to know *ātman* by the renunciation of non-*ātman*. The quest is often intensified by an intimation or glimpse of the self-effulgent Brahman. *Vicāraṇā* is the deep philosophic enquiry into Advaitic truth in the light of scriptural knowledge initiated by the *guru*. *Tanumānasa* is the attenuation or the gradual disappearance of *vṛttijñāna* by arresting the externalising tendency of dualistic thought. These three form the stages of Vedāntic culture culminating in Advaitic realisation. In the four succeeding stages, the ideas of duality involving the relation between the knowing subject, the known object, and knowledge even in the subtlest levels of introversion gradually disappear. All *vāsanās*, bodily, worldly, and even scriptural, vanish on the onset of *Brahmajñāna*. The fourth state called *sattvāpatti* is marked by the awakening of the non-dual consciousness and the freed man called *jīvanmukta* or *Brahmavid* works for the welfare of humanity according to his station in life and *prāra-*

bdhakarma. To him the world looks like a dream. In a higher state called *asamśakti*, there is the cessation of *saṅkalpa* or *vṛttis* followed by the disappearance of objective consciousness. The *Brahmavid* now becomes *Brahmavidvara* and his only contact with the world consists in the maintenance of the body without any touch or taint of bodily attachment, and virtue becomes his second nature. He is practically dead to the world like Jaḍabharata and awake in *Brahmajñāna*. In the still higher stage of *padārthabhāvanā* the *Brahmavidvara* ascends to the level of *Brahmavidvariyaṅ* which transcends *tripuṭi* or relational thought. The *mukta* has bodily existence like an *avadhūta* but body consciousness is swallowed up in *samādhi*. In the last stage of *turiya* or *turiyātīta*, the *mukta* ripens into *Brahmavidvariṣṭha*, becomes Brahman and attains *nirvāṇa* or the stirless peace that passeth all understanding, is ever immersed in *vikalpa samādhi* and attains *videha mukti*.

Mukti is cessation of sorrow and the attainment of infinite bliss, that is Brahman itself. The following phases of *ānanda* are distinguishable in the experience of *Brahmānanda*. There is an ascent as it were from the state of *ajñāna* to that of *ānanda* which is said to consist of seven stages. They are: (1) *ajñāna* or ignorance of Brahman caused by (2) *āvaraṇa* which veils it and (3) *vikṣepa* or the pluralising tendency of *avidyā*. Ignorance is overcome by (4) *parokṣajñāna* or the mediate knowledge of the identity of *jīva* and *Īśvara*, and (5) *aparokṣajñāna* or immediate realisation of identity. This leads to (6) *śokanivṛtti* or cessation of misery and (7) *ānandaprāpti* or the attainment of the eternal bliss of Brahman. *Viṣayānanda* is the mental joy of introversion in which Brahman is reflected in the *sāttvika* state. *Ātmānananda* is the self-satisfaction

of *samādhi*. It is the joy of the knowledge that the self is the *sākṣī* of the *kośas* as taught by Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī. *Adaitānanda* is the joy of the practice of non-dual consciousness in which the difference between the enjoying subject and the object of experience is overcome. *Nija ānanda* is the delight of detachment from the joys and sorrows of life arising from *prārabdha karma* and the resulting state of *samatva* and peace. *Mukhyānanda* is the contentment arising from the abolition of *ahaṅkara* and the experience of *samādhi*. *Brahmānanda* is the bliss of *Brahmajñāna* in which the *jīva*, tired of the woes of waking and the dream states, enters into Brahman like the weary falcon seeking its rest. *Vāsanānanda* is the reminiscence of *Brahmānanda* in the passage from *ānandamaya* to *viññānamaya* due to *prārabdha karma*. *Vidyānanda* is *ānandabodha* or the bliss in which there is no objective consciousness. It is the bliss of *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

The ecstasy of *nirvikalpa samādhi* is eternally self-realised and this is the characteristic expression of the experience of some *jīvanmuktas*. There is no distinction between the enjoying self and the object of enjoyment. Such bliss is not mere contentment or *tripti* nor *santoṣa* or joy, not even *sukha*, but is *ānanda* or pure bliss which transcends thought.

Section (iii) : The Phenomenon Theory

The phenomenon theory of Advaita is opposed to the Illusion theory as it regards the world as phenomenal and not fictitious. It is unreal, but not illusory or shadowy like dream experience. The real is non-

dual but not homogeneous.¹ Śaṅkara's refutation of *viññānavāda* or Buddhistic idealism and his recognition of degrees of reality bring out the fact that finite life is empirically real. The world of space-time-causality is not a mental construction but is objectively real and is independent of my idea of it. Likewise, the self is not a series of ideas but is an entity that abides in its own being and persists amidst all its perishing presentations. The world and the self have relative reality. They are empirically real. Owing to *avidyā*, which is another name for realistic thinking, they exist and appear to be real but are not real. Reality is beyond appearances, and even the ideas of *jīva* and *Īśvara* are mere appearances arising from the fissure between thought and reality. Reality or Brahman is beyond thought though thought seeks to grasp it and it is only by direct intuition or *anubhava* that it is known. *Śruti* is the only authority for this knowledge and *Śruti* is the recorded experience of *ṛṣis* who had an integral intuition of Brahman. *Sāstra* is not impersonal and eternal but is only a collection of the experiences of the seers of Brahman. Thus, according to this view of Advaita, the *Veda* is the testimony afforded mainly by intuition and is not the theological faith of the *Mīmāṃsakas*.

The theory of *avidyā* brings out the self-contradiction between reality and appearance. Every finite thought is dualistic and divisive and at the same time

1. "The false imitators of the *Upaniṣad* ideal, with an extreme of arrogant audacity, declare that Brahman is an absolutely homogeneous impersonal intelligence — a most dogmatic declaration alien to the true spirit of the *Upaniṣads*." Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 187.

it seeks to transcend itself. The Advaitins of this type utilise the dialectics of Bradley and Nāgārjuna to lay bare the self-discrepancy that results from relational thinking. Every kind of empirical experience is a subject-object relation and betrays self-contradiction. Self-contradiction is the predication of discrepant qualities to the same substance. For example, terms as such are separate and yet they are related. Relations separate terms and give them independence. Yet they enter into terms and remove their independence or self-sufficiency. The relata as such are external to each other, but as relations they lose their separateness. This contradiction is fully brought out in the dialectic analysis of difference. Difference is difference from something else and is an entity in itself. Yet it is a relation. If it is an external relation, it leads to the fallacy of endless regress. But if it is an internal relation, it ends in non-difference and non-duality. The whole is different from the parts and is yet in the parts. The one is different from the many and is yet in the many. The cause is different from the effect and is yet in the effect. The idea of difference is thus unthinkable and absurd. As Bradley says, "If you predicate what is different, you ascribe to the subject what is not and if you predicate what is not different you say nothing at all. There is no thought without difference and with difference there is non-reality."

Self-contradiction is experienced in the relation between substance and qualities, qualities and relations, space, time, causality, identity and difference, and in expounding the nature of self and God. Substance is known by the qualities and yet it is something

different from them. Relations relate and cannot be separated and yet relation refers to two separate qualities. Space consists of smaller spaces which are distinct and yet are continuous and thus antinomy arises. There is a relation of duration and it is more than a relation. Permanence and change cannot both be true. The identical cannot change and without change there is no identity. Something changes and we do not know that something, apart from change. The existence of the self is self-certified but what it is is inaccessible to thought. It is different from its contents as it is a unique centre of experience and yet is the object of enquiry. The self becomes the object and therefore ceases to be the subject. It is not its essential qualities as it is impossible to say what is essential and what is incidental. Besides, it is groundless to argue the case of the personal identity of the self, physical and psychical. To affirm the personal identity of the self, physical and mental, on the ground of memory is negatived by the facts of psychology like multiple personality and dissociation of personality. The self is not the unity of thought, feeling and will as they are only psychical states. The self is a product of thought, and thought is a quality of the self and the existence of its monadic uniqueness is only a myth. Even being separate implies a relation of separation. The ideas of truth, goodness and beauty are appearances of reality and not reality. They are relative and admit of degrees, but degrees of these ideas cannot reach the absolute which is beyond the relative. Even the God of religion is limited by the world. He creates and exposes himself to the riddles of relational thought. If he is less than the absolute, he is finite-infinite or finite; but if he

is all in all, he is the absolute and ceases to be the God of religion. If God makes man in His own image, it is equally true to say that man makes God in his image. Then God Himself is not real and is only a make-believe due to the limitations of thought or *avidyā* and *māyā*. *Avidyā* is the riddle of finite thought, and it brings out the fissure between logical thinking and reality.

What is true of *avidyā* as an intellectual deformity is also true of *māyā* as the finitising principle that somehow exists in the absolute of Brahman. *Māyā* is the statement of the self-contradictions of life and is a frank confession of the failure of thought to explain Reality. The universe is the home of all self-contradictions. Knowledge, for example, is said to dispel ignorance. But as knowledge grows, ignorance increases with it. The more we master the secrets of nature, the more is its mystery. We seek the pleasures of life, but increasing happiness is fraught with increasing sorrow. Pessimism grows with optimism and despair increases with hope. Civilisation is said to be progressive, but side by side with progress is the decline of civilisation. If this is the best of all possible worlds, it is also the worst of all possible worlds. If reality is rational, it is also rooted in irrationality. Reality is beyond appearances and is yet in its appearances. In this way, every kind of experience, every category of thought can be shown to be vitiated by self-discrepancy. The cause of this discrepancy cannot be logically explained as the very idea of causal enquiry applies only to finite thinking and phenomena and cannot apply to noumenal reality. To seek for the cause of *māyā* is illegitimate. All that we can say

is that the noumenal somehow appears as the phenomenal; but the appearance has its basis in Reality and is not a phantom; it is somehow in reality but it is not of reality.

Brahman is self-existent, non-relational and absolute. The world of *nāmarūpa* from the post to the personal God or *Puruṣottama* appears to be real, but is not so. The finite and the infinite differ only in degree but not in kind, as both belong to relational thought. The less the contradiction in a finite thing, the more real it is. In this way, there are degrees of truth and reality till we reach the absolute which is beyond all degrees. *Īśvara* has maximum reality, but even in him there is an element of negativity and imperfection. *Īśvara* is Brahman phenomenalised by the logical intellect and is being-becoming. *Īśvara* is not the real in itself, but is the real for thought. He is the highest conceptual reading of the absolute and the moment we think of the absolute or *nirguṇa* Brahman, it becomes relative and lapses into the God of religion. What is pure consciousness becomes subject-object relation and is caught up in contradiction. "God is not God unless He is the absolute and is all in all. But if He is the absolute, He is not the God of Religion." God is the highest device of finite thought suited to the empirical and religious needs of man. But when religion passes beyond itself and becomes philosophy, the personal God transcends the limits of thought and ends in the absolute. The empirical self is a complex of *avidyā-kāma-karma*. When the subject somehow becomes the object of knowledge, it ceases to be the self. It is caught up in duality. It is the sense of separateness from Brahman that subjects it to the

process of births and deaths and to the hazards of phenomenal life.

But *avidyā* can be overcome by *Brahmajñāna*. *Jñāna* consists in the direct knowledge of the absolute by rising from the logical level to intuition. In *mukti* the relational thought or duality is transcended but not destroyed. It is the disappearance of the false view of life and the sense of plurality and not of plurality itself. The world is not negated but its meaning is entirely transformed. *Brahmajñāna* is not a state of blankness, but is the sense of fullness of being-consciousness-bliss. *Mukti* is freedom here and now and not the attainment of a far-off heaven after death. Brahman is the all-self and therefore there is no goal that is to be attained. The *jīvanmukta* is free from *avidyā-karma* and though he is in the world, he is not of it. Freed from the sense of separateness, he works for world welfare.

Note :—Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's view of Advaita and Bradley's method are generally followed in this section.

Section (iv) : Advaita Siddhānta or Transcendental Monistic Metaphysics

Advaita is not only the experience of non-duality by removing the self-contradictions of relational thought which somehow, owing to *avidyā-māyā*, infest the absolute, but is also *siddhānta* established by eliminating false systems, *āstika* as well as *nāstika*. Śaṅkara employs the dialectic method to disprove other systems which are in their nature false and futile. Brahman is self-realised, but there are false theories about it

and when the false is negated, truth is self-affirmed. *Advaita jñāna* is obtained by dispelling the ignorance arising from *dvaita jñāna* which is *ajñāna*. Brahman is the secondless *sat*, but the *nāstika* systems deny its existence and call it *asat* and are, therefore, self-refuted. The materialist says that Brahman is matter, but matter is *avidyā* concretised. The Buddhist says that Brahman is *asat*, but Brahman is *sat* and the unreal cannot produce the real. The Jainas argue that truth is only relative, but their view is untenable as there is no passage from the relative to the absolute. The Vaiśeṣika, unlike the above atheists, accepts the *Veda* but his pluralism fails to satisfy the demand of reason for the unification of experience; and if there is real *saṃyoga* or external relation, it leads logically to non-difference or *Advaita*. The Sāṅkhya is no doubt a pure metaphysician in his exact analysis of the nature of *puruṣa* or *ātmā*, but his conclusion lands him in the unbridgeable dualism between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. The theistic account of *Īśvara* as the extra-cosmic cause (*Deus Ex Machina*) makes Him suffer from the self-contradictions of the creator-creature relation and their externality. The *Bhāgavata* school of emanationism is opposed to the eternity of the *ātman*. Even the view that Brahman is in the world lapses into the equation that Brahman is the world and becomes Pancosmism. But God is finite-infinite and is less than Godhead which is beyond all appearances. Thus all the schools of thought, orthodox as well as heterodox, Vedistic as well as non-Vedistic, claim to be self-consistent and true, but the claim is false and therefore rejected as false. They are not only self-discrepant but are mutually conflicting. Though they differ in their tenets, they have their foundations

in *avidyā* and their philosophic superstructure cannot stand the test of truth. By means of *viveka* as the Advaitic *sādhana*, the eternal *ātman* is distinguished from the non-eternal non-*ātman* in the light of Advaitic *Śrutis* and is finally self-realised. What is eternal is self-existent and not something new to be accomplished. It is the subject that never becomes the object and it is by mistake or *adhyāsa* that the subject is objectified. Such *adhyāsa* gives rise to the distinction of subject and object and false theories of materialism, mentalism, nihilism and anthropomorphism. Plurality is superimposed on Brahman which is really unaffected by it. *Ātman* is the eternal witness of all things and thoughts and it is the aim of Vedānta to free the self from its semblances and false notions of philosophy and show the identity between *ātman* and Brahman. Nescience is removed by the knowledge of the self-identity of Brahman and when such knowledge arises, the *Vedas* are not *Vedas* and Scripture itself ceases to be valid and is superseded. As Brahman simply is, any theorising activity about it becomes an ism and it is caught up in the self-contradictions of logical thinking. *Advaitajñāna* alone is true knowledge and all other knowledge including Divine omniscience is nescience.

This aspect of Advaita brings out the basic truths of Śaṅkara Vedānta as expounded in his *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya*, and is different from the phenomenon theory, though the aim of both is the same. The phenomenon theory utilises the negative logic of Nāgārjuna and Bradley in laying bare the riddles of thought which seeks to know reality and commits suicide in the attempt to reach it. The 'adventure of ideas' becomes an experiment with them and they are finally eliminat-

ed as mere semblances. The present theory applies the same method not only to ideas but to the rival theories of Advaita starting with materialism and ending with monotheism and pantheism. The non-Advaitic thinkers start with difference and duality and are entangled in the whirl of births and deaths and other pairs of opposites. When a truth is posited, it enters into its opposite and creates a dualism between the two. Every system repudiates its rival systems and is repudiated by them. The final object of philosophy is to know its futility and then *darśana* ceases to be conceptual and becomes *tattvadarśana* beyond *tripuṭī*. Advaita is not a *prameya* to be established with the aid of *pramāṇas*, nor an end to be accomplished in course of time. It employs *tarka* to demolish all *prameyas*, and *puruṣārthas* as only phenomenally true and fictitiously imagined. When the fiction disappears, the eternal fact remains and it is the self-existent and self-accomplished Brahman that knows no diversity, discord or sorrow.

The most noteworthy among the followers of Śaṅkara who employed his dialectic method in demolishing all other systems of thought in an uncompromising way are Śrī Harṣa and Citsukha. Śrī Harṣa (1150 A.D.) in his *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā* (the sweets of refutation) says that the only requisite of Advaita is to disprove every other system of philosophy. His attitude is revealed in the statement that every logical definition is logically indefinable or *anirvacanīya* and every proof including his own can be disproved. His main attack is directed against the Nyāya theory of *pramāṇas*, *padārthas* or categories and he delights in showing them to be self-contradictory and false. As

against the Nyāya theory that all things which can be cognised and named are categories, he holds that all knowable things are unreal. Even being or *sattā* is not different from non-being as non-being itself is a kind of being. Even Śrī Harṣa is inclined to be accommodative when he says the *bhakti* is a means to Advaitic *mukti* in the case of ordinary men.¹ Citsukha (1220), a follower of Śrī Harṣa, subjects Nyāya to further criticism and exposes its self-contradictions. Difference is unthinkable and self-refuted. As a classical example of the criticism of categories based on logical thinking is the refutation of the notions of difference and causality and it has some affinities with the method of Nāgārjuna. Pure consciousness alone is beyond the subject-object relation, is self-luminous and irrefutable. It is self-positing and self-proved and is directly experienced.

Though truth is one, it admits in practice of degrees of truth and every system is partly true and points to Advaita as the highest and sole truth. Buddhism denies phenomenal existence and refers to the universal void or *nirvāṇa*, but it has a positive aspect as Buddha's *nirvāṇa* is really *Brahmanirvāṇa*. Jainism is a half-way house to monism and becomes monism when the intuition of the *kevalin* beyond thought is stressed. The central teaching of Nyāya is the non-difference of the souls in the freed state and its logic of *sattāsāmānya* or being in general culminates in Advaita though the Naiyāyikas may not clearly recognise this truth. Sāṅkhya can rise to the level of monistic idealism if the theory of *kaivalya* is pushed to its conclusion by freeing it from the pluralism of

1. *Compromises in Advaita*, p. 31.

puruṣa. The Vedāntic systems of Dvaita and Viśiṣṭ-ādvaita are also on the road to Advaita. Dvaita arises when we are on the realistic level; it becomes Viśiṣṭ-ādvaita when we are on the spiritual level; and it reaches Advaita when the identity of Brahman is realised. Monotheism is only a form of monism and Viśiṣṭādvaita is inclined towards Advaita and Śivādvaita is even more Advaitic when the truth 'I am Śiva' is intuited. Advaitic thinkers are thus led to regard all systems of thought as pointing towards Advaita and as Deussen says philosophy including that of Plato and Kant simply follows the immortal *Upaniṣadic* idealism when it reaches the equation that the *ātman* is Brahman. The cosmological approach to Advaita lays stress not only on the subjective side of reality but also on the objective. But it does not give due weight to the moral and religious problems of life. This aspect is fully brought out in the ethico-religious approach which is the theme of the next chapter.

THE GREAT MASTER*

*Ranganath Mishra***

In the summer of 1936, the sage of Kanchi was returning to his abode after a very successful Vijaya Yatra in Northern India. News of his walking all the way with the retinue consisting of several scholars, priests, math officials, cows and elephants spread in the nook and corner of the newly formed province of Orissa and as the time neared, every where this became the subject of public gossip. The living God, as His Holiness was looked upon, visited Puri to see Lord Jagannath and after a short stay, proceeded southwards.

I was then a lad of barely 9, but my eldest brother Raghunathji, who is no more, was then in College and was in correspondence with the math officials. He got information about the approximate time the Shankaracharya would reach Balugaon, a place of some importance on the western side of Chilka Lake, where the road from my village met the highway. My

* Courtesy : *A Hundred Years of Light*, Sri Kanchi Sankaracharya Math, Kanchipuram, 1993.

**Former Chief Justice of India

brother and I reached the junction of the roads around 3 in the afternoon and waited for the great event. Within an hour or so, the Master and his team arrived. His Holiness with a bright and dazzling face bore no sign of tiredness because of the long walk in the summer sun and required no one to introduce Him. By appearance He was singled out. Hundreds of people prostrated on the metal road which was still very warm; flowers were thrown by children at His Holiness; ladies sang the welcome *mangalika*, the local priests blowed the crunches. Within minutes, the entire atmosphere was surcharged by a spirit of enthusiasm and sanctity. My brother, then about 20, made his way upto the great Swami and began talking in Sanskrit. The Master was amused to find in the countryside such proficiency in Sanskrit - particularly in speaking. His Holiness wanted to know if my brother was alone and whether he was staying back at Balugaon. In response to the query, I came to be introduced and without reference to me, my brother answered that we were accompanying.

We sent word home through a neighbour that we were marching with the party and would return within a week or so and mentally prepared ourselves to walk miles after miles, manage with the little clothing we had and eat whatever was given. In fact, all this did not appear to be an odd exercise. Our minds had been moulded and if we were made to part and stay back, we would have been upset and unhappy.

In three days we reached a place known as Chatrapur which is now the administrative headquarters of the Ganjam District. That evening a

local landlord and Sanskrit Pandit had arranged *pāda-pūjā* at his house. His Holiness looked for my brother when going for *pāda-pūjā* and both of us accompanied. After the *pūjā*, a Vidvat-sadas (gathering of scholars) had been arranged without prior notice to His Holiness, but He joined it with a smile. A competition in reciting *Ślokas* followed. Around 9 in the night, we were given food. By about 10, Swamiji looked for my brother and when he appeared, a dialogue over scriptures and Vedic literature started. Sitting at some distance with drooping eyelids, I soon stretched myself on the floor to get up around 4-30 in the morning when an attendant came to say that it was already time for the Swami to start the morning rituals. I went to Kanchipuram in April, 1990, to inform the Master that my brother passed away in the earlier month. He seemed to know the fact, but soon gave us a feeling of withdrawal from the present and with great composure recalled the Chatrapur event and said that it was a wonderful and absorbing night — when the two had not slept.

His Holiness settled down at Berhampur for Chaturmasya and we returned home from Banpur. My brother used to write to His Holiness and receive replies from some one. On a few occasions we had darshan of His Holiness. My mother did not want my brother to get closer to the Master apprehending the idea of *Sannyās* developing in him.

Time rolled by, I grew up and finished my studies and joined the Bar. In the summer of 1958, we had gone to Kodaikanal and on our return, we came to Madurai. There we gathered that His Holiness was

staying at Elayathagudi. Soon we arranged to be there for *darshan*.

What happened when we visited Elayathagudi is indeed difficult to recount. His Holiness was aware of our visit and had ordered eight plates of prasada (palm-leaf base) to be kept for us. He introduced us to Himself by leading questions. When told that we were on our way to Rameswaram, He cautioned us of a bad storm. When we sought advice as to whether we should abandon our trip to Rameswaram, He pointed out that on the earlier occasion, about a couple of years back, we had brought our mother to take her to Rameswaram, but had returned from Madras when one in the party became sick and, therefore, we should continue the trip. He blessed us profusely and each one of us believed that there would be no unsurmountable hurdles on our way.

The hour or so we had spent with the Master cast a magic spell on my wife and myself. What followed at Rameswaram on the following day firmly set our minds at His feet. The place Swamiji had indicated for our stay had advance notice of our coming and the attendant told us that when he was having coffee the previous evening (that was the time Swamiji was indicating to us the place of our stay at Rameswaram), he had intuitive feeling about our visit. From 1958, my link with Kanchipuram became firm and every year I tried to be with the Master at least thrice, if not more. Every time we came, we returned with more of conviction, more of realisation and blessings.

On the *Mahalaya Amavasya* day of 1968, there was a solar eclipse. The Master was camping at

Vijayawada and we were summoned there. I was still at the Bar at Cuttack and was in the midst of contested argument. When I asked for accommodation, the Judge, known for his stiffness, readily and with a smile granted it. We left by car and stayed at Rajmundry for the night hoping to cover the rest of the distance the next morning. Those were the days when the road bridge on Godavari had not been opened to traffic. It was the Master's grace which provided a berth for our car for crossing the river. That afternoon, after the eclipse was over, we accompanied His Holiness to the river Krishna and on its bed in wet clothes we were given the *diksha*. The Master now turned the *Guru* for us. The bond became more intense and stronger.

In the following year, I became a Judge of the Orissa High Court. I got more leisure than while at the Bar and we availed every break of reasonable duration to be with the Guru. In 1974, the present Mathadhipati Sri Jayendra Saraswati Maharaj was repeating the 1936 performance of His master. Some of us organised His visit of about one month within the State of Orissa to be properly utilised for the benefit of the people of all classifications. We arranged meetings on the way; visits to temples and educational institutions; we gathered students to meet Swamiji at intervals until He came to Cuttack. There and at Bhubaneswar we organised large scale meetings and finally at Puri there was the all-religion conference to be inaugurated by Sri Jayendra Saraswati Maharaj. The seven-day long conference was a grand success. That brought us all close to every one in the math. Sometime after when we came to the math, we found every one was very friendly. The

Master had kept detailed information of His disciple's movements and everything that happened in Orissa was known to Him.

From 1978 His Holiness moved out of Kanchipuram — nay Tamilnadu — and spent about six years in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. We visited almost every place where He stayed for a reasonable time — Hagari, Hampi, Satara, Gulbarga, Pandarpur, Mahagaon, Mahabub Nagar, Kurnool and Raichoti are some to mention. Everywhere we had the blessings of the Master.

At His bidding, we arranged for performing a *Maharudra Homa* at Cuttack in February, 1982. At His behest, we had the necessary support from Kanchipuram and Varanasi. His Holiness had told us that if the *Homa* was performed in the proper way, at the *Purnahuti* we should get a brief shower. In a clear sky, the bright Sun was reigning just 15 minutes before the event, but soon a patch of dark cloud covered the Sun and we had a local shower.

In July-August, 1982, I acted as the Governor of Orissa. That was the *Chaturmasya* time and the Master was at Mahagaon, off Sholapur. When we made preparations to go, most of the Raj Bhavan people wanted to accompany. With all efforts, we confined the party to 21.

In March, 1983, I joined the Supreme Court. I had apprehension that from Delhi, it would be difficult — at least inconvenient — to visit Kanchipuram. That soon seemed to be wrong. On the

other hand, our visits increased and in some years, I have been at Kanchipuram six times.

During these years, between 1958 and 1992 — thirtyfour unbroken years — every member of my family has received the grace of the Master. At one stage, I was thinking that His Holiness had a specially soft corner for me. Once while talking to some visitors from Kerala, I broached this aspect and found that many in the group had similar feelings — that the Master had a soft corner for them too. That is the greatness of the Grand Master. Like the Sun, He gives you everything He has. It depends upon how much you absorb.

Over the years, I have realized that the Master is the epitome of grace and kindness. Thousands visit Him day in and day out. Every one has something to ask for. Unhesitatingly, the Master patiently listens to every one and when, with a childlike smile He raises His palm to bless, what amount of solace is handed down to the blessed!

He joined the math at the age of 13 and when He came of age and took over the management of the math, He started communicating with the world outside. For over four scores of years, uninterruptedly He has been treated as a living God. You would find the Trinity in Him. Nay, He is often Mother Divine too, remembering Goddess Kamakshi, of whose temple the trustee He has been.

Sitting at Kanchipuram, He has the picture of India dancing before His eyes all these years. In the Legal Aid Team, a gentleman serving in the Ministry

of Law and Justice has been working. When he came to Kanchipuram with me and prostrated before the Master, a volley of questions followed. Swamiji's knowledge of the locality of Dera Ismail Khan (now in Pakistan) was so clear that, failing to answer the searching questions, the officer had to fall back upon the plea that he had left the place as a young boy at the time of partition. On another occasion, an Officer from the Mexican Embassy whom I had casually known and met at Madras wanted to see Swamiji. When he prostrated, he was surprised to be told many things which he alone claimed to know. His Holiness gave a graphic picture of his rural Mexican farm house, of a tiny river flowing by and gave particulars of the family. On yet another occasion, it was coincidence that the King of Spain with the queen dropped in when we were having audience. Swamiji's queries surprised the King and when he was told that the Master had never gone out of India, he was not prepared to believe.

His concern for the common man is unbounded. The manner in which He analysed the social and political problems and presented the core of the matter, was always a surprise. Nothing perhaps is unknown to the Master. All that is needed is a little concentration. When my brother presented the first copy of the Oriya translation of the talks of His Holiness delivered at Madras, the Swami turned the pages with the help of a torch. When he kept on looking at a particular page for some time, we thought he was looking at the defective printing. Soon He surprised us by asking me to compare the translation with the English version (book immediately provided) and say

if it was correct. I noticed that the talk in English had a negative stance which in the translation gave the impression of a positive statement.

The physical frame remains at Kanchipuram, but the mind soars high to tie up with God and around to serve the creation. Swamiji's interests are varied. There was a time when newspapers were read out to Him. Later His insight covered every aspect. To overhear his discussion with various people is both interesting and illuminating. He knows so much about any matter. He talks about that in no time and the visitor is overwhelmed.

Toleration is at its height in Him. I used to see a French doctor who was a normal visitor wherever Periyaval stayed. Originally, to give *darshan* to the doctor Swamiji used to come outside. Gradually the doctor started evolving himself and within a few years his face developed a glow. He got transformed and acquired inward bliss. With such evolution, he got admission with us and had access along with us. Similarly, a young lady teacher from Paris started visiting the math and spent all her spare time at Kanchipuram. Within a few years I noticed a lot of change in her and she started living as an Indian.

To the Senior Holiness, all religions are the same. When He refers to the Bible, the Koran or the Guru Granth Saheb, there is veneration in His language and expression. He believes that every man — whatever be his religious pursuit — is a divine manifestation. Unlike most of the religious heads, He treats every one uniformly and equality of treatment is the culture prevailing in His camp.

Two years back, Swamiji was in indifferent health. Some of us became anxious and worried. We found no sigh of suffering on His face or behaviour. During that period when I visited the math and had seclusive darshan, on prostrating, I was, to my surprise, asked as to what I was looking for. The only prayer I could speak out then was that His Holiness must will to live for the sake of humanity and continue to bless mankind. In answer, there was a childlike smile and a statement that whoever is born must wither away.

Kanchipuram is a celebrated ancient centre of culture and religion and all through the ages thousands of people have visited and are visiting the place. In this twentieth century the greatest factor of attraction of Kanchipuram has been its sage — the Periyaval. He lives for the world; not for Himself. The Sun distributes its innate energy and has gradually been diminishing its power. The Sun of Kanchi acquires power by *Sadhana* and distributes the same through His innocent smiles and lifting of the hand. Everytime I have visited Him, whether as an Advocate, as a Judge or the Chief Justice India, I have, like thousands of His devotees, received inward bliss and have returned with fortified strength. May the sage will to live for many more years and keep blessing God's creation!

A VISIT TO THE SAGE

[Excerpts from a moving account of the last meeting between Queen Mother Frederika of Greece and the Sankaracharya of Kanchi, Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati, at Miraj, in April 1980. The Queen Mother passed away on February 6, 1981.]

The sun has gone down. He asks me a few questions. Within the Absolute there was no speech, but at once duality has returned for me, words cannot separate what is already separated and speech becomes a bridge within the sea that needs no bridges. We do not speak of that which words can never reach. He asks me of my journey and if I travelled alone. I smile and tell him that this time I am protected by the Indian police and am not alone. This is a reminder of a former visit when I travelled eleven hours at night to meet with him somewhere on the road. At that time, he was not pleased that I travelled alone without an escort and asked a young Brahmin to return with me in my car to Madras. I am to return tomorrow morning at seven. This will give me plenty of time to get back to Bombay for my midnight plane to London. Getting back to the rest-house I want to relish the holy hours I spent with the sage.

In spite of the rather too intimate attention, all arrangements are most efficient and work without a hitch. This would have been impossible without my kindly police escort. I am touched and amused by the Sage's concern about my being properly attended to. He does not approve of my lonely journeys from continent to continent or even inside the country. "Why do you travel alone?" he asked me again yesterday. I told him that there was no one in the family who is free to make the long journey and that it was also a question of expense. He seems to remember the first time I met him when I was surrounded by people, including Tino's ADC plus Greek and Indian police, as well as Maria, my beloved and loyal personal help of 20 years. He senses that travelling alone for me at my age with all that involves, such as packing and unpacking at 35°c heat, is a physical strain that I should not be exposed to. But the circumstances are such that this cannot be avoided.

At seven o'clock the next morning, I am sitting again before the tin-shed in the small temple courtyard. The sage is still inside. I have time to look around. There are only a few attendants walking about, bringing fruits and gifts of flowers from different devotees. I can hear boys' voices chanting inside the temple.

The Sage appears and settles down in front of me. There is a rush of devotees. They file past him paying obeisance, the men lying flat on their faces and the ladies kneeling while placing their heads on the ground. No one pays any attention to the one foreigner sitting there alone except for some curious looks which seem to ask: "what is she doing here amongst

us?" The small crowd is made to settle at a distance and once again silence takes over. Now there is no more hearing, no more seeing. The inner stillness intensifies, the picture of the world gets dimmer until it dissolves within the arms of paradise. Reality is not an empty nothingness. It is Advaita. It is whole and all-inclusive, one only without a second.

When the world reappears within my consciousness, I see the Sage conversing with some scholars. The students who had been chanting before within the sanctum of the temple are now seated in a group close to the Sage with a look of deep devotion and expectation in their eyes. A handful of documents are brought and placed before the Sage on the ground. He points to a block of stone and directs it to be placed between him and me. I follow with interest, wondering what it is all about. He does not explain by words. It is his gestures that are interpreted and executed. Spoken words may break the harmony of an unbroken awareness.

Some people think that the Sage's silence lessens his effect on them and so they are inclined to be disappointed. It is his very silence which conveys in a more forceful way the truth he wishes to grasp. He now orders the documents to be placed on the ground before me. He then invites me to take one paper and place it on the stone block from which one student after another picks it up and salutes the Sage and withdraws. Whenever some over-eager helpers try to interfere and hand the papers directly to the students, the Sage claps his hands together and with a stern expression on his face orders the person to restore the documents to where they were lying before

and then asks me to continue the ceremony. Needless to say, the students could not care less if I am there or not. Their eyes and whole attention are fully concentrated upon the Sage. It is his blessings they are asking for. For them, I am an unknown instrument, being here today and gone tomorrow.

The sun is getting very hot. I know the hour of parting has come. The sage asks at what time I should leave for Bombay. He tells me to go back to the guest-house, take a long rest and then come back at 3 o'clock for a final good-bye. The police accept the new schedule without a murmur. They are well versed in the country's old traditions. They are delighted to be called before him and one by one receive his blessings.

At three, I return. The Sage is once again in complete silence. There is not even a movement on either his face or body. I sit in front of him all alone. It is too hot for any devotee to have arrived. Once again the ego bows to the greater Self, an all including awareness blots out the seen and the seer. Then large, immensely serious eyes look into mine. There are no emotions. There is no good-bye. There is a journey back to Bombay and to six grand-children in London and Madrid.

THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUALITY *

*R. K. Tripathi***

These days there seem to be many misconceptions about spirituality. Sometimes it is taken to be something mystical and mysterious, sometimes it is taken to be a kind of abnormality, sometimes it is described and denounced as a source of evil and sometimes it is considered to be just a kind of morality. We want to point out in this paper that spirituality is none of these, that it is of vital necessity and importance in our life, and that in spite of various spiritual traditions there is one common goal of all which is something tangible and which is to be properly understood and appreciated.

Let us begin with the question: what is spirituality or spiritual life? Ordinarily a man is taken to be spiritual if he puts on certain marks, wears a certain kind of clothes, goes to temple, church or mosque and

* Presidential Address delivered in the Indian Philosophical Congress Session held at Patiala in 1978. Courtesy : Indian Philosophical Congress.

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performs some form of worship. But obviously these are only external marks and are not necessarily indicative of the inner life of the man. There must be something which makes the above marks meaningful and we should be able to find out that. Some people think that having different kinds of visions is the mark of a spiritual man. But psychologists today point out that abnormal persons also have visions. Medical men tell us that even drugs can make us experience visions. Others seem to believe that the power of showing miracles or making prophecies is the sign of a spiritual man. Curiously we find two conflicting tendencies these days. On the one hand visions are dismissed as psychological aberrations, and prophecies and miracles are seriously doubted. On the other hand unless a man is able to perform miracles and makes prophecies, he is not taken seriously. All this only shows that we do not have a clear and correct conception of spirituality.

In order to have a clear and correct conception of spirituality we should discover the nature of that inner-life which is on the one hand common to all spiritual traditions and which on the other hand gives meaning to the external forms, doctrines and dogmas of the various traditions. Keeping this in view we can say that spirituality is a method of trying to attain permanent peace by tackling the problem of the ego. This definition has three merits—it points out the common and essential feature of different kinds of spirituality, it brings out the vital importance of spirituality and it distinguishes the inner aspect of spirituality from its external forms as it recognises many forms of spirituality. We hope to make our point clear by explaining our definition.

First of all let us note that spirituality is only a method or a *mārga* as we call it in India. It is not the goal or the thing itself. When this is forgotten and the method is mistaken to be the thing itself, there is fanaticism, narrowness and dogmatism. So it is necessary to remember that spirituality is only a way of life or a method or a discipline with the necessary implication that there can be many methods and disciplines and not only one although the goal may be one. The possibility of a variety of spiritual disciplines is very well recognised here in India but not in the west. But if we want to avoid bigotry and fanaticism and if we do not ignore other religions and traditions, it is necessary to accept many spiritual ways of life. There is the *bhakti mārga*, the *jñāna mārga*, the *yoga mārga*, the Buddhist way, the Jaina way and so on. The west knows only the *bhakti mārga*, and does not seem to recognise the other *mārgas* or ways.

The next point is that spirituality is a method of attaining permanent peace. We are aware that different methods define their goals differently in terms of salvation, *mukti*, *nirvāṇa*, *Īśvara-prāpti*, etc. and so it may appear wrong to say that the goal for all of them is that of attaining peace. But our contention is that the above different conceptions of the goal refer to what happens after this life. We do not want to be involved in the controversial question as to what happens after the present life. Nor do we want to raise the question of God and soul. Our concern is with spirituality or spiritual life here on this earth and so we have defined the goal as that of permanent peace.

The peace which spirituality aims to attain is a kind of peace which is different from every other kind. There is what may be called physical peace. It is the kind of peace which we have when we get rid of physical discomforts such as hunger and thirst, disease and pain or wants of different kinds. The experience of this kind of peace is universal; even animals have it. The cause of unpeace is taken to be some factor in our environment and the method employed for its removal is empirical and the relief is but temporary. Most people do not seem to go beyond desiring this physical peace and they do not hesitate to adapt even unfair means to have it. But there are others who are not able to enjoy peace even after the attainment of physical peace. They seem to have some kind of intellectual problem or tension and so they feel relieved only when the mental problem is solved. This may be called mental peace. There may be still others who have unpeace because of moral conflicts and considerations. Such persons have a sigh of relief when the moral conflict is over. This may be regarded as moral peace. All these different kinds of peace are temporary and superficial since they do not uproot the very possibility of unpeace. So the question is whether there is a root cause of all unpeace and whether it can be permanently removed.

This is precisely the spiritual problem. The empiricist believes that the cause of unpeace is in the external circumstance; the moralist believes that the cause of unpeace is vice or sin. But the spiritual man has a different diagnosis. He inwardises his attention and discovers that the cause of all unpeace is something internal, our ego or pride. The ego is the basis

of our whole life if we come to think of it. It is the ego that isolates and separates us; it is the ego that develops selfishness and self-interest because it is the ego that passes for our self. The ego is the organ of experiencing the *dvandvas*—success and failure, victory and defeat, pleasure and pain, inflation and depression. Our life is nothing but the life of the ego all the time seeking self-gratification, seeking progeny, power and pelf. It can be easily seen that suffering is due to passions and passions are due to the ego. Where the ego is not involved, we do not have any feelings or passions, and where it is even the least involved, we cannot but have feelings. The greater the involvement of the ego, the greater our passions; the less the involvement of the ego, the less our feelings. This correlation shows that the ego is at the root of our suffering. The truth of our statement can be tested every moment by observing our own life and that of others.

The ego has its ramifications; it does not centre round our body alone; it spreads to everything with which our body is related and seeks self-gratification through everything—its family and community, its village and district, its country and its part. Everything, even one's religious sect, is made an instrument of gratification by the ego. Whatever is regarded by me as mine affects me, and the sphere of the mine varies from individual to individual. The ego has not only an extensive sphere but also a subtle way of operating. Humility is anti-ego, but the ego can exploit humility for its own gratification by making a show of it or by advertising it. The ego thus produces a lot of self-deception in every sphere, specially in the

sphere of spirituality. One can guard against self-deception only if one is constantly vigilant and aware of the subtle ways of the ego. The ego hides itself even in most unsuspected corners of life. That is why the spiritual man's attention is always directed inwards. He does not blame external circumstances and other persons; he blames himself. The attention of the worldly man goes outwards to others and to the external environment. That is why the worldly man is not able to see that our suffering has a root cause and that root-cause is in us. The worldly man is not able to see that persons and circumstances cease to be a source of suffering the moment our relation of *mine disappears*. The moment the wife is divorced or the house is sold, they affect us no more, as they cease to be mine. If there were no root-cause, suffering could not be removed as a whole or completely. Nor could suffering be completely removed if it were due to external factors, because external factors can never be completely controlled by any one. At the moral stage suffering is said to be due to our sins. But when it is discovered that sin itself is due to our desire for self-gratification, then there is the awareness that suffering is due to our ego, that is, there is a root cause of suffering. This is the spiritual stage. Although the desire to get rid of suffering is universal, the awareness that it is due to our ego is not universal. Only those who have this awareness take to spiritual means of tackling the ego. Such persons are no doubt few, but they are there always; otherwise the stream of spiritual life would have dried up long ago.

If it is admitted that the ego is the root cause of unpeace or suffering, then the question arises- how to

tackle the ego? It seems to us, as already pointed, that there is not one way but many ways of tackling the ego. But there seem to be two primary ways of dealing with the ego and all the different ways can be put under one or the other. The essential thing to note is that in all the different ways ultimately the aim is to tackle the ego directly or indirectly. This is what we will endeavour to show.

Of the two primary methods of handling the ego, the one is direct and the other is indirect, the one is a frontal attack and the other is a flank attack. The indirect method is the method of *bhakti* or devotion and the direct method is that of knowledge or *jñāna*. In the *bhakti* path it is believed that the ego cannot be completely removed, at least not with the help of the ego. The ego cannot commit suicide. But the ego can be transformed in such a manner and to such an extent that it sheds off its evil urge for self-gratification. *Bhakti* means yoking the ego in the service of God. The ego, because of its self-gratifying nature, develops love for finite and transitory objects and consequently suffers. So the solution lies in turning our back to the finite and transitory objects and direct our love to what is infinite and eternal, that is, God. When we turn to God and develop love for Him, our ego ceases to be what it was; it ceases to have the fret and the fever of life as it feels the presence of the infinite and the eternal. With the realisation that God alone knows what is good for us and He alone can do good, our urge for self-gratification and self-effort is hated and gradually disappears and there is complete surrender to God. Surrender is thus the essential spirit of *bhakti* and egoity, the spirit of worldiness. In this spirit of surrender our individuality or

ego is not negated but only transformed. All the *bhakti* schools, whether in India or in the West, share this view.

As the emphasis in the *bhakti* path is not on renouncing the ego but on subduing and transforming it, this path is easier. Changing the direction of the ego from the finite or self-love to the infinite or love of God is not so difficult, as it follows the natural tendency of the ego to love what is more attractive; that is why *bhakti* is called *pravṛtti mārga*. *Bhakti* is difficult only so long as our desire for self-gratification is too strong. But then renouncing the ego is much more difficult as it means jumping out of one's skin. In the *bhakti* path only the centre of our life is changed; God comes to occupy the centre, but the natural tendency of the ego to love what it considers to be good remains in fact and is utilised for developing love of God. We begin to derive happiness from the love of God and not from finite objects. So love is not negated but only redirected in *bhakti*.

However, there are found in India other ways of tackling the ego. Apart from self-gratification, the ego has another feature and that is separateness and particularity. The other path emphasizes this aspect and tries to discover the universal behind the particularity of the ego or egos. It asks us to shake off our particularity or exclusiveness and dive deeper to find that there is a universal self which is our real self. In other words, it is a way of broadening or expanding our self. At present, we consider our self to be finite and limited to the body and things associated with the body. But really we are infinite and if we realise our universality and infinity, there will be no

duality, no fear, no tension and no unpeace. So our ego or self has to be expanded by the discovery or knowledge that we are really infinite. Once ignorance is destroyed there is no fall again. In the *bhakti* path also, there is no fear of fall although there is duality, as one is in the gravitational zone of God and the pull of the infinite is so great that there can be no fall.

There is yet another way of shedding off individuality or particularity. This is found in Buddhism. Here we do not proceed from particularity to universality; there is no expansion here. All that we are required to do is to drop particularity. Our egoity rests on the belief that we are something durable if not also permanent, while the fact is that we are nothing more than a momentary conglomeration of momentary *dharmas*. Once we come to realise this, the citadel of our ego is exploded and vanishes into thin air; there remains nothing which we can call I or mine. So instead of expansion, there is explosion here. What we regard as the centre of our life is exploded; all fetters are shattered and there remains nothing which can cause worry. In the *Ātmavāda* tradition, our true self is found to be infinite and eternal and there ceases to be any worry regarding the finite and the temporal. But in the *anātmavāda* tradition only the negative aspect of negating the ego is emphasized as that alone is enough to end suffering. So the Buddhist way also is *jñāna-mārga*. In knowledge there are two aspects, the positive aspect of knowing something and the negative aspect of destroying ignorance. The Buddhist emphasizes only the negative as that is considered to be both necessary and sufficient.

Our point is that though the different *mārgas* may be associated with different doctrines and dogmas about God and soul, so far as spiritual life is concerned they all aim at tackling the ego. Instead of being baffled by differences in doctrines, we should pin down the essential and common feature and take to any method of conquering the ego which is the main target in all the spiritual disciplines. Nor should we be dogmatic about theoretical doctrines; we may take alternative ways of helping us in our endeavour to overcome the ego. The important thing is the overcoming of the ego and not anything else such as the metaphysical doctrines or the forms of worship or a particular holy text.

So there can be many ways of downing or destroying the ego, the source of all unpeace. The point that we want to make is that this is the common feature of all methods of spiritual life or methods of gaining peace. If we recognise this, we will be able to appreciate that in spite of differences of doctrines and dogmas, the goal of all the different methods is one. Those who see only differences seem to feel baffled as to what spirituality is; they feel even sceptical as to whether there is anything as spirituality. But by noticing the above common feature we can safely assert that spirituality is a way of tackling the ego and that there can be many such ways. The advantage of this definition is twofold. Firstly, it comprehends all the different forms of spirituality—*bhakti*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, etc. Secondly, we can see the effect of practising spirituality here and now. We can easily see in our own life that the less there is the insistence and the intensity of the ego, the less there is the experi-

ence of fear and anxiety, of jealousy and hatred, of all the passions that create problems for us and for others.

Negatively, we can also say that spirituality does not mean mere morality, because morality is based on our ego. No doubt, morality controls and purifies the ego, but it cannot eradicate it. For that we have to take to some spiritual method which does not presuppose the ego or is not based on the ego. When the problem of the ego is forgotten, the practices of spirituality itself begin to strengthen the ego in subtle ways. For example when a man begins to make a show of his morality or begins to boast of his spirituality, he is obviously exploiting spirituality and morality or is a victim of his ego. Similarly when we begin to claim a superiority of our spirituality over others and even fight for it, it is obvious that we fight not for spirituality, but for our ego. Again, when we deny that spirituality is something more than morality, it is clear that we do not see the importance of the problem of the ego. Spirituality transcends morality.

What is essential is that one should conquer the ego; one should be free from the desire for name and fame, power and progeny, money and wealth, because all these are the ramifications of the ego. Such a man who is egoless does not advertise himself, he does not try to attract people, he does not overtly or covertly try to feed and nourish his ego. He does not fight whether in the name of truth or in the name of justice or in the name of religion, because wherever there is fight, it is the ego that fights. If we remember this, many of our problems disappear or dissolve.

If we are able to see the ideal of spirituality as the conquering of the ego, we can also see the great social significance of spirituality. We have two kinds of social problems—one objective and the other subjective. The objective problems relate to objective needs and requirements such as food, clothing, housing, medicine, etc. The subjective problems relate to our passions of jealousy, hatred, avarice, ambition etc. Of these problems, if we come to think of it, we can see that the subjective problems, that is, the problems emanating from the ego are more serious than the problems of want or the objective problems. We say this because we find that our passions do not allow us to enjoy even what we have and that not only have-nots but also affluent persons and societies are afflicted by them. For the same reason it is also wrong to hold that the subjective problems are due to the objective problems. The ego cannot be dealt with by providing any objective condition. It has to be dealt with by spiritual methods.

The man who has conquered his ego is a great social asset as he is at peace with himself and with others in society. Passions arouse passions and so when we associate with one who is free from passions, we experience a kind of peace. The spiritual man not only produces an atmosphere of peace around himself but also turns the attention of others in a direction in which peace can be attained. He shows that peace can be attained not by cut-throat competition for worldly objects but by developing the spirit of self-abnegation and renunciation. Those who are blinded by the glamour of worldly achievements are not able to see this point as they do not reflect and so do not see

the inherent unpeace in the life of worldly pursuits. But those who are reflective are able to see this. They are able to see that spirituality is not something to be despised or condemned, but something which the society needs very badly.

Philosophers may or may not accept the existence of God and soul; they may differ regarding everything. But nobody can deny that we all seek peace and that all unpeace, whether of the individual or of the society, is due to the ego.

They (philosophers) would therefore be discharging their duties properly and repaying their debt to society adequately, if they did their best to open the eyes of the people to the great social and individual value of spirituality as understood above. This view avoids metaphysical controversies by which philosophers are dogged at every step; it emphasizes only the problem of the ego and the methods of tackling it. This is the minimum requirement of spiritual life which leads to the experience of peace which everyone hankers after. Philosophers will be able to establish their importance in society if they succeed in drawing our attention to the nature and importance of spiritual life as a way of tackling the ego. Let us all pull down the banner of the ego and attain peace. Let us accept the variety of spiritual methods and not quarrel about them as all quarrel is due to the ego. Let not the ego dominate us; let us dominate the ego by following the one or the other spiritual method. Egolessness is spirituality and egolessness is peace. Spirituality cannot be denied or denounced so long as there is in man the aspiration and urge for permanent peace.

PARĀPŪJĀ *

Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda

Introduction

The *Parāpūjā* is a short poem in 10 verses composed by Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda after he had the realization of the true nature of God, after being blessed by Lord Śiva Himself. It expresses the bewilderment as to how to worship Him in any of the ordinary forms covered by the sixteen services such as offering water for washing the feet, water for sipping, offering ornaments, incense, etc. A shorter version in 5 verses found in some collections as given in the *Bṛhatsaṅkaravijaya* of Citsukha does not cover all the sixteen services. Moreover, the concluding verse in the shorter version is ascribed to Citsukha himself. The concluding verse dedicates all actions as services rendered to the soul identified with Lord Śiva and the intellect is conceived as His consort, Girijā (Pārvatī).

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(1)

अखण्डे सच्चिदानन्दे निर्विकल्पैकरूपिणि ।
स्थितेऽद्वितीयभावेऽस्मिन् कथं पूजा विधीयते ॥

When one exists in this unbroken state of existence, knowledge and bliss not having any distinction and not having a second one, how could worship be offered?

After one gets the self-realization, one sheds all sorts of differences. He exists in a state of supreme bliss. In that state of existence how or to whom he has to offer worship?

(2)

पूर्णस्यावाहनं कुत्र सर्वाधारस्य चासनम् ।
स्वच्छस्य पाद्यमर्घ्यं च शुद्धस्याचमनं कुतः ॥

Where could the whole one be invoked? (How could) a seat (be offered) to one that is the support of all beings? How could water for ablution, respectful offering of water to the clean one and, water for sipping would be offered to the one that is pure?

For any worship invocation has to be made. When the deity to be worshipped is always present within, the invocation is redundant. The invoked deity has to be offered water for ablution, water as a respectful offering and water for sipping (*pādyā*, *arghya* and *ācamana*). How could these be offered to the deity within?

(3)

निर्मलस्य कुतः स्नानं वस्त्रं विश्वोदरस्य च ।
अगोत्रस्य त्ववर्णस्य कुतस्तस्योपवीतकम् ॥

Whence is the bathing for the unstained one? (Whence) is the dress for the one that has the universe in the belly? Whence is the sacred thread for one that does not belong to any clan or caste?

Bathing is needed only to remove the impurity in one. What is the need for one that is always pure? The investiture of the sacred thread is one of the *samskāras* that is done for purification. For one that is beyond the clan or caste where is the need of this *samskāra*?

(4)

निर्लेपस्य कुतो गन्धः पुष्पं निर्वासनस्य च ।
निर्विशेषस्य का भूषा कोऽलङ्कारो निराकृतेः ॥

Whence is the perfume for the unsmearred one and flower for the one without fragrance? What is ornament for the one without any attributes? What are decorations for the formless one?

No external decoration is needed for a person without any special attributes.

(5)

निरञ्जनस्य किं धूपैर्दीपैर्वा सर्वसाक्षिणः ।
निजानन्दैकतृप्तस्य नैवेद्यं किं भवेदिह ॥

For what purpose is the incense for the unstained one, or the lamps for a witness of all (that happens outside)? What could be the offering for one who is satiated with innate bliss?

Naivedya is the offering of delicious eatable items.

(6)

विश्वानन्दयितुस्तस्य किं ताम्बूलं प्रकल्प्यते ।
स्वयंप्रकाशचिद्रूपो योऽसावर्कादिभासकः ॥

What purpose could be there in offering the betel leaf for one that makes the universe rejoice? (He is) of the form of self-luminous knowledge that illuminates the sun and others.

Tāmbūlan consists of the offering of the betel leaf, lime and arecanut partaken after eating food. The word *Arka* denotes the sun.

(7)

प्रदक्षिणा ह्यनन्तस्य ह्यद्वयस्य कुतो नतिः ।
वेदवाक्यैस्वेद्यस्य कुतः स्तोत्रं विधीयते ॥

(How could there be) the circumambulation for the boundless one? Whence is the prostration for the secondless one? How could a panegyric be made of one unknowable by means of the statements of the scriptures?

Vedavākyas or the statements from the scriptures denote the *mahāvākyas* or crisp sentences from the Upanishadic texts which point out the identity of the individual soul and the

supreme Being. These sentences do not serve any purpose for those who have already had the realization of the identity.

(8)

स्वयंप्रकाशमानस्य कुतो नीराजनं विभोः ।
अन्तर्बहिश्च पूर्णस्य कथमुद्वासनं भवेत् ॥

How could waving of lights be made for the self-luminous Lord? How could the service of 'making a request to leave' be extended to one that is complete inside and outside?

Waving of lights removes darkness and symbolically represents the shedding of ignorance also. It is redundant for one who is already self-luminous. After the worship is completed the invoked deity is requested to repair to the original abode. It is called *udvāsanam*. When it is omnipresent where is the question of its abode here or elsewhere. It is a whole entity that pervades inside and outside.

(9)

एवमेव परा पूजा मर्वावस्थासु सर्वदा ।
एकबुद्ध्या तु देवेशे विधेया ब्रह्मवित्तमैः ॥

Highest form of worship of the Supreme Being should always be done with concentration in this manner in all the states of existence by the knowers of Brahman.

Thus as the hymn has described the highest form of worship to be made by a realized person, the poem has been designated as the *Parāpūjā*.

(10)

आत्मा त्वं गिरिजा मतिः सहचराः प्राणाः शरीरं गृहं
 पूजा ते विषयोपभोगरचना निद्रा समाधिस्थितिः ।
 सञ्चारः पदयोः प्रदक्षिणविधिः स्तोत्राणि सर्वा गिरः
 यद्यत्कर्म करोमि तत्तदखिलं शम्भो तवाराधनम् ॥

O Śambhu (Śiva)! You are the soul, Girijā the intellect, the companions the life-breaths, the body the abode. Enjoyment of the worldly pleasures is your worship and sleep is the state of deep meditation. Moving around on foot is the mode of circumambulation. All the words uttered are panegyrics. Whatever I do, all those are but your worship.

Girijā denotes Goddess Pārvatī, the consort of Lord Śiva because she was the daughter of the mountain Himavān. We may remember here a similar verse in the *Saundaryalaharī* - *Jopo jalpoḥ śilpam* etc. in which one's all actions are conceived as the different services rendered to the Goddess.

ŚARAṆĀGATI
IN GOD AND ŚĀNKARA VEDĀNTA

S. Sankaranarayanan *

The students of Indian Philosophy are aware that according to monism, i.e. non-dualism, as taught by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, liberation is attained only by means of realization of the *Jīva-Brahmaikya*, i.e. the total identity of personal Soul with the Supreme Self, the latter being named in the Vedāntic works as Brahman, Paramātman and so on. In fact, the Ācārya's firm stand is: what is called liberation is a permanent feature of the Soul. It is attained, or regained, i.e. recognised when its impediment (*pratibandhaka*), viz. the nescience is eliminated by one's realization of his Soul's total oneness with Brahman (*Brahmasūtra-Śāṅkara-Bhāṣya* (BSB)-1.1.4). In the present paper it is proposed to study whether this stand of the Ācārya could be maintained successfully in the light of the teaching of *Śaraṇāgati*, a technique of taking refuge in the Lord, as taught in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

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I

The *Bhagavadgītā* is universally acclaimed as one of the most magnificent world classics on religion, ethics and philosophy and as the pillar of the Hindu religion. The importance as well as authenticity of the teachings of the *Gītā* lies in this: Here the Teacher Himself (*Gītācārya*) is the Supreme God while the preceptors who figure in the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmasūtras*, etc., are only men who have realised that Supreme God. Hence one could logically argue that the *gospel* of the *Bhagavadgītā* carries more weight than the doctrines taught in other works.

Taking refuge in the Lord, i.e. surrendering oneself to the Lord, is said to be the highest form of devotion (*bhakti*). This is also known by the word *prapatti* coming (for refuge)'. It may be noted that the *Gītā* proper commences with Arjuna's taking refuge in the Lord (*Bhagavadgītā* - (BG) 2. 7-8) and it ends with the Lord's teaching of the technique of taking refuge in Him, as the supreme means to attain Him (BG. 18.66). Also, in the middle of the *Gītā* the Lord develops the idea of taking refuge in Him: In the seventh chapter (verses 16 ff.), He classifies into four, those persons who come to Him for refuge and He dwells at length on the topic. Again, in the twelfth chapter (verses 13 ff.) the Lord gives a clear picture of His dear devotee, viz. he who has taken refuge in Him. Besides, He denounces in very sharp terms those who do not approach Him for refuge. He calls them the vilest men, deluded evil-doers, robbed of knowledge by *māyā*, 'the trick-of-illusion' (BG, 7. 14-15).

The universally accepted norm of Indian philosophies is: That subject with which a treatise com-

mences and also concludes and which it also touches and develops in the middle often (*upakramopasamhāra-parāmarśaiḥ*) — that subject alone constitutes the chief and central theme of that treatise. Accordingly, the *Gītā*, must be viewed as a treatise with the central theme of *śaraṇāgati*, i.e. the technique of taking refuge in God. Indeed, in the final verse of the *Gītā*, the Lord teaches, with a unique promise, *śaraṇāgati* as follows:

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(BG, 18. 66)

“Abandoning all *Dharmas*, surrender to Me alone as your refuge. I shall make you free from all sins; don’t be sorrowful.”

Even to-day many devotees of the Lord daily religiously recite many times this final verse of the *Gītā* so that they may imbibe and soak up themselves in the doctrine of *śaraṇāgati* as taught by the Lord Himself, as the means to attain Him, i.e. to attain liberation; and also that they may constantly bear in mind the unparalleled words of promise of His.

It is a common experience of one and all that there is a fundamental difference between the *śaraṇya* (i.e. the one who is approached for refuge and who grants the same) and the *śaraṇāgata* (i.e. the one who approaches for refuge and receives the same). Besides, the latter should also recognise himself to be different from, inferior to, and a subordinate of, the former. Otherwise there cannot be proper *śaraṇāgati* at all.

This well-known fundamental division of the grantor and the grantee of the refuge (*śaraṇya-śaraṇāgata-vibhāga*) is real; and its recognition is a necessary prerequisite for a proper *śaraṇāgati*, which is taught by the Lord Himself as a means for attaining Him and to attain the freedom from sin and sorrow, i.e. a means to liberation. This is totally incompatible with monism preaching a total identity of both. Thus it is evident that the doctrine of non-duality goes counter to the *Gītā* and hence it is to be rejected downright by all who have faith on the authority of that great scripture.

II

A reasoning and criticism of this sort could be raised against the non-dualistic school by all the philosophical systems that came after the break of the Bhakti movement that started in South India sometime about the 6th-7th century A.D., and spread throughout India soon. The founders of these later philosophical systems were under the spell of the said Bhakti movement. But in his major works, Śrī Śaṅkara is conspicuously silent on this point. He does not refer to the objection based on the fundamental division of the-grantor-and-grantee-of-refuge. Does this total silence on the part of Śrī Śaṅkara favour those who would assign the Ācārya to an age much earlier than the one in which the modern researchers, in general, would like to fix him? But an elucidation of this point falls beyond the scope of the present paper. So let us turn to our topic.

Because Śrī Śaṅkara was not aware of this problem we may not get in his works a direct answer to the question. However, the early Sāṅkhyas have

raised certain objections that are more or less of parallel nature and that are being based on the well-known divisions of the opposites. Their objection is: We are quite aware of the universally recognised distinction between the experiencer and the object of experience (*bhoktr-bhogyā-vibhāga*) and the difference between the tormented one and the tormentor (*tapya-tāpaka-vibhāga*) and similar other divisions of the opposites. All these, the Sāṅkhyas point out, are, as a whole, incompatible with the basic monistic doctrine that single conscious (*cetanam*) Brahman constitutes both the efficient and the material causes of the universe with its Conscious and Unconscious beings (*cetanācetanātmakam*). Ācārya Śaṅkara answers suitably these objections (*BSB*, 2-1-13, 2-10). Following the way shown by him in this context, we may also try to answer the objection raised on the basis of the division between the grantor and the grantee of refuge.

We all know that the waves, the water-bubbles and the foams on the ocean are basically oceanic waters only. Yet, the waves, water-bubbles and foams rise separately, appear to be entities mutually different; they are called by different names and they have also different forms; they strike each other, come and merge together, and become one and indistinguishable and finally return to their original status, i. e., they become oceanic waters. The same oceanic waters turn to be water vapour, clouds, rains, river-waters successively; and they are seemingly totally different from one another; yet they finally reach back the ocean and become once again the oceanic waters. Similarly, several ministries, such as those of home-affairs, finance, defence, foreign affairs and so on, are basically nothing but one single government, which

they constitute. Yet, these ministries appear totally different from one another — having varied functions, one depending on, and having a check over, the other; their mutual relationship, status, etc., are governed by a set of rules and regulations, practices, etc., created by themselves. So, the basic unity and oneness of any given two or more entities need not be viewed as a mere contradiction to, and as a thing totally incompatible with, the apparent and functional diversity and duality and also the results that follow such diversity.

So far we have seen examples from the objects of the world of our day-to-day experience. Turning to the epics and *Purāṇas* we may cite more examples. From the *Rāmāyaṇa* and from the *Purāṇas* we learn that both Bhārgava Rāma (i. e. Paraśu Rāma) and Dāśarathi Rāma (i.e. the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*) are two incarnations of one single Lord Viṣṇu; and hence they are basically one and the same God Viṣṇu. Without demur the dualists and non-dualists do concur on this. Yet, Paraśu Rāma comes to, quarrels with, gets vanquished by, and pays homage to, Dāśarathi Rāma. Thus, we realise that the basic unity and oneness of these two epic heroes as Lord Viṣṇu, is in no way contradicted by their apparent dichotomy of the attainable and the one who attains (*gamyā-gantṛ-vibhāga*); by the distinction between the conquered and the conqueror (*jayya-jetṛ-vibhāga*) and by the mutual difference between the worshipful and the worshipper (*pūjya-pūjaka-vibhāga*). Why to go elsewhere? In the *Gītā* itself, the Supreme Lord declares that He is identical with the son of Vasudeva among the men of the Vṛṣṇi clan; and also, in the

same manner, He is also identical with Arjuna-Dhanañjaya among the Pāṇḍavas; Vyāsa among the sages; Prahlāda among the demons, and so on, (BG, 10.37, 10.30) Yet, Arjuna and Prahlāda are found taking refuge in the Lord, while Vyāsa writing hymns after hymns eulogizing Him. Thus the ultimate real unity is found co-existing with the apparent functional diversities and dichotomies of the grantor and grantee of the refuge (*śaraṇya-śaraṇāgata-vibhāga*) and of the eulogized and eulogist (*stutya-stotr-vibhāga*). No doubt, the world of our common experience is full of diversities and contradictions. Yet, at the foundation of all these apparent diversities there lies a basic unity. The central spirit of the Indian culture, all know well, is 'Unity-in-Diversity'. The non-dualist stresses on this basic unity even while not rejecting these manifest diversities of the world.

From what we have seen so far, it is clear beyond doubt that the philosophy of non-dualism as advocated by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya is not incompatible with the principles governing *śaraṇāgati*, a form of *bhakti* or devotion. In fact, Śrī Śaṅkara is not against any form of *bhakti*. Rather he is for all of its forms. This fact is vouched for by the vast number of fine devotional hymns claiming the Ācārya's authorship and praising the glories of each and every important deity of the Hindu pantheon. According to him, the *acañcalā bhaktiḥ* (unwavering devotion to the Lord) is the surest and easiest of the paths that could lead the spiritual aspirant (*sādhaka*) through the Self-realization, to the great Goal, viz. Liberation.

In fact, a close study of the famous final verse of the *Gītā* would confirm this. The *śaraṇāgati* which

the Lord teaches there to Arjuna is not the one that is based on the dualistic approach to the Lord; for that form of *śaraṇāgati*, Arjuna has already undertaken in the very beginning. Rather, it teaches only that form which the man of wisdom undertakes with a unique non-dualistic realization, "All this is Vāsudeva" — the man of wisdom whom the Lord considers to be His very Soul (*BG.* 7-18-19); and in whose approach to the Lord all the divisive attributes (*sarva-dharmān*) of both the devotee of the Lord and of the Lord are rejected (*parityajya*) and the basic total identity (*ekam*) of both is realised as repeatedly taught by the famous Upaniṣadic supreme sentence (*mahāvākya*) 'That Thou Art' (*tat tvam asi*) and as explained cogently by Śrī Śaṅkara and his disciples.

Further one may have to carefully and impartially analyse the meaning of *mat* ('I' or 'me') in the expressions like *mayyarpita-manobuddhiḥ, madbhaktaḥ* (*BG.* 12-14), *manmanāḥ, mām ekam śaraṇam vraja* (*BG.* 18. 65-66) etc. found in the *Gītā*. Such an analysis would show that 'I' and 'me' in these cases signify not the self of the teacher Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*vaktur ātmā*), but only the Supreme, attributeless self (*Adhyātmā, pratyag-ātmā*). Parallels may be found in God Indra's teaching of the prescription *mām eva vijānīhi* (*Kaushītaki up.* 31) 'realise me alone', given to the king Prataradana and in the Sage Vāmadeva's solemn declaration *aham manur abhavaṁ sūryaśca* (*Bṛh. up.* - 1.4.10), 'I was Manu and the sun too.' This point has been meticulously argued, and logical and scriptural conclusion has been established in the *pratardanādhikaraṇa* of the *Brahmasūtra* (1.1 28-31) and in the *Śrī-Śaṅkara-bhāṣya* thereunder. Thus the *upakrama, upasaṁhāra*

and *parāmarśa* (see above) in the *Gītā* favour a *śaranāgati*, not of a dualistic form, but only of the non-dualistic form, even though the former form could serve as a step leading to the latter. A more detailed study of the final verse of the *Gītā* in this light—a necessary and interesting study of course—is bound to lengthen the present paper which is meant to be a short one. Hence we reserve that sort of a detailed study to an appropriate occasion in the near future. I conclude with a verse that capsulises the non-dualistic spiritual aspirant's approach to the Lord Preceptor.

अहं देहबुद्ध्या तत्रैवास्मि दासो
 ह्यहं जीवबुद्ध्या तत्रैवेकदेशः ।
 त्वमेवास्म्यहं त्वात्मबुद्ध्या, तथापि
 प्रसीदान्वहं देहबुद्ध्या नमामि ॥

(*Gurubhujāṅgastotra*, 106)

This verse can be roughly rendered as:

“O Lord! if I remain with the consideration for my body, then I become your humble servant. If I consider myself as a personal Soul, then I become a part of Yours. But if I view myself as Soul (pure, with all attributes rejected), then I become none but Yourself. Yet, O Lord! day after day, I remain with the consideration for my body; and I offer my homage to you. Be merciful please.”

THE FOUR INDISPENSABLE
QUALIFICATIONS

(From the *Sarva-vedānta-siddhānta-sāra-saṅgraha*)*

[Continued from VOS. XVII No. 2, July '92]

Srī Saṅkara Bhagavatpāda

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भगवन्करुणासिन्धो भवसिन्धोर्भवांस्तरिः ।

यमाश्रित्याश्रमेणैव परं पारं गता बुधाः ॥

The Disciple says (to the Master):

Oh revered Sir, Oh Ocean of Compassion, You are the only boat to cross the ocean of *aṁsāra*; resorting to You alone (using which boat only many learned people have crossed over (this ocean of transmigration) and reached the other shore (Supreme Bliss).

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जन्मान्तरकृतानन्तपुण्यकर्मफलोदयः ।

अद्य संनिहितो यस्मात्त्वत्कृपापात्रमस्म्यहम् ॥

* Free rendering: Dr. V. K. S. N. Raghavan

As a result of the innumerable good deeds (i) done by me in the previous births, and (ii) which are about to bear fruit now, I presume that, I have become the worthy disciple and receptacle of your abundant grace.

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संप्रीतिमक्षणोर्वदनप्रसाद मानन्दमन्तःकरणस्य सद्यः ।
विलोकनं ब्रह्मविदस्तनोति छिनत्ति मोहं सुगतिं व्यनक्ति ॥

The graceful *kaṭākṣa* (side-long glances) of a Brahmavit (Knower of Brahman) makes a disciple at once to be full of (i) love in his eyes, (ii) serenity in his face (iii) joy in his mind; it also frees him from all delusion and makes him gain the great goal.

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हुताशनानां शशिनामिनाना मप्यर्वुदं वापि न यन्निहन्तुम् ।
शक्नोति तद्ध्वान्तमनन्तमान्तरं हन्त्यात्मवेत्ता सकृदीक्षणेन ॥

The knower of Brahman-Atman, by his mere look, just once, is able to destroy all internal darkness (in the form of ignorance) which even innumerable (kinds of) fire, moons or suns cannot destroy at all.

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दुष्पारे भवसागरे जनिमृतिव्याध्यादिदुःखोत्कटे
घोरे पुत्रकलत्रमित्रवहुलग्राहाकरे भीकरे ।
कर्मोत्तुङ्गतरङ्गभङ्गनिकरैराकृष्यमाणो मुहु-
र्यातायातगतिभ्रमेण शरणं किञ्चिन्न पश्याम्यहम् ॥

[Oh Master!] I find this ocean of *samsāra* (cycle of birth and death/transmigratory process) can never be crossed at all. It is full of danger as there are births, deaths, diseases etc. found in abundance. It is full of terrible crocodiles in the form of numerous sons, wives, friends and others. I am tossed hither and thither very often by the lofty tides of troughs and crests in the form of *karman* (deeds done in former births). I am not able to find anyone as refuge, because I am completely upset by the delusion of progress and downfall.

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केन वा पुण्यशेषेण तव पादाम्बुजद्वयम् ।
दृष्टवानस्मि मामातं मृत्योस्त्राहि दयादृशा ॥

Sir! I know not how I have come to see the pair of lotus-like feet of yours, *i.e.* through what sort of any remnant of my merit. Prithee! kindly protect me from the jaws of death, through the shower of your compassionate look, — me who am suffering incessantly.

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वदन्तमेवं तं शिष्यं दृष्ट्यैव दयया गुरुः ।
दद्यादभयमेतस्मै मा भैष्टेति मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

After the disciple has said as cited above, the master, on his part, would shower his compassionate glances on the disciple; and the *guru* would grant him shelter telling him frequently thus:” Don’t be afraid, don’t be afraid.”

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गुरुः

विद्वन्मृत्युभयं जहीहि भवतो नास्त्येव मृत्युः क्वचि-
 न्चित्यस्य द्वयवर्जितस्य परमानन्दात्मनो ब्रह्मणः ।
 भ्रान्त्या किञ्चिदवेक्ष्य भीतमनसा मिथ्या त्वया कथ्यते
 मां त्राहीति हि सुप्तवत्प्रलपनं शून्यात्मकं ते मृषा ॥

The Master replies (to the disciple:)

O wise one! abandon the fear of death. There is no death at all for you, because you are Brahman that is eternal, non-dual, full of supreme bliss forever—Looking at something out of illusion, your mind is upset, and so you say (inadvertantly) “Please protect me.” Your prattling—which is just like the words of a dreaming person — is only meaningless.

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निद्रागाढतमोवृतः किल जनःस्वप्ने मुजङ्गादिना
 ग्रस्तं स्वं समवेक्ष्य यत्प्रलपति त्रासाद्धतोऽस्मीत्यलम् ।
 आत्मेन प्रतिबोधितः करतलेनाताड्य पृष्टः स्वयं
 किञ्चिन्नेति वदत्यमुष्य वचनं स्यात्तत्किमर्थं वद ॥

A person, who is fast asleep, suddenly sees in a dream that he is caught up by serpent, etc. and then he cries out of fear, “Alas! I am killed.” But, a very reliable friend wakes him up by striking him with his palm of hand; and then when he is asked, “What is the matter?” he replies to the friend, “No, nothing.” Now, tell me what is the purport of the above statement “No, nothing.”

(to be continued)

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संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-

स्विन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।

अत्यासन्नसुधाम्बुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-

त्येषा शङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*saṁsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhbhūtadāhavyathā-
khinnānām jalakāṅkṣayā marubhuvi bhrāntyā
paribhrāmyātm
atyāsannasudhāmbudhiṁ sukhakaram brahmādvayam
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.