

A HALF-YEARLY JOURNAL OF ADVAITA-VEDĀNTA

# *The VOICE of* ŚĀṆKARA

śaṅkara-bhāratī

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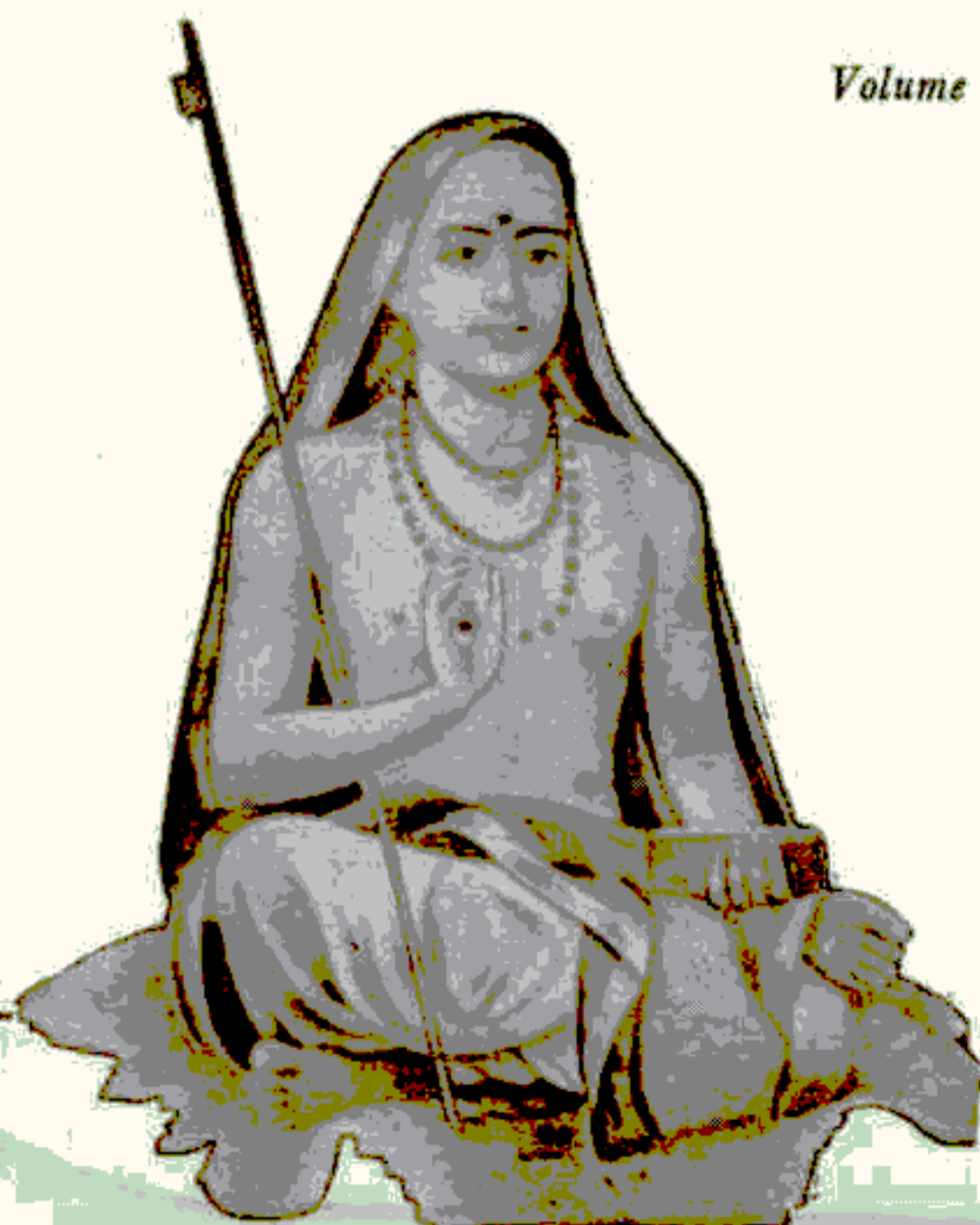
V. R. Kalyanasundara Sastri

*Editor*

R. Balasubramanian

*Volume TWENTYONE*

*Number ONE*



Vol XXI No 1

January 1996

esā śaṅkara-bhāratī vijagate  
nirvāṇa-saṁdāyīnī

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His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya  
of Kāñcī Kāmakōṭi Pīṭha  
by Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre

*Subscriptions are to be sent to:*

The Administrative Officer,  
Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre,  
8-A, Bishop Wallers Avenue (West)  
Near C.I.T. Colony  
Mylapore, Madras-600 004.

*Subscription Rates:*

	Indian	Foreign
Annual	Rs 60/-	US Dollars 20
For two years	Rs 100/-	US Dollars 36
Life	Rs 500/-	US Dollars 200
Single Copy	Rs 30/-	US Dollars 10

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## HOMAGE TO ŚAṆKARA

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[164]

मन्मथमातङ्गजये  
कण्ठीरवतां प्रयाति जनसङ्घः ।  
यत्पादाम्बुजनत्या  
तमहं प्रणमामि शंकराचार्यम् ॥

*manmatha-mātaṅga-jaye*

*kaṅṭhīravatām-prayāti jana-saṅghaḥ  
yat-pādāmbujanatyā*

*tamaham praṇamāmi śaṅkarācāryam*

I bow down to that preceptor, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya — by the salutation to whose lotus like feet, the host of people (devotees) become leonine in defeating the elephants of cupid (the god of Love).

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शम्पा प्राप पुरातैः

पुण्यैर्नूनं यदीयतनुसाम्यम् ।

शङ्कादुर्द्रुमपरशं

तमहं प्रणमामि शंकराचार्यम् ॥

*śampā prāpa purātaiḥ**pun्यair-nūnaṁ yadīya-tanu-sāmyam**śaṅkā-durdruma-paraśuṁ**tamaham-praṇamāmi śaṅkarācāryam.*

I bow down to that great preceptor Śrī Śaṅkarācārya who is like an axe in cutting down the wild thorny tree of doubts. Indeed, as a result of the good merits (*punyas*) gained in previous births, the lightning (*śampā*) has obtained the similarity of Śrī Śaṅkara's *śarīra* (body).

Śrī Saccidānanda-śivābhinava Nṛsiṁhabhāratī in  
*Śrī-Śaṅkarācārya-suvarṇamālāstava*



## THUS SPAKE ŚAṄKARA\*

---

### Twofold Vedic *Dharma*

The twofold Vedic *dharma* called *pravṛtti-dharma* and *nivṛtti-dharma* (the *dharma* of action and the *dharma* of renunciation) maintains order in the universe. This *dharma* which directly leads to liberation and worldly prosperity has long been practised by all castes and religious orders — from the Brahmanas downwards — who sought welfare.

### The Aim of the *Bhagavad-gītā*

The aim of this famous scriptural text called *Bhagavad-gītā* is, briefly, the attainment of the supreme bliss, the total cessation of bondage and of its cause. This takes place through that *dharma* which consists in a steady devotion to the knowledge of the Self, preceded by the renunciation of all works.

### The Usefulness of *karma-yoga*

The *pravṛtti-dharma* which is a means of attaining worldly prosperity is enjoined on the several castes and

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\* Readings from Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Introduction and Chapter II, compiled by R. Balasubramanian

religious orders. It leads the devotee to the world of the Devas and so on. However, when it is practised in a spirit of complete devotion to the Lord, without caring for the immediate results, it leads to the purity of the mind. A person whose mind is pure is eligible to pursue the path of knowledge; and to him knowledge accrues. Thus, the path of action (indirectly) leads to the supreme bliss.

### The Need for Self-knowledge

All creatures whose intelligence is swayed by grief and delusion and other evil influences naturally abandon their duties and resort to those which are prohibited. Even if they are engaged in their duties, their conduct in speech, thought, and deed is selfish and is prompted by a longing for reward. In their case, then owing to an accumulation of merit and demerit, of *dharma* and *adharma*, the bondage which consists in passing through good and bad births, happiness and misery, becomes incessant. Grief and delusion are, thus, the cause of bondage. And seeing that their cessation could not be achieved except through Self-knowledge, added to renunciation of all works, Lord Vāsudeva wished to teach that knowledge (of the Self) for the benefit of the whole world through Arjuna and began his teaching with the text 2.11.

### Sāñkhya, *Sāñkhya-buddhi*, and Sāñkhyas

The real nature of the Self as expounded in 2.11-30 by the Lord is called Sāñkhya; the intellectual conviction of the truth generated by the study of that section, — that the Self is not the agent because it is devoid of such changes as birth in it — forms *Sāñkhya-*



*buddhi*; and the wise who hold this view are called Sāṅkhyas.

### Yoga, *Yoga-buddhi*, and Yogins

Yoga consists in the performance of action as a means to liberation (before the rise of the *sāṅkhya-buddhi*) requiring the knowledge of merit and demerit and also the presupposition that the Self is different from the body and that it is the agent and the enjoyer. Such a conviction is *Yoga-buddhi*; and those who are engaged in action holding this view are Yogins.

### No Birth and Death for the Self

We see how the embodied Self, remaining unchanged, in the present body goes through the three stages of childhood, youth, and old age, all distinct from one another. At the close of the first of these stages, the Self is not dead; nor is it born again at the commencement of the second; on the other hand, we see the Self passing unchanged into the second and third stages. Even so the Self passes unchanged into another body. Such being the case, the wise man is not troubled (in mind) about it.

### The Self and the not-Self

This is the conclusion: the Real (the Self) is ever existent and the non-real (the not-Self) is never existent; this conclusion regarding the two, the Self and the not-Self, the real and the non-real, is always present before the minds of those who attend only to truth, to the real nature of Brahman, the Absolute, the All, the That. It is, therefore, good for you to follow the view of such truth-seers, shake off grief

and delusion, and, being assured that all phenomena (*vikāras*) are really non-existent and are, like the mirage, mere false appearances, do you calmly bear heat and cold and other pairs of opposites, of which some are constant and others are inconstant in their nature as productive of pleasure and pain.

### The Imperishable Self

Unlike the unreal you must understand, That (Brahman) does not vanish: —That, *viz.* Brahman, the Sat, the Real, by which all this world including ether is pervaded, just as pots and other objects are pervaded by ether. Brahman does not undergo increase or diminution and is, therefore, inexhaustible. This Brahman, the Sat, is not exhausted in itself; for unlike the body, it has no parts. Nor does it diminish by the loss of anything belonging to it, because nothing belongs to the Self. Devadatta, for example, is ruined by loss of wealth; but Brahman does not suffer loss in that way. So no one can bring about the disappearance or destruction of the inexhaustible Brahman. Nobody, not even Īśvara, the supreme Lord, can destroy the Self. For, the Self is Brahman itself and one cannot act upon oneself.

### The Unknowability of the Self

The Self is unknowable, not determinable by the senses or by any other means of knowledge.

*Objection:* The Self is known by *śruti*, and by perception, etc. prior to *śruti*.

*Answer:* This objection is untenable, for the Self is self-determined (*svatassiddha*). When the Self, the



knower, has been determined, then only a search for proper sources of knowledge on the part of the knower with a view to obtain the right knowledge is possible. In fact, without knowing the Self, no one seeks to determine the objects of knowledge. Indeed, the Self does not remain unknown to anyone. As for scripture which is the final authority, it obtains its authoritativeness regarding the Self only by eliminating the alien attributes superimposed on the Self, but not as revealing what has been altogether unknown.

The Self: Unborn, eternal, unchangeable, and primeval

The Self is not born, because no such change of condition as birth takes place in the Self. Nor does it die — this denies the last change of condition called death...Having once existed, the Self does not thereafter cease to be any more... Neither does the Self come into existence, like the body, having not existed before. So it is unborn... Since it does not die, it is eternal. Having no parts, it does not diminish in its being. Having no qualities, it does not diminish by loss of a quality. It is primeval, not subject to change known as growth as opposed to decline. For, that which increases in itself by the addition of parts is said to grow and to be renewed. Being devoid of parts, the Self was as fresh in the past (as it is now or it will be in the future). It never grows. And it is not slain when the body is slain; it is not subject to modification when the body is transformed.

The Importance of the Mind for Knowing the Self

Because of the practice of *sama* and *dama*, the mind, equipped with the teachings of scripture and

the teacher, serves as the sense by which the Self may be seen.

### Birth and Death of the Embodied Self

Just as in this world a person casts off the clothes which have become worn out and puts on others which are new, in the same manner, the embodied Self abandons old bodies and without undergoing any change enters others which are new.

### The Self: Unmanifest, Unthinkable, and Unchangeable

As the Self is beyond the reach of the senses, it is not manifest. Hence it is unthinkable. The reason for this is that that alone which is perceived by the senses becomes an object of knowledge. Truly, the Self is unthinkable because it is inaccessible to the senses. It is unchangeable. It is unlike milk which, when mixed with butter-milk, can be made to change its form. It is changeless as it has no parts, for, anything which has no parts does not undergo change. Since the Self is changeless, it is unchangeable.

### Characteristics of the Liberated-in-life (*Jīvanmukta*)

#### 1. *Satisfaction in the Self*

When a person totally abandons all the desires that enter the heart and is satisfied with the inward Self in him, without longing for external objects, averse to everything else on account of his acquisition of the inward nectar, i.e. the inward Self, then he is said to be a wise man, one whose knowledge arising from the discrimination of the Self and the not-Self has been steadied.



## 2. *Equanimity in Pleasure and Pain*

A wise man is one whose heart is not distressed in calamities due to suffering in the body, etc. Unlike fire which increases as fuel is added, his longing for pleasures does not increase as more pleasures are attained. He is said to be one of steady wisdom. He is called a sage, a *sannyāsin*.

## 3. *Absence of Attachment, Delight, and Aversion*

The sage has no attachment even for the bodily life. He does not exult in pleasure; nor is he averse to pain that may befall him. Being thus free from delight and distress, his knowledge arising from discrimination becomes steady.

## 4. *Withdrawal from Sense-objects*

Such a person, rooted as he is in wisdom, withdraws his senses from all objects in the same way as a tortoise withdraws its limbs from all sides out of fear.

One whose heart is pure, whose mind is steady, has achieved his end. So, the man of wisdom will resort only to those sense-objects which are indispensable and not forbidden by scripture, with the senses devoid of love and hatred.

## 5. *Cessation of Worldly Experience*

To one who possesses discrimination and whose knowledge has become steady, the experience of every kind, secular and sacred, ceases on the cessation of *avidyā*, because it is the effect of *avidyā*; and *avidyā* comes to an end being opposed to knowledge.

### 6. *Spiritual Light and Worldly Darkness*

To others who are ignorant, the supreme Reality is night. Night is *tāmasic* by nature and so it causes confusion of things. The Real is accessible only to a person of steady wisdom. Just as what is day to others becomes night to night-wanderers, even so to others who are ignorant and who are like the night-wanderers the supreme Reality is dark, *i.e.* night. The reason for this is that it is inaccessible to those whose minds are not absorbed in it. The self-restrained Yogin (the wise man) who has subdued the senses and who has overcome the sleep of *avidyā* is fully awake to the supreme reality. When all others are awake, *i.e.* when they are in sleep in the night of ignorance entertaining the notions of the perceiver and the perceived, when they are as mere dreamers in sleep at night, that condition of others is night from the perspective of the sage who has realized the supreme reality.

### 7. *The Peace of the Sage*

The renunciate who, after abandoning all desires, leads a life content with the bare necessities of life, who has really no attachment even for those bare necessities of life, who does not claim as his even those things which are required for the sake of bodily existence alone, who is not vain of knowledge — such a person of steady wisdom who knows Brahman attains peace, the end of all the suffering of bondage. In short, he becomes Brahman indeed.

### The State of Brahman

To renounce everything and to dwell in Brahman is the divine state, the state of Brahman... On reach-

ing this state one is no longer deluded. Remaining in this state even in the last moment of life, one attains liberation, the bliss of Brahman. It needs no mention that one who renounces while yet a student and dwells in Brahman throughout life attains the bliss of Brahman, the *brahman-nirvāṇa*.



### AN INVOCATION TO SUPREME BRAHMAN

दिवकालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तये ।

स्वानुभूत्येकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥

Salutations to the self-effulgent serene supreme Brahman (i) Who is beyond space, time etc., (ii) Who is infinite, (iii) Who is of the form of knowledge alone, and (iv) Who can be cognized through one's own *anubhūti* (innate experience/intuition).

Bhartṛhari, *Nīṭisataka*, 1



## PADMAPĀDA\*

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*N. Ramakrishna Sastri\*\**

Padmapāda was one of the favourite disciples of Śrī Śaṅkara, the others being Hastāmalaka, Toṭaka and Suresvara. Towards the close of his career, Śrī Śaṅkara conceived the idea of perpetuating the doctrine of Advaita by establishing various Maṭhas in different corners of India for the propagation of Advaita. According to the *Śaṅkara-vijaya* of Ānandagiri, the manuscripts of which are available in the Madras and the Mysore Government Oriental Manuscripts Libraries, Śrī Śaṅkara appointed Padmapāda as the first Ācārya at the Śṛīṅgeri Maṭha. Under instructions from his preceptor Śrī Śaṅkara, Padmapāda wrote a commentary on the bhāshya of Śrī Śaṅkara on the first four aphorisms of the *Brahma-sūtra*; and that commentary is known as *Pañcapādikā*. Being the earliest commentary on Śaṅkara's *Bhāshya*, the *Pañcapādikā* deserves a careful study by every student of Advaita philosophy. It was commented

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\* Courtesy: *Preceptors of Advaita* Secunderabad, 1968.

\*\* Āsthāna Vidvān, Śrī Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Maṭham.

on by Prakāśātman in his *Pañcapādikā-vivarana*. The *Pañcapādikā-vivarana* was further commented on by Akhaṇḍānanda in his *Tattvadīpana*. Ānandapūrṇa, who wrote his *Vidyāsāgarī* commentary on Śrī Harsha's *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādyā* wrote a commentary on the *Pañcapādikā*. Nṛsiṃhāśrama wrote a commentary on the *Pañcapādikā-vivarana* called the *Pañcapādikā-vivarana-prakāśikā*. Dasgupta mentions one more commentary on the *Pañcapādikā-vivarana* by one Śrī Kṛishṇa. Vidyāraṇya wrote a separate monograph called *Vivarana-prameya-saṅgraha* in which the Vedānta doctrines are clearly set forth on the lines of the *Pañcapādikā-vivarana*. Rāmānanda Sarasvatī, a pupil of Govindānanda, the author of the *Ratna-prabhā* commentary on the Śaṅkara-bhāshya on the *Brahma-sūtra* wrote his *Vivarana-upanyāsa*, a summary of the main theses of the *Vivarana*. Dasgupta says that this work was probably the last important work on the *Vivarana* line.

The first four *sūtras* on the *bhāshya* of which Padmapāda has commented set forth the quintessence of Advaita Vedānta. Each system of philosophy has to deal with three topics, those relating to God, Soul and the World. While the pluralistic and theistic schools regard these three as distinct realities, the Advaita teaches that the basic Reality, Brahman is one and non-dual. The truth of non-duality is the import of the Upanishads. And Brahman, owing to its association with avidyā, appears as God, Soul and the World. Padmapāda says that māyā, avyākṛita, prakṛiti, agrahaṇa, avyakta, tamaḥ, kāraṇa, laya, śakti, mahāśakti, nidrā, nidrā, kshara and ākāśa are the terms which are used in older literature as synonym-



ous with avidyā. Avidyā, like knowledge, requires a substratum as well as a content. On this issue Padmapāda's view as interpreted by Prakāśātman in his *Vivaraṇa* is that Brahman is both the locus and content of avidyā as against the view of Vācaspati Miśra that avidyā has Brahman as its object and jīva as its support. This is one of the fundamental points of difference between the *Vivaraṇa* line of interpretation and the interpretation of the Vācaspati line. In this Prakāśātman agrees with the view of Suresvara and his (Suresvara's) disciple Sarvajñātman. Brahman associated with avidyā is viewed as the source of the universe. On the subject of causality of Brahman, Padmapāda says that that on which the world-appearance is manifested, that, the Brahman is the cause of the world. On this point three alternative views are offered by Prakāśātman; and they are: (i) Just as two strands conjoined together make a rope, Brahman and māyā are the material cause of the world, in a relation of equal primacy. The elements of reality and manifestation are caused by Brahman; and the elements of inertness and change are produced by māyā. (ii) The potency of māyā alone may be characterised as the material cause. But, since potency always depends on the potent, it would have to be said presumptively that even Brahman that possesses the potency is the material cause. (iii) Since Brahman is the substrate of māyā, though material causality may belong directly to māyā alone, for Brahman too material causality cannot be avoided. Of these three views, the first maintains that material causality in the principal sense belongs to Brahman qualified by māyā; and the other two hold that it belongs to māyā alone. But on all the three views, Brahman is only figura-



tively the material cause.<sup>1</sup> As regards the nature of the universe, Padmapāda holds that it is indeterminable in the sense of not being either real like Brahman or unreal like an absolute nothing. In other words, he defines mithyātvam or indeterminability as 'Sad-asad-vilakṣaṇatvam'.

As regards the nature of the individual soul and the Supreme Lord, three theories are set forth by the Advaitic writers; and they are: pratibimba-vāda, avaccheda-vāda and ābhāsa-vāda. According to the pratibimba-vāda, the consciousness that transcends avidyā and serves as the original is Īśvara; and, the consciousness that is reflected in the intellect in its gross and subtle states is Jīva. Or, the consciousness reflected in avidyā is Īśvara, and in intellect is Jīva.<sup>2</sup> According to the avaccheda-vāda, the consciousness conditioned by avidyā is Īśvara; and the consciousness delimited by avidyā is Jīva.<sup>3</sup> According to the ābhāsa-vāda, the reflection of consciousness in avidyā when identified with the original is Īśvara; and, the reflection of consciousness in the intellect when identified with the original is Jīva.<sup>4</sup>

The difference between pratibimba-vāda and ābhāsa-vāda lies in this that according to the former the consciousness that is reflected and is present in avidyā or intellect is real and is identical with the original. Only the state of reflection (pratibimbatva) is indeterminable either as sentient or insentient. But, according to the ābhāsa-vāda, the consciousness that is reflected and present in avidyā or intellect is indeterminable either as sentient or insentient.<sup>5</sup> The

pratibimba-vāda is advocated by Padmapāda in his *Pañcapādikā* in the section which is designated by later Advaitic writers as *Darṣaṇa-ṭīkā*.<sup>6</sup> The avaccheda-vāda is advocated by Vācaspatimīśra, and the ābhāsa-vāda by Suresvara.

As regards the relation between the affirmative and negative Upanishadic texts, Padmapāda has a theory of his own. Maṇḍanamīśra holds that the negative Upanishadic texts are primary and the affirmative texts are secondary. Padmapāda, however, maintains<sup>7</sup> that the negative texts merely restate what is presumptively known from the affirmative Upanishadic texts. In the case of the erroneous perception of silver in the nacre, when it is said that 'this is nacre and this is not silver', the sentence 'this is not silver' merely restates the absence of silver which is presumptively known from the affirmative sentence 'this is nacre'. Similarly, the negative Upanishadic texts such as 'neti, neti' merely restate the absence of the universe in Brahman which is presumptively known from the affirmative Upanishadic texts that convey Brahman to be truth, consciousness and absolute. Thus the negative Upanishadic texts are subordinate to the affirmative ones. This view, according to Sarvajñātmah is faultless, desirable, and commendable.<sup>8</sup>

The greatest contribution of Padmapāda to Advaita lies in this that his interpretation of Śrī Śaṅkara's *bhāshya* served as the source of the most important school of Advaita, that is, the Vivaraṇa school.

## NOTES

1. Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *The Philosophy of Advaita*, pp. 228-229.
2. *Siddhāntabindu* (Kāśī Sanskrit series), p. 226.
3. *Avidyāvacchinna-anavacchinna-eva jiveśau iti pakshaḥ avaccheda-vadaḥ*, Nārayaṇi on the *Siddhāntabindu*, p. 232.
4. *Siddhāntabindu*, p. 219.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.
6. *Ratna-prabhā* on Śaṅkara's *bhāshya* on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, 2-3-50.
7. *Pañcapādikā*, p. 499. [Mm. Anantakrishna Sastri's Edition].
8. *Śaṅkshepaśārīraka* I, 257.



## ASPECTS OF ADVAITA\*

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*P. N. Srinivasachari*

### CONCLUSION

The rich and varied literature on Advaita offers immense scope for a critical and comprehensive study of its philosophy and religion in all its aspects. All the schools agree that it is non-dualistic or monistic experience that transcends *tripuṭi* or relational thought and the limitations of philosophy and religion. Advaita as such is *ajāta* and alogical and *māyā-avidyā* is non-existent. But the moment the alogical becomes the logical, Advaita lapses into Dvaita or duality and is engulfed in dualism. Monism has to accommodate itself to the needs of realistic thinking. The various schools are only philosophical devices by which thought seeks to transcend itself. The goal of philosophy is the definition and classification of its chief concepts and Advaitic experience is analysed and grouped into types of Advaitic thought. One way of such grouping is what is adopted in this study and its principle consists in the distinctive between Pure Advaita

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

and Practical Advaita or philosophy and religion. It is allied to the idea of compromises in the history of Advaitic thought, developed in the learned work bearing that title by Professor Mahamahopādhyāya S. Kuppusvāmi Śāstri. By a critical summary of the various type of Advaita we can discern the methods of approach and the distinctive features of evaluation. From the synthetic standpoint the term comprehensiveness or harmony is preferable to the term compromise or the spirit of accommodation.

The first systematic exponent of pure or rationalistic Advaita was Gauḍapāda, the *paramaguru* of Śaṅkara (788-820 A.D.), and it is noteworthy that he wrote his *kārikā* (gloss) on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, which, of all the *Upaniṣads*, is said to be least influenced by theological and textual presuppositions and doctrines. It is also significant, as Mr. Dasgupta says, that Gauḍapāda owed no philosophic allegiance to Bādarāyana, the author of the *Brahma Sūtras*, who formulated the system of the *Upaniṣads* and that Śaṅkara, the first known commentator of the *Upaniṣads*, should adore Gauḍapāda as the teacher who recovered and revived the *Upaniṣadic* system of Advaita. Gauḍapāda's refutation of the category of causality, his psychological analysis of the three states of consciousness, his *ajātavāda* and *advaya yoga* bring out the self-evident truth of Advaita. But it gave rise to different versions of the philosophy of pure consciousness regarded as an introspective enquiry into the nature of *prajñā*, pure consciousness or *turiya* and the like. The metaphysics of *dr̥k* or the subject beyond the subject-object relation as experienced by Maṇḍana, the idealism of *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* and the subjectivism of *ekajīva-*



*vāda*, agree in the conclusion that pure consciousness is fullness of being when the conscious states, latent or patent, are self-transcended in *turiya*.

The philosophy of the self or 'I' or pure consciousness is a process of introversion opposed to the objective methods of cosmogony and eschatology and it consists in turning the mind inwards till pure consciousness returns to itself and there is peace which passeth understanding. If Advaita is pure experience or *anubhūti* beyond *triputi*, it is *ajāta* and no philosophical explanation of the state is adequate or admissible. According to a recent writer on 'Mūlāvidyā Nirāsa', the positing of *avidyā* introduces duality and dualism in an admittedly non-dual experience and it should be rejected. But philosophising is, however, essential and inevitable till thought transcends the thinking process. The familiar *Māṇḍūkya* analysis of *avasthātraya* with a view to transcending it has the merit of rationally justifying the supra-rational state of *turiya*.<sup>1</sup> The idealism and imaginism of *Yoga Vāsiṣṭhā* seek to trace the world to *manas* and *vāsanās* and point to the void or *nirvāṇa* state arising from the vanishing of *vāsanās*. The enquiry into the nature of the metaphysical 'I' as different from the empirical 'me' satisfies the principle of *apacceda*. *Apacceda* is a principle of *Mīmāṃsā* interpretation according to which a latter injunction or text over-rules the earlier.

Self-cognition exists in its own right and is absolute and it cannot be subsequently rejected as false. It

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1. Mr. V. Subramanya Aiyar of Mysore lays great stress on the analysis of *avasthātraya* as the most rational way of expounding Advaita and reaching *turiya*.



is presupposed even in the act of denying it and is thus its own proof. To know the absolute is to be the absolute, as knowing and being are one. It is different from the transcendental ego of Kant and the absolute ego of Fichte as both of them are really empirical. Eckhart has a glimpse of it when he says that it is the supra-essential existence in which essence and existence are one. *Dr̥k-dr̥śya-viveka*, *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda* and *ekajīva vāda* are different methods adopted by rationalistic monists to realise the self-identity of *ātman*. *Dr̥k* shines by itself and does not require any object to illumine it. To be is to be self-illuminated. The knowing subject seems to be veiled by *avidyā* and appears as the known object or *dr̥śya* which is *anātmā jaḍa* and *tucca*. To treat the noumenal or transcendental *dr̥k* as *dr̥śya* is a transcendental illusion arising from *adhyāsa*. The metaphysical *dr̥k* is true and the psychological 'me' or *dr̥śya* or *ahaṅkāra* is false. *Dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda* holds that the world exists only when I perceive it and it is, strictly speaking, no theory of knowledge at all. As the '*Viveka Cūdāmani*' puts it, the world-appearance has its origin in the *citta* and ceases to exist when the mind is abolished. *Ekajīvavāda* is idealism carried to its logical conclusion. According to it, there is only one *jīva*, the super-*jīva* or cosmic *jīva*, as it is called, and the so-called other *jīvas* are its imaginings or dreams. When the illusion vanishes, the *jīva* is known to be identical with *cinmātra* or pure consciousness.

The different expositions of Pure Advaita stress the idealistic view of experience and are said to have a close affinity, with the *viññānavāda* and *sūnyavāda* of Buddhism. It does not attach much importance to

the *jīva* as a separate entity or to *Īśvara*. It is often remarked that Gauḍapāda follows the negative logic of Buddhism<sup>1</sup>. Śaṅkara follows the *Vedānta Sūtras*, rejects all the schools of Buddhism as mutually contradictory and concludes that it gives way on all sides like the walls of a well dug in sandy soil. Some modern Advaitins, however, discern the affinities between Advaitic idealism and Buddhism and point out that while Buddhism denies phenomenal reality and refers to *nirvāṇa* negatively, Advaita stresses positive or noumenal reality and refers to *Brahma-nirvāṇa*. Buddhism and Advaita are the negative and positive aspects of the same truth and they appeal to the modern scientific mind which has no use for theology and theism.

The need for supplementing subject philosophy by object philosophy is supplied by Pure Practical Advaita. Pure Practical Advaita marks that transition from the logical and the psychological side of Advaita to the cosmological side. Its scope is not confined to self analysis and *ātma-jñāna*, but it extends to *Brahma-jñānāsā*, as developed by Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* on the

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1. According to Mr. Dasgupta, Śaṅkara Vedānta is largely a compound of *vijñānavāda* and *śūnyavāda* Buddhism with the *Upaniṣad* notion of the permanence of the self super-added. — *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p 494.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan thinks that Gauḍapāda tries to combine the negative logic of the *Mādhyamikas* with the positive idealism of the *Upaniṣads*. In Gauḍapāda, the negative tendency is more prominent than the positive. In Śaṅkara we have a more balanced outlook.—*History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II. p. 465.



*Brahma Sūtras* It deals with the relation between Brahman and *māyā* and *Īśvara* and *jīva* and the nature of *nirguṇa* Brahman, *vivartavāda* and *jīvanmukti*. It adopts the principle that what is true of the macrocosm or *aṇḍa* is likewise true of the microcosm or *piṇḍa* and says that, while Brahman reflected in *māyā* or cosmic illusion in its *sāttvik* aspect is *Īśvara*, Brahman reflected in *avidyā*, the inner veiling principle, is *jīva* and the essence of *Upaniṣadic* teaching is contained in the equation that *ātman*, the self of man, is Brahman, the self of the universe or 'Thou art That'. There are different ways in which the relation between *jīva* and *Īśvara* is expounded, namely, the *bimba-pratibimbavāda*, *avaccedavāda*, the phenomenon theory, and the principle of *apavāda*. All these views seek their support in what Deussen calls the esoteric side of Śaṅkara *Vedānta*. The illusion theory is upheld by the *vivarāṇa* school and defended by Deussen. The limitation theory is defended by Vācaspati and has more positive content. The phenomenon theory is more realistic and it lays bare the self-contradictions of life in the manner of Bradley and is defended by some modern Advaitins. The ideas of *adhyāsa* and *apavāda* are employed to prove that the *jīva* is Brahman. In all these cases the contradictions of *jīva-Īśvara* are removed by the knowledge of '*tattvamasi*'. According to the illusion theory, *mukti* is disillusionment. The *avacceda* theory defines *mukti* as the expansive consciousness of *akhaṇḍa* Brahman, while the phenomenon theory would call it non-contradiction and *apavāda*. In the transition from one aspect of Advaita to the other, the meaning of *māyā* becomes more and more concrete with a positive content though in all cases it is regarded as an indeterminable somewhat or *anirvā-*

*canīya*, removable by *jñāna*. According to the illusion theory, *nirguṇa* Brahman is eternally self-effulgent and is not really obscured or obstructed by nescience as nescience is only nothingness. The *upādhis* that are said to limit the infinite are not semblances or phantoms but are there as *bhāvarūpa*. *Avidyā* is indeterminate but not non-existent. It is the absence of perception or *anupalabdhi* as when we say "I did not know anything in sleep". It has its locus and object in pure consciousness; Brahman is the cause of appearances. They are removed when Brahman is realised as the partless or the infinite. The phenomenon theory holds that *avidya* is the finitising process that somehow inheres in the infinite and in *mukti* the world is not negated though illusoriness disappears. The method of Śrī Harṣa and Citsukha which brings out the contradictions and confusions of the common-sense experience of difference, points to non-difference or Advaita as the only self-valid truth. The only way of expounding the nature of Brahman according to Bāhva when questioned by king Vāṣkali is by silence. The status of *Īśvara* in Pure Practical Advaita varies from the True Infinite to the finite-infinite or the bad infinite. *Īśvara*, the first figment of cosmic nescience or the illusory Highest, creates the aggregate of *jīvas* or *samaṣṭi jīva* or the finite-infinite which is Brahman confronted by *māyā*. The only means to *mukti* is meditation on *nirguṇa* Brahman or 'Aum' and *aikya jñāna* as enlightenment, *akhaṇḍa cinmātra* or absolute consciousness. But in none of these cases is there much scope for the religious consciousness of *Īśvara* or the Cosmic Ruler and the need for *Īśvara prasāda* or Divine Grace.



This aspect is brought out by Practical Advaita. Practical Advaita is not in favour of the idealism and relationism implied in Pure Advaita and its subjectivistic tendencies nor does it accept the *nirguṇavāda* of Pure Practical Advaita. All idealism ends in subjectivism and the *māyā* theory lapses into *avidyā* or the innate obscuring power of the *jīva*. Practical Advaita insists on the need for the realistic ethico-religious approach to Advaita and accepts the Śaṅkara Advaita of compromise between what Deussen calls esoteric and exoteric Advaita or *parāvidyā* and *aparā vidyā*. It concedes the distinction between *nirguṇa* Brahman and *saguna* Brahman, *vivartavāda* and *pariṇāmovāda* and *jīvanmukti* and *kramamukti*. *Aparā vidyā* is the enquiry into the nature of *saguna* Brahman, *pariṇāmovāda* and *kramamukti*; and *parā vidyā* expounds the meaning of *nirguṇa* Brahman, *vivartavāda* and *jīvanmukti*. Śaṅkara accepts the authority of the *Upaniṣads* and employs the *Mīmāṃsaka* rules of interpretation and reasoning to prove that Advaita is the only system of Vedānta that is consistent with *Upaniṣadic* teaching. His theory of two *vidyās*, two Brahman and two *muktis* satisfies the demands of *Upaniṣadic* religion and philosophy. Reality and truth admit of degrees and there is progressive knowledge from the *vyāvahārika* or the phenomenal and the pragmatic stage to the *pāramārthika* stage of the absolute. Truth is a passage from the less true to the more true till the whole truth is realised and it is not an advance from falsity to truth. *Śāstra* alone furnishes the authority for *Brahmajñāna* and it admits of three stages as detailed in the *karma kāṇḍa*, *upāsana kāṇḍa* and *jñāna kāṇḍa* and it is the last alone that initiates the *mumukṣu* into the truth of Advaita contained in the *mahāvākyas*. Śaṅkara adopts

the realist's position in rejecting the subjective idealism of *viññānavāda* and the nihilism of Nāgārjuna and establishes the relative reality of the external world,<sup>1</sup> the eternity of the *ātman* and the existence of Brahman as the operative and immanent cause of the universe. Among the modern expositions of the realistic view is the *advaitavāda* of authors like Kokilesvara Śāstri who affirm that *ajñāna* breeds the sense of separateness and *jñāna* is the intuition of the inseparability of Brahman from the world and it is not much different from the Viśiṣṭādvaitic idea of *avibhāga*. According to Śaṅkara, *Karmayoga*, *Bhaktiyoga* and *Jñānayoga* lead a man gradually from *dvaita* consciousness to *advaita jñāna*.

The aim of *Karmayoga* is *citta suddhi* or self-purification which consists in knowing that the utility of *karma* is its futility. As Suresvara points out, *jñāna* and *karma* are contradictory and not co-ordinate and Advaita is *naiṣkarma siddhi* and is a moral. The path of *upāsana* or *Bhaktiyoga* is meditation on Brahman or personal God and its chief aim is resignation to the grace of God by practising the truth 'Not I but thou, O Lord.' Then the *mumukṣu* is initiated into the meaning of '*Tattvamasi*;' *parokṣajñāna* or what is inferred becomes *aparokṣajñāna* or the intuition of the self-identity of Brahman. The *mumukṣu* changes into a *jīvanmukta* and when the body is dissolved, all duality is destroyed in *videhamukti*. This is called the ladder

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1. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Gauḍapāda Kārikā* says that the objects perceived in the waking state are like those seen in dream states and are false and in his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* refutes the idealistic view from the realistic aspect.



theory of Advaita in which there is a real passage from Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita to Advaita, the transcendental experience. It is not merely the denial of duality but the monistic affirmation of the self-identity of the absolute.

The supreme value of spiritual experiments and experiences of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa consists in his harmonising different religions and Vedāntic experiences. He avoids the extremes of the idealistic monism of Totāpuri and the *bhakti* teachings of Bhairavi Brāhmaṇī in the light of the *Acintya Bhedābheda* of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa says that God is both personal and impersonal, that *bhakti* and *jñāna* alike lead to the same goal, and that it is by divine grace that *samādhi* can be attained and spirituality communicated to others. In *bhakti* as *parabhakti* and *jñāna* as self transcendence attained by divine grace, there are more points of convergence than divergence between Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita.

As a *siddhānta* arrived at by the refutation of rival theories Practical Advaita is different from the systems of Śivādvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita. While the former affirms *svarūpa aikya* or identity between the *jīva* and *Īśvara*, the latter stresses *viśiṣṭa aikya* and insists on the distinction between the two, though they are inseparable like the consonant and the vowel and the body and the soul. According to Appayya Dīkṣita, Śivādvaita is really Advaitic as is proved by the Jābāla text quoted in the *Vedānta Sūtras*, viz., 'I am Thou, Holy Divinity and Thou art I'; but other Śaivite philosophers take their stand on the truth of the monadic nature of the *jīva* accepted by Śrīkaṇṭha and conclude that Śivādvaita is not Advaita, though

it is on the road to it. Viśiṣṭādvaita affirms *avibhāga* and *viśiṣṭa aikya* and points to the real nature of *ātma-jñāna* as *vibhu* or infinite. From the point of view of *Brahmānubhava*, the three systems are not very different as they, like other Vedāntic systems, insist on *viveka*, *vairāgya*, the effacement of *ahaṅkāra*, and yearning for *mukti* as the essential qualifications of the *mumukṣu*. The Practical Advaitins, who are said to belong to the right wing or the tender-minded type, are on the whole inclined to prefer the term co-ordination to compromises in the explanation of the two *vidyās*, two Brahman and two *muktis* when they say that the absolute of the intellectuals is the God of the *bhakta*, that *bhakti* and *jñāna* have equal efficacy in securing *mukti* and that in the eventual attainment of *mukti* in the world of Viṣṇu all the seekers after *saguṇa* Brahman attain eternity. Śaṅkara, the tough-minded uncompromising dialectician, like Gauḍapāda, and the expositor of Adhyāsa Bhāṣya, turns into the tender-minded devotee, when he worships Govinda in his "Bhaja Govinda." In Advaita, *ahaṅkāra* as *jīva* disappears, but in Viśiṣṭādvaita, the *ahaṅkāra* of *jīva* goes, and in both, the *jñānī* or the *mahātmā* intuits the absolute and his separate self is lost in Brahman and expires in bliss. Existentially, the soul and God are distinct, but experientially they are one and the distinction between non-duality, and unitive consciousness is too subtle for practical purposes. The unitive state is the highest state of *Brahmānubhava* as long as the cosmic order or *vyāvahārika satya* lasts and it is significant that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī seeks the solace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's grace and love when he assures



us that there is no *tattva* higher than the supremely Beautiful and Blissful Being,<sup>1</sup> and Sadāśiva Brahmendra muses on Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Cosmic Lord who enchants humanity with His flute.<sup>2</sup> The synthetic understanding of Practical Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita in its Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite aspects satisfies the highest logical, ethical and aesthetic ideals of truth, goodness and beauty, meets the demands of Vedāntic universalism and inter-Vedāntic understanding which is so essential to the consolidation of Hinduism as the harmony of religions. It fits in with the twin religious truths of spirituality and service and the innate hospitality of the *Gītā* as the essence of the *Upaniṣads*. The wisdom of the *Upaniṣads* is a Philosophy of Religion which satisfies the three *pramāṇas* in their integrity, equates the absolute of metaphysics with the God of religion, recognises the value of all the four *yogas* and the unity of the contemplative and the active and the aesthetic ideals of truth, goodness and beauty and points to *mukti* as the direct realisation of Brahman in the transcendental and immanent aspects of *Brahmānubhava* and *Brahmanisation* of all *jīvas* in the twin aspects of spirituality and service.

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1. **vaṁśī vibhūṣitakarāt navanīradābhāt  
pītāambarādarūṇabimba-phalādharoṣṭhāt |  
pūrṇendusundara mukhād aravindanetrāt  
Kṛṣṇātparam kimapi tattvam-aham na jāne ||**

2. **venuravāmṛta pāna kiśoram viśvasthītilayahetu  
vihāram,**



## REHABILITATION OF THE SUBJECT AND THE SUBJECTIVE\*

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*P. T. Raju\*\**

### I

Professor D. T. Suzuki said, in a lecture, that western philosophy divides the world into the subject and the object, that therefore there are two objects in the world, and the subject has disappeared from it. But a worse fate has really overtaken the subject than what Professor Suzuki meant. He meant that the subject has been turned into an object, and that the subject's peculiar nature is thereby ignored. But in fact, in the writings of many western philosophers, the subject is treated not merely as an object, not merely as redundant, but even as the unreal and the false. When for instance, it is said that, in scientific observation, the subjective factor should be kept in

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\* Courtesy : Presidential Address delivered at the Indian Philosophical Congress session held in Waltair, 1960. Courtesy : Indian Philosophical Congress.

\*\* The late Prof. P. T. Raju taught philosophy in the University of Rajasthan and the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio (U.S.A.)

the background and should be eliminated from the result, it is implied that the subjective is not merely redundant but is even false. But it is open to question whether the scientist succeeds in not using his subjective senses and mind in observing phenomena either directly or with the help of his instruments. The question therefore should be raised whether the subject is such a culprit as some of the modern-western trends of philosophy represent it to be. The importance of raising the question can be gauged from the fact that this tendency of modern thought has created a crisis particularly in ethics. Ethics is concerned with the subject. But if, as the scientific attitude implies, the subject is false, then we have to say that ethics is concerned with what is false and is a waste of labour. Then what importance can we attach to theories like that of ethics and politics which aim at the fullest development of personality? Do we mean that they aim only at the fullest development of the so-called object man, that is, at fullest development of the physical particles and biological cells which constitute man's physical body? It is not satisfactory even to say that these two disciplines aim only at the proper development of the structural patterns of the material and biological constituents of man's body. Ethics treats the subject as an agent responsible for his action, not merely as a robot which does what it is made for doing. Even the scientist is responsible for the results he obtains both during and after his observations. And agency and responsibility cannot be attributed to a mere structural pattern. The question about the status of the subject, therefore, is of both epistemo-



logical and ethical importance. This paper will be concerned mainly with the epistemological aspect of the problem.

It is S. Alexander who declares that in his philosophy the subject enjoys no privileged position, and that it is an object among objects. But experience contradicts what he maintains: No one perceives the subject of his experience as an object among objects. I cannot perceive the subject of my cognitions; I cannot even make it an object of my mind just as I can make my ideas, emotions, pains and pleasures its objects. The subject adds nothing to the weight of the material world and does not enter the constitution of the objects. The emergent evolutionists treat the subject as a new quality that emerges when a conglomeration of material and biological particles enter a particular structural pattern. But the subject must not be placed under the category of quality. A quality is a passive something that depends entirely on its base, whatever it is. But the subject, although it depends, up to a degree, on its body which is its base; the subject is an agent. It will perhaps be called an active quality in order to distinguish it from passive qualities like colour. But a quality, as we understand the term, depends upon its particular base; if the base changes, the quality changes, and the continuity of the identity of the quality is destroyed. But although the physical body and the experiences of the subject change, the subject feels its continuity and identity. It may be said that the experience of continuity and identity is due to the continuity and identity of the pattern of the physical body, that though the content of the pattern changes the pattern



does not change, and that when it too changes, there is no continuity of the subject. But there is here a peculiarity: the subject knows its own physical body as an object but no subject can be its own object. Furthermore the subject is non-spatial, whereas the object is spatial. It is true that one says: "I am six feet tall;" but his consciousness is not six feet tall. The consciousness of the six feet tall body belongs to the subject of the experience of that body. If we accept that the consciousness also is six feet tall, then there must be no objection to saying that my idea of the mountain is as big as the mountain. And if it is as big as the mountain, *a fortiori* it is not limited to the comparatively small physical body to which it is said to belong. Moreover, the physical body cannot be the subject of this consciousness. It is contrary to the nature of experience to say that the physical body is conscious of itself. The object of this consciousness cannot be its object also. When I make my physical body the object of my consciousness, I do not identify myself with my physical body. In the experience of any object, the subject of that experience cannot be the object also of the same experience and *vice versa*. In epistemology, therefore, although the subject need not be given a privileged status, it must still be given the peculiar status, of its own. To be sure, it does not add to the weight of the objects in the world. But it is not an object among objects. It is that which knows the objects, and can know them as they are. And what is more important, although it is not an object among objects, it can initiate activity in them and transform them.

One may say at this juncture that there is an ambiguity in the meaning of the word object. "Object" may mean whatever is cognized, the object of a cognition. Not only material objects but also feelings, emotions, mental images are all objects of cognitions. Samuel Alexander may not mean that the subject is a physical object, when he said that the subject is only an object among objects. But in our experience the subject is never an object of cognition even as a mental image is. The word object may be said to mean also anything we think about—any entity, physical, mental, or spiritual. Certainly, we are at present thinking about the subject. But we have also to recognize its peculiar nature. When I am thinking about the subject the subject of my thinking is still at the back of my thinking, not in its front. And unlike other objects, both physical and mental, it is always present in my experience and is always the subject of experience, thought or perception. Next, "object" may be said to mean the real, the true, the actual, the existent. In that sense, the subject may be said to be one among objects. But if its peculiar nature and status among the "objects" of the world are to be recognized, we have to realize that to say that the subject is a real among reals is different from saying that it is an object among objects. The latter expression deprives the subject of its peculiarity. Even the ability to say that the subject is an object among objects confers on the subject saying it a distinctive role not conferred on the objects.

## II

Now that we have raised the question about the meaning of the subject and the object, we may discuss it



further. The word object is derived from "*ob + jacere*," meaning "to throw before," to oppose. The word subject is derived from "*sub + jacere*," meaning "to throw under." The object is that which stands against (the subject), which opposes. The meaning is more closely associated with objection than with the epistemological meaning. The German word *gegenstand* (to stand against) expresses the original meaning clearly. The Sanskrit word for object is *viṣaya*. Its etymological meaning is "that which strongly binds" (*viśeṣeṇa sinoti iti viṣayaḥ*). It is that which binds down the consciousness of the subject; it is that which makes consciousness definite, determinate, ties it down to a particular. The English word subject, in its root meaning, is made subservient to the object. The object is what is "thrown before," but the subject is what is "thrown under," and so "under the object." One suspects that this etymological meaning of the word subject has something to do, in Western thought, with the primary importance given to the object and the gradual ignoring of the importance of the subject, although in western ethics and technology the subject places itself only temporarily "under" the object in order to know its nature and laws and then to act on it and control it.

Even in the epistemological doctrines of Indian philosophy, the consciousness of the subject is generally made dependent on the object. In the Advaita of Śaṅkara, in which the subject and its consciousness are of primary importance, the epistemological object is that which "offers its form to the consciousness" (of the subject). The Mīmāṃsakas understand the subject as the limit, limiter (*niyāma*) of consciousness. On the



whole, for most of the Indian schools consciousness is dependent on the object for knowing it. Yet the word *viṣaya*, in its root meaning, has an ethical and spiritual connotation, namely, that which is responsible for the ethical and spiritual bondage of the individual, and which is a hindrance to his freedom. We may therefore say that Indian epistemology originated in an ethico-spiritual context. But Western thought, though it started by subjecting the subject to the object, aims ultimately at subjecting the object to the subject. It is for controlling and utilizing the object that the subject subjects itself to the object.<sup>1</sup>

The Sanskrit word for "subject" is *viṣayin*, which means that which has an object (*viṣaya*). The word has no connotation of being subject (to the object). For the Advaita in particular, consciousness is originally free and is not subjected to, or limited by, any object. The limitation is temporary and accidental. The idea of "binding" or "being bound" by the object is there. But it is an accidental feature and does not constitute the essential nature of the subject. In the ethico-spiritual context, however, the idea of "being bound" is important; for the ultimate aim of knowledge is freedom from bondage to the object. But in the epistemological context, the *viṣayin* (subject), whether it is consciousness or possessor of that consciousness—on this point there are different views—is the determiner, pointer (*nirūpaka* according to the Nyāya) of the object or the remover of the cover of unknownness (*āvaraṇanivartaka* according to the Advaita) from the object. In the ethical situation, however, the agent is bound by the object and become attached to it. But he has the power also to free himself from that attach-

ment. This freedom of the subject as the agent of cognition and as the appropriator of the experience obtains special recognition in Indian thought.

Thus although dependence of the subject on the object is accepted by Indian epistemology, the dependence does not constitute an essential element of the nature of the subject and is not part of the root meaning. But in modern Western philosophies which claim to be scientific, this dependence forms a part of the essential nature of the subject. And because of this dependence (*paratantratā* without *svatantratā*), the subject becomes unimportant. It may be admitted that in the scientific study of objective nature the subject must not be allowed to influence the results. But this demand of science is made a universal demand of philosophy, and in every branch of philosophy the subject importance is ignored. Even in ethics, in which the centre of interest is the subject and its activity and freedom, the subject is losing its proper place. That is why some interpreters of Western culture say that it is object-centred, and that correspondingly Indian culture is subject-centred. But in Indian thought, although the reality and freedom of the subject are accepted and emphasized in epistemology the dependence of the subject on the object is recognized. Certainly the ethical teaching that the subject should cut itself off from the object in some of the interpretations and application of Indian thought, did become very much subject-centred.

### III

We have already raised the doubt whether the scientist, though demanding that the subjective factor



should not be allowed to intrude into objective observation, has succeeded in not using his mind and senses, which are subjective in those observations. Certainly, no scientists will say that he has not used his mind and senses. If scientists had not worked with their mind and senses, there would have been no science at all. This may sound a truism. But in this truism is hidden an important feature of the contribution of the subject to the determination of true objectivity. Mind and senses are subjective; as such they should not be used by the scientists, if they are to stick to their principle that all subjective factors should be kept aside. As they cannot stick to their principle, it will have to be said that the scientists do not mean that all subjective factors should be checked out but only some. This interpretation means that some subjective factors are necessary. If so then the subject cannot be completely excluded from scientific observation in determining the nature of the object. What have to be excluded are the subject's personal likes and dislikes, emotions, etc. The subject indeed does not enter the object and become part and parcel of it. Yet its presence is necessary in determining the nature of the object.

If the presence of the subject is necessary for determining the nature of the object and yet if a part of it has to be cut off in order to obtain the true nature of the object, are we then to say that part of the subject has to be retained and part to be discarded? Can the subject be divided into parts, as we can divide an object into parts? When the scientist attains truth in his observations, he says: "I have got the truth." And when he obtained a false result

earlier, he had said, "I have committed an error." The "I", that starts the process, makes false judgments in the beginning, and later obtains the correct result. It is the same "I". The same "I" went through the whole process, and cannot be divided. It is unitary, Self-identical and continuous. Division of the I-consciousness into parts is contrary to experience. Otherwise, the "I" that committed the mistakes; and both again would have been different from the "I" that obtained the correct result. If the three are really different from one another, there can be no learning from experience, and no recognition of mistakes.

What then is the solution of the problem? The subject that commits the mistakes, has to be the same as the one that obtains the true result. We now return to the scientist. We say that, when subjective factors intrude into our observations, the result will be falsified. One answer suggested to meet the difficulty is that part of the subject is necessary and part has to be discarded. But then we find it difficult to divide the subject into parts. The solution therefore lies in the recognition that the subject which commits mistakes can transform itself into the one that does not commit them and *vice versa*. This is a recognition of a peculiar nature of the subject. Often it has been said by philosophers like Descartes that we should weed out emotions, feelings and other disturbing factors from our mind if we are to have true cognition of objects. These philosophers mean that the subject can then become pure and its consciousness can present objects as they are. The test of the pure subject then is its ability to present objects in their truth.



We speak of the pure and impure subject, just as we speak of the true and false object. We do not speak of the true and false subject. The pure subject is the correlate of the true object and the impure subject is the correlate of the false object. Here we should note that the correlate of a false object is not a false subject. There is here a peculiar difference between the subject and the object. There is no objective relation between a false object and a true object in the classical example of the illusion of the snake in which a rope is perceived as a snake, there is no objective continuity, causal or any other, between the rope and the snake. If we can conceive at all of a relation between the two, it can be conceived only *via* the perceiving subject. There is a relation, independently of the subject, between any two true objects existing in space and time. But there can be no such relation between the rope and the snake. When, after the illusion, we perceive the rope as a rope, we do not think that the rope first transformed itself into snake, and that the snake next transformed itself into the rope.<sup>2</sup> There is no objective continuity between the true and the false, as there is between a piece of solid wax and liquid wax. But our experience is different in the case of the subject. There is a conscious continuity between the subject which sees the false object and the subject which sees the true one. The very subject which saw the snake says: "I saw the snake, but it is a rope, and was a rope even then." It is meaningful, therefore, to say that the mind of the subject did not work properly when the snake was seen, but it worked properly when the rope was seen. That is, we can speak meaningfully of the transformation of the subject from the impure to the pure.<sup>3</sup>

But this transformation does not break the continuity of the subject. It is the same. That is why we have to say that the subject corresponding to the false object is impure, but not false. To be called false, it has to be another subject, not the same.

Now, we may ask: What is this pure subject? It has often been maintained that there is no subject without an object, and no object without a subject. The two are correlates. If they are correlates, then the pure subject must be the correlate of the true object. Any true object is the same for all percipients; it is their common object. If the object in front of me is really a pen, then it is a pen for all. Logicians like Bosanquet say that it is universal meaning thereby that the judgement, "It is pen," is true for everyone. Similarly the subject that corresponds to a true object must be similar in all men; that is, it also must be universal in a similar sense. The consciousness that presents the same object to all the percipients must be alike in all. Such a consciousness divests itself of all the features of particularity. If these features remain as factors in the consciousness of anyone, then the object is cognized by him differently from what it is cognized by others. When the scientific observer is asked to weed out emotions etc., from his mind he is asked to divest himself of all features of particularity. That is, the demand is made that the subject should raise itself to the level of universality. It is the subject which any particular subject ought to become in order to know the object in its truth. The particular subject is asked to become the universal subject. The demand, then, that the subjective factors should not intrude into our observations will mean



that the particular subject should universalize itself, should undergo the transformation from particularity. Any observer who cannot undergo the transformation will be unfit to be a scientific observer.

Now, if the universal belongs to reason, and if consciousness at the level of the pure subject is universal, then that consciousness is reason. And if such consciousness exists, then reason exists. Reason is not merely the method of ratiocination; it is the subject itself that has transformed itself into the pure state that has universalized itself and has risen above its prior particularity.

One may doubt whether the subject really becomes universal in the act of purifying itself and whether it is able to shed off all features of particularity in the act of cognizing the object. If this doubt is to be fully cleared a deeper and wider study of the subject and its consciousness is necessary. We are at present concerned only with the cognitive situation, in which the subject's activity is confined to knowing the objects. Our analysis has revealed that even in this situation the subject is able to rise to a pure state above its particularity, above its feelings, emotions, likes and dislikes, and that it has the peculiar ability to identify itself with its lower or higher states. We may therefore conclude that the subject has the peculiar nature of identifying<sup>5</sup> itself with different forms which can really be made objects of its own consciousness, and that it can free itself, if it likes, from this identification. It can raise itself to the level of pure rationality or

universality or it can lower itself to irrationality or particularity.

#### IV

To say, therefore, that the subject factors should be excluded completely from the objective study of phenomena is an over-statement. The subject as reason as universalized consciousness, cannot be so excluded; as universal, it is absolutely necessary and is an indispensable factor in all objective studies. *A fortiori* we have to admit that all that is subjective is not false. We know that the objects of illusion and hallucination are false. Instead of saying that they are false, we often say that they are subjective, mental, imaginary etc. But these adjectives are misleading, and their use has resulted in treating everything that is subjective as unimportant and false. And this practice has led to the ignoring of the value of the subject. But without the subject, who will determine the truth of cognitions? One has therefore to distinguish between the subject and the subjective as true and the subject and the subjective as false. As has already been mentioned, so far as epistemology is concerned the subjective may be called false sometimes, but the subject is never false but may be impure. Just as we draw a distinction between the true and the false object, we have to draw a distinction between pure and the impure subject or between the subject in its universality and the subject in its particularity, and take into consideration the pure subject and subjectivity more seriously than we have tended to do under the influence of some contemporary trends of Western philosophy.



## REFERENCES

1. Christian other-worldliness and some extreme forms of idealism are exceptions. We are here considering the root meanings.
2. Only the Śāṅkhya holds this view. It is not accepted by the Nyāya or the Advaita.
3. Similarly, the dream subject is continuous with the subject of waking consciousness, but the dream objects are not continuous with the objects of waking consciousness.
4. Cp. the Greek doctrine of the Logos and Śāṅkhya doctrine of *Mahat*.
5. One may be tempted to relate this power of identification with the concept of identification used in psychoanalysis. The study may lead to interesting results, but is beyond the scope of the present paper. In psychopathology there can be the false subject, not merely the impure.

## MARGINS OF THEISM

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*S. L. Panday*

God is the form of Brahman meant to create the world and confer upon the individual souls His grace without which they cannot undertake the inquiry into the nature of Brahman.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the inquiry into the nature of God is itself called Bhakti or Love of God\* inasmuch as it is not an exercise of discursive reason but the life of intellectual love of God. So God is the starting point of the Vedāntic discipline that culminates in the realization of the Self and stresses the path of knowledge. The understanding of the essence of God is the *sine qua non* of the Self realization. In this way, the idea of God occupies the central place in the discipline of Vedānta. It is the idea of the unity of all things, subjective or objective. In addition to this, it is the cause of the liberation of man from his bondage and suffering.

But the Vedāntic position that God is the cause of liberation has little been understood by its critics. Yet this is a fundamental issue of Vedānta, at least it is more recurring in Vedānta literature than the view that God is the cause of the world. This view, how-



ever, is unacceptable to those who believe that liberation as over and above God-realization is blasphemous. Most importantly, Vedānta tries to distinguish between God-realization and liberation although it holds the view that the two are not different from each other at all. God-realization is conditional while liberation is unconditional. The former is the attainment of the essence of God (*Īśvarabhāva*) while the latter is identification with or recognition of the existence of Brahman (*Brahmabhāva*). The two are distinguishable, as the former is the experience of a particular ideal form and the latter is the experience of formlessness. Nevertheless the latter is not possible without the former.

In fact, Advaita philosophers maintain that as long as a man is alive he ought to adore the Upaniṣads, his Guru and God.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of his discipline his worshipful meditation on these is for the sake of acquiring and assimilating the knowledge of Brahman and at the end of the knowledge process, it is for the sake of avoiding ingratitude. The Text, the Teacher and God oblige him and hence on the attainment of the truth he ought to express his gratitude to them, otherwise he may incur sin and relapse into ignorance. His worship is a moral necessity, if nothing more than this. His gratefulness consists of constant reminiscence of their characteristics. Consequently, there can be no holiday from the study of the Upaniṣads and the worship of the Guru and God throughout his life.

The knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads is understood by the Guru who instructs it to his disciple. The Guru is the embodiment of Vedānta or the knowledge that is Brahman insofar as he is pure conscious-

ness. The Guru is, thus, the same as God. The etymology of the word 'Guru' in this context is illuminating. The syllable 'gu' means darkness and the syllable 'ru' means remover. The teacher removes the darkness or ignorance of his disciple and hence he is called Guru.<sup>4</sup> *Per contra*, those teacher who do not remove ignorance are not entitled to be Guru. The Guru is, therefore, hard to find. For all practical purposes he is the same as Brahman.<sup>5</sup>

Now it happens, more often than not, that the idea of God which is in use differs from Guru to Guru inasmuch as God is viewed in different perspectives. The believers in God attribute different names and forms to Him. The Gurus who belong to the Advaita tradition are not exception to this rule. So let us take a brief survey of views of God.

They are classified at first into two classes, the worshippers of *Nirguṇa* Brahman and worshippers of *Saguṇa* Brahman. The former are, again, divided into the worshippers of the Self and worshippers of the Guru, while the latter are divided into three classes, the worshippers of Lord Shiva, the worshippers of Goddess Shakti, and the worshippers of Lord Vishnu. The last ones are further divided into two classes, the worshippers of Nārāyaṇa or the supreme Vishnu and the worshippers of His incarnations. Finally the latter are, by and large, divided into the worshippers of Lord Rāma and the worshippers of Lord Kṛṣṇa. All other worshippers that are not named here, in fact, belong to one of these classes. For example, the worshippers of Lord Ganesa belong to the worshippers of Lord Shiva and the worshippers of Lord Hanumān belong to the class



of the worshippers of Lord Rāma. All these worshippers understand that their object of worship is the Absolute itself. For example, the worshippers of Lord *Kṛṣṇa* say, "The Sanskrit root 'Kṛṣ' means existence and the letter 'Na' means bliss and so *Kṛṣṇa* means the identity of existence and bliss."<sup>6</sup> Similarly the worshippers of Lord Rāma state that the word 'Rāma' means the infinite and eternal bliss-cum-consciousness in which Yogins are absorbed (*ramante*).<sup>7</sup> Further, Shiva means the Good and Shakti, the power. Hence Brahman is identified with Shiva or Sakthi. In this way, the object of worship for all Advaita philosophers, in none but the supreme Brahman that is existence consciousness and bliss. The popular canard that the God of Advaita philosophy is Lord Shiva is only a half truth. When God is viewed under a particular mythological system, he becomes Shiva, Shakti, Rāma or *Kṛṣṇa*. But shorn of all mythologies, He is what the Upaniṣads call the *Ānandamaya*. He becomes personal only under the influence of mythologies which are therefore the *sine qua non* of the view that God is personal. If there is no mythology, there is no personality of God.

Now a question arises, why is one and the same Brahman taken in different forms for the sake of worship? This question is answered by Puṣpadanta in the *Sivamahimnastotra*. He says, "Different are the paths laid down in the Vedas, *Sāṅkhya* and Yoga, *Śaiva* and *Vaiṣṇava* scriptures. Of these some people take to the one and some to the other as the best object of their worship. Devotees follow these diverse paths, straight or zigzag, according to their different aptitudes,

Yet O Lord! Thou alone art the ultimate goal of all men as the ocean is the ultimate end of all rivers."

A second answer to the above question is supplied by *the theory of cyclical creations* according to which the *Absolute assumes different forms in different ages* under the conditions of *Māyā*. A third answer is given by saints who have realised the Absolute. They say that the Absolute or *God Himself selects a companion to reveal His nature and form* to him or her. God appears before His lover who in his or her personal relationship with God thinks that God has the form he or she experiences. In this context, Advaita philosophy has done a great service to the cause of universal religion and authentic theism by pointing out the mistake that is likely to be committed by God-realized souls. It is the fallacy of exclusive predication. God has, undoubtedly, the form that is attributed to Him by God-realised souls. But it is not the only form. He has numerous other forms and is not bound within any one or all of them. In reality He is formless. To think that He has a particular form exclusively is the seed of all types of irreligion, fanaticism and bigotry.

But is it not contradictory to say that God, although formless, has a form? The critics of Advaita philosophy regard this contradiction as the basic defect in Vedāntic worship. They say that because of it the worship of Brahman is out of question.

Advaita philosophers, however, have tried to remove this contradiction in several ways. First, they have said that God is formless and yet He assumes forms, because form and formlessness are not simultaneous. That which appears *prima facie* to have a



form passes into formlessness when it is verified in its repeated occurrences because it is known as transcendent to them. This answer, however, presupposes that there is a time-factor between form and formlessness. But whether God has forms or not, time is not before Him in either case. So this answer does not satisfy the inquisitive critics who want to understand the scheme of the Divine forms in terms of space and time.

Secondly, Advaita philosophers liken God-realization to the awakening from a dream. A man who is awakened from his dream does not think that the objects of his dream are real. Nevertheless he remembers them and tries to reinterpret them in the light of his new experience. Similarly a man who experiences that God is formless may remember his experiences that God has a form and reinterpret them. So there is no contradiction in his thought. Having a true experience and reinterpreting a false one are not inconsistent. They are not necessarily spatio-temporal events either.

Thirdly, there is a type of knowledge that is called intended knowledge (*āhārya jñāna*). Advaita philosophers take the help of this knowledge to explain their experience that God has a form. His form has intentionality but no reality. In reality God is formless, but in intentionality He has forms which are meant to articulate His essence. His forms are not graphic but ideal (*vidyākara*), notional (*ānandakara*) or both.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, the forms of God are not physical although all that is physical is permeated by them.

Such is the implication of the Vision of God that is described as cosmic in the Vedas, *Smṛtis*, Purāṇas and *Vāṇis* of saints. The vision of the cosmic form of *Kṛṣṇa* that was granted to Arjuna by Him is a classical illustration of this point.

The view of intentionality has been reinforced recently by the phenomenology of Edmund Gustav Albert Husserl and his followers who have generalised the intentionality theory to explain all object of human knowledge. Advaita philosophers, however, use it restrictively to explain only the forms of God that are experienced by God-realised souls. But as the object of human knowledge ultimately depend upon the form of God that is called *Māyā*, there is no Vedantic veto on the universal use of phenomenological reduction. So some contemporary Indian philosophers are fascinated to attempt a comparative study of phenomenology and Advaita Vedānta. But this study, in our opinion, cannot throw new light on the nature and function of the Absolute which has no place in phenomenology. Vedānta attaches more value to the knowledge of the Absolute than to the explanation of phenomena. In this respect it is *Brahmavāda*, rather than *Māyāvāda*. The Absolute consciousness has no intentionality as ideas reflected in it have. Phenomenology, therefore, cannot be a substitute of Advaita Vedānta. What is true of an object of consciousness is not true of consciousness itself.

Further the form of God may be either unconditional or conditional. The conditional form is made up of *āvidyā* and the unconditional one, of *Vidyā*.<sup>10</sup> The former is partite and impermanent, while the



latter, impartite and eternal. Furthermore, the form of *Vidyā* is either ideal or notional or both. These three forms of God are inseparable *inter se*. But a distinction may be made among them to articulate the characteristics of the one from the other. When the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* says that the one and the same non-dual consciousness that is the object of Vedāntic investigation is called *Brahman*, *Paramātman* and *Bhagavān*,<sup>11</sup> it makes, as a matter of fact, the identification of consciousness thrice; first, with *Brahman*, second, with *Paramātman* and third, with *Bhagavān*. The first is the pure form of *Brahman* in the perspective of rational knowledge (*jñānakara*), the second in the perspective of ideal or meditational knowledge (*vidyākara*) and the third, in the perspective of notional knowledge (*Ānandakara*). Intellectual intuition, meditational intuition and beatific intuition can be taken respectively as the type of knowledge with regard to them.

Advaita philosophy has, thus, developed a theory of intuitive knowledge that has several ramifications. For our present purposes, however, it is sufficient to note that intuitive knowledge begins with, and not from, the revealed knowledge of the *Vedas*. Then it grows with the aid of cognitive powers called rational and reaches the level of intellectual intuition. Meditation or worship carries it further from there to the three stages we have just mentioned. Its final stage is that of the realization of consciousness in which there are no waves of forms, pure or empirical, at all. These distinctions suggest that the world of phenomena is also of two kinds, the world of pure forms (*vidyā-*

*prapañca*) and the world of empirical phenomena (*avidyā-prapañca*).

The world of pure forms is eternal. It is the romance of consciousness, the effulgence of beatific consciousness. It is, therefore, immaterial and is called the world of the *Śruti*. It can be compared with Plato's world of pure forms. Consciousness in relation to these forms is called God and their world as *Brahmaloka*. The experience of the realization of Brahman does not contradict the world of pure forms. It contradicts only the world of empirical forms. The world of pure forms appears from, and disappears into, Brahman. Its disappearance is the still of Brahman. But disappearance does not mean destruction. The pure forms are indestructible. Had there been no pure forms in their latent state, Brahman would have been a material entity like sky.<sup>12</sup> God, the pure forms and souls, all reflect the light of the Absolute. They are all *Bhāgavāta* or *Brāhmi*, i.e. completely saturated with *Brahman*. The individual souls identify their existence with *Brahman* and it is this identification that is called their liberation. Existentially, they are not different from Brahman or God, but essentially they are different. Therefore, the distinction between individual souls and God is essentially eternal. It can never be obliterated. They can never perform the specific functions of God, i.e., creation of the world, omniscience and omnipotence. But in all other respects they are as divine as God Himself. In other words, they are free from the cycles of birth and death and from ignorance and suffering. They are graceful and merciful either. Hence their state is called frustration-free (*Vaikunṭha*). Although there is



no difference between the existence of an ocean and that of its waves, the waves belong to the ocean and the ocean does not belong to the waves. Analogously, there is no difference between individual souls and God, yet the souls belong to God but God does not belong to souls.<sup>13</sup> The souls, therefore, intentionally postulate difference and engage themselves in the worshipful service of God.<sup>14</sup> Their worship is loving participation in the essence of God. This participation is called *bhajana* or *bhakti* because these Sanskrit words are derived from the root '*bhaj*' that means "to participate lovingly". Theism is, therefore, pre-eminently meant for loving participation in the essence of God. Whatever is done by such souls is the worship of God.

From the stand-point of this theism there are six beginningless entities, *i.e.*, individual souls, God, pure consciousness, the relation between the individual soul and God, *avidyā* and the relation between *avidyā* and pure consciousness.<sup>15</sup> Their beginninglessness means *inter alia* that they are *a priori* (*parācīna*) or beyond sense-experience, and hence cannot be analysed in terms of empirical knowledge. The sole method by means of which they can be known and analysed is the Vedāntic method that we have described earlier. That method shows that all these entities except the pure consciousness are not existential. There is only one existence that is identified with pure consciousness. The *vidyā* or worship is meant for intensive concentration on the pure consciousness. The other entities are the categories of intentionality, *i.e.*, they are the objects of *āhārya ñāna*. But when worship reaches its end, these categories lose their sense and

fade away in pure consciousness. Therefore a stage comes when *vidyā* comes to an end as and when *avidyā* is terminated lock, stock and barrel. It lingers till the last layer of *avidyā* remains. That is why it is said that the Absolute is beyond both *vidyā* and *avidyā*<sup>16</sup>. But it is admitted that immortality is gained and enjoyed by means of *vidyā*<sup>17</sup>. Worship, thus, is the means of realizing the immortality of soul. Moreover, its object or God is not annulled even though it is transcended. In that state God is Brahman itself or if we understand Him anthropomorphically, we can say that like an individual soul, God realizes that He is the Absolute. But Vedānta does not support this type of anthropomorphism, for God, *ex hypothesi*, is omniscient. He knows Himself and His existence. *He has no ignorance at all*. Nor does He suffer and enjoy like a man.

Advaita Vedānta, again, is fully aware of the limitations of worship. That is why it condemns worshippers that do nothing more than worship. The *Īśā upaniṣad* informs that those who are entangled in worship go to a darker region after their death than those who are engaged in action.<sup>18</sup> This is particularly true of the worshippers who are cutting the throats of those who belong to a different religion. So worship must be performed with a philosophical perspective on knowledge and it should not be permitted to blur the metaphysical vision of the worshippers and make them fanatics. A life of contemplation is far better than a life of passionate worship.

Transcendence from the object of worship is, therefore, desirable to safeguard worship from its vagaries. In other words, worship is to be combined



with knowledge in order to get its full enjoyment. This synthesis produces the spirit of religious tolerance that is the greatest need of modern world which is torn by large-scale clashes of different religious groups over the issues of religion. So the Vedāntic view of worship is quite relevant and sympathetic to the modern world. It leads a man to a contemplative life that gives peace and freedom to him. He lives peacefully with the followers of every religion because he has completely destroyed the *tamas* that is the cause of hatred. Śaṅkara describes such a saint very beautifully in the *Jīvanmuktānandalahari*:

“Here living with the worshippers of Śiva,  
 And there with those of Śakti.  
 Now living with those of Viṣṇu,  
 Now with those of Sun-God,  
 Or with those of Elephant-God.  
 The mendicant is not embarrassed,  
 For he is enlightened by his teacher—  
 Free from all distinctions.  
 And steadfast on non-duality.”<sup>19</sup>

Modern Vedāntins are spreading this message of Śaṅkara in the whole world among the followers of all religions. The ideal of *jīvanmukti*, liberation here and now, in this very life, is the best goal of human life that is theoretically conceivable and practically attainable. The *jīvanmukta* is the Ideal Man. He has neither injunction (*vidhi*) nor prohibition (*niṣedha*). He is the ideal of every religious tradition. He is not critical of any religion. In fact, by his very life he gives strength to every religion.

## NOTES

1. Appayadikṣita, *Śivārkamaṇidīpikā*:  
 तथाप्यनुग्रहादेव तरुणेन्द्रशिखामणेः ।  
 अद्वैतवासना पुंसां केषाञ्चिदिह जायते ॥

2. Śaṅkarācārya, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 32:  
 मोक्षकारणसामग्र्यां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ।  
 स्वस्वरूपानुसन्धानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते ॥

3. Śaṅkarācārya, *Tattvopadeśa*, 86:  
 यावज्जीवं त्रयो वन्द्या  
 वेदान्तो गुरुरीश्वरः ।  
 आदौ विद्याप्रसिद्धयर्थं  
 कृतघ्नत्वापनुत्तये ॥

4. *Dvayopaniṣad*, 4:  
 गुशब्दस्त्वन्धकारः स्यात्  
 रुशब्दस्तन्निरोधकः ।  
 अन्धकारनिरोधित्वाद्  
 गुरुरित्यभिधीयते ॥

5. *Dvayopaniṣad*, 6

6. A *smṛtivācana* quoted in Mahādeva Sarasvatī's  
*Advaitacintākaustubha*:

कृषिर्भवाचकः शब्दः  
 णश्च निवृत्तिवाचकः ।  
 तयोरैक्यं परं ब्रह्म  
 कृष्ण इत्यभिधीयते ॥



7. *Rāmaphūrvatāpinyuṇiṣad* I. 6:  
 रमन्ते योगिनोऽनन्ते  
 नित्यानन्दे चिदात्मनि ।  
 इति रामपदेनासौ  
 परं ब्रह्माभिधीयते ॥
8. Puṣpadanta, *Śivamahimnastotra*, 7.
9. *Tripād-vibhūti-mahānārāyaṇoṇiṣad*.
10. *Ibid.* 2
11. *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, 1.2.14:  
 वदन्ति तत्तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं  
 यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम् ।  
 ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति  
 भगवानिति शब्दयते ॥
12. *Tripādvibhūtimahānārāyaṇoṇiṣad*, 3:  
 अन्यथा सर्वपरिपूर्णोऽस्य परब्रह्मणः परमार्थतः साकारं  
 विना केवलनिराकारत्वं यदि अभिमतम्, तर्हि केवलनिरा-  
 कारस्य गगनस्येव परब्रह्मणोऽपि जडत्वम् आपद्येत ।
13. Śaṅkarācārya, *Ṣaṭpadistotra*, 3:  
 सत्यपि भेदापगमे नाथ  
 तवाहं न मामकीनस्त्वम् ।  
 सामुद्रो हि तरङ्गः  
 क्वचन समुद्रो न तारङ्गः ॥
14. *Tripurārahasya*, 20.34:  
 विभेदभावमाहृत्य  
 सेव्यतेऽस्त्यन्ततत्परै ।

15. जीव ईशो विशुद्धा चित्  
 तथा जीवेशयोभिन्दा ।  
 अविद्या तच्चित्तोर्योग  
 षडस्माकमनादयः ॥
16. *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, 10.
17. *Ibid*, 11.  
 विद्यया अमृतमश्नुते ।
18. *Ibid.*, 9.
19. Śaṅkarācārya, *Jīvanmuktānandalaharī*, 14:  
 क्वचिच्छैवैः साधं क्वचिदपि च शाक्तैः सह रमन्,  
 कदा विष्णोर्भक्तैः क्वचिदपि च सोरैः सह वसन् ।  
 कदाचिद् गणेशैर्गतसकलभेदोऽद्वयतां,  
 मुनिर्न व्यामोहं भजति गुरुदीक्षाक्षततमः ॥



THE GARLAND OF KNOWLEDGE RELATING  
TO BRAHMAN

(*BRAHMAJÑĀNĀVALĪMĀLĀ*)\*

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*Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda*

[1]

सकृच्छ्रवणमात्रेण ब्रह्मज्ञानं यतो भवेत् ।  
ब्रह्मज्ञानावलीमाला सर्वेषां मोक्षसिद्धये ॥

Whence arises knowledge of Brahman by merely listening once, this string of series of knowledge of Brahman (is) for the accomplishment of beatitude for all.

[2]

असङ्गोऽहमसङ्गोऽहमसङ्गोऽहं पुनः पुनः ।  
सच्चिदानन्दरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am without association. I am without association. I am without association repeatedly. I am of the form of existence, knowledge and bliss. I myself am immutable.

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\* Translated by Dr. N. Gangadharan

[3]

नित्यशुद्धविमुक्तोऽहं निराकारोऽहमव्ययः ।  
भूमानन्दस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am eternally pure and free. I am formless and immutable. I am of the form of abundant bliss. I myself am immutable.

[4]

नित्योऽहं निरवद्योऽहं निराकारोऽहमच्युतः ।  
परमानन्दरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am eternal. I am faultless. I am without a form. I have not fallen down. I am of the form of supreme Bliss. I myself am immutable.

[5]

चैतन्यशुद्धरूपोऽहमात्मारामोऽहमेव च ।  
अखण्डानन्दरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am of the form of pure supreme Spirit. I myself am delighted in Self. I am of the form of unbroken bliss. I myself am immutable.

[6]

प्रत्यक्चैतन्यरूपोऽहं शान्तोऽहं प्रकृतेः परः ।  
शाश्वतानन्दरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am of the form of the inward Spirit. I am tranquil. I am above the primordial nature. I am of the form of perennial bliss. I myself am immutable.



[7]

तत्त्वातीतः परात्माहं मध्यातीतः परः शिवः ।  
मायातीतः परंज्योतिरहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am the supreme Soul beyond the principles. I am the supreme Spirit. I am beyond the middle. I am the supreme Deity. I am beyond illusion. I am supreme Lustre. I myself am immutable.

The word *tattva* denotes the primary elements. The word *madhya* denotes the middle state of existence.

[8]

नानारूपव्यतीतोऽहं चिदाकारोऽहमच्युतः ।  
सुखरूपस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I have passed over the different forms. I have the shape of consciousness. I am immutable. I am of the natural state of happiness. I myself am immutable.

[9]

मायातत्कार्यदेहादि मम नास्त्येव सर्वदा ।  
स्वप्रकाशैकरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I do never have a body etc. resultant of illusion and its effect. I am of the form of self-luminous one. I myself am immutable.

[10]

गुणत्रयव्यतीतोऽहं ब्रह्मादीनां च साक्ष्यहम् ।  
अनन्तानन्तरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I have passed over the three qualities. I am the witness of Brahmā and others. I am of the form of the Infinite. I myself am immutable.

The three qualities are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

[11]

अन्तर्यामिस्वरूपोऽहं कूटस्थः सर्वगोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
परमात्मस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am of the natural state of the divine in human form. I am the supreme Soul. I am omnipresent. I am of the natural state of the supreme Soul. I myself am immutable.

[12]

निष्कलोऽहं निष्क्रियोऽहं सर्वात्माद्यः सनातनः ।  
अपरोक्षस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः॥

I am undivided. I am inactive. I am the universal soul. I am the first being. I am eternal. I am of the natural state of being visible. I myself am immutable.

[13]

द्वन्द्वादिसाक्षिरूपोऽहमचलोऽहं सनातनः ।  
सर्वसाक्षिस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥



I am of the form of the witness of the dual (forms) etc. I am immovable. I am eternal. I am of the natural state of being the witness of all beings. I myself am immutable.

[14]

प्रज्ञानघन एवाहं विज्ञानघन एव च ।  
अकर्ताहमभोक्ताहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am the multitude of spiritual knowledge. I am a collection of worldly knowledge. I am not the doer. I am not the enjoyer. I myself am immutable.

[15]

निराधारस्वरूपोऽहं सर्वाधारोऽहमेव च ।  
आप्तकामस्वरूपोऽहमहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am of the natural state of being without any support. I am indeed the support of all the beings. I am of the natural state of having gained the desires. I myself am immutable.

[16]

तापत्रयविनिर्मुक्तो देहत्रयविलक्षणः ।  
अवास्थत्रयसाक्ष्यस्मि चाहमेवाहमव्ययः ॥

I am devoid of the three kinds of miseries. I do not have the marks of the three kinds of physical bodies. I am the witness of the three states existence. I myself am immutable.

The three kinds of miseries are — caused by the mind (आद्यान्मिक), caused by the fate (आधिदैविक), and caused by the animals (आधिभौतिक). The three kinds of bodies are — vital air, sensorial and cognitional (प्राणमय, मनोमय and विज्ञानमय). The three states are waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

[17]

दृग्दृश्यौ द्वौ पदार्थौ स्तः परस्परविलक्षणौ ।  
दृग्ब्रह्म दृश्यं मायेति सर्ववेदान्तडिण्डिमः ॥

The eye and the visible object are two mutually distinct entities. That which perceives is Brahman and that which is beheld is illusion. Thus proclaim all the Vedānta (texts).

The Vedānta literally means the concluding part of the *Vedas*, namely the *Upaniṣads*. It denotes the last of the Indian philosophical systems.

[18]

अहं साक्षीति यो विद्याद्विविच्यैवं पुनः पुनः ।  
स एव मुक्तः सो विद्वानिति वेदान्तडिण्डिमः ॥

Whoever knows 'I am the witness,' after repeated deliberation in the above manner, he alone is released (from bondage). He is the learned. Thus proclaims the Vedānta.

[19]

घटकुड्यादिकं सर्वं मृत्तिकामात्रमेव च ।  
तद्ब्रह्म जगत्सर्वमिति वेदान्तडिण्डिमः ॥



All things such as pot, wall and the like are merely the modification of the earth. Similarly the entire universe is a modification of Brahman. Thus proclaims the Vedānta.

[20]

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।  
अनेन वेद्यं तच्छास्त्रमिति वेदान्तडिण्डिमः ॥

Brahman is real. The world is unreal. The individual soul is Brahman itself and distinct from it. The real sacred science should be known by means of this. Thus proclaims the Vedānta.

[21]

अन्तर्ज्योतिर्बहिर्ज्योतिः प्रत्यग्ज्योतिः परात्परः ।  
ज्योतिर्ज्योतिः स्वयंज्योतिरात्मज्योतिः शिवोऽस्म्यहम् ॥

I am the internal lustre, external lustre, the inward lustre, the most supreme, the lustre of lustre, the self-effulgent, the lustre of the individual self and I am the supreme Deity.

## ADVAITA: A METAPHYSICS OF STANDPOINTS

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*B. R. Shantha Kumari\**

### INTRODUCTION

Śaṅkara's works can be classified under three heads: (i) major philosophical works like the commentaries (*bhāṣyas*) on the *Brahma-sūtra*, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*. etc. (ii) minor philosophical works (*prakaraṇa-granthas*) like the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, the *Upadeśa-sāhasrī*, the *Ātmabodha*, etc., and (iii) hymnal literature (*stotras*) in praise of the different deities of Hindu pantheon, e.g. the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra*, *Gaṅgāṣṭakam*, *Śiva-pañcāksaras tottra*, *Subrahmanya-bhuj-aṅga*, *Śivānandalahari*, *Saundarya-lahari*, *Kanakadhārā stotra*, etc.

Indian philosophy is not the outcome of idle speculation. It is inspired by a hankering after liberation for ever from the finitude and miseries of embodied existence. The diverse systems of Indian philosophy are different means to overcome the sorrows

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(*duḥkha*) of bondage (*bandha*) and enjoy the bliss (*ānanda*) of liberation (*mokṣa*), by a healthy and holistic appreciation of the diverse aspects of life, not by indulgence or denial, but by disciplined enjoyment.

Every system of philosophy is a product of certain objective and subjective factors. The objective factors are the external socio-ethico-religious condition which impel a philosopher to formulate one's philosophy. The subjective factor include the philosopher's insight into Reality, one's evaluation of the socio-ethico-religious setting of the society of one's time, personal values, one's contribution to society to revitalize it in one's own unique way, etc. Therefore, every philosopher is indebted to the past which serves as a stimulus for responding in the present by formulating one's philosophy as an obligation towards the ever evolving future.

The philosophy of Śaṅkara can be best summarised in his own words, "*brahma satyam jagan-mithyā jīvo brahmaiva na aparāḥ.*" In building the edifice of Advaita, Śaṅkara employs six beginningless (*anādi*) principles, Brahman, *māyā*, *Īśvara*, *jīva*, the relation between Brahman and *māyā*, and the difference between *Īśvara*, and the *jīva*. Among these Brahman is the foundational category. Just as a prism splits a ray of light to display a spectrum of colours, so too the non-dual Brahman which is the transfigurative material cause (*vivarta-upādāna-kāraṇa*), gets projected as the pluralistic world of phenomena, both non-sentient and sentient, through the medium of *māyā*, which is the transformative material cause (*pariṇāmi-upādāna-kāraṇa*). Therefore, all the existents of the world are products of Brahman and *māyā*. Hence they possess

five qualities which are the nature of their causes. The five qualities are existence (*asti*), manifestedness (*bhāti*), and desirability (*priyam*) belonging to Brahman; and name (*nāma*) and form (*rūpa*) belonging to *māyā*.

Advaita upholds that *avidyā-māyā* has two powers, the power to conceal (*āvaraṇa-śakti*) and the power to project (*vikṣepa-śakti*). While *āvaraṇa-śakti* conceals the real—Brahman, *vikṣepa-śakti* projects the non-real—name and form—as the real. As a result of this, an individual—the *jīva* who is under the spell of *avidyā* wrongly ascribes the attributes of Brahman to *māyā*, and vice-versa, and experiences bondage. When the non-real name and form masquerading as the real are discarded through reason, which is in conformity with scripture (*śrutyanugrḥita-tarka*), *avidyā*, the root-cause of bondage, gets destroyed and the self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*) Brahman reveals itself.

Let us now examine Advaita under the three sections of philosophy, viz. epistemology, metaphysics and axiology.

### EPISTEMOLOGY

The categories of epistemological investigation (*pramāṇa-vicāra*) rest on the three factors of cognition (*tripuṭi-samvit*), i.e. the knower (*jñātā*), the object to be known (*jñeya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*) attained through an appropriate means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*).

In matters empirical Śaṅkara is in the company of the Bhāṭṭas (*vyavahāre bhāṭṭanayaḥ*), in that he admits six means of knowledge, viz. perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), comparison (*upamāna*), verbal testimony (*śabda*), postulation (*arthāpatti*), and non-



cognition (*anupalabdhi*). Śaṅkara, then, restricts the function (*vyāpara*) of these *pramāṇas* by a dichotomous demarcation of their duties (*pramāṇa-vyavasthā*). He declares that except the verbal testimony of scripture (*Śruti*), which has trans-empirical validity (*pāramārthika-prāmāṇya*), all the other five *pramāṇas*, have got only empirical validity (*vyāvahārika-prāmāṇya*). Hence, in spiritual or noumenal issues, scripture alone is the final authority. Although Advaita admits six *pramāṇas*, scripture alone is regarded as the *pramāṇa*, whereas all the other five *pramāṇas* are *pramāṇās* only for the sake of courtesy (*upacāra*). This is so, because Advaita stipulates that a *pramāṇa* is a means of valid cognition. Śaṅkara defines valid cognition as that cognition whose content is uncontradictable (*abādhitārtha-viśayaṁ jñānam hi pramā*), and new (*apūrva*). Since the *Vedas* are super-human (*apauruṣeya*) in origin, they are free from doubt (*saṁśaya*) and error (*viparyaya*), the defects (*doṣas*) of human origin, and their content - Brahman - is un-contradictable at all three times (*trikālābādhitā*) — past, present, and future; whereas the content of all the other *pramāṇas* is sublated at the time of Self-realization. Moreover, the unique knowledge that the Self is identical with Brahman (*jīva-brahma-aikya-jñāna*), which is disclosed by scripture, is new, and cannot be attained through any other *pramāṇa*.

According to Advaita, anything other than Brahman is illusory (*mithyā*). Therefore, scripture too is illusory. But its illusory nature does not divest it of its pragmatic value (*artha-kriyā-kāritva*), because Advaita maintains that what is illusory too is useful in attaining knowledge of the real. For example, a sket-

ched figure or a moulded model of a snake is helpful in identifying a "real" snake. In a similar fashion, although scripture is illusory, like the dream-lion which wakes up a sleeping person and makes one aware of the phenomenal nature of the dream and the "reality" of the world around oneself, scripture too wakes up individuals from the nightmare of bondage caused by *avidyā*, by awakening one to a certainty about the illusory nature (*mithyātva-niścaya*) of the world, and an apodictic awareness of the Self's identity with Brahman.

Śaṅkara upholds that, just as a branch serves as a pointer to indicate the distant moon (*śākhāgre candrah*), all the *pramāṇas* are only indirect means of knowing the Self; for they can depict and capture only what is empirical, viz. substance (*dravya*), attribute (*guṇa*), action (*karma*), relation (*sambandha*), and name (*saṃjñā*). But the Self transcends all these categories, and the scope of the senses. The Self cannot be known through the *pramāṇas*, because being of the nature of undifferentiated pure consciousness (*nirviśeṣa-cinmātram*), it is always the knowing subject or "asmad", and never the object of knowledge or "yuṣmad". Advaita stipulates two criteria fulfilling which an entity becomes an object of knowledge. They are: (i) pervasion of the object by an appropriate mental mode (*vṛtti-vyāpyatva*) and (ii) the presence of consciousness (*phala-vyāpyatva*). In the case of the Self, since only one condition is fulfilled, viz. *phala-vyāpyatva*, the Self is not an object of knowledge. What is instrumental (*parārtha*) in the enjoyment of another is perceived by a *pramāṇa* and then enjoyed. But the Self has intrinsic value (*svārtha*) and is sought



for its own sake, because it is bliss itself and perfect (*pūrṇa*). *Pramāṇas* cannot comprehend the Self, because they can perceive only entities which are external (*parāk*), material (*jāḍa*), made up of parts (*sāvayava*), and possess attributes (*saviśeṣa*), etc. But the Self is most internal (*pratyak*), spiritual, pure consciousness, homogeneous (*ekarasa*), impartite (*niravayava*), attributeless (*nirguṇa*), etc. Moreover, the Self as pure consciousness is the very basis of all the *pramāṇas*; hence the latter cannot reveal the Self which is foundational to their functioning. While the Self can reveal every other thing, it cannot be likewise revealed by anything else (*avedyatve sati sva-ītara avabhāsakatvam svaprakāśatvam*). According to Advaita, the Self is the "not-this" (*anīdam*) which has to be seen in its own light (*ātmānam ātmanā*), because it is self-revelatory and self-established (*svataḥ-siddha*), and there is nothing other than it which can reveal it.

### METAPHYSICS

Coming to the metaphysics of Śaṅkara, we find that his philosophy is "a metaphysics of standpoints". The constituents of the philosophical triangle — the world (*jagat*), the selves (*jīvas*) and Brahman — are the categories of metaphysical investigation (*tattva-vicāra*).

Advaita upholds that the supreme Brahman is trans-empirical, trans-rational, and trans-linguistic. Therefore, Śaṅkara proceeds from the cosmic standpoint (*saprapañca-dṛṣṭi*) to the acosmic (*niṣprapañca*) Brahman. The methodology involves apprehending the unknown through the known by the technique of deliberate superimposition and subsequent denial

(*adhyāropa-apuvādābhyāin nisprapañcam prapañcyate*)  
 The three states of experience (*avasthā-traya*) — waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), and deep sleep (*susupti*) — given to every human being, furnish the data for metaphysical inquiry. Hence Advaita has been rightly termed as “a metaphysics of experience.”

In classifying the categories of metaphysics, Śaṅkara defines real (*sat*) as that which is uncontradictable. According to Advaita, Brahman alone is real, because there is no sublation for it at any time past, present, or future. The non-real (*asat*) is defined as that which can never be perceived at any time; e.g. sky-lotus. In addition to these two mutually opposed polar categories, there is also a third category constituted by phenomena which are not real, because they are sublated and not non-real, because they are perceived. Hence, this category is describable (*anirvacanīya*) as either real or non-real, because it is different from both the real and the non-real (*sadasadvilakṣaṇa*). Entities satisfying this description are called “illusory” (*mīthyā*) by Śaṅkara. The physical world and all the phenomena contained therein cognized as the “this” (*idam*) through the six *pramāṇas* are encompassed by this category.

Applying the forceps of reasoning (*yukti*), having sublatability and perceptibility as its two arms, to the web of the three states of experience, Śaṅkara extricates the entangled Self, of the nature of pure consciousness, as the ultimate Reality in human beings, because the Self is invariably present in all the three states, whereas the body (*deha*), mind (*antaḥkāraṇa*), senses (*indriyas*), and their objects are only sometime present and sometimes absent. The Self is the eternal



witness to the presence as well as the absence (*bhāvābhāva-ubhayasākṣin*) of the objects and the faculties that cognize them.

Although Śaṅkara proclaims that the Self is one only without a second (*ekam-eva-advitīyam*), he has to account for the diverse phenomena perceived at the empirical level (*vyāvahārika*). He, therefore, adopts two analogies to explain how the non-dual Brahman appears as the world of material and spiritual phenomena. The two analogies are: (i) the rope-snake (*rajjusarpa nyāya*), which explains how Brahman appears as the physical world and all the material objects contained therein. It is a case of an unconditioned error (*nirupādhika bhrama*). Like the "snake" which is superimposed on a rope, its substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) all objects of the world are superimpositions (*adhyastha*) on Brahman. What the rope is to the "snake", Brahman is to the world. The rope at all times—before the "snake" was cognized, while it is being cognized, and after its apparent reality has been sublated—remains the same without undergoing any change. In a similar way, Brahman too remains unaffected by the name and form of objects superimposed on it. All changes such as seeing the "snake", running away from it out of fear, experiencing relief on being reassured that it is only a rope, etc., take place only in the mind of the perceiver. So also, cognizing the world of name and form, imagining it to be real, experiencing bondage, and striving for attaining liberation therefrom take place only in the mind of an individual, and not in Brahman. The reality (*sattā*), existence (*sthiti*), and cognition (*pratīti*) of the illusory snake are appropriated from the substratum on which it is superimposed (*kalpitasya adhiṣṭhānameva svarūpam*). Similarly, all

objects of the world derive their reality, existence, and cognition from Brahman. Like figures painted on a canvas, which are only patches of paint, all objects of the world are mere name and form superimposed on the infinite substratum, Brahman. And (ii) the crystal-red flower analogy (*japākusuma nyāya*), which explains how Brahman appears as the spiritual selves—the *jīvas*. This is a case of a conditioned error (*sopādhika bhrama*). For example, when a red flower is placed beside a clear crystal, the crystal appears red and continues to appear so, so long as the crystal is conditioned by the presence of the red flower—the limiting adjunct (*upādhi*)—in its vicinity. When the red flower is removed, the crystal ‘re-gains’ its original clear nature. Similarly, Brahman appears as the *jīva* so long as it is conditioned by the false identification *adhyāsa* with the body-mind-sense complex, which is the limiting adjunct. Once the false identification with the body-mind-sense complex gets terminated by Self-knowledge, the *jīva* ‘becomes’ Brahman by ‘re-attaining’ the already attained (*prāptasya prāpti*), for the *jīva* is no other than Brahman.

Advaita advances three theories to vindicate the view that though the *Ātman* is one, the *jīvas* are many (*ekātmavādā, nāna-jīva-vāda*). These theories explain Brahman-*jīva* relation. They are: (i) the reflection theory (*bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) advocated by Padmapāda and others of the Vivaraṇa school (ii) the limitation theory (*avaccheda-vāda*) advocated by Maṇḍana, Vācaspati Miśra, and others of the Bhāmati school, and (iii) the semblance theory (*ābhāsa-vāda*) advocated by Suresvara, Vidyāraṇya, *et al.* Of these theories, the semblance theory describes the *jīva* as an aggregate of three factors — the Self of the nature of



pure consciousness (*cit*); the mind, which is material and not-Self, acting as the reflecting medium and limiting adjunct; and a reflection of consciousness in the mind (*cidābhāsa*).

In Advaita, the Self is viewed in three ways. First of all, it is viewed in terms of its essential attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*) — as pure consciousness qualified by the internal organ as its essential attribute (*antaḥkaraṇa-viśiṣṭa-caitanya*). Although the Self is not the knower (*jñātā*), doer (*kartā*) and enjoyer (*bhoktā*), due to *avidyā*, it appears to be the knower, doer, and enjoyer because of the mutual transfer of the attributes such as knowership (*jñātvā*), agency (*kartrva*), and enjoyership (*bhoktrva*) of the body, mind, and senses to the Self, and vice-versa. An analysis of the three states of experience by the technique of co-presence and co-absence (*anvaya-vyatireka*) shows that there cannot be any real relation between the spiritual Self and the material mind; and that it is the empirical Self (i.e. the Self qualified by the mind) which is the knower, doer, and enjoyer; whereas the noumenal Self is devoid of all these aspects. Secondly, it is defined in terms of its adventitious attribute—as pure consciousness qualified by the internal organ as its adventitious attribute (*avidyā upahita caitanya*). The noumenal Self is one only without a second. But at the empirical level, the Self contextually becomes a witness to the phenomena perceived by the mind and the changes (*vikāras*) taking place therein—the plurality projected by *avidyā*. But the Self as such, is not a witness, because there is nothing other than the Self to be witnessed. Thirdly, it is defined as what it is. This definition denies what was earlier wrongly ascri-

bed to the Self. This means that the Self as such is neither the *jīva* nor the *sūkṣin*, but the non-dual Brahman alone (*kevala*), which is attributeless (*nir-guṇa*), because there is no other to serve as its attribute — essential or adventitious.

Hiriyanna describes the *jīva* as “Brahman in empirical dress.” The “empirical dress” is constituted by the five sheaths (*pañcakośas*) or the three bodies (*deha-traya*). The five sheaths are — the sheath of food (*annamaya-kośa*) which is the gross body (*sthūla-deha*); the sheath of the vital air (*prāṇamaya-kośa*), the sheath of the mind (*manomaya-kośa*), and the sheath of the intellect (*vijñānamaya-kośa*) comprising the subtle body (*sūkṣma-deha*); and the sheath of bliss (*ānandamaya-kośa*) which is the causal body (*kāraṇa-deha*). *Avidyā* by means of its *āvaraṇa-śakti* induces in the Self an ignorance of the Self’s real nature, its identity with Brahman, while its *vikṣepa-śakti* impels the Self to wrongly identify itself with the five sheaths or the three bodies which constitute the body-mind-sense complex in which the Self is imprisoned during its empirical existence. Consequently, although the Self as essentially Brahman is non-doer (*akartā*), non-enjoyer (*abhoktā*), infinite (*ananta*), eternal (*nitya*), immutable (*kūṭastha*), blissful (*ānanda*), etc., it begins to consider itself as the doer, enjoyer, finite, temporal, subject to the six modifications (*ṣaḍ-bhāva-vikāras*), viz. birth, existence, growth, maturity, decline, and death; because of wrong identification/ascription of the attributes of the body-mind-sense complex, constituting the not-Self to the Self, and vice-versa, and suffers the sorrows of transmigration.



At the empirical level, Advaita has to account for God (*Īśvara*), bondage of the *jīva*, its liberation, and the means (*sādhana*) thereto. According to Advaita, *Īśvara* is pure consciousness limited by *māyā* (*māyā viśiṣṭa caitanya* or *māyā upahita caitanya*). The Advaitins make a subtle distinction between *avidyā* and *māyā*, in that in *avidyā*, *tamas* is preponderant (*tamo-guṇa pradhāna*), whereas in *māyā*, *sattva* is preponderant (*suddha sattva pradhāna*). But *māyā* does not delude *Īśvara* or make Him parviscient as *avidyā* does the *jīva*. On the contrary *Īśvara* wields *māyā* to fashion the world of physical phenomena for the *jīvas* to experience the fruits of their actions, overcome bondage, and attain liberation. Advaita declares that, although *Īśvara* is the creator of the world, the dispenser of the fruits of justice, the object of devotion and meditation, whose grace is indispensable for the *jīva* to attain its liberation, *Īśvara* is like the *jīva*, because they are both conditioned or qualified entities (*sopādhika tattvas*), i.e. pure consciousness qualified by *māyā* and *avidyā* respectively, and hence illusory. It is important to note that the admission of *Īśvara* does not make Śaṅkara a pious conformist or elevate Advaita to the status of theistic philosophy; nor does his rejection of *Īśvara* as the ultimate Reality make him an irreligious heretic, and degrade Advaita to atheistic philosophy. The truth is that Advaita is, ultimately, neither theistic, nor atheistic; but trans-theistic. For Śaṅkara, the worship and grace of *Īśvara* or Saguṇa-Brahman are only a means to the attainment of the transcendental Nirguṇa-Brahman. Hence he has systematized six modes of worship and is, therefore, known as the *ṣaṅ-mata sthāpanācārya*. In the words of Hiriyanna, Brahman is *Īśvara* from the cosmic stand-

point, and *Īśvara* is Brahman from the acosmic standpoint. Therefore, it is one and the same Brahman appearing as two in relation to the world of phenomena, while by itself, all the time, it is one only without a second.

Advaita maintains that the infinite and blissful Brahman "becomes" the bound and suffering *jīva*, due to ignorance of its real nature (*svarūpa-ajñāna*). The spiritual fall of the Self from its Brahman-nature takes place in two stages. In the first stage, the Self gets conditioned by *avidyā*. It is, now, known as "*cidābhāsa*", and the "I-notion" (*ahaṅkāra*) emerges. In the second stage, the *cidābhāsa* identifies itself with the "I" and develops a pragmatic attitude towards the objects of the world as "mine" (*mamākāra*). Thus, identification with the "I" transforms the transcendental Self which is the non-knower, non-doer, non-enjoyer, etc., into the empirical Self which is the knower, doer, and enjoyer, etc.

The *Saptāṅga-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* lists seven categories as the creations of the *jīva* (*jīva-śṛṣṭi*). They are grains for men; milk for animals; sacrifices like *darśa* and *pūrṇamāsa* for the Gods; and mind, speech, and vital air for the *jīva*. These are the psychic or mental categories by the *jīva*, through its mind. Having created these categories the *jīva* gets deluded by its own creation, like a silkworm which spins a cocoon around itself and remains imprisoned in it, and experiences bondage. For attaining liberation, the *jīva* should get the redeeming knowledge of its real nature (*svarūpa-jñāna*) as essentially identical with Brahman.



### AXIOLOGY

As the disease, so the remedy. Since the bondage of the *jīva* is due to ignorance of its real nature, the remedy for it is the attainment of knowledge about its real nature. Hence, in the hierarchy of the means to liberation, knowledge (*jñāna*) occupies the foremost place, followed by meditation (*dhyāna*), devotion, (*bhakti*), and action (*karma*) respectively.

According to Advaita, action, devotion, and meditation, either by themselves or together cannot directly confer liberation, because they function through difference (*bheda*), their fruit (*phala*) is impermanent (*anitya*) and not immediate (*adr̥ṣṭa*) and they operate on the basis of body-consciousness (*dehābhimāna*); all these imply and necessitate the presence of *avidyā*, which is antithetical to the attainment of liberation. Śaṅkara maintains that they can bestow only non-eternal liberation (*aparā-mukti*), and not eternal liberation (*parā-mukti*), because they are conducive to the attainment of Saguna-Brahman. Nevertheless they indirectly aid liberation, because they instil discrimination (*viveka*), dispassion (*vairāgya*), mental-purity (*cittaśuddhi*), and one-pointed concentration (*ekāgratā*); and thereby attune the mind to intuit the Self.

Highlighting the importance of knowledge for attaining liberation, Advaita declares that liberation is possible only through knowledge of the identity of the Self with Brahman, got from the major texts (*mahāvākyas*) of scripture. Śaṅkara in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (v. 25) proclaims that proficiency in the *Vedas*, sacrifices offered to deities, the performance of rituals,

meditation on and worship of the deities, etc., can never confer liberation in the absence of intuitive knowledge of the Self's identity with Brahman, even after the passage of a hundred Brahmās.

*vadantu śāstrāṇi yajantu devān,  
kurvantu karmāṇi bhajantu devatāḥ  
ātmaikyabodhena vināpi muktir-  
na siddhyati brahmaśatāntarepi.*

Advaita stipulates that the eligible seeker (*adhikārin*), who is fit to receive Self-knowledge through its two-tiered discipline for liberation, is one who is equipped with the fourfold qualification (*sādhana-catusṭaya*). The four qualifications are the ability to distinguish the real from the non-real (*nitya-anitya-vastuviveka*); dispassion; the six virtues (*ṣaṭsampatti*), viz. control of the mind (*śama*), control of the senses (*dama*), fortitude (*titikṣā*), equanimity (*uṣarati*), faith (*śraddhā*), and one-pointed concentration (*samādhāna*); and a hankering after liberation (*mumukṣutva*). Therefore, the initial discipline trains one to acquire the four qualifications as pre-requisites which ensure the right mental set-up and prepare the seeker for undertaking the threefold final discipline consisting of guided study of texts (*śravaṇa*), rational reflection (*manana*) on them, and contemplation (*nididhyāsana*) on their import (*tātparya*). According to Advaita, *śravaṇa* eliminates doubts about scripture as a means of knowing Brahman (*pramāṇagata-sandeha*), *manana* eliminates doubts about the Self's identity with Brahman, which has to be realized (*prameyagata-sandeha*), and *nididhyāsana* wards off the recurrence of misconceptions (*viparīta-jñāna*) about the Self, i.e. that the Self is finite, knower, doer, enjoyer, etc., and reinforces the



awareness of the Self-Brahman identity. Through the triple discipline, mediate knowledge (*parokṣa-jñāna*) of the Self's identity |with Brahman gets transformed into immediate knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*). With the attainment of the intuitive knowledge of the Self, which is positive, or the annihilation of *avidyā*, which is negative — the attainment and annihilation being the two aspects of one and the same edifying experience — the seeker (*sādhaka*) becomes a seer (*siddha*). Such a fortunate one is liberated even though physically embodied, because Advaita affirms that it is not the presence of the physical body that is responsible for bondage, but the false identification with it, conspired by *avidyā*, which is the fount of all forms of finitude. Once *avidyā* is sublated by Self-knowledge, a knower of Brahman becomes Brahman (*brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*). Being freed forever from the travails of transmigration, the liberated one delights in the bliss of Brahman (*brahmānanda*).

In this way, Advaita synthesizes knowledge obtained from three sources — scripture (*śruti*), reason (*yukti*), and intuitive experience (*anubhūti*) to enable the *jīvas* wallowing in transmigration to attain liberation. “Its austere intellectualism, its remorseless logic which marches on indifferent to the hopes and beliefs of man, its relative freedom from theological obsessions, make it a great example of a purely philosophical scheme.”\*

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\* S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, II, p. 445.

## ŚRĪ SADGURUDAŚAKAM\*

(A Decad in Praise of the Great Master)

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*Śrī Śaṅkara Vijayendra Sarasvatī*

[ 1 ]

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणोक्तधर्ममार्गरतं गुरुम् ।  
भक्तानां हितवक्तारं नमस्ये चित्तशुद्धये ॥

For the sake of obtaining *cittaśuddhi* (mental purity), let me bow unto the Guru, who is intent on following and practising the righteous path as portrayed in the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis*, and *Purāṇas*, and who guides the devotees to do good deeds.

[ 2 ]

अद्वैतानन्दभरितं साधूनामुपकारिणम् ।  
सर्वशास्त्रविदं शान्तं नमस्ये चित्तशुद्धये ॥

For the sake of obtaining *cittaśuddhi* (mental purity) let me pay my obeisance to the Guru who is brimming with Advaitic bliss, who is helpful to the

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\* Translated by Dr V. K. S. N. Raghavan



good, who is well-versed in all *śāstras* and who is an embodiment of peace.

[ 3 ]

कर्मभक्तिज्ञानमार्गप्रचारे बद्धकङ्कणम् ।  
अनुग्रहप्रदातारं नमस्ये चित्तशुद्धये ॥

For the sake of obtaining *cittaśuddhi*, let me pay my obeisance to the Guru who is earnestly interested in propagating the paths of *karma* (action), *bhakti* (devotion), and *jñāna* (wisdom) and who blesses everyone (always through his kind glance, smile and speech).

[ 4 ]

भगवत्पादपादाब्जविनिवेशितचेतसः ।  
श्रीचन्द्रशेखरगुरोः प्रसादो मयि जायताम् ॥

Let me be the recipient of the blessings of the Guru, Śrī Candrasekharayati whose heart is ever intent on the lotus-feet of the Master, Śrī Ādiśaṅkara Bhagavatpāda.

[ 5 ]

क्षेत्रतीर्थकथाभिज्ञः सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहः ।  
चन्द्रशेखरवर्यो मे सन्निधत्तां सदा हृदि ॥

Let the Guru be pleased to abide in my heart ever, the Guru who knows the importance of the *māhātmyas* of holy cities and sacred rivers, and who is the embodiment of *sat* (truth), *cit* (knowledge) and *ānanda* (bliss).

[ 6 ]

पोषणे वेदशास्त्राणां दत्तचित्तमहर्निशम् ।  
क्षेत्रयात्रारतं वन्दे सद्गुरुञ्चन्द्रशेखरम् ॥

Let me bow unto the Guru, Śrī Candrasekhara Sarasvatī who is ever keen on nourishing the *Vedas* and allied *Śāstras* and who goes on pilgrimage to many holy places (*kṣetras*).

[ 7 ]

वेदज्ञान् वेदभाष्यज्ञान् कर्तुं यस्य समुद्यमः ।  
गुरुर्यस्य महादेवस्तं वन्दे चन्द्रशेखरम् ॥

Let me bow unto the Guru, Śrī Candrasekhara Sarasvatī, whose spiritual teacher was Śrī Mahādevendra Sarasvatī and who takes earnest efforts to make eligible scholars well-versed in Vedic lore and the *Bhāṣyas* of the *Vedas*.

[ 8 ]

मणिवाचकगोदादिभक्तिवागमृतैर्भृशम् ।  
बालानाम्भगवद्भक्तिं वर्धयन्तं गुरुम्भजे ॥

Let me worship the Guru, who enhances the devotion of children to God, by his firm propagation of the devotional hymns of great saints such as Śrī Māṇikkavācakar and Śrī Godā.



[ 9 ]

लघूपदेशैर्नास्तिक्यभावमर्दनकोविदम् ।  
शिवं स्मितमुखं शान्तम्प्रणतोऽस्मि जगद्गुरुम् ॥

Let me bow to the Jagadguru, Śrī Candrasekharayatīndra, who is full of auspiciousness and calmness, whose face is (adorned with) charming smile, and who is an erudite teacher in destroying atheistic thought (of people) through his divine and simple utterances.

[ 10 ]

विनयेन प्रार्थयेऽहं विद्याम्बोधय मे गुरो ।  
मार्गमन्यं न जानेऽहम्भवन्तं शरणं गतः ॥

O my endearing Master, let me request you sincerely to teach me the great *Vidyā* (self-knowledge). Not knowing any resort (other than you) I take refuge under you alone (as the sole redeemer).

SELECT VERSES FROM  
THE MĀNASOLLĀSA\*

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*Śrī Sureśvara*

[ 1 ]

आत्मलाभात्परो लाभो नास्तीति मुनयो विदुः ।  
यल्लाभार्थं कविस्तौति स्वात्मानं परमेश्वरम् ॥

That there is no greater gain than the gain of Self, the sages know; for the sake of the gain thereof, the seer-poet (here, Śrī Śaṅkara) sings the praise of the supreme Lord, his own Self.

[ 2 ]

ईश्वरो गुरुरात्मेति मूर्तिभेदविभागिने ।  
व्योमवद्ब्रह्मासदेहाय दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः ॥

To Him who is differently manifested in the forms of God, the Teacher, and the Self, whose body is all-pervading like ether, to Dakṣiṇāmūrti be this obeisance!

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\*Translated by Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan



[ 3 ]

सर्वात्मभावना यस्य परिपक्वा महात्मनः ।  
संसारतारकस्साक्षात्स एव परमेश्वरः ॥

The high-souled one whose experience of All-selfhood has become mature is the direct deliverer from *samsāra*; he is himself the supreme Lord.

[ 4 ]

अविद्याख्यतिरोधानव्यपाये परमेश्वरः ।  
दक्षिणामूर्तिरूपोऽसौ स्वयमेव प्रकाशते ॥

When the veil which is known as nescience is lifted, the supreme Lord, of the form of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, shines of His own accord.

[ 5 ]

देहेन्द्रियासुहीनाय मानदूरस्वरूपिणे ।  
ज्ञानानन्दस्वरूपाय दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः ॥

To him who is without body, sense-organs, and vital airs, whose nature is beyond the means of cognition (perception, etc.), and who is of the nature of consciousness and bliss — to Dakṣiṇāmūrti be this obeisance!

[ 6 ]

निरंशो निर्विकारश्च निराभासो निरञ्जनः ।  
पुरुषः केवलः पूर्णः प्रोच्यते परमेश्वरः ॥

The Self is said to be the supreme Lord, who is without part without modification, without reflection, pure, alone, and full.

[ 7 - 8 ]

वाचो यत्र निवर्तन्ते मनो यत्र विलीयते ।  
 एकीभवन्ति यत्रैव भूतानि भुवनानि च ॥  
 समस्तानि च तत्त्वानि समुद्रे सिन्धवे यथा ।  
 कश्शोकस्तत्र को मोह एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

That wherefrom words return and wherein the mind is resolved, that wherewith beings and worlds become one, and all the principles too, like the rivers with the ocean—what sorrow is there, what delusion, to the one who sees the one-ness?

[ 9 ]

सच्चिदानन्दरूपाय बिन्दुनादान्तरात्मने ।  
 आदिमध्यान्तशून्याय गुरुणां गुरवे नमः ॥

To the preceptor of preceptors, who is of the form of existence-consciousness-bliss, who is the inner self of *bindu* and *nāda*, who is without beginning, middle and end, be this obeisance!

[ 10 ]

स्तोत्रमेतत्पठेद्भीमान् सर्वात्मत्वं च भावयेत् ।  
 अर्वाचीने स्पृहां मुक्त्वा फले स्वर्गादिसंभवे ॥

Let the wise one read this hymn and contemplate All-Self-hood, leaving all yearning for the smaller fruit arising out of heaven, etc.



[ 11 ]

स्वर्गादिराज्यं साम्राज्यं मनुते न ह पण्डितः ।  
तदेव तस्य साम्राज्यं यत्तु स्वाराज्यमात्मनि ॥

The wise one does not deem the sovereignty of heaven etc., as universal empery; that alone is universal empery for him, which is autonomy with reference to the Self.

[ 12 ]

सर्वात्मभावनावन्तं सेवन्ते सर्वसिद्धयः ।  
तस्मादात्मनि साम्राज्यं कुर्यान्नियतमानसः ॥

All super-normal powers serve him who has the experience of All-Self-hood. Therefore, let one exercise universal empery in regard to the Self, having controlled his mind.

[ 13 ]

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ।  
तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥

To that high-souled one who has supreme devotion for God, and for the preceptor as for God, shine in full the truths that are taught here.

[ 14 ]

प्रकाशात्मिकया शक्त्या प्रकाशानां प्रभाकरः ।  
प्रकाशयति यो विश्वं प्रकाशोऽयं प्रकाशताम् ॥

That Luminosity which illumines all luminaries by its power of luminosity, that which illumines the universe—may that shine in full.

## PHILOSOPHY FOR LIBERATION\*

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### I

Though it is a truism that all cognitive enterprises, scientific or otherwise, undertaken by professionals are for the sake of the common man, there is a strong tendency among some technical philosophers today both in India and elsewhere to ignore this well-known truth and indulge in a kind of philosophical activity which is nothing but a futile intellectual exercise, profitless and uninspiring. It has been the practice among the classical philosophers in India to say in the beginning itself that the philosophical treatise which they write is intended to help the people overcome their suffering or to attain a goal which is worthy of realization. This healthy practice which was prevalent in the Indian philosophical tradition should not be ignored as nothing more than a pious convention like invocation (*maṅgalācaraṇa*). On the contrary, it deserves consideration as a pointer to the

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\* Presidential Address delivered at the I P C-59th Session: December 28-31, 1984, Rani Durgavati Vishwa-vidyalaya, Jabalpur. Courtesy: Indian Philosophical Congress.



responsibility of the professional philosopher to society, for whatever he says and does should, by being purposive, be beneficial to the people. A philosophical system, says Vācaspati, is expounded for the sake of the ordinary people who are in need of it and who are, therefore, eligible for it (*loka-vyutpādanārthatvāt śāstrasya, tasyaiva atra adhikārāt*).<sup>1</sup>

Quite a few contemporary Western philosophers hold the view that philosophy is concerned with conceptual analysis as well as the analysis of language with a view to clearing up the philosophical muddles and paradoxes arising as a result of the faulty use of language. They seem to think that it is not the business of philosophy to probe into the nature of man and the world for the sake of understanding the nature of reality and the ordering of life in the light of one's understanding of the nature of reality. Their contention is that the philosopher as such is not interested in facts of experience. On the contrary, a philosopher, according to them, has to lay bare the ways in which concepts and speech forms operate for the sake of clearing up conceptual confusions and diagnosing philosophical disorders. The work of analysis has been carried out by these contemporary Western philosophers in two directions — formal logic and language analysis. The study of the basic problems of metaphysics and epistemology is not their *primary* concern, whatever may be the indirect effect of their work on these disciplines through the study of epistemic words such as "know", "perceive", "see", "hear", etc., process words like "run", "travel", etc., achievement words like "win", "arrive", and so on. It looks as if contemporary Western philosophy has

moved out of the arena of epistemology and metaphysics in the name of analysis. Nor does it deal with the really important issues in ethics. Contemporary Western analysts who are absorbed in meta-ethics naively assume that meta-ethics has no ethical implications and that it is quite possible to discuss meta-ethics independently of ethics. They indulge in barren verbal discussions whether ethical terms are cognitive or non-cognitive, and so on, completely ignoring the implications of such a discussion so far as practice is concerned. In short, in contemporary Western philosophy, particularly as it is practised in most of the Anglo-American academic citadels, there is the collapse of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics as these disciplines are conventionally understood, though there seems to be the possibility of the re-entry of metaphysics. Some contemporary Indian philosophers, impressed as they are with the so called revolution wrought by the Western philosophers doing phenomenalist, physicalist, and ordinary language analysis, are still under the spell of these philosophers. They are not only the best admirers of what they characterize as "progressive" and "creative" work of these philosophers, but also the worst critics of classical Indian philosophy.

## II

There are two approaches to the study of philosophy. The first one, which may be called humanistic, is directed towards the study of man and the universe, the principles which govern both of them, man's place in the cosmos, the power or the reality which is the source and support of everything we see. We have a glimpse of it in the celebrated "Song of



Creation'' in the *R̥g-veda*, X. 129. The philosophies of both Plato and Aristotle exemplify this humanistic approach; whatever may be said about God, man, and the world has been dealt with in depth by the philosophies of these two master minds. Working out a full-fledged system of metaphysics as a foundation for the ethical teaching, Spinoza arrived at the conclusion that all human beings are expressions of God and that the endeavour to preserve one's own being demands action for the good of other human beings. The philosophical theism of Rāmānuja integrates God, man, and the world into an organic unity, mapping out man's place in the universe in relation to both God and the world, and the responsibilities that man has to bear arising therefrom. I have mentioned only a few philosophers in suggestive way to illustrate the humanistic approach. The point to be noted here is that a philosopher feels the urge to deal with everything connected with man, with all ultimate problems of thought and practice, and to probe into what is beyond the sensible and the visible world by means of reason supported by intuition wherever necessary. Instead of building a complex philosophical system, one may study philosophical problems in piecemeal way as a scientist would do. The scientific approach to the study of a problem comprises analysis, generalization through logical reasoning, and verification. Descartes adopted the scientific method when he decided to divide his difficulties, to conduct his thought in order, and to review his conclusions in dealing with philosophical problems. However, the scientific approach did not prevent him from constructing a philosophical system of God, man, and the world. It means that these two approaches to philosophy are not mutually exclusive. But the

philosophers who are interested in analysis take up isolated problems in philosophy and analyse them without constructing philosophical system.

Classical Indian philosophers have adopted both the approaches—humanistic and scientific—to the study of philosophical problems. All the orthodox schools of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism have not only worked out well-knit philosophical systems, but also have provided sophisticated analyses of problems in logic and epistemology, psychology of human action, and philosophy of language comparable to those found in Western philosophy. They never considered that logic and epistemology, conceptual and language analysis are ends in themselves. However important these areas may be for philosophising, they have to subserve a larger purpose of the common man by answering his questions about life and death, the destiny of man, the nature and source of the world. And these questions can never be dismissed meaningless and unimportant. For example, Swami Agehananda Bharati holds that questions about life and death are no problems at all and that they are but “cultural urges trying and training our fantasy.”<sup>2</sup> According to him, problems are questions that can be solved in principle; and questions that cannot be solved are no problems at all.<sup>3</sup> And these questions, he maintains, cannot be solved either because we do not have tools for solving them or because they are absurd. Swami Agehananda Bharati’s argument cannot be accepted. First of all there is difficulty with regard to what one means by “solution”. Does “solution” mean final answer once and for all? Solutions of this kind we do not have even in science. Secondly, there is no



justification for dismissing these questions as meaningless or absurd without assigning reason therefor. Thirdly, we do have techniques of analysis of the problem of life and death, which are not transcendent problems. On the contrary, they are problems which man encounters here and now; and they are meaningful. Swami Agehananda Bharati is not alone in holding this view. He has his philosophical cousins in India. To dismiss these problems as meaningless would very much shrink the horizons of both theory and practice and make life bleak and dreary.

### III

There are critics who hold the view that Indian philosophy is not philosophy proper. To them, what has come down to us as classical Indian philosophy is a mixture of theology and mysticism; and the bulk of contemporary Indian philosophy which is only exegetical of the classical texts and the commentaries thereon must be labelled, according to them, as theology of the second rate as it is not original and creative like the classical systems. They hold this view on three grounds—methodological, justificatory and thematic. It is necessary to examine these grounds one by one.

Drawing the distinction between the two words “philosophy” and “*darśana*” on the basis of their etymological meaning, the critics maintain first of all that philosophy in the West and *darśana* of the Indian tradition differ in their methods. Whereas the method of philosophy in the West is critical and discursive, *darśana* of the Indian tradition, according to them, is dogmatic and “enthusiastic”. An “enthusiastic” mind, it is said, is one which is “filled with” or “affected by”

the doctrines of the tradition, is guided by the instruction of the preceptor, and is over-whelmed by vision.<sup>4</sup> It is, therefore, dogmatic in its approach. Every Indian philosophical school called *darśana* centres round certain doctrines formulated and systematized by the preceptors; and such a system cannot but be authoritative demanding uncritical acceptance. On the contrary, every philosopher in the West, so they argue, examines the problems afresh in a critical way independently of what his predecessors might have said about them; and reason is the guiding principle for him. This criticism is totally unjustified. Though it is true that the words, "philosophy" and "*darśana*", do not convey the same meaning, it does not follow that those who look upon philosophy as *darśana* will be uncritical in their treatment of the problems of life and the views of their predecessors. Nor does the word "philosophy" convey, either etymologically or otherwise, the sense that it is a critical study. Also, critical outlook does not necessarily mean rejection of the views of one's predecessor. The commentarial tradition, whose contribution to the development and enrichment of each school has been extremely profound and valuable, has not been uncritical. Further, the Indian mind has provided an important place for reason in philosophical investigation, pointing out at the same time the limitations of reason. The simple truth is that we cannot explain everything by means of reason; this, as Walsh says, is a matter of logic, not of how the world is.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, critics argue that Indian philosophy is not philosophy in the true sense of the term, because it accepts *śruti* as a *pramāṇa*. While they welcome



the inclusion of perception and inference as sources of knowledge, they object to the acceptance of *śruti* as a source of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). They seem to think that what makes Indian philosophy theology and mysticism is the acceptance of *śruti* as a *pramāṇa*; and *darśana* minus *śruti* will be philosophy, according to them. This criticism, again, is totally unjustified. It betrays a misconception of the scope and function of *śruti* as a *pramāṇa* on the one hand, and the relation of *śruti* to the other *pramāṇas* on the other. There is detailed discussion on this problem in the works of the Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta schools. A brief account of the way in which the Advaitin explains the scope and role of *śruti vis-a-vis* other *pramāṇas* will be helpful to answer the criticism we are now considering.

A *pramāṇa* is accepted as a source of knowledge in so far as what it conveys cannot be known from any other source and also remains uncontradicted. It means that, according to the Advaitin, there are two criteria for a valid cognition (*pramā*) viz. novelty and unsublatability (*anadhigatābādhitārtha-viśayaka-jñānatvam pramātvam*); and that which produces a valid cognition is a *pramāṇa* (*pramā-karaṇam pramāṇam*). There are two points to be borne in mind in respect of the different *pramāṇas* which are accepted as sources of knowledge. First of all, the scope of *pramāṇas* such as perception on the one hand and *śruti* on the other is well-defined. Whereas perception and inference are sources of knowledge of things empirical, *śruti* is authoritative only in respect of what is trans-empirical or super-sensible. The implication is that *śruti* should not be invoked as a source of knowledge with regard to things empirical and that perception and

other *pramāṇas* are of no use with regard to what is trans-empirical. The second point to be noted here is that, since there is a clear demarcation between the scope of *śruti* on the one hand and the other *pramāṇas* on the other, there is no possibility of conflict between *śruti* and other *pramāṇas*. The authority of *śruti* can be rejected only if it can be proved that (1) what it conveys is known through other sources of knowledge; (2) it conveys what is contradicted by other sources of knowledge; (3) what it conveys is doubtful; and (4) it is not informative at all.<sup>6</sup> None of these reasons can be brought in against the authority of *śruti*. In view of a clear demarcation between the scope of *śruti* and that of the remaining *pramāṇas*, it cannot be said that the information conveyed by *śruti* can be obtained through other sources as well. It means that *śruti* can never be shown to be superfluous. Secondly, there will be scope for conflict between one *pramāṇa* and another *pramāṇa*, if both the *pramāṇas* have the same subject matter. Since the subject matter of *śruti* does not fall within the scope of perception and other *pramāṇas* what *śruti* conveys can never be disproved or contradicted by perception and other sources of knowledge. Thirdly, it cannot be said that what *śruti* conveys is doubtful. Doubt, error, and other defects are possible in the case of any information which has human agency as its source. But inasmuch as *śruti* is *apauruṣeya*, what it conveys can never be dismissed as doubtful or erroneous. Lastly, one cannot level the charge that *śruti* is not at all informative. One should have the right frame of mind in order to understand the teaching of *śruti*. It is not without reason that tradition has insisted upon certain requirements to be fulfilled by a person for the right comprehension of



the purport of *śruti*; and all these requirements are designed to help a person develop the right frame of mind which is indispensable for comprehending the scriptural teaching. To one who is a mould of clay in the human form *śruti*, says Śuresvara, will not be informative<sup>7</sup>.

I shall now consider the alleged thematic difficulty which stands in the way of calling the *darśanas* of the Indian tradition as philosophy proper. There are critics who hold the view that, since the *darśanas* deal with *mokṣa*, they are not philosophy, and that philosophy in the West does not deal with *mokṣa*. There are two assumptions in this argument, and both of them are questionable. The first assumption is that philosophy as pursued in the West provides the standard for judging whether Indian *darśanas* are philosophy or not. How gratuitous and unjustified this assumption is can be seen if someone, for the sake of argument, proposes the suggestion that philosophy in the West shall be judged on the basis of Indian *darśanas* which provide the model for philosophy. The truth is that it really makes no sense to do this kind of evaluation on the basis of the untenable assumption that the one or the other is the paradigm. There is yet another difficulty. Though philosophy means love of wisdom, there is not one definition of philosophy which is acceptable to the professional philosophers in the West today. There is disagreement among philosophers both with regard to the subject matter and method of philosophy. The conception of philosophy as a critique of science, or as a critique of language, or even as analysis in the most comprehensive sense, is a far cry from the ancient conception of philosophy as knowledge in general about man and the universe. How, then, can one say that

Indian *darśanas* are not philosophy proper as if there is one agreed definition or conception of philosophy available in the West?

The second assumption that philosophy in the West does not deal with *mokṣa* is equally untenable. A careful study of Western philosophy will show that the idea of spiritual freedom or liberation which is conveyed by the "*mokṣa*" is not absent in the West. In the final analysis, *mokṣa* means freedom from bondage of the body. What is implied here is that there is some entity, call it soul, or spirit or self that gets its freedom from its association with the body, which is bondage. To cite one example from the West, there is an interesting discussion on this problem of freedom from the bondage of the body in Plato's *Phaedo*. Keeping in mind the contrast between a philosopher and a lover of the body, Socrates holds the view that the life of a true philosopher is a training for death; that is to say, a philosopher, just because he is not a lover of the body, aims at the liberation from the body for the sake of the highest knowledge. Socrates' argument can be summarised in a series of propositions. (1) A philosopher is engaged in training for dying. (2) He is not a lover of the body as he does not set a high value on the pleasures of food, drink, and sex. (3) He is convinced that the body is a hindrance in his quest after truth, as it makes countless demands upon him, which are not worthy of fulfilment. (4) So long as he is united to the body, the attainment of knowledge is impossible. (5) While he is alive, he shall come nearest of knowledge, if his association with the body is to the minimum. If this entire argument of Socrates on the need for dissociation from the body is pre-



sented to an Indian scholar who has not studied *Phaedo* without revealing to him the source of the argument, he will undoubtedly say that it is from one of the authoritative manuals on Advaita.

It will be of interest in this connection to refer to Daya Krishna's conception of Indian Philosophy. Daya Krishna holds the view that Indian philosophy is philosophy proper and that it is not, therefore, radically different from Western philosophy. His contention is that, if Indian philosophy is treated as philosophy proper, then it can be shown that Indian philosophy has nothing to do with *mokṣa*. His interest in denying its association with *mokṣa* is for the purpose of vindicating that Indian philosophy is not radically different from Western philosophy. He alleges that the classical writers "have created the myth that Indian philosophy is intrinsically and inalienably concerned with spiritual liberation and not with what may be called philosophical problems proper."<sup>8</sup> If Indian philosophy is not concerned with *mokṣa*, then one should, suggests Daya Krishna, not only ask why the *Sūtrakāras* refer to *mokṣa* in their writings, but also wonder how, for example, what is claimed in the *Nyāya-sūtra*, 1.1.1 can be true, for it is impossible for us to accept the teaching that anyone could achieve *mokṣa* through a knowledge of *pramāṇas* and *hetvābhāsas*.

Apart from having the merit of being provocative, Daya Krishna's argument does not appear even to be plausible. First of all, he admits that "*mokṣa* was accepted as the highest value and the ultimate goal of life by the whole of Indian culture."<sup>9</sup> Since philo-

sophy is an expression of the culture of a people, it should not be surprising if the *Sūtrakāras* declare that their works are concerned with *mokṣa*. Secondly, piecemeal consideration of any statement will not be helpful to understand any problem. After quoting the opening aphorism from the *Nyāya-sūtra* Daya Krishna wonders how a knowledge of the sources of knowledge and the logical fallacies will help a person to attain liberation. Had he considered what the next *sūtra* says, he would have got the answer to the question. The second *sūtra* says: "Final release results from the successive removal of wrong knowledge, defects, activity, birth, suffering, the removal of each later member of the series depending on the removal of the preceding member." The first two *sūtras* taken together suggest that intellectual training and moral discipline are the prerequisites to be gone through for attaining the goal. Thirdly, to say that the Nyāya school, for example, is not concerned with *mokṣa* is anything but truth. The real position is that Indian philosophy is intrinsically concerned with the problem of *mokṣa*, which is a genuine philosophical problem. It is impossible to think of Indian philosophy without the concept of *mokṣa*. The inclusion of *mokṣa* within the subject matter of Indian philosophy neither detracts its value nor is detrimental to it.

#### IV

Though philosophy and religion are distinguishable, they are not separable. This will be obvious if we consider the relation between philosophy and religion. Historically speaking, the relation between philosophy and religion has been very close. Philosophy arose as a reflective criticism of the religious and



moral beliefs of man. Just as the modern man holds various kinds of religious and moral beliefs, even so the primitive man entertained all sorts of beliefs. Philosophy begins with man's reflection on his beliefs, both religious and moral, connected with natural and supernatural beings. It means the beginning of religion is also the beginning of philosophy. So long as man lives, he will have some religion or other which will justify the need for the continuance of philosophy as a reflection on his beliefs and practices.

If we examine the history of philosophy, we find that philosophy has developed by performing three different functions — speculation, interpretation, and analysis. It may be that while some philosophers are more interested in speculation, some others take up the work of analysis and interpretation. For example, philosophers both in the East and the West have speculated on the origin of man and the world; and as a result of their speculation they have built philosophical systems providing a place for man, world and God in the scheme of things. Different philosophical systems such as monism, dualism, and pluralism have a bearing on religion. It is also the case that these systems have been built on the basis of certain religious presuppositions which will become apparent only when we examine the religious tradition of the philosopher who has constructed a philosophical system. Scholars like Karl Jaspers who are competent so speak about the Western philosophical tradition are of the view that the Bible and the Biblical religion have provided the foundation for Western philosophy. It means that philosophy as a speculative enterprise influences religion and is also influenced by

it. The strength and grandeur of the Indian *darśanas* lie in the fact that they combine both philosophy and religion. A philosopher who is concerned with the problems of life cannot function *merely* as a technical philosopher analysing terms and concepts, truth functions and argument forms, words and sentences, however important these may be, ignoring the forms of human activity in the spheres of religion, morals, and politics. It means that he will be required to go beyond the boundaries of philosophy and step into religion, ethics, and political philosophy.

Philosophy is both *darśana* and *darśana-śāstra*. *Darśana* means seeing, perception, intuition. Each of these words in the verbal form is transitive pointing to an object. In order to bring out the full significance of the etymological meaning of the word '*darśana*' we have to ask: "seeing of what?" Since the answer to this question is seeing or intuition of truth, *darśana* means *tattva-darśana*. If so, philosophy means the vision of truth, the immediate and direct knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of the real. Philosophy also means *darśana-śāstra* or *tattva-vicāra* in the sense of a treatise on, or an enquiry into, the truth or the real. The classical writers in the Indian tradition were aware of the semantic distinction between *darśana* and *darśana-śāstra*. Nevertheless, they considered philosophy both as *darśana* and *darśana-śāstra* as it stands for the vision of truth as well as the means thereto. That this mode of explanation is neither unusual nor wrong can be shown by two examples. The word "*pratyakṣa*" is used in the sense of both immediate knowledge (*pratyakṣa-jñāna*) and that which is instrumental to immediate knowledge (*pratyakṣa-pramākarāṇa*). Śaṅkara



explains the word "*uṇaniṣad*" in the sense of knowledge and also as referring to the book which is meant for the purpose of attaining that knowledge (*uṇaniṣaditi vidyocrate ... tadarthatvād grantho'pi uṇaniṣat*).<sup>10</sup>

If philosophy means not only knowledge of truth, but also the means thereto, it follows that it is both theory and practice, vision and the *sādhana* therefor. If the practical role that is usually assigned to religion is undertaken by philosophy in the Indian tradition, it is because of the fact that philosophy as such can never be separated from religion. The unity of theory and practice, which has been the ideal of the Indian *darśanas*, has been recommended in modern times by Karl Marx on the basis that the world-view which one has formulated should be integrated with, and followed by, the appropriate modes of action. Deploring that the work of Western philosophers so far has been restricted to the interpretation of the world in various ways, Marx exhorted them to *change* the world. Certainly, the change that Marx had in mind was not only the change of the economic-political order of society, but also the change in the perspective of man. Contemporary philosophers like K.C. Bhattacharya, Malkani, Chubb, and others have not been in the wrong when they have explained philosophy both as theory and practice.<sup>11</sup>

## V

It is necessary at this stage to justify the claim that Indian philosophy is not only theory, but also practice. The claim of the unity of theory and practice can be justified by considering the relation between value and action. Philosophy has to be man-

centred. Every cognitive enterprise is pursued not for its own sake, but for the sake of some end or purpose of man. This is as much true of philosophy as it is of any other cognitive enterprise. It means that philosophy, to be valued and justified, must concern itself with the life-activity of man. If philosophy is related to the life-activity of man, then it has to be value-oriented. A brief explanation will be helpful to understand the relation between life-activity and values.

The life-activity of man which is fully reflective of his cognition, desire, deliberation, and choice comprises the pursuit of four values — *artha* (material goods), *kāma* (pleasure), *dharma* (duty), and *mokṣa* (liberation). Man lives at two levels — organic and hyper-organic. Bodily and economic values belong to the organic level. It may appear, when superficially considered, that man is not different from animals in the pursuit of pleasure. Since not all pleasures are worthy of pursuit, man's pursuit of pleasure is not restricted to, and cannot be explained solely in terms of his life at the organic level. Man cannot be considered to be fully "human" unless his senses have become *human* or refined. It means that his senses should not be subservient to the basic needs alone such as hunger, sleep, and sex. Values of association and fellowship, intellectual and moral, aesthetic and religious values belong to the hyper-organic level of the life of man. All the higher values of life can be brought under *dharma* and *mokṣa*. The Indian *darśanas*, being philosophies of life, take a comprehensive view of man's life comprising individual, social, and spiritual aspects of life and consider his entire life as



a preparation for the attainment of the final goal of liberation. It is for this reason that we say that the Indian *darśanas* are *mokṣa-śāstras*, i.e. treatises on liberation. Since philosophy is concerned with the life-activity of man, it is value-oriented.

Value and action are closely related to each other. If the Indian *darśanas* are value-oriented, then they are action-oriented. The "Use Theory of Language" associated with Wittgenstein is based on his view, "Do not ask for the meaning of a word; but look at its usage."<sup>12</sup> In the present context we may reformulate his statement and say: "Do not ask for the value of a person; but look at his action." There is no need to ask a person to make a declaration of his values. He may or may not tell the truth in this regard. However, his action, when closely examined, will reveal the values he cares for and pursues. When a person accepts something as a value, he cannot but be engaged in activities conducive to the attainment of the value in question. To say that something is a value e.g. charity or non-violence, is to accept it as a value and also to commend it for others; and to accept something as a value is not just for the purpose of talking, but for the purpose of doing. The logic of value-words, as pointed out by R.M. Hare, should finally result in action. Hare's statement deserves careful consideration. He writes: "The remedy, in fact, for moral stagnation and decay is to learn to use our value-language for the purpose for which it is designed; and this involves not merely a lesson in talking, but a lesson in doing that which we commend; for unless we are prepared to do this we are doing no more than lip-service to a conventional stan-

dard."<sup>13</sup> So Indian philosophy which is value-oriented is action-oriented. The oft-repeated claim that Indian philosophy is not only theory, but also practice can be justified only on the basis of the close relation between value and action.

Starting from the basic position that philosophy is man-centred and that it is, therefore, concerned with the life-activity of man, I argued for the justification of the unity of theory and practice by showing the link between value-orientation and action-orientation. The value-orientation of the Indian *darśanas* with all that it implies presupposes a philosophy of man. It is not necessary to go into the details of the doctrine of man which the Indian *darśanas* have developed paying meticulous attention to the constitution of man as well as the nature and significance of his experience at all levels — waking, dream, and deep sleep. One of the salient features of the philosophy of man which the Indian *darśanas* have developed relates to the competence of man to pursue the higher values. Unless it is shown that man, unlike other animals, has the special competence to pursue the higher values, *i.e.* *dharma* and *mokṣa*, the thesis that Indian philosophy is action-oriented because it is value-oriented, and that it is value-oriented because it is man-centred, will come to nothing.

It was Protagoras, the Sophist, who held the view that man is the measure of all things. Socrates examined this view and rejected it. In spite of Socrates' thorough-going criticism, quite a few subscribe to the Protagorean thesis that "man is the measure of all things." There are two ways in which



this statement can be interpreted. According to one interpretation, it means that man, a rational being, is the measure or the standard of everything, because he is capable of reflection and analysis, and as a rational being he can discriminate between truth and falsity, good and bad, right and wrong. Man alone is endowed with this power of discrimination and judgement, and so he is the measure of all things. This interpretation which emphasizes the pre-eminence of man among all creatures is acceptable to the Indian mind. There is an account of the creation of the world in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.1.1. From Brahman, the ultimate reality, the different elements, *viz.* ether, air, fire, water, and earth, came into existence; and then herbs and food came into being; and from food, the *Upaniṣad* tells us, man came into existence. When all creatures without any exception are products of food, why is it that man alone among created beings is mentioned by the *Upaniṣad*? Śaṅkara in his commentary on this text of the *Upaniṣad* considers this question and answers it. He says that man alone is mentioned by the *Upaniṣad* because of his pre-eminence. Man is pre-eminent among all creatures, because he alone is qualified for knowledge and the performance of religious duties (*karma-jñāna adhikārah*). Why is it that he alone has this competence? Śaṅkara justifies man's competence or eligibility for *jñāna* and *karma* on three grounds.

First of all, he has the *ability* for acquiring knowledge not only of the things of the world, but also of the supreme Being which is the source and support of all beings, since he is equipped with the mind which, being inspired by the Self, is capable of comprehend-

ing everything including the highest reality. A text of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says: "Only by the mind is it (*i.e.* Brahman) to be perceived."<sup>14</sup> The most wonderful instrument that man is in possession of is the mind. It all depends on the condition of the mind — whether it is controlled and purified or whether it is chaotic and perturbed. A chaotic mind which strays from the right path and wanders among the objects of the world brings disaster to man; but when it is controlled and purified along with the body and the senses, and when it has the benefit of the teachings of the scripture and the guidance of the teacher, it opens the door to liberation.<sup>15</sup> Unlike other creatures, man has the ability to understand scripture and follow it; and scripture is the authority both for the performance of religious duties and for our knowledge of the highest reality.<sup>16</sup>

Secondly, man has the distinctive quality of *desiring* certain ends as a result of discrimination, deliberation, and choice. Man cognizes something, desires it, and is engaged in activity with a view to fulfil his desire. The sequence of cognition, desire, and action, that is to say, cognition leading to desire, and desire culminating in overt action, is characteristic of man's goal-seeking activity. By virtue of the knowledge he possesses man can discriminate between, what the *Upaniṣad*<sup>17</sup> calls, the pleasant and the good, *preyas* and *śreyas*, and choose that end which is conducive to his liberation. In the words of the *Upaniṣad*, "Both the good and the pleasant approach a man. The wise man, pondering over them, discriminates. The wise one chooses the good in preference to the pleasant. The simple-minded, for the sake of the worldly well-being, prefers the pleasant."<sup>18</sup>



Thirdly, when a man exercises his choice on the basis of the knowledge of the objects presented to him, he is not indifferent to the object of his choice. On the contrary, he is earnest about it. He is in search of the right means to realize the end chosen by him. On the basis of his understanding of the means-end continuum he endeavours to adjust the means to the end. So non-indifference to the goal and the means thereto is characteristic of man.

To sum up: man's pre-eminence among all creatures of the world is due to his eligibility for knowledge and action; and his eligibility for these two is due to his ability, his desire for results, and his conscious involvement in the search for the appropriate means to the attainment of the end.<sup>19</sup> In support of this view Śaṅkara quotes a text of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*<sup>20</sup> which says: "In man alone is the Self most manifest for he is the best endowed with knowledge. He speaks what he knows; he sees what he knows; he knows what will happen tomorrow; he knows the higher and the lower worlds; he aspires to achieve immortality through perishable things. He is thus endowed (with discrimination) while other beings have consciousness of hunger and thirst, only." The Indian *darśanas* hold the view that man alone is capable of pursuing the highest value, *viz.* *mokṣa*, by the cultivation of virtues such as purity, self-control, dispassion, and non-violence, by the practice of *dharma* and *bhakti*, and by the attainment of the right knowledge of the supreme reality.

## VI

In the context of the fast spreading "Theology of Religion" in the West as well as in India, it is neces-

sary consider the role of Indian philosophy for the liberation of man. As philosophies of life, the Indian *darśanas* are concerned with the freedom or liberation of man. Influenced by the spiritual orientation of the classical philosophies, the leaders of the Renaissance movements from the beginning of the 19th century clarified, reaffirmed, and vindicated, each in his own way, the spiritual orientation of the classical *darśanas*. The word "spiritual" is allergic to some contemporary technical philosophers in India as well as outside India, though there is nothing absurd, weird, and unearthly about spiritualism as taught in the classical *darśanas*. It is wrong to think that spiritualism is outside the scope of philosophy. Since religion presuppose ethics which forms an integral part of the study of philosophy, there is no reason why spiritualism which is an integral component of religion should not form an integral part of philosophy. Without decrying the Indian spiritualist tradition by studying it superficially from a distance as many contemporary analytical philosophers study metaphysics in a piecemeal way remaining as far away as possible from it, one should try to understand the nature and role of spiritualism in the right perspective against the background of the philosophy of man formulated by the Indian *darśanas*. Discerning scholars who are acquainted with the philosophical tradition of India and its impact on modern and contemporary India and who cannot be accused of any partiality for India hold the view that spiritual life still exists in India, notwithstanding the storms of political agitation which may hide it at the surface. This should not be construed to mean that Indian philosophy is superior to Western



philosophy, or that spiritualism is the monopoly of India.

A brief reference may be made to the philosophy of man as formulated by the Indian *darśanas* before analysing the presuppositions of the concept of freedom. The Indian *darśanas* with the exception of Buddhism which is supposed to advocate the no-*ātman* theory hold the view that man is a complex entity consisting of spirit and matter, the self and its psycho-physical vesture. What binds or limits the spiritual principle is the psycho-physical part, what may be called the mind-sense-body adjunct, with which it is associated. This, however, does not mean that the body is something to be despised and ignored. While emphasizing the role and value of the mind-sense-body complex for intellectual training and moral-cum-spiritual discipline, the Indian mind has always subordinated it to the spiritual principle. It cannot think of a better way of explaining the subordination of the body to the self than the one successfully attempted by Rāmānuja whose definition of the body (*śarīra*) has become a *locus classicus*. Rāmānuja says that the body is one which is controlled by the self, which is supported by the self, and which exists to subserve the purpose of the self.<sup>21</sup> The distinction between the spirit and the body, which is an important feature in the philosophy of man as set forth by the *darśana* is intended not only for the subordination of the latter to the former, but also for the gradual dissociation of the spirit from the body. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*<sup>22</sup> works out a hierarchy of things with the *Puruṣa* or the self at the top and the senses at the bottom. It says: "The sense-objects are higher than

the senses; the mind is higher than the sense-objects; but the intellect is higher than the mind; and *Hiranyagarbha* is higher than the intellect. The Unmanifest is higher than *Hiranyagarbha*. The *Puruṣa* is higher than the Unmanifest. There is nothing higher than the *Puruṣa*, who is the culmination, the highest goal." Like Plato, the Indian *darśanas* recommend the dissociation of the spirit from the body through the cultivation of detachment for achieving liberation.

A little reflection on the presuppositions of the concept of freedom will help us to see that the Indian mind, while placing *mokṣa* or spiritual freedom at the apex of the hierarchy of values, has not ignored or minimized the importance of other values. There are many kinds of freedom — political freedom, economic freedom, religious freedom, and so on. The enumeration of the different kinds of freedom shows that the life-activity of man is many-sided and that the achievement of each one of these freedoms is indispensable for the spiritual perfection he aims at. Just as a man should be free to choose his own form of government, to acquire material goods, to profess and practise his religion, and so on, even so he should be free to seek and abide in the spirit. It means that man demands freedom in his entire life-activity for the pursuit of values ranging from bodily and economic values at one end and spiritual freedom at the other.

The pursuit of values implies the following presuppositions. *First of all*, since man has the competence for the performance of works and the pursuit of knowledge, he is a moral person or a moral agent. He has this competence, because he is in possession of will and reason. In a passage which looks like a para-



phrase of Śaṅkara's statement about the special competence of man to which reference was already made, T.H. Green says that "the condition of a moral life is the possession of will and reason."<sup>23</sup> By "will" he means the capacity in him to action as determined by his conception of perfection; and by "reason" he means the capacity in him of conceiving the perfection to be attained by action. Man cannot pursue values of any kind unless he is a moral person, that is to say, unless he is in possession of will and reason. *Secondly*, a moral person is capable of rights. He acquires this capacity for rights by virtue of his membership in society. *Thirdly*, every right is a claim implicit in, and deducible from, the highest good — call it perfection or spiritual freedom — he aims at. *Fourthly*, to say that he is capable of rights is to say that he ought to have them. In the absence of these rights he ceases to be a moral person. Without these rights he cannot pursue *artha* and *kāma*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*. *Fifthly*, a moral person should have the guarantee of justice being rendered to him. Justice in the ethical sense means giving *every* man the indispensable conditions for reaching the goal. It, therefore, implies equality; and equality means equal opportunities to everyone for the fulfilment of man's vocation as a moral being, for the achievement of perfection by himself and others. *Lastly*, the goal which he has conceived through the capacity of reason in him is the same for all.

These presuppositions are implicit in the theory of freedom formulated in the Indian *darśanas* and the Western philosophy of idealism. What is to be noted here is that the theory of freedom as conceived by

these philosophies which are spiritualistic in the best sense of the term, considers man in three dimensions — individual, social, and spiritual. The first two dimensions which are inseparable point to the third one as their culmination; and the achievement of the third dimension is grounded on the first two. It means that the Indian *dārśanikas* and the Western idealists are not dealing with empty freedom and abstract individual. Freedom which they advocate is *graduated* as it is related to values which are hierarchically structured. It is fully *positive* as it has a content — be it a material value or a spiritual value — for whose realization it is claimed and exercised, and not just negative in the sense of freedom from something. It may be noted that to accept a material value does not necessarily mean that it has to be treated as an end in itself.

In the course of the discussion of the problem of freedom in Indian philosophy Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya observes that the Indian philosophers have failed to arrive at “a positive conception of freedom adequate for our present requirements.”<sup>24</sup> He is thoroughly dissatisfied with the theory of freedom advocated by both the idealists and realists in Indian philosophy, though he admits that the former have worked out “a coherent conception of freedom, *i.e.* a conception in full conformity with their stand in epistemology and ontology.”<sup>25</sup> He argues that the idealist conception of freedom is negative on the ground that it undermines the reality of nature, “instead of understanding and thereby mastering it.” Advaita, for example, has not undermined the reality of nature or the world. On the contrary, it holds that



the world is not as real as the Absolute. The Advaitin is second to none in emphasizing the value and significance of the empirical realm (*vyāvahārika*) in all aspects of our business of life — economic and social, cultural and spiritual. He is very much interested in understanding the world. He does claim to know and understand the world. That is why he sizes up its ontological status *vis-a-vis* that of the Absolute. To put it in the right place in the ontological hierarchy is not to undermine its reality any more than it is when one places bodily and economic values in the right order in the axiological hierarchy. If to ignore a higher value and indulge in a lower one is a moral evil, then to ignore the claim of a higher reality and be submerged in the lower one is metaphysical blindness. It is wrong to think that we have to understand nature or the world for the purpose of “mastering” it. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya is impressed by the “staggering” progress of the Western science and technology which have enabled men to enjoy “endless mastery over physical nature,”<sup>26</sup> while the best minds of the West in recent times are concerned about the disastrous consequences that have arisen as a result of man’s diabolic desire for the conquest of nature. According to him, freedom in the positive sense consists in the mastery over nature; and the prophets of this new vision of freedom, he declares, were Bacon and Descartes, whose views he approvingly quotes.<sup>27</sup> While Bacon thought that “the propagator of man’s empire over the universe” would be the benefactor of the human race, Descartes desires that men should become “the masters and possessors of nature.” It is a pity that some technical philosophers in India and outside claiming expertise of Indian philosophy

exhort Indian philosophers, who are alleged to be in dogmatic slumbers coming under the spell of the tradition of *darśanas*, to become progressive and creative by responding to the fast-developing knowledge made available by Western science and technology, while they are nonchalant to the danger of self-destruction resulting from uncontrolled science and technology of which the recent Bhopal tragedy is a timely warning. Dinesh Mathur, for example, while criticising the philosophy of "transcendence" and "withdrawal" in the old-fashioned way, suggests by way of providing direction to Indian philosophy that it has "to adapt itself to the cumulative growing knowledge made possible by the rise of science and technology."<sup>28</sup> Competent scholars like Henryk Skolimowski tell us that the replacement of the Promethean technology by the Faustian one in the West has become a danger to mankind.<sup>29</sup>

Let us not in the name of science and technology decry the spiritualist tradition of Indian philosophy. Let us not in the name of a new theory of freedom which is vacuous and misconceived throw away a valuable theory of freedom which, by integrating man with society, uplifts him spiritually. Let us not in the name of creativity either ignore the Indian *darśanas* or misinterpret them as it is done in recent times by those who have developed a new love for Indian philosophy.

### NOTES

1. See Vācaspati, *Tattva-kaumudī*, commentary on the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, v. 4.



2. Swami Agehananda Bharati, *A Functional Analysis of Indian Thought and its Social Margins* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1964), p. 41.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
5. W. H. Walsh, *Metaphysics* (London: Hutchinson University Library, Second impression, 1966), p. 108.
6. See Sureśvara, *Naiṣkarmysiddhi*, 3. 34.
7. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* 3. 38.
8. Daya Krishna, "Three Conceptions of Indian Philosophy", *Philosophy East and West* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press), Volume XV, No. 1 January 1965, p. 50.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
10. See Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, 1.1.1
11. See Rajendra Prasad, "Tradition, Freedom and Philosophical Creativity," in Rama Rao Pappu and Puligandla (Ed.), *Indian Philosophy: Past and Future* (Delhi: Motilal, 1982), pp. 291-313, for his criticism of what he calls the ST conception advocated by Radhakrishnan, K. C. Battacharya, and others.
12. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Tr G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford, 1961), § 43: "The meaning of a word is its use in the language."
13. R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford, 1952), p. 150.
14. 4. 4. 19.
15. See Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, 2. 21.

16. *Bhagavad-gītā*, 16. 23-24.

17. *Keṭha Upaniṣad*, 1.2.1

18. *Ibid.* 1.2.2.

19. See Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.1.1. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.4.5 explains the causal nexus from "desire" to the "goal" as follows: "What it desires, it resolves; what it resolves, it works out; and what it works out, it attains."

20. 2.3.2.5.

21. Rāmānuja, *Śrībhāṣya* 2.1.9.

22. 1.3. 10-11.

23. T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (London: Longmans, New impression, 1963), § 6, p. 31.

24. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *What Is Living and Is Dead in Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1976), p. 564.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 565.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 632.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Dinesh C. Mathur, "Whither Indian Philosophy: A Search for Direction and Suggestion for Reconstruction," in Rama Rao Pappu and Puligandla (Ed.), *Indian Philosophy Past and Future*, p. 325.

29. Henryk Skolimowski *Technology and Human Destiny* (Madras: Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1980), pp. 99-100.



कदा वा हृषीकाणि साम्यं भजेयुः  
 कदा वा न शत्रुर्न मित्रं भवानि ।  
 कदा वा दुराशा विषूची विलेपः  
 कदा वा मनो मे समूलं विनश्येत् ॥

Oh Bhavāni! when will my senses receive pleasure and pain with equanimity? When shall I be without friends and foes? When will this greed of mine vanish? When will this mind of mine be destroyed from its very roots?

The Devībhujāṅgastotra (20) of Śrī Sañkara

*The Voice of Śaṅkara — INDEX to  
Volumes V — XV\**

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\* Compiled by Dr. N. Gangadharan



## (A) HOMAGE TO ŚAṄKARA

Ārambhapañkti	Author & Work	<i>Voice of Śaṅkara</i>			
		Śloka	Vol.	No.	Page
अखिलपरमहंसदेशिकम् Akhilaparamahaṁsadesikam	Nāganātha in Ātmabodhaprakaraṇa	87	VIII	1	1
अज्ञानतिमिरसंवृत Ajñānatimirasaṁvṛta	Jagadguru Śrī Sac- cidānanda-sivābhinava Nṛsimhabhāratī in Śrī-dvi- netrasambhustuti	100	IX	3	188
अथवा किं बोधयितुं Athavā kim bodhayitum	— do —	83	VII	4	142
अज्ञासुचित्तमुखकोश Annāsucittamukhakosha	Jagadguru Śrī Sac- cidānanda-sivābhinava Nṛsimhabhāratī in	126	XII XIII	4 1	 2

	Śrī- <i>śaṅkarācārya-</i> <i>padāvalambastava</i>				
अन्यैर्भिषगिभरनिवार्य <i>Anyairbhiṣagbhiranivārya</i>	— do —	136	XIV	3	1
अवतारेऽस्मिन्काम <i>Avatāre'sminkāma</i>	Jagadguru Śrī Sac- cidānanda- <i>śivābhinava</i> <i>Nṛsimhabhāratī</i> in Śrī- <i>dvi-netrasambhustuti</i>	77	VI	4	308
आकर्ण्य दीनगृहिणी <i>Ākarṇya dīnagr̥hiṇī</i>	Jagadguru Śrī Sac- cidānanda <i>Śivābhinava</i> <i>Nṛsimhabhāratī</i> in Śrī- <i>śaṅkarācārya-padāvalambastava</i>	141	XV	1	2
आत्मलाभात् परो लाभो <i>Ātmalābhāt paro lābho</i>	<i>Suresvara</i> in <i>Mānasollāsa</i>	58	V	1	2
आनेष्ट दूरगनदीं <i>Āneṣṭa dūraganadīm</i>	Śrī- <i>śaṅkarācārya</i> <i>padāvalambastava</i>	142	XV	2-3	1



आस्तिक्यरत्नमिह Āstikyaratnamiha	— do —	133	XIII	4	2	iv
इह खलु सर्वज्ञो Iha khalu sarvajño	Svayamprakāśayati in his commentary on Dakṣiṇā- mūrtistotra	60	V	1	2	
ओङ्कारपङ्कजमधुव्रत Oṅkārapaṅkajamadhuvrata	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalamba- suvarṇamālāstuti	88	VIII	2	121	
ओङ्कारार्थविवोधनचतुरं Oṅkārarthavibodhana- caturam	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstavarāja	106	X	2	83	
ओमिति दिविषत्प्रवराः Omiti diviṣatpravarāḥ	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstava	76	VI	4	307	
कन्येव रूपगुणशालिनम् Kanyeva rūpaguṇasālinam		103	X	1	1	

कमलोद्भवरूपान्तर Kamalodbhavarūpāntara	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstavarāja	110	X	3-4	176
कम्बुस्तपञ्जलान्तन Kambustapañjalāntarna	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstava	95	IX	1	2
करिष्यत्यवताराणि Kariṣyatyavatārāṇi	Śivarahasya	64	V	3	203
कृपासागरायाशु Kṛpāsāgarāyāśu	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayāstotra	113	XI	2	101
क्लेशान्निवार्यं कृपया Kleśānnivārya kṛpayā	Jagadguru Śrī Sac- cidānanda-sivābhinava Nṛsimha-bhāratī in Śrī- śaṅkarācārya-padāvalamba- stava	127	XII XIII	4 1	2
चिदानन्दरूपाय Cidānandarūpāya	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayātā-stotra	114	XI	2	102



छिन्नोऽपि शस्त्रनिचयैः Chinno'pi śastranicayaḥ	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalambastava	135	XIV	1-2	2	1
जटाजुटमध्ये Jaṭājūṭamadhye	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayāta-stotra	115	XI	3	199	
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द्वे विद्ये श्रुतिमध्ये Dve vidye śrutimadhye	Śrī-dvīnetra- śambhustuti	92	VIII	4	347	
नखेन्दुप्रभाधूत Nakhenduprabhādhūta	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayāta- stotra	116	XI	3	200	
नतानां हृदब्जानि Natānām hṛdabjāni	— do —	119	XII	1	1	
नत्वा पदाम्बुजनियुग्ममहो Natvā padāmbuja- niyugmamaho	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padavalamba- suarṇamālāstuti	89	VIII	2	122	

नत्वा यत्पदयुग्मं Natvā yatpadayugmam	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstava	78	VII	1,2 & 3	1
नमाम्यभोगिपरिवारसंपदं Namāmyabhogiparivāra- sampadam	Śrī Padmapādācārya in Pañcapādikā	90	VIII	3	229
नयनजितपङ्कजातं Nayanajitapaṅkajātam	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- suvarṇamālāstavavarāja	107	X	2	83
नाकादिलोकविरतिः Nākadilokaviratiḥ	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalambastava	125	XII XIII	4 1	 1
नेतारं जगतां किल Netāraṁ jagatāṁ kila	Śrī-dvīnetrasambhu- stuti	98	IX	2	86
प्रणम्रान्तरङ्गाब्ज Praṇamrāntaraṅgābja	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayātaṣṭotra	117	XI	4	277
प्रणम्रास्यपाथोज Praṇamrāsyapāthoja	— do —	118	XI	4	278



प्रभाघृतचन्द्रायुताखिलेष्ट Prabhādhūta-candrāyutākḥileṣṭa	— do —	120	XII	1	1	viii
प्राणैर्विहीनतनयं Prāṇairvihīnatanayam	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalambastava	129	XIII	2	2	
बद्ध्वा त्वदङ्घ्रिसरसीरुह Baddhvā tvadaṅghrisarasīruha	— do —	128	XIII	2	1	
बाह्यं तथान्तरञ्च Bāhyam̐ tathāntarañca	Śrī-dvīnetrasambhu- stuti	94	IX	1	1	
भट्टादिभास्करसितेतर Bhaṭṭādibhāskara-sitetara	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalambastava	130	XIII	3	1	
भवाम्भोधिमग्नान् Bhavāmbhodhimagnān	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprāyatastotra	124	XII	3	210	
भाष्याख्यपुष्परस Bhāṣyākhyapuṣparasa	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalambastava	132	XIII	4	1	

मतेर्वेदशीर्षाध्व Matarvedas'irṣādhva	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- bhujāṅgaprayāstotra	122	XII	2	116
मत्तो मनः प्रभव Matto manaḥ prabhava	Śrī-śaṅkarācārya- padāvalamba-suvarṇa- mālāstuti	101	IX	4	299
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## BRAHMAN IS REAL

श्लोकार्धेन प्रवक्ष्यामि  
यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।  
ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या  
जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

Let me put it in a hemistich what has been stated in about a crore of works; Brahman is Real; world is *mithyā* (unreal); and *jīva* (the self) is Brahman itself and nothing else.

## ABOUT THE PUBLISHERS

The Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre was established in 1975 under the guidance and with the blessings of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Kāñcī Kāmakōṭi Pīṭha. The main objectives of the Centre, among other things, are:

- (1) to undertake the carrying on a scientific research for the extension of knowledge in the fields of Natural and Applied Sciences generally, and in particular in the fields of Physics and Metaphysics.
- (2) to undertake and carry on scientific study and analysis of the Advaita system of thought as expounded by Ādi Śaṅkara and to conduct research as regards the relevance of his teaching in solving present day ills of mankind.
- (3) to undertake, promote, and encourage the study of ancient philosophical systems of India.
- (4) to undertake research for the purposes of establishing norms necessary for realising the divinity in man through moral, spiritual and cultural infrastructure.

THE VOICE OF ŚAṅKARA (ŚAṅKARA-BHĀRATĪ) is the half-yearly journal published by the Centre in pursuance of its main objectives.

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Editor : Dr. R. Balasubramanian. Published by: Mr. C. N. Ramachandran on behalf of Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre, 8-A, Bishop Wallers Avenue (West) Near C. I. T. Colony, Mylapore, Madras-600 004. Printed by: Mr. V. Seshachalam, Avvai Achukkoodam, Madras-600 013.



संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्धूतदाहव्यथा-

खिन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।

अत्यासन्नसुधाम्बुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-

न्त्येषा शङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*samsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūtadāhavyathā-*  
*khinnānāṃ jalakāṅkṣayā marubhuvi bhrāntyā*

*paribhrāmyatām*

*atyāsannasudhāmbudhiṃ sukhakaram brahmādvayaṃ*

*darśayant-*

*yeṣā 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.