

A HALF-YEARLY JOURNAL OF ADVAITA VEDANTA

The VOICE of ŚĀṆKARA

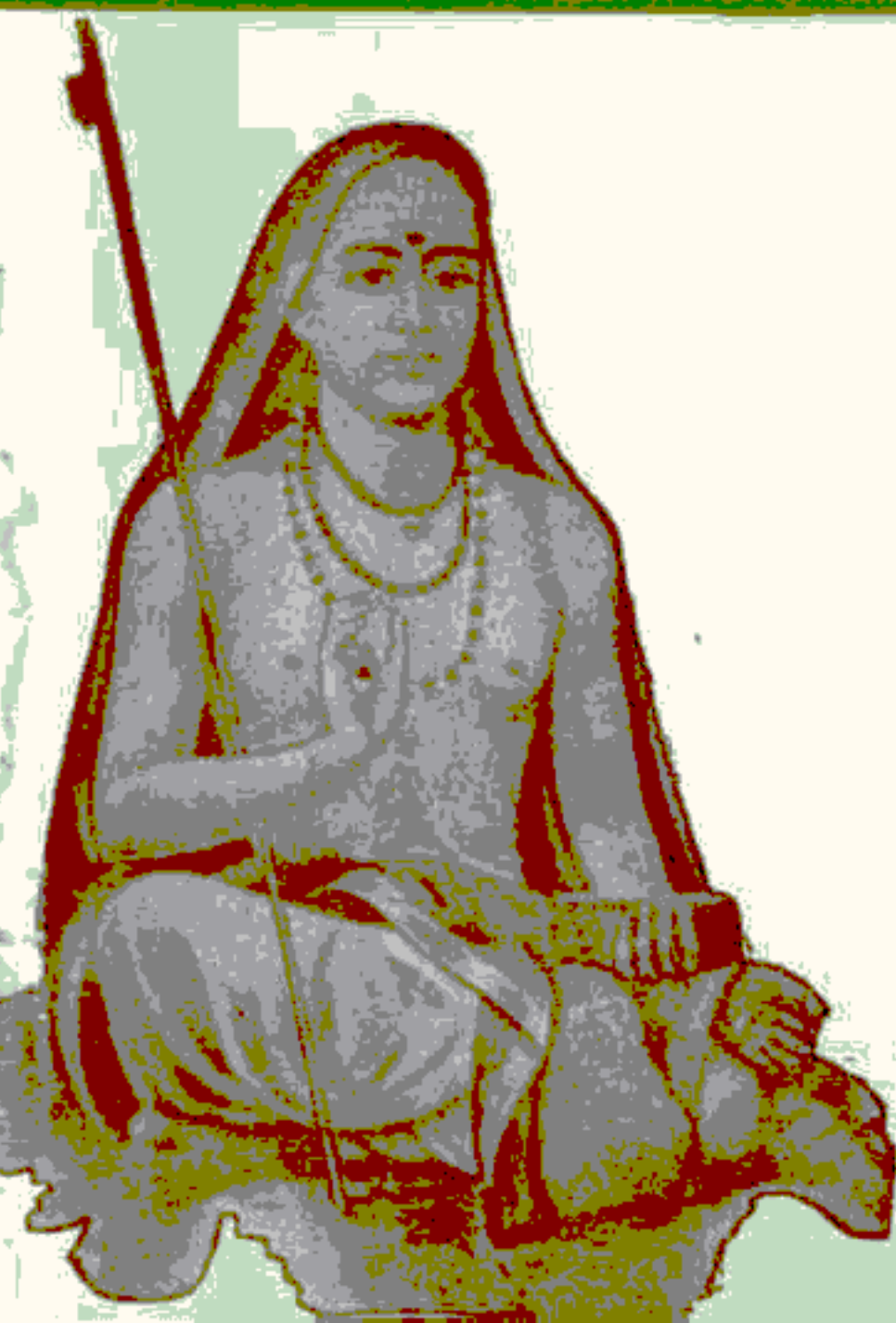
śaṅkara-bhāratī

Chairman, Advisory Board

V. R. Kalyanasundara Sastri

Editor

R. Balasubramanian



Volume 23 No 1

January 1998

esā śaṅkara-bhāratī vijagate
nirvāṇa-saṁdāyini

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

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Gananjali and ghoshti ganam by musicians at the Brindavanam of Shri Mahaswamigal on 26.12.97.





The Acharyas giving darshan on the 4th Annual Aradhana day of Shri Mahaswamigal on 26.12.97.



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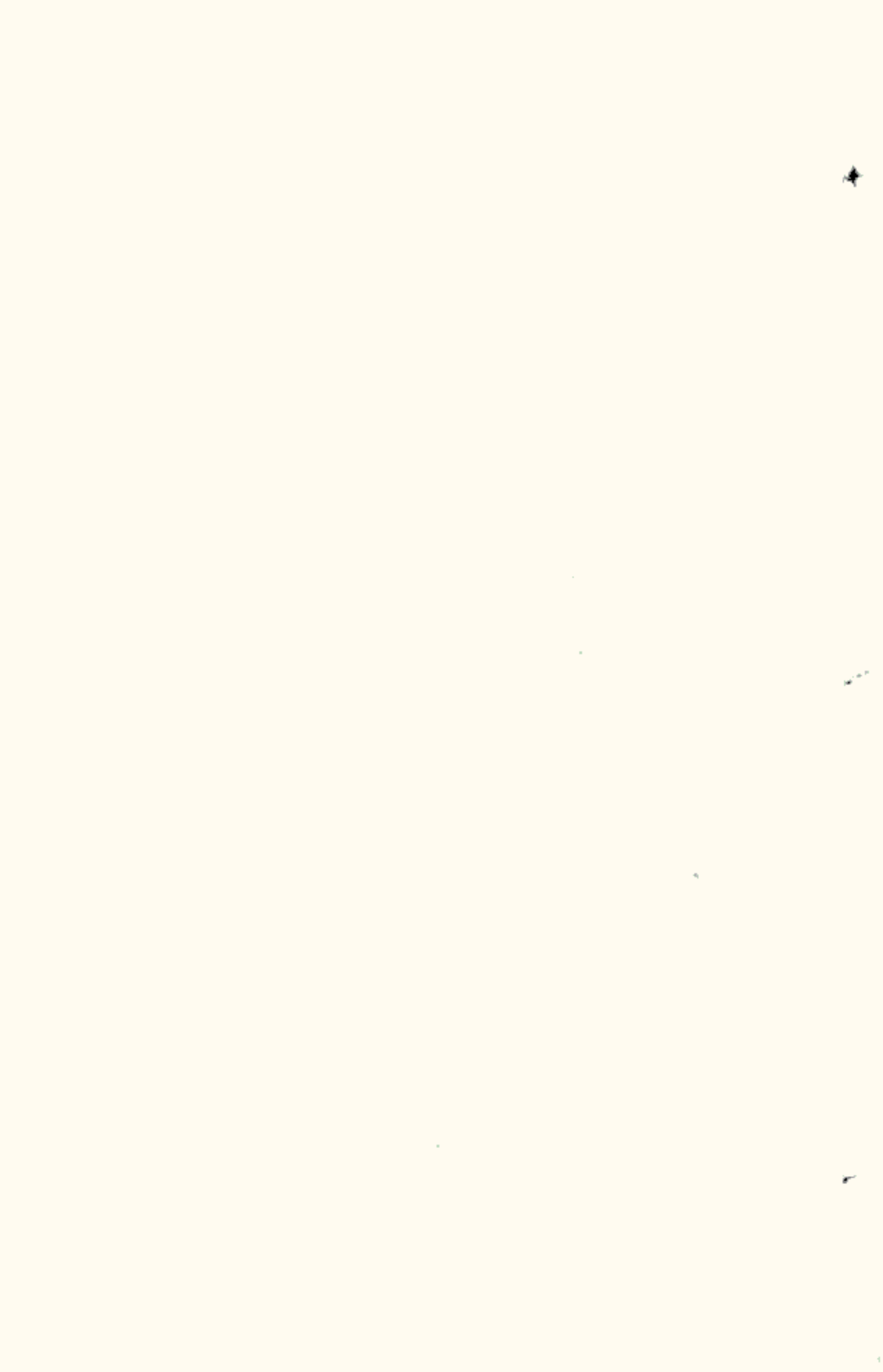
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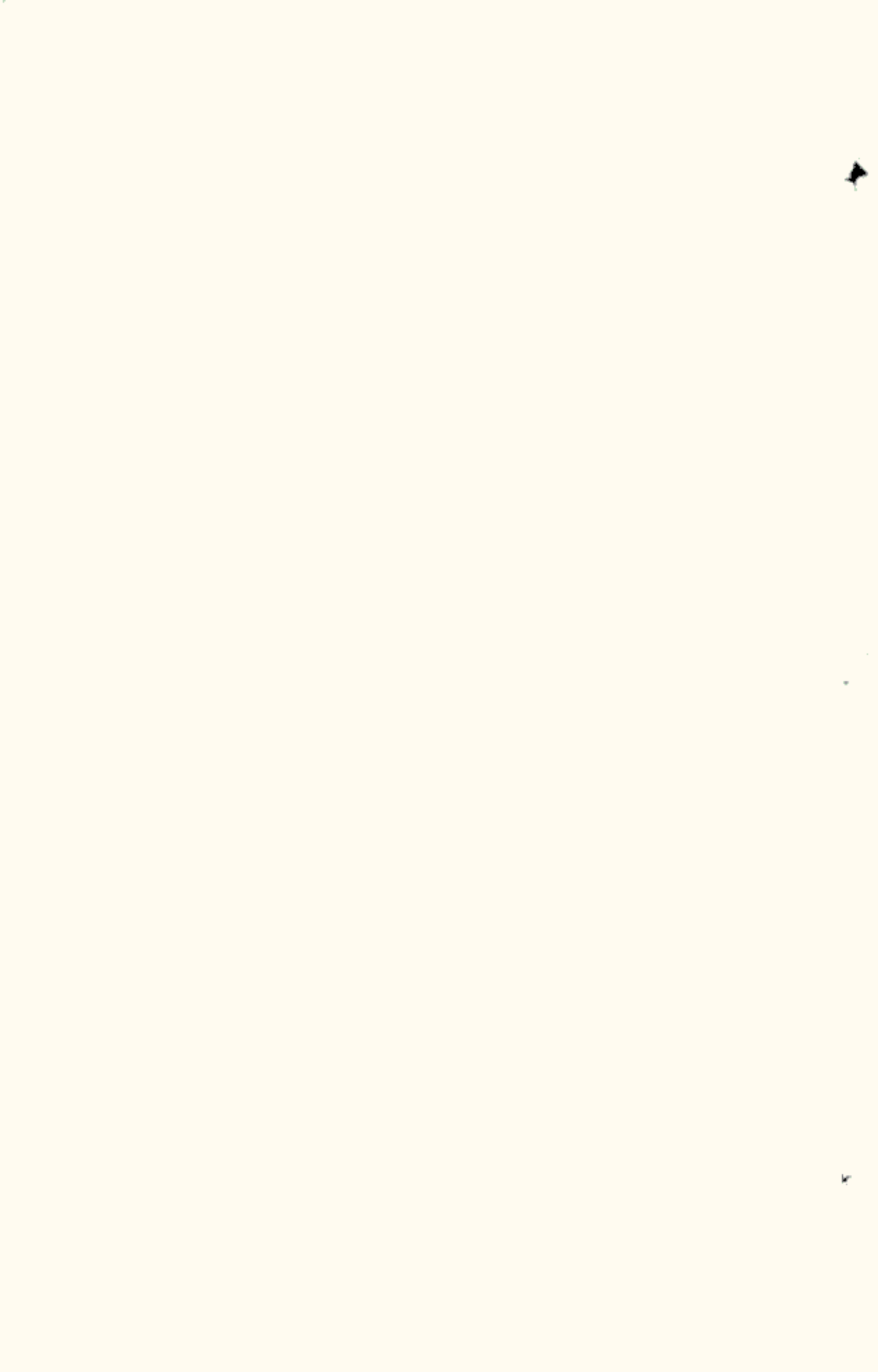
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Former President Shri R. Venkataraman receiving a Souvenir from His Holiness Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati on 26.12.97



HOMAGE TO ŚAṆKARA

[172]

नत्वा यत्पदयुगमं
 वाचस्पतिगर्वहारिवाक्ततयः ।
 प्रभवन्ति हि भुवि मूकाः
 तमहं प्रणमामि शङ्कराचार्यम् ॥

natvā yatpadayugmaṁ
vācaspati-garvahāri-vāktatayaḥ
prabhavanti hi bhuvi mūkāḥ
tamaham praṇamāmi śaṅkarācāryam.

I bow down at the holy pair of feet of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya; by prostrating at the pair of feet of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya even the dumb on this earth begin to utter a series of words, and thus the dumb vanquish the pride of Bṛhaspati, the foremost preceptor of gods.

Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānandaśivābhinava Nṛsiṃhabhārati
 in Śrī Śaṅkarācārya-suvarṇamālāstava

[173]

समताबोधाय नृणां
 पदपाथोजप्रणम्राणाम् ।
 गिरिजेनाद्य कृपातः
 त्यक्ता वा विषमलोचनता ॥

samatābodhāya nṛṇām
padapāthoja-praṇamrāṇām
girijenādya kṛpātaḥ
tyaktā vā viṣamalocanatā.

Indeed, Lord Śiva has given up now the state of possessing three eyes (odd number of eyes) [i.e. in His advent as Śrī Śaṅkarācārya] through His benign grace to teach equanimity of mind to the devotees who resort to His pair of lotus feet.

Jagadguru Śrī Saccidānandaśivābhinava Nṛsiṁhabhārati
 in Śrī Dvīnetraśambhustuti



Justice Ranganath Mishra, former Chairman of Human Rights Commission at the Aradhana celebrations.



THUS SPAKE ŚAṆKARA*

Background

Those who are free from desire and anger, who have renounced all actions, and who have attained right knowledge obtain instant liberation. But those who resort to *karma-yoga*, i.e. who perform *karma* in complete devotion and as an offering to the Lord attain *mokṣa* step by step. It means that *karma-yoga* is a remote means (*bahiraṅga-sādhana*) to liberation. But *dhyāna-yoga*, i.e. yoga of meditation, is the proximate means (*antaraṅga-sādhana*) to liberation. The Lord teaches *dhyāna-yoga* in the concluding verses (27-28) of Chapter V, which say:

Keeping out all external contacts and fixing the eye between the eye-brows, equalising the outgoing and incoming breaths which pass through the nostrils, controlling the senses, the mind, and the intellect, being free from desire, fear, and anger, keeping *mokṣa* as the highest goal,—the sage who remains like this always is, indeed, liberated.

* Readings from Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Chapters VI and VII compiled by R. Balasubramanian

Śaṅkara observes that the entire sixth chapter is a commentary on the above verses which briefly explain *dhyāna-yoga*. One who practises *dhyāna-yoga* attains the right knowledge and thereby gets liberated. A *dhyāna-yogin* has nothing else to do for attaining liberation. (*etasmin dhyānayoge kṛte sati jñānaprāpti-dvārā mokṣasya bhaviṣyatvāt na anyo mokṣopāyaḥ anuṣṭheyaḥ iti bhāvaḥ*—Rāmarāyakavi)

Renunciation in Action

Karma is a remote aid to *dhyāna-yoga*; and a householder on whom action is enjoined should perform it till he is able to attain to *dhyāna-yoga*. Keeping this idea in mind the Lord praises the performance of *karma* in the opening verse (6.1).

He who is thus free from a desire for the fruits of actions and performs action, such as the *agnihotra* or fire-sacrifice as obligatory duty (*nitya-karma*),—not as a *kāmya-karma* or action done with a motive, as a means of attaining some immediate specific end in view,—he who performs actions thus is superior to those who perform actions in a different spirit. With a view to impress this truth, the Lord says that he is a Sannyāsin and a Yogin. He should be regarded as possessing both the attributes, the attributes of renunciation (*sannyāsa*) and steadfastness of mind (*yoga*). Not he alone should be regarded as a Sannyāsin and Yogin who is without fire and without action, i.e. who neither lights sacrificial fires nor engages in other actions, such as austerities and the like which require no help of sacrificial fires.

THUS SPAKE ŚAṄKARA

Karma and Śama: When Are They Needed?

For a devotee (*muni*) who has given up the fruit of action, and who wishes to attain to Yoga, —i.e. who has not already risen to it, who is unable to remain steady in *Dhyāna-yoga*,—action (*karma*) is said to be the means of attaining his end. For the same devotee, on the other hand, when he has attained to Yoga, quiescence—i.e. the abstaining from all action—is said to be the means (of attaining his end). The more thoroughly he abstains from action, the more free he is from trouble, the more the senses are controlled, and the more steadfast his mind remains. Then he becomes a *Yogārūḍha*, one who has attained to Yoga.

One's Friend and Enemy

Let a man lift up himself who is drowned in the ocean of bondage i.e. let him so train himself as to become a *Yogārūḍha*, let him practise and attain to Yoga. Let him not lower himself; for, he alone is the friend of himself. There is indeed no other friend that can lead to liberation from bondage; nay, the so-called friend is only inimical to him who seeks liberation, as the former forms an object of affection, which is the cause of bondage. Hence the emphasis "he alone is the friend of himself." And he alone is the enemy of himself. The other enemy who is outside is made an enemy only by himself. Hence the emphasis "he alone is the enemy of himself."

His self is the friend of himself who is self-controlled, who has brought under control the aggregate of the body and the

senses. But in the case of a man who is not self-controlled, his own self does injury to himself, just as any external foe may do injury to him.

Nature of a Yogin

When a man has subdued the aggregate of the body and the senses, when his mind (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) is tranquil, when he has renounced all actions, then the supreme Self actually becomes his own Self.

When the Yogin is satisfied with knowledge (*jñāna*) of things as taught in the scriptures, and with wisdom (*vijñāna*), i.e., with the realisation (in his own experience) of the things so taught—then he is said to be a saint (*yukta*), he is said to have attained *samādhi* or steadfastness of mind.

When the mind is restrained from all quarters by practice of Yoga, the Yogin sees the Self—the supreme consciousness and the all-resplendent Light—by the self, i.e. by the mind which has been purified by *samādhi* and attains satisfaction in the Self.

The Result of Dhyāna-yoga

The Yogin sees all beings—from Brahmā down to a blade of grass—the same; that is to say, he sees the Self and Brahman as one. He sees that whatever is pleasant to himself is pleasant to all, and that whatever is painful to himself is painful to all beings. Thus seeing... he does not cause pain to any being; he is harmless. Doing no harm and devoted to right knowledge, he is regarded as the highest among all Yogins.

Īśvara, the Source of All Beings

Know that all beings, whether formed of *sattva* or of *rajas*, or of *tamas*, and which come into existence as the result of the respective *karma* of living beings, proceed from the Lord. Though they thus proceed from the Lord, the latter is not subject to them like mortal beings (*saṁsārins*). On the other hand, they are subject to Him: they are dependent on Him.

How to Overcome Māyā?

This illusion (*māyā*), formed of *guṇas*, is inherent in Viṣṇu, the Lord. Such being the case, those who abandon all formal religion (*dharma*) and completely devote themselves to the Lord, their own Self, the Lord of illusion, they cross over the illusion which deludes all living beings: they are liberated from the bondage of *saṁsāra*.

Yoga-māyā

The Lord says: I am not manifest to all people; that is to say, I am manifest only to a few who are my devotees. I am veiled by *yoga-māyā*. *Yoga-māyā* is the *māyā* which is none other than the Yoga or union of the three *guṇas*. Or, Yoga is the firm will of the Lord or Īśvara. The illusion or veil thereby spread is called *yoga-māyā*. Therefore, being deluded, people do not know Me as unborn and imperishable.

The *yoga-māyā* by which I am veiled and on account of which people do not recognise Me, is Mine, i.e., subject to My

control, and as such, it cannot obstruct My knowledge—the knowledge of Īsvara, of the possessor (or wielder) of the *māyā*, just as the glamour (*māyā*) caused by a juggler (*māyāvin*) does not obstruct his own knowledge.

Delusion of Pairs

The very desire and aversion which are opposed to each other like heat and cold, and which, arising in connection with pleasure and pain and their causes, occur to every being in its turn, are known as pairs (*dvandva*). Now, when desire and aversion arise on the occurrence of pleasure and pain or of the causes thereof, they cause delusion in all beings and create obstruction to the rise of the knowledge of the supreme Reality, the Self, by overwhelming the intelligence of those beings. To one whose mind is subject to the passions of desire and aversion, there cannot, indeed, arise a knowledge of things as they are, even of the external world; and it needs no saying that to a man whose intellect is over-powered by passion, there cannot arise a knowledge of the inward Self, inasmuch as there are many obstacles in its way. All creatures are born subject to this delusion. Hence, every being has its intelligence obscured by the delusion of pairs; and thus deluded it knows not that the Lord is the Self, and therefore worships Him not as the Self.

ON THE VEDAS*

H.H. Śrī Candrasekharaendra Sarasvatī

1. *Preservation of the Vedas*

All of us take care to keep our bodies and our clothes clean. But do we bestow any attention on our inner or mental cleanliness? Inner purity is the result of desire, anger, and fear. It is common knowledge that when one is in the presence of one's mother, one keeps all evil thoughts under control. Similarly, in the presence of the Divine Mother, we can control our evil thoughts. We can cleanse our hearts only by *dhyāna-tīrtha* (holy water of meditation) of the Divine Mother. When the heart is so cleansed, it will learn to distinguish the real from the unreal, which will result in the end of births. A day spent without a conscious attempt to clean one's heart, is a day wasted. Impurity of cloth or body will lead to diseases which will last only for one

* Courtesy: *Ācārya's Call*, Madras Discourses (1957- 1960) Part I (from the discourses delivered by H.H. the Paramācārya at Madras, October 1957 - January 1958) pp. 1-14, published by Śrī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭham Śrī Śaṅkarācārya Svāmi Matha, Kanchipuram - 631 502.

life-time. But impurity of heart will lead to diseases which will afflict the soul for several births.

God or *Paramātman* is only one, and we worship that God as Father, Mother or Teacher of the Universe. The Vedic religion, which is popularly known as Hindu religion, emphasises this fact. God in the form of Divine Mother, is a personification of kindness and love and he who worships at Her divine feet will secure mental peace quickly. Desires only increase by fulfilment. Desires can be overcome by *śānti* and mental discipline. Let us surrender ourselves at the holy feet of the Divine Mother and purify ourselves with her *dhyāna-tīrtha*, and thus free ourselves from desires, diseases and births.

There are two main sects among Christians. But the name of the God and the Holy Book of the Christian religion are common to both. The same is the case with the Muslims. So far as the Hindus are concerned, there are apparently two Gods and two Holy Books, according to whether one is a Śaivite or a Vaiṣṇavite – the *Tirumurai* and the *Prabandham*. But the basis for both Śaivism and Vaishnavism is the *Vedas*; and according to the *Vedas*, there is only one God, the God about Whom the *Vedas* sing. If we had been classified as Śaivites, Vaiṣṇavites, and so on, the whole country would have been balkanised. We should, therefore, bear in mind the fact that the *Vedas* form the basis for our religion and that there is only one God. Failure to realise this fact will only lead to the weakening, and finally the disintegration, of Hindu society.

This takes us to the question of preserving the *Vedas* in their pristine purity. The *Vedas* are not preserved in writing and

the Tamil term *marai* (hidden) for the *Vedas* is very appropriate. The *Vedas* are like the roots of a tree. The different sects are like its flowers and fruits, all deriving their sustenance from the roots. Fortunately, we have the good tradition of the *Vedas* and the *Vedāṅgas* being handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, and happily for the entire world, the *Vedas* have been preserved in their pristine purity, especially in the South.

The importance of Sanskrit is due to the fact that it is the language of the *Vedas*. There is evidence to prove the influence of Sanskrit in Far-Eastern countries like Indonesia and even in places like Persia. She once occupied the place of an international language. The *Vedas* must be preserved in the Sanskrit language and not in translation, because the spirit will get diluted in the process of translation. Though there may be translations, a reference to original will become necessary, when difficulty arises in interpretation. We can trace the basis for all religions to the *Vedas*. For the preservation of the *Vedas*, it is necessary that some people devote their entire time for Vedic study. That is how the *Vedas* were preserved in the past and were handed down to succeeding generations by oral transmission. A community will cease to exist the moment it loses sight of its purpose in the society. The purpose of the Brahmin community is to learn, preserve and hand over to posterity, the *Vedas* and the *Vedāṅgas*.

October 5, 1957

2. Vyāsa and Vedic Religion

Sage Vyāsa is known as Veda Vyāsa, as he classified and compiled together, the vast body of the *Vedas* or *mantras*

then existing. He classified the *Vedas* into four, namely the *Ṛg-veda*, *Yajur-veda*, *Sāma-veda* and *Atharvaṇa-veda* and taught them respectively to four great *Ṛsis* – Sumantu, Vaiśampāyana, Jaimini and Paila. *Mantras* are present around us as sound waves, and they are without beginning or end. As a radio set picks up a broadcast sound, so also these great *Ṛsis* by their yogic power, were able to comprehend and master these sound waves vibrating around them. One meaning of the word *Ṛsi* is that person who has seen the *mantras* (*Ṛṣayo mantra-draṣṭārah*). Yoga power endowed their minds the forms of these *mantras*, even as Arjuna was able to see before him the *viśvarūpa* of the Lord. The *Vedas* have thus come down to us in their original form by the process of oral transmission from *guru* to *śiṣya*. The *Vedas* have to be learnt by competent persons in an attitude of devotion, and with due observances of austerities and preserved for posterity.

Sage Vyāsa also composed the eighteen *Purāṇas* which contain the purport of the *Vedas* and asked Sūta, a sage revered for his knowledge and devotion, to teach them to the world. The next great service that Śrī Vyāsa did was to write a compendium of *sūtras*. The *Brahma-sūtras* were interpreted by the great Ācāryas, who came later, in their commentaries or *Bhāṣyas*. The commentaries most widely read are those of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara, Śrī Rāmānuja, and Śrī Madhva. Whatever doctrinal differences may have arisen in later times, we should not forget that the authority or the source of these commentaries is the *Brahma-sūtras* of Śrī Veda Vyāsa. India has evoked the esteem and admiration of other countries for this remarkable achievement in the realm of spiritual culture and metaphysical thinking. It is our duty to adore the great Sage Vyāsa, who has made available to us the

Vedas and remember with gratitude the great *Rṣis* who preserved them and passed them on to posterity in their original purity by this process of oral transmission.

In addition to the text of the *Vedas*, we have the body of the *Dharma Śāstras* which tell us what we should do and should not do, to qualify ourselves for the study of the *Vedas* and which tell us how to practise our religion. They are also known as the *Smṛtis* and are associated with the names of great *Rṣis* like Parāśara, Yājñavalkya, Manu and others. Compendiums of these *Smṛtis* known as *Dharma-śāstra-nibandhanam* have been written by later authors. In the North, the most popular *Nibandhanam* is the one written by Kāśināth Upādhyāya, while in the South, it is that written by Vaidyanātha Dīkṣitar. The *Vaidyanātha Dīkṣitīyam* is common to both Vaiṣṇavites and Śaivites. Thus the *Vedas* and the *Dharma Śāstras* are the foundation of our religion.

One important difference between other religions and ours is that while other religions speak of a direct relation between man and God, our religion speaks of a mediated relation established through transcendental deities, each presiding over a particular aspect of worldly and spiritual life. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* that when Prajāpati created men, He did so associating them with the obligation to perform Yajñas or sacrifices. The Yajñas are our expression of gratitude for benefits derived. The gods accepted our offerings through the sacrificial fire and blessed us in return with all the good things of the world. As an after-dinner toast honours even an absent person in whose name it is proposed, the offerings made in the fire in a spirit of sacrifice saying "*na mama*" (not mine), being gratification to the

gods to whom they are intended. The Vedic rituals in a *yajña* are the process by which whatever is offered with a sense of renunciation is transmitted to the Supreme Being through the proper channel, just as taxes are paid by us to the Central Government, not directly, but through the persons or agencies authorised to collect them. According to our religion, the direct relation between man and God can be established only when one is nearest to God. Such persons are *Brahmajñānis* and *Sanyāsis*, and they do not have to do any ritual prescribed in the *smṛtis*. All others have to perform the rituals or *karma* prescribed for them.

We must perform the *deva-karma* and the *pitṛ-karma* enjoined upon us and, understanding the rationale behind such observances of *karma*, preserve the *Vedas* and the *Dharma Śāstras*, and also remember with reverence and gratitude Śrī Veda Vyāsa, the Mūla Puruṣa of our religion. October 14, 1957

3. *Nature of the Vedic Religion*

We should all strive to cultivate lofty and noble sentiments and, eschewing all bad and selfish thoughts, live in a spirit of devotion to God and love for fellow men. Human stature increases in proportion to the nobility of human thought and deed. The spirit of selfless service, the readiness to sacrifice, devotion to God, and love for and goodwill towards all, and hatred for none, are the outcome of a highly developed mind, and go by the name of culture. Culture is known as *kalā* (कला) in Sanskrit, and arts like music, painting, etc. are regarded as the outward expression of this high culture.

It is interesting to note the verbal affinity that exists between the words *kalā*, culture, *kal* (கல் the Tamil word for learn), *kalāsālā*, and college. A man of culture is kin with the whole world. He is the friend of all and enemy of none. For him the three worlds are his homeland (*svadeśo bhuvanatrāyam*, स्वदेशो भुवनत्रयम्). The culture of a people is judged by a soundness of the heart of the people taken as a whole, though there may be individuals with defects and deficiencies.

The touchstone of the culture of a nation is the inspired sayings of its immortal poets (*mahākavi*, महाकविः) whose poems have stood the test of time. These immortal poems flow from the fullness of their heart and are the expressions of the noble culture which they represent and in which they are steeped. These great poets have no private axe to grind. Having no pet theories or sectarian *siddhāntas* to bolster up, they have no need to import specious arguments in their poetry. They give expression to truth; their insight into truth gives them the courage of utterance. Their authority is accepted to prove the culture of the people in whose midst they flowered. Homer and Shakespeare are two among such great poets in the West, and in our country Kālidāsa and Bāṇa are poets without a peer. It is said that the ring finger came to be called *anāmikā* (अनामिका) in Sanskrit, because a person who wanted to take a count of great poets, counted first Kālidāsa on his little finger, but could not think of any fit person to count on the next (ring) finger. So that finger came to be known as nameless or *anāmikā*. As regards the greatness of Bāṇa, there is a saying that other poets used the crumbs that were left over in Bāṇa's plate (*bāṇocchiṣṭam jagatsarvam*, बाणोच्छिष्टं जगत्सर्वम्). Thus, these poets have come to be regarded as great masters. Their

verdict is accepted as authority, not only in matters pertaining to culture, but in religious matters also.

In the context of our daily life, we are frequently called upon to determine the nature of our duties or *dharma*. The question arises, what is our *dharma* and from what authority is it derived? Ordinarily, the enactments of the legislature, i.e. the laws of the state, regulate our public conduct. These laws derive their sanction from the Constitution adopted by the representatives of the people. The laws are also enacted by the elected representatives of the people. It does not require much argument to show that the voters are of various grades of intellectual and moral calibre, and that not all representatives they elect are the best that could be found. Such a state of affairs is inevitable in this imperfect world. Some of the laws may not also be perfect from the moral point of view. That is why occasionally we hear judges making that they decided a point according to law, though they are not convinced of its moral correctness.

In our day-to-day personal and moral conduct, signified by the expression *dharma*, our religion has declared that we should be guided by the ordinance of the *Vedas*. It is said that the *Veda* is the source of all *dharma* (*vedo'khilo dharmamūlam*, वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम्). To illustrate the vastness of the *Veda*, there is a story that what Sage Bharadvāja was able to learn was compared to a handful of dust taken from a mountain the mountain representing the *Vedas*. If a doubt arises, which cannot be solved with reference to the *Vedas*, we are enjoined to seek guidance from the *Smṛtis*. It is a mistake to regard the authors of *Smṛtis* like Manu, Yājñavalkya and Parāśara, as law-givers. The *Smṛtis*

are merely *aide memoire* or short notes, meant to indicate what are contained in the *Vedas*. The authors of the *Smṛtis* did not write anything new, apart from what is contained in the *Śruti* or the *Vedas*. There is the authority of Kālidāsa to this proposition. Describing the manner in which the queen Sudakṣiṇā followed, for a short distance, her husband, King Dilīpa, when he took Nandini out to graze every morning, Kālidāsa states that she followed the footsteps of Nandini, like the *Smṛti* following the meaning (footsteps) of the *Śruti*. (*śruterivārthaṃ smṛtiranvagacchat*, श्रुतेरिवार्थं स्मृतिरन्वगच्छत्). Kālidāsa has unambiguously established that the *Smṛtis* derive their authority from the *Vedas*, and, in the same way as Sudakṣiṇā following Nandini only for a short distance, the *Smṛtis* only briefly indicate what the *Śruti* contains.

If we are unable to get the necessary guidance to clear our doubt either from the *Śruti* or from the *Smṛtis*, we are asked to be guided by the conduct of those who know and follow the *Smṛtis*. When this guidance is not available, we are asked to model our conduct on the action of good people who have conquered desires and ego, and are pure in heart. When even this source of guidance falls, we have to abide by the dictates of our conscience. That is how Duṣyanta reconciles himself to the love which sprang up in his heart at the sight of Śakuntalā in Sage Kaṇva's *āśrama*. Being aware that it was wrong for a kṣatriya to fall in love with the daughter of a sage, he concludes that having entertained no evil thought before, his conscience could not have misled him into falling in love with a wrong person. "*pramāṇamantaḥkaraṇa-pravṛttayah*" (प्रमाणमन्तःकरणप्रवृत्तयः) says Kālidāsa. It is to be noted that Śrī Vedānta Deśika in his *Rahasyatrayasāram* has quoted this *kavi-vākya*, this authority of

Kālidāsa, in support of a proposition enunciated by him. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa has also cited Kālidāsa's authority in his work.

In these days it is a fashion to give preference to conscience and to relegate all other Śāstraic guidance to a secondary place, or as is often done, to condemn them as antiquated, meaningless and irrational. But according to our Śāstras, the appeal to conscience must come as the last resort, when all the other guidance like Śruti, Smṛti, etc. are not available. The modern view is at variance with the classical view of the authorities on Dharma. The ancient view has stood the test of time and makes for enduring and eternal sanction in respect of ethical conduct. This view has been voiced in the utterances of Mahākavis like Kālidāsa, whose voice is the Truth, which is the glory and the prerogative of great poets.

Foreign critics of our Vedic religion fling at us the cheap give, "What a host of gods and goddesses you worship!" This charge of polytheism levelled against our religion is entirely wrong and is born out of ignorance of the fundamental teachings of the Vedas. This is what Bāṇa says on this subject:

रजोजुषे जन्मनि सत्ववृत्तये स्थितौ प्रजानां प्रलये तमस्पृशे ।
अजाय सर्गस्थितिनाशहेतवे त्रयीमयाय त्रिगुणात्मने नमः ॥

*rajo-juṣe janmani satva-vṛttaye
sthitau prajānām pralaye tamaspṛśe
ajāya sarga-sthiti-nāśa-hetave
trayīmayāya triguṇātmane namaḥ.*

In this verse Bāṇa says that the One God appears in the three forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, for a three-fold purpose, namely, creation, protection and dissolution, which functions are determined respectively by the qualities or *guṇas* of *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*. That one is the unborn (*Aja* - अज) and is the cause of these triple process. He is *trayīmaya* (त्रयीमय) compound of the three aforesaid qualities. He is *trayīmaya* also in the sense that He is claimed by the *trayī* or the *Vedas*. Kālidāsa expresses more or less the same idea when he says:

एकैव मूर्तिर्बिभिदे त्रिधा सा सामान्यमेषां प्रथमावर्त्वम् ।
विष्णोर्हरस्तस्य हरिः कदाचित् वेधास्तयोस्तावपि धातुराद्यौ ॥

ekaiva mūrtirbibhīde tridhā sā
sāmānyameṣāṅ prathamāvaratvam
viṣṇor-harastasya hariḥ kadācit
vedhāstayostāvapi dhāturādyau.

One *mūrti* (manifestation in form) appears as three, and there is no question of any one of the Three being superior or inferior to the other Two, says Kālidāsa. If Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are one in essence, then, by the same token, all the gods of the Hindu pantheon are also one in the ultimate analysis. Then why this wrangling that one god is superior to the rest? Some assert that the deity they worship is alone the highest. To a man standing under the arch at one end of a bridge, the other arches will appear smaller than the one under which he is standing. But we are aware that all the arches of a bridge are of the same span. Similarly, to the votary of a particular deity, all the other deities will appear inferior on account of his attachment to the deity of

his choice. But the truth is that all deities are manifestations, in particular ways, of one God.

God is the final of all the things of the world. If we take the example of a tree, we will find that it is the soil and water that help the seed to grow into a mighty tree. The source from which the tree came into existence from a seed, is the soil and water. The tree is sustained during its existence by the same soil and water. When the tree dies, it resolves itself into the soil and water from which it sprang. The essence or truth of the tree is the soil. It is the same for all material things like trees which constitute the world. This principle of an identical source is applicable in the case of the other forms of creation, including animals endowed with intelligence. As there is a "universal soil" at the back of "individual" soil from which a tree springs, by which it lives and into which it disappears, so too there must be a Superior Intelligence (*Pēraṛivu*) of which our intelligences are but minute fractions. That Superior Intelligence or *Cit* is God. He is bliss (*ānanda*). He is the one existent or *Sat*. He is responsible for creation in conjunction with *rajo-guṇa*, for preservation motivated by *sattva-guṇa* and for destruction under the impact of *tamo-guṇa*. Thus God is *triguṇātma*, one appearing as three, *ekaiva mūrtirbibhīde tridhā sā* (एकैव मूर्तिर्बिभिदे त्रिधा सा).

Parabrahman, which is without attributes (*nirguṇa*), which is pure or *Śuddha-sattva*, becomes the personal God or *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* has to perform these three functions of creation, protection, and dissolution. But the *Śuddha-sattva* *Īśvara* is static. He has to become dynamic to perform the act of creation. *Rajo-guṇa* supplies the energy to act, and so, in conjunction with it, the one primal God becomes *Brahmā*, the Creator. What is

created must be maintained and made to grow and flourish. That is accomplished by Īśvara assuming *Sattva-guṇa*. In that aspect, He is Viṣṇu, whose consort is Lakṣmī, the embodiment and bestower of prosperity. To bring about death, or the end of things created, association with *tamo-guṇa* becomes necessary. That aspect of Īśvara is Śiva. It is to be remembered that the *saṁhāra kārya* (dissolution) associated with Śiva does not signify cruelty on His part. It only betokens His mercy for the created, by which He gives rest to the ignorant souls, who have a balance of unrequited *karma*, for the duration of the *pralaya*, before they are pushed into the next cycle of birth to work out their residual *karmas*. These three attributes, *rajo-guṇa*, *sattva-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa*, do not really belong to Īśvara. He is *Śuddha-sattva-svarūpa*. He gets mixed with each of the three *guṇas* for definite purposes, and appears in different forms as a result. Only His appearances are different; not His essence.

This characterisation of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva as denoting *rajo-guṇa*, *sattva-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa* respectively, is not absolute either. Viṣṇu, who is considered as symbolising *sattva-guṇa*, has, on occasions, taken upon Himself *tamo-guṇa*, standing for destruction, as in His *avatāra*, Narasiṁha. In the *Rāma avatāra*, when He fought with Khara, Dūṣaṇa, Kumbhakarna and Rāvaṇa, and also when he threatened to dry up the ocean, He assumed *tamo-guṇa*. Vālmīki very appropriately describes this aspect when he says that Rāma took upon himself intense anger, *kopamāhārayattīvram* (कोपमाहास्यत् तीव्रम्). Anger is the effect of *tamo-guṇa*. *Per contra*, Śiva, whose nature is said to be *tamo-guṇa*, being the manifestation responsible for destruction, likewise assumes *sattva-guṇa* in His aspect as Naṭarāja and as Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

Thus these forms of God are not distinct and different. They are three manifestations of the same divinity assuming different aspects for different purposes, and according to the predilections and tastes of the worshippers. It is wrong to speak of gradations of excellences among them or to say that they are diverse and different. The forms may appear different, the names may be different, but the Truth is one. It is the One that becomes three, and then thirty-three, and then thirty-three crores, according to the numberless varieties of functions of divinity. This the basic fact declared by the *Mahākavis* and their words must determine us in our devotion and religious practices.

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SARVAJÑĀTMAN*

N. Veezhinathan

In order to keep alive the Advaitic tradition for the benefit of posterity, Śrī Śaṅkara established Maṭhas or centres of religious learning and practices in various parts of India. Badarī, Dvārakā, Pūri, Śṛṅgeri, and Kāñcī were his far-flung spiritual capitals. Of these, the Maṭha at Kāñcī is the foremost and is termed the Kāmakoṭi-pīṭha. And, Śrī Śaṅkara himself assumed the headship of this pīṭha. Ordained as *Sannyāsin* by Śrī Śaṅkara himself, Sarvajñātman was nominated successor to the Kāmakoṭi-pīṭha with Sureśvara – his preceptor, as his protector.

In the history of the Kāmakoṭi-pīṭha and in the Advaita literature, Sarvajñātman stands out as a prominent figure. He is well known to be the author of the work *San̄kṣepaśārīraka* which is a succinct exposition in verses of the views of Śrī Śaṅkara as stated in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-sūtra*. He also wrote another work on Advaita entitled *Pañcaprakriyā* which is divided into five sections. The first of them deals with the different kinds of meanings which a word may have. The next three sections treat of what are described as the "great sayings" of which "*tat tvam asi*" is a familiar example and point out how they should be interpreted. The last section is devoted to the elucidation of the

* Courtesy: *Preceptors of Advaita*, Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Sankara Mandir, Secunderabad, 1968.

nature of bondage and release. This work summarizes the teachings of the *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka*.

Apart from his work on Advaita, he wrote a short treatise, the *Pramāṇalakṣaṇa* on the Mīmāṃsā system. This work deals with the various *pramāṇas* of the Mīmāṃsakas and closes with an estimate of their epistemological doctrines and it is available in manuscript in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library.

The *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka* has one thousand two hundred and forty stanzas in various metres and consists of four chapters. The first comprises five hundred and sixty-three verses and corresponds to the first *adhyāya* of the *Brahmasūtra* termed '*samanvayādhyāya*', and as such it is the most important *adhyāya*. It is devoted to the correct interpretation of the different texts of the *Upaniṣads* pointing to the attributeless Brahman.

The second comprises two hundred and forty-eight verses and it corresponds to the second *adhyāya* of the *Brahmasūtra* termed '*avirodhādhyāya*'. It shows that the Upaniṣadic teaching is not stultified by other proofs like perception, etc., or by the views of other philosophical systems.

The third contains three hundred and sixty-six verses and it corresponds to the third *adhyāya* of the *Brahmasūtra* termed '*sādhanaādhyāya*' and it is devoted to an exposition of the means to the realization of Brahman.

The fourth contains sixty-three verses and it corresponds to the fourth chapter of the *Brahmasūtra* termed ' *phalādhyāya*' and it deals with the nature of liberation.

Though the titles of the four *adhyāyas* of this work correspond to those of the *Brahmasūtra*, and the subject matter treated in each is the same as in the *Bhāṣya* of Śrī Śaṅkara on the corresponding chapters of the *Brahmasūtra*, all reference to the nature of the qualified Brahman, the methods of meditative worship thereof and the result arising therefrom is avoided. On this ground, the title *San̄kṣepaśārīraka* (the gist of the *Śārīraka-bhāṣya* of Śrī Śaṅkara) is significant.

This work *San̄kṣepaśārīraka* has eight commentaries. The earliest of them seems to be the *Siddhānta-dīpa* by Viśvaveda and it is available in manuscript [R.1558(b)] in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library. Another commentary called *Sambandhokti* is by Vedānanda and it is also available in manuscript (R.2919) in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras. Rāmatīrtha, the disciple of Kṛṣṇatīrtha, wrote a commentary known as the *Anvayārthaparakāśikā* published in the Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series, Poona. He has based his commentary on the commentary *Siddhāntadīpa* already referred to. His disciple, Puruṣottama wrote a commentary called the *Subodhinī*. This also has been published in Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series, Poona. Nṛsimhāśrama, the disciple of Jagannāthāśrama who was a contemporary of Kṛṣṇatīrtha, the preceptor of Rāmatīrtha referred to above, wrote a commentary called the *Tattvabodhinī* published in the Princess of Wales Sarasvatībhavana Texts Series. Madhusūdanasarasvatī wrote an authoritative commentary, *Sārasaṅgraha*, and it is published in the Kāśī Sanskrit Series. This commentary is based on the one by

Viśvaveda referred to above. Apart from these commentaries, Aufrecht mentions one more commentary known as *Vidyāmṛta-varṣiṇī*. Another commentary by one Pratyagviṣṇu is referred to by Madhusūdanasarasvatī in his *Sārasaṅgraha*.

Sarvajñātman has distinct views on the important Advaitic concepts, and they have considerable importance in the historical development of Advaita. His merits appear most clearly when he is contrasted with other Advaitic writers like Padmapāda, Sureśvara and Vācaspatimiśra.

Avidyā which is superimposed on Brahman makes the latter appear as Īśvara, *jīva*, and the world. The conception of superimposition is thus an essential part of the Advaitic theory.

Śaṅkara prefaces his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* with an exposition of superimposition of the phenomenal elements beginning from mind, and their characteristic attributes on Brahman, and Brahman and its nature¹ on the phenomenal elements. Although the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* does not state the concept of superimposition so explicitly, yet he should be taken to presume it. According to the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*athāto brahmajijñāsā*," *jñāna* or the direct experience of Brahman is the means to the attainment of liberation which is only the removal of bondage pertaining to *jīva*. This bondage consists of the characteristics such as agency, finitude, etc. If, however, the bondage were real, *jñāna* would not annihilate it, as it could remove only that which is not real. This suggests that bondage is not real, but only appears in *jīva* whose true nature is Brahman. It is the appearance of something in a locus where it does not exist that is known as superimposition. It is on the supposition

that bondage is superimposed and as such not real, the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* should have composed the first aphorism.

Now the question arises: What is superimposition as conceived by the Advaitins? Śaṅkara in the *adhyāsa-bhāṣya* frames the definition of *adhyāsa* as follows: "*smṛtirūpaḥ paratra pūrvadr̥ṣṭāvabhāsaḥ*". *Adhyāsa* is the knowledge (*avabhāsaḥ*) of a particular thing (say) silver in a locus (say) shell where it does not exist (*paratra*). The content of knowledge, that is, silver has originally been seen elsewhere (*pūrvadr̥ṣṭa*). The cognition of silver here is similar to recollection (*smṛtirūpa*), as the object, viz., silver, unlike an object that is remembered, is presented in the cognition 'This is silver', and it is therefore not exactly what is remembered, but only *similar* to what is remembered. The thing that is remembered does not exist at the time of remembering it. Similarly, at the time of the erroneous cognition of silver, silver does not really exist in the locus in which it appears.

The object, namely, silver cannot be real; for, if it were so it would not be sublated afterwards. Nor can it be unreal; for, in that case it would never have been presented in the cognition 'This is silver'. It cannot be real and unreal at once; for, it is a self-discrepant notion. Thus as the object of the erroneous cognition is not characterisable either as real, or unreal, or real and unreal at once, it is termed *anirvacanīya*. It is also said to be *prātibhāsika* in the sense that it is coterminous with its presentation in cognition. The locus of superimposition, on the other hand, is real, that is, it has empirical reality (*vyāvahārika-satyatva*). *Adhyāsa*, therefore, is the cognition of an object

which is less real than the substratum in which it appears. It is otherwise termed *bhrama* or erroneous cognition.

The erroneous cognition of shell as silver is occasional (*kādācitka*), and hence its material cause must be referred to. The latter must have the same level of reality as silver. And that cause is *avidyā* present in Brahman-Ātman delimited by the true nature of the object (shell) that is misapprehended.

Apart from the material cause, the efficient cause also is necessary for the erroneous cognition of shell as silver. There are four factors which serve as the efficient cause; and they are: (i) defect in the instrument of valid knowledge, like defective eye-sight, (ii) defect in the object of erroneous cognition, (iii) the previous experience of silver, and (iv) a knowledge of the general nature alone of the substrate without a knowledge of its particular character. Shell appears as silver or silver is superimposed on shell not by one who has not seen silver before, but only by one who has seen silver before. Then, a serpent is not superimposed on shell, nor is silver superimposed on rope. There must be similarity between the ground of superimposition and the object superimposed; and this similarity is characterized as a defect present in the object of erroneous perception. Further, there must be also the defect in the instrument of knowledge such as defective eye-sight, etc. And finally, the substrate must be cognized in its general nature and not in its specific aspect. What is presented before the eyes should be cognized as 'this' and not as possessing the attribute of shellness.

There is yet another point of profound importance. In the case of the erroneous cognition of shell as silver, it is not silver

alone that is superimposed on the 'this' element, the 'this' element also on the silver. Sarvajñātman points out² that the objects that are not superimposed are not presented in the erroneous cognition. The shell as such is not presented in the erroneous cognition and hence it is not superimposed. The 'this' element of shell, on the other hand, is involved in the erroneous cognition and hence it is superimposed. Similarly the knowledge of silver is superimposed on the 'this' element, and the knowledge of 'this' on the silver.³ Thus, in the erroneous cognition of shell as silver, there is the mutual superimposition between the 'this' element and the silver, and the knowledge of the 'this' element and the knowledge of silver.

Now it is contended that on similar lines indicated above, there is the mutual superimposition between Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements. But Sarvajñātman suggests that the three factors, namely, defect in the object of erroneous knowledge which is characterized as similarity, defect in the instrument of valid knowledge, the previous experience of the object superimposed, are not common to all forms of erroneous perception and hence they should not be taken as the cause of superimposition. It is necessary to set forth Sarvajñātman's arguments in support of this view. Sarvajñātman points out⁴ that the Vedic text, "*brāhmaṇo yajeta*" presupposes the superimposition of brahmin caste on Brahman-Ātman. But these two, namely, the brahmin caste and Brahman-Ātman are not similar either through generic attribute or through any quality or action; for, both are devoid of generic attribute, quality or action. On this ground, it should be held that similarity is not an essential condition of superimposition. In the same way, in the case of knowledge which is self-luminous, there arises the erroneous notion that it is manifested by some external factors. This

superimposed notion regarding 'knowledge', cannot be due to any defect in the substratum—'knowledge', for, the latter, being self-luminous, does not become an object. Nor is the superimposed notion due to any defect in the sense-organs; for 'knowledge' being self-luminous, does not come within the range of sense-organs. When such is the case, there is no question of superimposed notion regarding knowledge being due to defect in sense-organs.⁵ It follows from this that defect in the object, namely, similarity and defect in the sense-organs are not the essential conditions of superimposition, owing to lack of correspondence (*vyabhicāra*). The third one also, namely, the previous experience of the object superimposed does not pervade all cases of error. Sarvajñātman does not illustrate this point; but Madhusūdanasarasvatī remarks that Sarvajñātman has not done so, because this point is too clear to require illustration. And he points out that as the *identity* between shell and silver, though not experienced before, becomes the object of erroneous perception and as such superimposed, the contention that the previous experience of the object superimposed is a necessary condition of superimposition is untenable.⁶ From what has been said so far, it would be clear that, apart from the material cause, namely, *avidyā*, the only efficient cause of superimposition is that the substrate of superimposition should be apprehended in its generality but not in its particular nature. These two essential conditions are present in the case of Brahman-Ātman, and as such there can be the mutual superimposition between the phenomenal elements and Brahman-Ātman. So far the presentation of shell as silver which involves the mutual superimposition between the 'this' element of shell on the one hand, and silver, on the other. On similar lines, the mutual superimposition between Brahman-Ātman and the universe is explained. Before proceeding further, it is necessary to consider

the necessity for accepting the mutual superimposition between Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements.

The theory of mutual superimposition between Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements is based on the difficulty in accounting for the manifestation of the universe. There are only three ways possible for the manifestation of the universe. It can be said that the universe is manifested by itself, or by Brahman-Ātman, or by other proofs like perception, etc. But all these three courses are excluded. The first alternative cannot hold good on the ground that the universe by itself is insentient and as such it cannot manifest itself. The second alternative also is untenable; for, Brahman-Ātman, being devoid of any relation (*asaṅga*), is not related to the universe and hence it cannot manifest the universe. The third alternative also is ruled out; for as proofs are not productive factors they cannot manifest the universe.⁷

Now it might be said: There exists the relation of the nature of subject and object (*viśaya-viśayi-bhāva*) between Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements and so the universe can be manifested by Brahman-Ātman. Sarvajñātman refutes this contention by pointing out that the relation of the nature of subject and object between Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements should have been caused by a specific relation like identity (*tādātmya*), or conjunction (*saṁyoga*), or inherence (*samavāya*). But these three are not possible for the following reasons: Brahman-Ātman is internal (*pratyak*), while the universe is external (*parāk*). Thus Brahman-Ātman and the universe differ so markedly that there can be no identity between them.⁸ The relation of conjunction can hold good only between substances (*dravya*); and substance is defined as that in which

qualities inhere. But no qualities inhere in Brahman-Ātman, as the latter is attributeless (*nirguṇa*). Hence Brahman-Ātman cannot be conceived of as a substance, and as such it can have no relation of conjunction with the universe.⁹ The relation of inherence also cannot hold good between Brahman-Ātman and the universe. This kind of relation is recognized as existing between the two things that are inseparable (*ayutasiddha*) such as component parts and composite wholes (*avayava* and *avayavin*), qualities and substances (*guṇa* and *dravya*), movements and moving substances (*kriyā* and *dravya*), universals and the individuals (*jāti* and *vyakti*), and particularities and the eternal substances (*viśeṣa* and *nityadravya*). But Brahman-Ātman and the universe cannot be viewed as inseparable. Though the universe cannot exist independently of Brahman-Ātman, yet, the latter, at the time of liberation and deep sleep remains without the universe. Hence these two are not inseparable and as such there does not exist the relation of inherence between them.¹⁰

From what has been said, it would be clear that the relation of the nature of subject and object between Brahman-Ātman and the universe is not possible, in view of the absence of any specific relation between the two.¹¹

It might be contended that the relation of the nature of subject and object between Brahman-Ātman and the universe is caused by the fitness (*yogyatā*) existing in Brahman-Ātman itself to have such a relation. Sarvajñātman refutes this contention by pointing out that the fitness existing in Brahman-Ātman will last as long as the latter lasts. And as Brahman-Ātman is eternal, the fitness also existing in it should be viewed as eternal. The inevitable result would be that Brahman-Ātman, owing to its

fitness to have the relation with the universe, will always be related with the universe and as such there will be never-ending transmigration in the case of Brahman-Ātman.¹² Hence the author concludes that there can be no relation of the nature of subject and object between Brahman-Ātman and the universe, in which case the universe can be manifested by Brahman-Ātman. It is not manifested by itself, as it is insentient; nor by other proofs, as they are not productive factors. Hence the universe is illusory.¹³ Sarvajñātman further explains this point. He holds that Brahman-Ātman being veiled by *avidyā* appears as the universe and as such the latter is superimposed on Brahman-Ātman. Thus it has no independent reality apart from Brahman-Ātman and it is manifested by the light of its substratum, Brahman-Ātman.¹⁴

From the foregoing discussion, it would be clear that to account for the manifestation of the phenomenal elements, it is necessary to admit the theory of superimposition of the latter on Brahman-Ātman. And *avidyā* alone is the primary cause of bringing about the superimposition of the phenomenal elements on Brahman-Ātman. Or, to state the same in other words, all objects are related to Brahman-Ātman through their being superimposed on it by *avidyā*. The important result of this view is that *avidyā*, also being a phenomenal element, should be related to Brahman-Ātman, and its relation also should have been caused by *avidyā*. If, in order to account for the relation of *avidyā* to Brahman-Ātman, another *avidyā* is accepted, then for the relation of the latter to Brahman, a third *avidyā* should be admitted, and so on *ad infinitum*. Hence Sarvajñātman concludes¹⁵ that the superimposition of *avidyā* on Brahman-Ātman is caused by *avidyā* itself. It might be thought

that this contention involves the fallacy of self-dependence (*ātmāśraya*); but Sarvajñātman holds¹⁶ that the objection regarding the defect of self-dependence should not be raised in the system of Advaita where everything except Brahman-Ātman is not determinable and hence illusory.

Sarvajñātman substantiates the view that *avidyā* is the cause of its super-imposition as well as the universe by citing three illustrations; and these three may be explained successively as follows. (i) According to the Prābhākara theory of triune perception (*tripuṭī pratyakṣa*) every knowledge manifests itself at the same time it manifests the object and the knower. It does not require any other condition than itself to reveal its object and its own self. Similarly, *avidyā* does not require any other thing than itself for its superimposition as well as the superimposition of the universe on Brahman-Ātman.¹⁷ (ii) According to the Naiyāyikas, the self is an immaterial substance and it comprehends the objects as well as itself through knowledge (*jñāna*) which is its quality. Similarly, it is not unreasonable that *avidyā* itself is the cause of superimposition of the universe and itself on Brahman-Ātman.¹⁸ (iii) The pot (*ghaṭa*) and cloth (*paṭa*) are different from each other. *Paṭabheda*, which subsists in *ghaṭa* differentiates the *paṭa* and the *ghaṭa* from each other. *Paṭabheda*, on the other hand, is different from *ghaṭa* in which it subsists. But it differentiates itself from *ghaṭa* without requiring any other 'difference' (*bheda*), as, otherwise, there would result *infinite regress*. Similarly, *avidyā* superimposes on Brahman-Ātman the universe which is its modification and itself.¹⁹

It has already been pointed out that, apart from the material cause, the efficient cause also is necessary for

superimposition. And that efficient cause is the substratum which must be cognized in its general nature and not in its specific one. It is clear from the fact that shell which is the substratum of silver that is superimposed on it is cognized in its general nature as *this* and not as *shell*. The *pūrvapakṣin* points out that Brahman-Ātman is unitary and as such it has neither general nature nor specific one and hence it cannot be the substrate of the superimposition of the phenomenal elements.

Sarvajñātman points out that it is deducible from the *pūrvapakṣin's* argument that an object, if it should serve as the substratum of a superimposed object, should have parts. But it is not so. What is required is that particular object should be revealed and at the same time not revealed. Sarvajñātman illustrates²⁰ this point. Two trees which are at a distance and which are really different are perceived to be one. To state the same in other words, 'oneness' is superimposed on the two trees. The difference that exists in one of the trees from the other tree is identical with the tree that is perceived. It should be held that the tree is perceived, but 'difference' which is identical with the tree is not perceived; for, otherwise, the superimposition of 'oneness' on the two trees would not hold good. The matter that is of profound importance is that 'difference' which is identical with the tree is not cognized even though the tree is cognized. It follows from this that an object is revealed and at the same time it is not revealed. Similarly Brahman-Ātman, being self-luminous, manifests itself; and at the same time owing to *avidyā*, it is not revealed in its true nature. Hence Brahman-Ātman can be the substrate of the superimposition of the phenomenal elements.

It might be objected that shell which is the substratum of silver that is superimposed on it is cognized in its general aspect as 'this', and not in its specific aspect. And, the general aspect which is known and the specific aspect which is unknown are different, as the two are designated by two distinct terms 'this' and 'shell'. So what is unknown is different from what is known. It follows from this that one and the same object cannot be known and at the same time unknown.

Sarvajñātman refutes²¹ this objection by contending that the difference that accidentally exists between the general aspect and specific aspect of shell does not account for the unknown nature of the specific aspect. He holds that one and the same object can be known and at the same time unknown. We have explained above that though the tree is perceived, yet difference from the other tree which exists in, and which is identical with the tree that is perceived is not apprehended.²² Sarvajñātman gives another illustration. The permanence of pot (say) is not the attribute of pot. But the form of pot itself, on the basis of its relation to the past and the present time, is spoken of as 'permanence'. Hence 'permanence' is identical with the form of pot. Sarvajñātman points out that 'permanence' is not perceived at the time of the perception of pot. However, it later becomes the object of visual perception accompanied by the awakened latent impressions.²³ It would be clear from this that if a person cannot perceive the permanence of an object which is identical with the object, though the latter is perceived, and if a person cannot perceive the difference that exists in one of the two trees from the other tree, though he perceives the tree with which difference is identical, what objection is there in holding that the same object is known and at the same time unknown. The author proceeds to say that Brahman-Ātman as inner conscious-

ness is always manifest, yet it is not revealed in its true nature as absolute bliss. It should be noted here that there is absolutely no difference between the known aspect and unknown aspect of Brahman-Ātman. The latter is self-luminous and hence it manifests itself. But, owing to *avidyā*, it is not revealed in its absolute nature and blissful form. Sarvajñātman holds that the criterion for an object to become the substratum of a superimposed thing is that it should be revealed and at the same time certain aspects which are identical with it should not be revealed.²⁴ Brahman-Ātman is revealed as inner consciousness and at the same time its absolute form which is identical with it is not revealed. Hence it can serve as the substratum of the superimposition of the universe. Or, to state the same in other words, it is misapprehended for something else.

One objection to the conclusion that Brahman-Ātman is misapprehended for something else, however, suggests itself, and that objection is: In worldly experience, erroneous cognition arises in respect of objects which are similar to the objects superimposed, and which are composite and external. As Brahman-Ātman is neither, it cannot be misapprehended for something else, that is, the phenomenal universe.

Adhering for the moment to the standpoint of the *pūrvapakṣin*, Sarvajñātman attributes²⁵ similarity, composite nature and externality to Brahman-Ātman. He holds that the latter and the phenomenal element, viz., intellect, are similar. Brahman-Ātman is pure and internal. The intellect, too, when contrasted with senses and body, is pure and internal; and owing to *avidyā*, Brahman-Ātman, though unitary, is viewed as having parts. And being reflected in the intellect it seems as if it has attained the state of an object. Sarvajñātman in this connection

cites Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* text – *na tāvadayaṁ ekāntenāviśayaḥ, asmatpratyayaviśayatvāt*.²⁶ Śaṅkara uses the word *asmatpratyaya* in the sense of *antaḥkaraṇa*. Brahman-Ātman reflected in it becomes *vyavahārayogya*, that is, it manifests itself indubitably. This is all what is meant when we attribute objectivity (*viśayatva*) to Brahman-Ātman and not that it is the object of knowledge. In order that a thing may become an object (*viśaya*), it is enough if it manifests itself, thereby dispelling the doubt regarding its existence, there being no absolute necessity for sense-contact. Now Brahman-Ātman being of the nature of consciousness is self-luminous and needs no other knowledge for its revelation. Thus Sarvajñātman, from the standpoint of the *pūrvapakṣin*, admits that Brahman-Ātman is similar to the object – intellect that is superimposed on it; and it is composite and an object. But really these three are not the criteria for superimposition, that is, the misapprehension of one thing as other. Sarvajñātman points out that for the misapprehension of one thing as other, what is required is that the object which is misapprehended should be immediately presented. And the objects are immediately presented either by themselves or by mind or by the sense of sight. In the dream state, Brahman-Ātman is immediately presented by its self-luminosity and in it erroneous cognition of objects arises repeatedly.²⁷ Similarly the etheric space is cognized by the mind; and in it there arises erroneous cognition ascribing various colours to it such as whiteness, etc. In the same way, shell is cognized by sense of sight and in it there arises the delusion of silver.²⁸ It would have become clear from this that for the misapprehension of one thing as other, what is required is that the object misapprehended should be immediately presented. Here Brahman-Ātman is immediately presented by its self-luminosity and so it can be mistaken for the objective universe. Or, to state the same in

other words, the universe can be superimposed on Brahman-Ātman.

It has been said that in superimposition only the superimposed objects are presented. In the case of the superimposition of the objective elements (say) – pot, etc., the latter are presented as existent in the form, 'The pot is existent, The cloth is existent', etc. and existence is of the nature of Brahman-Ātman. Since the latter also is presented in the superimposition of the phenomenal elements, it should be held that it is also superimposed on the phenomenal elements. Hence there results the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements.²⁹ Thus in the superimposition of Brahman-Ātman as the phenomenal world, there is the mutual identification of Brahman-Ātman – the absolutely real entity with the phenomenal world which is only empirically real.

There is one important instance of superimposition which Sarvajñātman specially considers;³⁰ and that is the mutual identification of mind and its qualities with Brahman-Ātman associated with *avidyā*. This gives rise to the notion of 'I' which contains the elements – Brahman-Ātman which is consciousness and mind. The mutual superimposition of the two gives rise to the *aham-padārtha* or *jīva*. The qualities of mind like agency, etc., are superimposed; and, likewise the relation of Brahman-Ātman to mind and its qualities are superimposed.

There is one objection which may be raised against the conception of the mutual superimposition of the phenomenal elements and Brahman-Ātman. And that objection is: whichever is superimposed is later sublated, like the form of silver superimposed on the 'this' element of shell. When such is the

case, if Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements are mutually superimposed, it follows that they should also be sublated and as such there would result only void.

Sarvajñātman obviates this difficulty by distinguishing between *adhiṣṭhāna* and *ādhāra*. According to this view, the element which is presented as related to the superimposed object is termed *ādhāra* and that element the misapprehension of which leads to the presentation of something else in its place is termed *adhiṣṭhāna*.³¹ It is clear that in the case of the erroneous cognition of shell as silver, the 'this' element of shell is presented as related to the superimposed object—'silver' in the form 'This is silver'. Hence the 'this' element is the *ādhāra*. And the misapprehension of the true nature of shell leads to the presentation of silver and hence shell in its specific aspect is termed *adhiṣṭhāna*. The correct apprehension of *adhiṣṭhāna*, that is, shell in its specific nature totally removes the presentation of the superimposed object (say) silver. Now Sarvajñātman argues that there is the mutual superimposition of the 'this' element of shell and silver. And these two alone are sublated as both are mutually superimposed. But the *adhiṣṭhāna*, that is, shell in its specific aspect, is not sublated. Sarvajñātman extends this line of argument in the case of the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements. He points out that Brahman-Ātman in its aspect of bliss, eternity, etc., is veiled by *avidyā* and is the *adhiṣṭhāna* and it is not superimposed on the phenomenal elements. And the part of Brahman-Ātman which is illusorily manifested by *avidyā* and which is presented as related to the superimposed object, that is, the phenomenal element is *ādhāra*.³² Hence what is superimposed is only the *ādhārāmśa* or the part of Brahman-Ātman termed *ādhāra*. Consequently the

latter alone is sublated and the *adhiṣṭhānāṁśa* remains. It follows from this that, in the case of the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements, the part of Brahman-Ātman termed *ādhāra* and the phenomenal elements are sublated. Yet, as the *adhiṣṭhānāṁśa* remains, there is no question of the universe becoming void.³³ Thus the objection, namely, that there would result only void in the case of the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements, is refuted by Sarvajñātman on the basis of the distinction between *adhiṣṭhāna* and *ādhāra*. Now Sarvajñātman proceeds to answer the objection without making any distinction as *ādhāra* and *adhiṣṭhāna*. He points out that as regards the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements, the objection that there would result only void would hold good if both are unreal objects. But Brahman-Ātman is real while the phenomenal elements are not real and these two are mutually superimposed.

The phenomenal elements as such are superimposed on Brahman-Ātman. But in the case of the superimposition of Brahman-Ātman on the phenomenal elements, what is superimposed is, not Brahman-Ātman as such, but only the relation between Brahman-Ātman and the objective elements – the relation which does not really exist between the two. Hence in the Advaitic terminology, the superimposition of the phenomenal elements on Brahman-Ātman is known as *svarūpādhyāsa* and the superimposition of Brahman-Ātman on the phenomenal elements is known as *saṁsargādhyāsa*. Or, to state the same in other words, in the case of the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements, the *relation* of Brahman-Ātman is superimposed on the phenomenal elements and the phenomenal elements *as such* are superimposed on Brahman-

Ātman. Hence, what are sublated by the direct experience of the substratum, namely, Brahman-Ātman, are the *relation* of Brahman-Ātman to the phenomenal elements and the phenomenal elements *as such*. Thus Brahman-Ātman remains and hence there arises no possibility for the objection of voidness.³⁴ Thus the mutual superimposition of Brahman-Ātman and the phenomenal elements has to be admitted.

To sum up: *Avidyā* abiding in Brahman-Ātman illusorily presents the latter in the form of God, the individual soul and the phenomenal world. The forms of God (*Īśvaratva*) and the individual soul (*jīvatva*) and the phenomenal world *as such* are superimposed on Brahman-Ātman and the *relation* of Brahman-Ātman on them. This superimposition is characterized as bondage to Brahman-Ātman and this bondage is caused by its own *avidyā*. And the direct experience of Brahman-Ātman which annihilates *avidyā* results in the annihilation of bondage.³⁵

Sarvajñātman's most important contribution is his view regarding the locus and content of *avidyā*. He holds³⁶ that the pure consciousness is the locus and content of *avidyā* as against Vācaspati who maintains that the individual soul is the locus of *avidyā*, while Brahman is its content. The latter view is refuted by Sarvajñātman on the ground that the notion of individual soul derives its existence from *avidyā* and as such it is posterior to *avidyā*. The latter cannot abide in a substratum which is decidedly subsequent to it. Sarvajñātman further contends³⁷ that the pure consciousness is the locus and content of *avidyā* neither in its absolute form, nor in its blissful form, but in the form of inner self (*pratyakcāitanya*). This he proves on the basis of the experience "I do not know myself." It is Sarvajñātman who

explains the apparently contradictory statements of Śrī Śaṅkara regarding the presence of *avidyā* in Brahman in deep sleep. To any serious student of Advaita, the contradiction in the statements of Śrī Śaṅkara, viz., *avidyā* does not exist in the state of deep sleep and *avidyā* exists in Brahman in that state³⁸ remained unsolved. And, Sarvajñātman explains³⁹ this view of Śrī Śaṅkara by stating that *avidyā* is not determinately prevailed in the form of "I do not know myself" in the state of deep sleep and it is with this view that Śrī Śaṅkara has said that *avidyā* does not exist in that state. Really it exists in that state in Brahman, as it is evident from the reminiscent experience in the form "I did not know anything when I was asleep."⁴⁰ Similarly the author explains Śrī Śaṅkara's statement⁴¹ that the individual soul is the locus of *avidyā*, by contending⁴² that *avidyā* though present only in the pure consciousness is revealed in the form 'I am ignorant' by the intellect which is the limiting adjunct of the individual soul. It is well-known that the nature of a revealing medium is such that what is revealed through it appears as though present in the medium itself. The mirror which reflects the face appears to contain the face. In the same way, the intellect which is the revealing medium of *avidyā*, reveals it as present in itself and consequently in the consciousness delimited by it, that is, the individual soul. *Avidyā*, however, is present in the pure consciousness.

Sarvajñātman's contribution to the theory of the nature of Brahman also is noteworthy. Relying on the method of gathering the unrepeated words found in the affirmative Upaniṣadic texts to arrive at the exact nature of Brahman – the method prescribed by the author of the *sūtras* in the aphorism '*ānandādayaḥ pradhānasya*' (III, iii, 11), Sarvajñātman affirms that, on the

whole, only ten words convey the essential nature of Brahman in an affirmative manner. And those words are: *nitya*, *śuddha*, *buddha*, *mukta*, *satya*, *sūkṣma*, *sat*, *vibhu*, *advitīya* and *ānanda*.⁴³ This same method is adopted in the case of the negative texts also. But, Sarvajñātman suggests that as the elements that are to be negated in Brahman are numerous, the words found even in all the negative Upaniṣadic passages are not exhaustive and hence many words should be gathered. Herein arises the question of relation between the affirmative and negative Upaniṣadic passages. Sarvajñātman says⁴⁴ that the negative Upaniṣadic texts, by denying all duality, confirm the affirmative Upaniṣadic passages.

The question whether lordship is natural to Brahman or not is answered⁴⁵ in the negative by Sarvajñātman, on the ground that lordship involves a reference to the controlled beings; and whichever is dependent on something else is illusory, and hence lordship, being illusory, cannot be natural to Brahman. This conclusion seems contrary to the view of the author of the *sūtras*, who in the aphorism '*parābhidhyānāttu tirohitam tato hyasya bandhaviparyayau*' (III, ii, 5) holds that lordship is natural to Brahman. Sarvajñātman, with a refreshing independence of judgement, points out⁴⁶ that the author of the *Sūtras* has said so from the opponent's stand-point and it is not his final view. And to substantiate this point, he refers⁴⁷ to the other aphorism '*kamaditaratra tatra cayatanadibhyah*' (III, iii, 39) which treats lordship on a par with attributes like possession of desire, etc., which cannot be said to be natural to the attributeless Brahman. Hence, Sarvajñātman holds⁴⁸ that Brahman is eternal, pure, consciousness, ever-released, truth, subtle, existent, all-pervasive, absolute, and bliss. And herein lies Sarvajñātman's contribution to the theory of the nature of Brahman.

As regards the elucidation of the nature of the supreme lord and the individual soul, Sarvajñātman adopts the well-known theory, the *pratibimba-vāda*, and in this he seems to have been influenced by the views of Padmapāda.

Coming to the practical side of Advaita, Sarvajñātman speaks⁴⁹ of asceticism as a necessary condition for attaining the knowledge of Brahman. He holds⁵⁰ that the remote means such as the performance of rituals including the optional ones (*kāmya-karma*) lead to the desire to know Brahman; and after this result is achieved the remote means should not be pursued. Again, Sarvajñātman holds⁵¹ that the Upaniṣadic texts alone give rise to the intuitive knowledge of Brahman; and *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana* remove the impediments which are present in the intellect of the aspirant who has such a knowledge and which hinder the knowledge from becoming effective in dispelling *avidyā*.

Summing up, Sarvajñātman as a philosopher has a considerable historical importance. His main contribution to Advaita rests in his clear exposition, in verses, of Śrī Śaṅkara's views as stated in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtra*. His work is entitled *Saṅkṣepasārīraka*; and the title is very significant, as throughout the work, Śrī Śaṅkara's phrases and arguments recur. He is most concerned with finding a way of reconciling the apparent contrary statements of Śrī Śaṅkara. His treatise is systematic, critical, and without any trace of dogmatic assertion. He does accept the foundations laid by his predecessors, yet he makes improvement on them. He is best in detail and in criticism. His style is easy and unpedantic. He has an admirable literary sense, and in fact, only several centuries after him, the world could produce Vidyāraṇya, who like Sarvajñātman, wrote in verses on

the Advaitic concepts in an admirable way. Being a great philosopher, Sarvajñātman has influenced profoundly the Advaita thought in the subsequent ages. As Madhusūdanasarasvatī characterizes him, he knows the traditional interpretation of the Advaita Vedānta. His views are very respectfully cited by Appayya-dīkṣita, Madhusūdanasarasvatī and Brahmānandasarasvatī.

*śrikāñcīkāmakoṭyākhyā-
pīṭhādhiṣṭhitam-adbhutam
bhāvaye'haṁ mahā-moha-
dhvāntasaṅghātaḥ mahāḥ.*

NOTES

1. *Pañcapādikā* with *Vivarāṇa* of Prakāśātman, Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, 1958; *Pañcapādikā*, p. 23; *Vivarāṇa*, p. 60.
2. *Saṅkṣepasārīraka*, (hereafter *SS*), 1.34.
3. *Ibid.*, I. 35.
4. *Ibid.*, I. 28.
5. *Ibid.*, I. 30; *Sārasaṅgraha*, (hereafter *SS*), p. 39.
6. p. 40.
7. *Ibid.*, III. 232.
8. Part II, p. 285.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Tattvabodhini*, (hereafter *TB*), p. 928.
11. *SS*, III. 233.
12. *Ibid.*, III. 234.
13. *Ibid.*, III. 232
14. *Ibid.*, III. 236.

15. Ibid., I. 52.
16. Ibid., I. 51.
17. Ibid., I. 53.
18. Ibid., I. 54.
19. Ibid., I. 55.
20. Ibid., I. 44.
21. Ibid., I. 45-6.
22. Ibid., I. 44, and 47.
23. *SŚ*, Part I, p. 52.
24. *Anvayārthaparakāśikā*, p. 66.
25. Ibid., I. 40.
26. *SŚ*, I. 40.
27. Ibid., I, 41-42.
28. Ibid., I. 43.
29. Ibid., III. 238.
30. Ibid., I. 27.
31. *TB*, p. 52.
32. Ibid.
33. *SŚ*, I. 32.
34. Ibid., I. 32.
35. Ibid., I. 50.
36. Ibid., I, 319
37. Ibid. II, 211-212
38. Ibid. III, 125-126
39. Ibid. III, 123
40. Ibid. III, 120-122
41. Ibid. II, 175
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid. I, 173
44. Ibid. I, 263
45. Ibid.III, 151-170
46. Ibid.III, 175
47. Ibid.III, 177
48. Ibid.I, 173
49. Ibid.III, 358-361
50. Ibid.I, 64; III, 330-340
51. Ibid.III, 299

BRAHMAN

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते
 येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।
 यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति
 तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद् ब्रह्मेति ॥

That, verily, from which these beings are born, that by which, when born they live, that into which, when departing, they enter; That, seek to know, That is Brahman.

Taittirīyopaniṣad, III.i.1

ADVAITA

R. Balasubramanian

3. ADVAITA: THE GOAL OF SCRIPTURE

Student: Sir, I have a question to ask you. After explaining the distinction between *śruti* and *smṛti*, you mentioned that there are fourteen works in the category *smṛti* and that these fourteen works together with the Vedas constitute our scripture. Also, you told me that Advaita is based on the authority of both *śruti* and *smṛti*. May I request you to explain to me how the entire scripture, i.e., the Vedas, the Upavedas, Vedāṅgas, etc., purports to teach Advaita?

Teacher: Your question is an important one. Since your question is about the entire scripture, one has to take a comprehensive or total view of both *śruti* and *smṛti*. *Śruti*, I told you, is primary scripture and *smṛti*, secondary scripture; and what *smṛti* teaches must be in accordance with *śruti*. There is a text in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 1.2.15, which says:

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति
 तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
 यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति
 तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण ब्रवीमि ॥ ओमित्येतत् ॥

The meaning of this Upaniṣadic passage is:

I tell you briefly of that goal which all the Vedas with one voice proclaim, which all the austerities speak of, and wishing for which people practise *brahmacarya*: it is this, viz., *Om*.

I must tell you that *Om* mentioned in the Upaniṣadic text not only designates Brahman, the non-dual reality, but also serves as the symbol for meditation on Brahman. According to the Vedas, the ultimate goal which a spiritual aspirant should think of and attain is Brahman. When the Vedas specify the goal, they will not teach anything else. If so, what they teach must be about this goal and the means thereto. If the purport of the Vedas is in Brahman, then *smṛti* which follows the lead of *śruti* must also teach the same thing. What does it mean to attain Brahman, which is said to be the goal? It is not like going to a place which is away or attaining an object which is not in one's possession. Brahman is no other than the Ātman or the Self of the jīva. Since Brahman is the inward Self of the jīva, one can attain it by knowing or realizing it. It is already in one's possession. It is one's own reality. One does not know this truth because of one's ignorance. If one knows it by removing one's ignorance of it, one attains it. It is a case of "attaining" what is already attained, "realizing" what is already realized. That is why the Upaniṣad says: "*brahmavid āpnoti param*," i.e., "The knower of Brahman attains the highest." The highest which the knower of Brahman attains must be Brahman itself, for it makes no sense to say that a person who knows Brahman attains something else. So attaining Brahman is Brahman-realization or Self-realization, which is the central teaching of Advaita.

S: You said that Brahman which is the Self remains unattained due to ignorance and that one attains it when one removes one's ignorance of it. Your expressions "attaining what is already attained," "realizing what is already realized," are no doubt fascinating, but perplexing. It would be helpful if you could give me some illustration.

T: I understand your difficulty. I shall give you two examples to elucidate my point. Consider the case of a person who, forgetting that he is wearing the necklace, searches for it, but fails to locate it and laments over its loss. When his friend tells him that the thing he is searching for is around his neck, he realizes the truth and is happy about its attainment. Here is a case of the loss (or non-attainment) of a thing due to ignorance and its attainment due to knowledge. This kind of attainment is attainment of what is already attained. There is the wellknown story of a group of ten persons who had to cross a river before reaching their destination. After crossing the river they wanted to check up whether all the ten members of the group had crossed the river safely. Each one of them counted the heads without including himself. They thought that one of them was missing and were worried. A passer-by who witnessed their predicament knew the mistake they committed. He asked one of them to count again; and when the same mistake was committed, he told the person who was counting: "You are the tenth man." The loss of the tenth man was due to ignorance; and the discovery of him was due to knowledge. In this case also there is the attainment of the already attained.

S: Now I understand the significance of the expression "attainment of the already attained". I would like to ask a further question at this stage. Usually we say that liberation (*mokṣa*) is the goal with which scripture is concerned. How is it then that

the Upaniṣad which you have quoted speaks of Brahman as the goal?

T: There is no contradiction here. Brahman which is identical with Ātman is ever free and never bound. To know Brahman is to be Brahman which is free. In this case which is unique, knowing and being are identical. To know a tree which is outside me is not to be a tree. Unlike a tree, Brahman is the inward Self of the jīva; and one who has the direct and immediate knowledge of one's Self remains as the Self untouched by pleasure and pain, heat and cold, and other dualities connected with the mind-sense-body complex. Such a state is called *mokṣa*, i.e., liberation from suffering in empirical existence.

S: Is absence of suffering alone *mokṣa*? I ask this question for two reasons. First, to say that liberation is freedom from suffering is a negative explanation; and we have to explain a concept positively and not negatively. Secondly, this explanation does not seem to be adequate as it does not bring out the nature of *mokṣa*.

T: You are absolutely right. The nature of *mokṣa* must be conveyed positively. The negative explanation may be helpful to start with, but it will not be adequate. Both the modes of explanation are resorted to depending upon the context. Positively speaking, *mokṣa* is *Brahma-prāpti*, i.e., attainment of Brahman; negatively speaking, it is *duḥkha-nivṛtti*, i.e., removal of suffering. Let me first of all tell the advantage of the negative explanation of *mokṣa*. Consider the case of a person who carries a heavy load of sand on his head. He is so much oppressed by the weight on his head that he feels free the moment the load is taken off from his head. The removal of suffering itself makes

him happy; and that is what he wished for. What is true of him is true of all of us. The state of bondage in which we are placed is the state of suffering. Human suffering is threefold – that which arises from intra-organic causes (*ādhyātmika*) such as bodily and mental illness, that which arises from extra-organic natural causes (*ādhibhautika*) such as men and beasts, and that which arises from extra-organic supernatural causes (*ādhi-daivika*) such as rain, famine, and earthquakes. Human beings seek not a temporary relief from suffering, but a permanent one: they long for freedom from suffering totally and for ever (*ātyantika-duḥkha-nivṛtti*) which can be obtained only through Self-realization, which alone destroys ignorance, the root cause of bondage. Thus, *mokṣa* is spoken of as liberation from bondage which is suffering. Positively speaking, liberation is the state of bliss, because Brahman or the Self is of the nature of bliss and the attainment of Brahman (*Brahma-prāpti*) is the enjoyment of bliss (*ānandānubhava*). We will have occasion to discuss this problem later.

S: Your elucidation with illustrations has been helpful.

T: Let me proceed with the explanation of the purport of the entire scripture with which the discussion started today. The basic teachings of the entire scripture can be formulated in five propositions:

- (1) The ultimate goal, as envisaged by the entire scripture, is *mokṣa*.
- (2) The means to *mokṣa* is knowledge and knowledge alone.
- (3) By "knowledge" is meant the knowledge of the non-dual Brahman which is identical with Ātman.

- (4) The experience of difference (*bheda*) is not valid cognition, i.e., *yathārtha-jñāna*.
- (5) All scriptural texts are conducive, either directly or indirectly, to the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman, even though
 - (a) some of them teach the performance of *karma*;
 - (b) some others teach the means to the attainment of sensuous pleasure (*viśaya-sukham*);
 - (c) yet some others teach meditation (*upāsanā*) on gods other than Brahman;
 - (d) some of them teach the means to the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman.

S: Is it the case that scriptural texts do not teach difference?

T: They do teach. Our daily life is based on difference. It is impossible to carry on our day-to-day life without accepting difference. There are systems like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika which accept the reality of difference. In fact, not only Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, but also other systems such as Sāṅkhya-Yoga, Mīmāṃsā are *bheda-darśanas*, i.e., systems which are dualistic or pluralistic in character. Also, these systems claim that they accept the authority of the Vedas, i.e., they are *vaidika-darśanas*. If so, there must be a way of reconciling the dualistic outlook of these systems and the goal of non-dualism (*advaita*) of the Vedas. I do not propose to take up this problem, which calls for a detailed discussion, at this point. However, it is necessary to indicate the way in which reconciliation has been worked out. We always proceed from the known to the unknown. A good teacher adopts the technique of teaching what is not known through what is known. Our scriptural texts play the role of a teacher. What is already known need not be taught by scripture. But a proper understanding of the objects of our experience – the problems,

the paradoxes, and the presuppositions in them – will give us a proper perspective to the comprehension of Advaita which scripture purports to teach. This is what systems such as Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika are supposed to do. Also, the training in logical analysis which the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika provides is helpful to the practice of *manana*, which means rational reflection, as taught in the Upaniṣads. This is one line of approach to the problem. There is yet another way of looking at this problem. The problem of non-dualism *versus* dualism can be reconciled on the basis of standpoints. Drawing a distinction between empirical and trans-empirical standpoints, which are called *vyāvahārika* and *pāramārthika* standpoints, we can say that, while dualism is true from the empirical standpoint, it is not so from the trans-empirical standpoint. There is perception of plurality so long as the truth of oneness or non-duality is not realized; however, when the truth of oneness is known, there is no more the experience of plurality. I do not propose to go into further details on this problem at this stage.

S: After listening to you I realize that the problem of reconciling dualism and non-dualism is a challenging one.

T: You are right. Let me tell you how the purport of the four Vedas is in Brahman, the non-dual reality. I have already told you that there are four Vedas – *Ṛg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma*, and *Atharva*. The corpus of the Vedic texts consisting of the Mantras, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upaniṣads, is enormous. The *Ṛg-veda* consists of twenty-one recensions, *Yajur-veda*, of one hundred and one recensions, *Sāma-veda*, of one thousand recensions, and *Atharva-veda*, of fifty recensions. Just as a tree consists of many branches, even so the Vedic tree consists of many branches, or recensions (*śākhās*) as they are called. So, there are altogether one thousand one hundred and eighty

recensions. It should not be thought that all the recensions of the Vedas straight away teach the non-dual Brahman. Vyāsa who compiled the Vedas divided them into several recensions taking into consideration the diversity in human beings in respect of their inclinations, interests of various kinds, and intellectual levels. We can divide the Vedic texts into three categories:

- (1) texts which teach the performance of various kinds of rituals (*karmas*),
- (2) texts which teach meditation (*upāsanā*) on Brahman, and
- (3) texts which teach the knowledge (*jñāna*) of Brahman.

There are eight hundred and forty recensions which teach *karma*; and these recensions constitute the *karma-kāṇḍa*, i.e., the ritual section of the Vedas. Again, two hundred and thirty-two recensions which teach meditation on Brahman constitute *upāsanā-kāṇḍa* of the Vedas. Finally, one hundred and eight recensions which impart the knowledge of Brahman constitute the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, i.e., the knowledge section of the Vedas. It is necessary to draw your attention to two important points in this connection. First, the real aim of those Vedic texts which teach *karma* is to help the spiritual aspirant attain the knowledge of Brahman which is necessary for liberation. *Karma* is of four kinds – (1) daily obligatory duties called *nitya-karma*, (2) occasional obligatory duties known as *naimittika-karma*, (3) desire-prompted ritual activities called *kāmya-karma*, and (4) prohibited deeds called *pratiśiddha-karma*. That one should abstain from prohibited deeds, does not require any special emphasis. Any action which is harmful to the individual as well as to the society is prohibited by scripture. Unlike ordinary

people, a spiritual aspirant will not be interested in those deeds which lead to worldly prosperity (*preyas*) through the fulfilment of one's desires. So, we have to keep aside *kāmya-* and *pratiṣiddha-karmas* from our consideration. We are, then, left with only *nitya-* and *naimittika-karmas* which are obligatory. The performance of these obligatory duties in a spirit of dedication to the Lord leads to the purification of the mind (*citta-śuddhi*); and a person who is thus equipped with a purified mind acquires the special competence for attaining the knowledge of Brahman through the moral and spiritual discipline as formulated in the tradition. It means that the ultimate aim of even those Vedic texts which give instruction about the performance of *karma* is Brahman-realization for which a spiritual aspirant is trained step by step. The second point which you must bear in mind is that the intention of the Vedic texts which teach *karma* is to turn a person from the pursuit of the morally low and vulgar activities prompted by instincts and desires to spiritually uplifting deeds which lead to the final goal of liberation.

S: I have a doubt which I request you to clear. You said that all the Vedas purport to teach Brahman even though there are Vedic texts which teach *karma* as well as *upāsanā*. I have understood your argument that the practice of *karma* and *upāsanā* gradually leads to the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman, which is the immediate means to liberation. Also, I am clear about the distinction between remote means and the proximate means. My doubt arises because of certain passages in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which seem to suggest an entirely different subject matter for the Vedas. In fact, these passages refer to the Vedic texts rather disparagingly on the ground that they captivate the worldly-

mindful people by making all kinds of promises such as heaven. Let me first cite three verses from the *Gītā* (2. 42-44):

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
 वेदवादादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥
 कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
 क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥
 भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयाऽपहतचेतसाम् ।
 व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥

The meaning of the verses is:

They are the unwise who utter flowery speeches, O Arjuna; they are enamoured of Vedic utterances and declare, "There is nothing (in the Vedas other than rites securing heaven, etc.)" They are full of desire; they have *svarga* as the goal; they utter words which promise birth as the reward of actions and which abound in specific acts for the attainment of pleasure and power. No conviction of a resolute nature is formed in the mind of those who are attached to pleasures and power.

There is yet another passage from the *Gītā* (2. 45):

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
 निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

The passage means:

The Vedas treat of the triad of the *guṇas*. O Arjuna, be free from the triad of the *guṇas*; be free from pairs; be free from acquisition and preservation, ever remaining in the *sattva* and controlling the mind.

If the Vedas are concerned with *samsāra* which is the result of the interaction of the three *guṇas* and if they deal with ends such as *svarga* and the means thereto, then Brahman or liberation is not their subject matter. What is conveyed by these *Gītā* passages goes against what you stated as the subject matter of the Vedas. Hence, my doubt.

T: There is no contradiction between what is stated in the *Gītā* passages cited by you and what I said as the subject matter or the ultimate goal of the Vedas. In order to show this, I must first explain the meaning of the *Gītā* passages in the context in which they occur. Though the Veda is referred to in general terms in these passages, we can say from the context that it is the *karma-kāṇḍa* which is kept in view and not the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. The subject matter that is dealt with here is worldly prosperity and not the supreme good. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.1-2) identifies the former as *preyas* and the latter as *śreyas*. *Preyas* and *śreyas* are two different goals which are available to human beings. The unwise people who are incapable of discrimination choose worldly prosperity which gives pleasure and power, *bhoga* and *aiśvarya*, through the twofold method of acquisition (*yoga*) of more and more of things and preservation (*kṣema*) of things acquired. But the wise choose the supreme good, which is variously termed as *Brahma-prāpti*, *mokṣa*, and so on. The Lord

tells Arjuna that the unwise people are enamoured of the Vedic utterances which speak about ends such as cattle, progeny, heaven, and so on, which are sources of pleasure and power, and are trapped in the world of *saṁsāra*. Deeds of various kinds which one performs to achieve these ends are due to the interaction of the *guṇas*; and so the Lord exhorts Arjuna to be free from the triad of *guṇas*, be free from the attitude of *yoga* and *kṣema*. One who is interested in *yoga-kṣema* cannot pursue *mokṣa*; and one who aims at *mokṣa* should not be concerned with *yoga-kṣema*. So, it is the subject matter of the *karma-kāṇḍa* that is reviewed in these *Gītā* passages. Though the *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* are parts of the Veda, each has its own subject matter. While *karma-kāṇḍa* is concerned with rituals and the objects that can be realized through the performance of rituals, *jñāna-kāṇḍa* deals with liberation and the means thereto. However, it does not follow from this that the two parts of the Veda are unrelated. Even though each part of the Veda serves a specific purpose, the Veda as a whole purports to teach the highest goal, viz. liberation, as stated earlier.

S: Is the difference between *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* a radical one?

T: Yes, because they differ in three important respects—eligible person (*adhikārī*), subject matter (*viśaya*), and the end (*prayojana*). For *karma-kāṇḍa*, the *adhikārī* is a person who is desirous of performing ritual for attaining worldly objects; its *viśaya* is ritual of various kinds; and the *phala* is the entire range of objects such as heaven, which are ephemeral. For *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, on the other hand, the *adhikārī* is a person who can discriminate between the eternal and the ephemeral, who has renounced objects of pleasure here and hereafter, who has

control of the mind and the senses, and who has an intense longing for liberation; its *viṣaya* is the ever existent Brahman; and its *phala* is Brahman-realization or *mokṣa* which is eternal. Even though there are differences between these two parts, what is taught in the *karma-kāṇḍa* is useful to a spiritual aspirant in securing the final goal of liberation.

ADVAITA IN THE RG-VEDA

S. Revathy *

The cultural heritage of India is to be found primarily in philosophy and religion; and the sources of India's philosophical ideas and religious beliefs lie in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. The word "*Veda*" means knowledge and supreme knowledge too. But secondarily it signifies the Vedic literature comprising Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads, which are considered to be direct revelations from God. Sāyaṇa defines it as a book which reveals the knowledge of supernatural methods, (*alaukika upāya*) for the achievements of the desired object and avoidance of the undesirable.

The Vedic scriptures, broadly speaking, comprise four great works, namely, *Ṛg-veda*, *Yajur-veda*, *Sāma-veda* and *Atharva-veda*. Each of these again has three main divisions, namely, the Saṁhitās or Mantras, the Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas. The Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas are loosely designated as *Karma-kāṇḍa* (the portion dealing with rituals), the Āraṇyakas as *Upāsanā-kāṇḍa* (the portion relating to meditation) and the Upaniṣads as *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (the portion dealing with supreme knowledge). The Brāhmaṇas are mostly in prose, containing detailed descriptions of the sacrificial rites and the modes of their performance. Each of the Vedas possesses one or more Brāh-

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maṇas. The *Ṛg-veda* has two, namely, the *Aitareya* and *Kauṣītakī* or *Śāṅkhāyana*.

There is a consensus of opinion among modern scholars that the *Ṛg-veda-saṁhitā* is the most ancient record of the religious thoughts of mankind. It stands first among the Vedic revelations because wherever mention is made of the Vedic scriptures, the name of the *Ṛg-veda* comes first. We also notice that the other Saṁhitās are more or less explanations of certain portions of the *Ṛg-veda*. Both the *Yajur-veda* and the *Sāma-veda* contain considerable portions of *Ṛg-veda* with slight additions and alterations. The *Atharva-veda* which is considered to be the last of the Vedas also contains many mantras of the *Ṛg-veda*.

Modern orientalist hold the view that the *Saṁhitā* portion of the *Ṛg-veda* speaks only of a primitive nature of worship and that the Advaita philosophy developed later on in the Upaniṣadic literature. Strangely enough, a careful study of the *Ṛg-veda-saṁhitā* shows that it advocates the Advaitic truth in unmistakable terms, as clearly as in the Upaniṣads. Thus we notice texts interspersed throughout the Brāhmaṇa and Saṁhitā literature, which express philosophical and religious thoughts of an exceedingly exalted type.

Before getting into details, we shall set forth briefly the fundamental principles of Advaita.

God, soul and the world which are distinct realities according to the pluralistic and theistic schools of Indian thought are only the seeming diversifications of a transcendental entity, called Brahman or Ātman through *avidyā* or *māyā*. Brahman is

the only reality; and it is truth, existence, consciousness, bliss and non-dual. It is the true import of the Upaniṣads. *Avidyā* and the world are indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*). God is a complex of Brahman, the pure consciousness, and *avidyā*; and *jīva* is a complex of Brahman and *avidyā* and its products, namely, the psycho-physical organism. The essential nature of God and soul is pure consciousness, that is Brahman. God is always aware of his identity with Brahman and hence he is ever-released. The soul, on the other hand, falsely identifies itself with the gross body and the subtle body, loses sight of its identity with Brahman, and undergoes transmigration. The realisation of its identity with Brahman and remaining as Brahman is the ultimate goal, that is, liberation. This is possible only by transcending *avidyā*. *Avidyā* has Brahman as its content (*viśaya*); and hence it could be removed only by the direct knowledge of Brahman. In order to achieve direct experience, the Upaniṣadic texts are studied and their import is enquired into. Śaṅkara states:

अस्य अनर्थहेतोः प्रहाणाय आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये
सर्वे वेदान्ता आरभ्यन्ते । (*Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 1.1.1)

We shall now explain the philosophy of Advaita as foreshadowed in the earliest literature available to us, namely, the *Ṛg-veda*.

In the Mantra portion, we come across several prayers addressed to Godhead behind the various powers of nature. The gods thus worshipped are many, Indra, Varuṇa, Agni and Vāyu. In spite of this apparent polytheism of the Mantras there is in them the suggestion of an underlying unity among all gods. The word "*deva*" used in respect of gods points to this sense of the

essential *oneness*. This tendency to see the unity of Godhead gradually led to what is known as monotheism. It is the outcome of this tendency which we find expressed in the passage, "What is but one, wise people call by different names as Agni, Yama, and Mātariśvān" (*Ṛg-veda* 3.22.6). This tendency to see the unity in Godhead, that is to say, to reduce the many gods to one who is above and apart from the world, further developed into monism, which traces the whole universe including gods to a single source. Thus we find here the theory of ultimate reality, which is fully expressed in the Upaniṣads and elaborated in the texts on Advaita, along with its allied doctrine of *avidyā*.

In a remarkably profound hymn, the *Ṛg-veda*, recognising the principle of *avidyā*, states thus:

नासदासीन्नोऽसदासीत्तदानीं
 नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
 किमावरीवः कुहकस्य शर्मन्
 अम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम् ॥

(*Ṛg-veda*, 8.7.17.1)

As to the questions whether Brahman which is pure consciousness could be viewed as the material cause of the world of names and forms, this hymn answers by saying that Brahman which is unconditioned cannot be viewed to be so. If something other than Brahman is viewed as the cause, then it may be either *asat* (absolute nothing) or *sat* or existent. The first alternative does not hold good because an absolute nothing like a flower sprung from the sky cannot be the cause of anything. That cause cannot be *sat* because it is against the spirit of Advaita where

Brahman alone is considered to be *sat*. Thus by the process of elimination it is ascertained that a factor different from both *sat* and *asat* existed along with the consciousness. And that is termed "*māyā*". It is *anirvacanīya* or *mithyā*. Thus reference to *māyā* as an indeterminable entity paved the way for the post-Śaṅkara Advaitins to view the world which is an effect of *māyā* as indeterminable, by defining *mithyātva* as *sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*.

The view set forth in the above hymn is elaborated by Śaṅkara in his *Śataślokī* (23) :

तुच्छत्वान्नासदासीद्गगनकुसुमवद्भेदकं नो सदासीत्
 किन्त्वाभ्यामन्यदासीद्व्यवहृतिगतिसन्नास लोकस्तदानीम् ।
 किन्त्वर्वागेव शुक्तौ रजतवदपरो नो विराड्व्योमपूर्वः
 शर्मण्यात्मन्यथैतत्कुहकसलिलवत्किं भवेदावरीवः ॥

In another hymn, the *R̥g-veda* (8.7.17.2) speaks of *māyā* as associated with Brahman, the only reality.

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्ना आसीत्प्रकेतः ।
 आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यत्र परःकिञ्चनास ॥

R̥g-veda, 8.7.17.2

The expressions "*mṛtyu*" and "*amṛtam*" respectively stand for *bandha* (bondage) and *mokṣa* (liberation). Bondage and liberation are for the souls whose essential nature is Brahman. And they are the effects of *māyā* or *avidyā*. Just as there are the verbal usages of day and night, in accordance with the visual perception and non-perception of the sun respectively, even though the sun is ever existent, in the same way, in Brahman

which has attained to the state of the soul the verbal usages such as 'bound' and 'liberated' are not real, but are caused by ignorance. It might be asked as to how there is the verbal usage referring to Brahman as *jīva* or the soul. This hymn itself gives the answer to it by saying, "आनीदवात् स्वधया तदेक". The expression "स्वधा" stands for *māyā*. Brahman which is non-dual, in association with *māyā*, acquired agency and existed as Hiraṇyagarbha, the first of the created beings. Having been associated with *māyā*, Brahman attains to the state of an individual soul, and in reality there is no *jīva*-hood(जीवत्व).

तदेव स्वधाशब्दवाच्यमायया परिवृतं सत् जीवभावं
प्राप्तं न पृथक्कश्चिज्जीवोऽस्तीत्यर्थः ।

(*Advaitākṣara-mālikā*, p.36)

Śaṅkara summarises this idea in his *Śataślokī* (24) thus:

बन्धो जन्मात्ययात्मा यदि न पुनरभूत्तर्हि मोक्षोऽपि नासीद्-
यद्बुद्धात्रिर्दिनं वा न भवति तरणी किन्तु दृग्दोष एषः ।
अप्राणं शुद्धमेकं समभवदथ तन्मायया कर्तृसंज्ञं
तस्मादन्यच्च नासीत्परिवृतमजया जीवभूतं तदेव ॥

Prior to creation, the world which we perceive now did not exist. The question arises then as to the creation of the world. The *R̥g-veda* states:

तम आसीत्तमसा गूढमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छयेनाभवपिहितं यदासीत्तपसस्तन्महिम्ना जायतैकम् ॥

(*R̥g-veda*, 8.7.17.3)

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ॥

(*Rg-veda*, 8.7.11.47)

The first hymn states that at the time of dissolution, *avidyā* which is positive in nature and which is rooted in Brahman, concealed the entire universe. In other words, the entire world remained in a latent form in its natural cause namely, *avidyā*. Creation means only the manifestation of what is latent into a gross form. *Avidyā* and the world have become one (*apraketam*). Just as water mixed with milk cannot be known separately, in the same way the world having become one with *avidyā* by being merged in it cannot be known separately from *avidyā*.

The second hymn, beginning with "कामस्तदग्रे" contains the answer to the question as to how there could be reflection (*ālocanam*) in the case of Īśvara, from which the world creation proceeds. It states that the Reality associated with *avidyā* comes to be endowed with a desire to create the world (कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तत). The merits and demerits of the souls which exist in their subtle bodies of which mind is the most predominant factor serve as the root-cause of the desire to create the world. That is, the reality associated with *avidyā* makes the world which remains in a latent form appear as gross in order to provide the field of enjoyment for the souls to work out their accumulated *karma*. And this is done on the basis of the merits and demerits of the souls (मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत्). The Reality associated with *avidyā* is God. Taking into consideration the merits and demerits of the individual soul, there arises in God the desire to create the world. He, then

reflects upon the process of creation and creates the world. This point has been set forth in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (8.6):

सोऽकामयत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति ।

Śaṅkara summarises this idea in his *Śataślokī* (25) :

प्रागासीद्भाव रूपं तम इति तमसा गूढमस्मादतर्क्यं
क्षीरान्तर्यद्वदंभोजनिरिह जगतो नामरूपात्मकस्य ।
कामाद्भ्रातुः सिसृक्षोरनुगतजगतः कर्मभिस्संप्रवृत्ताद्-
रेतोरूपैर्मनोभिः प्रथममनुगतैः संततैः कार्यमाणैः ॥

The text,

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् । (*R̥g-veda*, 8.4.17.2)

says that the non-dual, attributeless Brahman appears as the world of objects in the three divisions of time, past, present, and future.

Avidyā which is mentioned as the power associated with the reality during the time of dissolution is the factor that conceals the true nature of reality and projects it as God, soul and the world. Of these, God always realises his identity with Brahman and so he is ever-released. It is only the soul that has lost sight of its identity with Brahman and undergoes transformation. This view is set forth in the *R̥g-veda* (8.3.17.7):

न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानान्यद्युष्माकमन्तरं बभूव ।
नीहारेण प्रावृता जल्प्या चासुतृप उक्थशासश्चरन्ति ॥

This text means: Oh Men! You do not know the Reality from which this world has come into existence. It is because the Reality is far removed from you. It is true that the Reality (Brahman) and the soul (*jīva*) are identical. Yet the true nature of Brahman is concealed from *jīva* by *avidyā* which is similar to mist. Thus, having lost sight of its identity with the reality the soul performs actions prescribed in the Vedas and undergoes transmigration.

This *avidyā* is identical with *māyā* and the following hymn of the *R̥g-veda* (8.6.16.3) extols the existence of *avidyā* which is identical with *māyā*.

चतुष्कपर्दा युवतिः सुपेशा घृतप्रतीका वयुनानि वस्ते ।
तस्यां सुपर्णा वृषणा निषेदतुः यत्र देवाः दधिरे भागधेयम् ॥

Māyā or *avidyā* has four features: (1) it is always fresh; (2) it is adept in bringing about a relation between incompatible things, namely, Brahman and the world (अघटितघटना पटीमसी माया) (3) it presents a world which is pleasing in the beginning and is repulsive subsequently, and, (4) it conceals the knowledge of reality imparted in the Upaniṣads. It is in *māyā* or *avidyā* that God and soul exist like birds; and because of *māyā* the sense-organs function in respect of their respective objects. The above hymn sets forth that the distinction between God and soul is caused by *avidyā*, and it is through *avidyā* that the sense-organs relate the soul to their respective objects.

Śaṅkara sets forth this view in his *Śataślokī* (26) as follows:

चत्वारोऽस्य कपर्दाः युवतिरथ भवेन्नूतना नित्यमेषा
 माया वा पेशला स्यात् अघटनघटनापाटवं याति यस्मात् ।
 स्यादारम्भे घृतास्या श्रुतिभववयुनान्येवमाच्छादयन्ती
 तस्यामेतौ सुपर्णाविव परपुरुषौ तिष्ठतोऽर्थप्रतीत्या ॥

The doctrine that the soul undergoes transmigration and that the witness-self manifests the soul and its activities is mentioned in the following hymn:

एकस्सुपर्णः ससमुद्रमाविवेश स इदं विश्वं भुवनं विचेष्टे ।
 तं पाकेन मनसा पश्यमन्तितस्तं मातारेहि स उ रेहि मातरम् ॥
 सुपर्णं विप्राः कवयो वचोभिरेकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति ॥

(*Rg-veda*, 8.6.16.4)

God is supra-relational. The soul, having lost sight of its identity with Brahman, undergoes transmigration. When the mind has become pure, the soul realises that it is non-different from Brahman. Then *māyā* leaves the soul, i.e., the soul is freed from its relation with *māyā*. Thus, this hymn speaks of the distinction between the soul and the witness-self, and also of self realisation which brings about the removal of *māyā* or *avidyā*. Śaṅkara in his *Śataślokī* (20) explains the view set forth in the above hymn thus:

एकस्तत्रास्त्यसङ्गः तदनु तदपरोऽज्ञानसिन्धुं प्रविष्टो
 विस्मृत्यात्मस्वरूपं स विविधजगदाकारमात्मानमैक्षत् ।
 बुद्धयान्तर्याविदैक्षद्विसृजति तमजा सोऽपि तामेवमेकः
 तावद्विप्रास्तमेकं कथमपि बहुधा कल्पयन्ति स्ववाग्भिः ॥

The Advaitic view that it is only the mind inspired by the reflection of the self reaches the other world after the fall of the body is given in the hymn:

यत्ते यमं वैवस्वतं मनो जगाम दूरगाम् ।
तत्त आवर्तयामसीह क्षयाय जीवसे ॥ (Rg-veda, 8.1.20)

The Advaita doctrine that Brahman, owing to its unaccountable association with *māyā* which has manifold powers, appears as manifold, and that it undergoes reflection in mind, which is manifold is set forth in the hymn:

रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव , तदस्य रूपं परिचक्षणाय ।
इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते युक्ता ह्यस्य हरयः शता दश ॥
(Rg-veda, 4.7.33.3)

It may be noted that a similar passage occurs in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Kātha Upaniṣad* too.

The individual soul, identifying itself with the psycho-physical organism, thinks that it is different from God. When it realises also its identity with God, then it becomes liberated.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नः अनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥
(Rg-veda, 8.1.20.1)

Further, many of the texts found in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, speak of meditation on Brahman. For example, the text (2.2.4)

तद्योऽहं सोऽसौ योऽसौ सोऽहं

culminates in expressing the Advaitic thought. The text means:

तत् - तस्मिन् सर्वात्मके प्राणदेवतास्वरूपे योऽहं उपासक-
शरीरवर्ती, सोऽसौ - स एवादित्यमण्डलस्थः पुरुषः, तथा
योऽसौ - अधिदैवम् आदित्यमण्डलस्थः पुरुषः यः, सोऽहं -
स एवोपासकशरीरस्थोऽहमस्मि इत्यन्योन्यतादात्म्यं
ध्यायेत् इत्यर्थः ॥

Thus the perennial stream of Advaitic thought which found full expression in the Upaniṣad has been foreshadowed in the earlier literature, namely the *Rġ-veda*.

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NIMITTAMĀTRAM BHAVA*

R.V. Raghavan**

Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda, in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, mentions 'association with great souls' (*mahāpuruṣa-saṁśrayaḥ*) as one of the three things that are difficult for us to obtain. The importance he attaches to this comes out in bold relief by its juxtaposition to the other two. The other two are: "birth as a human being" and "longing for liberation." The English poet, Lord Tennyson, sings of man as "the roof and crown of things." Summing up thereby the uniqueness of the human species, Śrī Śaṅkara forcefully brings home to us the intensity of our desire to cling to 'fruitless hope' (*āsāpiṇḍam*) even in old age, when we move on crutches, toothless and bald (*Mohamudgara*). I consider it my good fortune to have come in contact with His Holiness Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī (hereafter referred to as Paramācārya or His Holiness), even if it be in my early fifties, after I had been weather-beaten and storm-tossed in the ocean of *saṁsāra*. Thanks to one of the devout disciples of the Great Ācārya, I could find himself in that 'Heaven of Freedom', which indeed is what one feels like in the presence of His Holiness. I narrate here a few instances in which I happened to be the mere instrument of His Holiness in promoting something worthy.

* Courtesy: *Śrī Kāñcī Kāmakoti: A Hundred Years of Light*, pp. 136-40 (English section), pub.: A. Kuppuswami, Sri Kanchi Sankaracharya Math, Kanchipuram, May 1993.

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Though I came in close contact with His Holiness rather late in life, I had known him even from my boyhood. Let me recall an incident when I was but eight years old, playing on the street.

A frail old man walked along, placed his hand over my head and was about to enter my house. We used to call him "Mayavaram Krishna Sastrigal Mama." My father, a six-footer, nicknamed "Brahmananda Iyengar" prostrated before Krishna Sastrigal in the dirt-laden street itself. Mama, after blessing my father, stepped on to the pial of the house, found a comfortable place in a corner to sit down, placed his handbag, and water-pot enquiring the while about our family welfare. My father asked him about " Śaṅkarācārya Svāmī " at Mayavaram (now Mayiladuthurai). Mama handed over to my father '*prasāda*' got from the Svāmī. That was the first time I heard about Paramācārya.

Krishna Sastrigal had given '*upadeśa*' of several *mantras* to my father, notably *Gāyatrī Mantra*, turning my father into a 'Gāyatrī Upāsaka'. Whenever I had '*darshan*' of Paramācārya in my later life, His Holiness used to ask me about Krishna Sastri, one of the several pandits who had been with Paramācārya when the Svāmī was young. How he had come to know about my closeness in my boyhood to 'Sastrigal Mama' I don't know. I had never told anyone about this. Is this a case of *jñānadṛṣṭi*?

The first time I really came close to His Holiness was in 1971, at Kārvetinagar, near Puthūr, on the way to Tirupati. Paramācārya had just then placed Śrī Jayendra Sarasvatī Svāmī in charge of the Kāñcī Maṭha.

It was around 4 p.m. I was lucky to be standing very close to the entrance of the hut, from which emerged His Holiness. There were a couple of Europeans in the gathering of

of about 50 who paid their obeisance to him. He was silent for a while. There was pin-drop silence, except for the sound of the rustling leaves in the trees around.

The golden rays of the evening sun made the hut and the surroundings alive and attractive. The atmosphere of serenity made such a deep impression on me that, years later, I could recapture the scene and tell an artist to portray the scene. The painting drawn by him hangs in my office and which, along with another big portrait of Paramācārya, I look at them every day, the first thing in the morning.

Paramācārya, turning towards me, wanted to know something of my background. I felt nervous on being spoken to by Paramācārya and could not find appropriate words to introduce myself. A friend of mine who was there told His Holiness that I was a publisher of industrial periodicals and that I was keen on publishing a 'spiritual' magazine with the blessings of His Holiness.

Paramācārya looked at me as if to enquire, "Is that so?" He then became silent for a while. He then asked me about the publications, I was bringing out and enquired if I had a printing press of my own. There was again a moment of silence. He then asked me, "Do you know Sanskrit? Have you read Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*? Who is the hero in the *Raghuvamśa*?" I was too nervous to reply. He himself gave the answer: "Don't you know, it is Dilīpa." Again a moment of silence. There appeared a smile on his face. "Bring out a journal with the title 'Dilīpa'. They are all crazy about the film star Dilip Kumar. Aren't they? Make your journal a modern vehicle of learning. Don't make it "*maḍisañchi*". Today, the fashion is to swear by science. Study the philosophy of Nāgārjuna. He was the greatest scientific

philosopher of all times. Let *Dilīpa* address itself to those who have lost their traditional moorings and have been brought up in a climate of unbelief, scepticism and the so-called rationalism. Go to people like Raghunathan¹ and seek their advice and guidance. Bring out *Dilīpa* both in English and Hindi."

A couple of years later, in 1973, when I went to Śivasthānam for a 'darshan' of Paramācārya, he enquired if I had brought out '*Dilīpa*'. Looking at my pathetic face, he said with great compassion: "Don't worry. Keep on trying. '*Dilīpa*' would come out. And it would shine brightly. You will do it."

I wanted to ask Paramācārya if I should have a separate organisation for publishing *Dilīpa*. "Could a trust be set up? What could be the name of the trust?" Paramācārya's encouraging words about *Dilīpa* gave me the boldness to ask him all these questions. Paramācārya became silent for a while, as he did at Kārvetinagar, rubbing his eyebrows with his fingers. Then he asked: "Did you or did you not say that you had read the *Raghuvamśa*? Do you remember the name of the queen, the wife of king Dilīpa?" As usual, without waiting for an answer he said, "It was Sudakṣiṇā. Kālidāsa depicts the character of Sudakṣiṇā beautifully; you had better read it yourself. Set up a trust to publish *Dilīpa* and call it Sudakshina Trust."

"Incidentally," Paramācārya added, "do you remember the line in the *Raghuvamśa*:

sa pitā pitarastāsām kevalam janmahetavaḥ

(Dilīpa was the father of his subjects; the fathers were merely the source of their birth.) This message must go home to all those ruling our country today. Use it as a motto in '*Dilīpa*'."

Thus came into existence 'Sudakshina Trust' which publishes *Dilīpa*. the first issue came out in January, 1974. I could not make it bilingual but pledged to myself that I would do it later.

In 1980, when Paramācārya was camping at Sholapur, he sent word that I should meet him along with Śrī Seshadri Bhattachar of the Chembur Ahobilam Temple. I went there the very next morning at 4 a.m. along with Śrī Seshadri Bhattachar and waited for the *darshan* of Paramācārya. As soon as he stepped out of his room, I was the first to be talked to. He said: "Don't worry, your son will be all right. But don't go in for an operation." I was amazed. The previous day in Bombay, when I had received the message from Paramācārya's camp, my son was seriously ill, suffering from *fistula* and we were in two minds whether or not to go in for an operation since, in spite of an earlier operation, the *fistula* had recurred. I could not give more thought to it as I had to rush to Sholapur at Paramācārya's command. And here was Paramācārya relieving me of my unexpressed anxiety!

Paramācārya immediately explained why we were called. Śrī Rajagopala Somani of Sholapur, Paramācārya said, had offered to give Paramācārya a donation of Rs. one lakh. Since Śrī Rajagopala Somani was a devout Vaishnavite, Paramācārya thought that his donation should more appropriately go to Śrī Aḷagiyasiṅgar Jīyar Svāmī, who was engaged in the monumental task of building brick by brick, the Rājagopuram of Śrī Raṅganāthasvāmī temple at Śrīraṅgam. Since Śrī Seshadri Bhattachar was known to Paramācārya as one engaged in the collection of funds for this cause at the command of Śrī Aḷagiyasiṅgar, he had to be called to Sholapur. My role in this mission was just to take Śrī Seshadri Bhattachar to Paramācārya.

How lucky I was to be chosen for this mission, which, incidentally, secured for me a very close *darshan* of Paramācārya and his blessings to my ailing son! My son recovered completely soon after my return to Bombay.

The year was 1978; the place, Nagari. Paramācārya was camping there during his six-year *yātrā* in Karnataka and Maharashtra. During the *darshan*, Paramācārya asked me if I had heard of one "Tōḷappar". Without waiting for an answer as usual, he went on, "Do you know that the *Vaidyanātha Dīkṣitīyam* is the only *nibandhana-grantha* (authority) for all, Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites, for daily *anuṣṭhāna* according to the Dharma Śāstra? Two hundred years before, in Kāñcīpuram, there was a great soul called Tōḷappar, a Vaiṣṇavite. He had authored a *nibandhana-grantha* for Dharma Śāstra called "Tōḷappar *Smṛti*". If you are able to lay your hands on any manuscript of the *Tōḷappar Smṛti*, publish it." I just nodded my head in obeisance and took leave of him. How was I going to locate the manuscript of the *Tōḷappar Smṛti*?

A few months later one Mamballam Bhāshyakara Svāmī, a venerable old Veda-Śāstra pandit, who was one of the recipients of *sambhāvanās* regularly from Sudakshina Trust, came to my house with a bundle in his hand. He told me that the bundle contained a rare manuscript in Telugu script of a part of the *Tōḷappar Smṛti* called, *Sudhī-vilocana* and he thought that I would publish it. It was a thrilling moment in my life. Paramācārya had asked me to locate this very manuscript only sometime ago and here was Mamballam Svāmī bringing it to my house. If this was not the grace of the walking God, what else was it?

The manuscript of a part of the *Tōlappar Smṛti* was in Telugu. How could I get it transcribed into Tamil to make it useful for daily use by the Tamilian Vaiṣṇavites? I had not to wait for the answer for long. A week later, I chanced to meet Ghanapāthi Desikachariyar, the *adhyaksha* of Mannargudi Veda-pāṭhaśālā, at a wedding. Ghanapāthi Desikachariyar, the only Veda-bhāṣya scholar among the Vaiṣṇavites was also an erudite scholar in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. It struck me that this gentleman could be the answer to my quest. I told him all about it. He said that he had himself heard about the *Tōlappar Smṛti*. I handed over the manuscript to him and he set about working on it to do not only a translation in Sanskrit but also a detailed commentary in Sanskrit and Tamil. From then on, locating a Tamil/Sanskrit printer at Śrīraṅgam and then at Kumbhakonam; the 4-year long struggle with the printing press to get printed; what originally was to be a 200-page book but which, in the event, turned out to be a 500 page volume; the expenditure of some Rs. 40,000/- on it; all these are all a long story. At last when a copy of the almost complete book was placed at the lotus feet of Paramācārya for his approval some time in the middle of 1988, Paramācārya smiled benignly and blessed me. He called upon a well-known mirasdar of Muḍikoṇḍān (Tamil Nadu), a great devotee of Paramācārya, who was standing by, to arrange for an *upodghāta* (preface) to be obtained for inclusion in the book by a great Vaiṣṇavite vidvān in Navalpakkam. What a breadth of vision! A Vaiṣṇavite vidvān to be chosen to write the preface for the *Smṛti* of the great Vaiṣṇavite, Śrī Tōlappar! The book was subsequently published and distributed to several Vaiṣṇavite *vaidikas*.

Later some more books like the *Vināyakar Akaval* were published by the Sudakshina Trust under the directions of Śrī Paramācārya.

Thus I have been an instrument of His Holiness in carrying out his wishes. To be in the presence of His Holiness is a boon and a blessing. I consider myself fortunate to have been drawn towards Him and bask in the sunshine of His spiritual glory.

It is the blessings of such great and lofty Mahātmās who are the walking gods on this earth, that can elevate ordinary mortals like us and make it possible even for us to love and be loved by God. And hence does Yāmunācārya invoke God's *kaṭākṣa* (glance) upon himself as the surest way of becoming one of the chosen devotees of the Lord.

And, so do I invoke the *kaṭākṣa* of Paramācārya, since He now does not ordinarily converse with others and lives in higher plane than we, the mortals.

O Lord! grant that I may be the recipient of the gracious glances of those Mahātmās, who, in their intense longing to behold Thy rapturous Figure once, reject the pleasures of the earth and the promises of Paramapada, and separation from whom even for a moment is to Thee most unbearable.²

NOTES

1. His Holiness referred to late N.Raghunathan a distinguished scholar and leader-writer of *The Hindu* for several decades.
2. Śrī Yāmunācārya's *Stotra Ratna*, 56.

PHILOSOPHY AS SELF-REALISATION*

Sibajiban Bhattacharyya**

I**Introduction**

Philosophy has been conceived differently by different philosophers and it is difficult to find anything common to all these conceptions. We analyse here a few views about philosophy in order to find out their essential features.

(i) Philosophy is the art of living a tranquil and serene life – it is a skill to be acquired by prolonged training and rigorous practice. There may be a theory behind this art, as there is one behind every act and that theory too may be called philosophy but only in a derivative sense. Too much concern with theory may be an impediment to attaining the practical goal in philosophy as elsewhere. So theorising is discouraged and the emphasis is on practice. Patañjali, for example in his celebrated theory of the eightfold method for attaining *samādhi* which consists in arresting the movement of the mind includes moral

* Courtesy: *Philosophy: Theory and Practice*, Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1967, pp. 481 - 496.

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practices (like non-violence, speaking the truth, non-stealing, physical postures, breath-control, etc.), and exercises of attention (like concentration, meditation etc.). As a result of these practices one attains a practical result. Patañjali, of course, asserts that these practices remove *avidyā* which is the root of the *kleśas*, and ultimately lead to self-realisation, but this self-realisation is automatically achieved without any intellectual or cognitive activity. As soon as all movements of the mind are arrested, the self remains in its pure state and this staying in its pure state is what is meant by self-realisation. The point to be noted here is that although self-realisation is really a state of pure self-consciousness, yet in order to achieve this no specially cognitive activity is needed. As a matter of fact, according to Patañjali even knowledge about empirical objects can be attained without any cognitive activity. Thus in giving details of the results of the various exercises, Patañjali mentions that by meditating on the sun, we attain knowledge about the world; by meditating on the navel, we attain direct knowledge of the state of the body; by concentrating on the heart, we attain direct knowledge of the mind – of our own as well as of others. But the results of all types of concentrations are not cognitive; for example, by concentrating on the throat, we get rid of thirst and hunger, but do not attain any knowledge of objects, empirical or non-empirical. Thus concentration sometimes yields knowledge, sometimes non-cognitive powers. The knowledge attained through concentration on specified parts of the body or on special objects, although empirical, is still extra-ordinary in the sense that ordinary people do not have this type of knowledge. This type of knowledge is empirical, not in the sense of being derived from sense-experience, but in the sense of being about spatio-temporal objects.

(ii) The Hegelians conceive philosophy as a form of knowledge, indeed, as the highest form of knowledge, a sort of super-science which is superior to science, just as science is superior to common sense. This highest knowledge is at once immediate and rational, all-comprehensive and concrete. Now reason has two aspects – a theoretical and a practical one. Kant, although admitting the unity of reason, still made a distinction between the pure theoretical reason and the pure practical reason. A cognitive act, according to Kant, is an act of theoretical reason and cannot be identified with a moral action which is the function of the practical reason. But, according to the Hegelians, this distinction is not ultimately valid. For any one who attains philosophical knowledge also attains moral perfection. Now, it is not clear whether this identification is achieved only at the highest level or is present at lower levels also. For apparently, being moral, i.e. performing moral actions and moral actions only, is not a way of knowing. It is not clear how at the highest stage morality and knowledge become identical. Reason which is the synthesis of sense and understanding in the sphere of knowledge seems to effect a harmony in the moral life of a person so that a philosopher necessarily leads a moral perfection needs to be explained; we may ask, for example: Is every morally perfect man a philosopher, i.e. does he possess the supreme knowledge of the Absolute which is the unity of subject and object, matter and mind which is, indeed, the highest synthesis? Or, is philosophising a way of becoming moral?

(iii) The linguistic analysts deny that philosophy is knowledge; they identify philosophy with a particular method of thinking. 'To do philosophy' is to practice analysis which dissolves, rather than solves, the philosophical puzzles. The goal of analysis is thus a practical goal – getting rid of the

philosophical puzzles which trouble the mind. Philosophical analysis is claimed to have a therapeutical value comparable to that of psycho-analysis. (Indian philosophers in general go a step further and claim that philosophy not merely rids the mind of puzzles, but puts an end to all types of worries, indeed, to all suffering.) The problem is: How can analysis achieve this practical result? The analysts say that the puzzles arise only when the rules of language are violated; and if we realise this by practising analysis of the philosophical problems, then we shall cease to ask these questions. That is, the mere knowledge that the puzzles are due to a mistaken use of language suffices to put an end to all philosophical questioning. The reason for this is that we cannot be genuinely puzzled by knowingly misusing language. No further explanation seems to be necessary; yet as we shall see, much clarification and even theorising will be necessary to explain this point.

(iv) The phenomenologists too, identify philosophy with the phenomenological method, rather than with any particular result. The essence of this method consists in effecting a change in consciousness, in the common sense attitude to the world. To philosophise is not to theorise, but rather to 'see' the objects in an essentially different way. The method of reduction involves suspension of belief in the existence that accompanies our every day life and scientific thinking. Now this is not merely an intellectual act, but involves self-discipline for to suspend existential beliefs is to withdraw our commitment to them, to stop identifying ourselves with such beliefs. This ultimately amounts to a total transformation of the personality of the individual comparable to a 'religious conversion'. Yet it is not clear whether phenomenologically reduced consciousness is morally perfect. In religious conversion it is the moral life which

is primarily transformed, a religious person is necessarily morally perfect, but does not appear to necessarily possess philosophical knowledge, whereas phenomenological reduction makes one a philosopher. Husserl, of course, has claimed that phenomenological reduction goes even beyond religious conversion and "has the significance of the greatest existential conversion that is expected of mankind" (*Husserliana* VI,140; quoted by Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, Vol.I p.136, fn 1). Yet the nature of this has not been revealed. Hence phenomenology has sometimes tended to become an esoteric practice not amenable to the uninitiated.

(v) The existentialist philosophers have emphasised the role of the self in experience. The self which tends to be overlooked and forgotten in the scientific attitude comes to the forefront in the realisation of crisis. It is only when we are deeply engaged, when we are in the world in the fullest sense, that *Dasein* is revealed. But if the function of philosophy is merely to make us aware of our authentic existence, then it does not involve any fundamental change in our personalities comparable to that of conversion. It merely restricts our tendency to escape into a world of abstractions and imaginations, to avoid responsibility for our choice and to conform mechanically to social and ethical standard.

This brief survey of some concepts of philosophy shows that philosophy always involves a change in our consciousness, i.e. has a practical aspect according to all these views. Their difference lies in the appraisal of the nature of the change brought about by philosophy. Yoga and other systems of Indian Philosophy claim a total transformation of personality and cessation of all suffering as effects of philosophy; Hegel seems

to come very close to such a theory claiming for philosophy the power to produce moral perfection in man; analytic philosophers claim only a limited therapeutic value for philosophy; Husserl claims a 'total personal transformation' as a prerequisite, not a consequence, of philosophy; but the nature of this transformation and its method remain yet to be explained; the existentialists urge us to eschew the palliatives of either socially directed responses or intellectualised acts in favour of responsibility and to live authentically.

The main problem which remains to be solved is:

(1) How does philosophical knowledge produce a practical change in our consciousness or a personal transformation?

We shall not discuss the problem we found in Patañjali's theory – How can concentration produce sometimes cognitive, sometimes non-cognitive results? Patañjali himself states these results without offering any explanation and it is difficult for us either to dispute the truth of these statements, or to justify them.

We shall explain and examine two types of answers to this question, namely, that given by the Nyāya system and that given by Advaita Vedānta. As both these systems explain their answers only by explaining the nature of self-knowledge, we shall have to understand their theories of the self, the inner sense, the nature of false cognitions and wrong notions and the nature of knowledge.

II

The Nyāya Theory

The Nyāya postulates the existence of two types of selves: one supreme self which is identified with God, and a plurality of finite selves. Both these kinds of selves are conceived as substances possessing consciousness as a quality. Not merely the supreme self but even finite selves are eternal and omnipresent; the supreme self differs from the other kind of selves in being omnipotent and omniscient. By 'omnipotence' is meant not 'the power to create everything', but only 'the power to create whatever can be created'. The supreme self creates the universe, keeps it in existence so long as it exists, and then destroys it – all by one act of will. There is no need to postulate different acts of willing in the supreme self. This one act of will which is postulated is, of course, eternal. Just as one act of will is directed towards all created objects, so also the omniscience which is postulated in the supreme self and its consciousness or knowledge are both eternal, yet they are not identical. The self is never identical with consciousness.

Every finite self is eternal and also omnipresent. It is not identical with consciousness, nor is it essentially conscious. Consciousness is only an accidental quality of finite selves. A finite self happens to possess consciousness only when the following conditions are fulfilled: (i) In order to be conscious a finite self has to possess a body; (ii) the self has to be related to the inner sense in a characteristic manner; and (iii) consciousness is always of some object. Let us explain these conditions.

(i) Every finite self is omnipresent. If in order to have consciousness or knowledge, a relation between the self and the object be sufficient, then every finite self being present everywhere will be related to everything and hence would have knowledge of everything i.e. every finite self would be omniscient. But it is not omniscient, so, at least one more condition is necessary for consciousness. Moreover, consciousness is experienced to occur in the self as associated with the body, no one experiences that his knowledge belongs to the self beyond his body.

Now it may be objected that so far as the facts of consciousness are concerned, the finite self is not omnipresent. What do we gain by saying that the self is present everywhere, if we have to admit that consciousness belongs to the self as limited within the body? In order to understand the Nyāya position, it is necessary to know the Nyāya theories of eternal entities, and perception of things and their attributes.

According to Nyāya if a thing is eternal, it cannot be composite. For if a thing is composed of parts, then it is always possible for the parts to fall apart destroying the whole which, therefore, cannot be eternal. Nyāya postulates two types of simple entities, atoms (of earth, air, water and fire), and infinite substances. Infinite substances are necessarily eternal, and hence cannot be composite. Now every self is eternal; hence it must be either atomic or infinite. It cannot be an atom, for an atom cannot be perceived whereas a self is perceived in introspection. No attributes of atoms can be perceived, but we all internally perceive our happiness, sorrow and other internal states of the self. So the self is not an atom, yet it is eternal. Hence it must be infinite in magnitude, i.e. must be present everywhere.

Consciousness according to Nyāya is the same as cognition. The other states of the self, namely, feeling and willing, are not conscious states. But when they occur in the self they are immediately followed by their introspective awareness. So for all practical purposes, there is no feeling or willing which goes unnoticed. But this introspective awareness of feeling or willing is not identical with the feeling or the willing.

Consciousness is neither the essence of the self nor is it identical with the self. In deep dreamless sleep we are wholly unconscious. This would be impossible if the self were identical with consciousness, or if consciousness were the essence of the self. The problem for Nyāya is, then, how to explain the nature of our cognition – that we slept well – which we have on getting up from sound sleep. According to Advaita Vedānta this cognition is memory, i.e. we remember on getting up from sleep that we slept well. But this memory will be impossible if we did not have direct consciousness of sleeping well, i.e. if we did not have experience of sleep during sleep. This implies that we are conscious even during deep sleep. But according to Nyāya this is impossible; we can never remember that we slept well. How then can we ever say that we slept well? According to Nyāya this is an inference, not memory. We infer that we slept well from the feeling of freshness etc. which we have when we get up from sound sleep. If the self is thus unconscious in deep sleep, then there must be some other condition of consciousness than the body. For even when we are asleep, both the self and the body remain, still we are unconscious. This brings us to the Nyāya concept of inner sense (*manas* or *antaḥkaraṇa*).

(ii) The concept of inner sense as distinct from the self is common to many systems of Indian philosophy. The inner sense,

according to Nyāya as according to all systems which admit its existence, is material in nature. According to Nyāya it is also an atom. The function of the inner sense is necessary not merely of introspection, but for cognition, i.e. consciousness as such. In deep sleep, although the inner sense is there, yet it is not characteristically related to the self, does not perform any function and is at rest. This is why in such sleep there is no consciousness even though the self as restricted by the body is there.

The inner sense, according to Nyāya must be an atom, not a composite, spread-out substance. For in that case it would have been related to the self at more than one point, thus giving rise to more than one cognition at the same time. But according to Nyāya only one cognition can originate in the self at one time. Sometimes we seem to have different cognitions at the same time, but according to Nyāya this is an illusion. What actually happens is that different cognitions quickly succeed one another producing in us the illusion of simultaneity.

(iii) Consciousness is always directed towards some object. As we have already remarked, consciousness according to Nyāya is cognition. Non-cognition mental states like willing are unconscious states; they can be directed towards object only through some cognition state. Thus desire can be directed towards an object only because desire for an object involves the belief that the object is attainable by me. These beliefs being cognitions have their objects, and the desire is directed to these objects of belief in a secondary sense. Only cognitions are directed towards object in the primary sense.

This directedness towards objects takes different forms corresponding to the different forms of cognition. In perceptual

knowledge, there is a real relation between three entities: 1. the self and the inner sense, 2. the inner sense and the sense organs, and 3. the sense organs and the objects perceived. We should note here that Nyāya does not find any difficulty in holding that the self can be directly related with material substances, like the inner sense. This threefold relation between the self and the object of perception is, of course, completely different from the epistemological relation of the knowledge of the object. Nyāya makes a distinction between the relation of the knower and the known and the relation between knowledge and its object. This is possible, because according to Nyāya the self is not identical with consciousness, hence the relation of the self to the object is also different from the relation of the cognition to its object. Here we shall be concerned primarily with the relation of the cognition to its object. Single objects are known according to Nyāya in a way roughly akin to what Russell calls 'knowledge by acquaintance'. Here the knowledge is related to its object in one way which is completely different from the way in which knowledge of an objective complex is related to the complex. According to Nyāya all ordinary cognitions are of relations holding between two terms. Thus when I see a jar, the knowledge is not of the single entity, but of the objective complex, the jar, the universal jariness, and their 'aRb'. The first term of the relation known (here, *a*) is the *viśeṣya* of the knowledge, the second term, *b*, is the *viśeṣaṇa* or *prakāra* of the knowledge. When we know a complex whole, then although there is one knowledge in the self, still this one knowledge is related to the different elements of the objective whole in different ways. The knowledge is related to the first term of the relation known, i.e. to *a*, in one way (*viśeṣyatā-sambandha*), to the second term, *b*, in another way, (*viśeṣaṇata-* or *prakāratā-sambandha*), and to the relation itself, i.e. to R, in a still different

way (*saṁsargatā-sambandha*). Conversely, the first term of the objective complex, i.e. *a*, is related to the knowledge in one way (*viśeṣyatā-sambandha*), the second term, *b*, is related to the knowledge in another way (*prakāratā-sambandha*) and the relation is related to the knowledge in a still different way, (*saṁsargatā-sambandha*). Thus the converse of *viśeṣyata* is *viśeṣyita*, of *prakāratā*, and of *saṁsargatā* *samsargitā*. Apart from these three relations and their converse, there is the fourth type of relation between knowledge and its object when the knowledge is acquaintance. Nyāya admits further type of complex cognitions involving relation of second order (*viśiṣṭa-vaiśiṣṭya-buddhi*). In this type of knowledge we know that something as related by a certain relation to a second term is further related to a third term by another relation. For example, when we know a man wearing a red coat, we know that the coat which is related to the red colour is again related to the man who wears it. But in this type of higher order knowledge, no new type of relation is involved between the knowledge and the object.

Now we come to the Nyāya theory of bondage and liberation. A man in bondage suffers pain; liberation is the cessation of pain forever. In deep sleep there is no suffering, but deep sleep is not liberation because the painless state ends when we wake up. According to the Nyāya, consciousness of objects is a necessary pre-condition of suffering. We suffer because we do not get the desired object, and desire for an object is caused by a cognition of objects together with other conditions. Thus objective consciousness is a necessary condition of desire, and desire is a necessary condition of suffering. Thus to be free from suffering, it is necessary to destroy objective consciousness. But as according to the Nyāya, consciousness is consciousness of objects, to remove objective consciousness is to become totally

unconscious. Thus in the state of liberation the self becomes totally unconscious. We have already explained the Nyāya theory that a pre-condition of consciousness is the relation of the self with the inner sense. This relation is due to our ignorance of the true nature of our own selves. If we realise that the self is altogether different from the body, from the sense organs including the inner sense, then the self will cease to be related with the inner sense and thus cease to be conscious, and will escape suffering. We are ignorant about the true nature of the self, because we have wrong notions of the following objects: (i) the self, (ii) the body, (iii) sense organs, (iv) sensory qualities, (v) cognition, (vi) the inner sense, (vii) good and bad deeds, (viii) desire and aversion, (ix) rebirth, (x) suffering, (xi) pain and (xii) release. About these objects various types of false beliefs are usual. For example, about the self one may believe falsely that there is no self, or that the self is identical with the body, and so on. If all these beliefs are destroyed, the self stays in its pure state, without pain, and also without happiness and consciousness. These false beliefs are destroyed by knowledge about these objects and primarily of the self.

Now we come to the Nyāya explanation of how false beliefs are destroyed or rendered ineffective by knowledge. Nyāya does this by its theory of preventing (*pratibandhaka-pratibādhyā-bhāva*). According to the Nyāya, cognitions of a particular form are prevented from occurring by cognitions of another form. We have to note here at the outset that this relation of prevention obtains only between cognitions, beliefs, knowledge, etc. only so long as they are actual states of the self, but do not belong to mere dispositions. We have already noted that the analytic philosophers of ordinary language hold that it is impossible to be puzzled by knowingly misusing language. But

the term 'knowledge' is used by them only in a dispositional sense. It is not a fact that a mere disposition can prevent us from misusing language and being genuinely puzzled. There is, for example, a controversy among philosophers whether any one can think or believe in self-contradictory propositions. Eric Toms says: "That an object may be said, *or even believed* both to have and not to have a certain property, every one knows to be possible, alas! Thus there is no problem about the actual occurrence of contradictions in language" (*Being, Negation and Logic*, p.3; italics mine). Arthur Pap, on the other hand, argues thus: "Thus explicitly self-contradictory sentences do not express anything that could possibly be believed; that there are round squares, for example, is not something that could possibly be believed, and the impossibility is not just *psychological*. That somebody should believe both (and at the same time) p and not-p is itself a contradictory supposition. The frequent claim that people, alas, are capable of holding self-contradictory beliefs notwithstanding, the statement 'X believes at t that p and not-p' is itself self-contradictory" (*Semantics and Necessary Truth*, p.173; author's italics). According to Nyāya this controversy can be easily solved. When anyone believes that p or not-p, at least one of the beliefs has lapsed into a disposition; that is, one has forgotten that one believes that p or not-p. Pap uses the term 'belief' not in the sense of a disposition but in the sense of an actual mental state. This is clear from his emphasis on 'believing at t', and 'believing at the same time: If 'belief' of 'believing' is used in a dispositional sense, then one can, and very often does, hold self-contradictory beliefs. Thus according to Nyāya both Toms and Pap are right, only Toms uses the term 'believe' in a dispositional sense, whereas Pap uses it in an episodic sense. Nyāya uses the terms 'cognition' ('cognition' and 'consciousness' are synonyms) 'beliefs', 'knowledge' etc. only in their episodic

sense. For dispositions they use other terms, like 'traces' etc. Every actual mental state, cognitive or non-cognitive, has three moments, of origination, of duration and of cessation. Nyāya bases its theory of prevention on the moments of origination and duration. We may note here the following points.

(i) When one cognition originates, it prevents the origination of any other cognition. In the case of introspective cognition of a first order cognition of objects, the objective cognition first originates, then passes into its second phase of duration; it is only then that the second order introspective cognition originates. Thus when the introspective cognition comes into being the first order cognition endures and hence is directly known in introspection. But the two cognitions cannot originate at the same time, and cannot endure at the same time.

(ii) Nyāya then calculates the strength of the conditions of different types of cognition. In every moment of waking life, there are conditions which can produce perceptual knowledge; i.e. the conditions which suffice to produce perceptual knowledge are always present. Yet we have other types of cognition, inferential, memory, etc. This means that when we have inferential cognition, the conditions which suffice to produce this cognition prevails over the conditions for perception of some object or the other. For as we have already seen, the conditions of perception are always present, so whenever we infer or have a different type of cognition, the conditions of inference etc. have to prevail over the conditions of perception. For example, when I infer that there is a man in the next room, instead of performing this act of inference I could have perceived the table in the room where I am sitting. As conditions sufficient for perceiving some object or the other are always present, these

conditions have to be subjugated if we are to have any other type of cognition. Here Nyāya gives the following rule: In the case of the same objective complex the conditions of perception normally prevail over conditions of other types of cognition; in the case of different objects, the conditions of inference prevail over the conditions of perception. Let us explain this rule.

According to Nyāya we can know the same objective complex in different ways. For example, we can know that there is fire on the hill by perception, by inference, or even by hearing words spoken by others. Suppose we are standing in front of the hill from where we can perceive that there is fire on the hill, and also from the perception of smoke we can infer that. When conditions for perception and inference are thus simultaneously present, normally we shall have the perceptual knowledge. But if we want to infer, then we shall have the inferential knowledge, not perception. The desire to infer what can at the same time be perceived will produce the inferential knowledge. When this desire to infer is not operative, i.e. is not an actual mental state, then we shall have the perceptual knowledge. But when sufficient conditions for perceiving an object are present, and also sufficient conditions for inferring a different objective complex are present simultaneously, it is the inference which will always take place, not the perception. Suppose I am standing in front of the hill, and sufficient conditions for perception of the hill are present, and also sufficient conditions for inferring that there is fire on the hill are present at the same time; then according to Nyāya, I shall not see that this is a hill, but shall have the inferential knowledge that there is fire on the hill.

(iii) Now we come to the theory of cognitions of contradictory propositions. The question here is: Supposing that

I have a cognition that S is P, can I also cognise that S is not P? When will one cognition prevent the occurrence of the cognition of a contradictory proposition? Thus here there are two cognitions; one preventing cognition, the other the prevented cognition, i.e. the cognition which is prevented from occurring or originating. Nyāya enumerates the different characteristics of the preventing and the prevented cognitions of contradictory propositions.

Characteristics of the cognition which is prevented from occurring:

1. The cognition can be either true or false.
2. It may or may not be attended with belief.
3. It must not be a supposition.
4. It must not be an ordinary perception, or an illusory perception due to any psycho-physical defect.
5. The cognition must have as its object a complex of the form 'aRb'

Characteristics of the preventing cognition:

1. The cognition must be attended with belief.
2. It may be either true or false; if false, it must not be known to be false.
3. It must not be a supposition.
4. It must be about the proposition which is contradictory to the proposition cognised by the prevented cognition.

Let us now explain these characteristics.

We first note that we are dealing here with cognitions of contradictory propositions only. A mere supposition of a proposition can neither prevent nor be prevented by a cognition of the contradictory proposition [Characteristic (3) of both]. If

we suppose that S is P, then this supposition even when it endures as an actual mental state cannot prevent us from cognising or even knowing that S is not P. So also even if we know that S is P, even this knowledge will not be able to prevent us from supposing that S is not P. The supposition, in this case, will be a contrary-to-fact supposition. Then an illusory perception cannot be prevented from occurring by any cognition of the contradictory proposition. For example, if we are suffering from jaundice, then even though we know (in the episodic sense of 'know') that the wall is not yellow, yet we shall see that the wall is yellow. Thirdly, the preventing cognition can be either true or false, but it must not be known to be false. Suppose that it is false that S is P, but we firmly believe that S is P. This firm belief (when it is an actual mental state) will prevent us from knowing the truth that S is not P. But, if we know that our belief is false, then of course, we shall no longer hold it, i.e. shall withdraw our conviction in it; then this cognition which has been known to be false will not be able to prevent the occurrence of any cognition of the form 'S is not P'.

These are the three ways in which, according to Nyāya, the occurrence of a cognition can be prevented. Now let us see how the knowledge about the true nature of the self destroys the false cognitions about it, and thus liberates the person who has it.

Suppose, we who are in bondage believe firmly that the self is identical with the body. This is a false cognition which has to be cured by knowledge of the self as it really is. Suppose also that the self is not really identical with the body. Destroying the false cognition that the self is identical with the body means nothing but preventing the occurrence of this cognition in the self permanently. The method prescribed by Nyāya to achieve

this result is this. First of all, we have to learn from someone who knows that the self is not really identical with the body. Then we shall have to strengthen our belief in it by argument, and finally know the truth. Then we shall have to constantly meditate on this truth. Meditating on it is nothing but keeping the knowledge of truth constantly in mind; any one who desires liberation cannot afford to forget the truth even for a moment. The knowledge of the truth must not lapse into a disposition, for as a disposition it will not be able to prevent the false cognition from occurring and deluding us. When the false cognition has thus been blocked from occurring, meditation on the truth results in illumination or intuition of the truth. Thought collapses yielding place to an immediate apprehension of truth. This immediate apprehension of the real nature of the self may be called self-realisation. Ordinary men do not have self-realisation, because even though they know that the self is not really identical with the body etc., still most of the time they forget it, and behave as if the contradictory were true. But Nyāya goes a step further and claims that this intuitive knowledge of the self is not the final stage, but is the penultimate stage leading automatically to the cessation of all consciousness and suffering. For consciousness which is due to the relation of the self to the inner sense ceases as soon as this relation is broken. The relation which is due to false cognition is destroyed by the intuitive knowledge of the nature of the self etc. If this state of unconsciousness be the state of self-realisation, then it is not a state of knowledge. Self-realisation as a state of knowledge has the following characteristics:

(i) It comes as the culmination of intellectual and rational activity, like arguing, inferring etc.

- (ii) It is a constantly actual mental state, which is not allowed to lapse into a disposition.
- (iii) It is held with the greatest conviction.
- (iv) It transforms the entire personality of the individual by completely dissociating the self from the body, the sense organ, the inner sense etc. This it can do only because the self's association with the body is due to false cognitions about the nature of the self, the body etc. And this ignorance is beginningless, though it ends with the attainment of liberation.

Finally we note the following points about the Nyāya theory of liberation:

1. The process of liberation is a personal processes: when a person is liberated it is his personality which is totally transformed, but nothing else in the universe is affected. For although the self can be associated with the inner sense, the sense organs and the body, and can have objective cognitions only because it is ignorant, still this transcendental ignorance which is at the very root of objective consciousness, cannot in any way affect the knowledge of the reality of other objects of the world. This transcendental ignorance makes one ignorant only about the twelve objects listed above, and this ignorance about these objects is the cause of bondage. When one attains liberation he is rid of the wrong notions, but this does not mean that all objects have been wrongly cognised, or that the entire world is unreal. Objective consciousness is destroyed, but not the objective world.

2. Nyāya has therefore no difficulty in explaining how if one person is liberated, others remain in bondage. For when a person is liberated, there has been a transformation only within himself, others remain unaffected by his transformation.

III

The Theory of Advaita Vedānta

According to Advaita Vedānta, the self is identical with pure consciousness which is not essentially related to any object, for it cannot be really related with anything. It is eternal and beyond all change, and is the highest reality. Empirical consciousness, however, is of objects. In order to explain the nature of empirical consciousness it becomes necessary for Advaita Vedānta to introduce some principle which will explain what cannot be a real relation. This is sought to be done by *māyā*. Thus every knowledge of objects, as distinct from the pure, transcendental consciousness, is based on a transcendental illusion. Owing to this transcendental illusion the self-shining consciousness is 'reflected' in the inner sense. This inner sense is, according to Advaita, material, being an evolute of *māyā*, and is spread out, and hence can assume modes which are images of objects. The inner sense with consciousness reflected in it is the empirical self. This reflection of consciousness in the inner sense is due to the transcendental illusion, i.e. a false identification of the transcendental self with the material, unconsciousness inner sense. According to Advaita Vedānta, in the perception of an external object, the inner sense goes out to the object through the outlet of sense organ and assumes the shape of the object with which the sense organ is in contact. This shape or modification of the inner sense is the *vṛtti* of the *antaḥkāraṇa*. This mode is illumined by consciousness and the external object is mediated on both the sides. Consciousness itself is not related with the object, only the inner sense which is illumined by consciousness is thus related. But again it is not the object itself which is related to consciousness as reflected in the inner sense, but only its

image in the inner sense which is directly illumined by consciousness. Thus the inner sense acts as the medium where the subject and the object meet.

Now we come to an analysis of the subject-object relation when the object is internal. According to Advaita Vedānta, only external objects need to be copied by the inner sense in order to be presented to consciousness, but the copies themselves are known directly by the witnessing consciousness. The copy theory of knowledge will lead to an infinite regress if the copies themselves have to be copied in order to be known. So the witnessing consciousness is postulated which can and does know the internal states without the mediation of images.

This witnessing consciousness which is sometimes the direct awareness of the internal states is also objectless at times. Thus in deep dreamless sleep there is consciousness of sleep, but there is no object of consciousness. For even the internal states do not arise in deep sleep. This direct awareness is independent of one image and witness the passing away of one image and the origination of a new image. The images succeed one another, they are discrete, yet the finite self even in its finitude is a unity. There is a consciousness behind the changing states of the inner sense which remains unaffected by the change and knows everything that goes on in the mind. No one can deceive this consciousness which is the witness of all our mental states.

The witnessing consciousness reveals not merely the mental states but all objects either as known or as unknown. This is why when one knows a new object for the first time, he has the feeling that he is knowing an object hitherto unknown to him. This is possible only because the object was not merely

unknown to him, but was known to be unknown to him. The knowledge that the object was unknown to him is the function of the witnessing consciousness.

Now if the witnessing consciousness reveals everything, subjective and objective, is infallible and unerring, then how is it that a finite individual still remains ignorant of the true nature of the self? We have already seen that Nyāya also faces the problem of explaining why a finite individual should not be omniscient. This problem arises in Nyāya because Nyāya conceives a finite self as omnipresent, and to solve this problem Nyāya had to postulate a special function of the body in production of knowledge. Now Advaita Vedānta admits that the witnessing self is omniscient in a sense, for it has direct knowledge of everything. But this direct knowledge is not sufficient to make one omniscient in the true sense of the term. Omniscience should cancel all ignorance, but the type of omniscience which the witnessing consciousness enjoy cannot do this. Ignorance, according to Advaita Vedānta, is not mere absence of knowledge, but is false cognition. This false cognition can be cancelled only by a true cognition which involves modes of the inner sense. We have seen that the witnessing consciousness is direct consciousness which does not involve any mode of the inner sense. Hence it is incapable of cancelling ignorance. In order to attain liberation it is necessary to have an image of the ultimate reality i.e. a mode of the inner sense. This is the last mode which the inner sense presents to the consciousness of the finite individual. This awareness of the ultimate reality which is identical with the transcendental subject cancels *māyā*, the principle of finitude, and the individual is liberated.

Comparison of the Nyāya and the Advaita Theories

We first note the points of similarities which are rather unimportant.

(i) According to both Nyāya and Advaita, consciousness of objects has to cease if the individual is to be liberated. According to Nyāya this means that the liberated self has no consciousness at all; according to Advaita Vedānta, this means that the liberated self merges itself totally with the pure transcendental consciousness.

(ii) Both prescribe the same method for attaining liberation, i.e. *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. The self is realised in its true nature by intuition which is the culmination of intense rational activity.

Now we note the points of difference between these two theories which are fundamental:

1. According to Nyāya, the finite self is eternal and omnipresent. It cannot be destroyed. According to Advaita Vedānta, the finite self is essentially a mystery; an irrational and unreal relation to the pure consciousness with the material inner sense is at the root of its being. Liberation is not a continuation of the finite self in any form but the release of the pure consciousness from its association with the not-self. The finite self being a product of *māyā* is beginningless but comes to an end when the self is liberated.

2. According to Nyāya, liberation is just cessation of suffering; according to Advaita, it is not a negative state, but a state of pure bliss.

3. According to Nyāya, the intuitive knowledge of the self cancels false cognition when it is kept continually as an actual mental state, whereas according to Advaita Vedānta this final knowledge consists in having an image of the ultimate reality. According to Nyāya, the inner sense being atomic, there can be no image of anything whereas according to Vedānta, the inner sense is like a plastic substance which can assume shapes of objects, i.e. can have images.

4. According to Nyāya, the process of liberation is purely a personal affair which leaves the rest of the world unaffected, but according to Advaita Vedānta, this is a cosmic process. The ignorance which is the cause of bondage is also the cause of the world. So the process of destroying bondage is also the process of the dissolution of the world. But this gives rise to a problem for Advaita Vedānta. According to this theory the ultimate reality is one transcendental consciousness, the finite selves are many, for *māyā* which is involved in the constitution of the individual, though one, is yet the principle of multiplicity thus giving rise to a plurality of finite objects and finite subjects. If liberation is the cancellation of this principle, then liberation is also the dissolution of the world. If *māyā* is cancelled, then all finite objects and also all finite subjects should be annihilated. That is, the liberation of one person will be the end of everything, and the liberation of one person will be the liberation of all. It is interesting to note that Sri Aurobindo who differed radically in his interpretation of *māyā* from the Advaita interpretation, accepted this consequence of the Advaita theory. He admitted that the liberation of one person is the liberation of all persons, and it is Sri Aurobindo who will liberate all mankind, indeed all forms of life by his own *sādhana*. If *māyā* is destroyed (transformed) then not only one person but all persons

are liberated. If *māyā* is not destroyed, then none is liberated. Personal liberation is thus impossible. Advaita Vedānta solves this difficulty by distinguishing between two types of *avidyā*, *tūlāvidyā* and *mūlāvidyā*. There is a type of *avidyā*, which attaches to the individual and is different from the universal cosmic *avidyā*. For the liberation of the individual it is sufficient to destroy his personal *avidyā*, not the universal *avidyā*. If this explanation of the Advaita school is accepted, then on this point, the difference between Nyāya and Advaita is considerably diminished. For now according to both, liberation is personal, and when a person attains liberation, the rest of the world remains unaffected. On other points their differences remain.

THE NATURE OF PRATIBIMBA IN THE ADVAITA-DĪPIKĀ*

Satya Deva Misra**

Non-difference between the individual soul and the supreme Self constitutes the corner-stone of Advaita metaphysics, Śaṅkara's explanation of this cardinal doctrine on the analogies of the other's delimitations by the pot or other objects¹, or , of the sun's and moon's appearances in the water², or, of the image of the face on mirror³ has given rise to the trinity of theories in the post- Śaṅkara Vedānta. These are known as the theory of limitation (*avacchedavāda*), the theory of appearance (*ābhāsavāda*), and the theory of reflection (*pratibimbavāda*). Of these, the first theory is related to the Bhāmatī school of Vācaspati Miśra, the second to the Vārtika school of Sureśvarācārya, and the third to the Vivaraṇa school of Prakāśātman.

The theory of *pratibimba* formulated by Padmapāda (800 A.D.) in his *Pañcapādikā* and expounded by Prakāśātman (1000 A.D.) through his gloss (*Vivaraṇa*) on the *Pañcapādikā* has a long tradition. Advaitins of repute namely, Vimuktātman (950-1050 A.D.), Sarvajñātman (1050 A.D.), Citsukha (1200 A.D.), Amalānanda (1247-1347 A.D.), Vidyāraṇya (1296-1386 A.D.),

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Nṛsiṃhāśrama (1500-1600 A.D.), and Rāmānanda Sarasvatī (1570-1650 A.D.) have strongly supported this theory.

Nṛsiṃhāśrama, believed to be a disciple of Jagannāthāśrama and the teacher of famous Advaitins like Raṅgarājādhvarīndra, Appayya Dīkṣita and Nārāyaṇāśrama, was a great dialectician and author of about a dozen independent works including the monumental *Advaita-dīpikā*⁴ and a number of commentaries⁵ on the standard treatises of the Vivaraṇa school.

Nṛsiṃhāśrama has discussed at length the nature of *pratibimba* in his *Advaita-dīpikā* and *Tattva-bodhinī*. The purpose of this paper is to define the *pratibimba* following these works and to bring out the main arguments contained in them for propounding the theory of non-difference between the *bimba* and the *pratibimba*.

According to the Vivaraṇa school, the *pratibimba* is reflectional appearance, *i.e.* the original appearing by way of reflection as separate and distinct from itself. It is real in the same sense as the *bimba*, being identical with the latter. The original by itself is the *bimba* and the same reflected in any receptacle is called the *pratibimba*.⁶ In the case of a human face reflected into a mirror, the entire object, *i.e.*, the face which falls on the reflecting surface of the mirror is retarded back into the field of the vision of the eye. The *pratibimba* ordinarily appears to be different from and other than the *bimba* only because it is wrongly located as such and misjudged together with its *bimba* in ordinary experience as two independent realities.⁷ But, when the constitution of *pratibimba* in the said manner is closely examined, it cannot be held to be essentially different from the

bimba. It has to be taken as a reflectional emergence of the *bimba* itself.⁸

Nṛsiṃhāśrama, who was a staunch adherent of the Vivaraṇa school, was born at a time when the above concept of *pratibimba* was challenged by the logicians of other Indian Philosophical systems. It was, therefore, natural for him to bring out the distinctive feature of the Advaitic concept of *pratibimba* by criticising and discarding the opponents' theories regarding it.

The theories of opponents examined closely in the *Advaita-dīpikā* are:

- (a) the theory of shadow (*chāyā*)
- (b) the theory of otherness (*dravyāntara*), and
- (c) the theory of indescribability (*anirvacanīyatva*).

Let us review these theories one by one following Nṛsiṃhāśrama.

(a) The theory of shadow (*chāyā*). According to the exponents of this theory, the reflection of the face on the mirror is the shadow of the face and is thus different from it. The argument of the Advaitins that the eye falling on the mirror retards back and contacts the same face does not hold good, because it may retard in the cases of reflections on the mirror and the other resplendent objects, but not in the cases of reflections in water. And if this point is conceded, there will be contingency of the non-perception of gold, etc. in the water.⁹

Criticising the above theory, Nṛsiṃhāśrama says that the reflection of the face cannot be called shadow, because the

shadow is quite different from the reflection. For example, the reflection of the face on the mirror faces the person, and the tongue and other organs of the face are distinctly visible in its reflection. On the contrary, the shadow never faces the person it belongs to. Distinct visibility of the organs in the shadow is also not seen. The reflection is experienced even in a place abundant in light, but invariably dark shadow is wiped out in the light. Moreover, we see the reflections of even the sun and the moon which have no shadow. The shadow always imitates the thing or the person to which or to whom it belongs. To illustrate, if a person is standing in the east with his face in the east and back in the west, his face will be exactly in the east and back in the west in the shadow too. Opposite is the case of reflection. If a person's face is in the east, it will be in the west in his reflection. Besides the reasons mentioned above, our experience also differentiates the reflection from the shadow. "I see my face on the mirror", "My face is beautiful", "your face is not that beautiful" – these experiences about the face appearing on the mirror suggest its identity with the face on the neck.¹⁰ It may be argued here that, if the non-difference between the *bimba* and the *pratibimba* is accepted, there will be contingency of smell, etc. in the reflections of musk, etc. This argument is meaningless, because the musk, etc. which are appearing as different from the *bimba* in the mirror and other objects actually do not exist there.¹¹

(b) The theory of otherness (*dravyāntaratva*). This theory holds that the reflection is a different entity like darkness. "One should not see the sun during eclipse and in the water"¹² – this statement of the *Manusmṛiti*, according to its exponents, must be construed in the secondary sense like the saying "Lion in the picture" and does not prove the sun's non-difference with its reflection in the water.

Attributing the above theory to the Asatkhyātivādins¹³ and criticising it, Nṛsiṃhāśrama observes that the reflection (*pratibimba*) cannot be different from the prototype (*bimba*). He argues that those who believe that the *pratibimba* on the mirror is either a shadow or an entity different from the *bimba*, have to admit a different extraordinary cause also which is improper. There can be no extraordinary cause in the case of the reflection of the face which appears as such and resemble the face greatly. The example of darkness for proving the difference of the *pratibimba* from the *bimba* is not tenable, because one has to imagine a dissimilar cause for the darkness which is unique amongst all the well known substances. Moreover, the question which arises here is: Whether that different cause is the material one or the one that exists independently? The first alternative is not tenable, because the reflection of the trees which are existing at some distance from the pond is seen only in the limited water flown from the pond and not in the pond. The material cause cannot be effective in isolation.¹⁴ The second alternative that the cause existing independently may produce the effect is also not possible. Water, etc. cannot be productive if they exist at a very distant place. If it is otherwise, the water in the river would drench the banks of the river even in the summer.¹⁵ As no extraordinary cause is admissible, one has to accept that the *bimba* itself appears as the *pratibimba*, and there is no difference between them. The statement of the *Manusmṛti* that one should not see the sun during its eclipse or when it is reflected in the water is not secondary, but is an evidence in respect of the non-difference between the *bimba* and the *pratibimba*. The knowledge of difference itself cannot be determinant of the secondariness of the statement of non-difference. Though the sun or the moon in the water is apprehended as different from the sun or the moon in the sky, yet from the usage that there is only

one sun or moon, it is evident that the knowledge of the sun's or moon's identity with its image in the water is primary, and the knowledge of its difference therefore is secondary.¹⁶

It may be objected here by another group of opponents that the face appearing in the mirror is not the same but another (*mukhāntara*), because of the experiences about it – of the contact of faceness, of the difference and of the attributes in contradiction to the original face. In reply to this, it may be pointed out that in the case of the above appearance, the mirror is only a receptacle, there is nothing in it. If it is accepted that another face is created in the mirror, the mirror will break and the face should be apprehensible by touch.¹⁷ As none of these happens, the theory of the creation of another face in the mirror is illogical.

(c) The theory of indescribability (*anirvacanīyatva*). The exponents of this theory believe that, if the face appearing in the mirror, is neither shadow, nor an entity different from the original, let it be indescribable (*anirvacanīya*) and destroyable along with the removal of the mirror containing it.¹⁸

Refuting this theory, Nṛsiṃhāśrama points out that the reflection cannot be indescribable because when the mirror is removed and it is said that there is no face in the mirror, it is only the contact of the face with the mirror which is denied and not its reflection.¹⁹ The knowledge of the absence of silver in the shell differs from the knowledge of the absence of the face in the mirror. The absence of silver is apprehended, but not the absence of the face.²⁰ Moreover, even during the time of the appearance of the *pratibimba* in the mirror, one is aware of its absence; hence the *pratibimba* of the face is not superimposed (*kalpita*) on

the mirror. It is essentially identical with the *bimba* and it is, therefore, as much real as the original.²¹

As none of the reviewed theories regarding the nature of the *pratibimba* stands to reason and experience, Nṛsiṃhāśrama declares that there is no difference between the *bimba* and the *pratibimba*.²² Now the question is: If they are non-different, why do they appear different from each other? In reply to this question Nṛsiṃhāśrama says that the seeming difference between them is created by the receptacle. The individual soul is the *pratibimba* of Brahman like the image of the face on the mirror and it is, therefore, not different from Brahman. It may be objected here that, though there may be non-difference between the *bimba* and the *pratibimba*, yet there is no evidence of Brahman's reflection. This objection, according to the *Advaita-dīpikā* is not admissible, because of the scriptural evidence of the adventitious (*aupādhika*) reflection of Brahman. The scripture says: "As the sun appears in diverse forms by way of its reflections in the water, even so the luminous Ātman appears different because of its adjunct."²³ The *praveśaśruti*²⁴ declaring Brahman's entry into creation is also an evidence in this regard. It is clear from the above scriptural illustrations that Brahman as the *bimba* and the *jīva* as the *pratibimba* are identical, and their difference is only *aupādhika*. In the worldly examples of reflections the adjuncts are objects like water and mirror. In the reflection of Brahman as the *jīva*, the receptacle, according to some followers of the *pratibimba* school, is nescience (*ajñāna*), and according to others, it is internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*). To make it more clear, Padmapāda and Prakāśātman hold that the *jīva* is the reflection (*pratibimba*) of the pure consciousness in *māyā* or *ajñāna* and Īśvara is the prototype;²⁵ but according to

Sarvajñātman, Īśvara and the *jīva* are both reflections, the former in the *ajñāna* and the latter in the mind, which is a product of *ajñāna*.²⁶ Nṛsiṃhāśrama adheres to the view advocated by Sarvajñātman.²⁷

It may be argued by the opponents that the reflection of the invisible Ātman or Brahman is impossible like the impossibility of the reflection of smell, etc. Rejecting this argument, Nṛsiṃhāśrama says that the reflection of the invisible Ātman is like the reflection of the invisible ether. The objection of ether's visibility on account of its affirmation or negation by eyes is not tenable, because if the visibility of a colourless object like ether is accepted, there will be contingency of even air's visibility. The contention that ether containing colour because of the principle of quintuplication (*pañcīkaraṇa*) is visible cannot be accepted. As the proportion of ether's colourless constituent is in excess of the constituent of colour, it cannot be visible. If the opponent denies this argument, there will be visibility of air also.²⁸ Supporting Sarvajñātman's standpoint that the individual soul is the reflection of Brahman in the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the *Advaita-dīpikā* argues that the *ajñāna* which is dark by nature is unsuitable for receiving the reflection.²⁹ The experience of "I" (*aham*) and the scriptural declaration that the effect is the adjunct of the *jīva* make it clear that it is not *ajñāna*, but the *antaḥkaraṇa* which constitutes the receptacle of the *jīva*.³⁰ The non-existence of the *antaḥkaraṇa* during the state of deep sleep cannot be accepted, because it exists there too in its subtle form.³¹

After establishing its view, on the grounds of logic, experience, and scripture, that Brahman's reflections in the *ajñāna* and the *antaḥkaraṇa* are Īśvara and *jīva* respectively, it

alternatively accepts the view of Padmapāda and Prakāśātman also that the *ajñāna* itself is the adjunct of the *jīva*,³² and the moment the *ajñāna* which causes duality is removed, there is no difference between them.

Whether the adjunct of the individual soul is the *antaḥkaraṇa* or the *ajñāna*, there is no difference between the *pratibimba-jīva* and the *bimba-brahman*. The difference is only conditional (*aupādhika*).

The Ābhāsavādins have also used the examples of Pratibimbavādins in explaining Īśvara and the *jīva* as the appearances of Brahman in the *ajñāna* and the *antaḥkaraṇa* respectively. We, therefore, in conclusion, wish to point out the basic differences between the *ābhāsa* and the *pratibimba* to dispel the general confusion prevailing about their nature.

1. Appearance is a depreciated semblance of the pure consciousness, but the reflection (*pratibimba*), as Sadānanda says in his *Advaita-brahma-siddhi*, is externally existed image of the prototype itself (*bahiḥ-sthita-svarūpa*), appearing in the adjunct and being totally free from the limitations of the adjunct.³³ Though the pure consciousness is undoubtedly the prototype of both the *ābhāsa* and the *pratibimba*, yet the distinction between the two becomes markedly prominent in as much as the former is distinct from, and the latter is identical with, the pure consciousness.

2. Reflection, in the words of Padmapādācārya, is not essentially distinct from the prototype; on the contrary, it is

prototype only,³⁴ while the appearance is not so and cannot be deemed to be either different from or identical with prototype.

3. *Pratibimba* as identical with the prototype is always real, and its distinct appearance³⁵ is due to *avidyā*. But the *ābhāsa*, partaking of some common characteristics of *avidyā*, is totally unreal, and its reality is recognised only in the secondary sense. In the light of this difference, the Pratibimbavādins uphold "*abhede sāmānādhikarāṇya*" or the principle of apposition or coordination resulting in oneness,³⁶ and the Ābhāsavādins that of sublation resulting in oneness technically called "*bādhāyām sāmānādhikarāṇya*."³⁷

4. *Ābhāsa*, being different from the pure consciousness, gets divided into two worldly forms, cause and effect, but the reflection remaining ever non-different from reality is actually indivisible by adjuncts. According to *ābhāsavāda*, Brahman, therefore, transcends both these appearances, but in the *pratibimba* school, it cannot transcend the reflection, which is essentially nothing but itself.

5. The Ābhāsavādins, accepting uniformity between the appearance and the adjunct, advocate the non-existence of adjuncts in the absence of appearance and hold that all adjuncts, including *ajñāna*, are appearances; but the Pratibimbavādins, who admit the *pratibimba* to be totally identical would never propound their adjuncts as reflection.³⁸

NOTES

1. para evātmā dehendriyamanobuddhyupādhibhiḥ paricchidyamāno bālaiḥ śarīra iti upacaryate. yathā ghaṭakarakādyupādhi-vaśād-aparicchinnamapi nabhaḥ paricchinnavad-avabhāsate tadvat (*Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 1.2.6). Also *ibid.* 2.1.24.

2. jīvo hi nāma devatāyā ābhāsamātram. buddhyādibhūtamātrā-saṁsargajanita ādarśa iva praviṣṭaḥ puruṣapratibimbo jalādi-ṣviva ca sūryādīnām (*Chāndogyabhāṣya*, 6.3.2). See also *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 2.3.50 and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-bhāṣya*, 2.4.12.

3. sarvadeśakālapuruṣādyavasthamekameva jñānaṁ nāmārūpā-dyanekopādhibhedāt savitrādi jalādi pratibimbavad anekadhā avabhāsate. (*Praśna-bhāṣya*, 6.2.1). See *Bṛhadāraṇyakabhāṣya*, 1.4.7. and *Muṇḍakabhāṣya*, 2.7.

4. The other independent works are: *Advaita-siddhānta-vijaya*, *Advaitānusandhāna*, *Tattva-viveka*, *Tattvampadārtha-śodhana-prakāra*, *Nṛsiṁha-vijñāpana*, *Bhedadhikkāra*, *Vācārambhaṇa-Prakaraṇa*, *Bhāvājñāna-prakāśikā* and *Vaidikasiddhānta-saṅgraha*.

5. The commentaries are: *Tattva-dīpana*, *Tattva-viveka-dīpana*, commentary on his own *Tattva-viveka*, *Tattva-bodhinī*, commentary on *Saṅkṣepa-śārīraka*, *Pañcapādikāṭīkā*, *Bhāva-prakāśikā*, commentary on *Pañcapādikā-vivaraṇa* and *Madhu-mañjarī*, commentary on *Maniṣā-pañcaka*.

For more details on the works mentioned in the notes nos. 4 and 5, please see R.Thangaswami, *A Bibliographical Survey of Advaita Vedānta Literature*. pp.267-71.

6. V.P. Upadhyaya, *Lights on Vedānta*, p.36

7. *Ibid*, p.36

8. *Ibid*, p.37

9. *Advaita-dīpikā*, ch.2, p.161.

10. *Ibid*. p.163 and *Tattvabodhinī*, p.715.

11. *Advaita-dīpikā*, ch.2, p.186 and Nārāyaṇāśrama, *Advaita-dīpikā-ṭīkā*, p.187.

12. nekṣetodyantamādityaṁ nāstaṁ yantaṁ kadācana
noparaktam na vāristhaṁ na madhyama-nabhaso gatam.
(*Manusmṛti*, 4.37). See also *Tattvabodhinī*, 2.207, p.718.

13. *Advaita-dīpikā*, ch.2, p.171.

14. anyatra sthitasyo pādānasyānyatra kāryājanakatvāt. (*ibid.*)

15. *Ibid*.

16. *Advaita-dīpikā-ṭīkā*, ch.2, p.189.

17. *Advaita-dīpikā*, p.171.

18. astu tarhi darpane'nirvacanīyaṁ mukham (*ibid*, pp.177-78).

19. na adārśe mukhaṁ nāstīti saṁsargamātranīṣedhāt (*ibid.*)

20. nedaṁ rajataṁ itivannedaṁ mukhamityadarśanāt (Nārāyaṇāśrama, *Advaita-dīpikā-ṭīkā*, ch.2, p.178).

21. pratibimbapratītikāle'pi darpaṇe tadabhāvāvagamācca na
tatra kalpitam (*ibid*, ch.2, p.178).

22. tasmāt pratyabhijñāpariśeṣābhyāṁ bimbayorabhedaḥ
(*Advaita-dīpikā*, ch.2, p.186).
23. ayaṁ jyotirātmā vivasvānapobhinnā bahudhaiko'nugacchan.
upādhinā kriyate bhedarūpo devaḥ kṣetreṣvayamajo'yamātmā.
(quoted in the *Advaita-dīpikā*, ch.2, p.149). See also *ibid.* ch.2,
p.189.
24. sa eṣa bhūtānīndrīyāṇi virājam devatāḥ kośāṁśca sṛṣṭvā
praviśya mūḍho mūḍha eva vyavaraharantaste māyayaiva tasmād
advaya evāyamātmā (quoted in the *Advaita-dīpikā*, ch. 2, pp.
149-56).
25. See *Pañcapādikā* together with *Vivarāṇa*, pp. 100 -111.
26. ajñānānyakaraṇapratibimbavācī jīvābhīdhānamiha vṛddha-
jana-prasiddham (*Śaṅkṣepaśārīraka*, 2.207).
27. ucyate – antaḥkaraṇam upādhiḥ "kāryopādhirayam jīvaḥ" iti
śruteḥ. ahamityanubhavagocarācca (*Advaita-dīpikā*, ch. 2, p.
203).
28. nīrupasyāpi cākṣuṣatve vāyorapi tatprasaṅgāt. pañcīkaraṇa-
nyāyena gagane rūpamastīti cet. na. rūpahīnabhāgasyādhikatvena
cākṣuṣatvāyogāt. anyathā vāyāvapi prasaṅgatādavasthyāt (*ibid.*
ch.2, p. 195).
29. ajñānasyāsvacchasya pratibimbāśrayatvāyogāt (*ibid*, ch. 2, p.
209)
30. antaḥkaraṇamupādhiḥ 'kāryopādhirayam jīvaḥ' iti śruteḥ,
aham-ityanubhavagocarātvācca (*ibid*, ch. 2, p. 209).
31. na ca suṣuptyādau tadabhāvaḥ tatrāpyantaḥkaraṇasya
sūkṣmatayā sattvāt (*ibid*, ch. 2, p. 209).

32. athavā ajñānamevopādhiḥ.
vibhedajanake'jñāne nāśamātyantikaṁ gate/
ātmano brahmaṇo bhedamasantaṁ kaḥ kariṣyati//
iti smṛtyā tasyaivopādhitvāvagamāt (*ibid*, ch. 2, p. 205)
33. pratibimbam tu upādhyantargatatve sati aupādhikaparic-
cheda-śūnyatve ca sati bahiḥ-sthita-svarūpatvam (ch. 6, p. 202).
34. bimbādiva pratibimbarṁ na brahmaṇo vastvantaram; kintu
tadeva tat (*Pañcapādikā*, varṇaka 1, p. 104)
35. See Ātmasvarūpa's commentary, *Praveśapariśodhinī* on the
Pañcapādikā, p. 108.
36. See *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika-ṭīkā Sāstra-
prakāśikā* on 1.4.383, *Chāndogyabhāṣyaṭīkā* on 6.4.3, *Kena-
vākya-vivaraṇavyākhyā* on 3.1.4.1 and *Advaita-siddhi*, pp. 202-3.
37. See *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika*, 4.3.1320.
38. S.D.Misra, "The Theory of Appearance in Śāṅkara Vedānta"
in the *Indian Philosophical Annual*, vol. 5, University of
Madras, pp. 84-85.

कालिदासीया द्वितीयगीता
 देवकृतब्रह्मस्तुतिरूपा
 (द्वादशश्लोकरूपा
 कुमारसम्भवद्वितीयसर्गान्तर्गता)

आत्मविद्याभूषणम् व.श.वै. गुरुस्वामी शास्त्री
 (पूर्वानुवृत्तिः)
 (268-269)

किञ्चात्र ब्रह्मणःस्तोत्रे कर्तारस्त्रिदशाः परम् ।
 नैव प्रसक्तिः सांख्यानानां कथञ्चन विधिस्तवे ॥
 औदासीन्यं प्रवृत्तिश्चेत्येकस्योक्तं द्वयं पुनः ।
 मायाशबलितं शुद्धं ब्रह्मैकमिति वादिनाम् ॥
 अद्वैतिनामेव मते भृशं सङ्गच्छतेतमाम् ॥

(270-272)

तदयं निर्गलितोऽर्थः

सदेवेत्यादिवाक्यं यच्छान्दोग्योपनिषद्गतम् ।
 तस्यार्थः कविनां त्वेतत्पद्येन प्रतिपाद्यते ॥
 सद्वाक्यस्थितसच्छब्दः वक्ति विश्वस्य कारणम् ।
 केवलां प्रकृतेः शक्तिं न बोधयति सत्पदम् ॥
 तथा चैतन्यमात्रं न शुद्धमप्याह सत्पदम् ।
 किन्त्वाह शक्तिसम्बद्धमीश्वरं विश्वकारणम् ॥

(273-276)

प्रकृष्टा प्रकृतिः शक्तिसम्पूर्णात्परमेश्वरात् ।
 नैकान्तं भिद्यते तद्वन्नाप्यत्यन्तं न भिद्यते ॥
 रमणीयो ग्राम एष ग्रामोऽयमृद्धिसंयुतः ।
 अधृष्यो ग्राम इत्येवं प्रयोगेष्वखिलेष्वपि ॥
 प्रयुक्तो ग्रामशब्दोऽयं विवक्षाभेदतः किल ।
 क्वचिज्जनपदं वक्ति क्वचित्तद्वासिनं जनम् ॥
 क्वचित्तदुभयं वक्तीत्येतत्प्रामाणिकं मतम् ।
 एवमेव च सच्छब्दो वक्ति शक्तिमदीश्वरम् ॥
 विवक्षयेति मन्यन्ते वेदान्तार्थविचक्षणाः ॥

(277-280)

तदयं श्लोकार्थः

सदेवेत्यादिवाक्यानि प्रकृतिं त्वां वदन्ति च ।
 न सा प्रकृतिशक्तिस्त्वां विनात्मानं प्रपद्यते ॥
 अचेतनापि सात्मानं प्रकरोति यदाश्रिता ।
 तं च तत्साक्षिणमपि त्वामेवेति विदन्त्यपि ॥
 अधिष्ठानावशेषं हि कल्पितं वस्तु नश्यति ।
 इति प्रसिद्धो विदुषां समेषामपि निश्चयः ॥
 त्वामामनन्तीति पद्यं सद्वाक्यार्थावबोधकम् ।
 यथा तथात्र व्याख्यातं गम्भीरार्थमिदं मया ॥

(११)

कुमारसम्भवम् , २.१४:

त्वं पितृणामपि पिता देवानामपि देवता ।
परतोऽपि परश्चासि विधाता वेधसामपि ॥

(281-283)

यथास्माकं जगत्यस्मिन्सर्वेषामेव सर्वदा ।
वन्दनीयाश्च पितरो यजनीयाश्च देवताः ॥
तथा पितृणामपि पिता वन्दनीयस्त्वमिष्यते ।
देवानामपि देवस्त्वं यजनीयोऽसि नित्यदा ॥
इति व्याख्यां सुरुचिरां मल्लिनाथस्त्वदर्शयत् ।
अन्यापि हृद्या व्याख्यात्र प्रेक्षावद्भयः प्रदर्श्यते ॥

(284-285)

एतत्पद्यानुकलनवेलायां कविमानसे ।
एतत्पद्यसमच्छायश्रुत्यन्तवचनानि च ।
विवर्तमानानि मुहुर्बभूवुरिति गम्यते ॥
“प्राणस्य प्राणं चक्षुषश्चक्षुः ।

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं, अत्रस्यात्रं मनसो ये मनो विदुः ॥”

(बृहदारण्यक ४.४.१८)

(286 a)

“श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद्वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य
प्राणः । चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृताभवन्ति ॥”

(केनोपनिषत् १,२)

(286 b)

“अक्षरात्परतः परः ॥”

(मुण्डकोपनिषत् २,१,२)

(287)

इति श्रुत्यन्तवाक्यानां यथा व्याख्या प्रदर्शिता ।
पूर्वेस्तथैव व्याख्यास्य पद्यस्यापि प्रदर्श्यते ॥

(288-297)

पितृत्वहेतुरात्मा त्वं पितॄणां स्वधयेज्यसे ।
देवत्वहेतुरात्मा त्वं देवानां स्वाहयेज्यसे ॥
एवंशब्दप्रयोगोऽस्मिन्लोके दृष्टचरोऽस्ति च ।
जातीनामप्यसौ जातिर्गुणानामप्यसौ गुणः ॥
एवंजातीयकं वाक्यं व्याख्यातव्यं च पूर्ववत् ।
किञ्चान्यदस्य पद्यस्य विमर्शं व्यज्यतेऽद्भुतम् ॥
यस्मिन्पञ्चेत्यादिवाक्यं बार्हदारण्यकं ध्रुवम् ।
पञ्चविंशतितत्त्वानां सांख्योक्तानां न बोधकम् ॥
इति शारीरके सूत्रकारैर्न्यायैः प्रसाधितम् ।
प्राणादयः पञ्चजना इति सूत्रकृदब्रवीत् ॥
के वा पञ्चजना ग्राह्या इति पक्षप्रदर्शने ।

* प्राणादयो वाक्यशेषात् (ब्रह्मसूत्र १.४.१९)

पितृ-देवासुर-निशाचर-गन्धर्व-पञ्चकम् ॥
 कैश्चित्पञ्चजनत्वेन व्याख्यातमिति भाष्यकृत ।
 सूत्रभाष्ये च केषाञ्चित्पक्षमेकमदर्शयत् ॥
 यस्मिन्पञ्चेतिमन्त्रस्य पितृदेवादिधारकः ।
 आत्मैवार्थ इति व्याख्या तदानीं प्रथिता ध्रुवम् ॥
 साकूतमिममर्थञ्च ब्रह्मणः संस्तुताविह ।
 महाकविः कालिदासः संजग्रन्थेति बुध्यते ॥
 सर्वदार्शनिकानामप्ययं प्राग्रेसरः कविः ।
 वेदान्तरसिकेभ्यस्तदुक्तमाहादि रोचते ॥

(१२)

कुमारसम्भवम्, २.१५ :

त्वमेव हव्यं होता च भोज्यं भोक्ता च शाश्वतः ।
 वेद्यं च वेदिता चासि ध्याता ध्येयं च यत्परम् ॥

(298-300)

प्रत्यग्ब्रह्मात्मनोरैक्यं सार्वत्रिक्यं परमात्मनः ।
 वेदान्तवर्णितमिह प्रकटं प्रत्यपादयत् ॥
 "ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
 ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥"

(भगवद्गीता ४,२४)

इति गीतावर्णितोऽर्थः कविनात्र निरूपितः ।
चतुर्मुखस्तोत्ररूपाद्द्वादशश्लोकरूपिणी ॥
द्वितीया कालिदासीया गीतेयं सर्वतोमुखी ।
कुमारसम्भवगता व्याख्याता च यथामति ॥

कालिदासीया द्वितीया गीता देवकृतचतुर्मुखस्तोत्ररूपा
द्वादशश्लोकरूपिणी कुमारसम्भवगता समाप्ता ॥

(अनुवर्तते)

THE SECOND " GĪTĀ " OF KĀLIDĀSA
[A hymn in praise of Brahmā, sung by gods]*

Ātmavidyābhūṣaṇam V. S. V. Gurusvāmī Śāstrī

(Continued from VOS, xx, 2)

(268-269)

Moreover, in this eulogy – made by the gods on Brahmā, the Creator – there is no room for the views of Sāṅkhyas to creep in.

As the Advaitins speak of the one Reality, Brahman in a two-fold manner – (i) the absolute Brahman is ever free from actions, and (ii) Brahman reflected in *māyā* (or veiled by *māyā*) is held to be the cause of actions, this *śloka* (*Kumārasambhava*, 2.13) is in full consonance with the doctrine of Advaita.

(270-272)

To put it in a nutshell:

Poet Kālidāsa has given briefly the meaning of the *Chāndogya* text, "*sadeva...*" in this *śloka*. In the text "*sadeva....*", the term "*sat*" refers only to the cause of the universe, and it does not refer merely to the power of *prakṛti*. Further, the term "*sat*" does not even refer to the pure *caitanya* (knowledge in the essence). Consequently it refers to the cause

* Free rendering in English by Dr. V.K.S.N. Raghavan

of the universe, viz. Īśvara (God) ever in association with *śakti* (supreme power).

(273-276)

The great *prakṛti* is neither different from nor non-different from the supreme Īśvara endowed with abundant power.

To explain: there are many usages with regard to a *grāma* (village). 'This village is beautiful; it is quite fertile; it is invincible, etc.' – in all the above instances the village is spoken of differently owing to the varied intentions of the speakers. Hence the term *grāma* refers to (i) the place, (ii) the people living in, and (iii) both the place and people. Such a view is tenable. Similarly, those well-versed in Vedānta consider that the term "*sat*" conveys the supreme Lord endowed with absolute power, as the context of the Upaniṣadic passage warrants.

(277-280)

The purport of the *śloka*:

The texts, "*sadeva...*" etc. refer to You as *prakṛti* (primal cause). That essential nature of primal cause cannot hold good as being the Ātman without referring to You (Īśvara). Though *prakṛti* is *acetana* (inert), *sat* etc. define Īśvara as the witness of *prakṛti*, for they convey about *prakṛti* only based on You. But whatever is superimposed on a particular locus gets itself sublated, for it is merely a superimposition – all the learned know this certainly.

Thus I have explained the purport of the *śloka* "*tvām-āmananti...*" corroborating the text of the Upaniṣad "*sadeva...*"

(II)

The Kumārasambhava II,14:

You are the foremost father of all our fore-fathers; You are the supreme Deity of all deities; You are the greatest God of all great gods; and, You are the supreme Creator of all creators.

(281-283)

Just as, for all of us – always, in this world, the great fathers (elders) are to be honoured and the divine beings are also to be worshipped, even so (the gods address Lord Brahmā:) You are the supreme father of all fathers, and hence you are highly adorable; you are the most holy divine being of all divine beings, and hence you are to be worshipped for ever.

The above interpretation is the grand explanation of the most popular commentator, Mallinātha. I would like to point out here another striking comment.

(284-287)

It is understood that the poet had in his mind's vision many *śruti* texts (of similar import to this *śloka*) when he composed this sloka; e.g. "Brahman is the life-breath of the vital airs (of the beings), eye of the eyes(of beings); ear of ears(of beings); food of the food (of beings), and the mind of the minds (of beings). (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* IV. iv.18)

"Brahman is the ear of the ears, mind of minds, the speech of the speeches, the life-breath of all vital airs, eye of all eyes; the wise, after having crossed over the bonds of this *saṃsāra* become immortal"(*Kena Up.* I.2) and Brahman is beyond *akṣara* and the most great."(*Muṇḍaka Up.* II.i.2) – the above Vedānta texts indicate the main import of this *śloka* of

Kālidāsa. Bearing in mind the import of the above texts of Vedānta, the meaning of the *śloka* is explained below.

(288-297)

"You are worshipped as *pitṛ* (fore-father) by the *mantra* of *svadhā* as you are the cause of *ātman* termed as *pitṛ*. You are worshipped as *deva* (god) by the *mantra* termed as *deva*" – such a method of usage with regard to spiritual words is quite common in the world. "This is the *jāti* (genre) of all *jātis*; this is the *guṇa* (quality) of all *guṇas*" – such type of sentences have to be commented on as referred to earlier.

Further, another important point strikes one at this juncture. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text "*yasmin pañca ...*" (IV.iv.17) does not convey the 25 principles enumerated by the Sāṅkhya system; and this is well brought out through reasoning by the author of the *Brahmasūtras*. There is the aphorism, "*prāṇādayaḥ vākyaśeṣāt*" (I.iv.12). The fivefold personalities (*pañcajanāḥ*) comprise the forefathers, gods, devils and demons and *gandharvas*. The great commentator, Śrī Śaṅkara refers to the above idea. But the *mantra* "*yasmin pañca...*" has the import of the *ātman* (the self) alone through the terms *pitṛ*, *deva*, etc. However, it is certain that the poet Kālidāsa had in his mind such a very important idea while composing this *śloka* forming part of "*deva-kṛta-brahmastuti*" (poem in praise of Brahmā sung by gods) – forming part of the *Kumārasambhava*. This poet should be ranked the most prominent with regard to the conviction of all the philosophers of Indian thought. Whatever the poet has voiced on the concept of Brahman is pleasing and very much lovable to the connoisseurs of Vedānta.

(12)

The Kumārasambhava, II.15:

Oh supreme Lord! You are the oblation and agent of the sacrifice; you are indeed, the enjoyable as well as the eternal enjoyer; you are not only the known and the knower, but also the agent of meditation and the supreme object of meditation.

(298-300)

Here the poet has reiterated well the principal doctrine of Vedānta viz. the identity of Brahman and *pratyag-ātman* (inner self), and also the supreme Brahman constituting everything (seen and unseen). The import of the wellknown *Gītā* text (IV.24): "Brahman is the instrument to offer with; Brahman is the oblation; by Brahman is the oblation offered into the fire of Brahman; Brahman alone is to be attained by him who contemplates on Brahman in all his actions" is brought forth here by the poet in his own words.

Thus the second section of "A Triad of *Gītā* of Kālidāsa" forming part of the *Kumārasambhava* – eulogy on Brahmā sung by gods in twelve verses – is commented here, pointing out the philosophical import contained therein.

(*Devakṛta Brahmastuti*: Second Canto of the *Kumārasambhava*)

(to be continued)

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संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-

खिन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।

अत्यासन्नसुधास्रुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-

न्त्येषा शङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*samsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūtadāhavyathā-
khinnānām jalakāṅksayā 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.