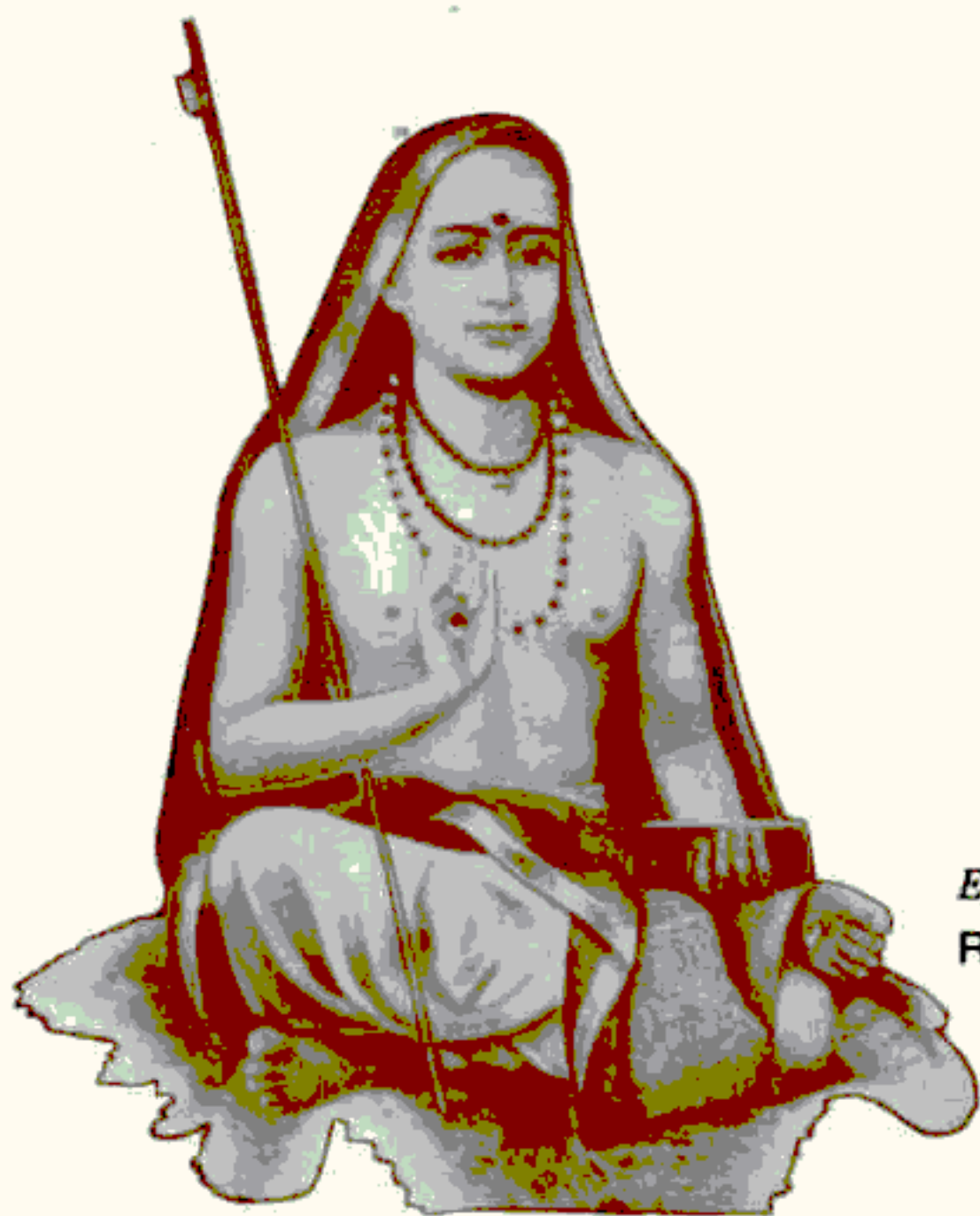


The VOICE of ŚĀṆKARĀ

śaṅkara-bhāratī



Editor:

R. Balasubramanian

eṣā śaṅkara-bhāratī vijayate
nirvāṇa-sandāyinī

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

The Voice of Śaṅkara
is published under the guidance of
His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya
of Kāñcī Kāmakoti Pīṭha
by Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre.

Subscriptions are to be sent to:

The Administrative Officer
Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre
17 (Old No.8A), Bishop Wallers Avenue (West)
Near C.I.T. Colony
Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004
Telephone : 24991147, 24994423, 24990459
Telefax : 91-44-24994510
E-mail : sviswa@md2.vsnl.net.in

Subscription Rates :

	Indian	Foreign
Annual	Rs. 150	US \$ 20
For two years	Rs. 250	US \$ 36
Life	Rs. 1,500	US \$ 200
Single Copy	Rs. 75	US \$ 10

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Volume 29 No. 2, 2004

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1

HOMAGE TO ŚAṄKARA

[194]

यत्पादपङ्कजध्यानात् तोटकाद्या यतीश्वराः ।
बभूवुस्तादृशं वन्दे शङ्करं षण्मतेश्वरम् ॥

*yatpādapaṅkajadhyānāt toṭakādyā yatīśvarāḥ
babhūvus-tādrśam vande śaṅkaram ṣaṇmateśvaram.*

Adoration unto Śrī Śaṅkara (i) who has provided the path of sixfold worship to the supreme Deity, and (ii) by constantly contemplating on whose lotus-like pair of feet, many preceptors like Toṭakācārya became prominent saints.

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आचार्यान् भगवत्पादान् षण्मतस्थापकान् हितान् ।
 परहंसान्नुमोऽद्वैतस्थापकान् जगतो गुरुन् ॥

*ācāryān bhagavatpādān ṣaṇmatasthāpakān hitān
 parahamsān-numo' dvaita-sthāpakān jagato gurūn.*

We bow down at the pair of feet of the great Ācārya Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda (i) who has been the beacon-light of the whole of humanity, (ii) who has founded the easy path of worship through the six systems of religious thought, (iii) who is of the greatest holy order of ascetics, and (iv) who expounded in great detail, the philosophy of Advaita.

THUS SPAKE ŚAṄKARA

R. Balasubramanian

From Affirmation through Negation to Affirmation

I

Implicit in the teachings of the Upaniṣads there is the method of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda*. The word "*adhyāropa*" is usually translated as superimposition, and the word "*apavāda*" as denial. Here superimposition is followed by denial, and the two stages of this method are complementary. Superimposition may be defined as wrong ascription of something to something else; and when the error of wrong ascription is realized by the person who has committed the mistake, he withdraws the wrong ascription through an act of negation or denial. It means that the cognitive act of superimposition involves affirmation, though a wrong one, and so it is followed by negation. The latter makes sense only in the context of the former: that is to say, what is wrongly affirmed alone can be denied, and so denial presupposes prior affirmation (*prasakta-pratiṣedha*). Thus, *apavāda* is complementary to *adhyāropa*. Śaṅkara and other Advaitins point out that the

Upaniṣads have adopted the method of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda* for the purpose of teaching the nature of the ultimate reality, Brahman or Ātman as it is called, which is *niṣprapañca*, which is totally other than the world we are familiar with. This method, it is necessary to bear in mind, is not the invention of Śaṅkara and other Advaitins. On the contrary, they have only highlighted in their writings how the Upaniṣads, realizing the difficulty in conveying the nature of the ultimate reality, have adopted this method in different areas of philosophy such as epistemology, metaphysics, and soteriology. That the unknown should be taught through the known is the basic principle of this method.

Generally speaking, epistemology involves the subject-object or knower-known distinction. The Upaniṣad speaks of the embodied Self as the knower, and everything else collectively called not-Self as the known. Starting from this dualistic position, the Upaniṣad proceeds to teach that the Self by its very nature is free from embodiment and that it is not, strictly speaking, even the knower at all in the absence of the objects to be known. It means that the Self is neither the known nor the knower. Here is a case where the Upaniṣad denies the initial dualistic assumption with which we start and conveys what transcends the subject-object dualism. We can give another example in the area of epistemology. The Upaniṣad makes the distinction between lower knowledge (*aparā-vidyā*) and higher wisdom (*parā-vidyā*), and suggests that a spiritual aspirant has to proceed from the former to the latter. The lower knowledge comprising all scriptural texts and their teachings is dualistic in its nature; and one must master the lower knowledge before proceeding to higher wisdom about Brahman, which is non-dualistic. At this stage, it is necessary to make two observations about the lower knowledge. First, it is not unimportant. If it were unimportant, the Upaniṣad would not have said that two kinds of knowledge should be acquired (*dve vidye veditavye*).¹ So along as we live in the world making all kinds of distinctions, we cannot be indifferent to it. Secondly, by

knowing its nature, Śaṅkara remarks, one develops detachment from it, which is an indispensable preliminary to the pursuit of the triple discipline of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*. That is why the Upaniṣad, after explaining the scope of the lower knowledge, says that one who is detached from the world of ends and means, and has acquired the competence for higher knowledge, "should go, with sacrificial faggots in hand to a teacher versed in the Vedas and absorbed in Brahman."²

The metaphysics of Advaita starts with empirical pluralism and terminates at Brahman, the ultimate reality, which is beyond thought and therefore beyond metaphysics. As in the case of epistemology, here also the guiding principle is the method of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda*. Every philosophical system seeks to explain three entities, viz. God, the individual self, and the world. In our day-to-day life we experience plurality of objects and of individuals, and postulate the existence of Creator-God as the source of the world and also as the dispenser of justice. The Upaniṣads tell us that the plurality we experience in our day-to-day life is not ultimately real and that we have to transcend it in order to realize the primal Being, which is beyond the empirical world.

In the same way, the Advaita theory of liberation must be understood through the method of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda*. The Self which is ever-free and never-bound is in the embodied condition during empirical existence. The embodied condition of the Self is called bondage (*saṁsāra*). So long as the *jīva* is ignorant and identifies itself with the mind-sense-body complex, it is in bondage; and so Advaita accepts, like any other system, that there is bondage and that it is a fact and real so long as one is in empirical existence. However, it holds that, since bondage is due to ignorance, it can be overcome through knowledge here in this life itself. The point to be noted here is that the embodied condition involves the dualism of Spirit and matter, Self and not-Self; and it is by transcending this dualism that one attains libera-

tion through the realization of the true nature of the Self as pure consciousness, bodiless and unconditioned. Consider, for example, the *Bhagavad-gītā* text, 13.13, in which there is the familiar description of the Self as endowed with various organs. This description is a restatement of what we know, what we usually think, of the Self in our daily life. The text reads:

With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes and heads and mouths everywhere, with hearing everywhere, that (Self which is to be known) exists enveloping all.

Hands, feet, and other organs, which are material, are not-Self; they constitute, in the language of the *Gītā*, the body or *kṣetra* of the Self. In his commentary on this text Śaṅkara observes that the Self which is devoid of organs is spoken of as possessing organs for the purpose of indicating its existence through them; and whatever is attributed to the Self initially is denied in the next verse, which reads:

Shining by the functions of all the organs, yet without the organs; unattached, yet supporting all; devoid of all qualities, but is the enjoyer of qualities.

If we consider the two verses mentioned above, it will be obvious to us how the scriptural text initially ascribes qualities and organs to the Self as we understand it in our daily life and then denies them all with the view to bring out its real nature. Thus, the scriptural text adopts the method of *adhyāropa* and *apāvāda* to convey the nature of the Self which is identical with Brahman, the ultimate reality. In his commentary on the text (13.13) Śaṅkara refers to the traditional method of teaching adopted by the wise as follows:

There is the saying of *sampradāyavids*—of those who know the right traditional method of teaching, "that which is devoid of all duality is described by superimposition and denial." Hands, feet, and the like constituting the limbs of all bodies in all places, derive their activity

from the energy inherent in the knowable (Self), and as such they are mere marks of its existence, and are spoken of as belonging to it only by a figure of speech.

The source of the traditional method of teaching to which Śaṅkara refers in the above comment is not known, though it is oft-quoted in the Advaita texts; and the focus of this paper is on the technique of the method about which Śaṅkara speaks.

II

It is necessary at this stage to refer to the distinction between *vyāvahārika* and *pāramārthika*, which is unique in Advaita. The term "*vyāvahārika*" refers to the empirical realm of duality whereas the term "*pāramārthika*" signifies that which is free from, or transcends, the world of duality. According to Śaṅkara, we transact our daily business of life, which comprises all kinds of activities, secular as well as spiritual, making distinctions of various kinds. He does not deny the existence of the empirical world and the business of life (*loka-vyavahāra*) that is transacted in a purposive way to fulfil our objectives. All that he maintains is that, though the empirical world is real enough for all practical purposes, it is not ultimately real. When he characterizes the empirical world, which is conditioned by space and time and regulated by cause-effect relation, as *vyāvahārika*, it is for the purpose of highlighting the dependent nature of the world, and not for denying its existence. Anything that has a beginning has a dependent nature, because it owes its existence to its cause. Further, anything that has a beginning must have an end, and so it must be finite and temporal. A pot which originates from clay has a dependent existence; it cannot exist in the absence of clay, because the latter constitutes its essence (*svarūpa*). Also, when we destroy the pot, it first of all becomes broken pieces, and then, through further transformation, small particles of earth: that is to say, it finally becomes one with the source from which it came.

The point to be noted here is that the pot which has dependent origination cannot be as real as clay, its cause. Commenting on the clay-pot causal relation, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.2.1, remarks that, of the two, clay alone is real and that the pot which is a modification (*vikāra*) of clay and which is, therefore, an effect exists only in speech. It does not follow from this that the pot as an entity does not exist. What the Upaniṣad intends to convey here is that the pot, which has a configuration or form (*rūpa*) is identified by a name (*nāma*) in the transaction of our daily life.

The theory of dependent origination conveys three ideas: an object such as a pot, which has dependent origination, has no existence of its own, no nature of its own, and no status of its own; all these three are borrowed from its cause. What is true of clay-pot is also true of rope-snake. The logic behind the two illustrations is the same. When a rope is mistaken for a snake, the latter which is an object of erroneous perception is usually said to be illusory. The illusory snake, which is experienced by the person concerned, is something existent; it cannot be dismissed as airy nothing. It is a "private object" whereas a clay-pot is a "public object". It has borrowed its existence from its cause and shines so long as its source is not known. The moment the person realizes that the object in front is only a rope, the illusory snake disappears. As in the case of the clay-pot illustration, here also the illusory snake has no existence of its own, no nature of its own, and no status of its own. All these three aspects it has borrowed from the rope, which is its substratum. Śaṅkara, therefore, holds that empirical objects such as pot and pan, and illusory objects (*prātibhāsika-vastu*) such as rope-snake and dream-lion, which are objects of experience, do exist, though they may not be ultimately real. The empirical realm, according to Advaita, comprises objects of experience of the waking and dream levels. The former may include objects of valid knowledge as well as of erroneous perception. Following Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara too does not ignore the distinction between objects of waking experience

and those of dream experience. But still, all these objects, they maintain, belong to the empirical realm, and so long as the highest reality is not known, they are considered to be real.

For the purpose of analysis, both epistemic and ontological, Advaita draws the distinction between Sat (Being) and asat (non-being). According to Advaita, Sat or Being is the ever-existent reality which has neither beginning nor end. Asat or non-being by definition is that which is never existent, i.e. that which is totally non-existent and is, therefore, outside the scope of cognition or experience by anyone at anytime. Brahman or Ātman is Sat; and the so-called entities we speak of such as sky-flower are asat or non-being. By contrast, the objects of the empirical world, which are different from both Being and non-being belong to the "third category", because they are neither real like Brahman nor non-real like sky-flower. Since they cannot be characterized as Sat or as asat, Śaṅkara calls them as *anirvacanīya*, i.e. indescribable. These objects which constitute the empirical realm are existent and indispensable in the transactional world; and so they are considered to be real till one realizes Brahman or Ātman, which is their source. So the term "*vyāvahārika*" signifies the empirical reality of the objects of the transactional world experienced by us in our waking and dream states. Parmenides, a pre-Socratic Greek thinker, first of all contrasts Being with "nothing", and then speaks about "appearance" or *doxa*. He maintains that the way to Being is inevitable, because it is the source and support of everything we experience. On the other hand, the path to "nothing" is inaccessible, because "nothing" is not an entity which one can reach. Being and nothing, according to Parmenides, are totally different from each other, and the polarity between them is comparable to that between Sat and asat as presented in Advaita. After contrasting Being with nothing, Parmenides talks about a third entity, what he calls "appearance" or *doxa*, and holds that the path to appearance is always available, and all of us unavoidably go around it in our empirical existence.

If Being is the reality, the world of becoming which is the manifestation or projection of Being has to be treated as appearance. Being appears in its manifold form from time to time, and getting absorbed in them in our daily life, we forget the source of the appearance of the manifested world. What Parmenides calls appearance is the *vyāvahārika* world of Śaṅkara, which is different from both Sat and asat and which is, therefore, characterized as *sadasad-vilakṣaṇa*.

III

According to Śaṅkara, the empirical realm in which we operate and transact our business of life is made available to us through *pramāṇas* such as perception, inference, and so on. As a philosopher, Śaṅkara emphasizes the need for, and the importance of the use of, *pramāṇa* for ascertaining the existence and nature of anything. The existence or non-existence of a thing in our daily life is decided only by a means of *pramāṇa*. In the course of the refutation of the Vijñānavāda Buddhist, Śaṅkara observes:

The possibility or impossibility of the existence of a thing is determined only on the ground of the operation or non-operation of a *pramāṇa* with regard to it; but the operation or non-operation of a *pramāṇa* is not ascertained on preconceived possibility or impossibility (of the existence) of a thing. What is known through any one of the *pramāṇas* such as perception exists, and what cannot be known through any one of the *pramāṇas* does not exist.³

The Vijñānavādin holds that consciousness alone which is internal exists and that the external world does not exist. Bādarāyaṇa in his *Brahma-sūtra*, 2.2.28–32, refutes the Vijñānavāda position, and Śaṅkara's commentary on these sūtras is helpful to understand the method and logic of criticism adopted by Bādarāyaṇa. If the external world is totally non-existent like the horns of a hare, then it would not be an object of experience. The fact, however, is that the external world is experienced by all of us

through our senses, and so it is wrong to say that it is totally non-existent. To quote Śaṅkara:

The non-existence of external things cannot be maintained because we are conscious of external things. In every act of perception we are conscious of some external thing corresponding to the idea, whether it be a post or a wall or a piece of cloth or a jar, and that of which we are conscious cannot but exist.⁴

Nor is it possible to say for the Vijñānavādin that only consciousness exists and that there is nothing external to it which is real. Śaṅkara remarks that the very nature of consciousness itself proves the existence of external objects different from consciousness, for we are conscious of objects of perception. Śaṅkara's elaboration of this point is worth quoting:

If the Bauddha should reply that he does not affirm that he is conscious of no object, but only that he is conscious of no object apart from the act of consciousness, we answer that he may indeed make any arbitrary statement he likes, but that he has no arguments to prove what he says. That the outward thing exists apart from consciousness has necessarily to be accepted on the ground of the nature of consciousness itself. Nobody when perceiving a post or a wall is conscious of his perception only, but all men are conscious of posts and walls and the like as objects of their perceptions.⁵

The substance of Śaṅkara's criticism of Vijñānavāda Buddhism is to show that the empirical world of our daily life has a dependent reality and that its existence will continue till one realizes the source from which it originates. Once a person knows Brahman or Being, the world of appearance qua appearance will disappear, because everything is seen as Brahman; and we have no justification to deny its existence till the truth behind it is known. This is how he summarizes his critique of Vijñānavāda Buddhism:

This world in which we are engaged, whose existence is guaranteed by all *pramāṇas*, cannot be denied without knowing some new truth,

based on which the existence of the world can be denied; for the general rule prevails in the absence of anything contrary to it.⁶

IV

Whatever is predicated of Brahman or Ātman from the *vyāvahārika* point of view is denied by śruti when it wants to convey the nature of the reality. Discursive reasoning functions through the distinctions of knower, knowledge, and the known. Also, the object it deals with admits of distinctions such as substance and attributes, whole and parts, and so on. It means that discursive reasoning functions through relations, and the object that is known is thus relational. Taking note of the way discursive reasoning functions on the one hand, and the nature of the supreme reality on the other, Śaṅkara shows how inadequate the former is in dealing with the latter, which is trans-relational and therefore trans-rational. The Upaniṣad resorts to the method of denial (*apavāda*) of whatever is predicated of Brahman-Ātman in our state of ignorance. Sometimes it denies specific qualities such as grossness, fineness, etc.; yet at other times it says that Brahman is devoid of the twofold form, *mūrta* and *amūrta*; instead of making specific denials, it also says that the entire manifested world of plurality, whatsoever it may be, is absent in Brahman (*na iha nānā asti kiñcana*) as this would help us to rethink about the causal relation between Brahman and the world, which is the convenient mode of understanding the cosmic dimension of Brahman. However, the explanation of Brahman as the Creator-God is problematic. The only way left open to us to relate Brahman with the world is to say that it is the cause of the world. But then, we have to make it a subject qualified by predicates and thereby it will be a determinate and relational entity. Thus, what is indeterminate and non-relational now becomes determinate and relational; and if we follow the rigorous path of logic, we will be compelled to deny all predications that we have made of it.

Pseudo-Dionysius brings out the conceptual muddle that arises as follows:

What has actually to be said about the Cause of everything is this. Since it is the Cause of all beings, we should posit and ascribe to it all the affirmations we make in regard to beings, and, more appropriately, we should negate all these affirmations, since it surpasses all being. Now we should not conclude that the negations are simply the opposites of the affirmations, but rather that the cause of all is considerably prior to this, beyond privations, beyond every denial, beyond every assertion.⁷

Gauḍapāda in his *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā*, 3.36, shows how Brahman is totally different from the world we are familiar with:

Brahman is birthless, sleepless, dreamless, nameless, formless, ever-effulgent, and omniscient. With regard to it there is no scope for ceremonial practice whatsoever.

The things of the world have birth or origination; and whatever has a beginning must also have an end. It means that the things of the world are temporal. Unlike these objects, Brahman is eternal (*ajam*). When we change the perspective from Brahman to Ātman, we find that every jīva is involved in the triple stream of experience, waking, dream, and sleep. But the Ātman has no involvement in these states of experience. That is why Gauḍapāda says that the Ātman is free from sleep (*anidram*) and dream (*asvapnam*), and also remains untouched by the objects of the waking experience characterized as *nāma-rūpa*. Further, Brahman-Ātman does not fall within the scope of karma of any kind (*na upacāraḥ kathaṅcana*).

Gauḍapāda's *Kārikā* quoted above is a summary statement of the seventh mantra of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* which reads:

(Brahman-Ātman) is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, beyond the grasp of organs of action, uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable; the essence of the knowledge of the one Self; in which all phenomena

cease; and which is unchanging, auspicious, and non-dual. That is the Self, and that is to be known.

Śaṅkara in his commentary on this mantra brings out the significance of the *via negativa*, the negative description of Brahman-Ātman. Whatever is affirmed of Brahman-Ātman is now denied with the view to show that the highest reality, which is the source and support of the world of animate and inanimate beings, is totally other than it, and so transcends the subject-object distinction. It is necessary to sound a word of caution in this context. According to Advaita, Brahman cannot be described even as transcendent. Though for the purpose of explanation we say first that it is immanent in the world and then when we deny it, we speak of it contextually as transcendent. The immanent-transcendent aspects of Brahman reveal a theistic standpoint; but Advaita is trans-theistic. Once again, it will be relevant to quote the words of Pseudo-Dionysius:

It is neither perceived nor is it perceptible. It suffers neither disorder nor disturbance and is overwhelmed by no earthly passion. It is not powerless and subject to the disturbances caused by sense perception. It endures no deprivation of light. It passes through no change, decay, division, loss, no ebb and flow, nothing of which the senses may be aware. None of all this can either be identified with it nor attributed to it.⁸

He goes on to say:

It falls neither within the predicate of non-being nor of being. Existing beings do not know it as it actually is and it does not know them as they are. There is no speaking of it, nor name nor knowledge of it. Darkness and light, error and truth—it is none of these. It is beyond assertion and denial. We make assertions and denials of what is next to it, but never of it, for it is both beyond every assertion, being the perfect and unique cause of all things, and, by virtue of its pre-eminently simple and absolute nature, free of every limitation, beyond every limitation; it is also beyond every denial.⁹

V

According to Śaṅkara, the negative description is not intended to reveal what Brahman is, because it cannot. Its role is limited to the denial of whatever is predicated of Brahman. There are a good many affirmative texts in the Upaniṣads, though not all, which restate the views that we ordinarily hold about Brahman. For example, there are many texts which speak about the creation of the world and also about the nature of Ātman in its empirical condition as an embodied being. Creation texts, which describe Brahman as the Creator-God, involve relation. What is non-relational by its very nature is made relational for the purpose of understanding the nature of the world. What is true of Brahman is equally true of Ātman, because the two are identical. Though the Ātman is non-relational, it is viewed as relational in its embodied condition. Scriptural texts purport to bring out the non-dual, non-relational nature of the Absolute, and so the negative texts play an important role in this regard. Whatever is ascribed to Brahman-Ātman from the dualistic standpoint has to be denied to show that the Absolute is devoid of all predications.

If Brahman-Ātman is devoid of all predications, then there is the possibility of its being viewed as a non-entity, as a void, as the same as the *śūnya* of the Mādhyamika Buddhist. Śaṅkara is aware of this problem of hermeneutics. Many western philosophers have confused pure Being with non-being (*asat*). If primal Being is indeterminate because of the impossibility of any kind of predication with regard to it, then it must be, they hold, a vacuous entity. In the introduction to his commentary on Chapter 8 of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Śaṅkara points out that ordinary people, who understand every object to be determinate because of qualities, parts, and relations associated with it, will think of Brahman-Ātman which is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa* as non-being, as *śūnya*. With the view to help these people, the Upaniṣad

describes Brahman-Ātman as endowed with qualities for the purpose of meditation and so on, as the indwelling Spirit immanent in the world of space, time, and causality as well as in the mind-sense-body complex. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the role of the negative texts of the Upaniṣads vis-à-vis those affirmative texts which are *prima facie* dualistic.

According to Advaita, while negation presupposes prior affirmation, it also in its turn is a preliminary to affirmation. Śaṅkara tells us that the Upaniṣadic texts purport to help the jīva overcome the problem of bondage by revealing its essential identity with Brahman. Advaitins hold that, however important the negative texts such as *neti neti* may be, still they are only subsidiary to affirmative texts such as "*tat tvam asi*," "*aham brahmāsmi*," and so on. A twofold realization is needed in this connection. The jīva should realize that the Ātman in it is not a limited entity though in its embodied condition it appears to be so. In the same way, it should also realize that Brahman which is said to be the source and support of the world is not something remote and material. We have the Mahāvākyas such as *tat tvam asi* which help the jīva to realize that the Self in it is *not other than* Brahman. If we carefully examine the role of the negative texts vis-à-vis affirmative texts such as *tat tvam asi*, we will appreciate the methodology of the Upaniṣadic teaching—how the methodology of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda* finally leads to the great affirmation of *jīva-brahma-aikya*. The initial affirmation, which reflects our naïve and natural attitude with regard to the transactional world of our daily life is followed by negation, which again is followed by affirmation revealing the consummation of the Advaitic teaching.

NOTES

1. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 1. 1. 4.
2. *Ibid.*, 1. 1. 12.

3. Śāṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 2. 2. 28.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 2. 1. 31.
7. *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, tr. Colm Luibheid, Paulist Press, New York, 1987, p. 136.
8. Ibid., p.141.
9. Ibid.

TEMPLE WORSHIP*

Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī

Our country abounds in *punya-kṣetras* (holy temples) and *punya tīrthas* (holy bathing places). The temples and *tīrthas* are places where sages of old had dedicated their *tapas* (spiritual powers) so that erring mortals, who are incapable of observing the austerities necessary to gain spiritual powers and who are susceptible to sins, may be purified and blessed, when they make pilgrimage to these temples and take their bath in the *tīrthas*.

Our sculpture, music, dance, *mantras* and every aspect of our culture are dedicated to God in the temple, and so the temple has become the repository of all that is best in our heritage.

We have our history also from the inscriptions in the temples. The monarchs of those days, great devotees as they were, took pride in raising temples for God and not residential palaces for themselves—as proved by the fact that while their palaces are now either dilapidated or not at all to be found, the grand temple edifices stand in glory to this day.

* From the proceedings of the conference on "Śaṅkara and Shanmata" held in Madras, June 1–9, 1969.

If our religion has survived many vicissitudes in the past, it is because of our temples and the festivals associated with them.

Gratitude for help received is a cardinal virtue. The taxes you pay to the Corporation of Madras and to the Government are your expression of gratitude for the services rendered by those agencies. There are superhuman agencies which confer benefits on us. We must express our gratitude to those agencies in the manner prescribed in the Vedas. This expression of gratitude is known as *yajña* (sacrifice). Temple worship is just another form of *yajña*, where offerings are made to the superhuman agencies on behalf of the entire community. While in the *yajña* the various forces are individually propitiated as *devas*, in the temples the Source of all these forces is worshipped with offerings, which naturally go to all the *devas*. Though schools, hospitals and banks and such other social service organizations may be necessary in the context of our present times, these institutions cannot serve their respective purposes in the absence of devotion. The one cure for all human ills is the power to endure them with faith in God's grace. *Bhakti* alone can give that power of endurance. Temples are the agencies for the cultivation of *bhakti*. Hence the obligation to maintain or build anew temples in every place.

What is the significance of making offerings to the idols installed in temples? This is done as an expression of gratitude to the Power that created all things. We will be guilty of gross ingratitude if we do not offer first to God, what we eat or wear. It is not every one that can do *pūjā* (worship) at home and make these offerings to God. It is here that temples come into the picture. Offerings are made to God in the temples on behalf of the entire community.

It is not even necessary that every one should worship inside the temples every day. *Gopura darśanam* (seeing the tower of the temple) will itself elevate our minds and make us remember the source from which we derive all the earthly benefits. At the same time, it is necessary for the community to see that worship

at the temples is conducted properly. We should make it a point to see the temple tower every day and thereby concentrate a while in the contemplation of God. At least once a week we should go round the temple, reciting *nāmās* (God's names) and doing *bhajan*. If we do so, we will derive real and lasting benefit.

The five sense organs, namely, eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch, give us an awareness of the fundamental elements, which, in diverse combinations, constitute the universe. Like a receiving radio set, these organs receive the various impulses from outside and carry them to our brain. That is why they are called the *jñānendriyas*. Each of the five senses contributes to our joy in life. Good food, delectable music, fragrant smell, beautiful art, cool breeze, and soothing moonlight add to our joy and happiness. All these good things in life come to us through God's grace, for, by ourselves, we cannot produce even a grain of rice. That being so, it behoves us to think of Him from whom they emanate, the God whose aspects are the divinities presiding over the elements, which determine the senses and their respective sensations. It is our duty to gratefully offer all those things which afford us the right kind of joy to God, the Giver, first, and then enjoy them as His *prasāda* or gift. According to the *Gītā*, if we enjoy these things without offering them first to the Giver, it would be tantamount to theft. It is this offering of the objects of the fivefold joys that is known as *Pañcopacāras* to God, the five offerings, namely the offering of *gandha* (sandal), *puṣpa* (flowers), *dhūpa* (incense), *dīpa* (lamps) and *naivedya* (food). If our *jñānendriyas* and their stimuli are reverentially offered to the Paramātman, then we shall not be inclined to misuse these sense-organs. By such dedication to God, we deflect them from evil propensities and sublimate them to a divine goal.

Besides requirements which are the minimum sources of material pleasure, there are other things which make for life's comfort, like house, clothes, conveyance, etc. These too are to be used only after they have been offered to God. All such offerings

are included in, what is known as, *Soḍaśopacāras* (16 offerings). And then there are other sources of enjoyment like music, dance, chariot, elephant, horse, etc., applicable in the case of highly-placed persons and which may be regarded as luxuries for the common man. All these should also be offered to God before being appropriated for use by us, and they are included in the sixty-four or *Catus-ṣaṣṭi upacāras*.

All these *upacāras* come within the ambit of the rituals of worship. It may be asked, "Why all these elaborate rituals? Will not silent prayer do?" The answer is to be found, if we rightly understand the significance of these ritualistic offerings, namely, that a true devotee acknowledges the ultimate source and the inner substance of these objects of his enjoyment and uses them only after tendering them to that source in humble gratitude. Since only the best and the purest should be offered to God, and since nothing should be enjoyed which is not so offered, this practice will ensure that every man will seek and take delight only in such things as can be fit objects of such offering. This will go a long way in making our lives perfect and pure.

God is the source of all the pleasures that we enjoy in this world, and they reside in Him in their excellence and perfection. He will vouchsafe them to us, warding off our afflictions, if we would but resign ourselves absolutely at His holy feet. It is in this consciousness of deriving our joys and pleasures from Him, that we offer various things to him in our *pañcopacāras*.

There is a *sthalapurāṇa* (mythological account) for each temple. The Śaivite and the Vaiṣṇavite saints have also sung about many of our temples and places of pilgrimage. This temple literature contains a fund of information which, when understood properly, will help us to approach the *purāṇas* with the reverence they deserve.

In this country, there are, what may be called, community temples. In fact, all the temples help promote community consciousness by bringing together people of all walks and stations of life

in the holy bond of devotion. Especially, the great festivals bring together people from far and near. In the Car Festival, rich and poor alike, Brahmin and peasant alike, draw the rope of the car. It is a rule that no pollution should be observed for the proximity of the outcaste in the Car Festival. Such is the bond of devotion!

Apart from this there are what may be called regular community temples. For instance, at Avudayarkoil, it is the custom to offer large quantities of cooked rice to the presiding deity, and this rice is made available to all at a nominal cost. In many temples the sense of community life is fostered by devoting special days and occasions for it. Consecrated food is made available through them to all those in need.

There is some special feature associated with the worship in each temple. For instance, the special feature of Tirumalai is the offering of wealth, which takes the form of dropping cash or jewels in the hundi. In Palani, people carry and offer *kāvadi*. At Rameswaram, the bathing of the deity with water brought from the Ganga is considered sacred. In the West Coast, each temple has its special form of offering. At Ambalapuzha, the offering to Sri Krishna takes the form of *pāl pāyasam* (a sweet preparation with milk and rice). The favourite offering to Sri Mahadeva at Vaikom is the conduct of feasts, at which hundreds of people are fed sumptuously. During the annual festival at another Sri Krishna temple, boat races are conducted in the watercourse in front of the temple. At Tiruparayar, where the presiding deity is Sri Ramachandra, offerings take the form of detonation—a number of cylinders, packed with gun-powder, are set fire to and they explode one after another in quick succession with a loud report. At Ettumanur, money is offered, as is being done at Tirumalai. At Trichur, ghee offered by devotees is poured over the deity, with the result that the Deity remains practically hidden under the solidified ghee. The accumulated ghee within the *sanctum sanctorum* is removed periodically, and this ghee, often a hundred years old, is purchased by Āyurvedic physicians, as *purāṇa ghr̥tam*.

(old ghee) is a specific medicine for skin diseases. It is at this temple that the parents of Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavat-pāda prayed and obtained the blessings of the Lord for getting a son.

Another sacred and historic temple in Kerala is that of Lord Sri Krishna at Guruvayur. The Lord enshrined in this temple is popularly called Guruvayurappan and He is pleased to hear the recital of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. This temple and the temple of Sri Ayyappan on the top of the Sabari Hills have become popular in Tamil Nadu also during recent years. It is noteworthy that Śaṅkara, in his *Śiva pādādi-keśastavam*, has also prayed to Sasta or Ayyappan, referring to Him as the third son of Lord Śiva.

In some temples, the quantity of *naivedyam* (offerings) is in such generous proportion that a devotee can get sumptuous food by paying merely an anna. The Annapurnesvari temple in Cherukunnam (Kerala) will be closed every day only after ascertaining that no one has gone without food. There is a custom there to tie a bundle of cooked rice to the branch of a tree near the temple in the night. This practice is to ensure that even a thief does not go hungry.

The lesson that we have to draw from all these forms of worship is that we should do our duty and enjoy the right things of the world, placing the entire responsibility for our not being lured by them, on God. This is not a philosophy of inaction or idleness. It is a philosophy of action, with the emphasis on the dedication of our action and enjoyments to God.

RĀMĀDVAYĀCĀRYA*

S. Subrahmania Sastri

Rāmādvayācārya belongs to that galaxy of medieval authors who wrote independent dialectical works called *prakaraṇas* connected with *Vedānta-śāstra*. The *Vedānta-kaumudī*, published by the University of Madras (1955) and an unpublished commentary on it by himself are the only works available in his name. A *prakaraṇa* may be smaller or bigger than the *śāstra* to which it is connected, but it elaborates a few topics dealt with there. The *Vedānta-kaumudī* fully answers to this definition.

His Date

Appaya Dīkṣita of the 16th century quotes from the *Vedānta-kaumudī* thrice, once by the name of the author and twice by mentioning his work. Brahmānanda (17th century), the author of *Laghucandrikā*, discussed his *anumāna* in the establishment of *mithyātva* (illusoriness) of the universe. Moreover, Dasgupta who was the first to notice the importance of the *Vedānta-kaumudī*

* Courtesy: *Preceptors of Advaita*, Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Sankara Mandir, Secunderabad, 1968, pp. 171-73.

refers to two manuscripts of the commentary of the work, one in Asiatic Society of Bengal and the other in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. In both these manuscripts the copying date given is 1515 A.D. We can therefore take it that the upper limit of the date of *Vedānta-kaumudī* and its commentary (which are by the same author) is 1500 A.D. His reference to Janārdana who later became Ānandagiri and his reference to later authors show that he probably lived about 1515 A.D.

Rāmādvaya in his discussions mostly follows the *Siddhāntas* of the Vivaraṇa school, but whenever he finds any difficulty, he adopts the views of Vācaspati. Following the *Siddhānta* of the Vivaraṇa school, he adopts:

- (a) *niyama-vidhi* in respect of injunctions regarding *śravaṇa*;
- (b) rise of Brahman-realization directly from the Vedāntas;
- (c) *jīvas* as reflections of Brahman.

Following Vācaspati he accepts nescience as many and its location in *jīvas*.

Contents of the Vedānta-Kaumudī

The work is divided into four chapters. Brahman-inquiry, the subject-matter of the opening *Brahma-sūtra*, is elaborated in the first chapter. Following the *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādyā* of Śrī Harṣa, the author establishes the eligibility of the Advaitin who views the world as unreal, for taking part in philosophical discussions. He says that what is required in the discussions is only the acceptance of categories as they are and not their absolute reality. Explaining the self-validity of the *pramāṇas*, he thinks that, though the absence of defects is useful, it does not conduce to validity being extrinsic. After an elaborate discussion he supports Vācaspati's view that mind is the means of Brahman-knowledge; but finally he approves the position taken by the

author of the Vivaraṇa that the Vedāntas directly give rise to intuitive knowledge. Taking up the Advaitin's stand in respect of illusion, the author condemns all other *khyātis* and supports *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. Māyā as a positive entity is established by perception, inference, and scripture. Among the qualities necessary for eligibility for Brahman-inquiry the author lays stress on *vairāgya* (freedom from desires). This he says is to be attained not only by performing the obligatory rites prescribed in the Vedas, but also by voluntary charity of food and clothing beyond one's means. Interpreting the age-long saying that by death in Vārāṇasī one gets final release, he says that death there leads to final release through different phases and not directly. After an extensive discussion, the author establishes that *sannyāsa-āśrama* is essential for Brahman-knowledge and is so taught in the scriptures. But once taken, there is no going back. Taking up the subject-matter of the *Brahma-sūtra*, the author states that the identity of jīva with Brahman is the subject and that the whole inanimate world with the multiplicity of the jīvas is unreal. The unreality of the universe is established on the ground that it is inexplicable either as different or as non-different from Brahman, its cause. In Chapter II, the author takes up the second *sūtra* for discussion. He declares that the fact that Brahman is the cause of creation, sustentation, and dissolution of the world is to be established only by scripture and not by inference as held by the Naiyāyikas. The author condemns the inferences of the Naiyāyikas establishing Īśvara as the cause as fallacious. Elaborating causality, the author rejects the views that (i) karma is the cause, (ii) time is the cause, (iii) nature is the cause, (iv) *prāṇa* (vital air) is the cause, and (v) *pradhāna* is the cause. Incidentally, he criticises the views of the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Pāśupatas in respect of causation.

After thus explaining the *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*, he takes up the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* and establishes on the basis of scripture and reasoning that Brahman is real, intelligence, and bliss. He also

establishes the Vedāntic theory that the *mahāvākyas* give rise to an impartite sense (*akhaṇḍārtha*).

In the third chapter, the author discusses the proofs for the existence of Brahman. He holds that the Vedāntas alone are the proofs. Incidentally, he takes up other pramāṇas and discusses their definitions and scope. He rejects the anumānas given by Udayana in his *Nyāya-kusumāñjalī* as fallacious. As regards verbal knowledge resulting from Vedic and non-Vedic texts, the author favours *abhihitānvaya-vāda* of Kumārila in preference to *anvitābhidhāna-vāda* of Prabhākara. Taking up the subject of authorship of the Vedas, the author declares that the Vedas are not of human origin; even God cannot interfere in their subject-matter or sequence. They are beginningless. Though they perish in the deluge, there is God who remembers the Vedas of the previous creation and teaches them to Brahmā at the time of the next creation after the deluge.

In Chapter IV the author takes up the fourth *sūtra* for discussion. In reply to the contention of the Mīmāṃsakas that Vedic injunctions which tend to human activity (towards good) or abstention (from bad) alone are valid, and that the Upaniṣads which reveal the ever-existent Brahman are not valid, the *sūtra-kāra* says that the Upaniṣads which are not connected with any *karma* and which do not set forth any activity are also valid since they also reveal Brahman whose knowledge gives the final *puruṣārtha*. The author incidentally defines the sixteen categories enumerated by Gautama. As regards the nature of Īśvara, he accepts the Vivaraṇa theory that he is the *pratibimba* (reflection) of Brahman in *māyā*; he is all-pervasive.

A RESOLUTION FOR RENOVATION
OF INDIAN CULTURE*

C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer

History has shown that increased vigour in cultural activity goes hand in hand with the heightening of the rhythm of *political events*; and that when the latter takes place on the morrow of great and destructive wars, the former expresses itself as a large-scale effort of reconstruction—reconstruction implying not merely restoration of the *status quo ante*, but *renovation*. Our present period is no exception to this rule, and the mental ravages of the war from which we have emerged make cultural reconstruction in many respects appear a dominant necessity. Some advance over previous instances of building up again, after catalysms, can be registered in the fact that we no longer see each nation singly trudging the uphill road; we discover the beginnings of a rational system of mutual assistance and joining of resources, where each nation contributes her particular best to the common pool. India has suffered comparatively little from material destruction of

*General President's address delivered in the 1946 Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Delhi.

cultural property, but her rate of advancement in some lines has been retarded by long seclusion from the normal channels of exchange. She has much to receive in the line of new scientific devices; she has much to give in the line of spiritual culture. Moreover, what she has to give is unique, there being no alternative to her performing this specific task: only she can effect in the world the revival of their own mental inheritance. In most cases, cultural reconstruction faces only problems of acute quantitative shortage—easily made up by the pooling system where it concerns material implements such as books, but by no means so easy to be remedied where there have been serious losses in the ranks of cultural workers and scholars. In most cases, the genuine seeds of regeneration are extant everywhere, and require only intenser cultivation. But in the case of India these seeds, scanty and sterile in a progressively alienated soil, no longer hold spontaneous force of renewal. Not only a branch of learning, but the fecund knowledge of spiritual forms of life inherent in its possession, are threatened with extinction at large, a prospective loss not for the receiving sphere of culture alone but also for the giving, which may thereby lose its hold on many minds and become separated by a growing dwindling of the prospects of Indological studies in the West may, if not checked in time, cause unthought of repercussions in the trends of mental life at home, far beyond the sense of cultural prestige. In fact, the spiritualising influence of Indian elements of thought, still operating in pre-war Western culture, though hardly perceptible on its surface, kept up at least a partial counterbalance to the imported trends of materialistic culture that took hold in the last century of Indian intellectual life. Our influence abroad did much to enliven our sense of our own values; *nemo propheta in patria*, and e.g., the immeasurably beneficial effects of the activity of Swami Vivekananda would not have had such strength in India without the response his teaching called forth in the West. These must not be allowed to become things of the past. Our present, fortunately, has not been without its dynamic

messengers of the Indian spiritual outlook to foreign lands; but the indigenous resonator in those lands has of late become impoverished to the extreme. It can be built up anew only from within, by a process congruous to the newly prevailing disposition which, once again and more than ever, is to test and probe and investigate new values offered. As a reaction to the slogan-ridden war and pre-war years, the thinking Western mind has become impervious to thought-elements which it has not thoroughly understood of its own accord. To achieve assimilation of the renewed mental message, it needs to retrace the shortcut of single impacts and allow the imagination to be swayed by the slow winding path of inquiry: it needs to follow up the master-touch of the philosopher and sage with the ancillary job of the philologist. Once again, it needs the patient light of research for a constant guide; and this is our task to rekindle.

Founder in her live past of a great spiritual culture—one of the only two which produced philosophical thinking, and on either of which the later developments of human thought were based—India is manifestly called upon to preserve the knowledge and foster the true understanding of that ancient culture in the world. Especially at this historical juncture, when India is resuming her rightful place in the community of nations, it is our patent duty to take the lead in reconstructing the studies of our proudest inheritance by co-ordinating the potentialities of enhanced research work at home and imparting new impulse to research abroad, including it in the orbit of such co-ordination on the uniform basis of a rational outlook, truly adequate to its subject and genuinely Indian.

I said genuinely because, as you know, modern "critical" research—or what has long been passed for such—was started by Western scholars. With us, the age-old scholarly tradition was not of "research" but of "knowledge," handed down through generations of teachers and pupils in the several *Śākhās*. Each scholar studied the texts pertaining to his branch and was not

supposed to study any other. His skill as a scholar in the interpretation of the ancient literature consisted in the ability to show that the doctrinal meaning conveyed by even the oldest texts was in conformity with the doctrine of the great Guru or founder of the philosophical school of which he was an adherent and an exponent. Thus of course the same ancient texts, as memorised (with slight variants) by the different schools, were often given divergent interpretation—which inevitably led an interested outsider to the conclusion that at best only one of them, and possibly none, rendered the correct original meaning of the old text. However unhistorical as those traditional methods of exegesis no doubt were, they nevertheless had the advantages of the internal continuity of thought development from the original sources to the contemporary school; thus, though the path might have taken many a turn, it was never entirely detached from its outset. The Western scholars had an entirely different approach. The beginnings of Indological studies in the West proceeded, as you know, from the discovery a century ago of what was called the Indo-European family of peoples. This discovery was essentially linguistic. In the study of the evolution of the main European languages from common stems, Sanskrit and Vedic came in as a welcome counterpart of Latin and Greek to typify the oldest forms. Comparison in the same spirit, but on much less solid grounds, was thereafter extended to the study of ancient Indian mythology, religion and philosophy. At the hands of the post-Boppian adepts of the comparative study, extending it outside the linguistic field, the *R̥g-veda* paid the penalty for being the oldest literary document in the Āryan world. It was studied as an Āryan, not as an Indian document, and its fundamentally Indian character was often entirely lost sight of (and recently even denied!). The figures and stories of Vedic deities were studied and analysed from peculiar angles determined by the conscious or unconscious quest of what light they could throw on the parallel figures of the Homeric and Hesiodic pantheon, with the result that certain aspects were over-

emphasised, while others were slurred over or deliberately put aside as obscure, or as meaningless verbiage. Vedic philosophy fared even worse, for it was studied, interpreted, and judged by the standards of the philosophy of the Pre-Socratics and of Plato—even outside the circle of the well-meaning enthusiasts of the Upaniṣads who appraised the latter's merits on the strength of the supposed anticipation in them of doubtful Kantian tenets. Such arbitrary and *a priori* equations with differently evolved foreign theories unavoidably vitiated the Western approach to ancient Indian thinking. They made this approach, if anything, far more uncritical than the traditional approach of the indigenous schools; they led it, through its own preconceived notions, into the insoluble conundrums that have been the crux of Western Indology for several decades and finally culminating in the weary sceptic resignation of so many prominent scholars to their ultimate failure to understand the ways of Indian thought—such as, to quote one outstanding example, the presumed irreconcilability of the negation of an immortal individual personality with the doctrine of *karma* and *sāṃsāra*.

This visualising of the whole background picture out of its natural focus has been even far more detrimental than the one-sided limitation of the scope of research. That mediate approach had its deleterious effects also on our studies, because, as you know, the Western "critical", or in this regard pseudo-critical, method was research as opposed to the Eastern "dogmatic" method—was adopted in our University curricula: where, to mention one peculiar feature, the classification of Vedic matters into religion or mythology and philosophy still persists; and at best, the latter is supposed to have grown in its incipient phase out of the former, and undeveloped thinking is freely imputed to highly speculative texts in which these categories appear to overlap. The result has been that ancient Indian philosophy is still surveyed, in some of our textbooks, under the headings of questions or problems whose posting in this peculiar fashion was

quite extraneous to the ancient Indian thinker; inevitably, the answers gleaned with difficulty from heterogeneous sources and from random quotations irrespective of their contexts, are sometimes awry and twisted, often uncertain, and even contradictory. Such a needlessly blurred picture of ancient Indian thinking serves as introduction to our students, before they have a chance to start out on independent inquiry. Such viewpoints still largely dominate the examination questions.

But, in the last pre-war decades, Western Indological researchers themselves became increasingly aware that the hidebound approach through their familiar thought-categories had led them to a blind alley where thorough understanding of the actual issues involved in the subject must remain finally unattainable. And while some, yet guided by the notion that external terms of comparison are indispensable, turned for inspiration to the recent discoveries of early cultural connections with the Middle East, courageous attempts have not been wanting to discard all outside comparative media and to base a new method of research on the awareness that the only adequate approach is from within, that the researcher's standpoint in positing his problem must coincide with the point of view from which it was originally posited, that the texts themselves contain their own complete problemology as well as the complete series of solutions, and the latter's complete history: that the critical researcher's task consists in bringing these forth in the historical sequence from the total conglomeration of pertinent texts rather than in ransacking them for random replies to subjectively posited questions. Initially decried as an attempt at the impossible—how indeed was a modern mind to transplant itself into mental surroundings to immensely distant in time and quality—the first results of this endeavour proved convincing, and met with wide recognition in the last pre-war years, as it became evident that the texts, when allowed to speak for themselves to the fullest extent, provided exhaustive and unequivocal replies to the problems that were

consistently mirrored in them. And it is only in the nature of things that such an intrinsic method of analysis relying solely on the abundant data of the relevant texts and on internal comparison should be the chosen method of the latter-day direct heirs of ancient culture, and handled by them with greater ease and assurance than methods nurtured on foreign elements of outlook. The natural hurdle in their path of unmediated approach would be rather that of traditional notions based on later-evolved forms of the conceptions met with in the ancient texts. But as fixed obstacles of mental habit these would confront only the full-blown orthodox pandits than lay scholars of the younger generation. In practice, one rarely, if ever, encounters, a young scholar handicapped in his outlook on the subject of his study by the attachment to traditional interpretation through the medium of either religious dogma or scholastic tenet. However convinced of the latter's truth, *qua* interpretations, he finds them critically unsatisfactory, but as a rule finds that the lenses of Western categories provide no better clarity. He is ready and eager to steer a new course. Whichever the type of his initial training, Westernised University curriculum or Vedic school, the renowned mental flexibility of the Indian scholar leaves him fully capable of shedding all crutches of mediated comprehension, fully adaptable to investing himself with a mode of vision distant from, yet ultimately cogeneric with, his own. And this is the only rational course if we want to develop and perpetuate a school of Indological research, properly critical and historical, properly our own, and universally valid. It ought to co-exist side by side with our traditional schools. These have not outlived their *raison d'etre* nor will they ever outlive it, serving as they do a purpose far exceeding the finite pursuits of mere research. Our ancient schools of "knowledge" maintain a separate and unassailable position, preserve the mastery of their domain in their own right: they are concerned with the attainment of absolute transcendental truth and of the spiritual perfection derived therefrom, not with the study of the shape of religious

and philosophical thought perceivable in the literal meaning of the documents. The latter only is the domain of objective research, which pursues no further end outside the ascertainment of historical facts. However distinct in its pursuit, the newly orientated school of critical research will also—and by virtue of this very distinctness of its methods from those of the schools of transcendental knowledge—fulfil a task furthering the latter's mission in the world at large. They are the keepers of the traditions which have exercised spiritual leadership in a great part of the world for many centuries in the past. The loss of this leadership in recent centuries has been mainly due to the waning of the understanding at large of the issues involved, till at last broad contacts of those teachings with unprepared foreign circles meant to them not much more than exotically attractive combinations of impressive abstractions. The scholar's hybrid interpreting through the medium of Western notions was not conducive to better understanding in the popularising compendia, which fostered only short-lived movements of fashion with pretensions to Indian connections more in name than in essence. The introduction of intrinsic understanding by Indian scholarship in international Indological research—the establishment of the intellectual leadership of India in the philological and historical study of the documents—will do much to restore the spiritual leadership of Indian ideas, of which the world stands in great need.

But mere intellectual leadership in the approach is not all. Ours is a time for leadership in attainment. What we need is a comprehensive *History of Ancient Indian Thought*, based exclusively on its original documents, but fully based on complete evidence obtainable from all its documents—a work to supersede the antiquated Western "Handbooks" (in which Indian conceptions are a *priori* functionally subordinated to classical "Indo-Aryan" viewpoints), and which, at the same time, would give us one vast survey cohering in all its parts, a monumental standard work

of the insight of our age, fully acquainted with its magnificent roots in the remotest past, fully aware of its historical relations with the same. This doubtless is an immense and complex task, a task for a whole generation of Indologists, but also one capable of welding a whole generation in a communion effort.

Is such an enterprise, not merely pathfinding, not merely convincing on principle and satisfactory in the methodological outline, but actually covering the whole vast field of evidence and problems which it is meant to encompass—Is it at all practicable without the time-honoured recourse to outer terms of reference, that has provided pre-formed patterns of interpretation? To the unprejudiced observer, this question is readily answerable by the very nature of the material at our disposal. The answer is that completeness and exhaustiveness are attainable to an incomparably larger extent than in regard to the would-be terms of reference in ancient Western thought. In fact, whereas the oldest philosophical literature of the latter is preserved only in fragments, we have the advantage of a vast, homogeneous, and to most purposes, complete bulk of literature preserved intact to our times, in a multiplicity of formulations, and the original versions can be isolated and picked out beyond a doubt. The many parallel texts illustrate each other; the often palpable elaboration of the notions and terminology of one group of texts in another group, and so on, allows us to trace in all its stages the evolution of a doctrine. There is no need for an outside commentary, where the abundant complex of all the contexts of a notion, for the most part clearly dated—linguistically and otherwise—in relation to each other, provides a running commentary on its basic meaning and its subsequent implications.

But to cover in this fashion a field of such dimensions, individual effort is patently insufficient. Even in a lifetime of devoted and strenuous work, an isolated scholar can at best cover a field circumscribed to single aspects, periods and problems—when his investigation is conducted on an entirely new basis, and the basis

itself has to be worked out by preliminary investigation. When we are faced with the postulated to cover so vast a field in a uniform manner, doing justice to the whole range of its aspects, not in a conglomerate of loosely connected studies, but in one well-knit survey whose every part is organically related to every other and closely integrated in the whole: this is where the need of concerted teamwork becomes imperative. But this is also where such teamwork is realisable, if anywhere—the unity of method providing spontaneously the common platform, the common denominator for the variety of contributions.

As hinted already, this enterprise requires two main stages of execution. In the first place, the groundwork must be made sure of, unequivocally and without any omissions. The groundwork is obviously the meaning, and the development of meanings, of the terminology employed in the texts. Terminology in the widest sense of the ideological implications of each work—including all names of entities, personal as well as impersonal, all qualifications, all verbal and nominal designations of concepts, activities and types of relationship. On closer scrutiny, it will be seen that in speculative philosophy all such terms are "technical," inasmuch as the import of each term far exceeds the mere word-import gleaned from a few self-explanatory phrases in purely narrative contexts and adopted as basic by the dictionaries. The mechanical attribution of such meanings to the same terms met with highly speculative contexts is responsible partly for the supposed obscurity of the latter and partly for the superficial translating and interpreting that bring only vague approximations to the underlying sense at best, but which often go off at a tangent. The actual import of a term in a given context can be brought out only by collateral examination of all cognate contexts where it occurs; the development of its meaning from an original import can be ascertained only by comparison with earlier texts.

In fact, we frequently notice a peculiar technique of crystallisation, whereby a single word or a brief phrase is used to denote

a situation depicted or a train of thought elaborated in another context presumed to be known to the audience. In such wise, technical terms grow by a process of accretion and condensation of thought-material. In the usually practised course of treating each text isolatedly, such a word would be (and in fact mostly is) taken in the critic's stride as hardly significant, or, if the closer context suggests no acceptable meaning, it is haphazardly rendered with an accompanying query-mark in brackets—while actually it holds the key of the whole composite implication of the text. Since often such a crystallised term is employed in conjunction with one or more such terms to denote modifications or associations of previously established concepts, the resulting complex idea, however definite and pregnant with sense, is a book with seven seals to the *ad hoc* translator unprovided with the series of background references. As a guarantee of full understanding, it is therefore indispensable to possess in every case all the links of the chain.

By such standards, the detailed study of each term and its history is bound to assume the dimensions of a monograph. The quintessence of the results arrived at would be summarised in a short article, and the total number of such articles would constitute an *Encyclopaedia of Technical Terms and Notions in Ancient Indian Thought*—the groundwork and first stage of our enterprise. Side by side with its editorial progress, the monographs would be published in *extenso*, providing a detailed corollary.

Under the conditions prevailing in large sets of homogeneous literature such as the *Rg-veda*, where each notion has undergone manifold ramifications in a century-long process of elaboration by a wide circle of authors, ultimate certainty of not having overlooked any connections is hardly attainable to single researchers, for all the thoroughness of their work. The advantage of teamwork lies not only in the mechanical subdivision of labour, but also in the system of mutual checking and supplementing of results. This system would operate at periodical meetings of the editorial body,

where collaborators would submit personally or in writing their observations, and additional suggestions to previously circulated drafts or articles. The minutes of the ensuing discussions would be published in a quarterly bulletin, thereby eliciting a still larger contribution of views. Whenever after thorough discussion a justified divergence of conclusions still persists, the alternative results with their references would be incorporated in the final text laid down in the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary*. This system would not actually tamper with the liberty and originality of the individual scholar's research work as this will be published in its full unmodified form in the separate monograph.

As resulting from the comprehensive study of all the occurrences and contexts of a technical term, we shall obtain not one fixed meaning, but the development of a sequence of meanings, and the historical train of this development. This line, clearly perceptible even in texts approximately coeval, more marked between those separated by a longer interval of time, will reveal its most striking angles in the transition between two subsequent eras of thought: at the same time, it will reveal the internal continuity. To take an instance: the thought of the Upaniṣads is mostly surveyed as a separate unit, with some prefatory remarks at best as to some of their notions being partly anticipated in the *Sūktas*. Terminological inquiry will show that almost all their dominant ideo-terms in fact pre-exist in the *Sūktas* in different shapes, and will thus reveal the trends of unbroken and consistent evolution. It will equally disclose that the Upaniṣads cannot be treated on a single level as a unit, but as a succession of units of thought on different temporal levels, much like the temporal stratification of the *Sūktas*, but only more marked. The same relation of continuity and gradual diversification will apply to the younger documents of early medieval Hindu thought, and eventually lead on to the dogmatised systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy and religion, as well as to the heterodox systems such as Buddhism and Jainism.

Each monographic enquiry into the origin and history of an ideo-term will thus provide a firm thread to the composite pattern reconstituting and visualising the continuity of Indian thought from Vedic to modern times. It will triumphantly vindicate the indigenous tenet, complacently done away with by old-fashioned Western criticism, that the *Rg-veda* is a book of Hindu thought not of course in the unhistorical sense of timeless identity, but in the sense of evolutionary continuity.

After completion of the solid encompassing groundwork in the Encyclopaedia—thus practically containing, in analytical form, all the elements of the future 'constructure'—the great synthesis can then be effectually taken in hand: the great *History of Ancient Indian Thought*, cumulatively portrayed by a large, concerted team of experts.

If such a monumental enterprise is to be achieved not only by the labour but also as the legitimate fruition of the work of the present generation of Indologists—if it is to be complete within, let us say, 10 years—the work cannot be confined to a more or less limited group of scholars: all the available talent must be enlisted for the purpose. There is every reason why we should welcome the collaboration of foreign scholars, offering them full and equal opportunities of work. It is the surest way of popularising and furthering in Europe the new outlook on Indological matters which we intend to establish throughout, and to consolidate India's leadership in major enterprises in Indology. We can expect to find suitable response since, as I have already remarked, modern Indological research in the West has, in its last halcyon days before the war, given evidence of turning away from its obsolete methods of "Western" persuasion and awakening to the need of reorientation towards intrinsicness of enquiry—the same need which to us defines the criterion of truly adequate, truly critical and historical research, so that the progressive elements of Western scholarship are bound to meet us on common ground, which is at last genuinely Indian ground.

There will be further advantage to reap from such international co-operation. While securing all the best forces for the success of our *opus magnum*, answering our first object, this universalistic policy will resuscitate, in the countries of the collaborating foreign scholars, the awareness of the present-day importance and vitality of Indological studies, thus eventually furthering the second object modern India is called upon to fulfil in this line—reconstruction and revivification of Indology at large.

The co-ordinating organisation which we shall constitute for the needs of our cumulative editorial enterprise will also render service to the advancement of independent individual research work. Co-ordination is a labour-saving device, favouring celerity, width and fruitfulness of results. Much valuable work is being pursued unknown to larger circles interested in the relevant line of research, until the results of this work are, in due but late course, published (and even then they sometimes escape general notice). Publication is slow and, except for papers short enough to be printed in journals, it is fraught with difficulties. At times, nearly a decade elapses between the writing of an extensive study and its reaching the interested readers. Apart from such communication through belatedly printed pages, only periodical, mostly *biennial*, learned *conferences* provide brief and scanty opportunities for exchanges of views and mutual information on objects of research and provisional results, between individual scholars. Lectures in learned societies are more and more expected to obey the tendency towards popularity and accessibility to a general public. A lecturer deliberately addressing himself to fellow specialists would be looked upon as a cryptic crank and his failure inferred from the scarcity of his audience. Thus, the prevailing condition is at worst total absence of, or at best serious lack of continuity in, communications between scholars working on cognate subjects, often on complementary aspects of the same subject. Much wasteful duplication is the result, and precious time and energy are lost that could be used for reaching a further

stage. A co-ordinating body of the kind suggested will enable all the research workers on common Indological subjects to give and receive, severally, current information on the work pursued by everyone of them. Information would be informally supplied in connection with the meetings, personally or by correspondence, and diffused through the Bulletin—exactly the amount of information that each worker would be disposed to volunteer at the provisional, more or less advanced, or final stage of his research; yet in every case sufficient to facilitate and bring about the desired contacts. ... When I say all scholars I mean *all*: from these facilities of co-ordination, no one should be excluded, and it will actually fulfil its scope only if everyone on principle is included. In other words, the co-ordinating information service must be more even than all-Indian: Indian in its centre: in its radius universal.

So far about the objects to be achieved in and for the present generation. Our third main object is to ensure the survival and encourage the development in the coming generation of Indological studies at large. The danger of their disappearance tomorrow is a problem vitally to be solved only today. The number of chairs at European universities which are still filled has appallingly diminished and the little extant cohort keeps rapidly dwindling. In proportion, the primary incentive for taking up these studies is reduced; young men and women joining the universities have less and less opportunity to hear about our culture. Where such chances still exist, the enthusiastic beginner is deprived of the secondary and durable incentive to persevere—of the hope to make good, to complete his studies and specialised training, to achieve a scholarly career. Only two of the countries once prominent in these studies still have any libraries left—everywhere else the wreckage is total or nearly so. The incipient scholar's expectation of crowning the period of his apprenticeship in India, or to lay here the foundations of his life's work is now an unattainable mirage to the students of the thoroughly impoverished countries of Europe. It may be that States and various

national and private foundations will institute scholarships for this purpose when our aforementioned aim is attained and the contemporary importance of Indian studies is realised in these countries. But this will give the requisite chance only to the students who will start after a decade or thereabouts. Our purpose is therefore to bridge this dangerous gap. We want the promising adept student of the present generation to be able to study Indian culture with the guidance of modern, genuinely Indian methods, and possibly to study it in India, in direct touch with the monuments of this culture, with the original documentary evidence, in daily inspiring intercourse with our outstanding pandits and scholars, to imbue themselves with the Sanskrit language and the living tradition of indigenous scholarship; and this will produce in record time a crop of sound research work and a vigorous vanguard of up-to-date Indological learning in the West, making up with a vengeance for the present decline.

With this and the cognate purposes in view, I have made a start by depositing with the Imperial Bank of India, Delhi, a sum of Rs.25,000, which may be called the C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Indological Scholarship Endowment, and will constitute the nucleus of a general Fund for the above purposes which, it is hoped, will soon grow to appropriate dimensions. Our Institute with its extended co-ordinating activities will be an efficient organ for the selection of candidates, for the guidance of their efforts, and for checking up their progress.

THE COSMIC PROCESS*
(in the light of Śrīmad-Bhāgavata)

T. P. Ramachandran

Part II

The Four Yugas

1. Moral regress in the course of the yugas

In the first part of this article, published earlier, we noted that a thousand *catur-yuga* cycles must pass before a *naimittika-pralaya* could occur. Now we shall devote special attention to the *catur-yuga*. A *catur-yuga* is said to last for 43,20,000 years in the human time-scale. The duration of each *yuga* diminishes as the cycle turns. *Kṛta-yuga* takes the longest period—17,28,000 years. *Tretā-yuga* lasts for 12,96,000 years, and *dvāpara* for 8,44,000 years. *Kali-yuga* is the shortest of the four, covering 4,52,000 years. Thus, *kṛta-yuga* occupies 40% of the total period of a *catur-yuga*, *tretā-yuga* 30%, and *dvāpara-yuga* approximately 20%. *Kali-yuga* comes only to 10% approximately of the whole

* Continued from the previous Number.

period. The diminishing duration of the yugas stands for a corresponding decline in the moral standards of the people who live in the respective yugas. Physical conditions also decline, because even the physical well-being of a people ultimately depends on their moral outlook and practice. The fact that the duration of each *yuga* diminishes correspondingly to the deterioration in the moral and physical life of a people may itself be described as an act of divine grace. The increasing degree of suffering in each *yuga* is sufficiently balanced, we may say, by the decrease in the period of the *yuga*. We shall now examine the principle behind the moral regress in the four yugas.

Wealth (*artha*) and worldly pleasure (*kāma*) are every individual's personal ends. It is natural for any human being to pursue them. But, since we are inevitably members of a society, we cannot pursue them without considering the identical interests of others. This is morality at its unavoidable minimum. When wealth and pleasure are sought by individuals without respect for the rights of others also to those very ends, social order breaks up, and with it the personal ends of individuals also suffer. Thus, even for the unhindered pursuit of *artha* and *kāma*, there is need for the observance of *dharma*. That is why, in the traditional scheme of *puruṣārthas*, *artha* and *kāma* are subordinated to and circumscribed by *dharma*. The Lord of the *Gītā* eulogizes this condition by identifying himself with that *kāma* which is not opposed to *dharma*.¹ (*Artha* is not mentioned here because it is only a means to *kāma*, which is an end in itself.) The prescription of regulating *artha* and *kāma* by *dharma* is strictly followed only in *kṛta-yuga*. With every succeeding *yuga*, the rule is relaxed, and *artha* and *kāma* become virtually independent values by the time of *kali-yuga*. Corresponding to the ascendance of *artha* and *kāma*, the importance of *dharma* and *mokṣa*, which are spiritual values, wanes with the passage of the yugas.

Dharma is not merely a regulator of *artha* and *kāma*; it has its own importance as an essential means to *mokṣa*, which is the

highest goal for man. However, with the march of the yugas, *mokṣa* comes to be nearly forgotten by most people, and along with it the application of *dharma* and other spiritual disciplines for the attainment of *mokṣa* also comes to be sidelined by many. Thus, the progression of the yugas stands for the ascendance of material values (*artha* and *kāma*) and the corresponding decline of spiritual values (*dharma* and *mokṣa*). To the world-infatuated, such a change may be "progress." But to the genuine seekers of *mokṣa*, the march of the yugas is "regress." They measure the state of values prevalent in society in terms of *dharma*. There is a necessary inverse relation between material progress and moral regress. This principle applies to both individuals and societies. The present age stands testimony to the depths to which the moral sense of man could fall when he contracts a craze for material development. The *Bhāgavata* clearly outlines the state of the world as the yugas succeed one another. We shall now cite and paraphrase the relevant verses, which are from the third Adhyāya of the twelfth Skandha.

In the first set of verses which we shall cite, the four yugas are differentiated in terms of *dharma*.

कृते प्रवर्तते धर्मः
 चतुष्पात्तत् जनैर्धृतः ।
 सत्यं दया तपो दानं
 इति पादा विभोर्नृप ॥

Dharma has four limbs, i.e. aspects, namely truth, compassion, austerity (self-denial), and charity. During the *krta-yuga*, people take to their respective duties with dedication. (18)

सन्तुष्टाः करुणा मैत्राः
 शान्ता दान्ताः तितिक्षवः ।
 आत्मारामाः समदृशः
 प्रायशः श्रमणा जनाः ॥

The people of this period are happy and kind. They are peaceful and observe friendship towards all. They are self-controlled and forbearing. Most of them are ascetics, who are immersed in contemplating the Ātman and who look upon all others with an equal eye. (19)

त्रेतायां धर्मपादानां
तुर्यांशो हीयते शनैः ।
अधर्मपादैः अनृतहिंसा -
असन्तोषविग्रहैः ॥

Like *dharma*, *adharma* also has four limbs—untruth, cruelty, discontent (avarice), and strife. In *tretā-yuga*, by the impact of these forces, the limbs of *dharma* (i.e. the virtues) gradually come down by a quarter of what they were. (20)

तदा क्रिया तपोनिष्ठा
नातिहिंसा न लम्पटाः ।
त्रैवर्गिकाः त्रयीवृद्धाः
वर्णाः ब्रह्मोत्तरा नृप ॥

During the *tretā-yuga*, the chief spiritual practices are austerity and the rituals taught in the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Veda. People are free from extreme violence and covetousness. They pursue *artha* and *kāma* only as controlled by *dharma*. Generally, people are well-versed in the three Vedas. During this *yuga*, the leadership and guidance of the priestly class remains unaffected. (21)

तपस्सत्यदयादानेषु
अर्धं हसतिद्वापरे ।
हिंसातुष्टयनृतद्वेषैः
धर्मस्याधर्मलक्षणैः ॥

In *dvāpara-yuga*, violence, dissatisfaction, falsehood, and hatred—these four qualities of *adharma* advance. By their impact,

the four qualities of *dharma*, viz. austerity, truth, kindness, and charity, come down by half. (22)

यशस्विनो महाशालाः
स्वाध्यायाध्ययने रताः ।
आढ्याः कृदुम्बिनो हृष्टाः
वर्णाः क्षत्रद्विजोत्तराः ॥

The people of *dvāpara-yuga* will be renowned as learners and teachers of the Veda. They will be great house-holders; their families will be large; and, generally, they will be rich and joyous. During this period, both the priestly and the princely classes will lead society. (23)

कलौ तु धर्महेतूनां
तुयांशोऽधर्महेतुभिः ।
एधमानैः क्षीयमाणो
ह्यन्ते सोऽपि विनङ्क्ष्यति ॥

In *kali-yuga*, the qualities of *adharma* advance very much. As a result, the qualities of *dharma* weaken and only a quarter of them remain. By the end of *kali-yuga*, even this last quarter disappears. (24)

तस्मिन् लुब्धा दुराचारा
निर्दयाः शुष्कवैरिणः ।
दुर्भगा भूरितर्षाश्च
शूद्रदाशोत्तराः प्रजाः ॥

In *kali-yuga*, the people will be avaricious, vicious, and hard-hearted. They will offend and hate each other. They will be ill-tempered and full of desires. During this period, sections other than priests and princes will be obliged to lead society. (25) The

Bhāgavata says elsewhere that in *kali-yuga*, the priestly and princely classes will lose their original moral qualities—the implication being that they will fail to guide and protect society.²

Now we shall present another set of verses, also from the same section of the *Bhāgavata*, viz. XII, 3. Moral conduct is the expression of character. As a person is, so he behaves. Traditionally, character is assessed in terms of the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. In Indian philosophical schools, the terms are applied both to physical objects and to mental dispositions. In both cases, they are either taken as constituents or as qualities. We need not enter into these details. In any case, the terms convey three definite sets of ideas. *Sattva* stands for whatever is fine, pure, noble, peaceful, pleasing, and so on. *Rajas* brings up the ideas of strength, vigour, action, pain, struggle, and so on. And *tamas* represents darkness, dullness, heaviness, non-discrimination, and so on. In the set of verses cited below, the *Bhāgavata* shows that, as the world passes from *kṛta-yuga* to *kali-yuga*, there is a clear decline in the character of humanity from the predominance of *sattva* to that of *tamas* through a stage in which *rajas* predominates.

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति
दृश्यन्ते पुरुषे गुणाः ।
कालसंचोदितास्ते वै
परिवर्तन्त आत्मनि ॥

All living beings are endowed with three *guṇas*, viz. *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Under the influence of passing time, their representation changes in the body, vital breath, and mind of a living being. (26)

प्रभवन्ति यदा सत्त्वे
मनोबुद्धीन्द्रियाणि च ।
तदा कृतयुगं विद्यात्
ज्ञाने तपसि यद् रुचिः ॥

When the mind, intellect, and senses function with *sattva* as the ruling *guṇa*, we must understand that it is *kṛta-yuga*. During this period (when *sattva* predominates), people will like knowledge and austerity more than anything else. (27)

यदा धर्मार्थकामेषु
भक्तिर्भवति देहिनाम् ।
तदा त्रेता रजोवृत्तिः
इति जानीहि बुद्धिमन् ॥

When men's tastes and activities begin to turn round the first three *puruṣārthas*, viz. *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*, which means enjoyment in this world and the next, we have to understand that their minds, bodies, and senses function with *rajas* as the predominant *guṇa*. That is the period of *tretā-yuga*. (28)

यदा लोभः त्वसन्तोषो
मानो दम्भोऽथ मत्सरः ।
कर्मणां चापि काम्यानां
द्वापरं तद् रजस्तमः ॥

When attitudes like greed, discontent, pride, deceit, and jealousy rule the roost, and when men, with great zeal and desire, engage in activities motivated by personal ends, it is *dvāpara-yuga*. The term *dvāpara* itself means a mixture of *rajas* and *tamas* among *guṇas*. (29)

यदा मायानृतं तन्द्रा
निद्रा हिंसा विषादनम् ।
शोको मोहो भयं दैन्यं
स कलिस्तामसः स्मृतः ॥

Deceit and falsehood, lassitude and torpor, cruelty and despair, sorrow and infatuation, fear and meekness—when these are

ascendant, then it is clear that it is *kali-yuga*, in which the mind, body, and senses are predominated by *tamas*. (30)

2. *Morality in kali-yuga*

The assessment made by ancient seers about the nature of the four yugas is based on their supernatural power (*siddhi*) of visualizing the future. It cannot be easily set aside just because we, worldly people, lack the depth of their vision. But if we need corroborative evidence for the veracity of their predictions, we have only to look around and see how the world is passing during the present period, which belongs to a *kali-yuga*. Following tradition, we shall assess the situation in terms of morality.

Morality involves respect for other human beings, regarding them as ends in themselves like ourselves. It is this respect that sustains society. Although this principle is recognized by the moderns, social conditions have so developed as to undermine it in several ways. Science has paved the way for the manufacture of more and more powerful weapons of destruction. Nations are held back from open war purely by fear of self-destruction. But wars could erupt even by accident, miscalculation or suspicion. An alternative to open war that has been invented is subtle, cowardly terrorism—insidious in the extreme and hard to foresee or identify. Even small groups can hold a whole country to ransom. Further, whether in war or in terrorism, the very nature of these forms of violence is such that no distinction is or can be made between combatants and non-combatants, between civil and military personnel. Civil society, being soft target, is easily vulnerable. Civilians are killed by terrorists just to create scare or to wreck vengeance against an authority.

Apart from open violence to human life and property, there are also subtle forms of exploitation of the human mind. Although democratic governance is desired by many, if a country falls under dictatorship, it becomes extremely difficult to oust it, as the tools of authority and control in the hands of dictators have become

extremely sophisticated and invasive, thanks to technology. Corruption at all levels of public life as means of buying favours, seductive commercial propaganda for promotion of all sorts of products, good, bad, and indifferent, tall promises and short-lived populist programmes by political leaders and parties to win public support—all these are some of the many forms of modern psychological exploitation.

We spoke of nations and communities. Even at the individual level, moral sensitivity has eroded. Family values are breaking up. Relatives become cold and formal to one another or just fall apart by compulsions of livelihood in far-off places. Old, indigent parents are regarded as burden and shoved to homes for the aged. The family circle is confined to husband, wife, and children. Former luxuries have become present wants; and wants have multiplied so much that both parents are obliged to earn. When both parents go out for work, young children are denied the love and care which parents alone could give. The inevitable consequence is that the psychology of children becomes morbid. They lose their innocence and become potential anti-socials. For want of space, people in urban areas are obliged to live in crowded apartments. But mere physical proximity has nothing to do with mental affinity. Neighbours have neither inclination nor time for acquaintance with one another, let alone cooperation. Television has added to lack of social contact.

Love of easy money and lowly enjoyment has led to innumerable forms of crime. The sense of shame has disappeared. In former times, fear of God held most people back from misconduct. But secularism, which has become hardly different from atheism, has eroded even this inhibition. At the other extreme, religious faith has become perverted into fanaticism. And plain fanatics have acquired the respectable name of "fundamentalists." If one goes into the fundamentals of any religion, one can find nothing but the best of human values—kindliness, self-sacrifice, love, and charity—sufficient for peace and concord with other religions.

A so-called fundamentalist knows nothing of the fundamentals of his own religion. He runs away with some of its superficials (its customs, symbols, and rituals), which necessarily vary from the superficials of other religions, tears them out of context, and finds room for conflict with others.

We so far spoke of respect for other human beings as a pre-supposition of moral life. Morality involves also respect for the non-human world, or nature, which comprises other living beings and the physical world. Human society has both rights and duties. The realm of nature has no duties, but it has rights which man has the duty to protect. We do need nature to sustain our lives—to give us air, water, food, and shelter. We are welcome to use nature's resources, but we should do this with due respect for the independence of nature, regarding nature as God's creation or manifestation. Such an attitude was maintained by pre-modern societies. So long as nature's resources were utilized by manual effort or even by natural virgin power, such as wind and water-current, the rate of utilization perfectly matched nature's slow rate of regeneration. In fact, it was utilization, not exploitation, that prevailed. But ever since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the use of artificially generated power (steam, oil combustion, and electricity), nature came to be exploited at systematically higher and higher rates. The consequence is that nature's life-sustaining resources are dwindling at a fast pace, and even the existing resources are getting polluted.

Pollution is usually caused by waste products resulting from production and consumption of various goods. The waste products are in the form of either gases, liquids or solids or mixtures of these forms. And they are discharged into one or other medium of nature—the atmosphere, water bodies or the soil. If they have affinity with the medium, there is a chance of their being absorbed in course of time. But most of the waste products of modern development are inimical to nature. Hence they poison the medium into which they are thrown and kill its vital properties.

The combined result of man's relentless exploitation and pollution of nature is that nature reacts in unprecedented, adverse ways. It is as though nature takes "revenge" on man. Climate change, rise of sea level, melting of polar ice-caps, drifting of glaciers, puncture of the ozone layer, frequent earthquakes, disruption of monsoon patterns, advance of deserts, loss of bio-diversity and specific species, mutation of germs and emergence of new types of diseases—these are some forms of nature's retributive reaction.

The world's population is steadily rising in spite of loud talk of zero growth. This by itself is a heavy demand on nature. On top of this, the modern life-style is becoming more and more sophisticated and highly consumptive of precious resources. These trends are eating into nature's reserves. Take for example water. Though three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered by water, only a portion of it is fresh water for drinking and irrigation. Rivers, which are the main sources of fresh water, have become a major contention among nations and even among regions within them. Excessive drawal of ground-water exhausts the aquifers. If rain also fails, the misery mounts.

In recent times, there is increasing awareness of the dangers to man arising from mindless use and abuse of nature, and efforts are being made to address them. But whatever is being attempted is only to *contain* the dangers, and not to eliminate them. Honestly, the threat to nature and man the modern age is posing can be removed completely only if the entire process of technology-based development is reversed. But such a course is unthinkable. We have got so much used to and involved in the flourish and fever of development that it is impossible for any nation or community to go back to the simple living of the past. We can only tinker with the ill-effects of development, which will sweep on till the earth is impoverished. Individuals and small groups realize this prospect and despair of future life on earth. But they are helpless to stop society. This is the reason why doomsday cults emerge

round the world. They honestly believe that the world's end is near and, losing their minds, commit mass suicide or even mass killing.

This age of technology belongs to *kali-yuga*. And the present *kali-yuga* is only in its first quarter. It has to grind through three more quarters till the present cycle of *catur-yuga* is complete to give the world a rebirth into the next *kr̥ta-yuga*. Till then, humanity has to endure the relentless march of *kali* with its deepening crises. It is remarkable that our ancient scriptures should express clear premonitions of the emerging scene in our era. It only shows that in general terms every *catur-yuga* and even every *pralaya* cycle would be of the same nature as previous ones; only the details may vary. The moral depravity and material deceptivity of our age, which are open to observation, perfectly fit into the account of *kali-yuga* given by our sages. If politicians and technocrats are entitled to project their so-called "visions" of material development, there is nothing wrong in our sages, who are endowed with spiritual powers, outlining the course of events in the universe from age to age. To those who realize the true nature of *kali* and despair of its inevitable doom, the Hindu scriptures offer the comforting assurance of a rebirth for the world by divine intervention. Such an intervention comes through Kalki, the tenth incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. He destroys all evil forces, chastens the world, and restores it to the moral status it enjoyed in *kr̥ta-yuga*. We shall now cite and paraphrase the verses from the *Bhāgavata* which bear on *kali-yuga* and Kalki's *avatāra*. The verses are in two sets.

Verses from Adhyāya 1 of Skandha XII:-

तुल्यकाला इमे राजन्
 म्लेच्छप्रायाश्च भूभृतः ।
 एतेऽधर्मानृतपराः
 फल्गुदास्तीव्रतमन्यवः ॥

As *kali-yuga* advances, rulers will be the first to fall from *dharma*. Losing faith in the Veda, they will become almost *mlecchas*.³ Ruling over different territories at the same time, they will solely be devoted to *adharma*. They will practise falsehood; they will be niggardly in giving charity; and they will be given to extreme presumption. (40)

स्त्रीबालगोद्विजघ्नाश्च
 परदारधनादृताः ।
 उदितास्तमितप्राया
 अल्पसत्त्वाल्पकायुषः ॥

These wicked people will not stop at killing even women, children, cows, and *brāhmaṇas*. They will be ready to appropriate the women and property of others. They will easily rise to power and easily fall too. These men of little *sattva* quality will have only short lives. (41)

असंस्कृताः क्रियाहीनाः
 राजसा तमसाऽऽवृताः ।
 प्रजास्ते भक्षयिष्यन्ति
 म्लेच्छा राजन्यरूपिणः ॥

They will be devoid of good breeding; they will not observe their duties. Blinded by *rajas* and *tamas*, and posing as kings, these *mlecchas* will loot and drink the blood of their own people. (42)

तन्नाथास्ते जनपदाः
 तच्छीलाचारादिनः ।
 अन्योन्यतो राजभिश्च
 क्षयं यास्यन्ति पीडिताः ॥

Following the example of their rulers, the people also will cultivate the same disposition, conduct, and speech. The rulers, for their part, will torment and destroy each other. (43)

Verses from Adhyāya 2 of Skandha XII:-

ततश्चानुदिनं धर्मः
 सत्यं शौचं क्षमा दया ।
 कालेन बलिना राजन्
 नङ्क्ष्यत्यायुर्बलं स्मृतिः ॥

Time is powerful. As the fierce *kali-yuga* advances, great moral virtues like truth, purity, forbearance, and compassion as well as other qualities like longevity, strength, and memory will disappear. (1)

अनावृष्ट्या विनङ्क्ष्यन्ति
 दुर्भिक्षकरपीडिताः ।
 शीतवातातपप्रावृड्
 हिमैरन्योन्यतः प्रजाः ॥

Rains will fail, and famines will recur. Mere hand to mouth existence will result. Or by cold, storm, heat, flood, and frost, and also by conflict among themselves, people will suffer and perish. (10)

इत्थं कलौ गतप्राये
 जने तु खरधर्मिणि ।
 धर्मत्राणाय सत्त्वेन
 भगवानवतरिष्यति ॥

As *kali-yuga* grinds on in this manner, people will become hard-hearted. It is then that God incarnates himself (as Kalki) to restore *dharma* by his own *sattva*. (16)

चराचरगुरोर्विष्णोः
 ईश्वरस्याखिलात्मनः ।
 धर्मत्राणाय साधूनां
 जन्म कर्मापनुत्तये ॥

Bhagavān Viṣṇu is both the overlord and the indweller of all beings, moving and non-moving. He is also the supreme guide of all beings. To protect the *dharma* of virtuous people, and to release them from the bondage of *karma*, which involves them in the cycle of births and deaths, (he incarnates himself on earth as Kalki). (17)

अथ तेषां भविष्यन्ति
 मनांसि विशदानि वै ।
 वासुदेवाङ्गरागाति-
 पुण्यगन्धानिलस्पृशाम् ।
 पौरजानपदानां वै
 हतेष्वखिलदस्युषु ॥

At the destruction of evil forces (by Kalki), common people in town and country will feel chastened at heart. This is because the atmosphere, which engulfs all life, having been purified by the touch of Lord Kalki, enables these people to feel the holy presence of the Lord. (21)

यदावतीर्णो भगवान्
 कल्किर्धर्मपतिर्हरिः ।
 कृतं भविष्यति तदा
 प्रजासूतिश्च सात्त्विकी ॥

Bhagavān Hari is himself the dispenser and protector of *dharma*. So the moment Hari incarnates himself as Kalki, *kṛta-yuga* will begin. Consequently, from that moment, the progeny of

the people in succeeding generations will be endowed with the quality of *sattva*. (23)

3. The significance of *kali-yuga* for liberation

Notwithstanding all the evils and miseries of *kali-yuga*, there are saving features about it for those who look to liberation as their goal in life. The worldly-minded easily fall a prey to the evil temptations of *kali* and reap their bitter fruits. But the spiritual-minded could turn those very evils and miseries to their advantage. First of all, observation of and reflection on the nature of *kali* induces dispassion (*vairāgya*) towards worldly ends. Considering the magnitude of the evils and miseries experienced in *kali*, it would be no exaggeration if we say that no age is so conducive to the production of *vairāgya* as this.

Secondly, in the practice of the means to *mokṣa*, in view of the innumerable and formidable obstacles to spiritual practice faced in *kali-yuga*, scripture offers gracious concessions to the seeker after *mokṣa*. In *kṛta-yuga*, men resorted to intense and prolonged meditation to attain liberation. But *kali* is the very picture of distraction and disturbance to mental fixation. Meditation, which requires one-pointed attention to the select object, is well-nigh impossible in the manner of olden days. Whatever meditation is popularly taught and practised nowadays is mainly for mental relaxation for a few minutes. The practice is more therapeutic than spiritual in aim and significance. In *tretā-yuga*, liberation was sought mainly by performing sacrifices. Even this is impossible now. There is neither the time needed nor suitable space nor purity of the material required nor even enough experts to guide such practices. In *dvāpara-yuga*, the chief means to liberation was worship of God strictly according to rules laid down in scripture. Even this has become difficult for want of time, dwindling faith, and laxity in the austerity required as preliminary to such worship. Hence it is said that in *kali-yuga*, worship of the Lord in the personal form by reciting his name and glory will

compensate for the impossibility of all other methods. Here are select verses expressing this view from the third Adhyāya of the twelfth Skandha of the *Bhāgavata*.

कलेर्दोषनिधे राजन्
अस्ति हेको महान् गुणः ।
कीर्तनादेव कृष्णस्य
मुक्तसङ्गः परं व्रजेत् ॥

Kali-yuga is the treasure-trove of evils. Nevertheless, there is one great virtue in it. It is that during this age, even by singing the praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one becomes free from all attachments and attains liberation. (51)

कृते यद् ध्यायतो विष्णुं
त्रेतायां यजतो मखैः ।
द्वापरे परिचर्यायां
कलौ तत् हरिकीर्तनात् ॥

In *kṛta-yuga*, one attains liberation by meditating on God; in *tretā-yuga*, one realizes this goal by performing elaborate sacrifices dedicated to God; in *dvāpara-yuga*, liberation is accomplished by conducting devotional service to God as ordained in scripture. In *kali-yuga*, uttering the name of God would be sufficient for realizing the same goal of release. (52)

It is natural for faithful people to weep in their own hearts over the evils and sufferings that belong to the *kali* period and pine for a good turn for the world and the eventual liberation of all. To them, the *Bhāgavata* offers the consolation and the assurance of the descent of Kalki even in specific terms and thus conduces to his contemplation. This influence is represented by the following verses from XII, 2.

विष्णोर्भगवतो भानुः
 कृष्णा ख्योऽसौ दिवं गतः ।
 तदाविशत् कलिर्लोकं
 पापे यद् रमते जनः ॥

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, who illumines all. When Kṛṣṇa ascended to heaven, having completed his mission on earth, that moment began *kali-yuga* on earth with people engrossed in sinful deeds. (29)

यदा देवर्षयः सप्त
 मघासु विचरन्ति हि ।
 तदा प्रवृत्तस्तु कलिः
 द्वादशाब्दशतात्मकः ॥

Kali-yuga begins when the seven celestial sages transit through the star Maghā. The duration of *kali-yuga* is 1200 years by the time-scale of the devas. (31)

दिव्याब्दानां सहस्रान्ते
 चतुर्थे तु पुनः कृतम् ।
 भविष्यति यदा नृणां
 मन आत्मप्रकाशकम् ॥

When in the time-scale of the devas, a thousand years elapse, then in *kali-yuga*, which will be in its fourth quarter, (by the grace of Kalki) *sattva-guṇa* will begin to dominate in men's minds and they will be enabled to know their own spiritual nature. From that moment, (the next) *kṛta-yuga* may be said to begin. (34)

यदा चन्द्रश्च सूर्यश्च
 तथा तिष्यद्बृहस्पती ।

एक राशौ समेष्यन्ति
तदा भवति तत् कृतम् ॥

When the moon, the sun, and Jupiter together enter the first quarter of the star Puṣya in the same *rāśi*, or house, that moment begins (the next) *kr̥ta-yuga*. (24)

सम्भलग्राममुख्यस्य
ब्राह्मणस्य महात्मनः ।
भवने विष्णुयज्ञसः
कल्किः प्रादुर्भविष्यति ॥

At the appropriate time, the Lord will take birth as Kalki in the house of the supremely virtuous and pious *brāhmaṇa* by name Viṣṇuyaśas, who will reside in the hamlet called Sambhala. (18)

अश्वमाशुगमारुह्य
देवदत्तं जगत्पतिः ।
असिनाऽसाधुदमनं
अष्टैश्वर्यगुणान्वितः ॥

The Lord, who is the master of the entire universe, is the repository of the eight "siddhis" and all the virtues. Riding the divine horse Devadatta, whose speed equals the Lord's will, the Lord destroys by his sword all the wicked people on earth. (19)

In recommending devotional praise of God (*nāma-saṅkīrtana*) as the means most suitable for attaining *mokṣa* in *kali-yuga*, the *Bhāgavata* does not overlook the true place of *bhakti* in the scheme of disciplines as subordinate to *jñāna*. The conception of *mokṣa* found in the *Bhāgavata* is ultimately that of Advaita. According to Advaita, *mokṣa* consists in the *jīva* realizing its non-difference from Brahman. Hence *jñāna* is the direct means to release. But in preparing the ground for *jñāna*, *karma*, *bhakti*, and *upāsana* have an important role. All the three disciplines purify the mind

of selfish, worldly inclinations. *Bhakti* and *upāsana* promote also mental concentration. These results are indispensable for the pursuit of *jñāna*. Thus, the practice of *bhakti* in *kali-yuga* in the form of singing the praise of the Lord prepares the seeker of *mokṣa* for attaining *jñāna*. In fact, *bhakti* has an advantage over *upāsana*. The strain involved in fixing the mind on the chosen object as in *upāsana* is absent here. Loving devotion to God easily carries the mind away from all worldly distractions and imperceptibly fastens it to the Supreme Being. Another advantage of *bhakti* is that it can not only prepare for *jñāna*, but also transform itself into *jñāna*. For these reasons, the *Bhāgavata* has a special place for *bhakti* in its teachings.

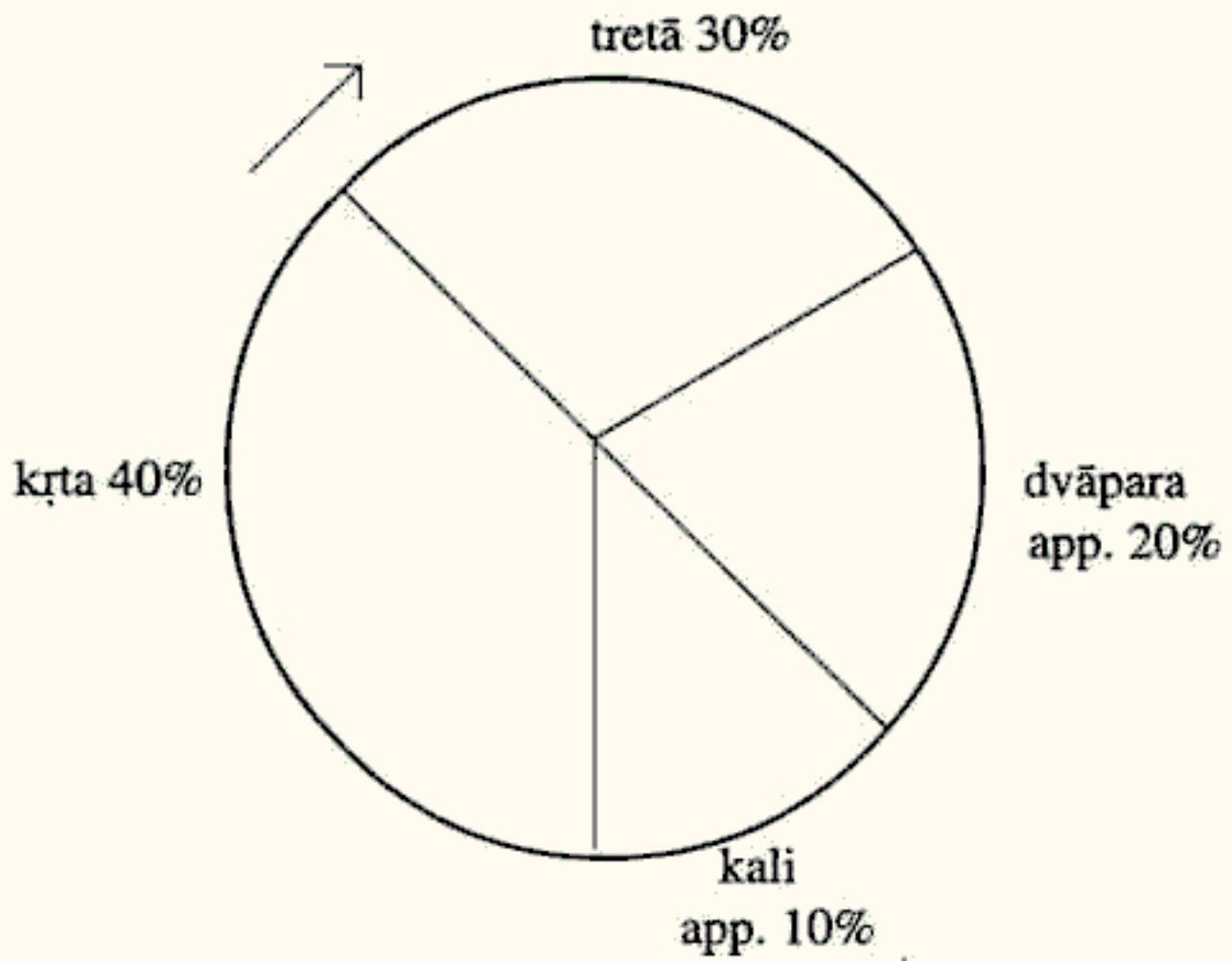
Again, in proposing *bhakti* as most suitable for *kali-yuga*, the *Bhāgavata* does not rule out the need for *karma* as a preparation for *jñāna* and even for *bhakti*. All that it does is to appreciate the difficulties faced by the agent in practising *karma*. *Sādhāraṇa-dharma*, which is incumbent on all, has in any case to be observed, abjuring all *pratiṣiddha-karma*. *Nitya* and *naimittika* karmas have to be observed at least to the extent that circumstances permit. But the discussion of such topics is beyond the scope of this paper and would require a separate article.

NOTES

1. धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ । *Bhagavad-gīta*, 7,11.
2. Vide *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*, XII, 1, 38 and 39.
3. A *mleccha* is anyone who does not conform to the Vaidika (Hindu) faith. Baudhāyana defines the term thus:-

गोमांसखादको यस्तु
विरुद्धं बहु भाषते ।
सर्वाचारविहीनश्च
मेलच्छ इत्यभिधीयते ॥

(V.S. Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Vol. II, Poona, 1958).



A catur-yuga cycle
(43,20,000 human years)

 "ṢADĀSMĀKAM ANĀDAYAḤ"*

R. Balasubramanian

From the One to Six

I

Since Advaita holds that there is only one reality, which is called Brahman, or Ātman, or Sat, it is generally said to be monistic. Strictly speaking, it must be called, according to tradition, non-dualistic. The negative characterization brings out the spirit of Advaita, and this is the reason why the Advaita tradition prefers to use the term "non-dualism" rather than the term "monism". When the *Chāndogya* text, 6.2.1, says that Sat, the primal Being, is one only, without a second (*ekam eva advitīyam*), it is for the purpose of conveying the idea that Brahman or Sat is the sole reality and that there is no second to it. Its aim is not to affirm the oneness of Brahman, but to deny the existence of any other real

* I have closely followed and elaborated the arguments as formulated in the *Vicāra-sāgara* (pp.55–57) (in Sanskrit) by Śrī Vāsudeva Brahmendra Sarasvatī Swamigal, eds. P. Panchapakesa Sastrigal and Varahoor Kalyanasundara Sastrigal, Mayuram, 1964

entity in addition to Brahman. It is for the purpose of denying plurality that the Upaniṣadic text does not stop with the declaration that Brahman or Sat is one only (*ekam eva*), but also adds "without a second" (*advitīyam*).

II

The One *per se* is beyond inquiry, because of the nature of what is to be inquired into on the one hand, and the nature of inquiry on the other. The One, which is to be inquired into, is trans-empirical, non-relational, and trans-linguistic. That is why it is said to be non-dual. Inquiry involves at least two entities, the subject who inquires and the object that is to be inquired into. It means inquiry presupposes duality. In view of the difficulty arising from the nature of the object of inquiry on the one hand and the nature of inquiry on the other, the Advaitin maintains that the One as such is beyond inquiry. So, for the purpose of philosophical analysis, the Advaitin begins his inquiry drawing a distinction between the Self and the not-Self, i.e. Ātman and anātman; here the Self is the inquiring subject, and the not-Self is the object of inquiry.

Śaṅkara draws our attention to the need for such a basic distinction as the starting point of our inquiry at the very commencement of the *adhyāsa-bhāṣya*, which is the introductory portion of his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*. He refers to the distinction between *yuṣmat* and *asmāt*, i.e. between the object (*viṣaya*) and the subject (*viṣayin*). Since it is impossible to straight away begin our inquiry into Brahman or Ātman, we have to start with the subject-object distinction, which is the minimum that is required for epistemological analysis. Further, our day-to-day experience is dualistic. With a little reflection every one knows that a human being is a combination of Spirit and matter, what we have referred to as Self and not-Self. How such a combination of two entities, which are totally different, is possible, is not the question that we propose to discuss at this point. The fact is that

these two entities, which are opposed to each other as light and darkness, co-exist; and it is because of the co-existence of these two entities that a human being who is called a jīva is able to function in this world as a rational and social being, perform various activities, and claim that he/she is a subject of knowledge, an agent of actions, and an enjoyer of the consequences of actions. The term "not-Self," as used in Advaita, is comprehensive enough to cover not only the human body consisting of many components, but also the objects of the external world. Being other than the Self which is of the nature of consciousness, all these objects, starting from the mind, the senses, and the body, and then the objects of the external world, are generally called not-Self. It follows that philosophical inquiry involves the distinction between the subject and the object, i.e. between the Self and the not-Self.

III

It is obvious from what we have said above that, though Advaita is interested in establishing the non-dual nature of the ultimate reality, it cannot straight away say anything, positive or negative, about it. It has to begin the inquiry with the given; and the given comprises the duality of the subject and the object, the Self and the not-Self. When we probe into the subject-object duality, we find that it includes six entities, which are identified as (1) jīva, (2) Īśvara, (3) Brahman, (4) the difference between jīva and Īśvara, (5) māyā/avidyā, and (6) the relation between Brahman and māyā/avidyā. The Advaitin claims that all these six entities are beginningless (*anādi*) in the sense that none of them has been originated, or brought into existence, by any cause. An oft-quoted verse, which has come down to us from tradition, enumerates the six beginningless entities as follows:

जीव ईशो विशुद्धा चित् तथा जीवेशयोर्भिदा ।
अविद्या तच्चित्तोर्योगः षडस्माकमनादयः ॥

Why is it that these six entities are said to be beginningless? It is well known that an effect, e.g. a pot, has a beginning, because it comes into existence from its cause. Now we have to show that none of the six entities mentioned above has a cause, and so no one of them has a beginning. Let us consider one by one the six entities.

IV

The search for the cause of Brahman is restricted to only three objects; and these three are avidyā, jīva, and Īśvara. Since Brahman itself is the locus or support (*adhiṣṭhāna*) for avidyā, the latter cannot be its cause. As both Īśvara and jīva are not possible without Brahman, neither of them can be its cause. There is nothing else which could be the cause of Brahman. It follows that there is no cause for Brahman and that consequently we have to say that Brahman is beginningless.

V

Nor is it possible to identify the cause of avidyā. Here also we have to follow the method of elimination. First of all, we have to rule out Brahman as the cause of avidyā since by its very nature the former is unchanging (*nirvikāra*); and what is unchanging can never be the cause of anything. If clay is the cause of pot, it is because of its inherent capacity for change or modification. Also, it implies that an object that is subject to transformation is a composite entity made up of parts (*sāvayava*). But Brahman is homogeneous, impartite, by its very nature, i.e. it is *niravayava*; and so it cannot be the cause of avidyā. Nor is it possible for us to say that either Īśvara or jīva is the cause of avidyā. The emergence of Īśvara and jīva is possible only because of avidyā. According to Advaita, it is avidyā, when associated with Brahman, the pure consciousness, that splits, as it were, the one Brahman into Īśvara

and jīva. It means that, without the prior existence of avidyā, it is not possible for Īśvara and jīva to come into existence as two separate entities. That is why Advaita says that neither Īśvara nor jīva could be the cause of avidyā.

VI

We will now consider the case of Īśvara and jīva. Neither Brahman in itself nor avidyā/māyā by itself can be the cause of Īśvara and jīva. The reasons for this are obvious. We have already said that the immutable Brahman cannot be the cause of anything, and so Brahman has to be ruled out. Being material by nature, avidyā/māyā cannot be the cause of an intelligent being like Īśvara or jīva. So avidyā/māyā also has to be ruled out as unfit to play the role of a cause in the case of Īśvara and jīva. Nor is it possible for us to hold that Īśvara is the cause of jīva, or that jīva is the cause of Īśvara. As conditioned entities, there is difference (*bheda*) between Īśvara and jīva. The *jīveśvara-bheda*, i.e. the difference between jīva and Īśvara, cannot be the cause of Īśvara and jīva, because the former presupposes the existence of the latter. Since there is no cause for Īśvara and jīva, we have to say that they are beginningless.

VII

So long as there is Īśvara as well as jīva, there is bound to be difference between them. Īśvara, according to Advaita, is a complex entity consisting of consciousness and māyā; jīva also, like Īśvara, is a complex entity consisting of consciousness and avidyā. Though the element of consciousness in both is the same, the two conditioning factors, māyā in the case of Īśvara and avidyā in the case of jīva, are responsible for the difference between them. Inasmuch as Īśvara and jīva are *anādi*, even the difference between them has to be *anādi*.

VIII

What remains to be considered is the relation between avidyā and Brahman. We have already explained why Brahman and avidyā are beginningless. In the absence of the relation between Brahman and avidyā, there is no possibility of the emergence of Īśvara. As long as there is the world, so long there must be a Creator-God who must not only be an intelligent principle to play the role of an efficient cause, but also the source and support of the world as its material cause. In short, the Creator-God, who is called Īśvara or Saguṇa-Brahman, is both the material and the efficient cause rolled into one (*abhinna-nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇa*). So the Creator-God is a complex entity comprising consciousness and māyā. Of these, the former element is responsible for the plan and design, harmony and variation of the things of the world, while the latter contributes the material structure and stratification of the things of the world. In other words, Īśvara is a complex of being and becoming, unity and change. Similarly, in the absence of the relation between consciousness and avidyā/māyā, the jīva as an empirical being cannot emerge. Like Īśvara, jīva too is a complex consisting of Spirit and matter, i.e. the element of consciousness which inspires and activates the material component, and avidyā which unfolds itself as the three bodies (*śarīra-traya*), or the five sheaths (*pañca-kośa*). What is true of Īśvara is equally true of the jīva in another respect. Like Īśvara, the jīva also is a unity of being and becoming, oneness and plurality. So the relation between Brahman and avidyā cannot be caused by Brahman, or by avidyā itself. Since Īśvara and jīva presuppose this relation, they cannot be the cause thereof.

It may be added in this connection that the six entities which are said to be *anādi* are mutually different from one and another, and the sixfold mutual difference (*paraspara-bheda*) is also beginningless.

Before we conclude, it is necessary to draw attention to the distinction between two kinds of beginninglessness. One is called *pravāhato-anāditva*. A brief explanation will help us to understand this concept. It is well known that the objects of the empirical world such as pot and pan, tree and table, appear and disappear. Each one of them arises from a cause, exists for sometime, and then disappears; and this cycle continues. It is like a continuous stream (*pravāha*) whose beginning we do not know because of ignorance. So it is spoken of as beginningless, even though it does have a beginning. This kind of *pravāhato-anāditva* is different from the *anāditva* associated with the six entities mentioned above. Here, each one of them is uncaused, and so it is said to be beginningless by its very nature (*svarūpato-anāditva*).

Even though we have put together the six entities under the class of what is beginningless, there is an important difference between Brahman on the one hand and the remaining five entities. It is only Brahman that has neither beginning nor end; and it is eternal by virtue of being immutable (*kūṭastha-nitya*). But the other entities, though beginningless, have the element of becoming; and they disappear getting sublated at the dawn of Brahman-knowledge (*jñāna-bādhyatvāt itarāṇi pañca anādisāntāni*). It means that, though beginningless for an important reason, they have an end.

THE DOCTRINE OF MĀYĀ
IN THE BRAHMA-SŪTRA*

Mandalika Venkatesvara Sastri

Śrī Śaṅkara's philosophy of Advaita involves the doctrine of avidyā or māyā. It is based on the *prasthāna-traya*, the triple canon of the Vedānta, that is, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the *Brahma-sūtra*. The distinguishing feature of this school is the doctrine that the material world is an illusion, or more correctly a mere *appearance*. It is, therefore, referred to as *māyāvāda*. The ultimate reality is termed Brahman which is impersonal and absolute consciousness. Owing to avidyā (nescience) it appears as Īśvara (Personal God), jīva (individual soul) and the world. The true nature of Īśvara and jīva is Brahman. Jīva is to realize its identity with Brahman. To remain as Brahman is the ultimate goal, that is, liberation. And, this is possible only by overcoming avidyā. Avidyā has Brahman as its content (*viṣaya*), and hence it could be removed only by the direct experience of Brahman. Avidyā thus is the most important factor in Advaita.

* Courtesy: *Sankara and Shanmata*, Souvenir published in connection with the conference on the same theme held in Madras during June 1-9, 1969.

This avidyā is identical with māyā. The Upaniṣadic texts "Know māyā to be the material cause of the world and Brahman as its substratum;"¹ and "The sages absorbed in meditation found the creative power of māyā associated with the three strands of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*,"² speak of māyā/avidyā as the primal cause of the world. The *Bhagavad-gītā* text, "Brahman, the pure consciousness, is veiled by *ajñāna*, and hence the individual souls experience phenomenal existences,"³ states that *ajñāna-avidyā-māyā* veils the true nature of Brahman.

The Upaniṣads speak of Brahman as attributeless and also as endowed with attributes. The Upaniṣadic texts such as "Brahman is not gross, not fine, not short. . . without sound, without forms,"⁴ etc., convey Brahman to be free from attribute and form. And the Upaniṣadic text, "He cherishes all (righteous) desires, contains all (pleasant) odours and is endowed with all taste,"⁵ conveys Brahman as endowed with attributes. The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* points out that Brahman by itself cannot have these two contradictory characteristics as it is opposed to experience. Śaṅkara, while commenting on this sūtra, observes:⁶ "Of the two aspects of Brahman set forth in the Upaniṣadic texts, we have to accept that which is non-determinate, *nirviśeṣa* as its true nature. The other aspect of Brahman is only superimposed on it by avidyā and hence it is not real."

Śaṅkara notices this distinction between two forms of Brahman, one which is without attributes and the other which is conceived with attributes. He says: "the Upaniṣadic texts teach Brahman which is free from attributes in order that it may be realized, and they teach Brahman with attributes in order that it may be worshipped."⁷ As has been stated above, Brahman is viewed as endowed with attributes through māyā/avidyā.

It follows from the above that the concept of māyā/avidyā finds full expression in the Upaniṣads and in Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-sūtra*. There is, however, a general criticism that *māyā-vāda* is not advocated by Bādarāyaṇa, the author of the

Brahma-sūtra. This criticism is unsound; for the aphorisms of Bādarāyaṇa only discuss the import of the Upaniṣadic texts. As māyā/avidyā finds expression in the Upaniṣads, it finds expression in the *Brahma-sūtra* also. We shall now deal with certain aphorisms of Bādarāyaṇa wherein the concept of māyā/avidyā has been set forth. Śaṅkara prefaces his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* with an exposition of the superimposition of the objective elements and their characteristic attributes on Brahman, and Brahman and its nature on the objective 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*—*atha'to brahma-jijñāsā* (I, i, 1), 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 (individual soul). 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. There must be some cause for the appearance of bondage and that cause is māyā/avidyā. Thus in the first aphorism itself, the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* indicates the concept of māyā/avidyā. He expressly states it in the aphorism—*tadguṇa-sāratvāt tu tadvyapadeśaḥ prājñavat*. (II, iii, 29).

The second aphorism *janmādyasya yataḥ* (I, i, 2) sets forth that Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe. Its being the material cause of the universe, however, is not clearly expressed in the aphorism. But the aphorism—*prakṛtiśca pratijñā drṣṭāntānuparodhāt* (I, iv, 23) affirms the material causality of Brahman in respect of the universe. Śaṅkara, while commenting on this aphorism, states: "Brahman is to be admitted as the material cause of the universe, as this view does not conflict with the statements setting forth the thesis and the illustrative instances. The statement putting forth the thesis is the

following: 'Have you ever asked for that instruction by which that which is not heard becomes heard; that which is not reflected on becomes reflected on; that which is not knew, known'? Now the knowledge of everything is possible only through the cognition of the material cause, since the effect is not different from the material cause. The illustrative example is: 'O gentle one: just as by one clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, the modifications being only a name arising from speech, while the truth is that it is just clay.' Similar statements putting forth the thesis and illustrative instances which are to be found in all Vedānta texts are to be viewed as proving that Brahman is the material cause of the world."

The point that is of profound importance here is that the thesis, viz. the knowledge of everything through the cognition of the material cause, that is, Brahman, would hold good only when we accept the world to be non-distinct from Brahman. And, this would be possible only when it is held that Brahman itself appears through *māyā/avidyā* as the universe. Bādarāyaṇa, thus, makes express mention of the concept of *māyā/avidyā*.

In the same way, the aphorism—*ātmani caivam vicitrāśca hi* (II, i, 28) sets forth the concept of *māyā/avidyā*. Śaṅkara, while commenting on this aphorism, says: "Just as there is the manifold appearances of dream objects in the self while the latter does not undergo any change, so also the whole universe appears in Brahman without the latter undergoing any change." It follows from this that Brahman appears as the world through *māyā/avidyā*.

Brahman is thus accepted as the material cause of the universe. It cannot be the transformative material cause; for, if it is held that the whole of Brahman undergoes transformation, then Brahman as such would have ceased to exist after the universe issued forth, and therefore there is no point in the Upaniṣads declaring that one should realise Brahman. On the other hand, if it is said that a part of Brahman undergoes transformation, then Brahman endowed with parts would be non-eternal. Moreover,

this admission would be in serious conflict with the Upaniṣadic teaching that Brahman is partless. Hence it must be held that Brahman is the transfigurative material cause.

Brahman *appears* as the universe; it does not transform itself into the universe. And, appearance would be possible only through māyā/avidyā.

It would be clear from the above analysis that the concept of māyā/avidyā has been advocated by the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* and the criticism that māyā/avidyā is not acceptable to the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* is, therefore, unsound.

NOTES

1. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV, 10.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 3.
3. *Bhagavad-gītā*, V, 15.
4. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III, viii, 8.
5. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III, xiv, 2.
6. *Brahma-sūtra*, III, ii, 11.
7. Śaṅkara's Commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, I, i, 12.

THE PRINCIPLE OF INEXPLICABILITY IN PHILOSOPHY*

G. R. Malkani

Explanation is one great demand of our thought. Whether we are studying things in empirical sciences, or whether we are philosophising, we are always seeking an explanation of things. We try to know the reason why things are what they are. This demand for explanation is a very legitimate demand. But before it can be met, we must know what it is to explain. Or in other words, when is a thing explained?

This problem of explanation, it appears to us, is bound up with another problem; and that is the problem as to the nature of the things to be explained. It is not all things that require an explanation. It is only things which have a certain character within our experience that require to be explained. And the sort of explanation which can be given in each case depends upon the kind of question to which the things themselves naturally give rise in our understanding. Of the things that require an explanation,

* President Address of the 'Logic and Metaphysics' section read at the 15th Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Hyderabad in December 1939.

there are first of all those things which *become* or come into being. It is evident that, if a thing exists in itself, and does not come into being through the agency of something else,—or in other words, it is not caused to exist,—there can be no reason for its existence in anything beyond itself. The reason of a self-existent thing must lie wholly within itself. A self-existent thing would continue to be itself, even if everything else beside it became different or ceased to exist altogether. Nothing therefore could throw any light upon its nature or its reality. It is in some sense self-explained; and a problem of explanation with regard to it will be quite illegitimate, unless we make clear to ourselves the sort of explanation that may yet be demanded.

We shall pursue this point a little further. What is a self-existent thing? A thing may be said to exist in itself, when it does not come into being. It is real without any beginning. But that is not enough. A thing may exist without beginning, and yet it may cease to exist at some later date. A self-existent thing, however, cannot cease to exist. It cannot cease to exist *of itself*. Of itself, it will continue to remain what it is. It can only cease to exist, if at all, through the operation of something else upon it. But if it does so, it cannot have a nature which excludes relations to other things. It cannot be impermeable to outside influences. How can we, under the circumstances, say that at any time it has unrelated or absolute being, or being that is not dependent upon anything else? In fact, we cannot conceive a self-identical or 'unchanging' thing *beginning* to enter into a relation with other things. It cannot be moved out of itself. If a thing enters a movement or a process of change, it can in no sense stand *outside* this process. It can only stand *within* it as a moment in the process. It cannot be said to have a self-identical or self-existent being. Anything then that comes into being, or ceases to exist, or in anyway becomes different from itself, is not what exists in itself. The self-existent must be at the same time immutable.

If we accept this interpretation of the self-existent, anything that is subject to change or modification will offer a problem. It will require an explanation. The reason for its existence lies outside of it. We are said to give this reason, when we give the cause. But a cause which itself requires an explanation will not explain. The true cause must not itself change into the effect. It must be understood as bringing about the effect, while it itself remains the same. If this is so, the effect is dependent upon the cause, while the cause exists independently of it and in itself. Whether there is any ultimate cause of the changing forms of things which constitute our world, is another question. It is also a question whether the effect, in so far as it is different from the cause, is really explained. This is a question to which we shall revert later in this paper. For the present, it is important to note that the demand for explanation of the changing forms of things can only be met by indicating an ultimate cause of things that does not itself change or that is truly immutable. Things that require to be explained must somehow be accommodated within it, or they must be left out as null and void.

It is not only things that arise or cease to exist that demand to be explained. All determinate existence demands an explanation. If something is *A* and not *B*, the question arises, why is it *A*? Why is anything, anything at all and not nothing? It is often thought that it is no part of a philosopher's business to make or constitute a world, or even to attempt to give reasons why there is any world at all. The fact of the world has to be accepted. We have to recognise the world as *given*. All that we can do is to seek to understand this world. Once we come to the conclusion, after empirical and rational investigation, that the world has a certain character and no other, we have no further problem left. We have to accept the world for what it is. The philosopher, like other human beings, is confined within the world. He must understand it from within; we cannot speculate about it from the outside.

It is doubtful in the extreme whether this business of understanding reality from within is itself a simple matter. It may be quite unilluminating, and certainly unending, unless we evolve a method of tackling reality which is not merely an adjustment of the empirical scientific method. We however contend that the question why anything is anything and not nothing is not illegitimate for the philosopher. It is no doubt illegitimate for the scientist whose sole concern is to get at the *matter of fact* character of reality through the empirical means of knowledge at his disposal. It is no part of his business to criticise these means of knowledge or to question the genuineness of the facts known through them. He is merely concerned with the progressive coordination and interpretation of certain facts which he knows objectively. He studies the object as such. The question why anything is anything, or why there is a world at all, does not worry him. But it comes naturally to the philosopher who seeks an ultimate understanding of reality as a whole. Once something has a determinate character, this question of why arises. The determinate does not stand by itself. We shall see that it is what it is, because it is grounded in what is not determinate. The reality of the determinate cannot be thought of, apart from this non-determinate ground.

It is sometimes argued: 'Things are what they are, because the ultimate nature of reality is what it is. All things are grounded in the Absolute. They are accordingly determined by the latter, and are deducible from it.' Let us suppose that this is a plausible way of seeking to explain things. But the question remains unanswered: why is ultimate reality what it is and not otherwise? The contention that ultimate reality, having nothing outside of it, explains itself and that no legitimate question can be raised regarding it, is not tenable. Nothing that has a determinate character really explains itself. The question cannot be suppressed, why is it that and not different? The determinate, however extended in scope and made inclusive, cannot be the Absolute. It can only be finite. We are obliged to go beyond it. It does not explain itself.

All being that is determinate is determined through certain relations. To say that a thing has a particular character is to exclude other things from it. If a thing is *here*, it excludes things which exist in other places. If a thing is *now*, it excludes things which exist at other times. If a thing is *such and such*, it excludes those things which are not such. It is only through these relations of exclusion that its own nature is determined. How can we say that such a thing explains itself or that it has a being *in itself*? Clearly, it is what it is, because of its relation to things which it excludes. These relations determine it, and in a way explain it. Determinate being then is not *in itself*. It has no self. Its self is in the infinite. The question, 'Why is it what it is?' is quite natural. But to raise this question is already to condemn this being in a way. It is to go beyond it to what is not determinate as the true explanation of it or the ultimate reason for it. Once again, the question whether there is any such reality, which is non-determinate and non-objective, and which can be said to explain all determinate beings, is an open question to which we shall come later.

Things that are impermanent and things that are determinate require an explanation. This means that all objects of knowledge, constituting our world, require to be explained. In fact, we shall go further and say that everything that we know has a disguised problem for us. The problem arises because of the peculiar nature of our knowledge of objects. On the one hand, every object of our knowledge has the appearance of being independent of our knowledge and so self-existent. On the other hand, our only approach to reality being through our knowledge, we have no independent means of determining what really exists or what reality is in itself. Indeed, if all knowledge that we actually have were uncontradicted knowledge, and therefore true knowledge, the problem of things in themselves or of reality as it is in itself would not arise. But this is not the character of all our knowledge; and certainly it is a question whether it is the character of any knowledge whatsoever. But since the self-existence of things

cannot be established through the evidence of knowledge itself, and all knowledge by definition is of the self-existent, it is an open question whether any knowledge that we have is knowledge. The objects which we know have, to say the least, a dubitable kind of reality. And doubt is only the first stage of error.

In actual error, we misrepresent reality. In doubt, we have no means of deciding between reality and unreality, since the former looks so very like the latter. Logically then, doubt is only an incipient error. We have not actually erred. But we are on the way to it; for our perception of reality makes no decisive difference between reality and unreality; what we take to be real might quite as well be unreal. Where then our knowledge is open to doubt, we are already on the way to err. We are without the means of distinguishing truth from error, and we are confusing the two. The demand for the explanation of *all objects of our knowledge* is therefore a demand for the substitution of our present so-called knowledge by knowledge which is self-evidently true and which reveals reality as it is.

We inquire about the reason of things. But this inquiry is, by its very nature, limited from within. Not everything can be explained. There is first the upper limit. This comprises the reality which explains itself or about which no intelligent question of explanation can be raised. Anything that we can decide to be the immutable first cause, anything that is real without being determinate and therefore truly infinite, and anything that is the object of self-evident knowledge or that is self-evidently true, cannot be the object of an enquiry for explanation. It is beyond explanation, or self-explained. But there is also a lower limit which we do not often recognize. When we ask for the explanation of anything, we are not prepared to accept the thing on its face-value. It somehow appears to contradict our fundamental intuition of reality. We unconsciously make a distinction between the appearance of the thing to us and its reality. We are thus prepared in a way to find the appearance an inexplicable excretion that has

no place in reality. We maintain that the demand for explanation is not, and cannot be, a demand for complete or wholesale explanation, in which nothing, not even unreal appearances, remain unexplained or unaccounted for. What demands to be explained is already rejected *in principle* as illusory and therefore inexplicable. This inexplicability is an ultimate fact. It is the only true answer to the original demand for explanation. This demand is accordingly not frustrated. It is fully met, and in a way which makes any further repetition of the original question meaningless. What demands to be explained is sublated by the truth and wanders homeless like an illusory appearance. The most complete explanation is not that which can accommodate literally everything within a self-explanatory system (there is no such system), but an explanation which leaves no further problem of explanation by recognizing the inexplicable. Paradoxical therefore as it may appear, a thing is fully explained when it is seen to be inherently and ultimately of the nature of the inexplicable. If it is not thus seen, the problem of explanation will only change its form, but it will never get finally resolved. It will keep recurring in one form or another. To resolve the question, we must show it to be ultimately illegitimate. It should not arise. An irrationality is not a matter for explanation; for it is opposed to reason itself. We in fact get here to the end of reason. We see the real which reveals itself, and reject the unreal about which no further question can be asked.

In order to understand this clearly, we must now ask: when is a thing explained? We sometimes think that a thing is explained when we give its cause. But evidently it is only a certain interpretation of the principle of causality which would explain. The cause cannot be different from the effect. If it is different, the effect is not explained. The effect remains distinct from the cause; and one distinct entity cannot be any reason for the existence of another. If the cause is to explain, the following conditions must be fulfilled: (a) The cause must not be a finite cause. A finite

cause is no cause. It merely postpones the question. It does not resolve it. The real cause must be both the ultimate and the infinite cause (b) The effect cannot be really different from the cause. In so far as it is different, it is not explained. There must accordingly be a real identity of the effect with the cause; the effect is nothing but the cause. It is the cause itself. (c) The effect as something distinct from the cause cannot be real and cannot be explained. It is by its very nature inexplicable.

If this is the true analysis of causality, the effect cannot be deduced from the cause. All that we can say is that it is grounded in the cause which is its reality. It has no other status than that of an illusory appearance. It is not literally explained. Literally speaking, it is inexplicable.

We have so far argued that to explain is to give the cause. We shall now suppose that to explain is to show something to have a necessary connection with something else or to follow self-evidently from the latter. We have the ideal of explanation in mathematics where certain conclusions are *seen to follow* from certain premises. Given the premises, the conclusion is necessitated. It is *contained* in the premises. We merely draw out the implications.

It is undeniable that the ideal of explanation can only be fulfilled when something is seen to follow self-evidently from something else. But while it is possible to see the self-evidence of the 'following', it is a different matter altogether when we come to the truth of the premises. The truth of the premises is never self-evident. This process of explanation is therefore only applied where we have to do with certain mental constructions. We start with these constructions or ideal entities. We know the exact limits of their content. For this content is limited by our definitions: We then work out in detail a whole system of concepts based upon those ideal constructions. The process of deduction is the process of exhibiting in detail all that is contained in the premises. There is no surprise and no novelty anywhere.

The process of explanation is inapplicable to reality. The content of anything real cannot be prescribed in thought. It is in a sense infinite. A fact, however insignificant, has no definite limits. Again, a fact may be related to other facts, but it cannot be deduced logically from any other fact or set of facts. Indeed, it may form part of a larger whole. But unless we know the whole, there is no scope for inference. And after we have known it, there is no need to infer. The part will be *seen* to be an element of the whole; and any demand for the explanation of the part will have disappeared.

It may now be said that things are explained when they are seen to be necessitated by the nature of the whole of reality. Reality as a whole, or as an inter-connected system is such that a particular thing cannot be otherwise than what it is. But this is not really explaining. First of all, we do not know the whole, and cannot therefore know the necessity of any connection. The part is, as far as we can see, wholly contingent, and therefore unexplained. Secondly, as we have seen before, the question as to the *why* of the whole cannot be dismissed. Why is reality the particular system it is, and not another? When there are several possibilities in thought, there must be a reason for the actuality of any one possibility. But nothing that we can ever know about the whole can give us this reason. In fact, all particularity, whether it belongs to the part or to the whole, demands an explanation. The particular as such is never self-explained. If it is said that the actual world-system or the actual world-course cannot be further questioned, it is to that very extent admitted that irrationality is at the very beginning of things. Indeed, we cannot give any reason why some other possibility should have been actualised. But the fact that no reason can be given for any particular course does not, for that reason, end the question. The question is on our hands, *why* the present course? Our inability to answer the question does not make it illegitimate.

The question remains: how can matters of fact be explained? There is only one way in which anything that has a factual

character can be satisfactorily explained; and that is by showing it to be not a fact at all, but only an appearance of a fact. We must find a way to resolve its contradiction with certain fundamental facts of experience and thereby go beyond it to a reality that is self-explained, or about which no question of explanation can be formulated. A fact cannot be deduced from anything else. It is in this sense ultimate and inexplicable. But it is fully explained in another way, if it is explained at all; and that is when it is seen not only as not necessitated by reality, but as having no real connection with the latter. It is illusory in character, and therefore does not demand an explanation.

When we declare something to be, by its very nature, inexplicable, we do not mean that it has an explanation which we do not know or even cannot know. What we mean is that the question of explanation simply does not arise. The illusory is incapable of explanation. But this does not mean any defect in our understanding of it. To know the illusory as illusory is to realize it as what is self-contradictory, *a something* which is at the same time *not that something*, and which therefore offers no mystery and no legitimate question of explanation. It is completely uncovered, completely open to our view, and completely resolved as a mystery of being. It is known for what it is, and offers no further problem. Our understanding may be forced, because of its ineradicable habit of questioning, to entertain certain questions about the illusory. But in the end, and on analysis, they would be found to be quite unanswerable, just because they are illegitimate. To say then that the illusory is inexplicable is not to confess ignorance on our part. It is rather a claim to penetrate the veil of mystery that hides reality from us and to know reality as self-revealing and self-luminous. It is a claim for a higher and a truer knowledge.

This then is the limit of philosophical explanation. Unless we know the Absolute Real, the problem of explanation will remain. Philosophical explanation must take the form of a direct seeing of reality as it is. If however all that we want is a conceptual

explanation, or an explanation which will be acceptable to the intellect as such, we are bound to remain without any real explanation. The only explanations that the intellect, in its normal activity, can devise, are the scientific explanations. These do not really go to the root of the matter. They do not explain. They merely postpone an ultimate explanation. They move within the sphere of what is called 'matter of fact.' The 'matter of fact' may be the *end* of science. But it is only the *beginning* of philosophy. We cannot forever stay in the matter of fact. It demands an explanation. This explanation cannot take the form of certain 'reason' which the intellect can conceive. All reasons lead merely to further reasons. There is no end that way. What may be called 'the sufficient reason' for anything is intellectually an impossibility. The best reason is necessarily beyond reason. It is to resolve the facts that require to be explained. Questions arise from defective seeing. We have only to see well and truly. This is the ideal of explanation which philosophy must help us to realize.

VEDĀNTA IN THE NUCLEAR AGE*

Karan Singh

The great secret of the persistence of Indian culture unbroken down through the millennia lies in its unique capacity for regeneration and reintegration from era to era. The whole history of Indian thought from Vedic times right down to the present century can be interpreted as a series of such regenerations—some of them within the orthodox systems and others, such as Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, outside the orthodox parameters. The *Upaniṣads* themselves, which may be considered the high watermark of Indian philosophical thought, came at the end of a long period of mystical outpourings represented by the Vedas. Thereafter with the advent of Buddhism and its subsequent decline, a situation was reached around the 8th century A.D. in which intellectual confusion and chaos seemed to reign supreme. There were numerous conflicting creeds and teachings, the combined result of which was to throw the whole intellectual and spiritual life of India into darkness and confusion.

* Presented in the International Seminar held on the occasion of Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayanti Mahotsava. Courtesy: *Perspectives of Śaṅkara*, Ministry of HRD, 1989.

It was at this critical juncture that there appeared one of the most remarkable religious figures in the history of mankind, Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. In a short life span of thirty-two years, sixteen of which were spent studying the scriptures, Śaṅkara virtually single-handedly wrought a revolution in the sphere of philosophy and religion. This extraordinary man combined in himself all the four Yogas so greatly praised in the Hindu cultural tradition.

As a *jñāna-yogī* Śaṅkara wrote luminous commentaries upon the *prasthānatrayī*, the three pillars of the Vedānta—the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahma-sūtras* and the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He also wrote many other original philosophical texts, including the celebrated *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, in which he brilliantly expounded the viewpoint of Advaita Vedānta. As a *karma-yogī* he travelled the length and breadth of India, established four *mathas* in the four corners of the country thus strengthening the foundations of national unity, and reorganized the *sannyāsi* order into a system which continues down to the present day. As a *bhakta*, Śaṅkara wrote beautiful hymns in praise of various deities of the Hindu pantheon—Śiva, Kṛṣṇa and the Divine Mother—all of which represent different facets of the same divine reality. And as a *rāja-yogī* he developed spiritual powers of the highest level, which manifested in many startling miracles associated with his travels and, above all, in his voluntary exit from life in the Himalayas at the early age of thirty two.

Each one of these aspects of Śaṅkara's life can be expounded at considerable length, but for purposes of this International Seminar I have confined myself to examining the concept of Vedānta which, in my view, is extremely relevant in this nuclear age. While I have not quoted directly from Śaṅkara, I have based my approach upon his interpretation of the *Upaniṣads*, and look upon this paper as a modest tribute to one of the most outstanding saint-philosophers that the world has ever known.

Mankind today is in a major period of transition, as significant as the earlier ones, from nomadic to agricultural society, from

agricultural to industrial, and from industrial to post-industrial society. We may be too close to the event to grasp its full significance, but it is now quite clear that we are in the throes of a major change. Whether it is in the field of politics or economics, communications or culture, a powerful new globalism is developing. Indeed, the outstanding features of the second half of the twentieth century has been the collapse of the materialistic paradigm that has dominated world thought for many centuries. What may be called the Cartesian-Newtonian-Marxist paradigm has broken down, and with it the materialistic philosophies based upon that view, whether Marxist or capitalist, can also be seen to have failed. With the impact of post-Einsteinian physics, quantum mechanics, Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and many other conceptual revolutions, the old structures have begun to crumble. 'Solid matter' dissolves into 'waves of probability', and the new physics seems to be approaching the mystic vision of which seers and sages of all traditions have spoken.

The predominant consciousness of the human race reflects its evolutionary situation, and it would be true to say that at this crucial evolutionary crossroads mankind is groping for a new model, a new philosophy, a new paradigm, a new consciousness to replace the old. And it is no coincidence that this is happening at a juncture when mankind is in supreme peril; not from another species, not from outer space, but from itself. There has been a tragic divergence of knowledge and wisdom, and from deep within the human psyche there has developed a terrible poison that threatens not only our own generation, but countless generations yet unborn; not only our own race but all life on this planet. We are perhaps like the fabled continent of Atlantis, rich and resplendent beyond compare, but ultimately sinking below the waves, unable to survive its own technological ingenuity.

Ancient myths often illuminate the human predicament, and there is a powerful Hindu myth of the churning of the Milky Ocean (the Samudra-Manthana) which speaks to us today across the

millennia, symbolizing as it does the long and tortuous evolution of consciousness on planet earth. In this great myth, the Devas and the Asuras, the bright and the dark powers, both cooperated in the churning of the ocean. This went on for aeons, until at last the great gifts began to emerge—Kāmadhenu, the all-giving cow and Uchhaiśravas, the divine horse; Kalpavṛkṣa, the wish-fulfilling tree and Airāvata, the divine elephant. These and other gifts appeared, and were happily divided between the two sides. The churning proceeded, as its ultimate objective was the Amṛta Kalaśa, the pot of ambrosia, the elixir of immortality for which even the gods crave.

Suddenly, without warning, the ocean started to boil with a deadly poison—the Garala—a new, malign dimension of which neither the Devas nor the Asuras had any knowledge. Rapidly the poison spread through the three worlds—the water, the land and the skies. The churners fled helter-skelter in terror, striving to escape from the deadly fumes, forgetting all the gifts that they had accumulated. And the Śiva-Mahādeva appeared, the great, primal divinity aloof from the avarice and materialism of the Devas and the Asuras. He collected the poison in a cup and drank it, integrating it into his being. Then the danger passed. Order was restored, and chanting hymns to the glory of Śiva, the participants returned.

This myth vividly illustrates the human predicament today. Prolonged churnings have given man the great gifts of science and technology. There have been incredible breakthroughs in medicine and communications, agriculture and electronics, space travel and cybernetics. We now have enough resources and technology to ensure for every human being on earth, the physical, intellectual, material and spiritual inputs necessary for a full and healthy life. And yet surely the poison is also upon us. Billions of dollars and rubles, pounds, francs and rupees are spent everyday on the manufacture of monstrous weapons with unprecedented power of destruction. It is estimated that there are now well over

fifty thousand nuclear warheads on planet earth, each a thousand times more powerful than the bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the dawn of the nuclear age; each with more explosive force than used by both sides in the entire second World War.

There is overwhelming evidence to show that any kind of nuclear war would not only shatter human civilization as we know it; it would also poison the air and the oceans, and render earth virtually uninhabitable, a charred and ravaged planet incapable of supporting more than extremely primitive lifeforms. Whether this happens through political foolishness or an accident, a flight of geese or a malfunctioning computer chip, it matters little. With all our tremendous knowledge, man has finally come to a single three-letter *mantra*—MAD—Mutually Assured Destruction. Thousands of years ago, at the dawn of human civilization, the Vedic seers had also discovered a three-letter *mantra*—AUM—as the symbol of the divinity that pervades the universe. Perhaps the time has come when we should revert from MAD to AUM, so that this greatest of all transitions, the transition to the global consciousness, can be safely completed, and the earth can become a crucible for the next major step in evolution.

It is in this chilling context that the necessity for an alternative philosophy of life becomes so intense, and because of the universal values that it enshrines, the Vedānta represents precisely such an integrated and universal philosophy. Based upon the collective wisdom of generations of seers and sages, and brilliantly expounded by Ādi Śaṅkara, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* stand as testimony to the magnificent spiritual endeavour and achievement of ancient India. This vast corpus of wisdom, collectively known as the Vedānta, provides insights which can be of crucial value for the survival of the human race in this nuclear age. While the field is extremely broad and rich, I have abstracted five major principles of the Vedānta that collectively can provide the framework for a philosophy to sustain the emerging global consciousness on our planet.

The first and most basic concept is that of the all-pervasive Brahman—“*Īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṃ yatkiñca jagatyām jagat.*” Whatever exists, and wherever it exists, whether it is moving or not, is permeated by the same divine power and force. This is an important realization, because many philosophies have postulated dichotomies between God and the world, between matter and spirit, between good and evil, between the divine and the devil, and so on. But the Upaniṣadic view is that in the ultimate analysis all is a manifestation of the divine. Indeed, there can be no manifestation without the divinity behind it, and this in a way parallels the realization of modern science. Previously, in the classical science of Newton, there was the incurable dichotomy between matter and energy; but in the post-Einstienian situation there is the realization that whatever exists is really the same energy. It may appear as a particle or as a wave; it is essentially the same energy. So the unified-force theory towards which the scientists are desperately probing has its spiritual counterpart in the concept of the all-pervasive Brahman of the *Upaniṣads*. The greatest realization is to see Brahman everywhere, above or below, to the right or to the left, within or without. This is the first important concept of the Vedāntic knowledge, the all-pervasive Brahman.

The second is that this Brahman resides within each individual's consciousness, in the Ātman. The Ātman, as it were, is the reflection of this all-pervasive Brahman in individual consciousness; but the Ātman is not ultimately separate from Brahman; it is a reflection of that Brahman, it is a part of it. One of the examples given in the *Upaniṣads* is that as, when a great fire is lighted, millions of sparks fly up out of the fire and then fall back into it, so from Brahman arise all these millions of galaxies, and into Brahman again they all ultimately disappear. The concept of the Lord residing within the heart of each individual (*īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānām hr̥ddeṣe tiṣṭhati*) is the second great insight of the *Upaniṣads*, and the relationship between the Ātman and Brahman is the key-point upon which the whole Vedāntic teaching

revolves. All the four *yogas* are directed towards bringing about the union between the Ātman and Brahman—*jñāna-yoga*, the way of wisdom, *bhakti-yoga*, the way of emotional rapport, *karma-yoga*, the way of dedicated works, and *rāja-yoga*, the way of ecstasy. All of them are directed towards bringing about the union between the all-pervasive Brahman without and the immortal Ātman within.

Following from this, we come now to another important Vedāntic concept which is that all human beings, because of their shared spirituality, are members of a single, extended family. The *Upaniṣads* have a beautiful word for human beings, "*amṛtasya putrāḥ*", children of immortality. It is an extra-ordinary phrase. We do not look upon human beings as essentially sinners, weak and cringing, begging and supplicating some unseen being seated in some seventh heaven. Rather, we are children of immortality, because we carry within our consciousness the light and the power of Brahman, regardless of our race or colour, our creed or sex, or any other differentiation. That is the basis of the concept of human beings as an extended family, "*vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*". A famous verse points out that the division between 'mine' and 'yours' is a small and narrow way of looking at reality, indulged in by people with immature minds. For those of the greater consciousness, the entire world is a family. This is another great insight of the *Upaniṣads*, peculiarly relevant at this juncture in human history.

We come now to a fourth major philosophical concept of the *Upaniṣads*, the essential unity of all religions, of all spiritual paths— "*ekam sad-viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti*" as the *Rg-veda* has it; the truth is one, the wise call it by many names. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* has a beautiful verse which says that in the same way as streams and rivulets arise in different parts of the world, but ultimately flow into the same ocean, so do all these creeds and religious formulations arise in different times and areas, but, if they have a true aspiration, ultimately reach the same goal. Here is a philosophy which cuts across barriers of hatred and fanati-

cism that have been built in the name of religion. The Vedānta is a universal religion; it accepts the infinite possibilities of movements towards the divine; it does not seek to limit or confine us to any particular formulation. It not only accepts, but also welcomes a multiplicity of paths to the divine, provided those paths are genuine movements towards divine realization and not merely intellectual gymnastics and disputations.

It is a little like climbing a mountain with several different starting places. If we keep arguing at those points, we will remain miles apart, but when we actually start climbing and moving upwards, then, as we approach the summit, our paths will begin to converge, and ultimately when we get to the top we will all meet there, because there is only one summit. Similarly, once we really start moving upwards in the field of spiritual endeavour, we will find all our denominational and intellectual differences gradually losing their importance, and as we rise to the summit, we will realize the spiritual oneness of humanity.

The fifth Vedāntic concept is the concept of the welfare of all beings, "*bahujana-sukhāya bahujana-hitāya ca.*" The Vedānta seeks the welfare of all creation, not only of human beings, but also of what we call the lower creatures. In our arrogance and ignorance we have destroyed the environment of this planet. We have polluted the oceans, we have made the air unbreathable, we have desecrated nature and decimated wildlife. Thousands of species have become extinct because of our *hubris* as human beings; and thousands more are on the verge of extinction. But the Vedāntic seers knew that man was not something apart from nature, that human consciousness grew out of the entirety of the world situation, and therefore they had compassion for all living beings. That is why the Vedānta constantly exhorts us that, while we are working for our own salvation, we must also shun the path of violence and of hatred. We must seek to develop both elements of our psyche, the inner and the outer, the quietist and the activist. Indeed, these are two sides of the same coin, so that

we must work not only for our own salvation, but also for the welfare of the world. While working out our own destiny, we also have a social responsibility; and as long as we are embodied, we have to continue to work for the welfare of all beings.

These five concepts from the Vedānta—the all-pervasive Brahman; the Ātman which resides in all beings; the concept of the human race as members of a family regardless of all differences; the idea that all religions are essentially different paths to the same goal; and the concept that we must work for the welfare of society as a whole, for this entire ecosystem and not only for ourselves—when taken together provide a comprehensive world view which can greatly help humanity in the process of globalization upon which it has embarked.

Gradually a world civilization is being born, and it has to be born if mankind is to survive in this nuclear age. Science and technology have given us tremendous power, and that power, if used for benign purposes, can abolish poverty and hunger, malnutrition and misery, illiteracy and unemployment from the face of this earth by the end of this century. It can be done; seven days expenditure on world armaments can abolish hunger in Africa, ten days expenditure on world armaments can abolish the debt of Latin America. But instead, the equivalent of one trillion US dollars every year is going into the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction so awesome that they can hardly be imagined. We now have enough nuclear power to destroy the human race forty times over, to commit not only racial suicide, but terricide, the destruction of planet earth.

We must never forget that power by itself is neither good nor evil; there is the *daivī śakti* and there is the *āsurī śakti*, the benign power and the malign power. The worship of power, of science, is not enough; we also need to recapture wisdom, compassion, understanding. We can now survive only if we have an alternative ideology to the one which has led mankind to this position, and if we boldly act in harmony with that ideology.

The Vedānta provides such an alternative ideology; and if even at this late hour we can imbibe some of its universal truths, we can perhaps reverse the mad rush towards destruction and begin the long, slow climb back to sanity. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, the seer says, "*vedāhametaṁ puruṣam mahāntam ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt*,"—I know that great Being, shining like the sun beyond the darkness; it is only by knowing him that you can overcome death, there is no other way to immortality. The immortality which the *Upaniṣads* speak about is not merely survival after death, which in any case is taken for granted. It is the transcending of birth and death; it means that our consciousness is raised to a state where we are not obliged to be reborn again and again in the cycle of *samsāra*.

Can you imagine what it is like when a caterpillar, an ugly landbound worm, goes into a chrysalis, and a miraculous metamorphosis takes place so that it emerges as a beautiful, radiantly coloured butterfly? That is the sort of metamorphosis that the *Upaniṣads* envisage for human consciousness, and that we need for the new global consciousness. We must change from our earth-bound consciousness into this bright, multicoloured, global consciousness which can still alight upon the ground like a caterpillar, but can also fly into the air which the caterpillar could not do.

That, as I see it, is the true significance of the Vedānta, so ably expounded long ago by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. I will close with the immortal Vedic prayer that seeks to lead us from the untruth of ignorance into the truth of knowledge; from the darkness within into the light above; and from the cycle of birth and death into immortality. That is the highest achievement of the *Upaniṣads*; and that is the goal towards which we all must strive:

*asato mā sadgamaya,
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya,
mṛtyormā amṛtam gamaya.*

 ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARA AND KĀÑCĪ*

V. A. Devasenapathi

Śrī Śaṅkara's life has been closely associated with Kāñcī; Kāñcī and its environs are replete with the reminiscences of Śaṅkara's life and mission. The temples of all denominations in Kāñcī abound in sculptures representing as *sannyāsin* with *ekadaṇḍa*, many of which could easily be identified as those of Śrī Śaṅkara.

To begin with: there is a life-size stone image of Śrī Śaṅkara installed in a shrine in close proximity to the *sanctum-sanctorum* of Śrī Kāmākṣī. The bronze *utsava-mūrti* of Śrī Śaṅkara which is in this shrine is taken every year on the *Vyāsa-pūjā* day to *Mukti-maṇḍapa* on the banks of the *Sarva-tīrtha*, and is offered worship there.

In the *maṇḍapa* with one hundred and eight pillars at Śrī Varadarājasvāmī temple, there is a sculptured panel in which are depicted a *brāhmaṇa paṇḍita* with *śikhā* and *yajñopavīta* in a defiant and arrogant mood, and a young *sannyāsin* with *ekadaṇḍa*

* Courtesy: *Kāmakōṭṭam, Nāyanmārs, and Ādi Śaṅkarā*, The Institute of Traditional Cultures, University Buildings, 1975, pp. 52-66.

in front of him, and radiating calmness. This panel illustrates the meeting between Vyāsa in disguise and Śaṅkara, at which the former challenged, in order to test, Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Brahma-sūtra*. There is another sculpture in the same temple on a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* to the north of the shrine of the Tāyār (*Lakṣmī*) which shows an elderly sage, with *jaṭā*, *rudrākṣa*, and *yajñopavīta*, in a sitting posture, and with one finger of the right hand raised, and an *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsin* standing nearby, offering obeisance. This sculpture evidently is the complement to the previous one; it represents Śaṅkara worshipping Vyāsa after the latter's identity had been disclosed.

It may be asked how a sculpture relating to *Advaita-siddhānta* came to be sculptured in a temple under the control of the followers of Rāmānuja. We may in this connection draw the attention of the readers to the following facts. According to the *Cidvilāsīya-Śaṅkara-Vijaya*, which treats about the life of Śrī Śaṅkara, it was Śrī Śaṅkara, who had the Varadarāja temple constructed through Rājasena, the then Ruler of Kāñcī. Since the temple was constructed under the direction of Śrī Śaṅkara it was but proper to sculpture some incidents in his life in the temple. Not only this: sculptures of an *ekadaṇḍi-advaiti-sannyāsin*, apparently Śrī Śaṅkara, are found in some of the temples, under the control of the followers of Rāmānuja, in and around Kāñcī. In the Varadarāja temple itself there are some more sculptures of an *ekadaṇḍi-advaita-smārta-sannyāsin*, one in the four-pillared *Vasanta-maṇḍapam* to the right of the *amṛta-saras*, representing a standing *sannyāsin* with a *daṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu* by his side, and the other outside the eastern wall of the second *prākāra* of the temple featuring an *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsin* without *śikhā*.

There is another sculpture in the Vaikuṅṭha-perumāl temple representing a *sannyāsin* without *śikhā*, with *ekadaṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu* and a *pustaka* by his side and with a *cāmara* on either side of his hand, standing on one foot and performing tapas, with his left hand on the top of his head.

There is a sculpture featuring an *ekadaṇḍa-advaiti-sannyāsin* without *śikhā* and *yajñopavīta* in the big Viṣṇu temple in Śevilimeḍu (Śivaliṅga-meḍu) at the southern outskirts of Kāñcī. There are similar sculptures in some of the Śiva temples also of the place, as for example the Puṇyakoṭīśvara temple, Kumara-koṣṭham, Kacchapeśvara temple, and many in Ekāmreśvara temple.

The sculpture in and around Kāñcī were so familiar with and so much devoted to Śrī Śaṅkara that they sculptured his figure in all the prominent temples in the city without regard to the deity to which they were dedicated or the sect to which the temple belonged in the later times. Not only this. It seems that Śrī Śaṅkara or his successors had something to do with the management of the Varadarāja temple. This could be seen from Vol. III (pages 340–341) of the *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts* relating to Mackenzie's collection, where William Taylor gives a brief summary of a copper-plate inscription in Viṣṇu-Kāñcī in which the name of Śaṅkarācārya appears among others as one who had something to do with the temple before the line of Tātācārya took charge. Śrī Śaṅkara and his successors having been connected with the temple, it was but natural that sculptural figures of him are seen in the temple.

There is an inscription in the Varadarāja temple relating to a Mutt, called *Veda-maṭha*, situated in the temple, the head of which is named as *Vedendra-Sāgara* (No. 350, South Indian Temple Inscriptions—Vol. I, Madras Government Oriental Series, No. CIV).¹ The appellation of *Sāgara* is one of the ten appellations used by *Daśanāmi-sannyāsins* of the *Advaita-sampradāya*:

तीर्थाश्रमवन्नारण्यगिरिपर्वतसागराः ।
सरस्वती भारती च पुरी नामानि वै दश ॥

The Sannyāsins of the *Rāmānuja-sampradaya* do not use any of these ten appellations. From this we can say that in the early

centuries of the post-Rāmānuja period, there was no objection to an Advaita institution flourishing in the precincts of a Viṣṇu temple.

There is a Viṣṇu temple in a village called Tirumukkūḍal on the banks of the Palar river 13 miles to the east of Kāñcī. An inscription in this temple states that a college and a hospital were being maintained by the temple, and the *Śivāgama* was one of the subjects taught in the college attached to that Viṣṇu temple.

These two inscriptions show that in the early centuries of the post-Rāmānuja period there was no bias against the propagation of Śaivite and Advaita tenets in Viṣṇu temples.

It is well known that the Śaṅkara Mutt in Viṣṇu Kāñcī is situated just a little to the West of the Varadarāja temple. This Mutt is referred to in a copper-plate inscription of the later Telugu Chola time in the following words:

सोऽयं श्रीगण्डगोपालचोलक्षमापतिरात्मनः ।
पट्टाभिषेचनादूर्ध्वं वर्षे च सति षोडशे ॥

तपोधनाय मुनये शिवध्यानरतात्मने ।
स्वात्मारामाय विदुषे पीप्पिल्लिप्रथितात्मने ॥

श्रीहस्तिशैलनाथस्य निलयात् पश्चिमे मठे ।
नित्यान्नदानविधिसन्तर्पितात्मद्विजन्मने ।
श्री शङ्करार्यगुरवे वत्सरे खरसंज्ञिते ॥

* * * * *

अम्बिकापुरनामानं ग्रामचिन्तामणीन् (णिं?) ददौ ।

Some scholars may try to explain that the sitting figure in the Varadarāja temple on a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* to the north of the shrine of Tāyār represents a *sannyāsin* of the Rāmānuja-sampadāya by name Aḷagiya-Maṇavāla Jīyar or Ramya-jāmātr-

muni and the standing figure as of one Śaṅkara-Dāsa, philanthropist who at the bidding of Aḷagiya-Manāvāla Jīyar, constructed a *maṇḍapa* in Kāñcī to install Goddess Marakatavalli. As authority for the same, they may rely upon an inscription in Sanskrit which states that a certain Śaṅkara-Dāsa built the *maṇḍapa* in front of the shrine of the Marakatavalli Nācchiyār at Kāñcī at the bidding of one Aḷagiya-Manāvāla (No.432, *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, Madras Government Oriental Series No.CIV).

वेदान्तद्वयतत्त्वबोधमुदितैः श्रीरम्यजामातृभिः
 आज्ञातेन च धर्मविग्रहवता सङ्कल्पिते मण्डपे ।
 श्रीमच्छङ्करदासनामविलसद्भक्तेन काञ्चीपुरे
 श्रीलक्ष्मीर्मरकतव (ल्लय) सौ त्रिजगतां माता चकास्ति स्वयम् ॥

The sculpture earlier discussed (No.1) is on a pillar on the *maṇḍapa* on the northern side of the Tāyār *sannidhi* of the Varadarāja temple and the Goddess there is called Mahādevī (Perundevī in Tamil). She is not called Marakatavalli-Nācchiyār. The inscriptions relating to Aḷagiya-Manāvāla Jīyar and Śaṅkara-Dāsa are in the Dīpa-Prakāśa temple, a mile to the West of Varadarāja temple and not in the Varadarāja temple itself. There is another inscription in the Dīpa-Prakāśa temple. This inscription states that Aḷagiya-Manāvāla Jīyar built *prākāras* and *maṇḍapas* in the temple of Dīpa-Prakāśa.

श्रीभाष्यामृतपुरपूरितमनाः पद्मोल्लसन् माधवः
 श्रीकाञ्ची (वर) पुरभूषणैः यतिवरैः श्रीरम्यजामातृभिः ।
 प्रा(क)कारैरपि मण्डपैर्विरचितैः दिव्यैः विमानैः कृते
 तत्सङ्कल्पितमन्दिरे विजयते दीपप्रकाशो हरिः ॥

According to this inscription, Aḷagiya-Manāvāla Jīyar was a *sannyāsin* belonging to the Rāmānuja sect. Sannyāsins of that persuasion alone use the appellation Jīyar. The sannyāsins of this

persuasion do not discard their *śikhā* and *yajñopavīta*, carry *tridaṇḍa* and wear *tilaka*, that is, three vertical lines. The sitting figure in the sculpture in the Varadarāja temple cannot be that of Aḷagiya Maṇavāla Jīyar, because that figure has matted hair (*jaṭā*), does not have *śikhā*, wears *rudrākṣamālā* and has neither *tilaka* nor *tridaṇḍa*. The sculpture in the standing posture should be that of an Advaita sannyāsin, apparently Śrī Śaṅkara. The figure clearly shows that he has no *śikhā*, has *ekadaṇḍa*, and does not wear *yajñopavīta*. He is doing *vandana*, represented by the *añjali* posture with *daṇḍa*. A sannyāsin does not worship one who wears *śikhā*, *yajñopavīta*, etc. Here in this sculpture we find a *sannyāsin* worshipping one who wears *yajñopavīta*, etc. The former must, therefore, be Śrī Śaṅkara and the latter must be Vyāsācārya—the *paramaguru* of Gauḍapāda according to the *guruparamparā* of Advaita-ācāryas.

नारायणं पद्मभुवं वसिष्ठं शक्तिं च तत्पुत्रपराशरं च
 व्यासं शुक्रं गौडपदं महान्तं गोविन्दयोगीन्द्रमथास्य शिष्यम् ।
 श्रीशङ्कराचार्यमथास्य पद्मपादं च हस्तामलकं च शिष्यं
 तं तोटकं वार्तिककारमन्यानस्मदगुरुन् सन्ततमानतोऽस्मि ॥

The third inscription in Telugu states that a chieftain (Miṭhādhāra) named Śaṅkara Dāśa renovated the maṇḍapam, etc. in the Dīpa-prakāśa temple.

स्वस्ति श्रीविजयाभ्युदय शालीवाहनशकाब्दाः १६५२साधारण
 नामसंवत्सरमुलो श्रीदीपप्रकाशखामिसन्निधियंदु अम्मकारि सन्निधि
 मुंदु ई मण्टपं राजश्री शंकरदास मिटाजी-वारि धर्मम् ।

दीपप्रकाश(क)जगत्प्रभुसन्निधौ श्री-
 श्रीमन्दिरं विजयतामिह राजधान्याम् ।
 धर्मार्थिना जगति शंकरदासनामा
 धीरेण लोकविलसद्यज्ञसा निबद्धम् ॥

साधारणाब्दसमयकलौ श्रीमन्दिरं चिरं विरचितमत एव तस्मात्
आसूर्यमाभर- जनीकर . . . तद्धि गृहे वसतु शङ्करदासनाम्नः ।

So the one Śāṅkara-Dāsa referred to in the inscription in the Dīpa-prakāśa temple should be a king or chieftain and not a sannyāsin. Further, on the first pillar on the southern side of the outer *mandapam* of the said Tāyār *sannidhi*, there is a sculpture of one Śāṅkara-Dāsa with a label in Telugu script above, mentioning Rājā Śrī Śāṅkara-Dāsa. The diadem, the mustached countenance, the ornaments and the apparel of the figure show that it represents Śāṅkara-Dāsa, the chieftain.

Considering all these facts together we may safely say that the standing figure in the Tāyār *sannidhi* is that of Śrī Śāṅkara and not that of Śāṅkara-Dāsa.

There is a temple at Kāñcī called Vyāsa-Śrāntāśraya. On the super-structure of the main shrine of this temple there are two stucco-figures. One represents Vyāsa with his two arms raised, signifying Vyāsa saying with uplifted arms before Śrī Viśveśvara at Kāśī that there is no God higher than Keśava.

सत्यं सत्यं पुनः सत्यं उद्धृत्य भुजमुच्यते ।
वेदात् शास्त्रं परं नास्ति न-दैवं केशवात् परम् ॥

And the other represents Vyāsa sitting in the *dhyāna* posture. According to the *Kāñcī-māhātmya*, Nandikeśvara cursed Vyāsa for saying so, and as a result of the curse Vyāsa was unable to move his uplifted arms. He then proceeded to Kāñcī, installed a *Śivaliṅga* there in a spot called Vyāsa-Śrāntāśraya, that is, the place resorted to by the afflicted (*śrānta*) Vyāsa, and worshipped it.²

One of the stucco images of the Vyāsa-Śrāntāśraya temple mentioned above is similar to the sculpture in the Varadarājasvāmi temple. From this also we may infer that the sitting sculpture in the Varadarāja temple has been the model for other Vyāsa images. In the images occurring in both Varadarāja temple and the Vyāsa-

Śrāntāśraya temple, there is a resemblance in the facial expression and the *jaṭā-baddha-kalāpa*. But the image of Vyāsa with uplifted arms on the super-structure represents Vyāsa in an afflicted mood, whereas the other image represents him in a happier mood, his affliction having been removed by his worshipping the *Śivaliṅga* at *Kāñcī-kṣetra*.

These sculptural forms of Śrī Śaṅkara in the temples at Kāñcī are tangible and concrete evidence showing Śrī Śaṅkara's close connection with Kāñcī. Presumably to disapprove such connection of Śrī Śaṅkara with Kāñcī, it has been argued, that the sculptural forms of Śrī Śaṅkara found in the temples of Kāñcī are really those of Lakulīśa or *Lakṣādhyāyi* of the *Golaki Santānam*. These alternatives indicate the uncertainty behind the argument. The *daṇḍa* in the hands of the sculptural images in Kāñcī are an unmistakable evidence that the images are those of Advaita-sannyāsins. To meet this negative evidence, it is argued that Lakulīśas of Pāsupata-sect also have *daṇḍa* in their hands. *Lakuḍa* means *daṇḍa*. But as *lukuḍa* and *lakula* sound almost similar, it is argued that the Lakulīśa is one who has a *daṇḍa*.³

But the *daṇḍa* in the hands of the Advaita-sannyāsins differs from that in the images of Lakulīśa thus: the former is of bamboo with knots (*parvas*) bearing the symbols of the conch (*śaṅkhamudrā*) and the axe (*paraśumudrā*) in cloth tied up with sacred threads (*daṇḍa-sūtras*). It is of the size of a thumb of the sannyāsins. The images of Lakulīśa have only a short staff and not the *daṇḍa* as described above.

A painted fresco enables us to have a clear idea of the type of staff that Lakulīśa had. This fresco was in an underground room in a village, Allādurg in Telāṅgāna area, and was discovered recently by the Archaeological Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Experts are of the view that this must be 1200 years old. Since it has been in an underground room, it has been protected from exposure to wind, rain and sunshine and so is very clear. This fresco has been carefully transplanted to the

Hyderabad Museum. There is a figure in this fresco, with a black turban and a black cloth as shawl. It has a staff in its hand. This staff appears to be made of silver since it is white in colour. The stone figures of Lakulīśa—excavated by the Archaeological Department have similar staff in the hands, but their material could not be identified because they are of stone. This fresco gives a clue to the identification of the staff as made of silver.

Bāṇa in his *Harṣa-carita* refers to the Bhairavācārya, that is, Lakulīśa as wearing a black turban and a black shawl. This he explains on the basis of the Āgama texts of the Bhairavācāryas. Bāṇa says further that the Bhairavācāryas offer worship to win the favour of demons (*vetāla*).⁴ The existence of a *vetāla* temple in Allah Durg, in proximity to the fresco could be taken as evidence that the image is that of Bhairavācārya.

In the light of the foregoing analysis, the argument that the images having a *daṇḍa*, with a symbol of the conch (*śaṅkha*) and the axe in the temples in Kāñcī could be those of Lakulīśas who have only a small silver staff in their hands, is unsound.

Hence we may conclude that because of the close association of Śrī Śaṅkara with Kāñcī, we have several sculptural images of him in and around Kāñcī.

NOTES

1. It may be added here that there are evidences which go to show the existence in Kāñcī of the Sannyāsins of two more orders of *tīrtha* and *bhāratī* apart from *sarasvatī* and *sāgara*.

In the walls of the Śiva temple at Ambil Village, there is an inscription in Tamil wherein the Ambil village is referred to as *maḍappuram*, that is, offered to Sannyāsins. This inscription records the institution of an annual worship for the merits of Kṛṣṇa Devarāya by Candrasekhara Sarasvatī.

In another village (8 miles north to Kāñcī) Govindavāḍi, a *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-kṣetra*, there are two sculptures of *Advaita-ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsins*, one enshrined in the wall in the Dakṣiṇāmūrti-sannidhi and the other prostrating with *daṇḍa* towards Dakṣiṇāmūrti. There is an inscription referring to this sculpture as an *Advaita-sannyāsin* of the *tīrtha* order.

Of the many sculptures of *Advaita-sannyāsins* in the Kāmākṣī temple, one sculpture is referred to in the inscription under it as a *sannyāsin* of the *bhāratī* order. There is nothing strange in it. As pointed out earlier, in the *Guruparamparā* of the *bhāratī* order of *sannyāsins*, recorded in the *Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts in Southern India* it is said: Śaṅkara installed Kāmākṣī at Kāñcī and attained *siddhi* there; and on hearing about it Pṛthvīdharabhāratī, the preceptor of the institution of *Bhāratī* order on the banks of Tungabhadra reached Kāñcī. The *Guruparamparā* of the Kūḍali Maṭha also says the same thing with a very slight modification in phraseology. The disciples of Pṛthvīdharabhāratī might have stayed on at Kāñcī and thus we come to have a sculpture of a *sannyāsin* of the *bhāratī* order.

2. Kāñcī-Māhātmya, X.

3. As regards the image of Śrī Śaṅkara in the precincts of the Kāmākṣī temple, it is asserted that it was originally an idol of Buddha and it had undergone re-chiselling so as to make it appear as that of Śrī Śaṅkara.

Within the four rājavīthis in Big Kāñcī are situated the Kāmākṣī temple dedicated to Devī Kāmākṣī, Kālī Koil dedicated to Kālī, Mahākāleśvar temple by the side of Kālī temple and Airāvātīśvarar temple dedicated to Śiva, the temple of Śaṅkupāṇi Pillayār dedicated to Vināyaka, Kumarakoṣṭha dedicated to Kumāra-Subrahmaṇya, and Ulahalandār temple dedicated to Lord Trivikrama Viṣṇu. A temple dedicated to Sūrya also existed nearby but now has become extinct.

In the same way, there might have been temples-dedicated to Buddhist and Jaina faiths in and around the Kāmākṣī temple. In course of time, they might have been deserted on the decay of these faiths. The idols of Buddhist and Jaina pantheon are found scattered in that locality. In the Ekāmreśvara temple we find the images of Buddhist slabs in the walls of its outer *prākāra*. This does not mean that this temple was originally dedicated to Buddha and later it was fashioned so as to appear as the temple of Lord Śiva.

The argument that the *mūrtis* of Buddha were rechistelled in the form of Śrī Śaṅkara is wrong on the ground that the main purpose of chistelling and installing a sculpture is to worship reverently, and reverential worship one cannot expect to have in respect of rechistelled figures. Such chistelling and remodelling cannot command reverence either from the Buddhists or from the Hindus. A new *mūrti* of Śrī Śaṅkara could easily have been sculptured instead of rechistelling Buddha's image into that of Śrī Śaṅkara.

Śrī Mahāmahopādhyāya Gopinath Kavirāj in his work *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti aur Sādhana* observes as follows:

अपने रहने केलिये आचार्य शङ्करने काञ्ची कामकोटिपीठ में ही स्थान बनाया था। प्रसिद्ध है कि काञ्ची में कामाक्षी देवी के मन्दिर में जहाँ पर आचार्य शङ्करजी की पाषणमयी मूर्ति है, उसी स्थान में उन्हें सिद्धि प्राप्त हुई थी।

In the Ekāmreśvara temple there is an image of a *sannyāsin* with a *daṇḍa*, with the sacred thread alone, the cloth after a dip in water being in the process of drying up. In no *kṣetra* other than Kāñcī can one find as many images of Advaita-sannyāsins.

In the Iravāttaneśvarar temple at Kāñcī which belongs to the Pallava period we find in a niche in the wall the image of Śrī Vyāsa by the side of Dakṣiṇāmūrti. To the left of that image is an *ekadaṇḍa sannyāsin*, a boy of sixteen with *daṇḍa* in his hand and with just a few sprouts of hair on the head and with no beard on his chin as he

is young. This could easily be identified as the figure of Śrī Śaṅkara in his teens seated near Vyāsa. This sculpture has been discovered by Sri C. Sivaramamurti, Director, National Museum, New Delhi.

In Śivāsthānam in the South Eastern border of *Viṣṇu-kāncī kṣetra*, the *sanctum sanctorum*, which is a *gajaprṣṭa-vimānam*, has in its western wall a *somāskandamūrti* and an Advaita-*sannyāsin* doing *daṇḍa-vandana* on the *garuḍāsana* as is usual when sannyāsins make *daṇḍa-vandana*. In this temple the idol of Dakṣiṇāmūrti in the southern wall of *garbhagrha* is most prominent. The beaming countenance of the *mūrti* is unique and is not found anywhere else.

In the *Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya* it is said that Śaṅkara reached Kāncī and offered worship to Ekāmreśvara and then to Viśvanātha (who is on the banks of Sarvatīrtha). He then went to pay obeisance to Goddess Kāmākṣi who is in the form of *bilakāśa* as if she desires to know the heart of Lord Śiva.

तत्र एकाम्राधीश्वरं विश्वनाथं नत्वा गम्यं स्वीयभाग्यातिशीत्या ।
देवीं धामान्तर्गतमन्तकारेर्हार्द्रं रुद्रस्येव जिज्ञास्यमानाम् ॥

Śrī Śaṅkara then offered worship to Kallāleśa who is nearby. The verse which states this is as follows:

कल्लालेशं द्राक्ततो नातिदूरे लक्ष्मीकान्तं सवसन्तं पुराणम् ।
कारुण्याद्रखान्तमन्तादिशून्यं दृष्ट्वा देव सन्तुतोषं एकभक्त्या ॥

The commentators construe the word *kallāleśa* with *lakṣmīkānta* and interprets it to mean Lord Varadarāja. But the word *kallāleśa* does not mean either etymologically or conventionally Lord Varadarāja. A careful study of *Śivajñānabodham*, *Tēvāram*, and *Tiruvīlaiyāḍal Purāṇam* shows that the word *kallāla* means a sturdy bunyan tree.

- (i) கல்லால் நிழல் மலை வில்லார் அருளிய பொல்லார்
இணைமலர் நல்லார் புனைவரே.

(ii) கல்லால் நிழல் மேயவனே

கல்லாலின் புடையமர்ந்து நான்மறை ஆறங்கமுதற் சுற்ற கேள்வி
வல்லார்கள் நால்வர்க்கும் வாக்கிறந்த பூரணமாய் மறைக்கப் பாலாய்

எல்லாமாய் அல்லதுமாய் இருந்ததனை இருந்தபடி இருந்து காட்டி
சொல்லாமற் சொன்னவரை நினையாமல் நினையந்து பவத்
தொடக்கை வெல்வாம்

The word *kallāleśa* should therefore be taken to mean the Lord who is seated under the banyan tree, that is, Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Thus the verse must be taken to mean: 'Śrī Śaṅkara then had a *darśan* of *Kallāleśa* (that is, Dakṣiṇāmūrti at Śivāsthānam), and afterwards had a *darśan* of Lakṣmīkānta who is nearby to Śivāsthānam and was very much pleased.'

4. *Kṛṣṇoṣṇīṣam. . . kṛṣṇavāsasaṁ. . . mahābhairavaṁ bhairavācāryam
apaśyat. Harṣacarita: University of Kerala Sanskrit Series, No. 187,
Third Ucchvāsa, p. 163.*

VEDĀNTA IN TEN VERSES

Daśaślokī of Śaṅkara

T. M. P. Mahadevan and N. Veezhinathan

The incident that led to the composition of this poem by Śrī Śaṅkara is narrated by Mādhavācārya in his *Śaṅkara-Vijaya* as follows:-

The boy Śaṅkara left his village-home, renouncing the world, and proceeded northward seeking his Master. On the banks of the Narmada he met his Master, Govinda Bhagavat-pāda. Śaṅkara expressed to Govinda his wish to be instructed in *Brahma-vidyā*. Govinda knew through insight the one who had come in the guise of a disciple. Yet, he put him the question, "Who are you?" In reply, Śaṅkara declared in ten verses the nature of the absolute Self that is the real 'I'. Greatly pleased, Govinda praised Śaṅkara and declared that he knew that Śaṅkara was the great Lord Śaṅkara himself.

In the *Daśa-ślokī*, Śrī Śaṅkara declares the true nature of the non-dual Self through the application of the rule of residue (*pāriśeṣya-nyāya*). What remains as the residue after all the

* Courtesy: *Vedānta in Ten Verses*, Śaṅkara Vihār, Chennai, 1965.

phenomena have been sublated is the non-dual Self, the real 'I'. The objective world of things that is experienced in the state of waking gets sublated in the dream state; the dream-world of idea-images disappears in deep-sleep. Even in the absence of both these worlds—the objective and the subjective, the Self shines as pure awareness. Sleep is not a state of nothingness; for, to be aware of nothing is not itself to be nothing. The Self is not contradicted at any time or by anything. When all else has disappeared, it remains. When space has been annihilated and time has come to a stop, no damage is done to the Self. It is the ever-constant, unvarying reality that is referred to in the Upaniṣads by such terms as Ātman and Brahman. The Self is auspicious, the highest value; it is pure consciousness, the non-dual Absolute. Through proper inquiry (vicāra) one should realize that the Absolute (Brahman) is the Self (Ātman), the substrate of 'I' (aham). In the *Daśa-ślokī*, Śaṅkara teaches the grand truth of the Transcendent Identity in words which are peerless in their power to awaken the seeker from the slumber of ignorance.

[1]

न भूमिर्न तोयं न तेजो न वायुः
 न खं नेन्द्रियं वा न तेषां समूहः ।
 अनैकान्तिकत्वात् सुषुप्त्येकसिद्धः
 तदेकोऽवशिष्टः शिवः केवलोऽहम् ॥

Neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor ether, nor sense-organ, nor their aggregate (am I), because they are inconstant. That which is the one established in sleep, that one which remains (after the sublation of all else)*that auspicious absolute (Self) I am.

Each system of philosophy has to deal with three topics—those relating to God (Īśvara), soul (jīva) and the world (jagat). While the pluralistic and theistic schools regard these three as distinct realities, Advaita teaches that the basic reality, Brahman, is

one and non-dual. The truth of non-duality is the purport of the Upaniṣads, the fundamental texts of Vedānta.

The major texts such as 'That thou art' (*CU*, 6.8.7), 'I am Brahman' (*BU*, 1.4.10) signify Brahman. Brahman is sometimes represented as the all-pervading principle. And, at other times, it is subjectively represented as the inner spirit or *pratyak caitanya* of the individual soul or self. The term, 'that' in the Upaniṣadic sentence 'That thou art' gives us a knowledge of Brahman as the all-pervading principle, while the term 'thou' gives us a notion of the inner spirit. This distinction is not to be taken as final. What the Upaniṣadic text 'That thou art' signifies is the same, viz. the non-dual spirit.

In the work *Daśa-ślokī*, Śaṅkara explains the import of the term 'thou' in the first three verses, of the term 'that' in the next three verses and of the sentence 'That thou art' in the last four verses.

The term 'thou' primarily refers to the individual soul characterized by duality like the qualities of being an agent, enjoyer, etc.; and it secondarily implies its true nature which is pure consciousness and which is termed inner spirit. Before setting forth the view of Advaita as regards the nature of the sense of the term 'thou', Śaṅkara refers to various theories and critically examines them.

(1) The materialist admits four elements—earth, water, fire and air. The living body is a particular concatenation of the four elements, and it is characterized by sentience. And, the materialist believes that the physical body as characterized by sentience is the Self.

Some followers of the same school hold that the eye and other sense organs are characterized by sentience and not the physical body because we have the cognitions like 'I see,' 'I hear,' etc. And each of the senses is the Self.

Some others of the same school hold that the aggregate of all the sense organs is the Self. Yet others maintain that mind is the Self because it is the means of determinate knowledge. And others

hold that because in the case of yogins the mind is dissolved and yet they continue to live, the vital airs constitute the Self.

(2) The Buddhist Vijñānavāda admits the Self to be *Vijñāna* (consciousness) and it further holds that it is momentary.

(3) The Mādhyamika school of Buddhism denies reality even to the momentary consciousness. And in this system only the void is viewed as the Self.

(4) The followers of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika regard the Self as omnipresent and as an agent and enjoyer. They make jñāna or knowledge an attribute of the Self, and that too, not an essential but only an adventitious one. And the Self in their systems is basically non-sentient.

(5) The followers of Sāṅkhya and Pātanjala-yoga regard the Self as mere enjoyer and as sentient by nature.

(6) The Advaita view is that the Self is attributeless, absolute and pure consciousness. It is, on account of avidyā, that the Self comes to be endowed with the attributes of agency, etc. And these characteristics do not affect the Self in any way.

Śaṅkara says that the Self which is the basis of the cognition 'I' is that which is without a second (*eka*), which is not sublated after all duality has been sublated (*avaśiṣṭa*), which is supreme bliss and consciousness, and which is free from all attributes. The Upaniṣads as understood by Advaita teach that the Self which is the basis of the cognition 'I' is non-dual and absolute, that it cannot be negated by any means, that it is the basis of all proofs and as such does not require any proof.

Śaṅkara explains the truth of Advaita by showing the untenability of the other views. He first refutes the view of the materialist that the body is the Self in the words 'Neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air'. The term 'I' (*aham*) in the last quarter of the verse is to be connected with all negations. 'I am not what is known as earth' and 'earth is not what I am'. In this way the absence of mutual identification is to be understood. When it is said that each one of the four elements is not the Self, it should be

taken that the view that the aggregation of the four elements, viz. the physical body, is the Self also stands refuted.

The words '*na kham*' contain a refutation of the view of the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism that only the void is the Self. The word '*kha*' conveys the sense of void.

The word '*nendriyam*' contains a refutation of the view of the followers of the materialistic school which teaches that each of the senses is the Self; and the words '*na teṣām samūhah*' contain a refutation of the view that the aggregate of the senses is the Self.

By the refutation of the view that the elements are the Self, the theories that the vital airs and the mind are the Self also stand refuted.

By the rejection of mentalism, Vijñānavāda which holds that momentary consciousness is the Self has been shown to be unsound; for momentary consciousness is only a function of the mind. The view of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school that the Self is an agent and an enjoyer and also the view of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga that the Self is mere enjoyer should also be deemed to have been rejected by the rejection of the view that the mind is the Self. The qualities of being an agent, enjoyer, etc. belong to the mind. Hence when it is denied that the mind is the Self, it follows that none of the attributes of the mind can be the Self.

The reason for rejection of body, senses and elements is contained in the expression—*anaikāntikatvāt* which means *vyabhicāritvāt*—'being inconstant or destructible by nature'. Anything that does not retain the same nature at all times—past, present and future, and at all places is called a *vyabhicārin*. The body, senses, etc. are such because they are subject to growth and destruction, and for this reason they are not the Self either individually or collectively. Śaṅkara points out that the view of Vedānta is that the Self which is of the nature of consciousness and which is absolute is constant, unlike the body, senses, etc. It might be said that the Self is not constant as it does not exist in the state of deep

sleep, because one who wakes up from sleep says, 'I did not know anything when I was asleep.' This view is wrong because, as Śaṅkara says, the Self is *susuptyeka siddha*. An analysis of deep sleep experience reveals the constancy of the Self. The Self is the witness of the state of deep-sleep. In that state, the true nature of the Self is veiled by *avidyā*. The recollection of one waking up from sleep 'I did not know anything when I was asleep,' 'I did not know anything when I was asleep,' refers to the existence of *avidyā* in the state of deep-sleep. And, the Self is the witness of *avidyā* in that state. If not, how could one recollect his experience of that state? So the Self is the witness of the state of deep-sleep, and there is not its absence.

According to the view of the other schools, the Self is identical with either the body, or any of the organs of sense, or the mind, or its attributes. But these elements, as we have shown, are inconstant. The Self alone is constant, unsublated and ever the same. It is one (*eka*) and does not disappear with the disappearance of the phenomenal world. The Self is devoid of attributes, and is of the nature of pure consciousness and infinite bliss.

[2]

न वर्णा न वर्णाश्रमाचारधर्मा
 न मे धारणाध्यानयोगादयोऽपि ।
 अनात्माश्रयाहं ममाध्यासहानात्
 तदेकोऽवशिष्टः शिवः केवलोऽहम् ॥

Neither the castes, nor the rules of conduct relating to the castes and stages of life, nor even concentration, meditation, yoga, etc. pertain to me; for the superimposition of 'I' and 'mine' which is dependent on the not-self has been destroyed. That one which remains (after the sublation of all else)—that auspicious absolute (Self) I am.

In the first verse it was stated that the Self is pure consciousness and is devoid of any attribute. Now, the *pūrvapakṣin* contends

that, if the Self were of such nature, then the knowledge that one belongs to a particular caste should be explained as based upon the mutual superimposition of the Self—the pure consciousness on the one hand, and the body, senses, etc. on the other. In that case, the Vedic texts such as 'A Brahmin should sacrifice' would lose their validity, as the distinction of caste, etc. do not really exist in the Self and also no activity could be prescribed with reference to the Self which does not really have the characteristics of being an agent, enjoyer, etc. If the Vedic texts could claim no validity, then the Self which is said to be known only from the Upaniṣads which are parts of the Veda cannot be established. The pūrvapakṣin contends that the Vedic texts such as 'A Brahmin should sacrifice' refer to the Self which really has agency, etc. and also belongs to a particular caste, etc. The conclusion is that the Self is not devoid of any attribute; and the characteristics of being an agent, enjoyer, etc. and also the distinctions of caste, etc. do really belong to it.

Now, it is replied that the validity of the Vedic texts and the distinction that one is an agent and an enjoyer and that one belongs to a particular caste are admitted to be relevant before the rise of the intuitive knowledge of the oneness of Self and Brahman. But after the rise of such knowledge all these except the Self in its attributeless nature cease to be valid.

The word *varṇāḥ* (castes) in this verse means the fourfold caste of Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. The word *āśramāḥ* (stages of life) refers to Brahmachārins (celibates), Grhasthas (householders), Vānaprasthas (hermits) and Sannyāsins (mendicants). The word *ācārāḥ* (religious practices) means the purification of the body, ablution, etc. The word *dharmāḥ* (duties) means the observance of celibacy, service of one's preceptor, etc.

Here the compound—*varṇāśramācāradharmāḥ* is dissolved thus: The phrase *varṇāśramāḥ* is to be taken as a *dvandva* compound and the phrase *ācāradharmāḥ* also is to be taken in a similar way. And, these two compounds should be grouped as a genitive

tatpuruṣa. Thus, we arrive at the sense of the religious practices and duties of the castes and also the religious practices and duties of the stages of life. *Dhāraṇā* means resting of mind on Brahman by excluding the external objects. *Yoga* means the control over the functions of mind.

And, by the word *ādi* (etc.), in the text, Vedāntic study (*śravaṇa*), reflection (*manana*) and contemplation (*nididhyāsana*) are referred to. The Ācārya sets forth the reason why all these do not exist in the Self after the rise of the knowledge of the oneness of Self and Brahman. And the reason is: *anātmāśraya aham-mama adhyā-sahānāt*. The word *anātma* means avidyā which is opposed to the usage 'I am the absolute Brahman'. The super-imposition in the form of 'I' and 'mine' has avidyā as its material cause. The intuitive knowledge of the oneness of Self and Brahman annihilates the notions of 'I' and 'mine' with its cause, avidyā. Then, the feelings that 'I am a Brahmin', 'I observe religious practices', 'I pursue Vedāntic study', etc. which are the outcome of the notions of 'I' and 'mine', also cease to exist. And the Self as pure consciousness remains.

To be continued. . .

THE INFLUENCE OF ŚAṄKARA'S
WRITINGS ON RĀMĀNUJA*

N. S. Ramanuja Tātācārya

The system of Vedānta based upon the Upaniṣads has been formulated by many a great sage like Bādari, Auḍulomi and others; and this we know from references to them in the *Brahma-sūtra*. The texts composed by these, however, are not extant now. The *Brahma-sūtra* composed by Bādarāyaṇa consisting of aphorisms that substantiate the teachings of the Upaniṣads has been commented upon by great preceptors who flourished before Śaṅkara. Their works too are not available now. The commentaries of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva on the *Brahma-sūtra* explaining the import of the Upaniṣads to be Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita respectively are current now.

In this paper an attempt is made to explain the influence of Śaṅkara's writings upon Rāmānuja.

There are certain Upaniṣadic texts which speak of the difference among the insentient world, the sentient souls, and God.

* Courtesy: *Perspectives of Śaṅkara*, Rashtriya Śaṅkara Jayanti Mahotsava Commemoration Volume, HRD, 1989, pp. 241-52.

(1) The text of the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*:

samyuktametad kṣaramakṣaram ca
vyaktāvyaktam-bharate viśvamīśaḥ¹

makes a clear reference to the three principles of *kṣara* (the world) *akṣara* (the souls), and *Īśvara* (God).

(2) Another text of the same Upaniṣad:

jñājñau dvau ajau īsanīśau
ajā hyekā bhokṛ-bhogārthayuktā²

refers not only to the above three factors but also to the difference among them. The word '*jña*' stands for God, the omniscient Being. The word '*ajña*' stands for the soul of limited knowledge. The expression '*ajā hi ekā*' refers to *prakṛti* which is insentient and which is different from the former two. The expression '*īsanīśau*' is a Vedic usage with the loss of *savarṇadīrgha*. It stands for *Īśa*, the God, and *anīśa*, the soul which is controlled by God. The expression '*bhokṛ-bhogārthayuktā*' means that *prakṛti* is associated with sound and other factors which are the means to happiness or misery as the case may be in regard to the souls. In this passage the difference between God and soul is emphasised by referring to the former as omniscient and the latter as one with limited knowledge. Further, the distinction between the soul and *prakṛti* too is stated by referring to the former as an experient and the latter as an object of enjoyment.

(3) Yet another text of the same Upaniṣad:

kṣaram-pradhānam-amṛtākṣaram haraḥ
kṣarātmānau īśate deva ekaḥ³

explains in a different manner the meanings of the terms '*kṣara*' and '*akṣara*' referred to in the passage "*samyuktam-etad kṣaram-akṣaram ca*" cited above and emphasizes the distinction among God, the soul and *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* or *pradhāna* in view of its

nature of undergoing change at every moment is referred to as *kṣara*. The word 'hara' etymologically means that which experiences the objects of the world and thus stands for the soul. In the expression '*amṛtākṣaram*' the word '*amṛta*' which is an adjective conveys the ground on the basis of which the soul is referred to as *akṣara*. The ground is that the soul in view of its being free from any change (*amṛta*) is *akṣara*. The word 'hara' conventionally conveys the sense of Rudra; and conventional usage is more powerful than the etymological one. Yet in the complement of the text, "*kṣarātmānau īśate deva ekaḥ*," the word '*ātman*' which stands for the soul is used as explanatory of the meaning of the term 'hara' found in the previous line. Hence it is ascertained that the conventional meaning of the word 'hara' is not intended to be conveyed here. In this text too, the distinction between the soul and *prakṛti* is conveyed by referring to the former as free from any change and to the latter as subject to change. In the same way, the distinction, between God on the one hand and the soul and *prakṛti* on the other, is conveyed by referring to the former as the controller of the latter.

(4) In the text:

pradhāna-kṣetrajñapatir guṇeśaḥ
saṁsāramokṣa-sthitibandha-hetuḥ⁴

the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* reiterates the three factors of God, soul and *prakṛti*. The terms '*guṇeśaḥ*' conveys God as the controller of three factors of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. God is spoken of as *pati* or the Lord of *prakṛti* (*pradhāna*) and of the soul (*kṣetrajña*). He is the cause of both bondage in the form of the experience of transmigratory existence and release from it.

(5) Another hymn of the same Upaniṣad:

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariśasvajāte

tayoḥ anyañ pippalaṃ svādu atti
anaśnan anyo abhicākaśīti⁵

states that two birds with beautiful wings inseparable from each other reside in one and the same tree—the body. Of these two, one experiences the fruits of its past merits (and demerits) and the other one without experiencing any fruit manifests of its own accord. In this hymn the expression 'dvā suparṇā' refers to God and the soul, and the expression "samānam vṛkṣam", the prakṛti which has transformed into the body. Further, the soul is said to be dependent upon its past merits and demerits as it is spoken of as experiencing the fruits of the latter, while God is said to be independent of any merit or demerit as He is referred to as a non-experient. The distinction between God and soul has thus been brought out clearly.

In this way there are certain texts which speak of the world and soul as identical with supreme reality and also of the absence of any entity apart from the latter. These texts are: (i) "sarvaṃ khalu idam brahma"⁶ (The world given in perception is Brahman indeed.); (ii) "ayam ātmā brahma"⁷ (This soul is Brahman.); (iii) "tat tvam asi"⁸ (You are That.); and (iv) "sadeva saumya idam agra āsīt ekameva advitīyam"⁹ (Oh! Gentle one, this world prior to its creation existed as sat only which is one only without a second).

Now the question arises as to the mode of reconciling the two sets of Upaniṣadic texts—one speaking of the difference and the other of the non-difference among the world, the soul and God. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*¹⁰ states:

The texts such as "This soul in the body being supported by the supreme reality goes to the other world"¹¹ and the like speak of the difference between the soul and the supreme reality. The texts such as 'tat tvam asi' and the like refer to the non-difference between the two. It is impossible that there could be difference and non-difference between the two at one and the

same time. This, however, is not a defect. Elsewhere it has been proved that the relation between the soul and the supreme reality is similar to the one that exists between the space conditioned by the pot and the space that transcends the pot. Moreover, when the direct knowledge of the true nature of soul as identical with the supreme reality arises from the texts like '*tat tvam asi*', the characteristic of being a transmigratory entity is removed from the soul and the characteristic of being the creator of the world, from God. The entire realm of duality caused by the indeterminable *māyā* is sublated by the valid knowledge of reality. The question of creation of the world and the question of non-creation of only pleasant objects do not have any relevance then. We have often said that transmigratory existence is due to the false identification of the soul with the body-mind complex.

From the above it follows that according to Śaṅkara the identity of the soul with Brahman conveyed by the texts such as '*tat tvam asi*' is real and that the difference between the two is fancied by *avidyā* or *māyā*. The texts that speak of the difference between the two only restate the difference that is fancied.

Rāmānuja in his commentary on the *adhikaraṇa* entitled "*amśo nānāvyapadeśāt*"¹² states:

A two-fold reference to the relation between Brahman and soul is noticed. The difference between the two is set forth in the Upaniṣads involving the relation of being a creator and the created, the controller and the controlled, omniscience and of limited knowledge, independence and dependence, purity and impurity, possession of auspicious qualities and the opposite of them, and the characteristic of being a Lord and that of being a subordinate. The texts like "*tat tvam asi*", etc., speak of the identity between the two. In order to maintain these two references to be primary, it is essential to admit that the soul is a part of Brahman. It cannot be said that the reference to the difference between the soul and Brahman can be explained as mere restatement of the difference that is known from perceptual evidence. The fact that the soul is controlled by Brahman and is dependent upon the latter and the difference between the two based upon this position—all these do not come within the range of perception. Hence it should not be said that the Upaniṣads which speak of the creation of the world, etc., convey only fancied entities as they restate what is known through other *pramāṇas*.

Thus Rāmānuja advocates the view that the difference between the soul and Brahman is real. The soul is a part and also is the body of Brahman. In ordinary experience, the words that are used to signify the body are well-known to convey the one who has the body. Hence the texts like '*tat tvam asi*', etc. which speak of the non-difference between the soul and Brahman convey Brahman as associated with the soul, its body. In other words, they convey the complex of Brahman and the soul to be one. This line of explanation must be extended in the case of the texts that speak of the non-difference between Brahman and the insentient world.

While commenting upon the aphorism, "*pūrvavadvā*,"¹³ Rāmānuja states:

The insentient object too, like the soul, is a part of Brahman as it is adjectival to the latter being not capable of existing independently. The reference to the non-difference is primary in the sense that it points to a part of the complex whole. The references to the difference also are primary in view of the fact that there is difference between the adjectival feature and the substantive feature. The fact of Brahman being free from any defect is also well taken care of.

In the *Śrībhāṣya* on the '*jijñāsādhikaraṇa*'¹⁴ Rāmānuja states:

God, soul and the world are set forth in the Upaniṣads as different among themselves. Some texts speak of the world and soul on the one hand, and God on the other as related to each other as body and soul and as adjectival and substantive features. Hence there is no conflict in referring to the causal relation between God on the one hand and the soul and the world on the other, and at the same time proclaiming the identity between the cause and the effect.

It follows that there is vast difference in the fundamental tenets of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. When such is the case, it may be asked as to how it is possible to maintain the influence of the writings of Śaṅkara upon Rāmānuja. It is answered that in regard to the

method of interpretation, Rāmānuja follows the method adopted by Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja's views on Brahman endowed with attributes are precisely the same as those of Śaṅkara.

The view of the Viśiṣṭādvaitin is: in the expression like 'Caitra knows,' the word 'Caitra' which is significative of the body is known to convey the soul. In the same way, any word which is significative of the sense different from Brahman and which is employed in śruti with reference to Brahman is decided to be conveying Brahman having the soul and the insentient world as its body. This position is arrived at on the basis of the teaching of the *antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* according to which the world consisting of the sentient and insentient beings is the body of Brahman. This mode of explanation is taken from the text of Śaṅkara. In his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*tadabhidyānādeva tu talliṅgāt saḥ*"¹⁵ Śaṅkara states:

A doubt having arisen as to whether the elements such as *vīyat (ākāśa)*, etc., themselves create their own effects or whether it is the Highest Lord Himself abiding in the elements as their self that creates the various effects after profound reflection, the conclusion of the opponent of Vedānta is that the elements themselves create their own effects. Whence is it so? Because the scriptures declare their independence in that respect thus: '*vāyu* came into being from *ākāśa*, *agni* from *vāyu*'¹⁶ etc. This being the conclusion arrived at by the opponent of Vedānta, it is said: it is the Highest Lord alone who abides in these elements as their self that creates each and every effect after profound reflection. Whence is it so? Because there is an indicatory mark about Him. The scriptures by stating that 'He who abides in the earth, and is within the earth, and whom the earth knows not, and whose body is the earth and who controls the earth from within'¹⁷ indicate that the activity of the elements is to be seen only when they are presided over by the Highest Self.

From the above it is clear that according to Śaṅkara, the words like *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, etc., in the texts like '*Vāyu* came into being from *ākāśa*, *agni* from *vāyu*', etc. are significative of Brahman, the Highest Self, which has *ākāśa*, etc. as its body and which

presides over them. This mode of interpretation found in Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* is adopted by Rāmānuja.

Śaṅkara explains the term '*trilokātmā*' in the *Viṣṇusahasra-nāma* in a twofold manner thus: (i) He who is the self of the three worlds by being their controller is *trilokātmā*, or (ii) from whom the three worlds do not really differ. Of these, the first interpretation is the basis of Rāmānuja's view.

It is well-known that the section entitled, '*antaryāmy-adhikaraṇa*' in the *Brahma-sūtra* discusses the import of the texts that speak of the sentient and the insentient as constituting the body of Brahman. While commenting upon this section, Śaṅkara says:

That the ability to control is the attribute only of the Highest self, who dwelling in the aggregate of all this varied creation, such as the earth, etc. and in the deity, etc. controls all from within, is reasonably sustainable. Omnipotence too is sustainable in the case of the Highest self alone as it is the cause of all creation.¹⁸

That Brahman is the *śarīrī* as existing in the sentient and the insentient beings and controlling them from within is clearly explained in the *antaryāmibrāhmaṇa*. The soul is signified by the word '*vijñāna*' in the *kāṇva* recension of the *brāhmaṇa*, while it is signified by the word '*ātman*' in the *mādhyandina* recension. And it is referred to as the body or *śarīra*; and Brahman is referred to as the *śarīrī* or the self of the soul by dwelling in it and controlling it. Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, '*śarīra-ścobhaye'pi hi bhedena enamadhīyate*,'¹⁹ also confirms the above view. And this mode of explanation by Śaṅkara is highly favourable to Rāmānuja's view. Further, according to Rāmānuja, Brahman has the sentient and the insentient beings as its body and it is identified as Lord Nārāyaṇa. And, the *antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* confirms this position.

Śaṅkara identifies the *antaryāmin* with Nārāyaṇa when he states in the commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*

that the Lord designated as Nārāyaṇa directs the presiding deities of the earth, etc. towards their functions. The text of the *Subālopaniṣad*:

sa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛto
divyo deva eko nārāyaṇaḥ

wherein the *antaryāmin* is identified with Nārāyaṇa is the authority for Śaṅkara's view.

While commenting upon the *pāñcarātrādhikaraṇa*,²⁰ Śaṅkara states:

It is said that Lord Nārāyaṇa who is the supreme self and the self of all and who is well-known as transcending the undeveloped exists by differentiating Himself in a manifold form. This view is not sought to be rejected by us. It is because in the Upaniṣads it is said that the supreme self becomes manifold. Further, propitiation of God with concentrated mind is recommended and this too is not rejected by us, as loving devotion towards God is well-known in the śruti and the smṛti.

The above observation is highly favourable to Rāmānuja's view. Śaṅkara holds the view that Lord Nārāyaṇa is well-known in the Upaniṣads as the supreme self when he states that Lord Nārāyaṇa is the supreme being by transcending the undeveloped. This reminds one of the statement in the *Kāthopaniṣad*²¹ that the supreme Self is higher than the undeveloped and it is the ultimate. And Śaṅkara in his commentary on this passage states that the supreme goal is Lord Viṣṇu designated as Vāsudeva.

While commenting upon the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*prakṛtāitāvattvaṃ hi pratiśedhati tato bravīti ca bhūyaḥ*"²² Śaṅkara raises the doubt as to whether the text "*neti neti*" negates the *mūrta-prapañca* and the *amūrtaprapañca*, or Brahman only, or both. The *prima facie* view he places before himself is that it negates both, and his final view is that it negates only the *mūrta-* and *amūrta-prapañca*. In support of his final position he says:

After expounding with great effort Brahman as the import of the Upaniṣads on the basis of the texts such as "He who realizes Brahman attains that transcendent one," "Brahman is real, consciousness and infinite," and the like no one would seek to negate it. For, as the maxim goes, it is better not to defile one's feet with mud than to defile and then to wash it off.

This very maxim Rāmānuja extends to the case of the negation of the world too. He says:

It is not proper to hold that the text "*neti neti*" negates the forms presented in Brahman. In that case it would be an instance of the utterance of a confused person. For, no one with a clear understanding would negate what is conveyed in respect of Brahman as its adjectival feature—a fact unknown from any other means of knowledge.²³

In the same way, according to Śaṅkara, Lord Nārāyaṇa is the supreme deity among the conditioned forms of Brahman. The invocatory verse of Śaṅkara's *Gītā-bhāṣya* runs as follows:

nārāyaṇaḥ paro'vyaktāt aṇḍamavyaktasambhavam,
aṇḍasyāntastvime lokāḥ saptadvīpā ca medinī.

Ānandagiri while commenting on this verse states:

The word *nara* stands for the group of bodies. And the reflected images of the consciousness in the bodies are known as *nārāḥ*. The substratum of these, their controller and their indwelling spirit is Nārāyaṇa. It is with reference to Him, the *antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* and the Vedic hymn known as *Nārāyaṇasūkta* are being studied. By this the supreme principle which is the import of the *Gītā* is conveyed.

All this is favourable to Rāmānuja's system of Vedānta.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord has said that "four types of meritorious people worship Me, Oh, Arjuna: one who is afflicted, one who is desirous of knowledge, one who seeks material prosperity, and the knower of the truth." "Of these, the knower of

the truth is the supreme as he is always devoted to me; I am the most lovable one of the knower of the truth and the latter is the one whom I love most."

Caturvidhāḥ bhajante mām narāḥ sukṛtino'rjuna,
 ārtto jijñāsuḥ arthārthī jñānī ca bharataṣabha.
 teṣām jñānī nityayuktaḥ ekabhaktiḥ viśiṣyate,
 priyo hi jñānino'tyartham-aham sa ca mama priyaḥ.²⁴

The word 'jñānī' is explained by Śaṅkara as one who knows the true nature of Viṣṇu (*viṣṇoḥ tattvavit*).

In the same chapter the Lord says: "Those who worship other Gods with a view to attain their desired ends attain them, as dispensed by Me; those who worship Me attain Me too, besides their desired ends."

sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ tasyārādhanam īhate,
 labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vihitān hi tān.
 Antavattu phalam teṣām tadbhavatyalpamedhasām,
 devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti māmapi.²⁵

Śaṅkara, while commenting upon these passages, states that the Lord expresses his sense of pity upon those who do not worship Him with a view to attain the highest good although the effort involved in the process of worshipping Him and the other Gods is the same. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his commentary, *Gūdhārtha-dīpikā*, states that the effort in the process of worshipping other Gods and the Lord is the same. My devotees, however, would attain the highest human end, namely, liberation. The devotees of other Gods attain their desired ends, but they would experience transmigratory existence. Hence let the afflicted, the seekers after knowledge and of material prosperity resort to Me and attain easily the highest human end. This is the considered view of the Lord, the most compassionate one.

In his commentary on the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*, Śaṅkara has shown the supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu over the other Gods. (1) The word "*sarva-loka-maheśvara*" is explained as one who is supreme by being the Lord of Brahmā and others who control the Lord. (2) The word '*arcita*' is explained as one who is worshipped by Lord Brahmā and others that are worshipped by the entire world. (3) The word '*kathita*' is explained thus: it is Lord Viṣṇu whom the Vedas speak as the supreme; or, He is one who is spoken of by all the Vedas. The *Kāthopaniṣad* states that the supreme truth is proclaimed by all the Vedas. To the question as to what is that supreme truth, the *Kāthopaniṣad* states that it is higher than the senses, their objects, the mind and the intellect. It is higher than the undeveloped. There is nothing higher than it. And the Lord who is proclaimed thus is *Kathita*. (4) *vihāyasagatiḥ*: He whose abode is in the etheric region. He who is desirous of release pursues the path of devotion or *prapatti*. He reaches the world of Vaikuṅṭha through the path of Gods. There he worships the Lord Vāsudeva, who is in the couch of Ādiśeṣa. He is being asked by the Lord to reveal his identity. He replies that he was immersed in the ocean of transmigration from time immemorial and by the grace of God he has reached this world of Vaikuṅṭha and has attained the full manifestation of his attributive consciousness. The Lord directs him to stay there itself and to have the experience similar to that of the eternally released souls. He stays there, worships God and never returns to earth. This is the view of Rāmānuja, and this is based on the authority of the section of the Upaniṣad entitled "*paryāṅka-vidyā*". This subject has been set forth by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, "*upapannaḥ tallakṣaṇārthopapatteḥ*":

The journey along the path of Gods is significant. It is discernible in the case of meditation upon the conditioned Brahman as in the case of *paryāṅka-vidyā*. Therein, ascending the couch, having conversation with Brahman who is seated on the couch and experiencing special smell, etc., which depend on the soul attaining a different place—all these are mentioned in the scriptures.²⁶

(5) The word 'atula' is explained in the sense that the Lord is excelled by none and equalled by few on the basis of the *Śvetāśvatara* text, "There is nothing like Him," and on the basis of the *Gītā* text, "There is none equal to Him and there is no question of his being excelled by someone." (6) *anuttamaḥ*—He who is excelled by none. (7) *padmanābhaḥ*—He who has in his navel the lotus that is the cause of the entire world. (8) *muktānām paramā gatiḥ*—He who is the ultimate goal of the liberated souls. Those who have reached Him never experience transmigration. (9) *viśiṣṭaḥ*—He who excels everything. (10) *śubheksaṇaḥ*—He whose gracious look grants spiritual felicity to those who seek after release, objects of enjoyment to those who desire material prosperity, purifies the sinful, dispels all doubts, and removes all *karma*. (11) *satām gatiḥ*—He who is the only resort of those who desire liberation. (12) *sukhadaḥ*—He who grants happiness in the form of liberation to the devotees. (13) *sulabhaḥ*—He who is attained easily by the offering of leaves, flowers, fruits, etc. out of devotion. (14) *suvrataḥ*—He who has a vow that is beneficial to all; Śrī Rāma's statement in the *Srīmad Rāmāyaṇa*: "This is my vow to offer protection on all grounds to one who resorts to me once with a sincere feeling that 'I am your servant'." (15) *stavyaḥ*—He who is praised by everyone and who does not praise anyone. These and other similar statements of Śaṅkara's in his *bhāṣyas* have influenced Rāmānuja.

NOTES

1. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 1.8.
2. *Ibid.*, 1.9.
3. *Ibid.*, 1.10.
4. *Ibid.*, 6.16.
5. *Ibid.*, 4.6.
6. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 3.14.1.
7. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, 2.

8. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.8.7.
9. *Ibid.*, 6.2.1.
10. *Brahma-sūtra*, 2.1.22.
11. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.3.35.
12. *Brahma-sūtra*, 2.3.7.
13. *Ibid.*, 3.2.8.
14. *Ibid.*, 1.1.1.
15. *Ibid.*, 2.3.13.
16. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.1.1.
17. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3.7.3.
18. *Brahma-sūtra*, 1.2.18.
19. *Ibid.*, 1.2.20.
20. *Ibid.*, 2.2.42.
21. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 3.10ff.
22. *Brahma-sūtra*, 3.2.22.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Bhagavad-gītā*, 7.16–17.
25. *Ibid.*, 7.22–23.
26. *Brahma-sūtra*, 3.3.30.

JIJÑĀSĀDHIKARĀṆA
(First Varṇaka)

N. Veezhinathan

It would appear almost as a superfluous insistence upon the obvious when we say that the proper study of mankind is man. Man is a complex of the spiritual element of consciousness and the material element of the psycho-physical organism of which the mind is the predominant factor. It is the confounding of these two—the permanent and the passing, owing to the radical error known as *avidyā* that is responsible for man's becoming an enworlded subject. He becomes falsely associated with the characteristics of being an agent (*karṭṛtva*), an experient (*bhokṭṛtva*), and a knower (*pramāṭṛtva*). These three characteristics constitute what is known as *saṁsāra*. Man, having thus become a *saṁsārin*, performs righteous deeds, commits interdicted actions, experiences their fruits, and thus undergoes cyclic existence in an endless manner. The hardships and sufferings, both physical and mental, entailed by his being involved in the transmigratory process leads him to the point of weariness or disgust. He discovers that material ends, whether visible or known only through the Veda, are unstable, quivering as leaves and

evanescent as lightning, and so are not solutions for his difficulties. He becomes aware of the futility of his attempts to achieve them and wearied with their useless repetition.¹ Thus, forced by his habitual suffering that swells with silence in his tormented soul, man seeks remedy to the cause of the evil, consisting of the characteristics of being an agent, an experient, and a knower that are adventitiously presented upon his essential nature—the remedy that would lead him to liberation or passionless serenity. That remedy, which Nārada has learnt from venerable seers, is the true knowledge of one's essential nature which is the Self, the consciousness-element.² The knowledge of the Self is variously termed *ātma-vidyā*, *brahma-vidyā*, or *brahmātmaikatva-vidyā*. It is the primary meaning of the word, "Upaniṣad". This word is derived from the root *sad* (*ṣadlṛ*) with *upa* and *ni* as prefixes, and *kvip* as termination. The preposition *upa* signifies nearness of the essential nature of man to the Self. And that nearness is identity between the two, or more strictly, the non-difference of the one from the other. The preposition *ni* conveys the sense of ascertainment. These two prepositions together mean firm knowledge that involves the identity between the essential nature of man and the Self. The root *sad* means "to unfasten" (*viśaraṇa*), "to reach" or "to unify" (*gati*) or "to destroy" (*avasādana*).³ The termination *kvip* means an agent. Since the knowledge of the Self unfastens the grip of avidyā, or destroys it, or unifies man with the Self, it is called Upaniṣad. This explanation Śaṅkara offers on the basis of the views of grammarians.⁴ He adds another explanation in his commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. The knowledge of the Self is called Upaniṣad, because in it the Self is embedded (*sad*) in a definite and explicit manner (*ni*) as the essence of man (*upa*).⁵ Thus, the word "Upaniṣad" primarily denotes "knowledge" and secondarily "a treatise," which serves as an aid in acquiring that knowledge.⁶

The *Vedānta-sūtra* ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa is helpful in identifying the true import of the Upaniṣads. It is also known as

Brahma-sūtra and *Śārīraka-sūtra*. Of these, the latter one seems to be its original title, as it brings out clearly the true nature of the jīva, which is the proper subject of study for man. The *Vedānta-sūtra*, according to the tradition of Advaita, contains five hundred and fifty-five aphorisms, which are arranged according to a definite and planned scheme in four chapters known as adhyāyas, and each adhyāya is divided into four sections called pādas. The first adhyāya entitled *samanvayādhyāya* explains that the final import of the Upaniṣads is the Self which is consciousness and bliss, and is non-dual. It also explains that the Self in its aspect of Īśvara is the material and the efficient cause of the world. The second adhyāya known as *avirodhādhyāya* is devoted to a critical examination and the final rejection of the view-points of the schools of Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Buddhism, Jainism, Pāśupata, and Pāñcarātra. The origination of space, etc. the nature of the jīva, and also the origination of sense-organs that serve as instruments of cognition in the case of the jīva are dealt with. The third adhyāya entitled *sāadhanādhyāya* deals with the means to liberation, and the fourth one designated as *phalādhyāya* treats of the nature of liberation.

Following closely a set arrangement, design or pattern, the aphorisms are grouped together in the form of adhikaraṇas. The term "*adhikaraṇa*" stands for an aphorism or a group of aphorisms comprising the entire text. It serves as the base for identifying select Upaniṣadic text or texts for detailed examination, by presenting arguments for and against, and thus enabling one to ascertain the true import of the text or texts. The total number of the adhikaraṇas under which the aphorisms are harmoniously grouped are one hundred and sixty-one.

Each Upaniṣadic text is likened to a flower in bloom. The body of the text of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, divided into several adhikaraṇas, serves the purpose of stringing them together into the form of a laurel wreath revealing the ultimate import of the Upaniṣadic texts.⁷

The first pāda of the first adhyāya consists of eleven adhikaraṇas. Of these, the first four adhikaraṇas, each one consisting of only one aphorism, serves as a preliminary, or as an antecedent, to an extended treatment, development, discussion, and presentation of the doctrines of Advaita. Śaṅkara's commentary thereon, wherein the essentials of Advaita have been expounded, has been divided by Padmapāda in his *Pañcapādikā* into nine varṇakas or sections.

The first adhikaraṇa is termed *jijñāsādhikaraṇa*; and Śaṅkara's commentary thereon is divided into four varṇakas. The first varṇaka gives details regarding the theme (*viśaya*) of the Upaniṣads, and the end (*prayojana*) to be attained by their study. The second varṇaka sets forth that the theme of the Upaniṣads is not covered by the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā school. The third varṇaka identifies the person qualified to study the Upaniṣads. And the fourth one explains that, although everyone has the knowledge of one's Self, which is the theme of the Upaniṣads, as "I", yet there are conflicting views as to its specific nature. Hence an inquiry into its specific nature through the study of the Upaniṣads aided by the *Vedānta-sūtra* is called for.

We shall now deal with the substance of the first varṇaka

The first adhikaraṇa entitled *jijñāsādhikaraṇa* consists of only one aphorism, "*atha atah brahmajijñāsā.*" The Upaniṣadic text that forms the subject-matter of discussion under this aphorism is: "Ātman is fit to be realized; for that purpose one shall pursue Vedāntic study, reflection, and meditation."⁸ The aphorism, however, does not lay down any direction. In order that the seeker of the truth may be actuated toward the study of Vedānta and in order that the aphorism may conform to the Upaniṣadic text in form, we have to incorporate the word "*kartavyā*" which means "to be undertaken". The aphorism would now read as:

atha atah brahmajijñāsā kartavyā.

The component parts of the word "*jijñāsā*" are the stem, *jñā*, and the suffix, *san*. The meaning of the stem is knowledge in general, and that of the suffix is desire. Neither knowledge nor desire can be related to the sense "to be undertaken", for both do not fall within the range of obligation. Hence the suffix, *san*, is taken to convey through secondary signification the sense of inquiry (*vicāra*). This is as it should be; for, the desire to have the knowledge of the Self would be fulfilled only when the latter is attained; and the latter could be attained only through the study of the Upaniṣads. Thus the suffix, *san*, leaves out its primary meaning of desire and conveys the sense of inquiry which is needed to fulfil one's desire. The stem, *jñā*, as has been said, is significative of knowledge in general, *jñāna-sāmānya*. It cannot be attained by inquiry into the import of the Upaniṣads. Hence it must be held that it secondarily signifies the intuitive knowledge of the Self (*vṛtti-sākṣātkāra*). The word "*atha*", as we shall see in the sequel, conveys the sense of subsequence to the attainment of competence to pursue Vedāntic study; and, the word "*ataḥ*" signifies the ground for pursuing Vedāntic study, viz. that the fruits of ritual-actions are non-eternal and liberation which is eternal results from the knowledge of the Self. The aphorism thus means:

Subsequent to the attainment of competence to pursue Vedāntic study (*atha*), since the Upaniṣads speak of liberation as attainable only by the knowledge of the Self (*ataḥ*), one shall inquire into the nature of the Self by the study of the Upaniṣads (with a view to attain the knowledge of the Self).

This is the explicit meaning of the aphorism. Its implicit meaning enables us to identify the theme of the Upaniṣads and the aim of Vedāntic study.

The knowledge of the Self which results from the study of the Upaniṣads cannot be the ultimate objective. The latter is either happiness or absence of misery. But knowledge is neither. It must, therefore, be admitted that it becomes purposeful only by

removing *samsāra* or bondage in the form of agency, etc. of the *jīva*. If bondage were real, then it cannot be removed by knowledge, as knowledge could remove only ignorance (*avidyā*) and its effects, which are non-real (*mithyā*). Hence we must accept that bondage in the case of the *jīva* is non-real or a superimposed factor (*adhyasta*). It is this theory of superimposition that is the ground for ascertaining the theme (*viṣaya*) of the Upaniṣads, and the aim (*prayojana*) of their study. An aspirant becomes convinced that he could embark upon the study of Vedānta as it has a theme and a definite aim. That the study of Vedānta has this specific objective may be set forth in syllogistic forms thus:

- (1) The study of Vedānta is purposeful; for it is the cause of knowledge that removes evil in the form of bondage; like the statement "this is rope only, and not a serpent", which removes fear or trembling of the body.
- (2) Bondage is removable by knowledge; because it is superimposed, like a serpent on a rope.⁹

The theory of superimposition, besides pointing to the aim of Vedāntic study, indicates the theme of the Upaniṣads. The knowledge of the Self is said to remove the bondage in the case of the *jīva*. This would not be possible if the *jīva* and the Self are different from each other. For, by the knowledge of something, ignorance and its effects present in something else cannot be removed. It must, therefore, be conceded that the *jīva* and the Self are identical or non-different from each other.

It may be contended that the view that the removal of bondage in the case of the *jīva* by the knowledge of the Self suggests the identity between the two, is not justifiable. For, such a point of view can very well hold good even if the *jīva* and the Self are different. But this contention is untenable. It is only the direct knowledge of the true nature of the substratum that effects the removal of the entity superimposed upon it. Silver is superimposed upon the "this-element" of the shell, and it is removed by the

direct knowledge of the true nature of its substratum—the true nature being the identity of the "this-element" of the shell with shell as such. In the same way, the *jīva* is the substratum of bondage in the form of agency, etc. It is known from the aphorism that the direct knowledge of the Self removes bondage, and this is possible only if the Self is the true nature of the substratum of bondage. It follows from this that the *jīva* which appears to be the substratum of bondage is essentially one with the self. If the *jīva* is different from the Self, then the knowledge of the Self cannot be the knowledge of the true nature of the substratum of bondage, and so it cannot be viewed as the annihilating factor of bondage. To put this view in a syllogistic form:

The *jīva* is identical with the Self; for it is the substratum of the superimposition of bondage that is removed by the knowledge of the Self; whichever is the substratum of superimposition of something that is removed by the knowledge of an entity is identical with that entity, like the "this-element" of the shell, which is the substratum of the superimposition of silver that is removed by the knowledge of shell, is identical with shell.¹⁰

It follows from the above account that the first aphorism of the *Vedānta-sūtra* which lays down inquiry into the import of the Upaniṣads with a view to attain the knowledge of the Self implies that liberation, or the removal of bondage, of the *jīva* is the ultimate objective (*prayojana*) and the identity of the *jīva* with the Self is the theme (*viśaya*) of inquiry. These two have a bearing upon the illusory or the superimposed nature of bondage of the *jīva*. To sum up this part: the study of *Vedānta* can be undertaken as it has a theme and a definite aim.

Philosophical endeavour, according to Advaita, becomes relevant only in the context of the illusory cognition or superimposition of bondage in the form of agency, etc. in the case of the *jīva*. That is why Śaṅkara prefaces his commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra* with an exposition of the theory of superimposition.

Śaṅkara first sets forth a possible objection to the view that there is superimposition or false identification between the Self—the spiritual element in man—and the not-Self, i.e. the mind and other factors that constitute the psycho-physical organism. The Self and the not-Self are opposed to each other in regard to their essential nature (*svarūpa*), manifestation (*pratīti*), and empirical usage (*vyavahāra*). We shall explain this as follows.

(1) The Self is the inmost being of man (*pratyak*), and it comes within the sphere of the notion of "I" (*asmadartha*). The not-Self, on the other hand, is external to the Self (*parāk*) and it falls within the realm of the notion of "thou" (*yuṣmadartha*). Śaṅkara would have normally said that the Self is *asmadartha*, and the not-Self is *idamartha*. But, since there are expressions such as "I, this being, exist" (*ayam aham asmi*) wherein the words, "*ayam*", the nominative singular of *idam*, and "*aham*", the nominative singular of *asmad* occur in juxtaposition, the difference between the Self and the not-Self will not be conspicuous if the two are referred to as *asmadartha* and *idamartha* respectively. But when it is said that the Self is *asmadartha* and that the not-Self is *yuṣmadartha*, the line of distinction between the two will be clearly marked out, as we do not have any expression wherein the words "*yuṣmad*" and "*asmad*" occur in appositional relation to each other.¹¹

(2) The Self is of the nature of consciousness, and it manifests of its own accord. The not-Self, on the other hand, is manifested as the object of consciousness.¹²

(3) Based upon the ascertainment of the not-Self as *mithyā*, the Self comes within the range of empirical usage "I am the Self", while the not-Self, i.e. the mind and other factors inspired by the reflection of consciousness, is referred to as "I am an agent", etc.¹³ The Self and the not-Self are thus diametrically opposed to each other, and so there is no possibility of their mutual identification. This implies that there can be no ascription of the attributes such as agency, etc. of the not-Self notably of the mind to

the Self, and those of the Self to the not-Self. It must be noted here that the Self is free from any characteristic feature. Yet, it is viewed as empirical cognition (*jñāna*) when reflected in the mental state, as manifestation (*sphuraṇa*) when it becomes identical with objects, and as happiness (*ānanda*) when reflected in the mental state that arises owing to the contact of the mind with pleasant objects. Thus based upon this difference caused by the limiting adjunct in the form of mental states, the Self is falsely understood as having knowledge, manifestation, and happiness as its characteristics.¹⁴

It becomes apparent from this account that the mutual superimposition between the Self and the non-Self is inconceivable, and so the transference of the characteristics of the one upon the other cannot be thought of. Agency, etc. which constitute bondage in the case of the *jīva* must, therefore, be real; and being real, bondage cannot be removed by the knowledge of the Self. The objective of the study of the Upaniṣads, viz. the removal of bondage by the knowledge of the Self, is not possible. Further, the *jīva* which is in bondage cannot be viewed as identical with the Self which is ever-free. Hence the study of the Upaniṣads need not be undertaken. This is the substance of the *prima facie* view concerning the theory of superimposition.

Śaṅkara admits the objection about the subject of superimposition rather unwillingly. He points out that, although the theory of superimposition may not be rational, yet we are weighed down by a sense of compulsion to explain perceptual cognitions of the form, "I am ignorant," "I am an agent," "I am a human being," etc. which are clear cases of superimposition or erroneous cognition of the characteristics of the not-Self upon the Self. Further, the assertion that the superimposition of the not-Self and its characteristics upon the Self, which is supra-relational and self-luminous, defies sound reasoning, is worthy of great distinction (*alankāra*).

An objection may be raised against the theory of mutual superimposition of the not-Self and its characteristics on the Self,

and vice versa. Whichever is superimposed is sublated later on, like the form of silver superimposed upon the "this-element" of shell. When such is the case, if the Self and the not-Self are mutually superimposed, they would also be sublated, and as such there would result only void.

Śaṅkara rejects this objection by pointing out that in the case of the mutual superimposition of the not-Self and the Self, it is only the *relation* of the Self that is superimposed upon the not-Self, and the not-Self along with its characteristics are superimposed *as such* upon the Self. In the Advaita terminology, the superimposition of the not-Self upon the Self is known as *svarūpādhyāsa*, and the superimposition of the Self on the not-Self is known as *samsargādhyāsa*. What would be sublated by the direct knowledge of the true nature of the Self are the *relation* of the Self to the not-Self, and the not-Self *as such*. The Self, thus, remains, and there is no possibility for the objection of voidness. This is the significance of the expression, "*satyāṅṛte mithunīkṛtya*" in the *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*.

Adhyāsa is defined by Śaṅkara as: *smṛtirūpaḥ paratra pūrvadr̥ṣṭāvabhāsaḥ*.¹⁵ Herein, it is only the expression, "*paratra parāvabhāsaḥ*" that constitutes the definition of *adhyāsa*. Śaṅkara states subsequently in the *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya* itself that *adhyāsa* is "*atasmin tadbuddhiḥ*." Superimposition is only erroneous cognition of something in a substratum wherein it is not actually present. The two other expressions, "*smṛtirūpaḥ*" and "*pūrvadr̥ṣṭa*" are intended to clarify the details concerning the definition.¹⁶ We shall explain the definition by applying it to the case of shell-silver illusion.

There is the perceptual cognition (*avabhāsa*) of silver (*para*) in the "this-element" of the shell (*paratra*) wherein it is not actually present. It is, therefore, a clear case of erroneous cognition. In order that shell may be mistaken for silver, three factors are essential. They are: (i) shell must be manifested not in its specific nature as shell, but only in its general aspect in the form of "this"

as a tiny piece of sparkling material. If it were manifested in its specific nature, then there is no possibility of mistaking it for silver; (ii) latent impression (*saṃskāra*) born out of previous experience of silver. He who has not seen silver before cannot identify the object before him as silver; and, (iii) the defect in the form of nescience, i.e. *tūlāvidyā*, which is the derivative of primal nescience (*mūlāvidyā*), and which is present in the consciousness conditioned by the "this-element."¹⁷

A person cognizes shell in front as "this", and not as shell owing to the absence of conditions not conducive for perceiving it to be so. The sight of similarity in respect of the shining lustre of the "this-element" enables him to recall the silver he has experienced earlier. The latent impression of silver is revived thereby; and aided by this, the *tūlāvidyā* transforms itself into an object with the form of silver, and the consciousness conditioned by the mode of avidyā in the form of silver is an apparent or erroneous cognition of silver.

The definition of superimposition is applicable both to erroneous cognition (*jñānādhyāsa*) and to its content (*arthādhyāsa*). In the case of *arthādhyāsa*, the definition is to be explained as follows: silver appears (*avabhāsyate*) in the substratum wherein it is not actually existent (*paratra*). Unlike an object of recollection (*smṛti*), it is perceived. Hence it is similar to the one that is recollected (*smāyamāṇa-sadrśa*). And it belongs to the class of silver that was earlier experienced (*pūrvadr̥ṣṭa-jātīya*) and is not the one that was experienced. The expression "*jñānādhyāsa*" means erroneous cognition (*jñānarūpaḥ adhyāsaḥ*). It is similar to recollection (*smṛtirūpaḥ*). It refers to an object in a locus wherein it does not exist (*paratra*), owing to the earlier experience of the object of its own class (*pūrvadr̥ṣṭa*).¹⁸

On similar lines, the Advaitin explains the superimposition of the not-Self upon the Self. The Self which is pure consciousness is unconditioned reality (*sat*), consciousness (*jñāna*), and bliss (*ānanda*). It is manifested as *sat* in experiences such as "*san*

ghataḥ", etc. In the same way, its consciousness-aspect is reflected in several modes of mind, and is manifested as *jñāna*. Its bliss-aspect is reflected in mental modes that have arisen from the contact of the mind and sense-organs with pleasant objects, and is manifested as happiness (*ānanda*). These aspects of *sat*, *jñāna*, and *ānanda* are taken as the general aspects of the Self, while its unconditioned aspect is viewed as its specific feature. It is concealed by *avidyā* and so is not manifested. It follows that the general aspects of the Self are manifested, but not its specific aspect. Hence the Self could serve as the substratum of the superimposition of the mind, etc. It must be noted here that this distinction between the general feature and the specific one in regard to the Self is only apparent and not real.

Further, in the state of deep sleep one has the experience of the Self associated with *avidyā*. When one comes back to the waking state from that of deep sleep, the mind is falsely identified with the Self. The latent impression born out of the experience of the mind which one had prior to the state of deep sleep accounts for the erroneous cognition of the mind in the Self when one comes back to the waking state. And the erroneous cognition involving the blend of the mind and the Self is the one of the form "I". It is the *jīva*. The material cause of the identification of the mind with the Self is *avidyā*, which is beginningless and indeterminable. Thus in the Self associated with *avidyā*, the mind along with its characteristics of agency, etc. are superimposed. And in the Self associated with *avidyā* and the mind, the sense-organs and the physical body along with their characteristics such as blindness, fatness, etc. are falsely presented.¹⁹ The Self associated with the psycho-physical organism owing to *avidyā* is the *puruṣa* or man. When Janaka seeks to know from Yājñavalkya as to what is the light that directs *man* toward activity (*kiṃ jyotiḥ eva ayam puruṣa iti*),²⁰ and when Yājñavalkya replies that the Self serves as his light (*ātmaiva asya jyotiḥ bhavati*),²¹ it is the

jīva—the complex of the Self and the psycho-physical organism—that is referred to by the word *puruṣa*, and the Self, by the word *jyotiḥ*.

When it is said that man, the enworlded subject is the jīva associated falsely with the body-mind complex and its characteristics, it comes to this that perception and other means of knowledge and also the scriptural texts have reference to the one characterized by avidyā. In order that sacred and secular activities may be carried out, an agent is necessary. In order to carry out the activities, he must be a knower. To be a knower is to be the substratum of knowledge. Knowledge cannot be viewed as pure consciousness, because, being non-dual and all-pervasive, it cannot be located in a substratum. Further, being eternal, it does not stand in need of any instrument of cognition to be originated. Knowledge cannot be viewed as the mode of the mind. It is because, being insentient, it cannot manifest anything. Hence it must be held that knowledge is a blend of pure consciousness, and the mode of mind. Since the Self is supra-relational, it cannot serve as its substratum. It could become so only when it is falsely identified with the mind. Further, such a knower, in order that he may direct the means of knowledge, should have the false notion of "mind" in the sense-organs. The sense-organs are located in the body, and so the knower must have the conceit of "I" or "mine" in the physical body too. It follows that all means of knowledge including the texts that speak of liberation and its means have reference to the jīva who is under the realm of avidyā.²² The jīva, the enworlded Subject, must realize its true nature and remain as the transcendent Subject.²³ The first *varṇaka* of the first aphorism, "*atha atah brahmajñāsā*," maintains that it is possible, because enworlded subjectivity in the case of the transcendent Subject is erroneous by being caused by avidyā and hence could be overcome by the knowledge of one's true nature through Vedāntic study, reflection, and meditation.

To be continued. . .

NOTES

1. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (hereafter *MU*), 1.2.12.
2. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (hereafter *CU*), 7.1.3.
3. *ṣadli-viśaraṇagatyavasādaneṣu* (*Pāṇinīya-dhātupāṭha*, 854, 1427).
4. Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* (hereafter *ŚB*) on the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (hereafter *KU*), 1.1.1. See also *Vanamālā* (hereafter *VM*), comm. By Acyutakṛṣṇānanda on *ŚB* on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (hereafter *TU*), (Chinmaya Foundation of Education and Culture, Chennai, 191), p. 11.
5. *ŚB* on *KU*, 1.1.; See *VM*, p. 11. See also: R. Balasubramanian, ed. *The Taittirīyopaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika* (with Introduction, English translation, and annotation), Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy), University of Madras, 1984 (hereafter *TUBV*), p. 226.
6. *ŚB* on *KU*, 1.1.
7. *Vedāntavākyakusuma-grathanārthavāt sūtrāṇām, Vedānta-sūtra-bhāṣya* (hereafter *VSB*), 1.1.2.
8. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (hereafter *BU*), 2.4.5.
9. *Ratnaprabhā* (hereafter *RP*), ed. by Jagadisa Sastri with the commentaries *Bhāmatī* and *Nyāya-nirṇaya* (Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1996), p. 3.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
11. *Parāgrūpaḥ ahaṅkāraḥ yuṣmadarthaḥ pratykcāitanyaṁ asmadarthaḥ iti svabhāvataḥ virodhaḥ darśitaḥ, Tattvadīpana* (hereafter *TD*), comm. on the *Pañcapādikā-vivaraṇa*, Mahesh Research Institute, Varanasi, 1992, p. 34.
12. *Pratītirūpaḥ pratyak, pratītiṣayaḥ itaraḥ*, *Ibid.*
13. *Ahaṁ brahma iti vyavahriyate pratyak, advaitānanda-pracchādanena kartrādirūpeṇa vyavahriyate itaraḥ*, *Ibid.*

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14. *RP*, p. 8.
15. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*.
16. *RP*, p. 11.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–13.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*.
20. *BU*, 4.3.2.
21. *Ibid.*, 4.3.6.
22. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*.
23. I owe this way of putting the matter to R. Balasubramanian.



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संसाराध्वनि तापभानुकिरणप्रोद्भूतदाहव्यथा-
खिन्नानां जलकाङ्क्षया मरुभुवि भ्रान्त्या परिभ्राम्यताम् ।
अत्यासन्नसुधाम्बुधिं सुखकरं ब्रह्माद्वयं दर्शय-
न्त्येषा शङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी ॥

*saṁsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhūṭadāhavyathā-
khinnānām jalakāṅkṣayā marubhuyi bhrāntyā paribhrāmyatām
atyāsannasudhāmbudhiṁ sukhakaram brahmādvayam
darśayant-
yeṣā śaṅkarabhāratī 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.