

THE VOICE OF ŚĀṆKARA

Śāṅkara-bhāratī



Editor:

N. Veezhinathan

एषा शाङ्करभारती विजयते निर्वाणसन्दायिनी

eṣā śāṅkara-bhāratī vijayate

nirvāṇa-sandāyini

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 Kāmakōṭi Pīṭha
by *Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre*.

Subscriptions may be sent to:

The Administrative Officer
Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre
Room No. 7 (Second floor).
'SANKARALAYAM',
New No. 66, (Old No. 62),
Mayor V.R. Ramanathan Salai, Chetpet,
Chennai - 600 031. Phone : 044-28366962
Mobile: 9789926679
E-mail: advaitarc@gmail.com
Website: www.advaitacentre.org

Subscription Rates :	Indian	Foreign
Annual	Rs. 150	US \$ 20
For two years	Rs. 250	US \$ 36
Life	Rs. 5000	US \$ 200
Single copy	Rs. 75	US \$ 10

THE VOICE OF ŚAṄKARA

Śāṅkara-bhāratī

Editor

N. Veezhinathan

Volume 35 No. 2, 2010

Editorial Advisory Board
Members

R. Balasubramanian

G. Mishra

S. Ramaratnam

S. Revathy

S. Sankaranarayanan

C. Murugan

V.K.S.N. Raghavan

R. Asha (Sivasree)

Editor

N. Veezhinathan

Published by : Ramdevan V. Krishnaswamy
on behalf of Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre, Room
No. 7 (Second Floor), 'SANKARALAYAM', New No. 66,
(Old No. 62), Mayor V.R. Ramantathan Salai, Chetpet,
Chennai - 600 031. Phone: 044-28366962, Cell. 9789926679.



Typeset by:

C. Murugan

Phone: 044 - 24846868

Cell. 9944066067.

Printed by

V. Seshachalam,

at Avvai Achukkoodam,

Chennai -600 013.

Phone: 044-25951909

CONTRIBUTORS

- V.M. ANANTHANARAYANAN** - Associate Professor,
Department of Sanskrit,
National College,
Tiruchirapalli.
- R. ASHA (SIVASREE)** - Former Research Scholar,
Department of Sanskrit,
University of Madras.
- R. BALASUBRAMANIAN** - Former Director, The
Radhakrishnan Institute
of Advanced Study in
Philosophy, University
of Madras.
- J. KRISHNAN** - Associate Professor,
Department of Sanskrit,
Pondichery University.
- C. MURUGAN** - Assistant Professor,
Department of Sanskrit,
University of Madras.
- T.P. RAMACHANDRAN** - Former Professor, The
Radhakrishnan Institute
of Advanced Study in
Philosophy, University
of Madras.

CONTENTS

Page No.

1. **HOMAGE TO ŚAÑKARA** 1
2. **THE TEACHINGS OF ŚAÑKARA**
N. VEEZHINATHAN 2
3. **ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ŚAÑKARA JAYANTI**
JAGADGURU ŚRĪMACCHANDRAŚEKHARENDRA
SARASVATĪ BHAGAVAT- PŪJYAPĀDĀH 9
4. **A SPIRITUAL APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**
(VIEWS OF MAHĀSVĀMIN)
T. P. RAMACHANDRAN 18
5. **IDENTITY OF MAṄḌANAMIŚRA**
R. BALASUBRAMANIAN 25
6. **THE PLACE OF ADVAITA IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY**
A META-PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH (2)
T. P. RAMACHANDRAN 52

7. **THE ĀTMAVIDYĀ-VILĀSA - PART-II**
[A Spiritual Autobiography
of
Sadāśiva- Brahmendra Sarasvatī]
Text with Translation
C. MURUGAN 76
8. **ON THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ - AVIDYĀ**
J. KRISHNAN 92
9. **PERCEPTION: ITS NATURE ACCORDING TO
ADVAITA**
V. M. ANANTHANARAYANAN 108
11. **ON THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ AND ADHYĀSA
IN THE KṚTIS OF ŚRĪ MUTTUSVĀMI DĪKṢITA**
R. ASHA (SIVASREE) 130

1

HOMAGE TO ŚAṆKARA

॥ श्रीः ॥

नमामि शङ्कराचार्यगुरुपादसरोरुहम् ।
यस्य प्रसादात् मूढोऽपि सर्वज्ञोऽहं सदा अभवम् ॥

I, who was under the realm of ignorance, have become a realized soul by the benign blessings of my revered preceptor, Śaṅkara. And, I offer my reverential prostrations at His Lotus- feet.

[*Anantānandagiri*]

THE TEACHINGS OF ŚAṄKARA

N. VEEZHINATHAN

There is a general criticism that the fundamental metaphysical position of Advaita is such that it cannot accord any place to *bhakti* or loving devotion to Īśvara in its scheme of practical discipline. The philosophy of Advaita involves the doctrine of avidyā or māyā. It is based on the *Prasthānatraya*, 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. It is accordingly frequently referred to as māyā-vāda. The ultimate reality is termed Brahman which is absolute consciousness. Owing to avidyā, it appears as Īśvara, jīva, and the world. The true nature of Īśvara and the jīva is Brahman. The universe as such is indeterminable either as real or as unreal. 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 intuitive

knowledge or the direct experience (*sākṣātkāra*) of Brahman. The formulation by Śaṅkara of Advaita in a systematic form and in alliance with the doctrine of avidyā has established the way of knowledge as the sole means to liberation. On this ground it has been maintained by the critics of Advaita that *bhakti* or loving devotion to Īśvara is not necessary in Advaita.

The critics of Advaita further contend that *bhakti* or loving devotion to Īśvara is not only not necessary but also not possible in Advaita. According to Advaita, Brahman alone is real, and so there is no distinction between Īśvara who rules and the world and the jīvas ruled by him. The universe is neither one with nor different from Brahman. It is illusory. *Bhakti* involves a distinction between jīva and Īśvara, and in order that it may be practised the universe must be real. The Advaitin contends that the difference between jīva and Īśvara is only illusory, as both are in essence Brahman. And the universe also is illusory. Hence *bhakti* towards Īśvara is not possible in Advaita.

An elaborate discussion on the concept of *bhakti* beginning with Śaṅkara and culminating in Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's famous treatise *Bhaktirasāyana* and his commentary *Gūḍhārthadīpikā* on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, proves that *bhakti* is not only possible but also necessary in Advaita. It has its legitimate place on the practical side of Advaita. The conception of Īśvara who is a complex of *nirguṇa-Brahman* and avidyā as the material and the efficient cause of the phenomenal world has been there in Advaita allowing room for devotion to Īśvara by the jīva who also is viewed as a complex of *nirguṇa-Brahman* and avidyā and its product-mind. The world is illusory only from the stand-point of the ultimate reality. The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* who holds

the *vivarta-vāda*, that is, the theory that the world is an appearance of Brahman and therefore illusory advocates this theory from the stand-point of the ultimate reality. So long as the knowledge of Brahman has not arisen the entire complex of phenomenal existence is taken as true, even as the phantoms of a dream are taken as true until the sleeper awakes. It is from this stand-point that the author of the *Brhama-sūtra* holds the *pariṇāma-vāda*, that is, the theory that the world is a transformation of Brahman. The world is treated to be real. Īśvara is considered to be omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. And the jīva is considered to be different from Īśvara. The ordinary course of secular and religious activities including *bhakti* towards Īśvara goes on undisturbed until the rise of the knowledge of Brahman. It follows from this that the philosophy of Advaita does allow room for *bhakti* towards Īśvara.

All writers on Advaita usually begin their treatises with reverential salutations to Īśvara, as devotion (*bhakti*) towards Īśvara is a proximate means (*antaraṅga-sādhana*) to the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. It is with the view of attaining to the latter that *bhakti* towards Īśvara has been pursued by all the preceptors of Advaita.

Śaṅkara who maintains *nirguṇa-Brahman* to be the ultimate reality and its knowledge to be the sole means of liberation is also the author of some of the most moving stotras, that is, hymns and praises, on various deities such as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Subrahmaṇya and others which are only the manifestations of Brahman. His *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra* is supreme in its combination of *bhakti* with profound doctrines of Advaita. He is credited with having established on the basis of scriptural teachings the worship of the six embodied deities, namely, Āditya, Āmbikā, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Śiva, and

Subrahmaṇya. His reconciliation of *bhakti* and *jñāna* in his *Prabodhasudhākara* testifies to the fact that *bhakti* occupies an important place on the practical side of Advaita. This is also evident from his analysis of the *Bhāgavata* school. While commenting on the *Brahma-sūtra* (II.ii.42) which refutes the view-point of the *Bhāgavata* school, Śaṅkara affirms the view that devotion to Īśvara (*īśvarapraṇidhāna*) is based on scriptural and smṛti texts. And it is a proximate means (*antaraṅga-sādhana*) to the intuitive knowledge of Brahman.

In his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* – *parāttu tacchruteḥ* (II. iii. 41) Śaṅkara states that the intuitive knowledge of Brahman which leads to liberation arises from the great sayings of the *Upaniṣads* through the grace of Īśvara. The latter could arise only from loving devotion or *bhakti* towards Him.

The text of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* - "If the truths of Vedānta are imparted to a high-minded person who has *bhakti* towards Īśvara and to his preceptor, then they are intuitively realized by him" (VI. 22) speaks of *bhakti* towards Īśvara and the preceptor as a proximate means to the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. *Bhakti* is to be distinguished from meditative worship or *dhyāna* or *upāsanā* which is predominantly intellectual. *Bhakti* and *upāsanā* relate only to *saguṇa-Brahman*. The *Upaniṣads* speak of Brahman as *nirguṇa*, i.e. free from all attributes and as *saguṇa*, i.e. associated with attributes. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (I. 1.2 and II.ii.15.) points out that the *Upaniṣads* speak of Brahman with the attributes for the sake of meditative worship. He further emphasises the fact that Brahman as *nirguṇa* can only be realized as identical with one's self, and Brahman as *saguṇa* can only be worshipped.

Brhman associated with attributes (*saguṇa-Brahman*) is embodied. The Upaniṣads prescribe *upāsanās* on *saguṇa-Brahman*, and they are of the form of *ahamgrāhopāsanā*. This means that Brahman which is associated with attributes and which is unembodied must be meditated upon as identical with one's own self. But for most people this kind of meditative worship becomes difficult. For their sake, *saguṇa-Brahman* itself assumes illusory male forms such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and female forms such as Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī and Pārvatī and further incarnates itself as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Matsya, Kūrma and other forms. We shall refer to these forms of Brahman as *sākāra-Brahman*. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* (I.1. 20) points out that *saguṇa-Brahman* itself assumes various illusory forms in order to bestow grace upon its worshippers. Each individual worshipper can have his chosen deity (*iṣṭa-devatā*) and he could worship the images of his chosen deity which are made alive with divinity by Īśvara. *Bhakti* or worship involving the emotional element of love is chiefly applicable here. It should be noted here that those who are capable of meditating on the *saguṇa-Brahman* may also have a natural liking for the worship of *sākāra-Brahman* because of the latter's peculiar excellences, especially aesthetic excellences, which produce pleasant mental or aesthetic impression on the worshipper. Śaṅkara in his *Śivānandalaharī* defines *bhakti* as follows:

Just as, here, the seeds of the aṅkola tree go and attach themselves to the tree, the needle sticks to the magnet, the chaste woman to her Lord, the creeper to the tree, and the river (runs) to the ocean, even so if the flow of the mind reaches the lotus-feet of the Lord of souls and remains there always, that is called devotion.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Bhaktirasāyana* states that the mental state in the form of Īśvara arising out hearing His glories (*śravaṇa*), reciting His names and glories (*kīrtana*), meditating His qualities and form (*smaraṇa*), worshipping the feet of His image (*pādasevana*), worshipping Him with flowers (*arcana*), saluting His image (*vandana*), dedicating all the activities to Him (*dāsya*), friendly attitude towards Him (*sakhyā*), and thinking of Him alone without any thought of attaining what is yet unattained or protecting what has been attained (*ātmanivedana*) develops itself into the form of *bhakti-rasa*. It may be added here that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī speaks of these nine factors as *sādhana-bhakti* and the mental state in the form of Īśvara which develops itself into *bhakti-rasa* as *sādhya-bhakti*. The point that is to be noted here is that meditative worship (*upāsana*) of *saguṇa-Brahman* or loving worship (*bhakti*) of *sākāra-Brahman* is the proximate means to knowledge as they give rise to concentration of thought and also enables one to receive the grace of Īśvara which wards off all the impediments towards the realization of Brahman.

Bhakti towards *sākāra-Brahman*, if practised independently, leads the aspirant to the world of Hiraṇyagarbha wherein he attains the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. On the other hand, if *bhakti* is practised along with *jñāna-yoga*, i.e. vedāntic study (*śravaṇa*), reflection (*manana*) and meditation (*nididhyāsana*), then it gives concentration of thought and renders *nididhyāsana*, on *nirguṇa-Brahman* possible. In fact unless one has concentration of thought one cannot pursue *nididhyāsana*, the most important constituent of *jñāna-yoga*. And, concentration of thought can be achieved through *upāsana*

on *saguṇa-Brahman*. But the latter also requires concentration of thought which is possible only by *bhakti* towards the concrete manifestations of Brahman. *Bhakti* is thus necessary for one to pursue *nididhyāsana*.

It is to enable every one to attain the intuitive knowledge of Brahman by pursuing loving devotion to Īśvara, Śaṅkara has composed several hymns on the various manifestations of the latter.

May we offer our salutations at his adorable feet.

* * * *

3

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ŚAṆKARA JAYANTĪ

JAGADGURU ŚRĪMACCHANDRAŚEKHARENDRA
SARASVATĪ BHAGAVATPŪJYAPĀDĀḤ

Today is Śaṅkara-Jayantī. It was by the avatāra of Śaṅkara that the Vedas, the Smṛtis, etc., were resuscitated. It is by their resuscitation alone that the observances connected with auspicious days such as Rāma-navamī, Nṛsimha-jayantī, Kṛṣṇa-jayantī, Uttarāyana-saṅkrānti, Śivarātrī, etc., have been revived. The Jayantī of Śaṅkara is the Jayantī that has imparted to all Jayantīs their character as Jayantīs. On the fifth day of the bright-half of the month of Vaiśākha falls Śaṅkara Jayantī. Like the pure white jasmine (vāsantī, mādhavī) creeper, that causes delight, let this fifth day of the bright-half month in the spring season (vāsantī, mādhavī) embellish and delight our intelligence.

Who is Śaṅkara? Śaṅkara is the one who brings delight to the world. He alone is Śiva. Śiva is the giver of auspiciousness.

*Śaṅkara Jayantī Message in Sanskrit. Translated into English by Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan.

Toṭakācārya says in his octad of verses in the *toṭaka* metre thus:

भव एव भवानिति मे नितराम्
 समजायत चेतसि कौतुकिता ।
 गुरुपुङ्गव पुङ्गव-केतन ते
 समतामयतां न हि कोऽपि सुधीः ॥

“Knowing that Thou art the Lord Śiva, there arises supreme bliss in my heart;

O the Best of teachers! The One whose banner is the bull-sign (Śiva)! None of the wise ones is equal to Thee!”

And, Padmapādācārya says in the *Pañcapādikā*.

नमामि अभोगि-परिवार-संपदम्
 विना विनायकं अपूर्वशङ्करम् ।

“I bow to the unique Śaṅkara whose wealth is the *entourage* of ascetics, (who has no serpents adoring him), and who has vanquished opposition by the Bauddhas and Jainas* (who is not accompanied by Gaṇeśa).”

And, it has been said by a well-instructed one of old:

“I bow to Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkara who is the repository of *Śruti*, *Smṛtis* and *Purānas*, the abode of grace, and the bestower of auspiciousness on the world.”

What is *śaṁ* (auspiciousness)? Happiness is bliss. The *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* says, it is love. Where that auspiciousness, love, or bliss exists, the world mostly does not know. Therefore it suffers. He who is always of the nature of auspiciousness, the Bhagavatpāda, seeing the world

* ‘Vināyaka’ is an appellation of the Buddha and the Jina.

which suffers, became filled with grace. He became the abode of grace so that the world may experience the happiness of the impartite Self-experience. What is that happiness? It was on account of the experience that Śaṅkara was far removed from misery. Śaṅkara speaks: "For all the Self alone is happiness: the Self alone is all; the Self itself is Brahman: and Brahman itself is all this. All is the effect of Brahman; and the cause itself is all this. From the cause, the effect is non-different. All is, verily, auspiciousness. Let auspiciousness be experienced in all beings. Let the Self which is auspiciousness be experienced."

A son becomes dear to the worldly people. Why? Because he is one's son. Wealth becomes dear to the worldly people, because it is one's wealth. A wife becomes dear to the worldly people, because she is one's wife. Corn and land become dear to the worldly people, because they are one's corn and land.

If the same corn and land have been sold to one other than one's self, say Yajñadatta, then they are not considered to be dear. And, thus in the world, since all that is external becomes dear because it is related to one's self; the self is the dearest; and since that itself is Brahman, that alone is the supreme bliss. Thus Śaṅkara said in his commentary on the topic dealing with the Self as love.

That the supreme Self is one is Śaṅkara's view. That, all is the supreme Self is Śaṅkara's view. That all is one alone is Śaṅkara's view. That all is Brahman is the view of Scripture. The view of Scripture is, verily, the view of Śaṅkara. Because all is Brahman, there is nothing whatever that is different from Brahman; this is Śaṅkara's view. The universe alone is real, there is no Brahman; this is the Cārvāka view.

The universe and Brahman are both of them real: this is the dualistic view of the Naiyāyaikas and others. The universe and Brahman are both of them non-existent: this is the Bauddha view. Brahman alone is real, the universe as different from Brahman is non-existent: this is Śaṅkara's view.

On the rise of Buddhism, the views that were in vogue previously did not get exterminated. On the rise of the Cārvāka school, the views that differed from it did not get obliterated. But, on the rise of Śaṅkara's view, all the previous schools lost their brilliance, even as the planets that shine by night are shorn of their luminosity at sun-rise.

When the impartite light shines, need it be said that the limited luminaries get overpowered? In the supreme non-dual Self, the one impartite essence, which is like the ocean, all paths, viz. devotion, meditation, ethical culture, and mutually incompatible *tāntrika-sādhanas*, stressing *Vaidika-ācāra* or *Yoga-samādhi*, become one, even like the great rivers which flow towards the East, South, West or North become one when they join the sea. Therein alone all of them find auspiciousness. The following statement of an ancient sage bears this out:

नानाभाष्याहता सा सगुणफलगतिः वैधविद्याविशेषैः
 तत्तद्देशाप्तिरम्या सरिदिव सकला यत्र यात्यंशभूयम् ।
 तस्मिन्नानन्दसिन्धौ अतिमहति फले भावविश्रान्तिमुद्रा
 शास्त्रस्योद्धातिता यैः प्रणमत हृदि तान् नित्यं आचार्यपादान् ॥

“The relative path of gaining the fruit of contacting Godhead endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) by guiding the souls to the respective celestial regions is revealed by the different Upaniṣadic *upāsanās* (meditations) and expounded by the various *Bhāṣyas*. But, like a river which flows into the ocean

and becomes a part of it, that path finds its end in the ocean of Ānanda, the final human goal, the quiescence of transmigration, which is the revelation of Scripture as explained clearly by the Ācārya-pāda. Adore him in the heart!”

The “Ācārya-pāda” is Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda.

The conclusive view of Bhagavatpāda, as of all the preceptors of the Vedic tradition, is that the *dharma* as taught in the Veda should be practised by the humans according to their respective *varṇa* and *āśrama*. And, this *varṇāśrama-dharma* is prescribed by Scripture, not merely for the sake of the preservation of the human society from the economic standpoint through the people helping one another as helpers and the helped, but as the means to *mokṣa* for each individual soul: this *dharma* is prescribed prominently in *Śruti* and *Smṛtis* for the sake of purifying the mind by generating virtues like peace, self-control, discrimination, and dispassion, which cannot be acquired by any other means by those who seek them. This has been taught directly by Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda in his work, *Aparokṣānubhūti* :

स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मेण तपसा हरितोषणात्।

साधनं प्रभवेत् पुंसां वैराग्यादिचतुष्टयम्॥

“By (following) one’s own *varṇāśrama-dharma*, by austerity, and by pleasing Hari, the four-fold means consisting of dispassion, etc., is generated for human beings.”

This teaching of Śaṅkara follows clearly the *Bhagavad-gītā*:
tasmācchāstram pramāṇam te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau.

“Therefore, scripture is the authority for you in the matter of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.”

In this passage of the *Gītā*, the word 'therefore' refers to some cause for Scripture being the authority for what ought to be done. What is that cause?

The cause has been explained in the previous verses:

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनं आत्मनः।
 कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभः तस्मादेतत् त्रयं त्यजेत्॥
 एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमो द्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः।
 आचारयत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम्॥
 यः शास्त्रविधिं उत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः।
 न स सिद्धिं अवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम्॥

“Triple is the door to this hell leading to self-destruction, desire, anger, and greed. Therefore, these three should be rejected. Freed from these three doors to darkness, O Arjuna, man follows what is his good, and thereby attains the supreme goal. He who, transgressing the injunctions of Scripture, acts being impelled by desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme goal. Therefore, Scripture is the authority for you in the matter of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Knowing thus, you ought to perform here only such action as is ordained by Scripture.”

Thus the Ācārya transforms even the layman into the supreme Self through the teaching of the Bhāṣyas gradually. Beginning with the statement “Let the Veda be studied everyday” (*vedo nityam adhīyatām*), he concludes his teaching with the statement “Let one remain as the supreme Brahman-Self” (*brahmātmanā sthīyatām*). The fruit of Veda is the performance of actions taught therein. The performance of actions ought to be done in a spirit of dedication to God, and not for the sake of any other fruit. The performance of

(one's) action is itself the worship of God. It has been stated by one who knows the tradition: "It is by God's grace alone that there is for men an inclination towards Advaita." It is by God's grace that the mind becomes pure. Let the one who is endowed with purity of mind approach a teacher who is a knower of Brahman. Let him offer worship to the teacher's *pādukā*. Let him listen to the meaning of the Upaniṣads. Let him pray for instruction. Let him renounce every desire. Let him seek the company of the good. Let him partake of food got by alms, merely as medicine for the disease called hunger. Let him not ask for delicious food. Let him be satisfied with whatever destiny brings. Let him practise *samādhi*. Let him remain as the supreme Brahman-self. This is the gist of Śaṅkara's teachings.

Thus the *parivrāt* (wandering monk), who expounds the hidden meaning of the Upaniṣads in the words of commentaries which are clear and deep, wanders about. He wanders everywhere from the Setu to the Himalayas. He visits the holy rivers. He goes to the pilgrim-places. He tours the villages. He goes to the towns. He visits the temples. In those places, he augments the Presence Divine through such means as *mantras* and *yantras*. There is almost no holy place in India whose greatness has not been strengthened by Śaṅkara's visit. Even to this day people in the different parts of the country say: "This temple in our territory has been purified by the splendour of the *mantras* uttered by Śaṅkarācārya; and has been rendered great by the installation of *yantras*." In the entire area where the Veda has spread — Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Āndhra, Draviḍa, Kerala, Karṇāṭaka, Mahāraṣṭra, Saurāṣṭra, Mālava, Gūrjara, Sindhu, Gāndhāra, Kuru, Pāñcāla, Kāśmīra, Nepāla, Maithila, Kānyakubja, Magadha, Kāmarūpa, Kāmboja, etc. — there is no place

where the Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya was not known to the seekers of release. Even now it is so in every place where the Veda is in vogue.

It is true that the growth of modern science is considered to be a great danger to the world because it has promoted the production of nuclear weapons which can cause the total destruction of living beings. Yet, from another standpoint, when one reflects carefully and thoroughly, one will be able to approve of the growth of science as what can possibly lead to the supreme peace of all beings. Till about fifty years ago, the eminent scientists were intent on establishing through enumerating the elements that those elements were absolutely distinct from one another. But now the scientists deny any distinction among the visible and invisible modes of matter, and proclaim that all matter is a transformation of one energy. Thus, gradually, the modern scientists reject difference and exhibit non-difference. This will be evident to all thinkers.

The foremost among the scientists, Einstein, Sir James Jeans, and others, come very close to the Advaita-siddhānta of the Upaniṣads as taught by Bhagavatpāda, by offering proofs for the reality of the objective world and its dependent reality. The scientific research of the present age is thus getting into the proximity of Śaṅkara's *siddhānta*, as it rejects the host of differences. Hence, it is clear that modern science has opened a way to universal peace. When the non-perception of difference has been established through higher research, then those popular leaders and administrators who are the wise ones, the heroes, the thinkers, who are rid of such differences as one's own and others', and who experience the non-difference from even the people of the enemy country,

and regard the suffering of those people as their own, will become the central pillars of lasting world-peace. On this sacred day of Śaṅkara Jayantī, let the thinkers and the wise ones, according to their abilities, begin to spread, with enthusiasm, everywhere in the world, the conclusive view of non-difference, endorsed by the modern scientific researchers, proclaimed by the beginningless Upaniṣads and rendered radiant by Śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda. May the malady of lack of peace which is a universal affliction be removed through the life-giving ambrosia of the experience of non-difference, i.e. Advaita.

* * * *

4

**A SPIRITUAL APPROACH
TO
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
(VIEWS OF MAHĀSVĀMIN)***

T. P. RAMACHANDRAN

Introduction

By “environment” we mean all that is in the world other than human beings. It consists of the physical world made up of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether) and all non-human organisms (plants and animals). For the sake of simplicity, we may call this whole realm “nature” (*prapañca*). This is the age of “development,” which stands for the proliferation and sophistication of man’s physical aids of life. Development has gone so far as to cause serious damage to the environment by way of exploitation and pollution. That is why nature is reacting to us in a variety of adverse ways. So the biggest problem

Collected from *Devattin Kuraj* (7 Volumes) compiled by R. Ganapathy and published by Vanathi Pathippakam, Chennai.

facing humanity today is how to protect the environment. Round the world, thinking people are offering solutions like reduction of carbon, emission, afforestation, recycling of waste matter, and so on. All such solutions could be summed up under the head “sustainable development”, which implies development executed in such a way that nature can withstand. But religious people cannot agree that this is the real solution, precisely because we can never fully know the secrets of nature to judge how far it can sustain itself against our ways of development. The only viable solution is to look upon nature as God’s creation, a sacred trust given to us, and act towards it with reverence. How far will this divine approach appeal to leaders of present humanity is another matter. Secularism has gone so far that a religious approach to nature will not appeal to many. But individuals, however few, could find some consolation and even spiritual benefit if they make a religious approach to nature. In that spirit, let us look at the views of our Mahāsvāmin, Śrī Candraśkharendra Sarasvatī, on this question of man and nature.

A. Conquest of greed (Vol. III, 716-22)

One of the biggest obstacles to spiritual uplift is greed (*lobha, parigraha*). It is the desire to earn and possess more and superior material goods than what we need to conduct our lives. Upto a point, food, sleep, clothes, houses, etc. are necessary for anyone to live. They could, therefore, be called needs. They are not ends in themselves but only means to the end of life. Once we look upon them as ends in themselves and desire more and more of what we need, they become luxuries. Excess of luxuries turn into enemies, not only to our spiritual betterment, but even to our physical life, like ruining our health.

The conquest of greed has a significance to our relation with others and nature. Greed promotes enmity from fellow men. Giving room for greed is also a form of theft – it deprives others of what is due to them also. Again, so far as nature is concerned, it is greed that leads to our excessive exploitation and pollution of nature. In the name of development, we drain nature of its precious resources. Development also leads to pollution of one or other life-sustaining area of nature, the soil, water-bodies, and the atmosphere. Like all other living beings, we depend on nature in many ways. Our craze for development at the cost of nature is, therefore, virtually a form of gradual suicide. For all these reasons, our religious texts uniformly condemn greed and require us overcome this weakness. The conquest of greed is called *aprigraha / nigraha*.

B. *The role of celestials (devas)* (Vol. I, pp. 698-702)

Īśvara is the supreme ruler of all beings including the devas. The devas, as his deputies, preside over nature. Since we depend on nature and use it for our needs, we owe a debt (*ṛṇa*) to the devas. And we have to repay this debt by performing sacrifices (*yāga / yajña*) in which we offer food into the sacred fire. This act is called *āhuti*. Such is the will of God. The devas have three forms.

(1) *Ādi-daivika*. This is the celestial body of the devas, in which they reside in *deva-loka*. Those human beings who are well advanced in austerity (*tapas*) can see and converse with this form of any deva.

(2) *Ādi-bhautika*. While residing in *deva-loka* in the above form, the devas are also present in the five elements of nature in an unseen form. For example, Varuṇa pervades all the waters of the earth. Similarly, earth, fire, air, and

ether also have their appropriate deities hidden in these elements. Therefore, if we misuse any form of nature, it is immediately known to the appropriate deity. So we are bound to receive due punishment from that deity. And the punishment will be in an appropriate form at any time later.

(3) *Ādhyātmika*. The devas are present in an unseen way in every organ of our body. So long as we observe *dharma* and perform Vedic rites, the devas will protect us; otherwise not – we will suffer from disease in any organ. Just as we will suffer if we do not have enough food, the devas also will be affected if we do not offer them food in the form of *āhuti*. And so retribution is certain. So long as one remains in bondage, Vedic rites are necessary. Only a *jīvanmukta*, who has experienced his non-difference from Brahman, becomes free from this obligation.

C. *The grace of Goddess Annapūrṇā* (Vol. I, pp. 918-23)

All over the world, there is scarcity of food, in spite of various forms of technology. This is because, ultimately, nature's production of food depends on God. In our religion, the giver of food is conceived in the form of Goddess Annapūrṇā. Prayer to her will bring the benefit of food. She would forgive our faults and grant us food by making our efforts successful. Ādi Śaṅkara's prayer (*stuti*) to Annapūrṇī is a model for all of us. Ācārya's prayer is not for himself but for all the three worlds.

Food is not enough. Besides nourishing the body, wisdom (*jñāna*) is also necessary. And mother Annapūrṇā grants us this also. Scarcity is ultimately due to sin practised by rulers and the ruled. The devas, who are guardians of nature, react in various ways – climate change, failure of monsoons or disruption of their usual pattern, increase of

germs and spread of diseases, and failure of crops leading to famine. We have, therefore, to wash away our sins by prayer to Annapūrṇā for food and the knowledge by which to avoid sin. What form of knowledge is to be prayed for in this context? The last verse says that Annapūrṇā is the mother of the universe and Parameśvara is the father. When this knowledge arises, we begin to observe kinship with all beings and regard them as their children.

अन्नपूर्णे सदा पूर्णे शङ्करप्राणवल्लभे ।

ज्ञानवैराग्य-सिद्धयर्थं भिक्षां देहि च पार्वति ॥

Therefore we should develop *bhakti* to the universal mother and father, though secularism has undermined religion.

D. *Universal love* (Vol.III, pp. 78-84)

We speak of “sympathy and service to society.” Such an attitude produces a sense of superiority in us. Our attitude should be one of love (*priya*). Love arises from a realization of kinship. Kinship should have a basis. To feel kinship with all living beings, we should realize and remember that the same God is inner ruler of all. This realization produces humility and ensures that the service that we do to other is really service to God. It thereby purifies the doer while helping other.

All beings, living and non-living, are inter-dependent. Such is God’s creation. Being endowed with knowledge, it is the duty of man to cherish love for all, since all are aspects of God’s creation. This is the rationale behind the Vedic rites oriented to the protection of all aspects of nature, living and non-living. Even common practices like watering plants and tending animals avoiding violence, which are prescribed by ancients, protect the environment by pleasing

their presiding deities. Practising love for all human beings and helping them in times of distress is also our duty. Irrespective of outer success, such a way of life purifies our minds.

E. *The tradition of ācāra* (Vol. III, pp. 393-98)

Ācāra is explained by Mahasvāmin thus. The practices followed by our ancient ṛṣis and by which they maintained their moral quality are called *ācāra*. Those practices, being time-tested, are safe to be followed by us also. They were not arbitrarily laid down but based on Dharma-śāstras. We may not know their exact significance, but it is good to follow them on faith. *Ācāra* is subject to modification only in details according to local conditions like climate (*deśācāra*) and the traditions of different families (*kulācāra*). (The term *ācāra* could roughly be rendered as custom).

The observance of Vedic rituals and the recital of Vedic mantras not only give the agent mental discipline but also favourably influence external forces like inviting rain. Even secular discipline like that of a king or a chaste woman invites rain – so goes the ancient belief. Conversely, if such persons fail in self-discipline, nature also will be affected. Thus there is a close relationship between human discipline and the order of external forces. This is because both the human mind and nature are manifestations of God's plan. But man is gifted with a mind by which he can voluntarily follow God's plan (or go against it). This is how nature is influenced favourably or unfavourably by human behaviour. The ideal for man is to respect God's arrangement. Moral behaviour (*manuṣya-dharma*) sustains natural order (*prapañca-dharma*). And when morality declines, nature reacts in adverse ways.

The link between moral order and natural order is the fact that God is the basis of both. This is conveyed by two verses in the *phala-śruti* of *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma*.

द्यौः सचन्द्रार्कनक्षत्रा खं दिशो भूर्महोदधिः।
वासुदेवस्य वीर्येण विधृतानि महात्मनः॥

It is the power of Vāsudeva that sustains all aspects of the physical world relating to the sky, earth, and ocean.

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिः सत्त्वं तेजो बलं धृतिः।
वासुदेवात्मकान्याहुः क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञ एव च ॥

It is again Vāsudeva who pervades all aspects of the *jīva* relating to his body, mind, and soul.

God directly sustains nature's order. But he sustains the moral order of human beings indirectly as follows. He gives man a free mind. At the same time, he gives the mind the means by which he could regulate its working. And that means is religious knowledge (*śāstra / āgama*). *Ācāra* is the foundation of that knowledge. Thus, ultimately, God is the master of all *dharma*. This is conveyed by the next verse.

सर्वागमानां आचारः प्रथमं परिकल्पते।
आचारप्रभवो धर्मो धर्मस्य प्रभुरच्युतः ॥

Conclusion

The essence of our Ācārya's call on this topic is this. Economic welfare really depends on morality. And morality can be stable only when it is based on religion. A self-sufficient moralism is no better than selfish prudence.

* * * *

IDENTITY OF MAṄḌANAMIŚRA

R. BALASUBRAMANIAN

Maṅḍanamīśra is one of the controversial personages in the history of Advaita Vedānta. If, on the one hand, he is treated as a great authority on Mīmāṃsā, on the other he is respected and honoured as one of the foremost teachers of Advaita as well. His *Brahmasiddhi* occupies a unique place among the works on Advaita Vedānta not only because of its comparative antiquity but also because of the comprehensive and elaborate treatment of the various aspects of the doctrine it contains serving as a model of philosophical reasoning. Before the publication of the *Brahmasiddhi* we had access to his views on Advaita only through the references to the *Brahmasiddhi* contained in other works, and these references were not in any way helpful to us to decide whether the traditional account of his life and literary career as contained in the various biographies of Śaṅkara is reliable or not. Even after the publication of *Brahmasiddhi*¹, for which we are indebted to Professor Kuppuswamy Sastri, we

are not in a position to say either that the tradition about Maṇḍana is perfectly reliable or that it should be thrown overboard. Bewildered as we are about his date, we are even more bewildered about his identity, and much light remains to be thrown on this question.

We shall first consider what tradition has got to say about the identity of Maṇḍana. Probably the earliest life history of Śaṅkara that we possess now is Anantānandagiri's *Śaṅkaravijaya*. In canto 55 of this work, Kumārila informs Śaṅkara that Maṇḍana is his sister's husband and advises him to hold discussions with Maṇḍana who, when convinced of the greatness of Śaṅkara, becomes a saṃnyāsin. He then comes to be known as Sureśvara.²

In Vyāsācala's *Śaṅkaravijaya*, Viśvarūpa with whom Śaṅkara holds discussion is not referred to as Maṇḍana. Vyāsācala narrates the meeting of Śaṅkara with one Maṇḍana, who is a householder, on his way to meet Viśvarūpa on the advice of Kumārila. After blessing this Maṇḍana, Śaṅkara leaves him and goes to the house of Viśvarūpa.³

Cidvilāsa in his *Śaṅkaravijayavilāsa* identifies Maṇḍana with Sureśvara. We are told in this work that Maṇḍana is the name of the same person in his earlier life who on becoming a saṃnyāsin assumed the name of Sureśvara.⁴

Govindanātha, the author of the *Śaṅkarācāryacaritra*, must be later than Vyāsācala as he refers to the latter with great respect. He refers to Śaṅkara's meeting Viśvarūpa on the advice of Kumārila and does not mention the meeting of Śaṅkara with Maṇḍana, the lifelong householder. Nor does he call Viśvarūpa by the name of Maṇḍana.⁵

In the *Guruvamśakāvya*, Lakṣmaṇa Sastri points out that Śaṅkara was directed by Kumārila to meet Viśvarūpa and that he blessed Maṇḍanamiśra whom he met on his way before he went to Viśvarūpa.⁶ We are also told in this work that Viśvarūpa became a saṃnyāsin, and that he was then known as Sureśvara.⁷

One more work to which reference must be made is Vidyāraṇya's *Śaṅkaradigvijaya*. The name Viśvarūpa occurs in many places as a name of Maṇḍana in this work. Vidyāraṇya narrates the meeting of Śaṅkara with Kumārila. Kumārila instructs Śaṅkara to defeat Maṇḍana. This is stated in verses 111 to 117 of the seventh canto of this work.⁸ It is quite evident from this that, according to the tradition known to Vidyāraṇya, Maṇḍana was identical with Viśvarūpa and that he was popularly known as Umveka. Vidyāraṇya also tells us that Maṇḍana became a saṃnyāsin according to the promise given to Śaṅkara when he was defeated by the latter, and that he came to be known as Sureśvara. This is described in verses 74 and 75 and verses 104 to 106 of the tenth canto of this work.⁹

Thus according to the tradition as embodied in some of the works which purport to give an account of the life history of Śaṅkara, Maṇḍana is identical with Viśvarūpa and Sureśvara.

The identity theory based upon the traditional account was first challenged by Professor Hirianna on the ground that there are certain doctrinal differences between Maṇḍana and Sureśvara.¹⁰ Prof. Kuppuswami Sastri has come forward to strengthen the case of Hirianna by an array of arguments and number of internal evidences gathered from important and authoritative works on Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya and Dvaita-

Vedānta. He contends that “the data of overwhelming cumulative weight” which he has gathered are “quite sufficient to kill the common belief in the Maṇḍana-Sureśvara equation, and to exhibit Maṇḍana and Sureśvara as two different individuals, maintaining strikingly divergent views within the purview of Advaitism.”¹¹ Three conclusions, he says, emerge from the host of literary evidences adduced by him: first, Maṇḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, was never a disciple of Śaṅkara, did not become a saṃnyāsin, was not identical with Sureśvara and represented an Advaitic tradition different from the tradition of Śaṅkara; secondly, Sureśvara was known as Viśvarūpa and was a disciple of Kumārila when he was a householder; he came to be known as Sureśvara, when he became a saṃnyāsin and disciple of Śaṅkara; in his *Vārtikas* and *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* he controverted many an Advaitic doctrine expounded by Maṇḍana in his *Brahmasiddhi*; and he nowhere departed from his avowed allegiance to the tradition of Śaṅkara; and thirdly, Maṇḍana should have written his *Brahmasiddhi* after seeing Śaṅkara’s commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*, and Sureśvara should have written his *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* mainly as a Śaṅkara counterblast to the *Brahmasiddhi* probably in compliance with Śaṅkara’s desire. The confused accounts of Maṇḍana and Sureśvara furnished in what he calls “the pseudo-biographies” which “mix up in a hopelessly confused manner legendary and historical materials” cannot, therefore, be relied upon.¹²

It should be pointed out here that in each of the three conclusions drawn by Professor Kuppuswami Sastri several points are involved. The acceptance of one or two points in each of them does not entail the acceptance of the other points. Nor does the acceptance of any one conclusion

entail the acceptance of the remaining ones. Let us first examine the arguments which are adduced in favour of these conclusions in order to find out whether all the three conclusions are acceptable or certain points in some of them alone are acceptable.

The arguments advanced by Kuppuswami Sastri can be brought under three groups: (I) doctrinal differences between Maṇḍana and Sureśvara, (II) the marked difference in the attitudes of Maṇḍana and Sureśvara towards Śaṅkara, and, (III) the availability of evidences in other works to show that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara are not identical, while there are evidences to show that they are different. It is not necessary to examine the arguments put forward by Hiriyanna separately, as they are covered by the arguments included in the first of the three groups mentioned above.

There can be no difference of opinion on the issue that Maṇḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, and Sureśvara, the author of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas*, maintain strikingly divergent views within the purview of Advaitism. But is it safe to conclude by relying upon these doctrinal differences that the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* must be different from the author of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and *Vārtikas*? Professor Subrahmanya Sastri points out that the doctrinal differences, whatever they are, cannot unfailingly point to difference in personalities.¹³ His contention is that it is quite possible for us to account for these doctrinal differences by accepting the tradition which identifies Maṇḍana with Sureśvara. A master mind that he was, Maṇḍana distinguished himself not only in the field of Mīmāṃsā but also in Advaita. If the *Brahmasiddhi* testifies to the fact that he is one of the foremost thinkers of the Advaita school, the *Mīmāṃsānukra-*

mañika, the *Bhāvanāviveka* and the *Vidhiviveka* which are the compositions of Maṇḍana bring out the unquestioned authority of their author on Mīmāṃsā. Maṇḍana, the Advaitin, deserves our homage no less than Maṇḍana, the Mīmāṃsaka. That Maṇḍana was not only a Mīmāṃsaka but also an Advaitin is made clear by Jñānāmṛta in his *Vidyāsurabhi* which is a commentary on the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, when he remarks that the Advaitic tradition as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi* of Maṇḍana, who is a great Mīmāṃsaka, is not good and approved Advaitic tradition, whereas the Advaitic tradition as embodied in the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, which is based on, and draws inspiration from, Śaṅkara works, is characterised as good.¹⁴ The point that should be noted here is that Maṇḍana was an Advaitin, and that he sponsored a type of Advaita quite different from that of Śaṅkara. Maṇḍana was at the end of a long-line of pre-Śaṅkara Advaita writers who represented the orthodox school of Advaita of the day. If Śālikanātha, one of Prabhākara's disciples, chooses to state the Advaitic standpoint for the purpose of refutation by quoting extracts from Maṇḍana's *Brahmasiddhi* and not from Śaṅkara's works,¹⁵ if Jayantabhaṭṭa who wrote his *Nyāyamañjari* shortly after Vācaspatimiśra's *Tātparyaṭīkā* chooses to review the Advaita doctrine in the words of Maṇḍana's *Brahmasiddhi* and not in the words of Śaṅkara's works,¹⁶ it is because of the fact that Maṇḍana was looked upon as the champion of the Advaitic tradition that was prevalent at the time of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara gave a new orientation to the same by freeing it from the influence of Mīmāṃsā. For example, the way in which Maṇḍana stresses the importance of karma in the scheme of discipline leading to liberation is something characteristically peculiar to the Advaitic tradition as

embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi*, and no Advaitin in the post-Śaṅkara period, not even Vācaspatimiśra who came under the spell of Maṅḍana, tries to bring out the utility of karma in the way in which it has been done by Maṅḍana; and this brings out in unmistakable terms the Mīmāṃsā influence on Maṅḍana. If it is conceded, argues Subrahmanya Sastri, that the views of Maṅḍana, in the works in which the author is referred to as Maṅḍana, represent his views as an Advaitin of the pre-Śaṅkara school which is largely an Advaita-cum-Mīmāṃsā type, the views of Maṅḍana in the works in which the author is referred to as Sureśvara should necessarily be different, as he has had the benefit of a thorough conversion at the hands of his master Śaṅkarācārya. He further points out that “the doctrinal differences between Maṅḍana and Sureśvara are not so formidable and incompatible as not to be explained by the natural process of evolution of pre-Śaṅkarite, Śaṅkarite and post-Śaṅkarite ideals.”¹⁷ Pandit Ramanatha Sastri also suggests that “the differences in views of Maṅḍana and Sureśvara may be accounted for by the extraordinary influence of Śaṅkara’s doctrines upon Sureśvara which secured his spiritual transformation.”¹⁸ We have already pointed out that, according to tradition, Sureśvara was known as Maṅḍanamīśra and also as Viśvarūpa and that he was a doughty champion of Mīmāṃsā before he was defeated by Śaṅkara in a debate and converted to the Advaita view and way of life, as a consequence of which he became a saṁnyāsin and a disciple of Śaṅkara. Viśvarūpa, we are told in Vyāsācala’s *Śaṅkaravijaya*, appeals to Śaṅkara to believe in his true conversion and adds that though he has already written many works in various fields, his only desire thereafter is to serve at his teacher’s feet.¹⁹

Nobody can dispute the contention that the doctrinal differences obtaining between any two works suggest that their authors are probably different. But it should not be argued by relying upon these doctrinal differences that their authors must, beyond any shadow of doubt, be two different individuals. It may be that one and the same person is the author of both the works and that the doctrinal differences that we find between the two works have arisen as a result of the evolution of his ideas. To show how the doctrinal differences between two works cannot unfailingly prove that their authors should be different individuals, we can take the case of Prabhākara. Prabhākara wrote two commentaries on the *Śābara-bhāṣya* called the *Laghvī* or the *Vivaraṇa* and the *Bṛhatī* or the *Nibandhana*. These two commentaries which have served as the bases for the two traditions of the Prābhākara school as the *Vivaraṇamata* and the *Nibandhana-mata* have been commented upon by Śālikānātha. Though a copy of the *Nibandhana* is now available, a copy of the *Vivaraṇa* is yet to be discovered. That Prabhākara wrote not only the *Nibandhana* but also the *Vivaraṇa* is made clear by the references to the latter contained in works on Mīmāṃsā. The manuscript of the *Dīpaśikhā*, which is a commentary on the *Vivaraṇa* written by Śālikānātha, is now available.²⁰ Bhavanāthamiśra's *Nyayaviveka*, which explains the various adhikaraṇas of the *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras* of Jaimini, contains references to the *Vivaraṇa*. It is an important work in the Prābhākara school of Mīmāṃsā. It is said that it occupies in the Prābhākara school more or less the same position which Pārthasārathi's *Śāstradīpikā* occupies in the Bhāṭṭa school. Bhavanātha points out that his work is based on the works of Śālikānātha.²¹

A careful study of the *Nayaviveka* reveals to us that there are doctrinal differences on the same issues between the *Nibandhana* and the *Vivarāṇa*, the two commentaries of Prabhākara on the *Śābara-bhāṣya*. For example, one such difference referred to by the author of the *Nayaviveka* is in respect of the explanation of the third sūtra: "The examination of its means follows."²³ After explaining the sūtra from the standpoint of the *Nibandhana*, the author refers to the explanation that is given in the *Vivarāṇa*. The explanation is begun with the remark: "*Vivarāṇa tu śaiṅkā*."²³ We can notice another difference also in the explanation of the fourth sūtra, which seeks to show that dharma is not within the ken of such means of cognition as sense-perception and the like.²⁴ Bhavanātha brings out another difference under the section entitled "*Sambandha-ākṣepavādaḥ*."²⁵ The text of the *Nayaviveka* which is available in print is up to the first pāda known as "tarka-pāda" of the first adhyāya of the *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras*. We come across differences between the *Nibandhana* and the *Vivarāṇa* in the remaining part of the *Nayaviveka* also which is in manuscript. Though there are doctrinal differences on the same points between the *Nibandhana-mata* and the *Vivarāṇa-mata*, we do not suggest that there were two Prabhākaras, one who wrote the *Nibandhana* and the other who wrote the *Vivarāṇa*, or that the author of the *Nibandhana*, whoever he may be, was different from the author of the *Vivarāṇa*. Thus the case of Prabhākara who wrote two commentaries on the *Śābara-bhāṣya* testifies to the fact that the doctrinal differences which we find in two works with regard to the same issues cannot prove that their authors should be different.

It should not be thought that we ignore or minimise the importance of doctrinal differences as pieces of internal evidence capable of suggesting a new hypothesis. What we urge is that, however valuable they may be, they cannot conclusively show that the authors of the works which contain doctrinal differences should be different. Coming to the traditional account of Maṇḍana-Sureśvara equation and the modern challenge to it on the basis of doctrinal differences between the *Brahmasiddhi* on the one hand and the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas* on the other, we have shown that it is quite possible for us to account for these differences in terms of a thorough conversion which Maṇḍana underwent as a result of the discussion he had with Śaṅkara. If at least there is no explanation for these doctrinal differences from the point of view of the traditional account, which seeks to identify Maṇḍana and Sureśvara, there may be some justification if we think that the identity theory that has come down to us through tradition cannot be depended upon, and that the doctrinal differences point to difference in personalities. Even then we cannot claim certainty for our view. Since there is an explanation for these doctrinal differences on the basis of the traditional account, we cannot easily set aside the tradition and conclude that the doctrinal differences between the *Brahmasiddhi* on the one hand and the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas* on the other lend support to the fact that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara are different.

It is not only on the score that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara uphold strikingly divergent views but also on the ground that there is difference in their attitude towards Śaṅkara that Kuppuswami Sastri draws the conclusion that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara should be different. Whereas Maṇḍana

criticises Śaṅkara's views on certain questions, Sureśvara who is a devoted disciple of Śaṅkara does not, for as a disciple his chief task is to interpret, amplify and vindicate the view of Śaṅkara, his Godlike master. Sureśvara, observes Professor Sastri, would consider it a sacrilege on his part or on the part of any other Advaitin to treat Śaṅkara's views on certain questions in the manner in which Maṇḍana has done.²⁶

This argument is not acceptable, as it overlooks the fact that Sureśvara also differs from Śaṅkara on many a point. The following are some of the differences between Śaṅkara and Sureśvara in the interpretation of the Upaniṣadic texts, and they are taken from Sureśvara's *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika*.

(1) Commenting on the text: "There are indeed three worlds, the world of men, the world of the Manes and the world of the gods. This world of men is to be won through the son alone, and by no other rite; the world of the Manes through rites; and the world of the gods through meditation.....,"²⁷ Śaṅkara says that this world of men is to be won or attained through the son alone as means, and by no other rite, nor meditation. With regard to the world of the Manes, he says that it is "to be won through rites *alone* such as the agnihotra and not through either the son or meditation." Again, with regard to the world of the gods, he says that it is to be won "through meditation and not through either the son or rites."²⁸ Sureśvara objects to the addition of the word "*eva*" and "*karmanā*" and "*vidyayā*" which Śaṅkara makes in the explanation which he gives in his commentary. It is but proper to say, observes Sureśvara, that the world of the gods is to be won through meditation and that the world of the Manes through rites, because

there is the scriptural statement that meditation and rites are the means. But it is wrong to say by adding “*eva*” to “*karmanā*” and “*vidyayā*” that the world of the Manes is to be won through rites *alone* and that the world of gods through meditation *alone*, since they can be attained through other means also. The addition of “*eva*” to the word “*putrena*,” which we find in the text itself, is justified, since the world of men is to be won through the son alone and not through any other means.²⁹ Sureśvara not only criticises Śaṅkara’s interpretation but also emphatically declares that of the two interpretation his own interpretation is quite sound and should be accepted and not that of Śaṅkara which is defective.³⁰

(2) In his commentary on the text: “Now therefore the entrusting (*samprattiḥ*). When a man thinks that he will depart (*praiṣyan*), he says to his son, “You are Brahman, you are the sacrifice and you are the world....”³¹ Śaṅkara says that the “entrusting” is the name of rite (*karmaṇo nāmadheyam*). It is so called because the father in this manner entrusts or transmits his own duties to his son. When should this be done? Śaṅkara syas: “This is being stated: When a man, a father, on account of some omen or otherwise, thinks he will depart (*praiṣyan*), i.e., he will die (*maṛiṣyan*), he says to his son calling him, ‘You are Brahman, you are the sacrifice and you are the world.’”³² So according to Śaṅkara, (i) what is called the entrusting (*samprattiḥ*) is the name of a rite which should be done by a father who thinks he will die; and (ii) the word “*praiṣyan*” means “*maṛiṣyan*.”

Sureśvara does not accept Śaṅkara’s interpretation in both the respects. The “entrusting” is not an independent

rite; nor is it subsidiary to karmas like agnihotra. If that were the case, it should have been mentioned in the *Kalpa-sūtra*. There is, however, no reference to that in that work. Sureśvara, therefore, says that it is a rite which should be done by a person who, after practising meditation, is about to enter into the order of *saṁnyasa*.³⁵ Consistently with this view, Sureśvara explains the meaning of the word “*praiṣyan*.” He says that “*praiṣyan*” means “*pravrajīṣyan*,” i.e., one who is about to depart by giving up all the karmas. Contrasting his explanation of the word with that of Śaṅkara, he says that his explanation is based upon the direct sense of the root and the preposition contained in the word; and so his explanation alone is tenable.³⁴

(3) In his commentary on the text: “Knowing this very Self the Brāhmaṇas renounce the desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds and lead a mendicant life,”³⁵ Śaṅkara observes: “Knowing this very Self, their own reality, as ‘I am this, the Supreme Brahman, eternally devoid of the relative attributes and ever satisfied, the Brāhmaṇas—they are mentioned because they alone are qualified for renunciation—renounce.”³⁶ It follows, therefore, that the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas are not, according to Śaṅkara’s interpretation of this text, qualified for renunciation, since the word “*brāhmaṇa*” is used in the text to make known the specially competent person.

Sureśvara does not accept Śaṅkara’s explanation of the usage of the word “*brāhmaṇa*” contained in the text. Since there is the scriptural declaration: “Or else, let one renounce even from the student’s order of life, or from the householder’s, or from the forest-dweller’s”³⁷ without making any distinction of caste, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas

are also, like the Brāhmaṇas, qualified for renunciation, and so the use of the word “*brāhmaṇa*” is, says Sureśvara, for the purpose of implying (*upalakṣaṇārtham*) all the three castes.³⁸

(4) Sureśvara differs from Śaṅkara in the interpretation of the text: “Yājñavalkya went to Janaka, Emperor of Videha. He thought he would not say anything.”³⁹ In his commentary Śaṅkara observes that the object of Yājñavalkya’s visit was to get more wealth and maintain that already possessed, and that “while going, he thought he would not say anything to the Emperor.”⁴⁰ Sureśvara interprets the text differently by reading the expression “*sa mene na vadiṣye*” as “*sa enena vadiṣye*.” Following this reading Sureśvara interprets the text to mean that Yājñavalkya went to the king thinking that he would say well (*saṁvadiṣye*).⁴¹

Let us now consider the arguments which are included in the last of the three groups mentioned earlier. That Maṇḍana and Sureśvara should be treated as different individuals is argued on the ground that, in none of the available works on Advaita, Maṇḍana is identified with Sureśvara, while in many vedāntic works of the Advaita and Dvaita schools they are distinguished as two different Advaitins. The evidences taken from works on Advaita with the view to show that in none of them Maṇḍana and Sureśvara are identified are the following:

(1) Sureśvara himself criticises some of the views contained in Maṇḍana’s *Brahmasiddhi*.

(2) Sarvajñātmamuni and the commentators on the *Samkṣepaśārīraka* differentiate Maṇḍana from Sureśvara and draw attention to the fact that the former’s school is

different from the school of Śaṅkara, while the latter closely follows Śaṅkara.

(3) Prakāśātman, in his *Vivaraṇa* and *Śābdanirṇaya*, vindicates the views of Padmapāda and Sureśvara and criticises Maṇḍana's views; and where he quotes Maṇḍana with approval, he refers to him as the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* and not as Sureśvara.

(4) Ānandabodha also in his *Nyāyamakaranda* accepts Maṇḍana's views in some places and criticises them in cases where he prefers to adopt Sureśvara's views. Citsukha identifies all these references in his commentary on the *Nyāyamakaranda*, but nowhere identifies the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* with the author of the *Vārtika*.⁴²

It is not known how these references, which lend support to the fact that the views of the school of Maṇḍana as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi* are different from those of the school of Śaṅkara which Sureśvara closely follows, can prove that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara are different persons. It should be pointed out here that Professor Kuppuswami Sastri himself admits that Maṇḍana's exposition of the Advaita doctrine was based mainly on pre-Śaṅkara phase of it, while Sureśvara's exposition of that doctrine was entirely dependent upon its Śaṅkara phase. It has already been said that Maṇḍana was both a Mīmāṃsaka and an Advaitin and that, when he was converted by Śaṅkara, he recanted not only his views of Mīmāṃsā but also Advaita. It is no wonder, therefore, that Sureśvara coming under the influence of Śaṅkara differs from the views as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi*, for those views relating to the Advaita doctrine are characteristic of the pre-Śaṅkara period. Sarvajñātmamuni and the commentators on the *Samkṣepa-*

śārīraka are perfectly justified when they differentiate the school of Maṇḍana from that of Śaṅkara. If Prakāśātman and Ānandabodha who follow in the footsteps of Sureśvara quote certain views as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi* with approval, it is because of the fact that they do not run counter to those of Sureśvara. After all the doctrinal differences which we find between the *Brahmasiddhi* on the one hand and the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas* on the other are well within the bounds of Advaita, and there is nothing out of the way, if there is agreement between them in certain respects. When Maṇḍana, otherwise known as Viśvarūpa, was converted by Śaṅkara, it was not the conversion of one who was a total stranger to the Advaitic fold, but was the conversion of one who sponsored a type of Advaita which differed from the Advaita of Śaṅkara in certain respects. And so where there is no disagreement with the standpoint of Śaṅkara, whom Padmapāda and Sureśvara follow, the views as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi* are referred to with approval by Prakāśātman and Ānandabodha. That Citsukha does not identify the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* with the author of the *Vārtika*, while he identifies their views in his commentary on Ānandabodha's *Nyāyamakaranda*, is no reason to say that the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* should therefore be different from the author of the *Vārtika*. As a commentator he identifies the views referred to by Ānandabodha. All that we can expect him to do is to state that a particular view is from the *Brahmasiddhi* and that some other view is from the *Vārtika*. If he does not identify the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* with the author of the *Vārtika*, even though he identifies their views, it is because it is not what is strictly relevant to his purpose.

As many as ten references taken from Vedāntic works of the Advaita and Dvaita schools are cited by Kuppuswami Sastri in order to show that in all of them Maṅḍanamīśra is differentiated from Sureśvara.⁴³ It is not necessary to examine all these references one by one separately. What clearly emerges from these references is that Pratyaksvarūpa, Ānandagiri, Amalānanda, Vidyāraṇya and others are aware of the doctrinal differences between the *Brahmasiddhi* on the one hand and the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas* on the other, and that they quote from these works, sometimes in successive sentences, clearly bringing out the sharp opposition that obtains between them with regard to certain issues. When they refer to a certain view as stated in the *Brahmasiddhi*, they identify it as the view of Brahmasiddhikāra; similarly the view taken from the *Vārtika* is referred to as the view of Vārtikakāra. These references cannot conclusively prove that Brahmasiddhikāra and Vārtikakāra should, therefore, be different individuals. In fact Kuppuswami Sastri draws such a conclusion from these references. For example, he says: "From the way in which Appayya Dīkṣita refers to Vārtikakāra and Brahmasiddhikāra it may be made out that he knows that the authors of the *Vārtika* and the *Brahmasiddhi* are two different persons."⁴⁴ Taking the case of Amalānanda he says: "Amalānanda in his *Kalpataru* draws attention to the fact the Maṅḍana, as an Advaitin, criticises some of Śaṅkara's views and assumes that Sureśvara's *Vārtika* should be taken to elucidate Śaṅkara's view and that Maṅḍana and Sureśvara were two different Advaitins adopting different view-points."⁴⁵ It is certainly true that Appayya cites a certain view taken from the *Vārtika* and that it is the view of the Vārtikakāra;⁴⁶ mentioning a view taken from the *Brahmasiddhi*, he says

that it is the view of Brahmasiddhikāra.⁴⁷ But how are we justified in drawing the conclusion from his that Appayya knew that the authors of the *Vārtika* and *Brahmasiddhi* were two different persons? Whenever the Dīkṣita cites some passages or view from the *Vārtika*, he says that it has been stated in the *Vārtika* or that it is the view of Vārtikakāra; nowhere does he say that it has been stated by Sureśvara or that it is the view of Sureśvara. This is rather significant in view of the fact that, whereas he refers to other writers, for example Sarvajñātmamuni and Citsukha both by their names and the works they have written,⁴⁸ he uniformly refers to Sureśvara not by his name but by citing the work he has written. It should be clearly borne in mind that the Dīkṣita purports to give an account of several viewpoints on the various issues relating to the Advaita doctrine and so he mentions *inter alia* the view as stated in the *Brahmasiddhi* and also the view as stated in the *Vārtika*. From this we cannot jump to the conclusion that the Dīkṣita knew that the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* and the author of the *Vārtika* were two different persons. It may be conceded that Maṇḍana criticises some of Śaṅkara's views; it may also be conceded that Sureśvara in his *Vārtika* elucidates Śaṅkara's views. But this does not in any way enable us to conclude that Amalānanda assumes "that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara were two different Advaitins."

One of the striking features which we can notice as we read the *Brahmasiddhi* and the *Saṁbandha-vārtika* is that there are many common views, arguments and even expressions between them. It is incumbent upon those who reject the identity theory and maintain that Maṇḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, is different from Sureśvara, the author of the *Vārtikas*, to account for them in a

satisfactory way. Curiously enough, this problem has not attracted the attention of Kuppuswami Sastri, and so he does not offer any solution to it. But Mr. Ramakrishna Kavi, who also maintains that Maṅḍana and Sureśvara are different persons, is aware of the fact that there are many common verses and arguments between the *Brahmasiddhi* and the *Sambandha-vārtika*.⁴⁹ He says: "Works of Maṅḍana and Sureśvara have many common thoughts, arguments and even expressions. If their identity is denied, similarity in thought and expression may border upon Sureśvara's plagiarism, as he lived a few decades later than Maṅḍana. It may particularly be noted that a series of arguments in the *Sambandha-vārtika* of Sureśvara appears to be mere paraphrase in verse of the second and third chapters of Maṅḍana's *Brahmasiddhi*. In two or three places common verses occur without any alternation. This commonness prompted later readers to identify them instead of attributing plagiarism to Sureśvara. Unless proper explanation is sought to justify the commonness, it will still be a strong argument in favour of their identity.⁵⁰ If so, what is his explanation? "The *Sambandha-vārtika*," observes Ramakrishna Kavi, "was meant as an introduction by Sureśvara to his versified commentary on Śaṅkara's *Bṛhadāraṇya-bhāṣya*. The subject matter of this introduction is not found in Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya*. It extends over 1500 verses. What was the occasion for such a long preface? It is veritably a severe attack on Prabhākara and Bhartṛprapañca. Maṅḍana frequently indulged in it. The third chapter of his *Brahmasiddhi* which forms more than half the work is devoted to destroying the Niyoga theory of Prabhākara. Against this attack Prabhākara and Śālikānātha, his pupil and commentator on his works, denounce the Bhāṭṭa interpretations of the *Śābara-bhāṣya*,

of which school Maṇḍana was then the leader. In reply to these attacks, Sureśvara had to write his preface in which repeating all the arguments of Maṇḍana he supplements his own to defeat Ślikānātha. This phase of development was long forgotten by later scholars who were separated from the real combatants by several centuries and they were naturally reluctant to attribute plagiarism to Sureśvara and imagined his identity with Maṇḍana."⁵¹

This explanation is not satisfactory. There is no basis for his contention that the subject matter of the *Sambandha-vārtika* is not found in Śaṅkara's *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad-bhāṣya*. The *Sambandha-vārtika* is the introductory part of Sureśvara's *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika* which is a metrical commentary on Śaṅkara's *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad-bhāṣya*. Śaṅkara's commentary on this Upaniṣad begins with an introduction; and it is on this introduction, observes Dr. Mahadevan, that the *Sambandha-vārtika* is based.⁵² True to the character of a *Vārtika*, it contains what is said, what is not said and what is not well said in the original text. And this gives an opportunity to Sureśvara to examine the subject matter, to elaborate his points of view and to vindicate the standpoint contained in the original in a thorough and exhaustive way. It is, therefore, no wonder that the *Sambandha-vārtika*, which is an introduction to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika*, is fairly long, though the introductory part of Śaṅkara's commentary on the Upaniṣad is brief. From this one should not draw the conclusion that the subject matter of the *Sambandha-vārtika* is not found in Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya*. We shall now come to another point stressed by Ramakrishna Kavi in the course of his explanation. He says that Maṇḍana criticised the Niyoga theory of Prabhākara in the third chapter of his

Brahma-siddhi. Prabhākara and his pupil Śālikānātha denounced in their turn Maṅḍana's point of view. In reply to these attacks Sureśvara, says Ramakrishna Kavi, had to write his preface in which he repeated all the arguments of Maṅḍana and supplemented his own in order to defeat Śālikānātha. This phase of development, according to Kavi, was long forgotten by later scholars. How Kavi came to know of this phase of development we do not know; nor has he furnished any evidence in support of his contention. His explanation cannot therefore accepted.

The explanation which Professor Suryanarayana Sastri offers to account for the common thoughts and expressions is equally unsatisfactory. He rejects the contention that, if the identity of Maṅḍana and Sureśvara is denied, similarity in thought and expression may border upon Sureśvara's plagiarism. He says: "In the first place, we shall be making a great mistake in importing our horror of plagiarism into the literary conventions of those days. 'What is good enough to be appreciated is also good enough to be appropriated' seems to have been the maxim of the time." He further remarks that "there is no room for indignation, if we remember that few philosophical authors, if any, set store by personal reputations."⁵³ In these statements Suryanarayana Sastri gives expression to the healthy atmosphere that prevailed among the scholars in those days and the nobler sentiments which they exhibited. Certainly what is good enough to be appreciated is also good enough to be appropriated. But there should be some limit to appropriation. One should not be surprised to find common ideas, arguments, expressions and examples between the work of a teacher and that of his disciple. A comparative study of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, the *Upadeśasāhasrī* and the

Saṅkṣepa-śārīraka reveals to us that there are many common ideas, arguments and turns of expressions among them.⁵⁴ This is as it should be. The *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* is the work of Śaṅkara, who was the guru of Sureśvara, and the *Saṅkṣepa-śārīraka* is the work of Sarvajñātmamuni, the pupil of Sureśvara. It is also not uncommon among scholars in those days to incorporate portions of thought and of expressions of their predecessors. There are common ideas, expressions and examples between the *Brahmasiddhi* and *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspati.⁵⁵ This is not surprising because Vācaspati, who wrote a commentary on the *Brahmasiddhi*, was very much influenced by Maṇḍana. It would be the height of absurdity to charge Vācaspati with plagiarism or appropriation. But the problem for which we are seeking an explanation is something peculiar. Sureśvara, the author of the *Saṅbandha-vārtika*, is not a disciple of the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*. Nor is he one who has written a commentary on the *Brahmasiddhi*. Nor does he say, as other writers do, that he is referring to the explanation offered by others. It is not a case of common ideas, similar arguments and identical expressions which are found in a limited number of verses, say half a dozen or so. The entire sequence of arguments and turns of expressions closely packed and briefly stated in nearly four pages of terse prose in the *Brahmasiddhi*⁵⁶ are found re-stated in the *Saṅbandha-vārtika*⁵⁷ in more than sixty verses. And what is the explanation for this? Suryanarayana Sastri tells us that “what is good enough to be appreciated is also good enough to be appropriated” seems to have been the maxim in those days and that plagiarism was not to the ancients “the bugbear that it is to us.” He further remarks: “If Śaṅkara tolerated Sureśvara’s jealousy for Padmapāda,

Maṅḍana could easily have tolerated some pilfering from his own work, especially when by that pilfering his dialectic obtained vogue under the aegis of a publicist like Śaṅkara." "Maṅḍana might have welcomed the appreciation of his dialectic instead of resenting its appropriation."⁵⁸ This explanation, to say the least, does not carry conviction.

We are not suggesting that we should blindly accept the tradition and maintain that Maṅḍana and Sureśvara are identical, even though there are clear evidences and compelling reasons to show that they are different. What we contend is that the evidences adduced by Kuppuswami Sastri do not conclusively prove that Maṅḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, is different from Sureśvara, the author of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas*. It should be pointed out here that with regard to the Indian philosophical systems tradition is generally a surer guide than historical research. The latter is based upon the material available at the time and its interpretation. The available material is not always complete, nor has its interpretation the certificate of absolute certainty. Generally speaking, tradition is free from accretion and distortion, and speaks in a truer voice than historical research is capable of. Though this is not to decry the conclusions of research, one must not place absolute reliance on it. In matters about which complete authentic records are not available, tradition has its own value. It *may be* that the traditional account about the identity of Maṅḍana and Sureśvara is wrong. But we should have stronger evidences of an authentic character to show that the tradition is wrong and that Maṅḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, is different from Sureśvara, the author of the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* and the *Vārtikas*. Though Kuppuswami Sastri thinks that "the data of overwhelming cumulative weight" furnished

by him “would be quite sufficient to kill the common belief in the Maṇḍana – Sureśvara equation,” he has not, for the reasons mentioned earlier, proved his case beyond any shadow of doubt.

We have already invited attention to the fact that in each of the three conclusions drawn by Kuppuswami Sastri several points are involved, and that the acceptance of one or two points in each of them does not entail the acceptance of the other points. In the same way the acceptance of any one conclusion does not entail the acceptance of the remaining ones. While we can readily agree with him that Maṇḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi*, represented an Advaitic tradition different from the tradition associated with Śaṅkara, we want further evidences of an authoritative character for accepting the other points stressed by him in the first conclusion. So far as the second conclusion is concerned, we can accept all the points stressed by him excepting the last one, viz., that Sureśvara nowhere departed from his avowed allegiance to the tradition of Śaṅkara. We can also accept his third conclusion. The greatest service which Kuppuswami Sastri has rendered is that he has compelled us to make a careful investigation of the Maṇḍana – Sureśvara equation which has come down to us from tradition by adducing several evidences, by drawing our attention to the references to Maṇḍana contained in certain important works of the Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā and Dvaitavedānta systems with a view to show that Maṇḍana and Sureśvara are different persons maintaining strikingly divergent views within the purview of Advaita Vedānta. We can settle this question only if there is more definite evidence than we have at present in favour of either of the two views.

* * * *

NOTES

1. S. Kuppaswami Sastri, editor (Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Series No. 4, Madras).
2. Vide introduction to *Śloka-vārtika* (Madras University Sanskrit Series No. 13). p.xi
3. Vyāsācala, *Śaṅkaravijaya* (Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Series No. 24, 1954), pp. 57-58.
4. Vide introduction to *Śloka-vārtika*, p.x.
5. Vide foreword to *Brahmasiddhi*, p. ix.
6. *Gurvaṁśakāvya* (Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam), Canto II: 48-50.
7. Ibid., Canto II: 59.
8. *Śaṅkaradigvijaya* (Anandasrama Sanskrit Series), pp. 292-293.
9. Ibid., pp. 300-400 and p. 410.
10. M. Hiriyanna, "Sureśvara and Maṇḍanamiśra," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, April 1923 and January 1924.
11. Introduction to the *Brahmasiddhi*, p. xxvi.
12. Ibid., p. Ivii.
13. Foreword to the *Brahmasiddhi*, p.vi
14. Manuscripts R. No. 3354, Triennial Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS. in the Govt. Oriental Manuscripte Library, Madras, p. 351.
15. *Prakaranapañcikā* (Chowkamba Sanskrit Series No. 17), pp. 155 and 178.
16. *Nyāyamañjari* (Vizianagaram Sanskrit Series), pp. 526-527.
17. Foreword to the *Brahmasiddhi*, p. vi.
18. S. K. Ramanatha Sastri, "Bhavabhuti and his identity," *The Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, Rajahmundry, July 1926, Vol. I, Part 3, pp. 125-129.

19. Canto 7, verse 65, p. 87.
20. Introduction to the *Nayaviveka* (Madras University Sanskrit Series No. 12, Madras, 1937). p.xii.
21. *Nayaviveka*, p. 2
22. *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras*, 1-1-3.
23. *Nayaviveka*, p. 64.
24. Ibid., p. 67.
25. Ibid., p. 171.
26. Introduction to the *Brahmasiddhi*, p. xlviii.
27. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 1-5-16.
28. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, with Śaṅkara's commentary, translated by Swami Madhavananda (Advaita Asrama, Almora, 1950) p. 229.
29. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣay-vārtika* (Ananadāsrama Sanskrit Series No. 16), p.847, verses 279-280.
30. Ibid., p. 848, verse 281.
31. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 1-5-17.
32. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, with Śaṅkara's commentary, p. 231.
33. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣay-vārtika* verse 284, p. 848.
34. Ibid., verse 288, p. 849.
35. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 3-5-1.
36. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, with Śaṅkara's commentary, p. 480.
37. *Jābāla Upaniṣad*, 4.
38. Ibid., verse 89, p. 1254.
39. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, 4-3-1.
40. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, with Śaṅkara's commentary, p. 595.

41. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-Bhāṣay-vārtika*, verse 10, p.1378.
42. Introduction to the *Brahmasiddhi*.
43. Introduction to the *Brahmasiddhi*, p. li-lv.
44. Ibid., p. liii.
45. Ibid., p. lii.
46. Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha, edited with an English translation by S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri (Publication of the Department of Philosophy, No.4, University of Madras), III: 1.4.
47. Ibid., IV: 2. 1.
48. Ibid., IV: 1.4. and IV: 4. 2246; IV: 2.42 and II: 3.612.
49. See his article, "Identity of Sureśvara," *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, Vol. V, Part III pp. 187-192, 1931, Rajahmundry.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. See his preface to the *Sambandha-vārtika* (Madras University Philosophical Series, No. 6, Madras, 1958), p. vi.
53. See his article, "Maṇḍana and Sureśvara," *The Journal of the Madras University*, Vol. XI, No. 1, 1939, pp. 30-40.
54. Vide Introduction to the *Naiṣkarmya-siddhi* (Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series, XXXVIII, 1925), p. xxx.
55. Cf. *Brahmasiddhi*, Part I, p. 12, last line and p. 13, first line and the *Bhāmati* (Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, 1933), p. 80, lines 11-13.
56. *Brahmasiddhi*, Part I, pp. 28-31.
57. Verses 342b-350a, 377b-427, 428-436a.
58. Ibid.

THE PLACE OF ADVAITA IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

A META-PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH (2)*

T. P. RAMACHANDRAN

META-PHILOSOPHY AND THE INDIAN TRADITION

I shall try to assess the Indian schools of philosophy by applying the criteria suggested in the previous part, namely width of scope and consistency in organization. I shall omit the Cārvāka school as it is an exception to the religious spirit of Indian philosophy. All the remaining schools aim at *mokṣa* and orient their metaphysics and epistemology to that purpose. Philosophy, in the Indian view, must culminate in experience. Otherwise, it is not considered as worth the effort. Hence we shall examine the scope and organization of schools with reference to *mokṣa*. Though in both Indian epistemology and metaphysics there are several issues that are connected with *mokṣa*, I shall consider here only those

*The L. Venkataratanam Endowment Lectures delivered on 13th and 14th December 1989 under the auspices of the University of Madras in the Department of Sanskrit. Courtesy: The Tradition of Advaita — Essays in Honour of Bhāṣyabhāvajña V.R. Kalyanasundara Sastri. Edited by R. Balasubramaniam.

that have a direct bearing on the goal. Similarly, though axiology deals with all the values, Indian axiology regards *mokṣa* as the chief value and all the other values as subordinate and subservient to it. Hence I shall deal with *mokṣa* alone under axiology.

1. *Epistemology*

To begin with epistemology, from the point of view of *mokṣa*, the issue for epistemology is: what is the source of knowledge about it? The ultimate means of becoming certain about the possibility and the nature of *mokṣa* is, of course, the experience or direct knowledge of it. But in order that one may strive for the goal in right earnest, mediate knowledge of it is necessary in the first instance. The means to such mediate knowledge cannot be any of the ordinary ones such as perception or inference, for these are suited to bring knowledge only about the sensible world. Hence Indian philosophers have uniformly held that the only means of knowledge about *mokṣa* is verbal testimony (*śabda*). Verbal testimony can operate either in the sensible or in the supra-sensible realm depending on whichever happens to be its basis—sense and reason, or spiritual experience. We are here concerned with verbal testimony relating to a spiritual matter. Such verbal testimony is of two kinds as recognized by Indian schools. There is the personal testimony of great souls relating to their experience (*pauruṣeya*). In contrast to this there is the testimony of the Veda which is believed to be non-personal in origin (*apauruṣeya*). In regard to the acceptance of these two kinds of testimony Indian schools fall into two groups.

Jainism and Buddhism depend on the words originating from the intuitive vision (*yogi-pratyakṣa*) of their masters.

Such an authority is spoken of in these schools as *smṛti* in the sense of tradition (*aitihya*). It is regarded as sufficient to disclose extra-empirical facts in an immediate manner. The Vaidika schools, however, see a risk in this appeal to individual insight. The private experience of an individual, however gifted and honest he may be, does not by itself guarantee the validity of his expression. Personal authority could after all be subjective. To avoid this defect, for a knowledge of the realm which transcends common experience the orthodox schools depend on that authority which is believed to be supra-human (*apauruṣeya*) in one sense or another, namely the Veda. Since the origin of the Veda cannot be traced to any mortal being, the Veda is regarded as immemorial (*sanātana*) in character. This is not to deny a human connection to the Veda. As the name *śruti* implies, the truths for which the Veda stands must have been received by, or revealed to, the inspired sages (*ṛṣis*) of old.

The Veda thus acquires an objective status, which is further guaranteed by the principle that if a doubt arises as to the validity of the views handed down by revelation, appeal is to be made to the best minds of the community (*mahājana*) who are satisfied with those views. Further, to prevent anything being claimed as revealed truth, the adherents of this tradition restrict the scope of the Veda by two conditions. One is that a truth belongs to the Veda only if it is new (*anadhigata*), i.e. if it relates to the trans-empirical (*alaukika*), which cannot be known by any other means. The other is that the content of revelation must be free from contradiction (*abādhita*), i.e. it must be internally coherent. This means that, though the Veda is above reason, it is not against it.

We have stated the respective positions of the heterodox and the orthodox schools on the resort to verbal testimony on spiritual matters. Let us now apply our criteria of scope and organization to the two sets of schools on this question. It is found that the scriptural scheme of the orthodox schools is a larger scheme which includes the scheme of the heterodox schools. In accepting the Veda as the proper source of information on trans-empirical questions, the orthodox schools accept also the utility of personal verbal testimony, described here also as *smṛti*. In the Vedic tradition the whole class of *smṛti* texts, which are the personal expression of all the sages, have their own places of importance for instruction on question of spirit. And this class of texts is of wide range and great variety in the Vedic tradition. The Itihāsas and Purāṇas, the Sūtras and commentaries, and the innumerable compositions of the Ācāryas—all belong to the class of *smṛti*. Thus personal authority, which is regarded as the primary source on spiritual matters in the heterodox schools, finds a place here also. The difference is that this authority is subordinated to the Veda and derived from it in this scheme and in that sense called *smṛti*. Thus, the provision for personal authority (*smṛti*) in the orthodox scheme of verbal testimony as a secondary source renders the scheme larger and more inclusive than the other.

If we look within the Vedic tradition, the schools falling within this group are, however, not uniform in regard to their attitude to the Veda. Although formally speaking, all these schools regard the Veda as the ultimate authority on matters spiritual, some of the schools are in practice not consistent with this general attitude. The Vedānta schools subordinate reason to Vedic authority and resort to it only

to render probable the teaching of the Veda and to clarify it. But Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Sāṅkhya-Yoga resort to reason as a supplement to scriptural authority and thus give it virtually equal importance with scripture. The assumption behind this is that reason unaided by scripture has the capacity to unravel the mystery of spiritual reality. The Vaiśeṣika regards the interpretation of scripture as a matter of inference, like later Buddhism. The Nyāya school believes in the infallibility of the Veda, since, according to it, it emanates from God, but it resorts to *sāmānyato-dṛṣṭānumāna* instead of scripture in proving the existence of God. The Sāṅkhya resorts to the same method of reasoning to prove the unseen existence of primal *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. And it resorts to scripture only where even this type of inference is not possible, as for example, in the case of the order in which the evolutes of *prakṛti* emerge from it. The Pūrva Mīmāṃsā school places unquestioning faith in the Veda, but the earlier phase of this school undermines this stand by restricting its importance to the *karma-kāṇḍa*. Thus, schools of the Vedic tradition other than Vedānta, while accepting the Vedic authority as the means of knowing transcendental verities, are not consistent in their allegiance to the Veda. We are thus left with Vedānta as the only division of the orthodox tradition that is free from self-contradiction in its attitude to the Veda.

II. *Metaphysics*

From the epistemology of schools we shall now turn to their metaphysics. There are two major issues in Indian metaphysics which have a direct bearing on the concept of *mokṣa*. One of the issues concerns the nature of the self. *Mokṣa* is for the self. Hence in every school there is a

correlation between the conception of the self and the conception of liberation in the school, and so liberation may well be described as self-realization. It consists in the self realizing or regaining its true state. There are many questions about the self which are connected with the concept of liberation. We shall discuss only one of them, which perhaps is the most important. It is the question whether pleasure is inherent in the self or not.

It is found that those schools which do not recognize the presence of pleasure in the nature of the self have a negative conception of release as consisting in mere absence of pain. To this class belong Jainism, Buddhism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya-Yoga, and Mīmāṃsā. Each, of course, denies pleasure in the self for its own reasons, which we shall briefly state.

According to Jainism, neither pleasure nor pain belongs to the self. The essence of the self is nothing but all-comprehensive knowledge. Owing to association with *karma*, which is regarded as subtle matter, the omniscience of the self exhibits itself under limitations and consequently the self passes through pain and pleasure. When, through effort, all fresh *karma* is stopped and old *karma* is thrown off, the self shines in its true state as mere consciousness and no experience.

To Buddhism, desire (*tṛṣṇā*) for pleasure is the immediate cause of pain, and desire springs from ignorance of the truth that the self as well as the external world is unsubstantial and transitory. With right knowledge desire comes to a stop and with it all suffering and rebirth. The term "*nirvāṇa*" used for *mokṣa* in both Jainism and Buddhism is significant expressing a negative state of cessation.

According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, consciousness, pain and pleasure, and so on are adventitious qualities of the self arising from contact with objects through the mind and sense organs. Liberation, described as *apavarga*, consists in the self divesting itself of all these specific qualities and remaining as a neutral being or pure substance. The Mīmāṃsā conception of the self and *mokṣa* is more or less similar to that of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

Sāṅkhya-Yoga also conceives of *mokṣa* as *apavarga*, or freedom from all experience (*bhoga*). But while to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, pleasure and pain are real, though temporary, to Sāṅkhya-Yoga, they are a delusion arising from the false contact of *puruṣa* with *prakṛti*. With the dawn of wisdom the false association with *prakṛti* snaps and the self remains as itself, free from pleasure and pain.

Here then is a negative conception of *mokṣa* represented by many schools. Life involves pain, and liberation should fulfil man's yearning for complete and permanent absence of pain. But the absence of pain does not imply the presence of pleasure. The nature of the self as conceived in these schools, though variously, fits in with this view. Both pleasure and pain are foreign to the self. And liberation restores the self to the neutral state of nil experience. It is commonly recognized by all these schools that the liberated self, being free from pain, is in a state of restful peace (*śānti*). But this is all that *mokṣa*, according to them, stands for.

The Vedānta schools agree with the assertion of the non-Vedānta schools that in liberation there is absolute cessation of suffering as represented by the unruffled state of peace. But they assert that there is a positive side also to

mokṣa—the enjoyment of bliss, which follows as a necessary consequence of the absence of pain. This state of enjoyment, they point out, is not the same as ordinary mundane pleasure. Ordinary pleasure is allied to pain, and it is such pleasure that disappears along with pain in the state of liberation. But in the place of both, the transcendental experience of bliss (*ānanda*) prevails. Such an experience would not be present in liberation if its possibility were not already in the self.

All the Vedānta schools hold that bliss is inherent in the self. While Advaita regards it as the essence of the self, the other schools of Vedānta consider it as a permanent attribute of the self. But this difference is not important for us now. What matters is that the recognition by Vedānta of bliss in the nature of the self leads to a positive conception of *mokṣa*. When all the obstacles are removed, the native bliss of the self manifests itself. The positive view represented by Vedānta can claim superiority over the negative view, for it is more comprehensive. It includes the idea of freedom from pain and supplements it with the concept of bliss.

I have so far considered one of the metaphysical issues with a direct significance for liberation. The other issue relates to the recognition of the ultimate reality. Schools of philosophy commonly recognize the physical world and the Self. No philosophy can afford to ignore the physical world in which we live. A philosophy may interpret its nature as different from what it appears, but it must reckon with the physical world at least for empirical purposes. Likewise no philosophy can deny the existence of the self, which is taken as the subject of common experience. Here again the interpretation of what is called the self may be of any kind. But the philosopher cannot ignore the assumption of an empirical subject behind thought, feeling and action. One

must exist even to philosophize on the self. Now, all schools of philosophy admit that the world and the self have their limitations. Hence the question arises whether the world and the self are self-subsistent or point to a reality higher than themselves on which they depend—an ultimate reality. On this question the Indian schools of philosophy fall into two groups.

The schools of Vedānta comprise one group. The term “Vedānta” is usually applied only to those schools that are directly based on the teachings of the Upaniṣads. Some of the Śaiva schools are based on the independent sources of Āgama, and these are not formally included in Vedānta. But if we consider their patterns of thought, they too may well be brought under the term “Vedānta”. The central feature of Vedānta as distinguished from all the other schools is the recognition of an ultimate reality on which the physical world and the entire class of souls are, in some manner or other, dependent, either for their nature alone or for their existence also. And the Vedānta schools not only recognize the existence of an ultimate reality, but also accord to it a place of central importance in their systems.

The differences among the Vedānta schools exhibit themselves on two major questions regarding the ultimate. One is the nature of the ultimate reality. It is conceived either as the personal God or as the impersonal Absolute. When the ultimate is treated as personal, it is regarded either as Viṣṇu or as Śiva. The other question is the relation which the souls and the world bear to the ultimate. On this we have the two extreme positions of difference and non-difference with a range of positions in between which accommodate difference with non-difference. And if we arrange the schools in a graduated scale either from difference

to non-difference or from non-difference to difference, we find a remarkable parallelism in the broad patterns of thought between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools—between Śaiva-siddhānta and Dvaita Vedānta, between Vīra-śaivism and the Bhedābheda of Nimbārka, between Śivādvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita, between Kāśmīra Śaivism and the Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha. Thus, the term Vedānta could comprise a wide variety of schools, theistic and absolutistic. We shall not enter into the differences among them. But the point to be stressed is that with all their differences, none of these schools of Vedānta compromises the central importance given to the ultimate reality. In fact, the ultimate reality of Vedānta is truly ultimate.

In contrast to Vedānta, there are various schools where the recognition of an ultimate reality is either absent or found wanting. We shall omit, of course, the Cārvāka and confine our attention to the religious schools. Among them, Sāṅkhya advances arguments to deny the existence of God whereas Jainism and Mīmāṃsā refute the arguments advanced by others to prove the existence of God. Buddhism is divided on the issue. Early Buddhism and the Theravāda schools are silent on the question of the ultimate. But the Mahāyāna schools give room for the view that they are not after all against the idea of an ultimate.

Some thinkers in Vijñānavāda postulate a universal or absolute consciousness (*vijñapti-mātra*)¹ of which the particular selves are appearances. But the concept is represented in the history of Vijñānavāda in more than one form so that nothing definite can be said about it. Śūnyavāda also appears to postulate an ultimate reality. The denial of the external world and the empirical selves does not leave a void. What remains from such denial is described by

Mādhyamika thinkers as *śūnya* only in the sense that nothing positive or negative can be said about it. This unique reality is the ground of all deceptive plurality. However, such a conception of the ultimate reality is so elusive that it is impossible even to conjecture its nature. Thus, the Mahāyāna schools are not clear and positive on the question of the ultimate reality. There is of course the common tendency of the Mahāyāna schools to deify the Buddha in the manner of the theistic Hindu schools and inculcate devotion to the Buddha as a means to salvation. But it is not made clear whether the deified Buddha is identical with the ultimate reality or remains the master in a glorified conception.

The Yoga school, purely under the constraint of buttressing its practical discipline, postulates an Īśvara who is no better than an elevated jīva. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika conception of God is only a little better than the Yoga conception. Somewhat late in its history Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika introduces the idea of God and purely for reasons of explaining the origin and design of the world. Designated Paramātman, God belongs to the class of selves (*ātman*) and is distinguished from the individual self (*jīvātman*) only by qualities equal to his cosmic tasks.

Thus, the schools other than Vedānta comprise those that do not recognize an ultimate reality at all and those that do not do so adequately. In any case, none of them acknowledges an ultimate reality in the unambiguous and positive manner in which the Vedānta schools recognize it. In this sense we may regard all of them as negative in their attitude to the question of the ultimate reality.

Now, it is seen that to take either a positive or a negative stand on the problem of the ultimate reality carries

with it its own implication for a school in regard to the concept of *mokṣa*. The implication concerns the relation which the liberated self has to the physical world and the other selves, which, taken together, constitute the self's environment.

Let us consider the negative view first. Since this position does not recognize an ultimate reality, adequately or otherwise, there is nothing, according to it, to bind or unify in an essential manner the self with the environment. Hence, liberation involves a withdrawal of the self from the environment. As for the physical world, the contrast between spirit and matter is recognized by all the schools. It is also admitted by all that, in view of this opposition, the soul's association with matter, whether real or not, in common life gives rise to desires, which lead to misery. But from this admission the negative schools assume that for permanent relief from suffering the self has to shake itself free from inanimate nature, virtually at least in life till actual separation becomes possible at death. In the absence of a common base, self and nature are seen as irreconcilables. *Jīva* is pitted against *ajīva*, *ātman* against *anātman*, *puruṣa* against *prakṛti*, and liberation involves the abandonment of nature by the self.

The rest of the environment consists of other souls. What, according to the negative schools, is the attitude of the liberated or perfected one to other souls? It is certainly not one of indifference. Every one of these schools teaches that one who is liberated or is well set for liberation works for the upliftment of his fellow souls. But the important point to be noted is that, since there is no essential connection between souls in the absence of an ultimate reality, the

service to fellowmen by the liberated or the perfected one comes more out of pity, compassion, for them than out of love. Love needs more than an external relation. The emphasis laid on compassion (*dayā*) both in the discipline for *mokṣa* and among the virtues of the perfected, especially by the heterodox schools, is significant in this context.

In Vedānta the central importance given to the concept of Brahman revolutionizes the concepts of *mokṣa*. *Mokṣa* here is not merely self-realization, but also Brahman-realization. It consists in the self realizing its true nature either as identical with, or as closely related to, Brahman. Such a realization invests the self with a positive outlook on the physical world and the other selves. The entire universe is encompassed by Brahman either as its basis or as its essence. Therefore he who has experienced Brahman is said to have known the truth of everything. The impact of that realization on one's attitude to the world and the other selves cannot be one of exclusion and otherness.

The physical world is a manifestation, real or illusory, of Brahman. Bondage is not the result of association as such with matter. It is the consequence of the narrow and perverted outlook of the self on the world in terms of possession and exploitation. Liberation, therefore, does not entail any isolation of the self from inanimate nature, but only the realization of one's deeper link with nature through the common ground of Brahman. In other words, the world, instead of being rejected, comes to be looked upon with other eyes. The self's relation with the world, instead of being severed, comes to be transformed through a correction of outlook from the selfish to the selfless.

As for the liberated person's attitude to other selves, it is not just one of sympathy, but of love (*priya*). Sympathy involves a sense of difference between the subject and the object. But love requires an inner affinity. And it is Vedānta that provides for such an affinity. From the standpoint of Vedānta, the liberated or perfected one actually or virtually experiences the same Brahman in all beings (*sarvātma-bhāva*). From this felt conviction in the oneness of all beings (*sarvātma-bhāva*) springs spontaneous love for all as illustrated in many passages of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.²

The recognition of the ultimate reality gives to the Vedānta conception of *mokṣa* the distinction of being wider and more constructive than that of the non-Vedānta schools. Brahman-realization includes the idea of self realization put forward by all the other schools. It implies also a more optimistic attitude to the world and the other selves. Vedānta admits that the universe of matter and souls contains physical and moral evil. But the evil is present because the self in ignorance takes a partial and distorted view of it and develops preferences and exclusions. When it understands the universe as a whole by discovering its root and basis, the evil loses its sting, and narrow attachment and aversion are replaced by the sense of cosmic unity. As a result, the liberated or perfected one is at peace with everything.

देहाभिमाने गलिते विज्ञाते परमात्मनि।
यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्र तत्र समाधयः॥³

Such a conception of *mokṣa* has special relevance to modern civilization, faced as it is with depletion of nature on the one hand and social violence on the other. If the philosophy of Vedānta cannot change things overnight, it can at least give man a point of view from which to take consolation.

III. Axiology

Having examined the epistemology and metaphysics of Indian schools in terms of *mokṣa*, it now remains for us to examine the concept of *mokṣa* itself.

We have already discussed some of the issues relating to *mokṣa* in connection with epistemology and metaphysics. These are (1) the proper source for a mediate knowledge of *mokṣa*, (2) the bliss nature of the self and its implication for *mokṣa*, and (3) the ultimate reality and its significance to the liberated one's attitude to the environment. The examination of these questions has led us up to Vedānta as the one set of schools that satisfy the criteria of scope and organization. The common features of the Vedānta conception of *mokṣa*, as we have gathered so far, may be summarized thus. (1) The nature of *mokṣa* is to be known primarily through the impersonal authority. (2) *Mokṣa* is not only the absence of pain but also the presence of supreme bliss. (3) *Mokṣa* involves the trans-valuation of nature and love to fellow beings.

There are issues about *mokṣa* not covered so far on which there are differences even among the Vedānta schools. Some of them relate to the nature of liberation and some to its means. Since the conception of the means to liberation invariably depends on the conception of its nature, we shall restrict our discussion to two issues relating to the nature of liberation.

- (1) Is *mokṣa* attained only after life or even within it?
- (2) Does the content of *mokṣa* differ in kind or in degree for the different schools?

We shall first take up the question of when liberation is attained. While all schools of Indian philosophy are certain that liberation is possible, some go further to assert that it is possible even within the span of one's life. This concept, *jīvanmukti* as it is called, has its own attractions. If liberation were possible only after death, it may even be doubted whether it is ever attainable. But the idea that liberation may be attained here and now, if only a human being so wills, carries greater certitude in the possibility of liberation. Moreover, the concept of *jīvanmukti*, as Hiriyanna puts it, "deepens the significance of the present life" whereas the other idea tends "to dwarf the present" and engender an attitude of "other-worldliness."⁴

Some schools like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā do not recognize the possibility of *jīvanmukti* at all. Bondage involves the self's association with matter. Since this association is severed only at death, liberation is possible only after death. There are other schools which, while denying the possibility of liberation in life, conceive of the chance of attaining a stage of perfection in life which is close to liberation. A person who has reached this stage is as good as released except for the fact that the body stands as an impediment. To this group belong Jainism and the schools of Vedānta other than Advaita. For one who stands on the threshold of liberation while in life significant names are used. Jainism describes him as *arhan*, the worthy one. Some of the schools that belong to Vedānta even use the expression *jīvanmukta* but purely in a figurative sense, e.g. the school of Bhartṛprapañca, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Dvaita. None of these schools admit *jīvanmukti* in the literal sense. Matter is real according to all of them, and so bodily life and liberation in the strict sense of the term are incompatible.

The only schools that recognize the possibility of liberation while being alive are Sāṅkhya-Yoga, Buddhism, and Advaita. But there are difficulties in the positions of Sāṅkhya-Yoga and Buddhism. We shall consider them briefly before taking up Advaita.

In Sāṅkhya, as in other systems, bondage consists in the association of the self with matter, and liberation is the severance of this link. But here the association, unlike in the other schools we have so far considered, is regarded as false and arising out of ignorance relating to the totally opposite nature of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The self in its true nature is only a witness of *prakṛti* and in itself is unaffected by the pain and pleasure of being in contact with *prakṛti*. When enlightenment on this dawns, the self realizes its native freedom, though the body may continue to live. Such is *jīvat-kaivalya* in Sāṅkhya. Hence, there is really neither bondage nor liberation. Since freedom has only to be realized, the presence of the body is no impediment to it.

The crux of the Sāṅkhya solution to the problem of *jīvanmukti* lies in the illusory nature of the contact of *puruṣa* with *prakṛti*. But it passes our understanding how the relation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* can be illusory when both are regarded as real. An illusory relation is possible only when one of the relata is illusory. A person is in illusory contact with a horse when dreaming of a ride, but not when riding a real horse. Sāṅkhya is inconsistent in this respect as in many other respects. The point that emerges is that the idea of *jīvanmukti* can be illusory. This is partly achieved in Buddhism, which we shall now consider.

Even in its earlier canonical phase Buddhism recognizes the possibility of liberation in life. Of the later

phase, Theravāda Buddhism mostly follows the teachings of canonical Buddhism. So the position of both can be stated together before we deal with Mahāyāna Buddhism. Neither the self nor the external world is, as commonly believed, a fixed and permanent entity. Both are aggregates and represent a constant flow. The immediate cause of bondage is desire. But how futile desire is, is brought home by the right knowledge that it is the unsubstantial and transient self that seeks the equally unsubstantial and transient object. When this right knowledge ripens into experience through meditation, there results *nirvāṇa*. It is a state of serenity where all desires and miseries become absent. One who thus "becomes cool" is called an *arhan*, as in Jainism, a worthy or holy one. Such a state could occur and is aimed at even while in life, and thus corresponds to what Sāṅkhya and Advaita describe in literal terms as *jīvanmukti*.⁵

The admission of *jīvanmukti* in canonical and Theravāda Buddhism stands to reason because the world of matter and its relation to the self are in effect regarded as illusory. But the difficulty with this phase of Buddhism is that it repudiates the common empirical self without postulating anything behind it. In the state of *arhan* the false empirical self continues to be experienced though it no longer deceives. At death even this so-called empirical self is annihilated or "blown out" as additionally signified by the term *nirvāṇa*. Such a state is also called *parinirvāṇa* corresponding to *videhamukti*. The ideal represented in this negative character as annihilation can hardly serve as an incentive for man for practising the discipline recommended for its attainment, even with the promise of a serene state preceding it within the span of life. Such a difficulty is sought

to be overcome in Mahāyāna Buddhism through a half-hearted recognition of an ultimate reality.

In presuming an ultimate reality while denying the reality of the empirical self and the world, Mahāyāna Buddhism appears to give a positive content to *nirvāṇa*. The goal is no longer the annihilation of the self but the merging in or realizing the Absolute, which is either the *vijñapti-mātra* or the so-called *śūnya*. The goal is also represented as the attainment of Buddhahood, and one who is ready for it in life is described as a *bodhisattva*. The consequence of these development is that the goal as achieved before death and after it tends to become more attractive than in the rest of Buddhism. However, the crux of this contribution to the idea of *mokṣa* by Mahāyāna Buddhism is the conception of the ultimate reality in it, which, as we have already seen, is neither uniform nor clear.

The only remaining school that literally recognizes *jīvanmukti* that we have to consider is Advaita. The Advaita conception of *jīvanmukti* is free from the inconsistency and vagueness found in Sāṅkhya and Buddhism. The doctrine is too well known to bear a detailed account here. The essence of it, however, may be stated for the sake of continuity.

The belief in *jīvanmukti* enshrined in the Advaita doctrine goes back to the Upaniṣads, which, though they refer to *mokṣa* after death, speak also of its possibility in the present life.⁶ The possibility of *jīvanmukti* is justified on two grounds. One is that *mokṣa* is not *sādhya*, something to be attained; it is *siddha*, ever attained. The *jīva* is non-different from Brahman, and this truth remains only to be realized in one's own experience. The effort for *mokṣa* is merely to remove the obstacle to it so that the self may reveal itself in

its real splendour. Since the only obstacle is ignorance, knowledge alone is the means of removing it. The other justification for the possibility of *jīvanmukti* is that all the physical accompaniment of the *jīva* are false. The world of matter is illusion (*mithyā*). The association of the *jīva* with the body and through it with the external world is fictitious. There is in reality no bondage. Hence the continuation of bodily life is not incompatible with the realization of freedom. Thus, the consistent and uncompromising recognition of *jīvanmukti* is found only in Advaita. Advaita speaks of *videhamukti* also. But, the self being ever free, the distinction between *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti* is purely nominal. It is a case of the liberated being liberated—*vimuktaśca vimucyate*.⁷ It only shows that *jīvanmukti* is a wider concept than *videhamukti*. While it necessarily includes the idea of *videhamukti*, the latter does not necessarily presuppose the former. An exclusive recognition of *videhamukti* restricts the scope of liberation whereas the admission of *jīvanmukti* enlarges its range.

We pass on to the next question about liberation which is about its content. The theoretical formulation of the nature of *mokṣa* varies from school to school. And all the schools—*darśanas* as they are called—claim that their doctrines are ultimately based on direct experience of liberation. Hence, we may safely surmise that the content of the experience is itself different for the different schools. Now the question is whether this difference in the experience of liberation is one of kind or of degree for the different schools.

The experience cannot be different in kind. For, if there were nothing in common in the content of liberation as experienced in the various schools, there would not have occurred any interaction among the schools on this question.

But the schools of Indian philosophy have grown by reacting to one another on every important question including liberation. Hence, the experience of liberation cannot be of a different kind for each school.

When we examine the content of *mokṣa* taught by various schools, we find that, in spite of differences, they agree on one basic idea, namely that *mokṣa* implies freedom from all selfishness and its attendant suffering. The immediate cause of all the ills of life is the narrowness of one's outlook. In the state of liberation, whether the individual is supposed to retain his individuality in it or not, the individualistic attitude which characterizes common life disappears altogether, and with it all suffering comes to an end. This much is recognized by all schools, Vedic and non-Vedic. It is on the presence or absence of other elements in *mokṣa* that they begin to differ. That is to say, the experience of *mokṣa* in the different schools differs in degree rather than in kind. The schools, therefore, admit of being compared in terms of more inclusive and less inclusive experience. The more inclusive must certainly be the higher experience provided the elements of it are well organized so that the experience may be integral for all that it includes. On this principle it may be said in the first instance that the content of *mokṣa* in Vedānta is more inclusive and higher than the content in all the other schools.

We have already seen that the conception of *mokṣa* in the non-Vedānta schools uniformly stops with the negative aspect of *mokṣa*, namely the absence of pain. The Vedānta conception includes this aspect, but goes beyond it to recognize the positive side of *mokṣa* as consisting in bliss. Hence, we may say that the experience of a Vedāntin surpasses the experience of a non-Vedāntin, whether of the

Vaidika or of the non-Vaidika tradition. It is more comprehensive than the latter. The more comprehensive, or the higher, can explain and assess the less comprehensive, or the lower, but the latter cannot do the same to the former.

On the question of *mokṣa* there is greater diversity of opinion among the non-Vedāntic schools than among the Vedānta schools. This is but natural. The experience and its interpretation are seen to work in inverse relation. A less inclusive experience gives room for more diverse interpretation than one which covers a larger area. We have thus a variety of interpretations of *mokṣa* in the non-Vedānta group all claiming to represent a cessation of pain—those of Jainism, Buddhism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya-Yoga and Mīmāṃsā. There are, indeed, differences among the Vedānta schools also in the interpretation of *mokṣa*, but they are not so deep-rooted as we find among the non-Vedānta schools by virtue of their foundation in a comprehensive positive experience. *Mokṣa*, for all of them, consists in the soul realizing Brahman. But this realization is in different degrees of the soul's relation to Brahman. At one end there is an experience of Brahman with a sense of total difference from him. This is represented by those Vedānta schools which assert the principle of difference (*bheda*), namely Dvaita and Śaivasiddhānta. At the other end is the experience by the self of its absolute non-difference (*abheda*) from Brahman represented by Advaita. In between these two points there is the experience represented by the rest of the Vedānta schools which stand for various degrees of compromise between difference and non-difference. According to this middle group, in *mokṣa* the soul, while retaining its individuality, does not feel completely different from Brahman.

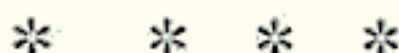
Now the question before us is: what would be the hierarchy of these degrees of Brahman-realization in Vedānta? Does the hierarchy exist in terms of the released soul's decreasing sense of difference from Brahman or in terms of an increase in that sense of difference? It seems reasonable to suggest that the experience involving less of the soul's sense of difference from Brahman is the higher and more comprehensive one than the experience which carries a greater sense of difference. We shall cite two reasons for this.

One reason is that those schools of Vedānta which stress the idea of difference themselves seem to admit that the experience involving less difference is higher when they speak of grades of *mokṣa* represented as *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and *sāyujya* in that order. Entering the abode of Brahman, approximating to him, taking on his form, and attaining intimate connection with him, — each of these is marked by less difference and greater joy. But this may be treated as an extrinsic reason. The intrinsic reason is that while the experience of difference is comparatively easy, being in tune with common experience, it requires a higher point of view to see beyond differences. It is more reasonable to hold that spiritual experience transcends the standards of common experience than to think that it adapts itself to them. The state involving less of soul's difference from Brahman may be said to include the one involving more difference in the sense that it presupposes the latter and acknowledges its utility as a passage to it. And if we admit that the more inclusive is the higher position, we may well say that *mokṣa* experience among the Vedānta schools graduates from the one in which the soul feels its difference from Brahman to the one in which it loses all sense of difference. In other words, it passes from a position of *bheda* through those of *bhedābheda* to the one of *abheda*.

Advaita experience, where all difference is transcended, may be said to be the complete experience (*pūrṇānubhava*). There are no degrees of non-difference but only of difference. Non-difference is an absolute term like perfection. There are degrees of imperfection, but not of perfection. When all imperfection is overcome, there remains perfection. Likewise, when all sense of duality disappears, what remains is the non-dual experience. Advaita experience is thus the consummation of all partial experiences of Brahman. All orders of *mokṣa* represented by other schools fulfil themselves in it. It is on the ground of such an experience that Advaita takes—as it can afford to—an accommodative attitude to the views of other schools. While it refutes the claims of other systems to final verdict on *mokṣa*, it recognizes their value as steps to the plenary experience. Advaita may, therefore, be described as the culmination of Indian thought.

NOTES

1. This is sometimes called *ālaya-vijñāna*, but the meaning of this term is not definite. See M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Conception of Values*, Kavyalaya Publishers, Mysore, 1975, p. 128, fn. 46.
2. See II. 55-57 and VI. 27-32.
3. *Vākya-sudhā* of Vidyāranya and *Sarasvatī-rahasyopaniṣad*, cited in M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Conception of Values*, p. 284, fn. 44 and p. 318, fn. 10.
4. M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Conception of Values*, p. 246.
5. "....it (*nirvāṇa*) does not really signify, as seems to be commonly taken for granted, any state following death. It represents rather the condition which results after perfection is reached and while yet the 'individual' continues to live." M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, George Allen & Unwin, First Indian Reprint, 1973, p. 152.
6. See *Kāṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 3. 14.
7. *Kāṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 2. 1.



THE ĀTMAVIDYĀ-VILĀSA
PART - II

[A Spiritual Autobiography of
Sadāśiva-Brahmendra-Sarasvatī]

TEXT WITH TRANSLATION

C. MURUGAN

[1]

यत्पादपद्मकरन्दजुषां नराणां
संसारघोरभुजगात् न भवेत् स्म भीतिः ।
सच्चिद्धनं सकलसौख्यलवाम्बुराशिं
श्रीदक्षिणाभिमुखमूर्तिम् अजं भजेऽहम् ॥

I pay obeisance to the Lord Spiritual who is unborn and who is seated facing the southern direction. The spiritual aspirants, rapt in adoring contemplation of the pollen of His Lotus-feet, have become free from the quivering dread of the poisonous snake in the form of transmigratory existence. He is of the nature of existence and consciousness; and, He is the ocean of bliss whose

partial manifestations in the mental modes are the forms of common or empirical pleasure (i.e. pleasure derived from the interaction of the mind and the sense organs with pleasant objects).¹

1. *etasyaiva ānandasya anyāni bhūtāni mātrām upajīvanti,*
BU, 4.3.32.

See also the section of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, (2.8) entitled "Inquiry into happiness" (*ānandamīmāṃsā*).

[2]

एतावदेव खलु पुंभिः अवाप्तुम् अहं
यत् चेतसः निलयनं निजतत्त्वबोधे ।
आक्रोशनं श्रुतिशिरांसि यदर्थमेव
कुर्वन्ति, येन हि भवेत् पुरुषः सुखाब्धिः ॥

The Upaniṣads make a clarion call that man's energies must be directed toward centering the mind upon his true nature, i.e. the Self. It is the Self that is indeed fit to be realized,¹ as by realizing it man would remain in the form of absolute bliss.

1. *ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ, śrotavyaḥ, mantavyaḥ,*
nididhyāsitavyaḥ, BU, 4.5.6.

[3]

मातेव पुत्रमनुबोधयति श्रुतिर्हि
लोकं समस्तमपि योजयितुं सुखेन ।
तस्मात् श्रुतेः अभिहितार्थम् अतन्द्रितेन
चित्तेन साधयितुम् अत्र जना यतध्वम् ॥

Just as a mother instructs her child (with affectionate care in a gentle and persuasive manner), in the same way, the Upaniṣad teaches (that the true nature of every being is the Self which is bliss and it alone is fit to be realized) with the sole aim of directing everyone to realize one's true nature and thereby remain in the form of bliss. Hence oh Men! being not indolent set out on an earnest quest for the Self with the mind focused on it.¹

cf:

1. *tasmāt nāstikakudṛṣṭim kutārkika bhedadṛṣṭim ca ujhitvā mātāpitṛsahasrebhyaḥ api hitaiṣiṇā vedena upadiṣṭam ātmatattvam śāntadarpaiḥ ādaraṇīyam, Śāṅkarabhāṣya on the Kāṭha Upaniṣad, 2.1.15.*

[4]

आदौ इदं सकलमेव जगत् सदासीत्
कुम्भादिवत् तदनु शक्तियुतात् परस्मात्।
आकाशवायुदहनाम्बुभुवः बभूवुः
वातप्रसक्तसलिलादिव बीचिपूरः॥

The entire world (which is now perceived as differentiated into name and form) remained, before its creation, as Self only. And, from the Self which is associated with the power of *māyā* or *avidyā*, there came into being space, air, fire, water, and earth (which are known as "subtle elements" or *tanmātras*), like pot, etc. (which emerge from the causal operation of potter and others) and like ripples which appear on the surface of

water when it is set in motion by the fair breeze or the gentle wind.

Notes: Māyā located in the Self has two powers named *āvaraṇa* ("the obscuring"), and *vikṣepa* ("the diversifying"). By the former power it conceals the true nature of the Self, and by the latter it gives rise to the subtle elements, *tanmātras*, viz. space, air, fire, water and earth. These are non-quintuplicated (*apañcīkṛta*). From these spring into being all subtle bodies as well as the gross elements.

For details regarding subtle body and gross elements, See Notes on the following verse.

The world consisting of names and forms remain during the period of dissolution in subtle form in māyā, the limiting condition of Īśvara [See Notes on Verse 8]. And creation means only manifestation of what is latent into a gross form. Īśvara or the Self associated with māyā is the efficient cause of the manifestation of the world into a gross form. An efficient cause, potter (say) has the knowledge of the pot to be projected (*jñāna*), desire to project it (*icchā*), and volition or the resolve to put the desire into effect (*kṛti*). All these in the case of Īśvara are the modes of māyā inspired by the reflection of the Self, i.e. consciousness in them. Īśvara is the complex of consciousness and māyā. The consciousness-element in Him is the substratum of *jñāna*, *icchā*, *kṛti* which are the modes of māyā inspired by the reflection of consciousness in it. By His resolve, the *vikṣepa* phase of māyā undergoes modification into the form of subtle elements. In this sense, He is regarded as the efficient cause of the world. The reference to the

potter — the efficient cause of pot in the verse is to make clear the point that the Self as associated with *māyā*, i.e. *Īsvara* is the efficient cause of the world. *Īsvara* is the material cause of the manifestation of the world in the sense that He is the substratum of *māyā* which has undergone modification into the form of the subtle elements and also of the gross elements (See Notes on the following verse). The reference to the appearance of ripples on the surface of water is to exemplify the point that the world appears in the Self associated with *māyā*.

[5]

सूक्ष्माख्यभूतगतसत्त्वरजस्तमोभिः
 लिङ्गं शरीरम् उदभूत्, अत ईश्वरेच्छा।
 पञ्चीचकार वियदादिकभूतसूक्ष्माणि
 अण्डं प्रभूत् अत इदं सह जीवभोग्यैः॥

There then arose the subtle body (*liᅅga-śarīra*) from the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* aspects of *māyā*. Subsequently the will of God quintuplicated the subtle elements of space, etc. And from the quintuplicated elements arose this entire world consisting of objects for the enjoyment of the *jīvas*.

Notes: The subtle body consists of seventeen factors. These are the five organs of knowledge, *buddhi*, *manas*, the five organs of action and the five vital airs. The organs of knowledge are those known as the ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. These arise respectively and in order from the *sattva* aspect of the elements, viz., space, air, fire, water, and earth taken singly. *Buddhi* is that mode of the internal organ which stands for certitude;

manas is that mode of the internal organ which stands for desire and doubt; *citta* and *ahaṅkāra* which are sometimes reckoned separately are to be included in these two (See Notes on verse 18). These spring into existence from the *sattva* aspects of the elements of space, etc. taken all together. The organs of action are those known as the tongue, the hands, feet, the anus, and the generating organ. These come into being in order from the *rajas* aspects of the elements of space, etc. taken separately. The five vital airs are *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna*, and *samāna*. This group of the five airs comes into being from the *rajas* phase of the elements of space etc. taken all together.

The gross elements are those that are quintuplicated. "Quintuplication" means dividing each of the elements beginning with space, etc. into two equal parts, then sub-dividing each of the first five of the ten halves into four equal parts and combining those fourth parts (one each) with the remaining halves, excepting only the second half of its own kind. According to this view, the gross element of earth is equal to $1/2$ earth + $1/8$ water + $1/8$ fire + $1/8$ air + $1/8$ space. Exactly similar consideration applies to the quintuplication of other elements.

See *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, ed. with English Translation by S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri. The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Chennai, 1984. pp. 122-123.

See also *Vedāntasāra*, ed. with Introduction, Translation and explanatory Notes by M. Hiriyanna. Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 1929. pp. 31, 49-51.

[6]

सृष्ट्वा जगत् सकलमेवम् अशेषकर्ता
 तत्प्राविशत् पुनः उपागतजीवभावः।
 विस्मृत्य सत्यसुखबोधमयस्वरूपं
 भ्रान्त्या भ्रमति अनिशम् अस्तविवेकलेशः॥

The Self which is the efficient cause of the entire world (through avidyā), after projecting it has entered into it in the form of the jīva.¹ The jīva, having forgotten its essential nature of being real, bliss, and consciousness, and being devoid of even a trace of the power to distinguish the real from the apparent, falsely undergoes cyclic existence in an unending manner.

Notes: The text of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, “*anena jīvena ātmanā anupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaravāṇi*” (6.3.2.) speaks of the “entrance” of the Self in the subtle elements to explain the nature of the jīva. In his commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.6). Śaṅkara explains the significance of the word “entrance” thus:

Entrance or *praveśa* of the Self is only its specific manifestation in the mind which comes into being from the subtle elements. From the above it is clear that according to Advaita there is no entity known as jīva apart from the Self. The latter itself is figuratively spoken of as jīva because of its association with its limiting adjunct, the mind which is the product of māyā.

See also *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (1.3.12), the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.4.7), and the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.6).

[7]

इत्थं प्रमादवशतः परिमुह्यमानः
 देहात्मबुद्धिपरिकल्पितकर्मबन्धः।
 स्वर्गादिभोगगमनागमनादिखिन्नः
 लूतावदेष भवम् अध्यगमत् चिदात्मा॥

On account of forgetfulness of its essential nature, the Self in the form of the jīva falsely identifies itself, with the psycho-physical organism, takes it to be real, performs deeds, righteous and unrighteous, experiences their fruits in heaven or hell as the case may be and comes back to the earth to experience the remnants of its past merits and demerits. It is oppressed by undergoing unending cycle of births and deaths in this manner.

Just as the spider spins a web (to trap insects as food) and gets itself entangled in it, in the same way the Self gets itself enmeshed in the psycho-physical organism projected by its own *karma* or merits and demerits.

Notes:

Cf:

कश्चित् कीटः कथंचित् पटुमतिः अभितः कण्टकानां कुटीरम्
 कुर्वन् तेनैव साकं व्यवहृतिविधये चेष्टते यावदायुः।
 तद्वज्जीवोऽपि नानाचरितसमुदितैः कर्मभिः स्थूलदेहं
 निर्माय अत्रैव तिष्ठन् अनुदिनममुना साकमभ्येति भूमौ॥

Just as an agile spinning creature makes a network of twiggy sticks around it, dwells therein throughout its life, moves about from place to place and carries out its activities, in the same way the jīva by means of its

merits and demerits accumulated in its previous lives gets related to a physical body, abides therein during the whole duration of its life and performs actions – sacred and secular.

Śaṅkara's *Śataślokī* [Vedānta in Hundred Verses], 6.

[8]

मायायुतस्तु अगमत् ईश्वरतां चिदात्मा
 चाविद्यया युगभवत् भृतजीवभावः।
 माया भवेत् विमलसत्त्वगुणप्रधाना
 प्रोक्ता मलापिहितसत्त्वगुणा तु अविद्या॥

[Prakṛti or the primal power consists of the three strands of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*]. When characterized by the predominance of the radiant *sattva*, it is termed *māyā* and when characterized by the predominance of clouded *sattva* it is known as *avidyā*. The Self as associated with the aspect of *māyā* is Īśvara and as related to *avidyā* is the *jīva*.

Notes: The text of the *Nṛsimhottaratāpinī Upaniṣad* “*jīveśau ābhāsenā karoti māyā ca avidyā ca svayameva bhavati*” [9] states that the primal cause (*prakṛti*) becomes *māyā* and *avidyā* and projects *jīva* and Īśvara as the reflections of the Self. Vidyāranya in the section entitled *Tattvaviveka* of his work *Pañcadaśī* defines *māyā* as that aspect of *prakṛti* wherein the *sattva* is predominant by being not impeded by *rajas* and *tamas*, and *avidyā* as that aspect of *prakṛti* wherein the *sattva* is overpowered by *rajas* and *tamas*.

Māyā and *avidyā* are thus two facets of one *prakṛti*. Postulating this subtle distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā*, it is said that the reflections of the Self in *māyā* is Īśvara and that its reflection in *avidyā* is the *jīva*.

See *Pañcadaśī*, 1.16,17.

[9]

एकोऽपि अनेक इव भाति शरीरभेदात्
 आत्मा घटादिगतभेदवशात् वियद्वत्।
 देहेन्द्रियादिषु चलत्सु निजप्रकाशात्
 पूर्णोऽपि निश्चलतरोऽपि विकारवद्वत्॥

The Self although one appears to be many owing to different psycho-physical organisms that condition it. This is similar to space which although one appears to be manifold when conditioned by different limiting adjuncts such as pot, jar, and the like.

The Self is absolute and is free from any activity. But when the psycho-physical organism which is manifested by its light functions it also appears to be active and is subject to modification.

Notes:

cf: *saḥ samānaḥ san ubhau lokau anusañcarati
 dhyāyati iva lelāyati iva, Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,
 4.3.7.*

See also:

*eka eva hi bhūtātmā bhūte bhūte vyavasthitaḥ
 ekadhā bahudhā caiva dṛśyate jalacandravat,
 Brahmabindu Upaniṣad, 12.*

[10]

एवं भवार्णवनिमञ्जनदुःखितेषु
 लोकेषु, पूर्वजनिसञ्चितपुण्यपुञ्जैः।
 कश्चित् विशुद्धमतिः, एत्य गुरुं कृपाब्धिं
 ग्राह्यं प्रणम्य भवसागरलङ्घनेच्छुः॥

Among men who are afflicted by being immersed in the ocean of transmigration in this manner, someone has attained "betterment of character" or "the cleansing of the heart" owing to abundant merits he has accumulated in his previous births and longs to extricate himself from the predicament in which he is involved. Resorting to a preceptor who is very compassionate, and prostrating before him, he addressed him (as follows):

[11]

संसारघोरजलधौ भगवन् अपारे
 तापत्रयौघदहने सहजारिनक्रे ।
 मोहाम्भसि प्रचलदुद्भवमृत्युभङ्गे
 वीक्ष्य अन्तरस्मि पतितं जगदद्य भीतः॥

Oh Lord! I have fallen into this frightful ocean of transmigratory existence; it is boundless; it has under its surface the fire in the form of three-fold misery;¹ it consists of whales of the nature of innate enemies (such as desire, aversion, greed and the like); in its delusive waters births and deaths resembling the rise and fall of the waves occur alternately. I shrink in shuddering fear from this situation.

Notes:

1. Misery is three-fold, as caused by intrinsic influences, bodily or mental, such as the predominance of bile or phlegm, or desire or anger and the like (*ādhyātmika*), by extrinsic influences such as other men, beast and birds, or inanimate objects (*ādhibhautika*) and by extrinsic super-natural influences such as spirits and so on (*ādhidaivika*). See *The Sāṅkhyakārika*, edited and translated by S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri, University of Madras, 1948, p.2.

[12]

मातुः स्थितस्य जठरे वचसां च दूरं
 दुःखं, पुनः जननकालभवं दुरुह्यम्।
 बाल्येऽपि दुःखम् अविषह्यम् अवारणीयम्
 आलोच्य भीतिः अधुना महती ममोत्था॥

The suffering undergone by me when I was in my mother's womb is too dreadful to be described. The pain I suffered at the time of my birth was unbearable. And, the trials and tribulations I met with in my childhood days are unendurable and inescapable. When I reflect on these distressing situations I passed through, I am overpowered by extreme and agitating fear.

[13]

तारुण्यम् एत्य कुलयौवनरूपसंप-
 द्विद्यात्मगर्वपिहितात्महिताभिलाषः।
 विष्मूत्रमांसरुधिरास्थिमयेशरीरे
 नार्याः रुचिं समुपयाति जनो विचित्रम्॥

Having reached the state of a young man, one becomes insufferably conceited in regard to one's lineage, young age, handsome physique, wealth and learning, remains wholly devoid of proper disposition or frame of mind to pursue the means to one's spiritual well-being, and is bewitched by the charm of the body of a woman — the body which is constituted of waste material, flesh, blood and bones. What a pity!

[14]

सर्वापदां निलयम् एत्य वयोऽधिकत्वं
 जन्तुः सुखं न लभते ह्यपि किञ्चिदत्र।
 पुंसाम् इहास्ति न भयं खलु मृत्युतोऽन्यत्
 धिक्कृत्य संसृतिम् इमाम् अभवं विरक्तः॥

Worn out by age man becomes the abode of all forms of misfortune and adversity. He does not derive happiness from any source whatsoever. He has an awful dread of death and has no quivering fear of anything else. (Hence) forsaking the world and all its pleasures, I have become a recluse.

[15]

स्वामिन्! कथं मम भवार्णवलङ्घनं स्यात्
 आयासलेशरहितं वद तत्र हेतुम्।
 श्रुत्वा तु शिष्यवचनं रमणीयम् इत्थं
 प्रत्युत्तरं गुरुरदात् कृतमन्दहासः॥

O Lord! How could I cross the ocean of transmigratory existence? I pray you to instruct me a simple (but effective) means to achieve this end. Hearing this prayer of his disciple — the prayer which is gratifying (as it is appropriately related to the realization of the goal of existence) — the preceptor beamed with pleasure and instructed the disciple (in the following manner):

[16]

“देहेन्द्रियासुहृदयादिकचैत्यवर्गात्
 प्रत्यक्चितेः विभजनं भववारिराशेः।
 सन्तारणे प्लवः” इति श्रुतिडिण्डिमोऽयं
 तस्मात् विचारय जडाजडयोः स्वरूपम्॥

The clarion call of the Upaniṣads is:

The direct knowledge that the Self which is consciousness and is the Inmost Being is distinct from the group of insentient beings, viz., the physical body, the sense organs, the vital airs, the mind, etc, is the boat to cross transmigratory existence. Hence inquire into the nature of the Being and the beings.

[17]

प्रत्यक्चितिः वपुरिदं न भवेत् जडत्वात्
 कुड्यादिवत्, जडतयापि असवो न चित् स्युः।
 नापि इन्द्रियाणि करणं कुत एव चित् स्यात्
 कुद्दालकादिवत् इति प्रविचारय त्वम्॥

“The gross body cannot be regarded as the Inmost Being, i.e. the Self which is consciousness as it is insentient like wall, etc. The vital airs too, on account of their being insentient, are not to be deemed as the Self. The sense organs, in view of their being instruments of action like spade, etc. cannot be viewed as the Self”. In this manner, carefully reflect on the nature of the Self and the not-Self.

[18]

दृश्यत्वतः न मनसश्च भवेत् चितित्वं
 न अहङ्कृतिश्च परिणामवती चितिः स्यात्।
 बुद्धेः अचित्त्वमपि जन्मविनाशवत्त्वात्
 चित्तं च दृश्यम् अचित् इति अनुचिन्तय त्वम्।

Oftentimes reflect that *manas*, as it is manifested by the Self, cannot be reckoned as the Self. *Ahaṅkāra* too is not the Self as it is subject to modification. *Buddhi* is not the Self as it undergoes origination and destruction. *Citta* is revealed by the Self and so it is different from it.

Notes:

Cf:

मनो बुद्धिरहङ्कारश्चित्तं करणमान्तरम्।
 संशयो निश्चयो गर्वः स्मरणं विषया इमे॥

Sureśvara's *Mānasollāsa* on the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra* of Śaṅkara, ii. 35-6.

The internal organ, though one, because of difference of mental states, is called *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, and *citta*. The functions of these are doubt, certitude, pride, and recollection respectively.

[19]

बुद्ध्या समस्तमपि दृश्यमचित्स्वरूपं
 प्रत्यक्चितिं च निजरूपतया विदित्वा।
 देहेन्द्रियाद्यखिलसाक्ष्यहमित्यजस्रं
 संचिन्तय व्यपगताखिलसंशयः सन् ॥

Ascertaining that the entire world that comes within the range of one's knowledge is the not-self, discerning that the Inmost Being which is consciousness is one's essence, and being free from all forms of disbelief regarding your true nature, think deeply and continually that "I am the Witness of the physical body, senses, etc."

[20]

देहादिकं जगदसज्जडदुःखरूपं
 मयि अद्वितीयनिजबोधसदादिरूपे।
 सन्दृश्यते भ्रमवशात् गगने निरंशो
 गन्धर्वपत्तनमिव इति अनुभावय त्वम्॥

Always think thus: "The world consisting of the physical body, etc. is non-real, insentient, and is characterized by misery; it illusorily appears in my true nature which is non-dual, consciousness and real, and it is similar to the appearance of the visual image of a city in the sky that has no objective reality."

[To be continued]

* * * *

ON THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ – AVIDYĀ

J. KRISHNAN

1. Māyā or Avidyā

The Upaniṣads speak of the Ultimate Reality as non-dual and pure consciousness. Certain other Upaniṣadic texts like the *Taittirīya* speak of the Ultimate Reality as the source from which this phenomenal world comes into existence, from which it derives existence and manifestation and into which it lapses back at the time of dissolution. Now this apparent contradiction, namely, non-dual Brahman is the cause of the world must be resolved. The Upaniṣads themselves resolve the above contradiction by admitting the principle known as māyā. The *Śvetāśvatara* text refers to this principle as the creative power – “The sages absorbed in meditation realized the creative power that is present in the self-luminous Brahman – the power which consists of the three strands as *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.¹” The same Upaniṣad in the passage “Know māyā to be the primary cause of the world and Īśvara to be the one possessing māyā²” explicitly mentions the cause of the world to be māyā.

2. The Indeterminable Nature of Māyā

Māyā is neither real nor an absolute nothing. It is not real and absolute nothing at once. Hence it is indeterminable either as real or as an absolute nothing or as both. This is the significance of the word - *anirvacanīya*.

Reality is defined as that which does not suffer annihilation in the three divisions of time- past, present and future. An absolute nothing is that which will never come within the range of cognition. Since māyā is said to be annihilated by the knowledge of the Self it is not real. Since it comes within the range of the cognition-“I am ignorant”, it cannot be an absolute nothing. It cannot be both for that would be a discrepant notion. Hence it is *anirvacanīya*.

3. Two aspects of Māyā

Māyā possesses the power of concealing and also the power of revealing. By the former, it conceals the essential nature of Reality and by the latter it projects it as Īśvara, jīva and the world. The former is known as *āvaraṇa-śakti* and the latter, *vikśepa-śakti*.

4. Is Māyā one or many?

According to the Vivaraṇa tradition, māyā is one only³. According to the Bhāmatī tradition, māyā is manifold⁴. It must be noted here that by the word māyā, we mean the primal nescience or *mūlāvidyā*.

The Vivaraṇa tradition maintains that Brahman or the Reality is the locus and content of māyā. Since the locus is Brahman which is one only, māyā also is admitted to be one. According to the Bhāmatī tradition, the locus of māyā is jīva and the content of māyā is Brahman. Since jīva is

manifold, *māyā* also is manifold. Although primal nescience is one according to the Vivaraṇa tradition, yet derivative nesciences are held to be many. The former is termed *mūlāvidyā* while the latter, *tūlāvidyā*. The necessity for postulating *tūlāvidyā* arises on the following ground: if *mūlāvidyā* were admitted to be the material cause of the entire world including the dream and illusions like shell-silver, etc., then the criticism would be that these would be removed only when their cause viz. *mūlāvidyā* is removed. *Mūlāvidyā* could be removed only by the knowledge of Brahman. It comes to this that the dream world and illusions like shell-silver etc., would continue to exist as the waking world till there arises the knowledge of Brahman. This, however, is not the case. We find that dream state is removed when one comes back to the waking state and shell-silver is removed by the knowledge of shell. Hence something other than *mūlāvidyā* must be admitted as the cause of dream state etc., and that is *tūlāvidyā*⁵. It is a derivative of *mūlāvidyā*. It is present in the consciousness conditioned by the objects like pot, shell etc., and it will be removed by the knowledge of the form of pot, shell etc.,. The Bhāmatī tradition also must subscribe to the above view and admit *tūlāvidyā*.⁶

It must be noted here that *tūlāvidyā* is to be admitted chiefly to account for the removal of dream, shell-silver illusion etc., when primal nescience or *mūlāvidyā* is not removed. The Vivaraṇa tradition advocates another view according to which an effect may be removed without the removal of its cause. For instance, dream, shell-silver illusion etc. may be considered as the effect of *mūlāvidyā*. Its removal is not based upon the removal of *mūlāvidyā*, but is based upon the rise of a contrary cognition in the form of

the cognition of waking state and the knowledge of the shell. This kind of removal, i.e. the removal of an effect when its cause exists is known as *nivṛtti*. But one point must be noted. The dream, shell-silver illusion etc., in this case when they are removed by the contrary cognition of the waking state and the knowledge of shell respectively would remain in a subtle form in *māyā* and this subtle form would be removed only when *māyā* is removed by the knowledge of Brahman.

To sum up: removal of an effect when the cause exists is known as *nivṛtti*. Removal of an effect along with its cause is known as *bādhā*. Thus *mūlāvidyā* is one according to the Vivaraṇa tradition and many according to the Bhāmati tradition. But according to both the traditions *tūlāvidyā* or derivative nescience is manifold.

5.The Identity of Māyā and Avidyā

Some Advaitins make a distinction between *māyā* and *avidyā* and argue that *māyā* is located in God and it does not delude its locus. *Avidyā* is located in *jīva* and it does delude its locus. This view is not the prevalent one in Advaita. One does not have the experience that God is associated with *māyā* or God is ignorant. For the reasons which we shall adduce later, *jīva* cannot be the locus of *avidyā*. But the *vikṣepa*-phase of the primal power termed *prakṛti* is known as *māyā* and the *āvaraṇa* - phase of the *prakṛti* is known as *avidyā*. In the case of Īśvara the primal power is not active in its *āvaraṇa*-phase i.e. nothing is concealed from Īśvara. On the other hand, the world of object is presented to Him through the *vikṣepa*-phase of the primal power. God perceives the world and He perceives it to be illusory. Thus the primal power in its *vikṣepa*-phase is

active in the case of Īśvara. We have said that the *vikṣepa*-phase of the primal power is termed *māyā*. Hence it is said that *māyā* is located in Īśvara. In the same way, in the case of the *jīva* the *āvaraṇa*-phase of the primal power is fully active. It is from the *jīva* the truth of non-duality is concealed. We have said that the *āvaraṇa* phase of the primal power is termed *avidyā*. With this in view it is said that *avidyā* is located in *jīva*. Hence *māyā* and *avidyā* are two phases of one *prakṛti* and they are no distinct entities.

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* it is stated that *māyā* is removed by the knowledge of the Self and it conceals the true nature of Brahman. In another passage the *Gītā* states that *ajñāna* or *avidyā* conceals the Reality and it is removable by the knowledge of Self.⁸ Hence the two are taken to be identical. This part of the discussion may be summed up by saying that *māyā* and *avidyā* are different aspects of one *prakṛti* and they are not two different entities.

6. Proof For The Existence Of *Māyā*

Avidyā is manifested by the *sākṣi* or witness-self.⁹ *Sākṣi*, according to Advaita, is the Self that transcends the mind. The Self that is immanent in the mind is *jīva* and the Self that transcends the mind is *Sākṣi*. Just as happiness, misery, etc. stands in need of no proof, in the same way, *avidyā* also does not stand in need of any proof. *Avidyā*, like happiness, misery, etc. is directly manifested by the *Sākṣi*.

Further it is impossible to admit a proof in respect of *avidyā*. For, proof is that which gives us knowledge of an object that is "hitherto unknown". The expression "hitherto unknown" signifies that which is characterized by *avidyā*.

If a proof is admitted in respect of avidyā then it must be held that the proof gives us the knowledge of avidyā unknown hitherto. This amounts to admitting that avidyā is characterized by another avidyā . Thus we would land ourselves in a fallacy of *infinite regress*. Hence it is said that no proof could be adduced in respect of avidyā .

Although as regards the essential nature of avidyā proof is neither possible nor necessary yet, in order to give us a knowledge of some specific features of avidyā proofs are required. For example, there may arise a doubt as to whether avidyā is positive in nature or mere absence of knowledge. This doubt arises from ignorance regarding the nature of avidyā . Hence proofs like perception, inference, verbal testimony and presumption are given. These pramāṇas give rise to the knowledge which removes ignorance as regards the positive nature or otherwise of avidyā. Thus pramāṇas are needed to give us the knowledge about the specific feature of avidyā . But as regards avidyā as such no proof is needed.¹⁰

Perception: The experience “I am ignorant” points to the positive nature of avidyā . It is, however, argued that avidyā is absence of knowledge. Thus from the perceptual experience, “I am ignorant” there arises the perceptual cognition of absence of knowledge.

The criticism of the above view is as follows: it is an important point in the Advaita theory of knowledge that absence of knowledge can never be perceptually known. It is only inferable. It is because negation of an entity (pot) pre-supposes the knowledge of pot. Unless one has the knowledge in the form of recollection of pot at a particular moment, one cannot negate it in the subsequent moment.

Thus the knowledge of the thing negated is absolutely necessary before the negation of the object. If we are to predicate the absence of knowledge we must have the knowledge of knowledge in the first moment. Thus we have knowledge and so we cannot negate it. If, however, we say that one does not have the knowledge of knowledge in the first moment, then one does not have the knowledge of the thing that is to be negated and so no negation is possible. Therefore the content of perceptual experience ‘I am ignorant’ cannot be absence of knowledge. It is positive ignorance.¹¹

Inference: Inference also goes to prove the positive nature of avidyā . This inferential argument is as follows:

Knowledge, i.e. mental state is preceded by an entity which is different from its prior negation, which conceals the object with reference to which knowledge has arisen and which is removable by knowledge. It is like the light of a lamp during the first moment of its existence.

Knowledge cannot remove its antecedent or prior negation. It is because knowledge results through the annihilation of its prior negation. Hence what knowledge removes is not its prior negation but something different from that, namely, positive ignorance. On the side of the illustration a lamp during the first moment of its existence removes darkness which is different from its antecedent negation. Thus this inferential argument proves the positive nature of ignorance.¹²

Verbal testimony:

Scriptural text like *anṛtena hi pratyūḍhaḥ*¹³ prove the positive nature of avidyā . The very fact that avidyā is said to conceal the true nature of the individual soul suggests

that avidyā is positive in nature. It is because avidyā, if it were absence of knowledge, cannot conceal an entity.

Presumption: The Upaniṣadic text “The knower of truth transcends grief” (*tarati śokam ātmavit*)¹⁴ suggests that grief, that is, avidyā is positive in nature. It is because knowledge of Reality cannot remove its antecedent negation for the reasons set forth above. Hence the assertion that knowledge of Reality removes avidyā implies that avidyā is positive in nature.

7. The Locus of Avidyā

As regards the locus of avidyā, Maṇḍana, the author of the *Brahmasiddhi* maintains that the individual soul is the locus of avidyā which veils the true nature of Brahman and has Brahman as its object. Maṇḍana, thus, differentiates between the locus and the object of avidyā.¹⁵ Vācaspatimiśra also holds that the individual soul is the locus of avidyā.¹⁶ Brahmānanda in his commentary on the *Siddhāntabindu* points out that according to Vācaspatimiśra the locus of avidyā must be one from whom the true nature of Brahman is veiled. The true nature of Brahman is veiled from the individual soul who feels that Brahman is not manifest to him. Hence the individual soul alone is the locus of avidyā.¹⁷

It is generally believed that this view is derived from Maṇḍana. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* states:

Avidyā is the root-cause of the world. It is designated by the word *avyakta*. It is indeterminable. It is identical with māyā. It is deep sleep. It is parameśvarāśraya, that is, it depends on Brahman. And in it the individual souls, having lost their identity with Brahman, rest.

Vācaspatimiśra while interpreting the word Īśvarāśraya in the above passage states that Brahman is the āśraya of avidyā not in the sense of its substratum or locus but in the sense its object and the individual soul is the locus of avidyā.¹⁸

Sureśvara considers the differentiation between the locus and object to be unnecessary and holds that Brahman is the locus and object of avidyā.¹⁹ His disciple Sarvajñātman in his *Samkṣepaśārīrakā*²⁰ and Prakāśātman in his *Vivaraṇa*²¹ maintain the same view. Thus as regards the locus of avidyā, Maṇḍana and Vācaspatimiśra hold a view contrary to that of Sureśvara, Sarvajñātman and Prakāśātman.

The view that the individual soul is the locus of avidyā does not wholly agree with view of Sureśvara and others in his line of thinking although it comes nearer to their theory. The way in which the individual soul is the locus of avidyā is inadequate is chiefly based on the fact that avidyā presupposes the appearance of the individual soul and hence the latter cannot be conceived as its locus. No doubt the distinction of the individual soul and God is beginningless, yet such a distinction can be made only when Brahman as such is not realized. One cannot conceive of the individual soul if one had realized Brahman. Hence the notion of the individual soul derives its existence from avidyā although avidyā does not require the notion of the individual soul for its own existence. The relation between avidyā on the one hand and jīva and Īśvara on the other is not the relation of cause and effect, but is technically known as *vyāpya-vyāpaka-bhāva*. Thus as the individual soul is logically, if not temporally, antecedent to avidyā, it cannot serve as the locus of avidyā.²²

Another argument advanced to prove that the individual soul cannot be the locus of avidyā is this: in the state of deep sleep there is the experience of avidyā. The reminiscent experience of a person who on waking up from deep sleep says "I did not know anything when I was asleep" and "Being enveloped by avidyā, I was incapable of understanding anything" involves a reference to avidyā. If not, how could there be the reminiscence in the form "I did not know anything". On the authority of this reminiscent experience, it should be held that avidyā exists and is experienced in deep sleep. But the notion of the individual soul is absent in that state. There is thus the direct experience of avidyā even in the absence of the notion of the individual soul and this would not be possible if the individual soul were the locus of avidyā. On this ground also it should be held that the individual soul cannot be locus of avidyā.²³

These difficulties have led the other group of Advaitins to formulate the theory that pure consciousness is the locus of avidyā. In the experience "I am ignorant" the word "I" primarily signifies the blend of pure consciousness and intellect, that is, the individual soul. It secondarily signifies the pure consciousness. This view is held by the author of the *Advaitasiddhi*.²⁴

In the state of deep sleep, only pure consciousness and avidyā exist; all other factors are provisionally merged in avidyā then. Direct experience of avidyā would not be possible without a locus; and pure consciousness alone serves as a locus then. Sureśvara maintains this view in his *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārttika*.²⁵ He points out that before the manifestation of the notion of the individual soul, that is, in the state of deep sleep, avidyā which is

experienced could not have any relation with any thing else except Pure Consciousness. It has the Pure Consciousness as its locus and object and this is evident from the experience "I am ignorant" and "I do not know myself".²⁶

The view that pure consciousness is the locus of avidyā does find support in Śaṅkara and Sureśvara and it directly appeals to the experience in deep sleep state. However, in the commentaries on the *Brahma-Sūtra*²⁷ and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*²⁸, Śaṅkara holds that the individual soul is the locus of avidyā. Sureśvara also holds that the consciousness reflected in the intellect, namely, the individual soul is the locus of avidyā²⁹. It may be added here that Vācaspatimiśra might have derived the view that the individual soul is the locus of avidyā from these sources.

It has already been proved that the individual soul cannot be the locus of avidyā. Avidyā, though present in the pure consciousness is revealed in the form "I am ignorant" by the intellect which is the limiting adjunct of the individual soul. It is well-known that the nature of a revealing medium is such that what is revealed through it appears as though present in the medium itself. The individual "cow" reveals the universal "bovine sense" (*gotva*) as present in itself. The mirror which reflects the face appears to contain the face. We can multiply the instances. The point that is of profound importance here is that the revealing medium reveals the thing to be revealed as present in itself. In the same way, the intellect which reveals avidyā reveals it as present in itself and consequently in the consciousness delimited by it, namely, the individual soul. Hence there is the experience "I am ignorant".

The intellect does reveal avidyā because in its absence in the state of deep sleep avidyā though present in the pure consciousness is not determinately perceived in the form “I am ignorant”. Sureśvara affirms that the intellect manifests avidyā. So the intellect reveals it as present in itself and consequently in the consciousness delimited by it. The statement of Śaṅkara and Sureśvara regarding the individual soul being the locus of avidyā should be interpreted in the aforesaid manner. As Sarvajñātman concludes, in the system of Śaṅkara, avidyā is present only in the pure consciousness.³⁰

As for the question whether Vācaspatimiśra’s view also can be interpreted in a similar way, Advaitic writers observe an adamant “no comment”. But, since Vācaspatimiśra does follow the tradition of Advaita represented by Śaṅkara we can confidently say that Vācaspatimiśra speaks of the individual soul as the locus of avidyā only by courtesy even as Śaṅkara does. On the contrary, Advaitic writers are not in favour of extending this line of explanation to the view of Maṇḍana, namely, the individual soul is the locus of avidyā. The argument that is advanced in this connection is that Maṇḍana represents a standpoint in Advaita different from that of Śaṅkara.³¹

8. The Annihilating Factor of Avidyā:

Avidyā is manifested by the sākṣi. Sākṣi is pure intelligence that transcends the mind. It is not opposed to avidyā. It is eternal consciousness. It is comparable to the Sun’s rays which illumine grass, etc. But when the same rays are passed through a lens they destroy the very same grass. In the same way, pure consciousness when reflected in the mental state arising from the Upaniṣadic text (according to the Vivaraṇa tradition) or from mind (according to the

Bhāmatī tradition) annihilates avidyā. Consciousness reflected in the mental state is known as knowledge of Brahman or Self-realization.

To sum up: Brahman which is of the nature of consciousness is the witness of avidyā. It is eternal. Knowledge of Brahman is only a mental state or the modification of mind and its removes avidyā.³²

9. The Nature of the Removal of Avidyā:

There are four views in Advaita as regards the nature of the removal of avidyā:

- i). the first view is that it is identical with Brahman;
- ii). the second view is that it is different from Brahman, but it is neither real, nor an absolute nothing, nor real and absolute nothing at once, nor indeterminable, but is of the fifth kind;
- iii). the third view is that it is identical with the knowledge of Brahman which brings about the removal of avidyā; and,
- iv). the fourth view is that it is momentary or *kṣaṇika*.

These may be explained successively as follows:

First view: The removal of a superimposed entity is nothing but its being reduced to its substratum. The removal of snake that appears in a rope is nothing but the rope itself. When viewed in this light avidyā which is super-imposed upon Brahman when removed is reduced to its substratum that is Brahman.

Second view: Avidyā-nivṛtti is different from Brahman. It is not real. For if it were real there will be two real entities,

i.e. 1. Brahman and *avidyā-nivṛtti*. It is not an absolute nothing for an absolute nothing cannot be effected. *Avidyā-nivṛtti* is effected by the knowledge of Self and so it cannot be an absolute nothing. It cannot be both real and absolute nothing; for that would violate the law of contradiction. It cannot be *anirvacanīya*; for an object which is *anirvacanīya* must be based on *avidyā*. When *avidyā-nivṛtti* is attained, *avidyā* does not exist and so *avidyā-nivṛtti* cannot be related to *avidyā*. This means that it is not *anirvacanīya*. Hence this school maintains that *avidyā-nivṛtti* is of the fifth kind.

Third view: Just as light removes darkness and the removal of the darkness (*tamo-nivṛtti*) is nothing but the light, in the same way, knowledge of Brahman brings about the removal of *avidyā* (*avidyā-nivṛtti*) and the latter is identical with the knowledge of Brahman.

Fourth view: Origination is a positive change of an object. It is momentary. It is because the verb having present tense suffix is used with reference to the object, only during the first moment of its origination as *utpadyate*. During the second moment of its existence it is referred to as *utpannah* having the past tense suffix. Before it is originated it is referred to by the word *utpatsyate* having future tense suffix. Thus from the restrictive use of the word having present tense suffix with reference to the object during the first moment of its origination it is concluded that origination is momentary. In the same way, the word having present tense suffix conveying the sense of destruction is used only with reference to an object at the moment of its destruction as *nivartate*. Before and after destruction words having future and past tense suffixes are used. From this it follows that destruction or removal too, like origination, is momentary. Removal of *avidyā* too, therefore, is momentary.³³

To sum up:

- i) māyā which is identical with avidyā is the primal cause of the world;
- ii) it is indeterminable;
- iii) it has Brahman as its locus and content;
- iv) it has two powers known as *āvaraṇa-śakti* and *vikṣepa-śakti*;
- v) it is positive in nature; and,
- vi) it is removed by the direct knowledge of Brahman.

NOTES

1. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 1.3.
2. *Ibid.*, 4. 10.
3. *Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa* (Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, 1958), p. 99.
4. *Bhāmatī* with *Kalpataru* and *Parimala* (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1917), p. 377.
5. *Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa*, p. 99.
6. *Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha*: (Benares: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1916), p. 176.
7. *Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa*, p. 178.
See also *Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha* p.81.
8. *Bḡagavad-Gītā*, 5. 15-16; 7.14,25.
See also *Samkṣepasārīraka*, 3.108-9.
9. *Advaita-siddhi* with *Laghucandrikā*: (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1917) p. 575.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 565.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 555.

12. Ibid., p. 562.
13. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8.3.2.
14. Ibid., p. 7.1.3.
15. *Brahma-siddhi* (Madras Government Oriental Library, Madras, 1937), p. 30.
16. *Bhāmatī*, p. 80.
17. *Nyāyaratnāvalī*, Comm. on the *Siddhañtabindu* (Benares: Kasi Sanskrit Series, No. 65, 1928), p. 227.
18. *Bhāmatī*, p. 297.
19. *Naīṣkarmya-siddhi* (Bombay Sanskrit and Prakṛt Series, No. XXXVIII, 1925), pp.105-6.
20. *Samkṣepaśārīraka*, 1.319.
21. *Pañcapādikā-Vivarāṇa*, p. 213.
22. *Sārasaṅgraha*, Comm. on the *Samkṣepaśārīraka* by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (Benares: Kasi Sanskrit Series, 1924) p. 239.
23. *Pañcaprakriyā* of Sarvajñātman (Madras University Sanskrit Series), pp. 54-55
24. *Advaita-siddhi*, p.604.
25. *Bṛhadāranyaka-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika*, 1.4. 290.
26. Ibid.
27. Śaṅkara's Comm. on the *Brahma-sūtra*, 4.1.3.
28. Śaṅkara's Comm. on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, 18.2.
29. *Bṛhadāranyaka-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika*, 1.4. 298.
30. *Pañcaprakriyā*, p. 69.
31. *Samkṣepaśārīraka* , 2. 174.
32. *Advaita-siddhi*, p.577.
34. *Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha* pp.362 ff.

* * * *

PERCEPTION: ITS NATURE ACCORDING TO ADVAITA

V. M. ANANTHANARAYANAN

The Advaitin maintains that the import of the Upaniṣads is the non-dual Brahman. It is argued that Brahman could be viewed as non-dual or free from any duality, only if there is no world apart from it. Perception, however, gives us the knowledge of the world as real in forms such as 'The pot is real', 'The cloth is real' and the like. The existence of the world which is real and is different from Brahman precludes the possibility of viewing the latter as non-dual. The contention that the logical significance of the Upaniṣads is the non-dual Brahman is, therefore, wrong.

The world given in perception, the Advaitin argues, is only the transfiguration or the illusory appearance of Brahman. It is superimposed on Brahman like the silver upon a shell. It is, therefore, *mithyā* or non-real. And the appearance of the non-real world would in no way impair the non-dual nature of Brahman. The perceptual cognition of the form 'The pot is real' is invalidated by the cognition

of the form 'The pot is non-real' that arises from inference and the *mithyātvā-śruti*, that is, verbal testimony.

Vyāsatīrtha argues that the assertion of the Advaitin that the perceptual cognition is invalidated by the cognition arising from inference and verbal testimony is wrong because perception is more powerful than inference and also from verbal testimony if the teaching of the latter is not in accordance with it. In the wake of this basis position, Vyāsatīrtha raises several objections against the view that perception is less powerful than inference and verbal testimony. Madhusūdana presents reasons disapproving Vyāsatīrtha's objections. We shall now set forth their arguments.

First Objection

Vyāsatīrtha argues that perception is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony. This means that perceptual cognition invalidates the cognition that arises from inference and verbal testimony. The Advaitin's contention that perception is invalidated by inference and verbal testimony is wrong. It is because in order that inference and verbal testimony may invalidate perception what is necessary is that there must be the ascertainment that they are valid. Their validity could be ascertained only when it is known that they are not in conflict with perception. The latter will be ascertained only when it is known that perception is invalid. Thus the identification of the validity of inference and verbal testimony depends upon the identification of the invalidity of perception. But the invalidity of perception could be determined only when it is known that it is in conflict with inference and verbal testimony. And the latter could be ascertained only when it is known

that inference and verbal testimony are valid. Thus the ascertainment of the invalidity of perception depends upon the ascertainment of the validity of inference and verbal testimony and the latter depends upon the former. The defect of interdependence (*anyonyāśraya*) is clear. But in the case of the ascertainment of the validity of perception no such defect of interdependence is involved as it is antecedent to inference and verbal testimony. Hence perception is powerful and the cognition of the form 'The pot is real' cannot be invalidated by the cognition arising from inference and verbal testimony.¹

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana points out that if perception is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony, the perceptual cognition of the moon as of small size would invalidate inference and verbal testimony and thereby ascertain the validity of its content. But this is not the case. The content of the perceptual cognition that the moon is of small size is not at all valid. It is ascertained to be invalid on the basis of the cognition that arises from inference and verbal testimony. Hence it is to be held that perception is not more powerful than inference and verbal testimony.

Further Vyāsātīrtha has stated that the ascertainment of the validity of perception does not involve the defect of interdependence. It is not so. Perception too in order that its validity may be ascertained depends upon the ascertainment of its non-conflict with inference and verbal testimony. To be explicit: it is only when inference and verbal testimony are known to be invalid, perception which comprehends the sense that is contradictory to the content of inference and verbal testimony could be ascertained as

valid. And it is only when perception is known to be valid, inference and verbal testimony which give rise to the cognitions of their senses contradictory to what is given by perception could be identified as invalid. And the defect of interdependence is quite clear.

Madhusūdana proceeds to point out that if perception is admitted to be more powerful than inference and verbal testimony, then the perceptual cognition of the body to be the self will not be invalidated by the cognition that the self is different from body that arises from inference and verbal testimony. As a result the perceptual cognition of the body to be the self has to be treated as valid and one would thereby be adopting the line of the argument of the Cārvākas. It emerges from this that inference and verbal testimony are more powerful than perception.²

Second Objection

Vyāsatīrtha points out that perception *per se* is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony. That is why the perceptual cognition that fire is hot invalidates the cognition arising from the inference 'Fire is not hot, because it is a substance like pot'.

It might be said that perception *per se* is not powerful. But it is powerful and it invalidates the cognition arising from inference because it is the sustaining factor (*upajīvyā*). In the inferential argument referred to above, fire is the subject of inference (*pakṣa*). It must come within the range of perception, because only then we could predicate what we seek to establish with reference to it. Thus perception is the sustaining factor (*upajīvyā*) of inference. It is this characteristic of being the sustaining factor that is present in perception that serves as the criterion for viewing the

latter as powerful and as invalidating the cognition that arises from inference. It comes to this that perception *per se* is not powerful.

Vyāsatīrtha states that the above contention is wrong. It is because the sustaining factor of inference is only the visual perception of the subject of inference, and it does not invalidate the cognition arising from inference. What invalidates the inferential cognition in the present case is the tactile perception of fire as hot and it is not the sustaining factor of inference. Thus the tactile perception *per se* is more powerful than inference and it invalidates the cognition arising from it.

Moreover, the powerful nature of perception could be identified on two grounds:

(1) it provides us with the knowledge of certain factors that could not be provided either by inference or verbal testimony; and,

(2) it removes the delusion which could not be removed by inference or verbal testimony.

It is thus: the lines and the sub-lines in pot (say) are not comprehended by inference or verbal testimony, but perception reveals them. In the same way, the delusion regarding the exact direction is removed only by perception and not by the other two. Hence perception *per se* is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony.³

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana rejects the objections set forth in the foregoing paragraphs by stating that visual perception is the sustaining factor of inference in regard to the comprehension of the *pakṣa* or the subject of inference. In the same way,

tactile perception too in the present case is the sustaining factor in regard to the comprehension of the *sādhya* or the thing that is sought to be established. For what is sought to be established here is the absence of hot touch. And the quality - touch could be known through tactile perception only. And its absence too could be known through the latter. It is in this sense it is said that tactile perception too in the present case is the sustaining factor. And it is in its aspect of being a sustaining factor, tactile perception invalidates the cognition that fire is cold arising from inference. The point that is of importance here is that tactile perception invalidates the inferential cognition not because it is powerful *per se*.⁴

The other contention of Vyāsatīrtha that perception is powerful as it provides us with the knowledge of certain factors that could not be provided by inference and verbal testimony is wrong. It is because if the characteristic of providing the knowledge of certain factors that could not be provided by inference and verbal testimony were taken as the criterion for fixing the powerful nature of perception, then inference and verbal testimony are to be taken as more powerful than perception as they give us the knowledge of merit (*dharma*) or sin (*adharma*) that could not be provided by perception.⁵

Yet another contention of Vyāsatīrtha that perception is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony because it removes the delusion regarding the exact direction - the delusion that is not removed either by inference or verbal testimony is also wrong. It is because the characteristic of removing what is not removed by perception or verbal testimony shows dissimilarity between perception on the

one hand and inference and verbal testimony on the other and not the powerful nature of perception.

Madhusūdana further argues that if a particular factor is to be viewed as more powerful on the ground that it removes something that could not be removed by other factors, then the sense of sight must be treated as more powerful than the sense of touch. It is because visual perception removes the illusion of a serpent which is not removed by tactile perception. If the sense of sight were treated as more powerful than the sense of touch on this ground, then the following difficulty would arise: the visual perception of a picture which has three dimensions - height, length and width and which appear to be real cannot be invalidated by the tactile perception as they do not come within the range of the latter. Hence perception *per se* cannot be considered to be powerful on the grounds mentioned by Vyāsatīrtha.⁶

Third Objection

The Advaitin may contend, Vyāsatīrtha argues, that it is said in the traditional code-

‘Among those three (perception, inference and verbal testimony) superiority belongs to verbal testimony alone, because of its very nature (*jāti*)’.

that verbal testimony is more powerful than perception and inference. Hence the contention that perception is more powerful than the other two is wrong. But this is not correct. It is because the above traditional code refers to the superiority of the scriptural texts. But in respect of secular statements, the latter are less powerful than perception.⁷

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana points out that our present discussion relates to the relative strength of the perceptual cognition of the world to be real and the cognition of the non-reality of the world derived from the *mithyātva-śruti*. And in this context Vyāsātīrtha's reference to the powerful nature of perception in relation to secular statements has no relevance.⁸

Fourth Objection

Vyāsātīrtha proceeds to explain the powerful nature of perception on the basis of the maxim known as *upakramānyāya* arrived at in the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtras*.⁹ This maxim is as follows: if the meanings of the initial passage and that of the concluding passage are in conflict with each other, then the concluding passage must be interpreted in such a way as not to have any conflict with the meaning of the initial passage. The reason for subscribing to this view is that the initial passage is of greater force than the concluding one.

The *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* school sets forth the ground for admitting that the initial passage is more powerful than the concluding one by stating that at the time of the origination of the cognition of the sense of the initial passage there is nothing that is opposed to it, as the cognition of the meaning of the concluding passage has not arisen then. In other words, it is *asañjāta-virodhi*, that is, the one in whose case a contrary cognition has not arisen earlier. But the knowledge of the meaning of the concluding passage has at the time of its origination, the knowledge of the meaning of the initial passage opposed to it. It is, therefore, *sañjāta-virodhi*. The former naturally is of greater force than the latter; and, so the concluding passage must be interpreted or understood

in such a way as not to have any conflict with the meaning of the initial passage.

On the basis of the above maxim, Vyāsatīrtha argues, we have to admit that perception is more powerful than inference or verbal testimony,. It is because the latter two function subsequent to perception. At the time of the rise of the cognition from perception there is nothing preceding it. But the cognition arising from inference or verbal testimony has perceptual cognition prior to it. If there is conflict between what is given in perception on the one hand and the one that is derived from inference or verbal testimony on the other, then the former being *asañjāta-virodhi* is more powerful than the latter two which are *sañjāta-virodhi*.

Now Vyāsatīrtha following the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtras* explains the above maxim by making a reference to a particular section which deals with the *vedas*. The initial passage of that section reads as follows:

तेभ्यः तेषानेभ्यः त्रयो वेदा असृज्यन्तः अग्नेः ऋग्वेदः वायोः
यजुर्वेदः आदित्यात् सामवेदः।¹⁰

This text is a commendatory passage. It means that the *Rg-veda* emanated from Agni; the *Yajur-veda*, from Vāyu; and the *Sāma-veda*, from the sun. Each of the *Vedas* is a collective body of sacred hymns.

The concluding passage reads as follows:

उच्चैः ऋचा क्रियते, उच्चैः साम्ना उपांशु यजुषा।¹¹

This text is an injunctive one. It enjoins that in a sacrifice the *mantras* that are identified on the basis of their structure as *ṛk*, *yajus* and *sāman* are to be recited in a loud, soft, and loud voice respectively. The *mantras* that conform to metre

are known as *ṛk*; those that are set to music are designated as *sāman*; and, those that are in prose-form are styled as *yajus*. The words *ṛk*, *yajus* and *sāman* in this injunctive text do not represent the *Ṛg-veda*, *Yajur-veda* and the *Sāma-veda*.

In the initial passage there is reference to the *Ṛg-veda*, the *Yajur-veda* and the *Sāma-veda*; and, in the concluding passage there is reference to the mantras - *ṛk*, *yajus* and *sāman*. The initial passage is a commendatory one, and the concluding passage is an injunctive one. According to the general rule that the injunctive one is more powerful than the commendatory text, the latter must be interpreted in such a way as not to have any conflict with the former one. Accordingly, the words - *Ṛg-veda*, the *Yajur-veda* and the *Sāma-veda* which primarily signify the collective body of hymns respectively are taken to signify secondarily the mantras, the *ṛg*, the *yajus* and the *sāman* respectively. Thus the import of the whole section wherein these two passages occur would be that in a sacrifice the *Ṛk*-mantras are to be recited in a loud voice even if they occur in the *Yajur-veda*. In the same way, the *Yajur-mantras* are to be recited in a low voice even if they occur in the *Ṛg-veda*. Similar consideration applies to the *Sāma-mantras* too. This is the *prima facie* view and it is presented in the aphorism-

श्रुतः जाताधिकारः स्यात्¹²

The conclusive view is: it is true that the injunctive text is more powerful than the commendatory text. But it is a general one. In the present case, the commendatory text occurs first and so at the time of the rise of the knowledge of its meaning, there is nothing opposed to it. It is *asañjāta-*

virodhi. The injunctive text occurs subsequent to the commendatory one. As a result, at the time of the rise of the knowledge of its sense it has the knowledge of the meaning of the initial passage opposed to it. Hence it is *sañjāta-virodhi*. Hence the former is of greater force than the latter. It is on this ground we must interpret the concluding passage, although it is an injunctive one, in such a way as not to have any conflict with the meaning of the initial passage, although it is a commendatory text.

Now the words *ṛk*, *yajus* and *sāman* are taken in their secondary senses of *Rg-veda*, *Yajur-veda* and the *Sāma-veda*. Now the whole section would mean that the collective body of the hymns—the *Rg-veda* is to be recited in a loud voice. Even the *Yajur-mantras* contained therein must be recited in a low voice. Even the mantras styled as *ṛk* contained therein must be recited so. This view is arrived at in the aphorism

वेदो वा प्रायदर्शनात्¹³

The point that is of profound importance here is that just as the initial passage is treated to be more powerful than the concluding passage on the ground that the initial passage is free from anything that is opposed to it, unlike the concluding passage, in the same way, perception on the ground of its not having anything opposed to it at the time of its functioning is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony which at the time of their functioning have the cognition arising from perception opposed to it. The perceptual cognition that the world is real cannot be invalidated by the cognition that the world is non-real arising from inference and verbal testimony.

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana argues that the above contention that the cognition which arises from perception earlier invalidates the subsequent cognition that arises from inference and verbal testimony on the basis of the *upakrama-nyāya* is wrong. It is because the latter is applicable only when there is contradiction between the initial passage and the concluding passage of a section of a text that conveys a unitary sense. It must be noted here that both the passages are equally valid. In the present case, the contradiction is between perception on the one hand and inference and the *mithyātva-śruti* on the other. The validity of inference is ascertained on the ground of its being free from fallacies; and, the validity of the śruti texts is ascertained on the basis of their being not defiled by any defect. But the validity of perception has not been ascertained as the knowledge that arises from it is not invariably valid; it is erroneous too in certain cases. Thus, unlike the initial and the concluding passage that are equally valid, perception, on the one hand, and inference and verbal testimony on the other, are not equally valid. And perception whose validity has not been ascertained is less powerful than inference and verbal testimony whose validity has been well ascertained.

If, however, it is argued that the maxim of the antecedent one invalidating the subsequent one would be applicable in the case of perception on the one hand and inference and verbal testimony on the other, although the two are not equally valid, then, Madhusūdana argues that the erroneous cognition "This is sliver" arises first. It is *asañjāta-virodhi*, that is, at the time of its origination nothing exists as opposed to it. And the cognition "This is shell" arises subsequently. It is *sañjāta-virodhi*, that is, it has at

the time of its origination the cognition "This is sliver" opposed to it. According to the maxim of the antecedent one invalidating the subsequent one, the cognition of the form "This is sliver" which is antecedent would sublate the cognition "This is shell" which is subsequent. But this is not the case.

It is because the cognition "This is sliver" and the cognition "This is shell" do not have equal validity. That is why the antecedent one although *asañjāta-virodhi* does not invalidate the latter one although it is *sañjāta-virodhi*.¹⁴

It emerges from the above that the maxim of the antecedent one sublating the subsequent one is not applicable in the case of perception on the one hand and inference and verbal testimony on the other. Perception is less powerful than the other two.

Fifth Objection

Vyāsatīrtha seeks to establish the powerful nature of perception on the basis of another maxim arrived at from the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-sūtra*

अविशेषेण यच्छास्त्रं अन्याय्यत्वात् विकल्पस्य तत्सन्दिग्धं
आरात् विशेषविशिष्टं स्यात्।¹⁵

This aphorism discusses the scope of the injunctive text-*pade juhoti*. In connection with the *vyotistoma* sacrifice, it is said that the *soma*-creeper is to be bought by giving a calf which is tawny in colour, is one year old and has yellowish eyes.

अरुणया पिङ्गाक्ष्या एकहायन्या सोमं क्रीणाति।¹⁶

Then the text – *pade juhoti* enjoins that one shall make the sacrificial offering in the foot-prints of the calf in the path

through which it is led to the place wherein the *soma*-creeper is bought. This text makes reference to the specific location wherein the sacrificial offering is to be made.

But there is a general rule –

आहवनीये जुहोति ।¹⁷

According to this a sacrificial offering in general is to be made in the *Āhavanīya*-fire.

Now the question arises as to whether one should make the offering in the foot-prints of the calf in accordance with the specific rule – *pade juhoti* or in the *Āhavanīya*-fire in accordance with the general rule *āhavanīye juhoti*. The *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-sūtra* referred to above states that in the context of the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice, at the time of making the sacrificial offering what would come to one's mind immediately is the foot-prints of the calf as the location of offering. It is because the text – *pade juhoti* occurs therein. And the rule – *āhavanīye juhoti* has relevance in the case of offerings other than the one that is to be made in the foot-prints of a calf. It comes to this that the specific rule or the one that makes known something individually is more powerful than the general rule or the one that makes known the class of individuals. The former is, therefore, more powerful than the latter. This maxim is known as *sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya*.

On the basis of this maxim, Vyāsatīrtha argues that perception comprehends the reality of the objects individually in the form “The pot is real,” while the *mithyātva-śruti* conveys in a general way the absence of duality,¹⁸ and, so perception which is specific is more powerful than verbal testimony and also inference that refer to absence of duality

or the non-reality of objects in general. Hence the perceptual cognition cannot be invalidated by the cognition arising from inference and verbal testimony.

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana answers the above objection by stating that the maxim *sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya* is applicable only in those cases where the general rule and the specific one are ascertained to be valid. The text – *āvahanīye juhōti* and the one – *pade juhōti* are valid and so it is reasonable to conclude that the general rule is superseded by the specific rule. But in the case of perception and verbal testimony the latter is ascertained to be valid as it is free from any defect, while the former is not so, as there is every likelihood of its being associated with defect. Hence there is no scope for the application of the maxim of *sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya* in the case of perception and verbal testimony. It comes to this that one cannot argue that perception as it comprehends every object specifically is more powerful than verbal testimony – the *mithyātva-śruti* which makes reference to the objects of the world in a general way and so it would invalidate the latter.¹⁹

Madhusūdana further points out that if the Dvaitin insists that that which makes reference to the individual would invariably supersede the one which refers to the class of individuals irrespective of whether they are valid or not, then the erroneous cognition of the form “This cow is the horse” which is perceptual and which makes specific reference to the cow as the horse will not be invalidated by the cognition arising from the statement– “A cow will never become a horse,” as this is a general statement signifying the difference between the class of cows and the class of

horses. But it is invalidated. The point that is to be noted here is that the cognition arising from a statement referring to an individual cannot be considered to be more powerful than the statement that makes reference to the class of individuals unless both the texts are valid. Perception comprehends the objects individually as real, no doubt; and, verbal testimony refers to the whole class of objects as non-existent in Brahman or non-real. Yet, on the basis of the *sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya*, the former cannot invalidate the latter, as verbal testimony is valid, while perception is not. In the same way, inference too is ascertained to be valid on the ground that it is free from any fallacies. Hence the cognition arising from it referring to the class of objects as non-real will not be invalidated by the cognition arising from perception although the latter refers to the reality of the objects individually. From this it follows that the *sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya* operates in the cases of two texts not only on the ground that one refers to the individual and another to the whole class of individuals but also on the ground that both are valid. Between perception on the one hand, and inference and verbal testimony on the other, this maxim is not applicable as the validity of the former is not ascertained while that of the latter has been determined although the former makes reference to the individual and the latter refers to the whole class of individuals.²⁰

The Advaitin points out that the contention that the *mithyātva-śruti* makes reference to the class of individuals (*sāmānya*) and not to each and every individual specifically (*viśeṣa*) is wrong. Vyāsātīrtha, he argues, has taken into account the *śruti* text—

एकमेव अद्वितीयम् ।²¹

which negates the existence of the world as different from Brahman (*sāmānya*) in Brahman and has stated that the *mithyātva-śruti*, unlike perception, refers to the whole class of objects and so it is invalidated by perception. It must be noted here that there are texts such as —

i) नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ²²

ii) इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा ²³

referring to the fact that every object of the world is non-existent in the substratum wherein it appears and is, therefore, non-real. The words *kim* and *sarva* are classified as pronominal words (*sarvanāma*). The signification of the word *kim* is the individual category which is the content of the desire to know. And, the signification of the word *sarva* is each one of a whole. It may be added here that the text — इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा does not refer to the identity of each and every object of the world as identical with Brahman; for, the object being inert and Brahman being sentient, no identity between the two is possible. On the other hand, it means that each and every object has no independent existence apart from Brahman and is, therefore, non-real.

Sixth Objection

Yet another maxim on the basis of which Vyāsatīrtha attempts to prove that perception is more powerful than inference and verbal testimony is *sāvakāśa-niravakāśa-nyāya*. This maxim may be explained as follows:

Initiation ceremony (*dīkṣaṇīyā iṣṭi*) is one of the subsidiary rites of the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice. In connection with it it is laid down that it must be performed by reciting the relevant *mantras* either in a loud voice or in a low voice according to one's wish.

यावत्या वाचा कामयेत तावत्या दीक्षणीयायां अनुब्रूयात्।²⁴

In connectin with the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice itself it is read that whichever religious rite one shoud perform prior to the offering of the sacrificial animal with reference to the deity – Agnīṣoma, it must be performed by reciting the relevant mantras in low voice.

यत्किञ्चित् प्राचीनं अग्नीषोमीयात् तेन उपांशु चरन्ति²⁵

The religious rites that are to be performed prior to the offering of the sacrificial animal with reference to the deity–Agnīṣoma consists of the initiation ceremony too besides the act of soliciting the priests, spreading of the *darbha*-grass, etc.

Now according to the first text one is enjoined to perform the initiation ceremony by citing the *mantras* either in a loud voice or in a low voice as one wishes. The second text enjoins that the initiation ceremony must be performed by uttering the *mantras* in low voice. Thus there is apparent contradiction between the two texts.

Jaimini resolves the contradiction by stating that if one performs the initiation ceremony by uttering the *mantras* in low voice on the authority of the second text cited above, namely, यत्किञ्चित् प्राचीनं etc., then the first text– यावत्या वाचा which enjoins the performance of the intitation ceremony by uttering the *mantras* in a loud voice or a low voice as one wishes would become devoid of any scope whatsoever. The text thereby would be rendered futile (*niravakāśa*). To avoid this unwelcome position it is concluded that the initiation ceremony must be performed by uttering the *mantras* relating to it either in a loud voice or in a low voice. The text–यत्किञ्चित् प्राचीनं, etc., which enjoins that whichever religious

rite one should perform prior to the offering of the sacrificial animal to the deity—Agnīṣoma must be performed by reciting the relevant *mantras* in low voice is operative in respect of other rites such as soliciting the priests, spreading of the *darbha*—grass, etc. (*sāvakāśa*). Thus Jaimini is of the view that if a text is likely to become devoid of any scope and thereby insignificant, then it remains powerful. In the present case, the text that enjoins the performance of religious rites like the initiation ceremony, soliciting the priests, spreading of the *darbha*-grass, etc., by uttering the *mantras* in a low voice are understood to have reference to the rites excepting the initiation ceremony chiefly to accommodate the text that prescribes the performance of it by uttering the *mantras* in a loud or a low voice as one wishes. Otherwise the latter text would become devoid of any content. This is an instance where the *sāvakāśa-nirvakāśa-nyāya* is applied.²⁶

When viewed in the above light, Vyāsātīrtha argues, if the cognition that arises from the *śruti* texts that the objects of the world are non-real invalidates the cognition that arises from perception that the objects of the world are real, then the latter would become devoid of any content (*niravakāś*). On the other hand, if it is held that the cognition arising from perception invalidates the cognition arising from the *śruti* texts the latter will never become devoid of any content as we could interpret it in such a way as not to have any conflict with perception. For example, the Advaitin interprets the text – नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन as conveying the sense of non-reality of the world. This is in conflict with the cognition arising from perception that the world is real and the contradiction can be resolved by interpreting the text thus: in God (*iha*) there is (*asti*) not even a trace (*na kiñcana*) of difference among the qualities (*nānā*) present

in Him.²⁷ In the same way, the text— इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा means that God is the only independent real and all this world is real by being dependent upon Him. These texts do not signify the world to be non-real as the Advaitin thinks and so they are not in conflict with perception. Similarly the text *tat tvam asi* does not refer to the identity of the true nature of the soul and that of God. On the other hand, it conveys the sense that the soul must surrender itself to God (*tasmai tvam asi*); or, it means that the soul has God as its Self (*tasya tvam asi*); or, it means that the soul is dependent upon God (*tasmin tvam asi*). Or, the text reads as *a-tattvamasī* signifying that the soul is not identical with God. What Vyāsatīrtha wishes to emphasize is that perception shows the reality of the world and the difference of the soul from God. The Advaitin contends that the world is non-real and there is no difference between the soul and God and all this is known from the *śruti* texts; and he proceeds to contend that if the cognition arising from perception invalidates the cognition arising from *śruti* texts cited above then the latter would become devoid of any content (*niravakāśa*). Vyāsatīrtha states that the *śruti* texts are to be interpreted in the way in which the Dvaitin has interpreted and as shown above they are not rendered without any content.²⁸ Hence perception is more powerful than the other proofs and the reality of the world known through perception is valid.

Reply to this Objection

Madhusūdana argues that on the basis of six indicatory marks it is ascertained that the *śruti* texts such as *tat tvam asi* and the like have for their import the non-dual Brahman. And the *mithyātva-śrutis* signify the world to be

non-real thereby confirming the non-dual nature of Brahman. The cognitions arising from these śruti texts invalidate the perceptual cognition that points to the reality of the world and of the difference between the soul and Brahman. Thereby the perceptual cognitions do not become devoid of any content. It is because we assign empirical validity to the content of perceptual cognition. This means that the perceptual cognitions refer to objects which have empirical reality; that is, they are subject to sublation by the direct knowledge of Brahman; but they are not sublated till the rise of the knowledge of Brahman. It emerges from this that the perceptual cognitions that the world is real and that there is difference between the soul and Brahman when invalidated by the cognition arising from the śruti texts do not become devoid of any content. The world and the difference between the soul and Brahman are treated to be provisionally or empirically real. Hence the maxim of *sāvakāśa-niravakāśa-nyāya* cannot be applied in the case of perception and verbal testimony.²⁹

[To be continued]

NOTES

1. *Nyāyāmṛta* (hereafter *Nmṛ*), pp. 118-119.
2. *Advaita-siddhi* (hereafter *AS*), p. 118.
3. *Nmṛ.*, p. 119.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *AS.*, pp. 119-120.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
7. *Nmṛ.*, p. 120
8. *AS*, p. 120.
9. *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-sūtra*, (hereafter *PMS*), 3.3.2.

10. *Maitrayaṇī-saṁhitā*, 3.6.5.
11. Ibid.
12. *PMS.*, 3.3.1.
13. Ibid., 3.3.2.
14. *AS*, p. 121.
15. *PMS.*, 10.8.16.
16. *Taittirīya-saṁhitā*, 6.1.6.7.
17. *Taittirīya-brahmaṇa*, 1.1.10.5.
18. *Nmr.*, p.122.
19. *AS*, p. 123.
20. Ibid.
21. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6.2.1.
22. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.4.19.
23. Ibid., 2.4.6.
24. Cited in the *Śābara-bhāṣya* on *PMS*, 9.1.2.
25. Ibid.
26. *PMS*, 9.1.2.
27. *Viṣṇutattvaviniṛṇaya*, p. 1009.
28. *Nmr.*, pp. 123-124.
29. *AS*, p. 124.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. *Advaita-siddhi* with the commentary *Bālabodhinī* by Yogendranatha Bagchi. Vols I & II. Tara Publications, Varanasi, 1971
2. *Nyāyāmṛta*, Vols I & II. Śaddarśana Prakāśanapratīṣṭhānam, Benares, 1977.
3. *Viṣṇutattvaviniṛṇaya*, Akhila-Bhārata-Madhva-Mahāmaṇḍali Publications, Bangalore, 1969.

* * * *

**ON THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ AND
ADHYĀSA IN THE KṚTIS OF
ŚRĪ MUTTUSVĀMI DĪKṢITA**

R. ASHA (SIVASREE)

(continued from the previous issue.....)

In the previous issue, the concept of Brahman, the non-dual Reality, as presented by Śrī Muttusvāmi Dīkṣita in his *kṛtis* was elaborated upon.

The next important concept in Advaita Vedānta is *māyā*.

The Upaniṣad affirms that all is Brahman –

सर्वं खलु इदं ब्रह्म ।²⁸

It is Brahman which appears as God, soul and the world.

भोक्ता भोग्यं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा

सर्वं प्रोक्तं त्रिविधं ब्रह्म मे तत्।

जीवेशानौ सृज्यमानं जगच्च

शुद्धं ब्रह्मेत्याह वेदान्तवाक्यम् ॥²⁹

But this difference (*bheda*) is only apparently real. The Ultimate Reality is to be understood in the destruction of difference.

[cf. Dīkṣita – जीवेशजगद्धेदापहं (श्री वाञ्छनाथं), भेदाज्ञानध्वान्तसूदने (उच्छिष्ट-गणपती)]

To account for this apparent contradiction between non-duality and plurality is postulated the concept of *māyā* which is quite unique to Advaita. *Māyā* is the term given to the creative power of Brahman, due to which the world of diversified names and forms is presented in Brahman.³⁰ It is beginningless (*anādi*) and positive (*bhāvarūpa*). It is indeterminable as either real or unreal. It cannot be accepted as absolutely real, since the scriptures assert that Brahman is the only Reality. Also, it is sublated at the dawn of knowledge. It cannot be categorised as unreal like hare's horn or a barren woman's son, since it is presented in experience. Nor can it be said that it is both real and unreal, as this is an impossibility. Therefore, it is indeterminable, i.e. *anirvacanīya* or *mithyā*. The same explanation applies to the world, which is regarded as superimposition³¹ (*adhyāsa*) on Brahman. Common examples for this are snake-rope and nacre-silver. Just as the rope serves as the substratum for the appearance of the apparent snake, Brahman is the locus (*adhiṣṭhāna*) for the world-appearance. The rope / Brahman without undergoing any change in itself appears as the snake / world. It is ignorance (*avidyā* / *māyā*) present in them which transforms itself thus. So, Brahman is the transfigurative material cause, while *māyā* is the transformative material cause. Transfiguration is appearance-otherwise, while transformation is becoming-otherwise. So, the 'relation' between Brahman and the world is one of reality and appearance and not of cause and effect. That this appearance

is illusory (false) is further strengthened by its objectivity, inertness and limitedness.

Five definitions are generally given for this illusoriness or falsity (which is termed *bhrānti* or *bhrama*). Falsity is—

1. Not being the locus of either reality or unreality. (attributed to Padmapāda).
2. That which is eternally negated in the locus where it is cognized.
3. That which is contradicted by knowledge. (2 & 3 attributed to Prakāśātman)
4. That, the locus of which is equally the locus of its eternal negation (Citsukha)
5. That which is other than reality. (Ānandabodha).³²

The illusory presentation of the world is aided by the two-fold power of *māyā*, viz. *āvaraṇa* (concealing) and *vikṣepa* (projective). *Māyā* conceals Brahman and projects the manifold world of names and forms.

There are many phrases in Dīkṣita's compositions which refer to the above concepts.

Four types can be identified.

1. Brahman — substratum for world-illusion.

- Egs. 1. नश्वरप्रपञ्चाधिष्ठानम् (in the *kṛti* विश्वनाथं भजेऽहम्)
2. मायामयविश्वाधिष्ठानः (in श्री नाथादि गुरुगुहो जयति)
3. भ्रमात्मकं विश्वकरं (in कुमारस्वामिनम्)
4. अनादिमायोत्पत्ते (in श्री गुरुगुहमूर्ते) ५

2. Brahman — transcending the world.

There are phrases where Dīkṣita refers to the Supreme as transcending this illusory world of name and form, unaffected by the imputations of māyā.

- Egs. 1. भ्रान्तिस्वरूपप्रपञ्चातीतः (in बृहदीश्वरो रक्षतु)
 2. अनाद्यविद्याप्रपञ्चरहिते (in मङ्गलदेवते परदेवते)
 3. मायाकार्यकलनाहीनः (in श्री नाथादि)
 4. मायातीत (in पन्नगशयन पद्मनाभ)
 5. मायाप्रपञ्चातीतस्वरूपिणि (in नीलोत्पलाम्बिके)
 6. नामरूपातीतं (in त्यागराज महाध्वजारोह), etc.

Māyā is considered to possess three constituents, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Dīkṣita refers to the Supreme as being over and above these too.

1. सत्त्वरजस्तमोगुणातीत सत्यज्ञानानन्दरूपिणः (in त्यागराजादन्यं न जाने)
2. गुणत्रयातीताय (in श्री स्वामिनाथाय नमस्ते)

3. In some places, Dīkṣita exhorts one to give up māyā and its effects and practice devotion.

1. कल्पितमायाकार्यं त्यज रे (in कमलाम्बां भज रे)
2. मायामयहृत्तापं त्यज रे (in मानसगुरुगुह)
3. अविद्याकार्यकलनां त्यज रे (in आर्या अभयाम्बाम्)

4. Devotion to the Supreme, results in evoking its grace by which the duality caused by delusion is destroyed. This also is indicated by Dīkṣita,

1. अनाद्यविद्यातमोभास्करम् (in श्री दक्षिणामूर्तिम्)
2. भ्रान्तिहरचतुरतरम् (in श्री कुमारस्वामिनम्)
3. आत्मेश्वरजीवभेदावरणनिवृत्ते (in श्री गुरुगुहमूर्ते)

4. जननलयादिरूपप्रपञ्जाज्ञानकार्यनिग्रहस्य (in गुरुगुहस्य)
5. मूलाज्ञानशोकविनाशक (in श्रीशमूलाधारचक्रविनायक)

Ontology

Advaita accepts three levels or three degrees of reality viz., *prātibhāsika* (apparent), *vyāvahārika* (empirical) and *pāramārthika* (absolute). The *prātibhāsika* is that which is sublated by knowledge other than that of Brahman (examples are rope-snake, shell-silver and dream-illusion). The *vyāvahārika* is that which is sublated at the rise of the knowledge of Brahman. The world belongs to this category. The *pāramārthika* (Brahman) is that which is unsublated in the three divisions of time — एकरूपेण ह्यवस्थितो योऽर्थः स परमार्थः।³³

The world of name and form is not *asat* (non-existent).³⁴ It is *anṛta* (false), i.e. it is real inasmuch as it has Brahman as its substratum, but taken apart from Brahman, it is not real.³⁵ It exists in empirical experience only.

This superimposition of the world on Brahman, this false attribution of the not-self on the self, is subsequently denied.³⁶ This false attribution (*adhyāropa*) followed by negation (*apavāda*) is the method followed in the Upaniṣads to convey the nature of Reality.³⁷ *Apavāda* can also be called *bādha*. It is of three kinds — *śrauta*, *yauktika* and *pratyakṣa*. The understanding with the help of *śruti*, that apart from Brahman, there is no other Ultimate Reality is the first kind. The second type involves the use of logic such as reasoning out the illusory nature of the world etc., to arrive at the conclusion finally that the world is essentially Brahman. The third kind involves *upadeśa* or instruction (of *mahāvākyas* like *tattvamasī*), followed by immediate experience (of the form "I am Brahman").

Cosmogony

Advaita Vedānta explains the process of creation of the myriad world of names and forms in the following way, using the theory of quintuplication (*pañcīkaraṇa*). In Īśvara, there arises a desire to create.³⁸ Then are produced the five (unquintuplicated) elements designated as *tanmātras*, which being the effects of *māyā*, are made up of the three *guṇas* *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. From these elements, particularly possessed of *sattva* and *rajo guṇas*, taken singly, and individually are produced the five senses of knowledge and the organs of action respectively. When these elements in their *sāttvic* aspect are combined, the *manas*, intellect, ego and *citta* are produced. When these elements in their *rājasic* aspects are combined, the five vital forces are produced. When these elements in their *tāmasic* aspect are mutually combined, compound elements are produced.³⁹ This is indicated by the statement — तासां त्रिवृतं त्रिवृतमेकैकं करवाणि।⁴⁰ The quintuplication (*pañcīkaraṇa*) theory which is the expansion of the theory of triplication (*trivṛtkaraṇa*) takes place in the following manner. Each element is first divided into two. Each of the halves is further sub-divided into four parts. Each one of these four parts is added to the halves of the other four elements. From these are produced the various worlds and bodies by permutation and combination.⁴¹

Dīkṣita refers to this in the following phrases:

1. पञ्चीकृतात्मके, पञ्चभूतात्मके (in त्यागराजे)
2. पञ्चभूतमयप्रपञ्चप्रभो (in जम्बूपते मां पाहि)
3. पञ्चीकृतपञ्चमहाभूतप्रपञ्चादिमोहनकरलिङ्गम् (in श्रीविश्वनाथं भजे), etc.

At one place, he refers to the Supreme as transcending this world thus:

पञ्चीकृतप्रपञ्चातीतं (in पञ्चभूतकिरणावलिं). He also refers to creation in the collective (*samaṣṭi*) and individual (*vyāṣṭi*) aspects —

तत्त्वसमष्टिव्यष्टिरूपलयतारकब्रह्मरूपात्मनः (in त्यागराजादन्यं न जाने)
as ultimately dissolving in Brahman.

Māyā in the Devī-kṛtis of Dīkṣita

In the Devī-kṛtis of Dīkṣita, the term 'māyā', acquires a special dimension since it can be interpreted from the Advaitic as well as Śākta point of view. [It is well known that Dīkṣita was a Śrīvidyopāsaka].

While, on one hand, Devī is the Supreme Brahman, transcending māyā, (as in मायाप्रपञ्चातीतस्वरूपिणि in नीलोत्पलाम्बिके and मायाकार्यवर्जिते in the kṛti भारती), and the creatrix of the illusory world, (as in भ्रमात्मकविश्वजननी in हिमाचलकुमारी and मायामयविश्वोत्पत्तिकरी in छायावतीम्), on the other hand, She is māyā itself! Dīkṣita addresses Her thus in some compositions, eg. माये in मीनाक्षि मे मुदम्, माये चित्कले, etc. Śaṅkara in his hymn *Saundaryalaharī* address Her so thus:

गिरामाहुर्देवीं द्रुहिणगृहिणीमागमविदो
हरेः पत्नीं पद्मां हरसहचरीमद्रितनयाम् ।
तुरीया कापि त्वं दुरधिगमनिस्सीममहिमा
महामाया विश्वं भ्रमयसि परब्रह्ममहिषि ॥⁴²

The *Lalitā-Sahasranāma* also has 'महामाया' as one of Her names.⁴³ Mūka Kavi in his *Mūkapañcaśatī* speaks of Her inscrutable nature as —

अभिदाकृतिर्भिदाकृतिरचिदाकृतिरपि चिदाकृतिर्मातः ।
अनहन्ता त्वमहन्ता भ्रमयसि कामाक्षि शास्वती विश्वम् ॥⁴⁴

(It is interesting that both the great poets use the words 'विश्वं भ्रमयसि!').

Coming to Dīkṣita's usages: in one song (गानलोले), after addressing Devī as transcending the world of plurality (नानाप्रपञ्चातीते), he switches over to addressing Her as *māye* and as the world of name and form (नामरूपकात्मके). Here, as in other places (eg. माये in मीनाक्षि मे मुदं, in माये चित्कले), Devī is personified as the Cosmic creative power which transforms itself into the world. This accords with the Advaita theory that māyā is the transformative cause of the world (*pariṇāma-kāraṇa*).

Śaṅkara describes Her as —

मनस्त्वं व्योमस्त्वं मरुदसि मरुत्सारथिरसि
 त्वमापस्त्वं भूमिस्त्वयि परिणतायां न हि परम्।
 त्वमेव स्वात्मानं परिणमयितुं विश्ववपुषा
 चिदानन्दाकारं शिवयुवति भावेन विभृषे ॥⁴⁵

Again, in his *Bhavānībhujāṅgam*, he says—

त्वमर्कस्त्वमिन्दुस्त्वमग्निस्त्वमाप-
 स्त्वमाकाशभूवायवस्त्वं महत्त्वम्।
 त्वदन्यो न कश्चित्प्रपञ्चोऽस्ति सर्वं
 त्वमानन्दसंवित्स्वरूपां भजेऽहम् ॥⁴⁶

[*cf.* धरणिमयीं तरणिमयीं पवनमयीं गगनदहनहोतृमयीम्।
 अम्बुमयीं इन्दुमयीं अम्बां अनुकम्पां आदिमामीक्षे ॥⁴⁷

Coming back to Dīkṣita, the song quoted earlier namely, मीनाक्षि मे मुदं देहि is particularly significant as it was while this song was being sung, Dīkṣita was liberated from the shackles of mundane existence. In this song, Dīkṣita sings 'मानमातृमेये माये'.

Elsewhere, in 'श्री मातः', he sings of Her as being the basis for epistemological activity by virtue of Her being the illuminator of the knower (प्रमातृ), means of knowledge (प्रमाण) and the object of knowledge (प्रमेय) –

‘प्रमातृप्रमाणप्रमेयप्रपञ्चप्रकाशकरतलविरले’.

Śaṅkara in his *Devībhujāṅga-stotra* praises the Blissful form of Devī as –

विरिश्वादिरूपैः प्रपञ्चे विहृत्य
स्वतन्त्रा यदा स्वात्मविश्रान्तिरेषा ।
तदा मानमातृप्रमेयातिरिक्तं
परानन्दमीडे भवानि त्वदीयम् ॥⁴⁸

Devī is both the finitising, veiling principle and the illuminating, unveiling principle. By way of elaboration, Dīkṣita has a whole song based on this idea.

राग - तरङ्गिणी

ताल - आदि

पल्लवी

माये त्वं याहि मां बाधितुं काहि (माये)

अनुपल्लवी

ध्याये ध्येये त्वमेहि मुदं देहि मां पाहि (माये)

चरणम्

गाये गेये याहि काहि एहि देहि पाहि (माये)

उपाये पेये सरसकाये रसकाये सकाये अये (माये)

समुदाये गुरुगुहोदये सुधातरङ्गिणि अन्तरङ्गिणि (माये)

The song begins with Dīkṣita requesting māyā (obviously ignorance personified) to get away from him and not to trouble him - माये त्वं याहि मां बाधितुं का हि. In the very next line occurs the word 'ध्यये' (fit to be contemplated upon). This

obviously does not seem to refer to māyā in the above sense of ignorance but to Devī Herself whom he successively beseeches to come, grant liberation and to protect him, त्वमेहि मुदं देहि मां पाहि. It is clear that here Devī is the deluder and the wielder of Her own delusive power. Again both types of phrases and opposite ideas are juxtaposed as in याहि काहि एहि देहि पाहि. This ambivalence continues in the latter half where he refers to Devī as both the path and the goal, उपाये पेये .

Māyā as Her power is inert but She is the wielder of that power. As such She bestows Her grace on the seeker and puts him on the Advaitic path and the goal is Herself.

For a Śāktic interpretation, the words of the tāntric scholar Arthur Avalon may be quoted in this context—

“Veda says: “All this (that is, the manifold world) is (the one) Brahman” (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म).....In the first place, what is the one reality which appears as many? What is the nature of Brahman as it is in itself (*svarūpa*)? The answer is *Sat-Cit-Ānanda* - that is, Being-Consciousness – Bliss Supreme Consciousness is the supreme *Śiva-Śakti* (*Paraśiva Paraśakti*) which never changes, but eternally endures the same throughout all change effected in it's creative aspect as *śiva-śakti*..... Behind all these particular changing forms of sentiency or consciousness is the one formless changeless *Cit* as it is in itself (*svarūpa*), that is, as distinguished from the particular forms of it's manifestation. As *Cit* throughout all these stages of life remains the same it is not in itself really developed. The appearance of development is due to the fact that it is now more and now less veiled or contracted by Mind and Matter. It is this veiling by the power of Consciousness (*śakti*) which creates the world. What is it, then, which veils Consciousness and thus produces world-experience?

The answer is power or *śakti* as *māyā*. *Māyā-śakti* is that which seemingly makes the whole (*pūrṇa*) into the not-whole (*apūrṇa*), the infinite into the finite, the formless into forms and the like. It is a power which thus cuts down, veils and negates. Negates what? Perfect Consciousness. Is *Śakti* in itself the same as or different from Śiva or *Cit*? It must be the same, for otherwise all could not be one Brahman. But if it is the same it must be also *Cit* or Consciousness. Therefore, it is *Saccidānandamayī* and *Cidrūpiṇī*. (The suffixes *mayī* and *rūpiṇī* indicate a subtle distinction, namely, that She is in Herself, *Cit*, and yet by appearance the effect of the power something different from it).

And yet there is, at least in appearance, some distinction. *Śakti*, which comes from the root *Śak*, "to have power", "to be able", means power. 'Power implies a Power-Holder (*Śaktimān*). There is no Power-Holder without Power or Power without Power-Holder. The power-Holder is Śiva. Power is *Śakti*, the great Mother of the Universe.' 'As She is one with Śiva as Power-Holder (*Śaktimān*), She as such Power is the power of Śiva or Consciousness. There is no difference between Śiva as the possessor of power (*Śaktimān*) and Power as it is in itself. The power of Consciousness is Consciousness in its active aspect. Whilst, therefore, both Śiva and *Śakti* are Consciousness, the former is the changeless static aspect of Consciousness and *Śakti* is the kinetic, active aspect of the same Consciousness. The particular power whereby the dualistic world is brought into being is *Māyā-śakti*, which is both a veiling (*āvaraṇa*) and projecting (*vikṣepa*) *Śakti*.....*Māyā* is that power by which things are "measured" - that is, formed and made known (*mīyate anayā iti māyā*).....It is that which

establishes a dichotomy in what would otherwise be a unitary experience, and is the cause of the dualism inherent in all phenomenal experience."⁴⁹ 'Māyā is not in this system "illusion", but is in the concise words of the *Śākta Sādhaka Kamalākānta* 'the Form of the Formless' (*sūnyasya ākāra iti māyā*). The world is it's form and these forms are therefore real.⁵⁰

All said and done, where does a seeker stand? Śaṅkara beautifully puts it thus—

मृषान्योऽमृषान्यः परो मिश्रमेनं
 परः प्राकृतं चापरो बुद्धिमात्रम्।
 प्रपञ्चं मिमीते मुनीनां गणोऽयं
 तदेतत्त्वमेवेति न त्वां जहीमः॥
 जगज्जालमेतत्त्वयैवाम्ब सृष्टं
 त्वमेवाद्य यासीन्द्रियैरर्थजालम्।
 त्वमेकैव कर्त्री त्वमेकैव भोक्तृ
 न मे पुण्यपापे न मे बन्धमोक्षौ॥⁵¹

And so it is that one has to resort to Her to overcome the effects of māyā, for as Dikṣita puts it, She is the bestower of knowledge —

1. ज्ञानप्रदे (in अखिलाण्डेश्वरी)
2. वेदवेदान्ततत्त्वबोधिनी (in मधुराम्बा)
3. परमतत्त्वार्थबोधिते (in नागगान्धारी)
4. परमाद्वैतबोधिते (in श्री राजराजेश्वरी)
5. आत्मस्वरूपप्रबोधितया (in गिरिजया)

She thus, becomes the Guru or preceptor too.

गुरुस्त्वं शिवस्त्वं च शक्तिस्त्वमेव
 त्वमेवासि माता पिता च त्वमेव ।
 त्वमेवासि विद्या त्वमेवासि बन्धुः
 गतिर्मे मतिर्देवि सर्वं त्वमेव ॥⁵²

She is again, at the same time the knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge ज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेयस्वरूपिणि – (Dikṣita in the *kṛiti* ज्ञानाम्बिके).

This *jñāna* which makes the soul attain Śivahood is but a product of Her grace.

विनोदाय चैतन्यमेकं विभज्य
 द्विधा देवि जीवः शिवश्चेति नाम्ना ।
 शिवस्यापि जीवत्वमापादयन्ती
 पुनर्जीवमेनं शिवं वा करोषि ॥⁵³

Souls like Śrī Dikṣita who are fortunate enough to be bathed in the bountiful glances of Her compassion, become *muktas*, established in their real nature as *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*.

‘श्री कमलाम्बिकया कटाक्षितोऽहं
 सच्चिदानन्दपरिपूर्णब्रह्मास्मि’ – Dikṣita

(To be continued)

NOTES

28. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (hereafter *CU*) 3.14.2.
29. *Samkṣepaśārīraka* III- 293.
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (hereafter *SU*) 1 - 12.
30. मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यात् मायिनं तु महेद्वरम्। *SU* IV -10.
31. Śaṅkara defines superimposition in his *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya* as 'smṛtirūpaḥ paratra pūrvadr̥ṣṭāvabhāṣaḥ'. i.e. it is the form of recollection and the appearance-elsewhere of an object seen earlier.
32. See *The Advaita concept of Falsity - A Critical study* by Nirod Baran Chakraborty, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1967.
33. *SB* on *VS*, 2.1.11..
34. *Asat* is that which does not exist—
यच्चास्ति तन्नोपलभ्यते यथा शशविषाणादि।
Taittirīya-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya of Śaṅkara 2-6.
35. सर्वं च नामरूपादि सदात्मनैव सत्यं विकारजातं स्वतस्त्वनृतमेव वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं इत्युक्तत्वात्। *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad-bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara 6.3.2.
36. *BU*, 2.3.6.
37. See 'The Method of the Vedānta', Swami Satchidanandendra (tr.A.J. Alston), Kegan Paul International, London, 1989.
38. *CU*, 6.2.3, *TU*, 2.6.
39. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, pp. 237-245.
40. *CU*, 6.3.3.

41. *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*. p. 247, See also *Pañcadaśī*, 1.27.
42. *Saundaryalaharī* (hereafter *SL*), 97.
43. *Lalitāsahasranāma*, 215.
44. *Mūkapañcaśatī*, (hereafter *MP*), 47.
45. *SL*, 35.
46. *Bhavānībhujāṅgam* (hereafter *Bh.B*), 12.
47. *MP*, 18.
48. *Devībhujāṅgastotra* (hereafter *DBS*), 3.
49. Arthur Avalon, *Serpent Power*, p. 23; pp. 28-32.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
51. *DBS*; verses 8 and 27.
52. *Bh.B*; 14.
53. *DBS*, 4.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Avalon Arthur, *The Serpent Power*, Ganesh and Co, Chennai. 1958.
2. Chakraborty, Nirod Baran, *The Advaita Concept of Falsity – A Critical Study*, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1967.
3. *Complete works of Śrī Śaṅkara*. Vol. I. *Stotras*. Samata Books Madras. 1995.
4. Govinda Rao, T.K., (ed.) *Compositions of Muddusvāmī Dīkṣitar*, Ganamandir Publications, Chennai, 1997.
5. *Mūka-pañcaśatī* of Mūka Kavi. Tamil Translation - S.V. Radhakrishna Sastri. Sri Vignesvara Venkatesvara Trust. 214, T.T.K. Road, Chennai- 18, 2002.

6. Sastri, J.L. (ed.), *Brahma-sūtra-Śaṅkara-bhāṣyam*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1998.
7. Sastri, Panchanana Bhattacharya, *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā* of Dharmarājādhvarīndra, Satinatha. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1961.
8. Satchidanandendra, Swami (tr. A.J. Alston), *The Method of the Vedānta*, Kegan Paul International, London, 1989.
9. *Ten principal Upaniṣads* with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, Vol. 1, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1987.
10. *Vidyāraṇya, Pañcadaśī* with *Pādādīpikā* of Rāmakṛṣṇa, Chaukhamba Amarbhārati Prakashan, Varanasi, 1984.

* * * *



ABOUT THE PUBLISHERS

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

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

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

The following are its office-bearers:

President

Ramdevan V. Krishnaswamy

Vice-Presidents

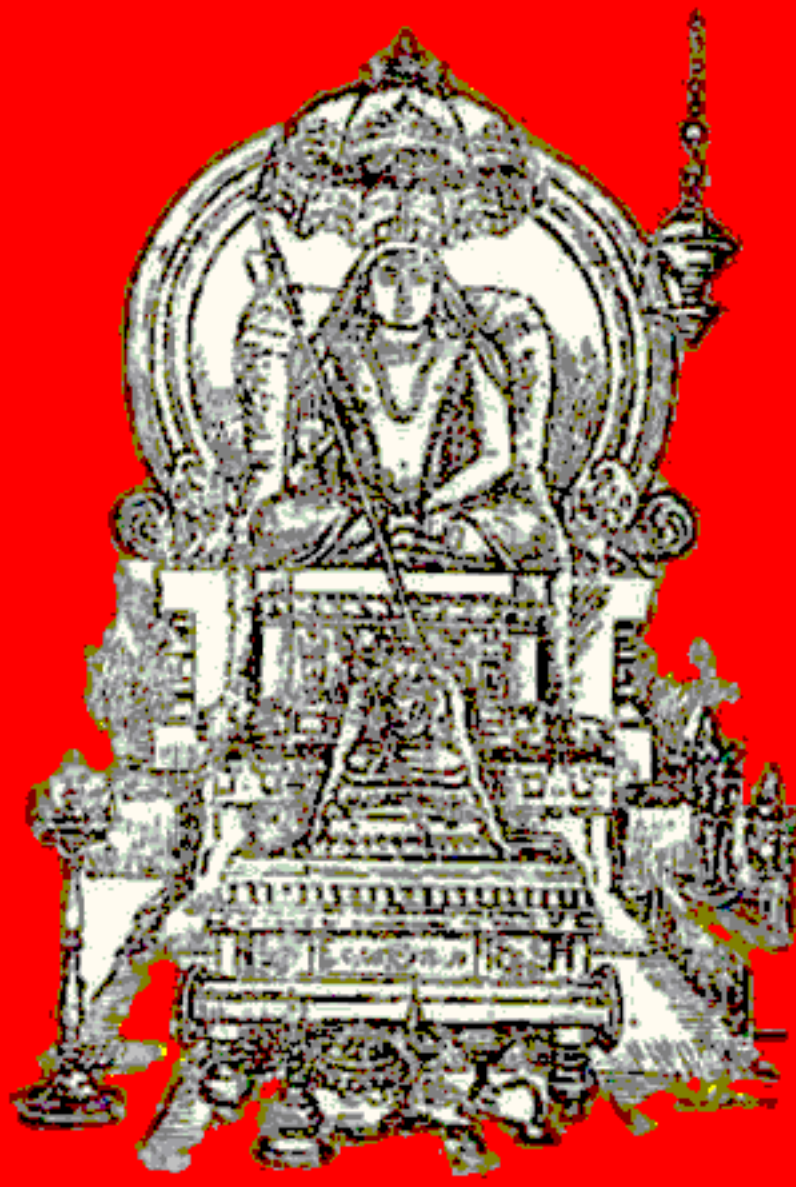
T.S. Krishnamurthy

K. B. Sankaran

V. Kamakoti

Secretary

R. Chandrasekharan



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

*samsārādhvani tāpabhānukiraṇaprodhbhūtadāhavyathā-
 khinnānām jalakāṅksayā marubhuvi bhrāntyā paribhrāmyatām
 atyāsannasudhāmbudhīm sukhakaram brahmādvayam darśaya-
 ntyeṣā śāṅkara-bhārati vijayate nirvāṇa-sandāyini.*

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 Śankara—is victorious, leading, as it does, to liberation.