

**THE REALITY BEYOND
ALL EMPIRICAL DEALINGS**

Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti Series



SWAMI SATCHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATI

By D. B. GANGOLLI

**ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARAYALAYA
BANGALORE**

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Foreword

This is the third of a series of small books under the head — “*Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti*” or “The Enlightening Words of Satchidaananda”. All these booklets contain a free transliteration of ‘the enlightening and immortal words and teachings of Shri Satchidaanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of revered memory, found in his numerous Kannada books. Those readers who do not have the facility and advantage of reading and understanding books in the Kannada language will be immensely benefited by these English publications written in simple language and style.

This small plan of publishing these ‘gems of spiritual literature’, unrivalled in their esoteric import and teachings of the highest order and based on the pristine pure original Bhashyas of Adi Shankara, was first mooted by Shri D. B. Gangolli, a devotee and admirer of Swamiji. He had brought out the first of the series entitled — “The Relevance of Vedanta in This Modern Age of Civilization” — with the munificent financial help of Subharam Trust (Regd.)

It is an irony of our times that even that great Acharya’s immaculate teachings of *Atma Vidya* or Self-Knowledge, purely based on the strength of the *Upanishadic* statements, their veracity based on Intuitive dialectics or ratiocination (called *Anubhavaanga Tarka*) and finally on the strength of the culmination or consummation of all those teachings in one’s own Intuitive experience here and now, have been distorted beyond recognition and redemption.

The devoted and discerning seeker of the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* or the Self, of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss (Intuition), is sure to benefit a great deal by studying and cognizing the truths that are taught in these booklets which have adopted a well-planned sequential order of a spiritual theme so as to enable him to get rid of many a deep-rooted misconception that was hitherto proving to be a big stumbling block in his path of spiritual progress. It can be affirmed here that if the student honestly applies his mind and intellect and devotes all his efforts and energies with a high sense of purpose and perseverance, he will never fail to get the conviction and complete satisfaction accruing from this lofty pursuit.

We have great pleasure in publishing this book under the auspices of Adhyatma Prakash Karyalaya, Tyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028 and are thankful to its author, Shri D. B. Gangolli, for making over to us the copyright of this book. We hope that those who are sincerely interested in and devoted to the pursuit of a genuine spiritual path will avail themselves of this opportunity.

K. G. Subraya Sharma, M.A.,
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THE REALITY BEYOND ALL EMPIRICAL DEALINGS

I. Dealings Involving The Enjoyer And The Enjoyed:

“*Brahmaivedam Vishvam*”, “*Aatmaivedam Sarvam*” etc. — according to these scriptural statements all this world appearing to us is *Brahman* alone, the *Paramaatman* or the Supreme Self alone; in this there does not exist any kind of distinctions whatsoever — thus the Vedantins, who are propounders of *Advaita* or *Non-dualism*, keep on saying. If we take the literary meaning of these scriptural statements, word for word, then it amounts to our accepting an opinion which is ever opposed to the experience of all of us. For, in our experience this world appears to be comprising the distinctions of the seer and the seen; the distinctions of the agent of action, the means of action, the action and the fruit of action; the distinctions of the enjoyer and the enjoyed. These distinctions are not being falsified in anybody’s experience at any time whatsoever. It being so, how can it be accepted that the philosophical teaching of *Non-dualism* is the one which is in agreement with or which is purported by the scriptural texts? In case anybody accepts that, then it will amount to the scriptural texts, in view of their teaching about an entity which is contrary to universal experience, becoming invalid means of cognition alone, is it not? — It is but natural for such a doubt as this to arise in the minds of the aspirants. How will it at all be possible to discard without valid reasons this dealing of the seer and the seen, which is universally established to be true? Even if the scriptural texts propound this entity which is contrary to the universal experience, how will it at all be possible for the listeners or students of *Vedanta* philosophy to cognize or know that entity which is beyond the ken of all empirical dealings? — This is one big objection. Only after the essential nature of this objection is explained first, it will have to be determined whether the discerning people should accept the solution suggested by the scriptural texts or not.

First of all, let us try to know in a detailed manner, or analytically, the essential nature of the dealing of the enjoyer and the enjoyed. To the aborigines or backward people who see the civilized world for the first time all those scenes and appearances here in modern cities will be looking very strange. If an uncivilized person, who does not know anything at all, comes to a museum and sees the human skeletons, the remnants of the skeletons of primordial extinct creatures like dinosaurs etc., the stuffed bodies of birds and

animals and various kinds of rare exhibits which are on show there, he becomes astounded! In the same manner, a newly born baby, looking at the surrounding environment, gets astounded. Looking at its mother's face, which it can see, the objects seen in the vicinity, new people, etc., and examining them enthusiastically by slow stages, the baby acquires their knowledge and gets acquainted with them. We also, in a similar way, are looking at this world at large and are wondering! Having seen it, we are earnestly trying to find out or explore as to what could be its reality or essence of being; acquiring its knowledge gradually, identifying it in the manner — "Our world" — we are getting acquainted with it.

Things in this world are of various kinds. They are belonging to two types, viz. sentient and insentient. Among the insentient things there are metals as well as non-metals; among the sentient, immovable and movable — this difference exists. Among the movable creatures, the differences of beasts, birds, animals and human beings are seen. Through the scriptures we come to know that sentient beings like deities, demons, *Yakshas* and *Gandharvas* do exist. In the sentient beings special features like the body, the senses etc., are seen. All the objective world keeps on changing invariably every moment. Some objects are not only changing but are also moving. Here we are separating ourselves as "*Drishtru*" or "seers" and the objective world which is "*Drishya*" or "the seen" object; we keep on examining by observation and testing.

All the objects which exist in the world which we see are appearing to us on the support or matrix of time and space alone. We are seeing the things in the manner — "here", "there" — on the support of space. In the manner — "now", "then" — we are seeing the 'changes' of birth and growth of those things on the support of time. Objects which are not existing on the support or matrix of time and space are not perceived by us at all. All the objects which are perceived by us are changing and moving on the support of space; their birth, growth, fresh changes, movement, decay and finally getting destroyed — all these are perceived on the matrix or support of space alone. To change and move in that manner they also need time. Such and such an object was born at such and such a place, such and such a time; for that object to become big so much time was needed, finally it decayed and got destroyed — in this manner relating to time and space alone we are seeing all the objects. Questions like — "Where do these objects exist?" — pertaining to certain spatial distinctions do not appear to be relevant; for example, regarding some thoughts which flash to us, if the question — "Where or in which space do they exist?" — is raised, we cannot answer. Even so, those are the changes

occurring in our mind; in this manner we feel. They get born in time and disappear in time alone.

Just as we get curiosity with regard to objects, we also get curiosity with regard to time and space. What is this *entity* called 'Time'? In time there are three divisions, viz. past, present, future. What is their reality? We say that 'past time' means that time which has gone by; but what is meant by — "Time going by or passing away?" Where does it, i.e. time, go? In quite a different manner the present time is experienced by us other than the manner in which the past time is experienced by us. What is the reason for this? What is the meaning of saying that time 'goes'? Just as we say — "A cart goes" — does time traverse (from one place to another)? While 'going', with the support of which entity or thing does time go? People say: "Time went (passed off) fast", is it not? How should the speed of that be reckoned? What is meant by 'future time'? Before it comes, does it exist? If not, how and wherefrom does it come? What is meant by 'present time'? When we say — "The currently existing time" — wherefrom does that time begin? How should it be measured? The astrologers are saying — "The solar measurement of time", "The lunar measurement of time" and "The measurement of time in respect of Jupiter" etc. How can we reckon them? If solar time is the time fixed by the state of the Sun, then how to measure that state? Then does it not amount to saying that time is relative? Does there exist a time which is unrelated? Is time different from events or not? — All these are the questions that arise in our mind with regard to time.

In the same manner too with regard to space also we keep on getting curiosity. What is the meaning of saying — "Here", "There"? Which is that entity or reality that gives room for objects to exist? This the scientists are calling "space or sky" (i.e. *Aakaasha*). Does the substance called sky or space exist? How is it that we cut into parts this space in the manner — 'here', 'there' and know it too? Just as times are many, are the spaces, too, many? — All these are questions with regard to space.

Now let us see the objects which appear in time and space. These appear differently in the forms of substance (*Dravya*), quality (*Guna*) and action or function (*Kriya*). An earthen pot, a pitcher and a plate, table, chair, dog, horse, donkey etc. — all such things are substances or *Dravya*; being big, being small, being black, being red — all such are qualities or *Gunas*, which appear in those substances. A thing fell down broke, passed away — thus the actions or *Kriya* are related to those substances. Besides, from clay an earthen pot is caused, from seed a sprout is caused and from this a plant as well as a tree are born — in this manner as a result of *Kaarya Kaarana Bhaava* or cause-effect

categories they are all related to one another. Cause has to be there first, effect later — in this manner there is a temporal rule. Now if we plant a tender cocoanut in a proper or fertile ground, and to that add red earth, manure and water and nurture it, a cocoanut tree grows and in due course of time at its top cocoanuts grow — in this manner the action or *Kriya*, the means or accessories or *Kaaraka* and the fruits or *Phala* — their relationships too are seen by us.

We are not merely looking at this world in front of us. From the objects in it what benefit or *Prayojana* accrues to us — taking this aspect into the reckoning also we are seeing the world. We are also looking at the objects which exist in it with feelings like — “These are good”, “These are bad” — is it not? From the good things we get the desirable benefit; while from the bad things we get the undesirable results or fruits — thus by relating the objects to ourselves alone we are knowing everything. This is our house, this is our boy, this is our cow, this is our field or farm — in such a manner it is customary for us to see by relating the objects to ourselves alone. The purport of this feeling is nothing but — “A house that is desirable and beneficial to us, a boy who is desirable and helpful to us, a cow that is desirable and beneficial to us, a field or farm that is desirable and beneficial to us” — alone. We keep on experiencing the good or bad fruits that accrue to us from these external objects. Therefore, in this world we do not exist merely as *Drishtru* or seers alone. We exist as *Bhoktru* or enjoyers too. From this viewpoint when we see the world, it can be said that the world is nothing but a bunch of *Bhoktrus* or enjoyers, *Bhoga* or the means of enjoyment and *Bhogya* or the objects enjoyed alone.

Because in this manner there are many *Bhoktrus* or enjoyers, there is no rule or regulation that if to a particular person a particular thing is desirable, that same thing necessarily be desirable to another person. If to one person one particular kind or type of food, environment, attire, residential house, behaviour, faith, educational system, political system — all these are desirable, those same things may be undesirable to another person. If one object alone is desirable to many, then to obtain it all of them may attempt; in that event, it may not be obtained by everyone. Then among the people there ensues a competitive spirit and even hatred may be engendered. When food and clothing are cheap, those things alone are wanted by everyone and among the people there arises a competitive spirit — this can be remembered in this context. If people who are neighbours wish to acquire the same place, one group may try to see that the other party does not get it. For mutual hatred to develop between one nation and another the cause may be one commodity

alone being needed by both; between two groups of people staying in one locality alone, if what is wanted by one group is not wanted by the other, then one group may wish to acquire what is desirable and preserve it, but that very thing the other group may wish to get rid of and remain happy.

This *Bhoktru Vaishamya* or disparity or incongruity among the enjoyers exists among the beasts too. If paddy is food for rats, for cats rats themselves are food, for dogs cats themselves are food and so on. In this way mutually among the animals in the world the enjoyers-the enjoyed relationship or the *Bhoktru-Bhogya Sambandha* is noticed. In the same way, some animals are made “the enjoyed or *Bhogya*” food by the human beings, and the human beings are made the enjoyed or *Bhogya* food by some animals; because human beings too utilize the services of one another to acquire what is desired by them, among them also the relationship of “the enjoyer-the enjoyed” arises. Men being utilized by women, women by men, boys by elders, elders by youth, servants or employees by the employers, employers by the employees, common people by leaders, these leaders by the electorate — in this manner they are all utilizing or exploiting the others in the form of ‘the enjoyed’ or *Bhogya*. Why say more, this phenomenon of the world itself can be reckoned as a big heap of “the enjoyed, the means of enjoyment, the enjoyers” indeed.

Man carries on his transactions keeping before him as the goal — first, individually his own enjoyment, then the enjoyment of his own relatives, then the enjoyment of his party or his country. Finally, feeling or believing that the human race itself as his own, he divides the world into — (a) those things which are desirable for humanity to be good; (b) those things which are undesirable for humanity to be bad. To man all things like — quality of the soil, quality of weather or climate, society, education, agriculture, trade, government etc. become worthy of examination and analysis from the point of view of acquiring desirable things which can be enjoyed, as also mitigating undesirable things.

Not only in this world, but if there is a world beyond — in that other world too man wants *Sukha* or a desirable enjoyment; not only in this life, but if there is another birth, in that rebirth too he wants a desirable enjoyment and he does not want what is undesirable. For that reason alone, he has formulated sciences which teach the devices by which the desirable things can be acquired and the undesirable things can be got rid of. Thus for the acquisition of desirable things and disassociation from undesirable things he does not merely take into the reckoning the external cause-effect categories, but attempts by means of his own personal actions also to acquire those things which are desirable and to keep away those things which are undesirable.

From this point of view, it amounts to saying that the transactions of *Kartru-Karma-Phala* or the agent of action, the means of action and the fruits of action — also become a part of the world. Therefore, this aspect will have to be considered by us.

II. The Transactions Of Agent Of Action, (The Means Of) Action And The Fruit of Action

The objective world is beautiful; it creates amazement; it causes curiosity; it is a mixture of happiness and misery — in this manner after finding out facts about the world in stages man attempts to obtain happiness alone and get rid of misery. By this he gets the knowledge pertaining to the action-the means of action-the fruits of action (*Kriya-Kaaraka-Phala Vyavahaara*). With the belief that by doing an action that is desired by him, using the requisite means for that action, the desired fruit can be obtained — he becomes a creature endowed with the capacity to perform action.

Among the agents of action there exists a natural proclivity for action as well as a tendency to analyse. Beasts, birds, animals, insects and bacteria etc. have a natural or innate tendency for action. They function among sound, touch, form, taste and smell which are convenient for them. They recede from sound, touch etc. which are inconvenient or unbeneficial. But they do not possess in the least the reasoning or discriminative power of taking into the reckoning the memory of the previous experience and anticipating that in future such and such a thing might happen and then performing an action. That is not so in the case of man; he determines through discrimination that the things that are known by means of his senses are such and such; knowing their nature, he attempts to gather around him things which are desirable, not to allow things which are undesirable and to take precaution; and inspite of it if unexpectedly anything undesirable comes before him he tries to get rid of. Therefore, he is an 'agent' of action endowed with the capacity or faculty of analysing. Machines perform action in deference to the wishes or desires of others; creatures know or understand and then behave independently; man acts after deliberating. Now what we have taken for consideration is the topic of man who is an agent of action and who functions with deliberation.

Among the discriminative agents of action also two categories of the type — people with limited knowledge and people with scientific knowledge — can be made. The common run of people with limited knowledge have known by practice spread over a long time the method of utilizing the external ground or

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earth, water, air, fire and fields as well as the objects appearing in them. People who have the knowledge of using the fruits and leaves of trees and plants as well as the flesh of creatures as their food, constructing shacks and houses etc., to avoid or solve the difficulties caused by storms, rains and sun's heat etc., preparing or cooking the proper food by the use of fire, constructing roads for trekking, living with friendship or amity among creatures as well as human beings who live in the locality around us, driving away animals or creatures which appear to be our enemies by beating them up, formulating norms for social justice and rules and regulations for people to work with unity etc. — such people can be included among those with limited knowledge. People who discover, invent devices by examining with insight the characteristics of objects, creatures, human beings and societies and by suitable experiments to utilize them for their benefit can be called people with scientific knowledge.

Whether it is the case of agents of action with limited knowledge or whether it is the case of agents of action with scientific knowledge, all of them — having reckoned that in this world for certain known actions certain known results accrue on the basis of such and such time, space and causation and in accordance with that knowledge — (these agents) undertake suitable actions for the respective results or fruits. For example, those who have repeatedly seen the regulations pertaining to cause and effect of the type — “From the seeds plants and trees grow” — grow plants and trees by sowing seeds and nurturing them with water and manure; those who have known that from clay pots and plates can be made and that in the clay there is a potentiality of becoming transformed into pots and plates etc. — on the strength of experiments, they will utilize the requisite means, i.e. clay, the wheel, the turning pole and will engage themselves in vocations of manufacturing earthen pots and plates etc. This is an example for the agents of action with limited knowledge. In the same way, people with sharp intellect find out by experimentation that in water two gases called oxygen and hydrogen are combined. They use the means of creating the conditions congenial for the two gases to combine and thus produce water. This is an example for the agents of action who have a scientific knowledge. If the results or effects of an action have to accrue, then all the relevant or requisite means are needed; from that point of view although the agent of action is also a means of action, he is independent as far as the matter of causing the action is concerned; the remaining means of action are dependent upon him or they are in his control. Thus in this world there are many agents of action who use stipulated time-space-causation categories and perform actions as well as many enjoyers who enjoy the fruits of those actions.

Those who are agents of action and enjoyers are many in this world. To the extent these people know the fact that for the actions relying on time, space and causation categories such and such results accrue, the actions as well as their results will be within their command. When the knowledge that — “By means of such and such actions such and such results or fruits can be attained” — is acquired by many people, then it is true that each one of them will make an attempt to obtain that particular fruit or result. Thus for man to undertake any action his *Raaga and Dwesha* or sense of attachment and hatred alone becomes the cause. People who have knowledge as well as the desire to enjoy the fruits will hanker after obtaining the respective results or fruits as early as possible with certainty. If the sense of attachment and hatred is high and the anxiety of the type — “If others take away this very result or fruit for themselves, what about me!” — also seizes many persons, then among such agents of action and enjoyers a competitive spirit arises.

In these days as and when the scientific knowledge has increased among people, the desire to amass the objects of happiness as much as possible also is increasing. Nowadays in each community or society between one individual and another as well as between one group and another group the competitive spirit is increasing in many ways. Between one nation and another the competitive spirit is increasing. Because of the multitude of objectives or end-results like greed or wealth, power of position, sovereignty or lordship over other people etc., individual agents of action as well as nations have been indulging in competition for supremacy. Apart from fulfilling the desires of people, those, who are prompted by the hatred of depriving people, whom they do not like, of their respective objectives or fruits, utilize many accessorial means for the purpose. They are using appliances like rail, ships, steamer, and aeroplanes etc. not only for their own convenience but for causing dangers or hazards to others. To destroy lakhs of people instantaneously they are using atom bombs and such other lethal or dangerous weapons. In addition to this, men have been aspiring to reach the Moon, the Mars, the Jupiter and such other planets and if possible they wish to use them too for their benefit. For this purpose, they are launching inter-planetary satellites which can travel that far to those planets. All these are the effects of an identification with the agentship of action and the enjoyership on people in general.

People are utilizing the scientific knowledge for their own benefit with the speed of lightning. Eclipses of various planets and such other events which are likely to take place in the future after the lapse of many years are being found out by them from now on with the help of science. By exploring the deep

strata of earth through geological surveys they are discovering metallic ores as well as oils useful for industries; by studying the characteristics and habits of creatures living in oceans, they are aspiring to achieve what is desirable and avoid what is undesirable from those creatures; by improving the agricultural methods they have begun to grow plants on desert land; they are discovering methods and devices to prevent or cure many illnesses and diseases which man is susceptible to suffer from. If all these are not caused by man's defects prompted by his innate liking or attachment (*Raaga*) towards a thing and dislike or hatred (*Dweshu*) towards a particular thing, then from what other cause can they arise? It seems a North Indian expressed his desire in the manner — "If scientists find out a method of living on the planet Moon, then I will start a hotel or boarding house there!" This is the state of affairs of the consequences of the transactions indulged in by many agents of action and enjoyers!

Now we have to turn our attention towards another topic. Let us assume that a particular person started reasoning or deliberating in the following manner within himself: "In this world there appear to exist many objects or things which are either sentient or insentient. Now is this phenomenon a mere belief of mine, or is it a distinct knowledge or experience? There exist many people just like us in this world; all of them too are saying that in this manner there exist different types of objects or things as well as many people and agents of action and enjoyers like us alone. Therefore, that which is acceptable to the majority of people should be acknowledged as true and certain indeed, is it not?" In this manner any person may argue. But, although it is true that it appears as if there exist many agents of action and enjoyers like us alone and it is also true that this fact is established or fully supported by the empirical knowledge, is it a definite or distinct knowledge which is absolutely real or is it merely *Prateeti* or a time-honoured or traditional belief? It is seen that just like me alone the others too are indulging in actions or transactions; but is their knowledge like this or not, who knows? It is true also that I have imagined or assumed by virtue of the fact of their actions that all of them are also enjoyers; but how do I know what their experience is? If, supposing, any one says: "I am suffering from stomach ache" — its experience is not cognized by me in the same manner as when I myself suffer from or experience a stomach ache, it is not? At a distance away from me if a person fires a revolver or a gun, its sound is heard by me indeed; it is also based on experience that I determine or decide that that is the sound of a gun shot alone. But how am I to know that that was the sound of a gun shot alone? How do I know now that that was fired by a person and that he held a gun in his hands? How is it to be determined or decided that objects or things exist just as they

appear to me only? That there exist many people in front of me as also that they behave just like me — these are my beliefs. That this is inferred knowledge (*Anumita Jnaana*) also is true; how should this be determined or established? In the sky at a far-off distance some stars appear to me; in that manner is it merely appearing to me or really they exist independently by themselves? If a microphone sound gets magnified in various directions through the loud speakers, it cannot be imagined that so many people are really speaking from those several directions, is it not? In the same manner, the phenomenon of many agents of action and enjoyers appearing before us — is this merely a magnified projection of a means of knowledge or really do those agents of action and enjoyers exist independently by themselves?

Listening to this method of deliberation some people may laugh! But when we begin to determine the Ultimate Truth, it is very clear that mere belief is not enough. Just as for enjoyership to exist in us, in support for that we have to have agentship of action in us, it is in everybody's experience that the deliberative knowledge of action and the means of action as well as the deliberative knowledge of the agent of enjoyment or enjoyer, the means of enjoyment and the object of enjoyment are also equally the supports. For that reason, now we have to deliberate upon the phenomena of the knower, the means of knowledge etc.

III. The Transactions Of The Knower, The Means Of Knowledge And The Objects Of Knowledge

Man is not a mere enjoyer, nor a mere agent of action cum enjoyer; he is a knower too. For insentient objects like a stone, sand etc. there is no enjoyership; if on a rock rain falls and the water slips away hither and thither, if the rain falls on sand and it becomes muddy — to those (inert or insentient) things by this happening neither happiness nor misery accrues. In one sense we can think that by storm, rain, sun, light and moonlight etc. plants and trees beget happiness and misery. When rain comes plants and trees appear to be dancing with elation. If the sunlight becomes strong they dry up. But as in the case of creatures, birds and animals the happiness and the misery that the plants and trees beget are not so very conspicuous. For the creatures, birds etc. the enjoyership prompted by agentship of action exists; we can notice that when they are hungry they go in search of a place where they can obtain their food, and having eaten it they become elated, as also when they are exposed to cold, rain, storm and hot sunshine etc. they feel miserable. We can also notice

that they advance towards attractive, desirable objects or people and recede away from undesirable objects, creatures or human beings, as also among their desires, hatred and fear they display some in a particular manner. Even so, they do not possess the power or faculty of deliberating upon things which are desirable or which are undesirable. Human beings can systematize their opinions and can communicate to their fellow-beings those opinions through language. Therefore, they are both agents of action and enjoyers who are capable of behaving on the basis of knowledge supported or backed up by deliberation. Having discrimination of the type of *Heya* (or that which should be discarded) or *Upaadeya* (or that which should be acquired), they (i.e. human beings) are capable of discovering what is undesirable and acquire things which are desirable and to enjoy them too. From this, (it is evident that) in the empirical transactions of man, as a substrate for his agentship of action and enjoyership, his knowership exists.

The main difference of distinction between man and other creatures is that man performs action with discrimination as also enjoys their fruits with discrimination. For this reason alone we reckon that man alone has distinct capacity, qualification to study the scriptural texts on Self-Knowledge and ritualistic acts. It is not merely that man knows or understands the objects, but he can also determine in the manner — “This is correct knowledge and this is wrong”. Although among the Westerners logic is acknowledged as the science of discrimination or deliberation, there are occasions when they have to determine after reconciling their logic with the objects or the facts. Although as long as there is not mutual contradiction in their deliberations it amounts to using logic, they have to per force observe that their knowledge is in agreement with the factual situation or circumstances. Therefore, in our country the deliberation on 16 categories, like *Pramaana* or means of cognition, *Prameya* or the objects of cognition etc., is itself called ‘logic’. The knowledge which denotes or signifies ‘a thing as it is’ is called *Samyajnaana* or correct knowledge; the means for that knowledge is called *Pramaana* or the instrument or means of cognition. Therefore, man is not a mere knower; he is a *Pramaatru* or cognizer also. Cognizing the external objects through the means like *Pratyaksha* or perception, *Anumaana* or inference etc., thereafter based on the attachment (*Raaga*) and hatred (*Dweshha*) that is caused in him towards a particular object either he advances towards that object or recedes away from it. Hence, for man’s empirical dealings of the type of agentship of action, enjoyership etc. his cognizership or *Pramaatrutwa* alone becomes the basis or background.

Now we have to deliberate more incisively upon the essential nature of *Pramaana* or the means of cognition. *Pramaana* or the valid means of

cognition help acquire that knowledge of an object as it is; only if it denotes an object as it is, then alone that means will be fit to be called a *Pramaana*. To thinkers here in this context there may arise a doubt of the type: Because the *Pramaana* or the valid means of cognition has denoted, it should be reckoned that the object exists in that manner alone or *because it, i.e. the means of cognition or Pramaana, denotes or signifies the object as it is it should be reckoned as a true means of cognition? For the solution of this doubt, the thinkers put forth a device or strategem. Although it is a general rule that the means of cognition denote objects as they are, when there are defects in those means of cognition they may denote the objects in a different manner too. Merely for this reason, Pramaanas or means of cognition cannot be rejected as the valid means of cognition.* The means of cognition in themselves or in their own right have the ability to serve as means of cognition, but compared to others, or relatively, they do not possess that validity. If any one asks in the manner — “In that case, ‘in a particular circumstance did the means of cognition denote its object as it is or not?’ — how can this question be determined?” — they have an answer to that question too. The fitness or suitability of the means of cognition should be determined through analogy or corresponding evidence. If a man goes towards a distant place seeing that there is water there, and if he gets real water, that means, if he finds that by drinking that water it was possible for him to quench his thirst, then that means of cognition was capable of giving rise to an action in keeping with the fact; hence, that is irrefutable alone.

Although this solution seems to be somewhat reasonable, many means of cognition let us down even after proper examination. For, even after many means of cognition denote in the manner — “This time what I have denoted is absolutely true only” — if the object is examined thoroughly in another manner we come to know that the decision taken by the former set of means of cognition was not proper or correct, just like it is in our experience that many cheats assert in the manner — “This is true” — we come to know in due course that the perceptual knowledge that we got through them are not in accordance with facts. Huxley in the book on ‘Physiology’ has written the news about one Mrs. ‘A’. Even after she perceived very clearly that on a mat in her house her pet cat was squatting, when she approached it and touched she came to know that there was really no cat at all. Even after she had ascertained that her husband had gone away to a far-off place, it was appearing as if he was standing in person near the entrance in front of her room. Thus when it is reckoned in the manner — “Though seen, it is not really seen; though heard, it is not really heard” — etc. the question or problem may arise as to — “Whether the means of cognition should be called

as those which give rise to proper or correct knowledge or not?" To this question, Huxley answers: The senses denote what they perceive alone; our decision is wrong. That is all. When the nacre or sea-shell shines brightly its shining in that manner is true, what we understand in the manner — "That silver" — is the mistake of our judgment. Not only such illusions born out of sensual perception are there, but also illusions where one conceives what is not there. For example, in delirious state and such other states, what we see as objects and what we hear as sounds are also such hallucinations. There are also delusions which people imagine or conceive by themselves. It is said that a particular lunatic person imagined himself to be a water pumping set! Thus there are many illusions of such types happening. From this it becomes established that to determine — 'whether our knowledge is in accordance with proper means of cognition or not?' — becomes difficult.

To some it may appear that by repeated examination or by the determination of many people who come together and deliberate upon, a particular thing may become true in accordance with proper or valid means of cognition; but what happens when the mental state of all those who determine in that manner is in one and the same defective condition or state? Just because many sick persons determine or decide that it is not wrong to take curds, will it become proper decision? If many lunatics with one voice say something, will it become a truth? Now we have taken for examination the common empirical knowledge alone.

Whether 'Knowledge' is the means and whether it is in accordance with the fact — how to find out this? This is the crux of the question. Things or objects are established on the basis of means of cognition (they are *Pramaana Siddha*), or they are established on the basis of traditional beliefs (they are *Prateeti Siddha*) — In this manner we have taken that they are of two kinds. The silver of nacre or sea-shell is a traditional belief (*Prateeti Siddha*); it is not established on the basis of proper means of cognition. That it is nacre or sea-shell is established on the basis of the proper means (*Pramaana Siddha*). But what happens when the proper means of cognition themselves do not denote in a true or proper manner? What happens when the judge himself is corrupt and accepts a bribe? Are there other means to examine the veracity of the means of cognition? Here in this context, it is not proper to argue or raise an objection in the manner — "What is seen by the eyes — can it be said to be false?" For, the crux of the problem here is whether the eyes are showing or denoting the true things or not? Even the objection or argument that — "After the object is denoted as it is, did it or did it not serve as a proper means of cognition?" — is not proper. Here is it not worth deliberating upon as to

whether it, i.e. the means, denoted the object as it is or not? The physical scientists have formulated that — “An object or thing means a substance which occupies some space”; but what is meant by saying — “The object or thing exists”? Let us take that just as in a dream an object is perceived by the eyes, it is determined that there is a thing occupying a certain space like a stone. We do not at all call that a thing which is established on the basis of the proper means of cognition. What is seen in the waking — is it established on the basis of the proper means of cognition (*Pramaana Siddha*) or is it established on the basis of traditional belief (*Prateeti Siddha*)? — This question is what we have taken up for deliberation now. It is but natural for the doubt of the type — “Because the dealings involving the means of cognition are thus left dangling without a foundation, what will be the fate of dealings involving *Kartrutwa* or agentship of action and *Bhokrutwa* or enjoyership which depending upon those means of cognition themselves come into being?” — to arise. Therefore, it amounts to saying that the truth about the proper means of cognition has to be examined still more incisively or deeply. Let us now get down to that task.

IV. Dealing Of Ignorance

We have understood that among the dealings of enjoyership (*Bhokrutwa*), agentship of action (*Kartrutwa*) and knowership (*Jnaatrutwa*) — the earlier ones desiderate the later ones. If we have to say that enjoyership is our essential nature, in reality the agentship of action has to be our essential nature; to say that agentship of action alone is our essential nature, knowership alone will have to be the essential nature. If knowership is not our essential nature, consequently if the essential nature of any object whatsoever which we determine through the means of our knowership amounts to be not certain or determined, then no scientific treatise which we formulate will have any value or validity. For, all scientific treatises start on the strong belief alone that we are all cognizers (*Pramaatrus*), that we acquire correct or real knowledge on the strength of which we are capable of performing all acts of approaching or receding from external objects and of solving our problems of our likes and dislikes. Therefore, what we decided in the previous discussion that — “Knowledge can never denote what is correct or true; it is not possible at all to determine that such and such a knowledge is the valid means of cognition or final” — seems to be false or dry logic alone. For, by one kind of logic any one can refute or strike down another kind of logic. But how can it be accepted if it is said that the scientific knowledge which determines the essential nature

of an object or entity on the strength of observation, examination and analogy etc. is also not determinate? Mathematics is an exact science which denotes the resultant aspects without the least difference. Astronomy stands on the foundations of mathematics; what that science (i.e. astronomy) has established, e.g. an eclipse and the beginning and the end of a star etc. as facts which are perceivable by everyone — to say that it is indeterminate or uncertain, can it be a statement exhibiting wisdom? — This doubt may arise in us.

Before a solution to this doubt is suggested, we have to examine the belief itself which is the support for that doubt. For, there is no doubt in the statement — “All the sciences carry out deliberations invariably in accordance with proper means of cognition and then determine the essential nature of various entities or truths”. But what we are dealing with as the knowledge based on proper means of cognition — is it an irrefutable knowledge? Does that final knowledge stand on belief or does it stand on decisions sustained after deliberations? — This question has to be considered first. The crux of the problem which we have begun to tackle now is — “What is established by perception — can it be said to be the absolute truth?” We have already found out that this is controversial by deliberation on the essential nature of knowledge. Merely because the doubting disputant contends that in all empirical dealings all of us believe it to be true, how can it be established that deliberation on the essential nature of knowledge is itself wrong? A thinker by name Berkeley had opined that the objects which appear to us are certain sensations. For example, what we call a mango is a particular form, a colour, a smell, a taste — such qualities alone, is it not? Apart from these qualities, each one of them is a mere knowledge that is flashed to a particular sense organ. Therefore, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting — all these together alone — this is the meaning for the word which we call as ‘fruit’. In order to smell the object there is no separate smell or fragrance, to see there is no separate form etc. That being the case, we are calling the group of the mental ideas alone the object or substance. Thus hearing what Berkeley had opined, another thinker Johnson, kicking a stone with his foot, said, it seems — “I have refuted this opinion”! Here Johnson did not properly understand Berkeley’s opinion; for, Berkeley did not at all say that it is not possible at all to see, to touch or to kick the stone. What Berkeley had said was that — “All these are the knowledges of our mind alone.” Similarly, in the present context for the objection — “How is it established that knowledge is the valid or proper means of cognition?” — is there no dealing of perception in the scientific treatises? People believe what is perceptible to be true, is it not? — in this manner if a solution is suggested,

will it be proper? It is true that scientists as well as the common people of the world carry on transactions of the type — perception, inference etc.; merely for that reason can they be reckoned to be true? Just because in the game of chess the players carry on dealings like ‘elephant’, ‘camel’, ‘horse’ etc. do those pawns of the chess game really become animals like elephant, camel, horse etc.? A thinker by name Sri Harsha has written a book named — ‘*Khandana Khandha Khaadya*’. In that he has taken up for consideration the topic that — “When disputants of opposite views argue with one another on various topics, they carry on transactions pertaining to valid means of cognition etc. But merely on that basis, can the means of cognition etc. be reckoned or assumed to be real alone?” He has declared his judgment that because some disputants say that objects or substances are real and some other disputants say that they are essenceless, even before the argument starts to assume that — “The means of cognition, etc. to be true or untrue” — is not proper. This his opinion is proper indeed. For, if without deliberation at all anything is to be assumed to be proper or wrong, then where is the need for deliberation at all?

So far, assuming that we are invariably cognizers (*Pramaatrus*) — that is, we are of the nature of knowing the objects and determining their essential true nature — we have carried out our deliberations. But let us examine and see whether the cognizership or *Pramaatrutwa* exists in us as our very essential nature or not. If cognizership or *Pramaatrutwa* is not our essential nature, then to assume that we determine the objects by the valid means will amount to be wrong alone, is it not? It is true that all the people carry on their day-to-day dealings on the assumption that they are cognizers or *Pramaatrus*, but are we in reality cognizers or *Pramaatrus*? How can it be established that we are of the essential nature of cognizership or *Pramaatrutwa*? — Let us now consider this problem.

Pramaatru or a cognizer is one who utilizes the valid means of cognition or *Pramaanas* and endeavours to determine the essential nature of the object of cognition or *Prameya*. Is it not? Here *Prameya* or the object of cognition is the substance which is to be known and determined. Let us suppose that it appears to us that at a distance there exists a snake; then, before we determine that there a snake exists, we may get a doubt to the effect — “It looks as if there exists a snake, really is it a snake or is it a rope?” Thereafter, we approach nearer, examine, see and then determine as to what it is, is it not? Here, what was seen as if a snake existed was by the eyes, the doubt arose in our mind; the eyes, the mind — both these function depending upon our body alone. Our going near the snake, examining it, imagining or thinking that it may be a

rope, thereafter courageously touching it and determining it to be a rope alone — all these details are carried out with the help of the body alone. Anyway, the senses like the eyes, ears etc. and the mind — the body which is the support for both these — without all these factors and without assuming that the body is oneself, i.e. 'I' and the senses, the mind to be 'mine', no one can say that — "I determined it to be a rope by the valid means of perception" — is it not? This opinion has been expressed by Sri Shankaraachaarya in the form of objections and their solutions in the following manner — "*Katham Punaravidyaa-vadvishayaani Pratyakshaadeeni Pramaanaani Shaastraani Cheti? Uchyate, Dehendriyaadishu Ahammamaabhimaanarahitasya Pramaatrutwaanupapattau Pramaanapravruttyanupapattehe*" — "Objection: How is it that valid means like perception, inference etc. as well as *Shaastras* or scriptural texts are things pertaining to ignorant people? Solution: We will answer it. Because, for people who do not have an identification with the body, the senses etc. in the manner — "I" and "mine" — the cognizership or *Pramaatrutwa* does not become relevant, the dealings of valid means of cognition do not at all become relevant too."

If observed in this manner, whether in the case of the common run of people or the scholars — while they consider the essential nature of Truth they are assuming in the manner — "We are cognizers" — alone; *Pramaatru* or cognizer means one who has invariably reckoned the body to be 'I' and the senses and the mind to be 'mine'. But neither the fact that the body is 'I' nor that the senses and the mind are 'mine' is established on the strength of any valid means of cognition whatsoever. All these are based on traditional beliefs (*Prateeti Siddha*). Therefore, because, without deliberation only, after the dealings of the type — "The body is myself or 'I' and the senses and the mind are 'mine'" — the dealings of *Pramaatru*, *Pramaana* etc. (or the cognizer and the means of cognition etc.) are born, all these amount to showing that there is *Avidya* or ignorance alone, i.e. misconception. It is true that those who carry out deliberation on Reality on the strength of valid means of cognition acknowledge the division of knowledge and ignorance as well as their dealings. But what they have taken up for deliberation or analysis are only the knowledge and ignorance with regard to the objects of cognition. What we are examining now is: At least after it is determined that the dealings of the valid means of cognition are invariably and universally acknowledged, whether those empirical dealings are, in the true or absolute sense, knowledge, correct knowledge or not? What we have assumed as *Pramaatru* or cognizer — that too appears to be ignorance (misconception) alone (*Avidya*), is it not? From this standpoint we will have to examine and observe as to how pervasive or comprehensive is the region of ignorance or *Avidya*.

V. The Dealings Of 'I' And 'Mine'.

It is so far mentioned as a general solution to the doubt: "Is it proper to say that the dealings of valid means of cognition and the objects of cognition are themselves the effects of *Avidya* or ignorance?" Although for all scientific or scriptural texts the dealings of valid means of cognition and the objects of cognition are necessary, merely on that ground without examining those dealings to assume or presume them to be absolutely true will not be proper at all. In logic the apparent causes are first elaborated upon and then by logic or reasoning the method of differentiating the real and the false is enunciated, it is true. It is also true that psychologists have examined the question — "How do the delusions occur?" — and have explained it. Further, it is true that sciences like mathematics, astronomy etc. have determined and shown their topics or objects beyond doubt so as to be fully realized for all time by all the people. But all those are topics pertaining to the objects of cognition. In those cases there is no question of examining the valid means of cognition at all. About the deliberation upon the question — "Is *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership absolutely real?" — there is no trace even in those cases.

Therefore, although in the empirical sciences the valid means of cognition mentioned give rise to *Vidya* or knowledge — that means the correct information — from their own empirical viewpoint, because they have not deliberated upon the question of *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership alone it is not wrong whatsoever if from the absolute viewpoint it is determined that the dealings of valid means of cognition are the effects of *Avidya* or ignorance. It is already mentioned that for *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership to be entertained it is but necessary for one to have identification of the type — "I" and "Mine" — in the body and the senses and the mind. Now let us deliberate upon the question — "How is it established that the body, the senses etc. exist?" Those who start deliberating like this will have to be per force 'cognizers' themselves, is it not? Therefore, before considering the 'cognizer', the body, the senses etc. have necessarily to exist; prior to our considering the question — "Do the body, the senses etc. exist or not?" — the *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership should exist. Thus because there exists a defect of mutual dependence (*Anyoanya Aashraya Doasha*) it amounts to the fact that we do have the body, the senses etc. is established on the basis of an admitted proposition or axiom (*Abhyupagama Siddha*) — that means, it is established merely on the basis of all of us acknowledging it to be true and then deliberating. Although all the people have acknowledged that the body, the senses etc. are established on the strength of valid means of cognition alone (*Pramaana Siddha*) if we begin to consider the essential nature or reality of

this topic it becomes tantamount to saying that all these are established without proper deliberation at all.

Now another doubt arises: In order to deliberate and determine about the cognizership, the body, the senses etc., with the support of which *entity* can we at all carry out this deliberation without assuming cognizership or *Pramaatru-twa* (that is, the assumption of “I am the cognizer”)? All the means of deliberation that are available for us are: The body, the senses, the mind etc. alone which are well-known. Discarding these well-known means, to start deliberating upon their existence itself is a statement of exaggeration or vanity, is it not? — In this manner any one may ask. From the standpoint of other sciences this doubt is proper indeed; for in those sciences there is no endeavour at all to determine the Reality beyond the empirical valid means of cognition. Those sciences have presumed invariably that — “The cognizership is real; the valid means of cognition which depend upon this cognizer are also real and the objects of cognition which are established through those valid means of cognition are also real”. It is also true that it is enough for the empirical dealings that the establishment of the reality of the objects of cognition is thus achieved by the valid means of cognition; for, all of us carry on our empirical or day-to-day dealings by acknowledging that we have really a body, the senses and the mind alone. “Empirical or day-to-day dealings” means “whatever proceeds from these three alone”.

But the *science of Vedanta philosophy* is saying: “Because these too are the known objects, we must determine their essential nature or reality only after thorough examination alone; the external objects have to be established by means of knowledge gained through the senses. Those objects are *Pratyakshavedya* or knowable or cognizable through perception. The external things to be known which are not perceptible to the senses have to be known by inference based on the strength of any symptom which will be within the purview of perception, for example, observing smoke, it is inferred that there must exist fire there and is likewise determined. Such known things are called *Anumaanaadipramaanavedya* or things known by the valid means of inference etc. But when we start examining the whole gamut of valid means of cognition we do not have any other valid means at our disposal at all. Even the mind, like the external senses, can directly know or cognize happiness or grief which are its objects only, but when the whole group of body, senses and mind is kept as an object of knowledge and then deliberated upon, its (i.e. the mind’s) help also will not be available to us. For, then the mind too is an object of knowledge. By the strength of that *entity* with which we know or rather ‘Intuit’ that all these are objects of knowledge — that *entity* is called

Anubhava or Intuitive experience (or in short Intuition). *Anubhava* or Intuition means Pure Consciousness — which is quite distinct from the perceptual experience or *Pratyaya Anubhava* and the psychic experiences or *Vedanaanubhava* of the kind of mental grief, happiness and various emotions etc.; and which illumines all these empirical or physical experiences by the strength of its knowledge or Consciousness alone, that is, Its very essential nature or *core of Being*. That alone is our true essential nature. This alone is called *Atman* in *Vedanta*. *Atman* who is of the essential nature of Intuition is self-established; this is not like the self-established axioms or truths which are acknowledged in Euclid's geometry etc. The composite whole (*Amshi*) is bigger than the part (*Amsha*); if two things are each equal to another particular single thing, the two things between themselves are equal to each other — etc. — such axioms are acknowledged to be self-established truths in mathematics; but all of them are empirical truths which flash to the mind or which by means of intellectual logic or reasoning but without much, undue discussion become established. When we say that — “*Atman who is of the essential nature of Intuition (Anubhava) is self-established (Swayamsiddha)*” — it is not in that sense or with that meaning. He is not to be perceived either by means of discarding (*Haana*) or acquisition (*Upaadaana*); that Intuitive experience of Pure Consciousness cannot be either acquired afresh or given up; it is not possible either to establish His Pure Existence through any valid means or instrument or to reject or refute in the manner — “He does not exist” — for, the stipulations or injunctions of the type — “He exists” — or the prohibitive or deprecating instructions of the type — “He does not exist” — both have to be established by means of that Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness alone. This is not any entity to be postulated in the manner — “Let us presume that Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) exists” — for, the essential nature of Being of the person who presumes in that manner is Itself *Atman* who is of the nature of Intuitive experience, i.e. *Anubhava* or Pure Consciousness. All kinds of our existence, living and empirical dealings are all rooted in that Intuitive experience. There is no scope or room for any logic or disputations with regard to this Intuitive experience. For, as Sri Sureshvaraachaarya has stated: “*Amum Praashnikamuddishya Tarkajwarabhishaaturaaha; Twaachhiraskavachoajaalairmoahayanti Parasparam*” — “All those who are afflicted by this illness with high temperature of logic or disputation are arguing with one another in the manner — ‘It being so, it is like this’ — only accepting this middleman or mediator of Intuitive experience.”

On the strength of this Intuitive experience Sri Shankaraachaarya has taught us all a profound truth: “*Anyoanyasminnanyoanyaatmakataam Anyoanya-*

dharmamscha Adhyasya Itaretaretaraavivekena, Atyantaviviktayoadharma-dharminoarmithhyaajnaana Nimittaha Satyaanrute Mithuneekrutya Ahamidam Mamedamiti Naisargikoayam Loakavyavahaaraha' — "Self-established Atman, Anaatman or not-self like body, senses etc. which are established on traditional or time-honoured belief — by misconceiving both these, one for another, and wrongly assuming the essential nature or characteristics of one to be those of the other and although both of them are of extremely and exclusively different natures, without being able to distinguish between them and as a result of their misconceptions, people are carrying on quite naturally their empirical dealings in the manner — 'I' and 'mine'." When it is said — 'misconceiving one for the other' — it is not like misconceiving two pieces of copper and silver, which are lying side by side, one for the other; just as a mixture of milk and water is dealt with as milk alone, the mixture or blending of *Atman* or Self and *Anaatman* or not-self is being treated as the single entity of 'I' alone by people. That alone is taken to be one's '*Atman*' — that means, one's essential nature of Being. One who lacks discrimination calls each one among the body, the senses, the mind as 'I' and carries on transactions with notions of 'I' and 'mine' as and when he likes in the manner — "My son", "My body", "My eyes", "My mind" — just as a new officer who has taken charge, when he is not properly familiar with his duties or work, goes on signing on whatever papers that are forwarded by his clerk. What is now 'I' — that alone becomes 'mine' the next moment! Merely if it is mentioned that this is a misconception, people become angry! Just as a drunkard prompted by the intoxication of the liquor thinks all those who are around him to be drunkards, this person who has misconceived one for the other through superimposition will not hesitate to call those who have come to deliberate and explain the truth as people lacking discrimination! Let us analyse a little this entity called 'I'. What is this substance? In this we do not see any organs whatsoever; it is a consolidated or composite experience this entity called 'I'. In this there is no variety at all. Anything whatsoever can be called 'I'; whatever misconception may be removed, but this phenomenon of 'I' cannot be known. To this 'I' there is no plural number. Just as by adding 'tree', 'tree' and 'tree' we say 'trees', by adding 'I', 'I' and 'I' we cannot say 'I's'; second to this 'I' there is no 'I' at all. This 'I' makes all that is separate from it as its object and calls that as 'mine'; if anything that is apart or separate from themselves is desirable, people display greater identification in them and praise it in the manner — "It is such and such"; if it is undesirable they decry it. But no one can make himself as an object and see it at all. Although it appears that this is perceptible as the 'I' notion — that is, we can objectify it as 'I' — that 'I' which objectifies remains as the subject alone.

Man falsely indeed feels proud that he has objectified himself alone. *Asmat Pratyaya* — the cognition of the type of 'I' or the 'I' notion — like the occasional cognitions of pot, cloth etc. — is not one which is cognized on a particular occasion; just as we, on seeing many pots, have assumed the cognition of pots in our empirical dealing, no one, whosoever he may be, has formulated this cognition of the form of 'I' on seeing many such 'I's. For the children even after the knowledge of 'I' has clearly been seen, they may not be able to carry on transactions as 'I'; but its cognition (*Pratyaya*) especially will always exist in them invariably.

Anyway, all of us carry on our empirical transactions each one treating himself as 'I' and the rest as 'you', 'he' etc. *The fact that in this entity called 'I' the misconception (Adhyaasa) — of taking one as the other — of two things is implicit does not flash to any one whosoever he may be.* If Vedantins say that *Atman* or the Self and *Anaatman* or not-self — both these having combined the misconception of the type of 'I' has been formulated or conceived, everyone gets surprised or dissatisfied or angry. That this 'I' is one and one entity only seems so natural to all of us! Even so, the feeling of 'I' (*Aham Mati*), like a sparrow, flies from one place to another and to whichever thing it attaches itself it makes all those things to be felt as 'I' alone. Therefore, the scripture is stating as follows: "*Sa Vaa Ayamaatmaa Brahma Vijnanamayoa — Manoamayaha Praanamayaschakshurmayaha Shroatramayaha Prithveemaya Aapoamaya Vaayumaya Aakaashamayastejoamayaha Kaamayoa(s)kaamamayaha Kroadhamayoa(s)kroadhamayoa Dharmamayoa(s)dharmamayaha Sarvamayaha*" — (*Brihadaraanyaka 4-4-5*). "I deliberate, know, breathe, see, hear, jump, talk, touch, smell" etc. All this is 'I' alone! It is seen in our empirical sphere that one employer entrusts employees in his control with various jobs. But here 'I' alone performs all these tasks. 'I heard the fruit falling, I went there, I took that fruit in my hand, I smelt it, cut it with a knife and I put it in my mouth, I chewed it, I tasted it, I swallowed it and felt satisfied'! — in this manner if these knowledges of 'I' which relates everything to itself alone is not *Avidya* or ignorance, what else can it be? In *Amarakoasha* (Sanskrit lexicon), it is said: "*Avidya(s)hammatih*" — i.e. "The notion or feeling of 'I' alone is ignorance". In this manner it is clearly written also. On certain occasions even persons who are different from ourselves are treated as 'I' alone. For example, don't we call the work performed by our son or through our servant in the manner — "I did it? Here in this context, although it is known that the son or the servant is different from ourselves, with the feeling of the type — "They are my people; if my people perform a task it is like I doing" — we carry on our transactions. But there in that context too, because the feeling that those persons are "my

people” is engendered on the strength of the ignorance of the type — ‘I’ alone — there is no doubt whatsoever in calling all this “dealings of ignorance alone”.

In that case, what is meant by *Vidya* or Knowledge? Without desiderating any of these, viz. the body, the senses etc. how at all can *Vidya* or Knowledge be attained? This topic will have to be deliberated upon now.

VI. Dealings Of Knowledge (*Vidya*) And Ignorance (*Avidya*)

For *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership the belief that ‘the body, the senses etc. exist’ alone is the foundation. It is not possible either to say that the body, the senses etc. exist or that they do not exist. That all of them are established on common people’s belief or time-honoured belief has been indicated. It has also been explained that the knowledge about oneself as ‘I’ or to entertain the ‘I’ notion and all the empirical dealings carried out on the support of this ‘I’ notion (*Ahammati*) are both the effects of *Avidya* or ignorance. How do we come to know that all these are the effects of *Avidya* or ignorance? Which is that *Vidya* or Knowledge that strikes down or removes this *Avidya* or ignorance? How does that *Vidya* or Knowledge arise? — all these questions have to be further deliberated upon.

First of all, what is meant by the statement — “Knowledge has accrued” — this question let us consider a little in depth. The logicians say that after *Atman* or the Self comes in contact with the mind, after the mind too comes in contact with the senses, by the relationship between the senses and the external object the knowledge accrues. But no knowledge of this description occurs to us in our workaday world. “Just as we opened our eyes the object was seen” — in this manner it appears to us, is it not? Some people do say that the mind goes out through the senses and after it assumes the shape of the object, that object is illumined by the light of Pure Consciousness (*Chaitanya*) and appears. But without the light of Pure Consciousness neither the mind nor the senses by themselves can at all shine or function; just like a mirror shines with the light of the Sun, they, i.e. the mind and the senses, are shining (or functioning) with the light of Pure Consciousness alone. There are no limits or restrictions to the light of Pure Consciousness (In other words, It is infinite and immutable). It is not possible to say: “Up to this limit is my Intuitive experience; It does not exist beyond”. For, to say — “It does not exist” — also Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness alone is necessary.

The sense organ perceives or knows to the extent — “This is a form” — only; the sense organ remaining as it is, keeps on receiving the reflections of

the object. The mind especially tells us after it formulates a trustworthy cognition of the respective object, while the intellect determines it. All these are with distinctions (*Savikalpa*) alone. Pure Consciousness of the Self or *Aatma Chaitanya*, on the other hand, is without distinctions or *Nirvikalpa*; like the Sun, without performing any action or without movement, It, i.e. Pure Consciousness, illumines everything. The Mind as the composite inner instrument (*Antahkarana*) as thoughts pervaded by Pure Consciousness and forming Its apparent forms alone goes out through the senses and has to illumine the external objects. It being so, when we transact in the manner — “Knowledge has occurred” — which is this ‘knowledge’? Did it actually arise or was it born afresh? When the cloud moves to a side, the Sun is seen by the eyes. Then, can it be said that — “The Sun was born”? In the same manner, at the end of every cognition (*Pratyaya*) Pure Consciousness that appears alone is knowledge or *Jnaana*. Depending upon the nature of the thought or *Vritti* it has to be determined whether it is “the proper or correct knowledge” (*Samyajjnaana*) or “wrong or false knowledge” (*Mithyaajnaana*). That which appears at the end of the false knowledge or *Mithyaajnaana* also is that very Pure Consciousness alone. In the Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) called *Chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness alone the intellect, the mind, the senses — all these exist. Because the thoughts in the inner instrument (*Antahkarana*) of the Mind are born, the transactions of the type — “Knowledge is born” — is carried on and when these thoughts disappear the transactions of the type — “Knowledge is lost” — are carried on. In reality, to the essential nature of Knowledge or Pure Consciousness there is neither birth nor destruction.

If observed from this standpoint, because a thought is caused when the body, the senses and the mind — all these combine together only, it amounts to saying that the production or formulation of *Vidya* or Knowledge — i.e. the proper or correct knowledge (*Samyajjnaana*) also occurs in the region of *Avidya* or ignorance alone. Therefore, it is tantamount to saying that the dealings of *Vidya* or Knowledge and *Avidya* or ignorance — both are within the ambit of *Avidya* or ignorance alone.

Here there lurks a doubt: Because the knowledge that — “The body, the senses etc. exist” — is not falsified, it should be said that knowledge is the correct, proper knowledge alone, is it not? — To this doubt the solution is: It is not so; for, whether it is the body or the senses or the mind — none of these remains as it is even for a moment; their essential nature keeps on changing alone. The body getting born, growing, transforming, withering or getting emaciated and finally getting destroyed — thus the body experiencing all

these changes or mutations is universally well-known. Changes occurring by stages in the senses too is well-known only; otherwise, increase and decrease in one's eye-sight, developing cataract etc. being there in everyone's experience, how can the doubt be relevant at all? Especially, the mind keeps on flowing and fleeing alone; otherwise, it cannot be called 'mind' at all. The scriptures or *Upanishads* state that *Atman* or the Self (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness) does not possess the body, the senses or the mind etc. at all in the manner — "He is '*Ashareeram*' or devoid of a body, '*Achakshushkam*' or devoid of eyes, '*Apraanoahyamanaaha Shubhbraha*' or devoid of *Praana* or the vital breath, devoid of mind, pure. *Atman* or the Self appears even in the dream as if He, with the aid of a body, senses etc. is knowing the objects and is moving about. In reality, that therein (in the dream) there do not exist any of these, viz. body, senses, mind etc., is universally acceptable. In deep sleep especially it is established on the strength of everyone's experience that *Atman* or the Self does not see anything whatsoever. Therefore, it is evident that *Atman* having *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership is not His essential nature; it is also evident that He is of the essential nature of Pure Consciousness or *Chaitanya* alone. Because it is evident that one who perceives through the senses is *Atman* alone, and because the body, the senses and the mind etc. being of the nature of constant changes or mutations do not exist in the least either in the dream or in the deep sleep, it becomes evident that all dealings of the type of seeing, hearing etc. take place owing to *Atman's* innate nature alone without the aid of the senses, the mind etc. For that reason alone the scripture *Shwetaashwatara Upanishad*, states: "*Apaanipaadoa Javanoa Graheetaa Pashyatyakshuhu Sa Shrunoatyakarnaha; Sa Vetti Vedyam Na Cha Tasyaasti Vettaa Tamaahuragryam Purusham Mahaantam*" — (*Shwetaashwatara Upanishad* 3-19). It means: "Without having hands and legs He grasps, walks fast, without having eyes he sees, without having ears He hears, He knows all the objects which can be known, there is none who can know Him, Him alone wise people call 'great or supreme Being' or '*Mahaapurusha*'."

Thus if both knowledge and ignorance (*Vidya* and *Avidya*) become a dealing carried out from the viewpoint of *Avidya* or ignorance alone, does there exist a *Samyajjnaana* or real Knowledge which transcends this dealing? — To this question, the answer is — Yes; that alone is called *Shaastrajanyajnaana* or Knowledge born out of the study of the scriptural texts. The topic as to how that Pure Knowledge transcends both the empirical knowledge and ignorance — let us now examine and find out.

VII. The Scriptures As The Valid Means To Cognize Reality

It has been already stated that *Pramaatrutwa* or cognizership is caused by misconception. After having mentioned that the body, the senses etc. are established on the strength of time-honoured or traditional beliefs, it has also been justified or explained in detail that the dealing of the type — “Knowledge has occurred or arisen” — is based on the fact that at the end of a thought Pure Consciousness manifests itself alone and not that really knowledge arises or is caused afresh whatsoever. Finally, it has also been shown that both *Vidya* or knowledge and *Avidya* or ignorance occur in the region, or within the ambit, of *Avidya* or ignorance alone. Now another doubt arises: If, thus, everything occurs in the region of *Avidya* or ignorance alone, how can the Absolute or Pure Knowledge which transcends both these is to be attained at all? Whatever kind of knowledge it may be, it has to arise or occur by the change of thought alone, is it not? How can we believe that another knowledge which can strike down that knowledge also cannot arise at all? Is it not a ridiculous statement to say that — “Thriving in the sphere of empirical dealings only we claim to propound a truth which is beyond the ken of any empirical dealing”?

The solution to this dilemma is: Whatever we were talking till now was based on the assumption that the existence of the body, the senses etc. is established on the time-honoured or traditional belief. Therefore, it is but natural that even after our reckoning the fact after due deliberation that “Knowledge cancels or removes ignorance” — the doubt of the type — “Is this alone the final judgment?” — to arise. But the scriptures indicate to us the Reality as It is, taking the Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) — which is not susceptible to be cognized by any valid means whatsoever and which is Itself the support for proving the validity of any proper means of cognition — alone as its final support. Therefore, there is a very great difference between the topics based on purely time-honoured or conventional beliefs which we have followed so far in our deliberations and the topics which are established on the support of Intuitive experience alone that we are mentioning now. The scriptures do not argue in the manner — “It should be like this”; they remind us about what really exists, in the manner — “It is like this” — alone.

For example, let us bring to our mind the purport or opinion of the scriptural statement: “*Yat Saakshaadaparoakshaad Brahma Ya Aatmaa Sarvaantaraaha*” — (*Brihadaaanyaka* 3-4-1), meaning, *Brahman* is our direct and immediate essential or innate nature, that is our, *Atman* or Self alone. Between that *Atman* or the Self and ourselves there is no mediation whatsoever of

either time or space. This *Atman* or the Self is the innermost essence of Being-Consciousness of everything. We might be knowing or reckoning our body, vital breath, mind, intellect, ego — all these to be 'I' or 'my Self' through *Ajnaana* or ignorance; the fact that more than all these (misconceived) selves the real *Atman* or Self who is innermost — even more innate than our ego — is our *Atman* or Self. He is one who is devoid of any divisions whatsoever — this fact is established on the strength of Intuitive experience alone. The scriptural text is indicating this truth as it is only. This is not any kind of imagination or inference whatsoever which is arrived at by relating and reconciling mere cogitable forms of pure logic in the manner — “If A is equal to B and B is equal to C, then A must be equal to C”. The fact that — “*Our Atman or Self is immediate (Aparoksha); exists in our Intuitive experience without any mediation whatsoever (Avyavahita)*” — becomes established to qualified seekers who are capable of discriminative thinking on the mere hearing of the scriptural texts.

In the scriptures too some topics have been instructed in the form of logical arguments or disputations; but there is difference between this *Shrauta Tarka* or scriptural logic and *Laukika Tarka* or empirical logic. In the empirical logic there are many things or phenomena which are objective or external; if they are reconciled in such a manner as not to have any contradictions and then examined, then whatever decision is reached at the end — that alone we reckon as the final determination. In *Shrauta Tarka* or the scriptural logic it is not so. Therein at every step Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) alone is taken as the basis. Passing from one Intuitive experience to another, finally getting established in the Ultimate Intuition or Pure Consciousness alone is the form of that logic. For instance, let us examine the following: “*Ashareeram Vaava Santam Na Priyaapriye Sprushataha*” — (*Chaandaogya* 8-12-1). The meaning of this scriptural statement is not — “One who does not possess a body, to him the desirable and the undesirable things do not affect or touch”; “*Atman* does not possess a body, therefore the desirable or the undesirable things do not affect or touch Him” — this is the meaning. Even when we see the cat drawn in a picture as drinking milk, we say in the manner — “The cat is drinking milk”; but that the statement is not like — “A real cat is drinking real milk” — is known to all of us. In the present context, we really possess a body — to prove this fact we do not have any valid means whatsoever. This aspect the *Bhaashyakara* or Sri Shankaraacharya has shown clearly in his commentary on the aphorism on “*Samanvaya*” or “Mutual connection” (in the *Brahma Sutras*). This same topic has been indicated in the *Bhagavadgeeta* too: “*Naasatoa Vidyate Bhaavoa Naabhaavao Vidyate Sataha*” — Here *Sat* means *Atman*; *Asat* means *Anaatman* or not-self — i.e. the body, the senses

etc. Non-existence of *Atman* or the Self is never probable (i.e. it is impossible even to imagine); 'the body, the senses exist' — this proposition is also never probable, i.e. it is an impossible premise. This alone is the meaning of the *Geeta* statement. In the commentary on this statement of *Geeta*, Shri Shankaraachaarya has taken the support of Intuitive experience to explain that — "If the effect is properly examined, it does not appear to be different from its cause at all" and has finally established on the basis of logic that *Atman* alone is real and the body, the senses etc. are like the mirage water etc. — mere false appearances alone. Further on in the *Geeta* itself these following verses are there: "*Avinaashee Tu Tadviddhi Yena Sarvamidam Tatam; Vinaashamavyayasyaasya Na Kaschit Kartumarhati; Antavanta Ime Dehaa Nityasyoaktaaha Shareerinaha; Anaashino(s)prameyasya Tasmaadyuddh- yaswa Bhaarata*" — (*Geeta* 2-17). Here it is stated that the fact that — 'Atman or the Self has all-pervasiveness' — is in accordance with Intuitive experience alone. Because *Atman* is of the essential nature of Pure Consciousness (*Chaitanya Swarooopa*) and because Pure Consciousness does not have any limitations whatsoever He is all-pervasive; because apart from Him there does not exist any other real entity whatsoever, there cannot exist any change or mutation caused by another thing. Therefore, *Atman* is *Avinaashi* or indestructible; to His essential nature of Being—Consciousness there does not exist any change from Himself too; He is of the essential nature of the Ultimate, Absolute or Transcendental Reality. On the other hand, in the case of the body, the senses etc., till they are properly and clearly examined and seen, they appear to exist and at the end of the discrimination or deliberation they become falsified (*Baadhita*) like the bodies, the senses of the dream and magic, and for this reason they are having an end or destruction; their very essential nature disappears and they become falsified, as it were; they did not exist at any time at all — in this logic too there is a form of logic; even so, it is showing or pointing out one's Intuitive experience alone. We all keep on asking — "Who is this *Atman* or Self?" — with astonishment, although we are *Atman* alone of such an essential or innate nature of our Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The scriptures are saying — "Bodiless *Atman* alone art Thou; you do not possess a body now itself, i.e. at this very moment while you are in this body".

In the same manner, in the scriptural statement: "*Apraanaa Hyamanaaha Shubhrahaha ...Etasmaajjaayate Praanaha*" — (*Mundaka*, 2-1-2, 3) — it is mentioned in accordance with everyone's Intuitive experience alone that — "Just as for one who has got up from deep sleep, in the dream the vital breath (*Praana*) and mind appear, although one is really devoid of *Praana* or vital

breath and devoid of mind, now (in the waking) due to *Ajnaana* or ignorance it appears as if one has the vital breath, mind etc.’

In the same way, there is yet another scriptural statement: “*Swapnaantam Jaagaritaantam Choabhau Yenaanupashyati; Mahaantam Vibhumaatmaan-am Matwaa Dheeroa Na Shoachati*” — (*Kathopanishad* 2-1-14). “He who cognizes both the dream and the waking states from his nature of Intuitive experience — He alone is *Atman* who is the Supreme Lord; if one knows Him, one does not grieve” — this scriptural text has projected in front of us a logic in consonance with Intuitive experience. One who sees the dream is not the *Pramaatru* or cognizer of the waking state; for the body, the senses, the mind which are the adjuncts of the waking *Pramaatru* or cognizer do not exist at all in the dream; the body, the senses and the mind of the dream especially do not exist in the waking at all. Even though it is so, we say — “I saw a dream”! These are two states which do not have mutually any relationship in the least; it is but natural then if it is said that — “If one cognizes that he is the non-dual *Atman* alone who exists by and unto Himself and who pervades by His Pure Consciousness both these states, then to that person the vicissitudes and griefs of *Samsaara* do not attach themselves.” In this logic at every step Intuitive experience alone exists. It is clear and evident that this is not at all the logicians’ dialectics which is of the form of sentences belonging to five limbs or parts.

Another scriptural text: “*Sataa Soamya Tadaa Sampannoa Bhavati Swama-peetoa Bhavati Tasmaadenam Swapiteetyaachakshate Swam Hiyapeetoa Bhavati*” — (*Chhaaandogya* 6-8-1). In this scriptural statement a logic in consonance with Intuitive experience alone is mentioned in the manner — “All of us in deep sleep merge or become one with our essential nature of Being alone; that essential nature of Being is *Brahman* alone of the essence of Pure Existence alone.” In deep sleep apart from our essential nature of Pure Being or Existence nothing else whatsoever exists at all; therein we exist by ourselves unto ourselves alone. If the body, the senses etc. were our essential nature, then in deep sleep where did they go? — in this manner by Intuitive logic the notion of one having *Samsaaritwa* or being endowed with transmigratory nature is removed and the fact that our essential nature is that of *Paramaatman* or Supreme Self (Pure Consciousness) alone is elucidated. Here there does not exist any valid means whatsoever, nor there is any empirical logic at all.

Let us examine another scriptural text: “*Atra Pitaa Apitaa Bhavati Maataa Amaataa Loakaa Aloakaa Devaa Adevaa Vedaa Avedaaha, Atra Stenoa(s)stenoa Bhavati Bhroonahaa(s)bhroonahaa Chaanda-*

aloo(s)chaandaalaha Poulkaso(s)poulkaso Shramano(s)shramanas Taapasoo(s)taapasoo(s)nanvaagatam Punyenaananvaagatam Paapena Teernoahi Tadaa Sarvaanshoakaan Hridayasya Bhavati' — (Brihadaraanyaka 4-3-22).

Here what is stated to the effect that — “The relationships of father and mother, of empirical actions or works, of various regions, deities and Vedas and the scriptural rituals etc., of thief and such other people with sinful proclivities — do not exist whatsoever in deep sleep” — is very much in consonance with Intuitive experience! When there is relationship with body, senses and mind alone *Avidya* or ignorance, desires and actions do exist, is it not? Therefore, here also logic in keeping with Intuitive experience is referred to in the manner — “In deep sleep there does not exist any grief whatsoever of *Samsara* or the transmigratory life.” In another place in this same *Upanishad* it is stated in this following manner: “*Salila Eko Dri-shtaa(s)dvaito Bhavatyasha Brahmaloakaha Samraaditi Hainamanusha-shaasa Yaajnavalkya Eshaa(s)sya Paramaagatireshaasya Parama Sampadeshoasya Paramo Loaka Eshoo(s)sya Parama Aanandaha Etasyaivaanandasyaanyaani Bhootaani Maatraamupajeevanti'* — (Brihadaraanyaka 4-3-32). “In deep sleep the essential nature of *Atman* or the Self exists extremely pure. It is of the nature of non-dual seer or Witness, is of the essential nature of *Brahman* or the Ultimate Reality alone. There is not even the vestiges of the nature of transmigratory life of the *Jeeva* or soul exist. This is the Supreme state or abode that the *Jeeva* or soul can achieve or attain; the supreme wealth or riches that he can acquire; the supreme world that he can reach; this is the supreme happiness or Bliss that he can acquire; depending upon a part alone of this supreme Bliss the remaining *Jeevas* or souls thrive” — in this manner the scriptural text has praised that essential nature of Being. Therefore, it becomes established that the nature of soulhood which appears in the waking is born out of, or caused by, *Avidya* or ignorance alone.

It should not be doubted in the manner — “To the one person who has directly cognized with the help of the three states alone this Intuitive experience accrues but not to the others, is it not?” Here we have carried out the deliberations taking into our reckoning all the *Jeevas* or souls alone who appear in each one of the states. Therefore, the difference or distinction itself of the type — “The others”, “I” — is projected or effected by *Avidya* or ignorance. If that Intuitive experience is cognized in accordance with the teaching of the scriptures, we get the conviction that we are of the essential nature beyond the three states alone. That these states are projected or effected by *Avidya* or ignorance is determined or decided by the Intuitive experience of the deep sleep alone. The scriptures by means of sentences of the form of logic

in accordance with Intuitive experience bring home to our mind our real essential nature of Supreme Self (Pure Existence-Pure Consciousness) by removing the misconception of the type — “We are endowed with a body, senses, etc.; we are endowed with the three states, we are transmigratory souls”. Because the knowledge born out of the scriptural texts (*Shrutijanya Jnaana*) is of the essential nature of eternal Intuitive experience transcending the two kinds of conceptions viz. “*Avidya* or ignorance existed” and “By means of *Vidya* or Knowledge it disappeared or was removed” — there is no scope for doubting about any hindrance or danger whatsoever to this Knowledge. “*Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmaivaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyet*” — “When everything is *Atman* (of the essential nature of Pure Existence-Pure Consciousness-Bliss) alone, then who can see whom?”

VIII. The Final Valid Means (*Antyapramaana*)

It has been so far elucidated as to what is the essential nature of the Intuitive steps or stages as well as the essential nature of the logic or dialectics in accordance with one’s Intuitive experience that have been mentioned in the scriptural texts, i.e. *Upanishads*. The scriptural texts alone are the final valid means or *Antyapramaana*. Therefore, it has been indicated already that there is no higher court of appeal whatsoever over and above that. Now what is meant by *Antyapramaana*? Does it mean — “This alone is final; there is nothing greater than this; one should not raise any objection against it”? In that case, all this will amount to mere faith or belief alone! People of various religious faiths are claiming that — “Our scriptural or religious texts are in the same manner *Antyapramaana* or final authoritative source; those who do not believe in them will meet with evil consequences”. Christians are saying that their scriptural text, viz — Bible, is manifested to the people through saintly persons who are prompted or blessed by the Almighty Lord; the Mohammedans say that their religious leader Mohammed was the final *Paigambar* or saint; he has expounded the God’s message to the world. Buddhists say that Buddha was omniscient; there is no second to his teachings etc. It being so, how will it be proper to say that the scriptural texts, viz. *Upanishads*, alone are the final authoritative sources or texts?

The solution to this objection is: When it is stated that the scriptural texts or the *Upanishads* are *Antyapramaana* or the final authoritative or valid means, it is not meant at all that they are to be believed to be greater means or the only authoritative sources. The scriptures indicate the Ultimate Reality in accordance with everyone’s Intuitive experience; after they indicate the

Reality it is not possible at all to doubt about its veracity — This is the real purport of the statement. *Anubhava* or Intuitive experience does not mean anything like the experience of a mendicant devotee without a nose who used to say — “If one cuts off his nose he attains the *Saakshaatkaara* or materialization of God in person”; what he referred or alluded to was an experience which is pertaining to an individual; that had to be believed based on trust alone. Finally in that episode everyone came to know that the mendicant was a cheat. In the present context it is not like that at all. Here the scriptures or *Upanishads* which, by reminding everyone of his Intuitive experience alone which ever exists, are stating: “You are not beings who are endowed with a body, senses, mind; therefore, the notion that you are all *Pramaatru* or cognizers is a projection of *Avidya* or ignorance. For this reason alone, all *Pramaanas* or valid means (which the *Pramaatru* or cognizer of the form of ‘I’ notion uses to know or cognize the objects before him) are prompted by *Avidya*. Although these *Pramaanas* or valid means of cognition are real in the region of *Avidya*, if observed from the viewpoint of the non-dual Intuitive experience which is based on the universal acceptance it will be discerned that the dealings themselves of *Pramaatru* or valid means of cognition and *Prameya* or the cognized object are false or misconceived; therefore, you are not really *Pramaatrus* or cognizers, you are not transmigratory souls, but are that Supreme Self Himself who is the Ultimate or Absolute Reality. Knowing this truth you be in your essential nature of Being or Self (Pure Consciousness)”. Just as in a criminal (court) case, accepting one among the criminals who is prepared to turn an ‘approver’, the criminal charges are levelled against the remaining criminals, Vedantins rely on the scriptures because they state facts or truths in accordance with everyone’s Intuitive experience and on the strength of those valid means or sources of cognition they (i.e. Vedantins) decide or determine that all valid means of cognition or *Pramaanas* are promoted by *Avidya* or ignorance alone. It is true that from this it amounts to saying that the scriptures too are not *Pramaanas* or valid means of cognition at all; but it is a special feature with regard to the scriptures or *Upanishads* that they become falsified or invalid means only after signifying the truth that *Atman* or the Self is the non-dual *Brahman* or Ultimate Reality which is of the essential nature of eternally pure, conscious and liberated Being-Consciousness. In this sense the scriptures are called *Antyapramaana* or the final valid means or authoritative sources, that is, it means that after the instructions or teaching of the scriptures are cognized or Intuitively discerned then the dealings of using any valid means of cognition do not remain at all. The scriptures do not indicate *Brahman* or the Ultimate Reality by pointing It out objectively in the manner — “It is this”.

“*Anyadeva Tadviditaadathoa Aviditaadadhi*” — “That which is cognized, that which is not cognized — beyond both these, that is, beyond both the manifested and the unmanifested worlds — this *Parabrahman* or Supreme Reality which is verily the *Atman* or Self of all of us is quite different indeed”; “*Aksharaat Parataha Paraha*” — “It is different from *Avyaakruta* or the unmanifested which is queerer than all else”; “*Neti Neti*” — “Not this, not this” — In this manner the scriptures or *Upanishads* refute the whole gamut of *Anaatman* or not-selves and then indicate the Ultimate or Absolute Reality.

There is a vast difference between the negating sentences that are to be found in the *Upanishads* and the sentences which the Buddhists use to negate the characteristics of any substance. Without discerning this fact, many are deluded that the *non-dualistic Vedanta* is Buddhism alone. *Naagaarjuna*, who is the author of the *Maadhyamika Kaarikas* has written: “Buddha taught *Prateetya Samutpaada* or dependent origination in order to destroy all viewpoints”. “*Shoonyataa Sarvadrishsteenaam Proktaa Nihssaranam Jinaihi; Yeshaam Tu Shoonyataa Drishtistaanasaadhyaan Babhaashire*” — (*Maadhyamika Kaarika* 13-18) — “No viewpoint is proper; nothing exists — this alone is the theory of Buddhism; those who reckon that — ‘Essencelessness (*Shoonyataa*) itself is our viewpoint’ — to such people teaching is not possible at all” — this the meaning of the statement. This is the purport of the negating sentence according to the viewpoint of the Buddhists. The *Shoonyavaadins*’ or Nihilists’ doctrine is: To refute all kinds of theories of cause-effect — to say that substances, whatever they may be, do not have any existence. But the teaching of the *Vedantic* sentences is not this at all. The purport of the negating sentences found in the scriptures is nothing but: “There exists an Ultimate Reality; in that Reality none of the characteristics which the ignorant people have superimposed or misconceived to exist do not really exist”. The essential nature of *Atman* or the Self should not be reckoned to be ‘such and such’; ‘that is like this’ — In this manner to cognize It is as much wrong as to cognize It to culminate in total existential negation or refutation in the manner — “That is not like this”. To describe *Atman* (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness) as *Atman*, i.e. that which is one’s own innate nature, also is *Adhyaasa* or delusion alone. In *Atman* there do not exist any causes or premise whatsoever to prompt any kind of usage of words. Therefore, to cognize that He (*Atman*) is devoid of all characteristics of the manifested world and to get established in the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman* alone is *Aatmaanubhava* or Intuition of *Atman* (or the Ultimate Reality).

Now we can analyse the question: "Between these two theories which is to be accepted and why?" In the opinion of the followers of the school of *Maadhyamikas* all the substances that appear in the dualistic world are mutually relative; it is not possible to prove logically that in themselves they have any essential nature at all. If they are examined by applying the four-pronged or four-cornered rule of the type — 'exists', 'does not exist', 'though existing, does not exist', 'does never exist' — those substances cannot at all belong to any of these four groups. Therefore, "*Shoonyataa Sarvadrishiteenaam*" — "No theory or doctrine is maintainable or can be sustained" — this fact alone is true, it amounts to say. Thus the doctrine of *Maadhyamika* school is supported by logical disputation. But *Vedanta* follows both Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) and logic or strategy in accordance with Intuitive experience. Whatever substance it may be, if it appears to us, its essential nature has to be something; it cannot appear without any support whatsoever. "What appeared to be silver — though it was not really silver, it existed indeed as the sea-shell or nacre" — based on this experience the above-stated strategem is proposed. Further, no one can ever prove that our *Atman* does not exist. *Maadhyamikas* have tried to prove that *Atman* also does not exist by a logical device like — "*Avidhyamaane Bhaave Cha Kasyaabhaava Bhavishyati; Bhaavaabhaavavidharmaa Cha Bhaavaabhaavam Cha Vetti Kaha*" — (*Maadhyamika Kaarika 5-6*). i. e. "If *Bhaava* or essence does not exist, then *Abhaava* or essencelessness too does not exist; because essence and essencelessness do not exist, *Atman* who cognizes both essence and essencelessness and who is quite different from both these also does not exist". But if there does not exist anyone at all, to determine whether in the case of essence or in the case of essencelessness they exist or they do not exist — then neither of the two facts viz. 'exists' or 'does not exist' can be established; therefore, to say that the examiner or the witnessing principle of "essence" and "essencelessness" himself does not exist is a ridiculous statement. It is a fool's behaviour to try to establish in himself in the manner — "Do I exist; I do not exist"; for, without assuming that one exists, determination of anything whatsoever is not possible at all. Therefore, the teaching of *Vedanta* philosophy alone viz. "*Atman* who is the Witnessing Principle of everything and who is one's essential nature of Being cannot at all be discarded by any one whosoever" — is here sustained by reasoning in accordance with everyone's Intuitive experience.

Many people who are followers of *Adi Shankaraachaarya's Advaita Vedanta* have failed to reckon the vast difference of the above kind between *Advaita Vedanta* and *Shoonyavaada* or Nihilism (of *Maadhyamika* school *Mahaa-*

yaana Buddhism). In order to ridicule the *Advaita* philosophy one particular scholar of *Dvaita* philosophy, after examining the historical account of Adi Shankara's life, has written in his work that Shri Shankara went to one "Bakka Swami" and that the latter teacher taught him that — "*Shoonya* or essencelessness alone is *Brahman* or the Ultimate Reality; try to get that alone materialized"! It is true that the Buddhists have stated that in order to cognize that — "*Shoonya* or essencelessness alone is the Ultimate Reality" — one should attain *Yoga Samaadhi*; but how is it possible at all for anyone, whosoever he may be, who wishes to attain such a *Samaadhi* or trance of materialization of the Ultimate Reality of *Shoonya* or essencelessness to succeed in his efforts without himself remaining aloof (from the *Samaadhi* or trance of essencelessness)?

By following Buddhistic, purely logical device of '*Chatuskoti Vuada*' or the four-cornered or four-pronged theory alone Shri Gaudapaadaachaarya (Shri Shankara's grand preceptor) has stated: "*Koatyaschatasra Yetaastu Grihair-yausaum Sadaavritaha; Bhagavaanaabhirasprushtoa Yena Drishtaha Sa Sarvadrik*" (*Gaudapaada Kaarika 4-84*) — "One who cognizes that *Bhagavaan* or Supreme Lord or Reality who is not tainted in the least by any vestiges of the phenomenon which is circumscribed by the four-cornered categories like — 'exist', 'does not exist', 'though existing, does not exist', 'does never exist' — is alone the *Sarvajna* or all-knowing or omniscient Being". All the *Pramaanas* or valid means of cognition are misconceiving or superimposing on *Atman* or the Self (of Pure Being-Consciousness) something or other. If *Atman* who is devoid of all causes or premises for prompting the dealings or usage of words (*Sarvashabda Pravrittinimitta-shoonya*) is denoted or signified by means of any word or sentence whatsoever it becomes a wrong or improper procedure; what exists — that Entity the Scriptures have never refuted saying that — "It does not exist" — only they are stating the truth that what is misconceived in or superimposed is not existing. '*Tureeya*' means *Atman* or the Self (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness) who does not have any taint in the least of the vestiges of the misconceived or imagined *Praana*, body, senses, mind, intellect, ego; *Tureeya does not mean a state or Avastha; it means the Ultimate Reality of Atman or Self which is vastly different from and which does not have any relationship whatsoever with all the three states which are misconceived or superimposed on Atman.*

It is extremely necessary in *Vedanta* to understand or discern in the proper perspective the purport of using the negating sentences (in the scriptures or *Upanishads*). '*Asthoolam*' means merely 'it is not gross', that is all, but not

'that is *Anu* or subtle or microscopic'; therefore, the scriptures have negated even '*Anutwa*' or subtlety or microscopic nature. '*Neti, Neti*' i.e. in the negative sense, it is neither this 'not' too; if all the misconceived or superimposed (or imagined or *Kalpita*) characteristics or features are rescinded (*Nivrutti*) and (if one 'recedes' as it were unto his own true essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness) then one gets established in the Ultimate Reality as It really 'is', i.e. "*in esse*". "*Siddhantu Nivartakatwaat*" — this aphoristic statement of Shri Dravidaachaarya viz. "The scriptures become the valid means to cognize the Truth only because they exhort us to rescind from the Ultimate Reality all the characteristics or features that do not at all pertain to It" — has this purport alone in view. Some present-day Vedantins keep arguing in the manner — "If it is stated negatively that this is not a snake, it is not enough; it is necessary to indicate positively in the manner — 'this is a rope' ". It is their opinion that negation of *Anaatman* or not-self is not enough; the essential nature of *Atman* or the Self should also be enunciated. This is not a feasible task at all. *Atman* or the Self is devoid of characteristics or any special features; He cannot be an object to either any sentence or a percept or cognition by the mind. Such is His essential nature. How can it ever be possible to indicate or signify Him through stipulative injunctions? A Western philosopher has stated that the philosophical science of the Ultimate Reality means the determination of the Ultimate Reality in the manner — "What is this Reality?" That statement is not proper; the *Vedantic* teaching is: "The supreme or final philosophical science propounding the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* or *Brahman* is that which helps us avoid determining by misconception or superimposition; and get established in the Ultimate Reality of our Self or *Atman* (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness) alone".

Anyway, this much is determined now: "All the other sciences proceed depending invariably upon the dealings of knowership and agentship of action. Those sciences call that knowledge alone which is projected by Avidya or ignorance with the appellation of 'Vidya' or knowledge. Vidya or knowledge and Avidya or ignorance are both Avidya alone (in Vedanta); "The Supreme Intuitive experience alone of getting established in Atman or Self who is beyond all empirical dealings and is eternally pure, conscious and liberated or free is the true Vidya or Knowledge of the Absolute or Ultimate Reality" — this alone is the essence of Shri Shankara's Vedanta.

IX. In Praise Of Shri Shankara Bhagavatpaada

How to eulogise the *Achaarya* or the Great World Teacher — Shri Shankara? If we deliberate upon this question, we can come to this decision, viz. if there is one supreme quality mentioning which it becomes tantamount to mentioning all other qualities — such a quality may be signified. That great divine person used to remain established in the Intuitive experience of the Supreme Self alone which was beyond all empirical dealings and which was his essential nature of Being. This alone was his especial quality.

To the question — “In what entity is the Supreme Self established?” — *Chhaandogya Upanishad* gives the answer: “In His own greatness or excellence (*Mahima*)”. Because the Supreme Self exists rooted in His essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness alone which is beyond all empirical dealings, there is no possibility or probability of any other entity being a support or substrate for Him. Enjoyership, agentship of action and knowership — among these, for the preceding dealing the following dealing is the support. *Vyavahaara or empirical dealings or transactions mean Pratyaya or cognition, Vyapadesha or designation by name, Karma or action — that is, knowing, talking or expressing and behaving or acting. Bhagavaan Shri Krishna* has told *Arjuna*: “The attachment towards the pairs of opposites (*Dwandwamoaha*) which is caused by love or desire and hatred afflicts especially to all born creatures”. One who is devoid of the ‘I’ notion — he cannot possibly have the physical qualities or characteristics mentioned in the *Geeta* statement — “*Ichhaa, Dweshaha, Sukham, Duhkkham Sanghaataha Chetanachetanaa Dhritihi*” i.e. desire or love, hatred, happiness or pleasure, misery, conglomeration of parts, sentience or consciousness and insentience and resolution or self-command. The dealings of *Kartrutwa* or agentship of action, *Bhokrutwa* or enjoyership and *Jnaatrutwa* or knowership do not in the least taint or touch him at all.

Without discerning the secret of the Knowledge or Consciousness devoid of the agentship of action which the Vedantins mention, some people blame them saying — “*Vedanta* is a philosophy of lazy people”. The signs of symptoms of living are either to do something or to give up something, is it not? “If these are not there in life, one will have to remain like inanimate or insentient things like stone, sand etc.” — this is their opinion. But the truth is: What is mentioned in *Vedanta* is a supra-state which has transcended both *Karma* or action and *Akarma* or inaction. Though kings like Janaka etc. had undertaken action of the type of the administration of an empire etc. for the welfare of mankind they were rooted in *Atman* or the Self of the essential

nature of Pure Being-Consciousness beyond the ken of action; so many *Avadhootas* or ascetics who have renounced the world, although externally they seemed to practise silence and to meditate upon the Self alone, by their grace many people have performed wonderful actions or feats. *Yaajnavalkya* discharged the duties of *Gaarhastya* or householdership in keeping with the social laws and conventions but at the same time he renounced the world (like a *Sannyasin* or ascetic) to embrace asceticism to set an exemplary code of conduct for the people to emulate. His teachings are fit to show all of us a means or path to *Shreyas* or spiritual attainment of emancipation. What stupendous acts and tasks Shri Shankaraachaarya, who attained *Paramahoun-sahood* or Self-Realization in his youth alone, performed before his 16th year of age, who can possibly in the present age achieve?

Nowadays there are several people who praise Shri Shankaraachaarya. In every town *Shankara Jayanti* celebrations are organised. Many people among them think that by distributing some eatables and drinks they have performed the worship or adoration of Shri Shankaraachaarya! But how many great men are there who have discerned the secrets of the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality or *Brahman* which is beyond all empirical dealings and which Shri Shankaraachaarya has propounded? 'Beyond all empirical dealings' — this phrase does not mean an entity which squats or remains still at a place without doing any work or action. "*Naiva Kinchit Karoameeti Yuktoa Manyeta Tattwavid; Pashyan Shrunvan Sprishan Jighrannashnan Gachhan Swapan Shwasan; Pralapan Visrujan Grinhannunmishannimishannapi*" (*Geeta* 5-8, 9). As the *Geeta* statement says: "*Jnaanis* though they are performing all actions or works they are revelling in the Intuitive experience of the nature — 'I am not doing anything at all'. They have directly Intuited a state of Being in which *Atman* or the Self grasps without any hands, walks without any feet, sees without the eyes, hears without the ears''.

If we see any great man who has cognized the teachings of Shri Shankara we gain peace of mind ourselves. Just as, if we see people crying we become miserable and if we see smiling or jovial people we also get happy, similarly when we are in the vicinity or in the presence of such great men all the vicissitudes of the empirical sphere disappear into thin air; we get peace of mind too. This alone is Shri Shankaraachaarya's greatness or excellence.

People interested in poetry praise Shri Shankaraachaarya as a 'great poet'; lawyers or logicians say: "He puts forth very lucidly his arguments or logical disputations"; literary men or scholars say: "What a wonderful style, what a beautiful language!" Reformers say: "What a great social reformer he was!" Philosophers say: "What a pleasing or attractive style of reasoning and

exposition of the Ultimate Reality!” Thus according to their own levels of understanding or knowledge and individual perspectives people eulogise Shri Shankaraachaarya. Really speaking, none of us has completely reckoned what state he had attained. Shri Shankaraachaarya, though he had carried out all the empirical transactions in an efficient and excellent manner from the empirical point of view, he had established himself in the glory or excellence of his non-dual Self or *Atman*. Let all of us pray to Him alone with utmost reverence in the manner — “Let your grace flow towards us all!”

Om Tat Sat

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