

The Heart
of
Sri Samkara

by

Sri Swami
Satchidānandendra Sarasvatī

Translated from the Sanskrit by

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TRANSLITERATED SANSKRIT NAMES AND FORMS

The following table gives the most elementary indications of the value of the vowels that are variable in English (but regular in Sanskrit) and of the unfamiliar symbols and groupings of letters found in transliterated Sanskrit words. It is not intended as an accurate guide to correct pronunciation, for which see M. Coulson, *Sanskrit*, Teach Yourself Books, pp. 4-21.

<i>a</i> = u in but	<i>jñ</i> = ja or gya (as in big yard)
<i>a</i> = a in father	<i>m̐</i> = m before b, m, p, v, y and at the end of a word; elsewhere = n
<i>ai</i> = ê in French crême	<i>ñ</i> = n in king
<i>au</i> = au in audit	<i>ṇ</i> = n in tendril
<i>c</i> = ch in chant	<i>ñ</i> = n (except in jñ, q.v.)
<i>ch</i> = ch aspirated (said with extra breath)	<i>o</i> = o in note
<i>d</i> = d in drake	<i>r</i> = ri in rich
<i>e</i> = ay in hay, (better, French é elongated)	<i>s</i> = s in such (not as in 'as')
<i>h</i> immediately after a consonant aspirates it without altering the value. (bh, ph)	<i>ś</i> = sh in shut
<i>ḥ</i> = strong h	<i>ṣ</i> = sh in shut
<i>i</i> = in hit	<i>t</i> = t in try
<i>ī</i> = ea in eat	<i>u</i> = u in put <i>ū</i> = oo in boot

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The work here translated from the Sanskrit was written in 1922 and first published in 1929 under the title *Mūlāvidyā Nirāsaḥ athavā Śrī Śaṅkara Hṛdayam — Refutation of Root-Ignorance or The Heart of Śrī Śaṅkara*. The author was then still a layman, known in English under the name of Subba Rau, a corruption of the Sanskrit Subrahmaṇya Śarmā, and his name appears in this latter form on the original title-page. Devoted study of the commentaries and of the *Upadeśa Sāhasrī* of Śrī Śaṅkara, along with his own acute powers of philosophical reflection, had convinced the author that the affirmation by post-Sureśvara Advaitins of the existence of Root-Ignorance of indeterminable reality-grade as a power or śakti from which superimposition (adhyāsa) proceeds was both erroneous: in itself and a misinterpretation of the doctrines of Śaṅkara, to whom Sureśvara alone (no doubt with Trotaka) was broadly faithful. This 'Root-Ignorance' is positive in form (bhāva-rūpa) and so ranks as a kind of existing entity, the material cause of the world, difficult to differentiate from the 'Nature' or Prakṛti of the dualistic Sāṅkhya philosophers. Later in life (1964) he worked all this out in great detail, and with copious extracts from the later authors, in a work called *Vedānta Prakriyā Pratyabhijñā*, which I have earlier translated under the title *The Method of the Vedānta* (Kegan Paul International, London and New York, 1989). The latter translation occupies all told over 1000 pages, is expensive to buy and takes long to read. I am happy, therefore, to offer an English translation of the earlier and shorter work, in which the writings of the later authors are represented by short summaries rather than by long extracts.

The author well understood the difference between a short popular work explaining the main points of Śaṅkara's Advaita to the general reader, and a polemical work aimed at undermining what he considered to be the false interpretation of Śaṅkara by traditional pundits. His English works, admirable as they are, belong basically to the former category. But in *The Heart of Śrī Śaṅkara* he meets the pundits head on, and the positions he attacks stem from the *Brahma Siddhi*, *Bhāmatī*, *Iṣṭa Siddhi*, *Vivaraṇa*, *Citsukhī*, *Advaita Siddhi* and other advanced Advaita works, some of which existed only in manuscript form at the time the work was written. Thus the first consideration in bringing out the present translation was to exhibit the author's doctrine in relation to the post-Sureśvara authors more briefly than in *The Method of the Vedānta*, but more elaborately than the author himself did in his English introduction to the *Vedānta Prakriyā Pratyabhijñā*.

A second purpose was to trace and supply numerical references to the texts quoted by the author, and also to trace, with page-references to modern editions, instances of the theories of later Advaitins which he attacks. While conscious that there must be errors on points of detail, I hope that the broad picture of the original work that emerges is correct in the main. No attempt at evaluation has been made. As Rousseau said in his *Confessions*, speaking of the study of Leibniz: the first condition for understanding a philosophical author is to throw oneself into the study of his works enthusiastically and sympathetically. Only then will critical reflection be fruitful, and the polemical nature of the present work will ensure plenty of that. The book occasioned much controversy at the time of its publication, as it calls into question hallowed traditions. But recent academic work on Śaṅkara in the west suggests that study of *The Heart of Śrī Śaṅkara* will be important in the future for a revised appraisal of Śrī Śaṅkara's texts. The late Professor Paul Hacker of Münster, for instance, pointed out, after a minute examination of the use of the term avidyā by Śaṅkara in his *Brahma Sūtra*

Commentary, that its difference from those of the later Advaita authors had been correctly assessed and succinctly summarized at para 109 of *The Heart of Śrī Śaṅkara*, in almost every particular. It may be of help to some readers to remark that what is today conventionally regarded as orthodox Śaṅkara Vedānta — which derives essentially from the abundant definitions in the *Vivarana* of Prakāśātman — is precisely what the author designates as ‘unorthodox Advaita Vedānta : he designates as ‘orthodox’ the more strict Advaita of Gaudapāda, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara.

I would point out in conclusion that the notes were originally embodied in the text in brackets, without end-notes. When it struck me that this was excessive, I took some of the larger ones out and put them as end-notes, but some short notes have found their way into the end-notes too. I acknowledge that this is unsystematic, but imagine that it will not constitute a serious difficulty for the reader. I would even defend it as a useful compromise. The reader will find most of the references before him on the page, with most of the translator’s comments removed to the back, with some of the more essential explanatory matter from the translator left on the page in brackets. References by volume and page to the translator’s *Śaṅkara Source Book* are to the first edition: page-numbers in the forthcoming edition are liable to be somewhat higher. Please note that the word ‘para’ is used to refer to the sub-sections of the work as enumerated by the author, while the word ‘paragraph’ has its normal sense. The author occasionally forgot to alter the numbering of the sub-sections as he went along. This has been covered in the translation by adding a further numeral, e.g. 176 (1), etc., where the extra numeral has no other special significance. The Select Index of Concepts placed at the end is no more than a few random jottings made along the way, which have been included in case they would be of *some* help to the reader.

My obligations are first and foremost to the Working Committee of the Adhyātma Prakāśa Kāryālaya, Holenarsipur, Hassan District, Karnatak, South India, for granting me permission to publish my translation, and secondly to the Book Committee of Shanti Sadan for accepting it for publication. Amongst various colleagues who have been kind enough to help me I must single out Anthony Collins, without whose ministrations at the word-processor the work could not have appeared in its present form at all. It is dedicated to our revered Guru Hari Prasad Shastri (1882-1956), who demonstrated to his pupils by his life that the philosophy of Śrī Śaṅkara is not a mere game for the intellect but a potential passport to the deep metaphysical peace that abides.

A. J. Alston
London, 1997

ABBREVIATIONS

A.R.	<i>Adhyātma Rāmāyana</i>
A.S.	<i>Advaita Siddhi</i> Madhusūdana
B.B.V.	<i>Bṛhadāranyakopanisad Bhāṣya Vārtika</i> Sureśvara
B.B.V.S.	<i>Bṛhadāranyakopanisad Bhāṣya Vārtika Sāra</i> Vidyāranya
B.S.Bh.	<i>Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya</i> Śamkara
Bh.P.	<i>Bhāgavata Purāna</i>
G.K.	<i>Gaudapāda Kārikās</i> , included in Gambhīrānanda, <i>Eight Upanishads</i> , Vol. II
I.S.	<i>Ista Siddhi</i> Vimuktātman
M.V.	<i>The Method of the Vedānta</i> Satchidānandendra
N.S.	Nirnaya Sāgara Press (Bombay)
N.Sid.	<i>Naiskarmya Siddhi</i> Sureśvara
P.M.S.	<i>Pūṛva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras</i> Jaimini with Śabara's Comm.
P.P.	<i>Pañcapādikā</i> Padmapāda
R.V.	<i>Rg Veda</i>
S.L.S.	<i>Siddhānta Lesa Saṅgraha</i> Appaya Dīksita
S.Ś.	<i>Samksepa Śārīraka</i> Sarvajñātman
Ś.S.B.	<i>Śamkara Source Book</i> Śamkara
S.V.	<i>Sambandha Vārtika</i> Suresvara
T.B.V.	<i>Taittirīyopanisad Bhāṣya Vārtika</i> Sureśvara
T.P.	<i>Tattva Pradīpikā</i> Citsukha
T.T.	<i>The Thousand Teachings</i> Śamkara
Viv.	<i>Vivarana (on Pañcapādikā)</i> Prakāśātman
V.P.P.	<i>Vedānta Prakriyā Pratyabhijñā</i> Satchidānandendra
V.S.M.	<i>Vedānta Siddhānta Muktāvalī</i> Prakāśānanda
Y.V.	<i>Yoga Vāsistha</i>

LATIN TERMS

<i>ad fin.</i>	towards the end
<i>ad init.</i>	towards the beginning
<i>ad loc.</i>	at the place cited
<i>ibid.</i>	at the same place
<i>idem</i>	the same (work)
<i>loc. cit.</i>	at the place cited above
<i>per se</i>	in itself
<i>q. v.</i>	which see
<i>sic</i>	left as it stands in the original
<i>supra</i>	above
<i>viz.</i>	that is to say

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PART I – INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Verse

*That which has no states (avasthā) is
imagined by those of confused mind to have
three states: may they encounter that light
which disposes of root-Ignorance*

1. Indication of the method of Vedānta

The holy Commentator Śrī Śaṅkara has shown with arguments how the whole Veda is initiated to determine the true and indubitable nature of the real, after first abolishing the connection set up by the unenlightened between the unreal not-self and the essence of pure unbroken attributeless Consciousness which stands as the Self of all. And he has shown with arguments that this is the reason for the initiation of all three of the starting-points of Vedānta (Upanishads, Gītā and Brahma Sūtras).

The Upanishads taken as a whole start from the distinction of subject and object experienced in the waking state, and on that basis sift out the real Self. In regard to dream, the unreality of which quickly becomes apparent, they explain how the false appearance is illumined by that same self-luminous Self. And they establish the falsity of objects by indicating how the worlds of waking and dream are altogether of the same order.

They point also to dreamless sleep, where all the impurity of objects is absent, to strengthen the conviction that the Self is associationless. They do this because they wish to remove the impression that may come to certain dull-witted people to the effect that 'The Self is never free from objects, so it must have attributes and be limited by objects'. In this way they serve the interests of metaphysical enquirers by announcing the true nature of the Self indirectly through an examination of the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep.

2. The subject-matter and so on of the present treatise

It is clear to those possessed of sharp insight that this method of instruction is impeccable and is the one held in honour by the true experts in the Upanishads. And yet it is all too often seen that the enquirers of today have fallen into error, confused by sham methods proffered in all sorts of different ways by Advaitins who have developed into dualists while still thinking of themselves as Advaita Acaryas, even though they cannot discern the true and indubitable nature of this non-dual reality and are themselves ignorant of their own true nature. This can only have occurred through a break in the line of the tradition. And so the present work is begun to determine the true method of the Vedānta by enquiring where truth and untruth lie in regard to the various topics raised by those whose minds have become infected by germs of dualism. And this will be done by collecting together systematically various thoughts scattered here and there in the works of Śrī Śaṅkara.

SECTION 2: THE INITIAL CONCEPTION
OF THE ENQUIRER

3. The universe exists even at the time of dreamless sleep

An enquirer may be supposed to have the following conception. It is common to the experience of everyone that the objects of the waking realm are not perceived in dream and that there is no experience whatever of objects in dreamless sleep. But this is not enough to demonstrate that the Self is void of the world of plurality. For when they have woken from sleep everyone perceives the world as it was before. It does not occur to anyone to entertain such doubts as 'Is this the house in which I went to sleep last night, or is it another?' And in one's dealings with other people disagreements never arise about whether objects perceived in waking before going to sleep belong to that same realm of waking. For when one person goes to sleep it does not mean that everyone goes to sleep, so that the world is not for that time annihilated. And if it really was the case that the whole world was abolished in dreamless sleep, how could you explain how the world was regularly perceived again on waking? You cannot imagine that a whole new world springs up entirely afresh every time you wake up. For the production of the previously non-existent (i.e. creation from nothing) cannot be accepted, as it contradicts all authoritative means of knowledge. And one cannot ignore recognition associated with a feeling of certainty in the form of 'Verily, this is that same', unless there is some evidently contradictory factor. So the enquirer will say initially that it does not seem sensible to say that the world does not exist in dreamless sleep.

4. There is a world both of waking and dream

Initially, the enquirer is not willing to admit the absence of a world in dream. For even there the appearance of a world of sorts is seen. And one should not say that the world of waking experience, too, is only an appearance, for this cannot be proved. Nor should one claim that the Self has (i.e. only appears to have) a second thing standing over against it on account of a world that is (merely) perceived through error. The notion that the world of waking is on a par with dream is a mere unproved assertion. It is quite insufficient to overrule the universal experience of everyone that they are different. The harmonious interrelation of space, time and causation and absence of subsequent cancellation (in the manner that a dream is cancelled and known to have been unreal on waking) — these characteristics of waking clearly demonstrate its difference from dream. There is a very easily intelligible difference between the definitions of waking and dream. For a dream is a mere stream of cognitions arising from the defect of sleep and the impressions of past experience, which takes place in the mind when the latter is detached from the senses, whereas waking is quite different from that.

And the Veda teaches that dreams are illusory, as in such passages as 'There are no (real) chariots there (in dream)' (Bṛhad. 4.3.10). The Smṛti says, 'If a person experiences objects at a time when his mind is still functioning, while the activity of the senses has broken off, he should know that the vision is dream' (M.Bh. 12.267.24). Nor do the traditional texts anywhere declare that waking experience is illusory, nor do we experience it as such — so that there is nothing to suggest that it is on a par with dream.

Or suppose even that one could not make out definitions of waking and dream to show

that they were different. Even so, who could deny that they are directly experienced as different, just as pleasure and pain are? Therefore, because dream and waking are different, one cannot infer that the world of waking experience is illusory on the ground that it is on a par with dream. You cannot (argue that one thing has the characteristics of another on grounds of similarity when in fact they are opposite and) claim that snow has the properties of fire because it is 'like it'. So we should conclude that, whereas the dream-world is an illusion, it is a real world that we perceive in waking. And so it has been shown that even in dream the Self is associated with a world of sorts, while the presence of a real world in the waking state is beyond dispute.

5. A mere examination of the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep is not enough for knowledge of reality

Thus no lapse in the connection between the Self and the world can either be perceived or inferred in any way. So it is quite vain to maintain that a pure Self void of the world will be brought to manifestation though a mere examination of the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep.

And there is another point. If the theory that the dream-world and the waking world were both illusory was right, then everyone from cowherds to great scholars would attain liberation from reincarnation merely by falling into dreamless sleep. And if that were the case, who would feel any zest for the discipline of hearing the upanishadic texts, reflecting over their contents and subjecting it to sustained meditation? Nobody but an idiot would make strenuous efforts to get rid of reincarnation if it subsided naturally of its own accord. Nor do we really entertain any hope that liberation could arise in this way. For we see that one who is supposed to have undergone liberation from reincarnation in dreamless sleep is again in bondage to the same world or to a new one when he awakes. Thus the world cannot be dismissed by mere reasoning, and to suppose that it could would deprive the Veda of meaning and utility. So it seems to us that the view that the world is illusory must be incorrect.

SECTION 3: A CERTAIN UNORTHODOX ANSWER

6. The Self is in connection with causal Ignorance in dreamless sleep

There are certain members of our school who propose the following answer to this doubt. They would tell the enquirer that he was right to suppose that this world was not totally dissolved in dreamless sleep. In the state of reincarnation the Self is always conditioned by beginningless Ignorance. It never gives up its ability to act as an individual or its capacity to undergo individual experience. It is true that it appears to be void of all limitations in dreamless sleep. But even in that state it is found to be connected with illusory Ignorance. And though this Ignorance is called illusory because it is thought to be subject to cancellation through metaphysical knowledge, nevertheless one could not suppose that anyone who had not yet achieved liberation could attain transcendence merely by falling asleep.

This 'Ignorance' has two forms — a 'causal' state and an 'effect' state. It is known by

various different names such as *Māyā*, *Avidyā*, *Prakṛti*, *Bīja* (seed) and so on. In dreamless sleep it assumes its causal form. Admittedly it is not perceived there. But when people reflect back on this state after they have woken up they feel that this lack of apprehension in dreamless sleep was due to the absence of any power to apprehend, and not to the absence of objects to apprehend.

Their reflection assumes the following form: 'I did not know anything in dreamless sleep'. This reflection cannot be said to bear merely on absence of knowledge. For there is no positive knowledge in dreamless sleep that would enable one to affirm absence of knowledge by contrast. (1) The reflection also yields the feeling of Ignorance about oneself, in the form 'I did not know myself either'.

Even though there is no transient empirical knowledge in dreamless sleep, there is no reason why the constant self-luminous Self should not be evident. There is no positive wrong cognition. The mere traces of past wrong cognitions could not be supposed sufficient to constitute an obstacle to knowledge of reality. Hence (as the only remaining alternative) we are forced to assume the presence of some positive entity assuming a subtle form and veiling the Self (2)

7. Even in the waking state there is direct experience of positive Ignorance in manifest (gross) form

Even in the waking state there is direct experience of some positive obstacle to metaphysical knowledge expressed in the form of the feeling 'I do not even know my own Self'. Since this feeling is something perceived, it is clear that what is felt is not mere absence of knowledge. A non-existence cannot be perceived, it can only be known through the sixth means of knowledge (*anupalabdhi*, taking note of the absence of a thing in a place where it could have been perceived). Even he who does not accept the sixth means of knowledge as a distinct faculty over and above perception and inference cannot explain how a non-existence could be subject to perception. For we have to ask (in the case of the Self — 'Where there is this (alleged) absence of knowledge of the Self, is there or is there not knowledge of the Self as the absent thing, and of its absence?') If there was such knowledge, then there could not be perception of absence of knowledge in regard to the Self. So let us suppose that there is not knowledge of the absent thing and of its absence. But in that case, how could there be perception of absence of knowledge, which depends on knowledge of the absent thing? Therefore there cannot be perception of absence of knowledge on either hypothesis. Hence it stands proved that the Ignorance experienced through perception in the waking state (cannot be mere absence of knowledge and therefore) must be Ignorance conceived as a positive entity. (Cp. *Viv.* p. 74 f., quoted *M.V.* p. 756.)

8. Use of the word 'Ignorance' to mean what is (positively) opposed to knowledge

In the same (imperfect) line of thinking, the obstacle to knowledge is said to be perceived in concrete form even in the waking state, because both itself and its effect in the form of

the world are subject to being known through perception. In dream, too, Ignorance is perceived in concrete form because an appearance of a world is present, based on mental imagination associated with the traces of earlier experience. The peculiarity of Ignorance in this form is that it is associated with the additional adventitious defect of sleep. It will be shown below how Ignorance in dreamless sleep is (not manifest but) subtle.

Some say that if Ignorance in its form as effect assumes a subtle state in dreamless sleep it may be spoken of by such names as 'causal Ignorance' or 'root-Ignorance'. This root-Ignorance is something that lies beyond Ignorance in its form as dissolution (*laya*), when it is associated with the impressions that will lead to further action and projection (cp. *Vācaspati*, *Bhā* 2.2.2, *M.V.* p.550). In the way already explained, that which is found, either in its effect form or its causal form, to conceal the Self, is known as 'Ignorance' (*avidyā*) and by other names. It is called 'Ajñāna' (lit. non-knowledge, not in the sense that it is a mere 'non-existence' of any kind but) because it is what opposes and contradicts knowledge.

9. The method of counteracting Ignorance

This Ignorance (*ajñāna*) can only be eliminated through knowledge of one's identity with the Absolute acquired through hearing, pondering over and meditating on the upanishadic texts. If the enlightened person is aware of the world after the Ignorance has gone, this is due to an impression (*saṃskāra*) of Ignorance, known also as 'the remnant (*leśa*) of Ignorance'. This impression of Ignorance is brought to an end by a final modification of the mind assuming the form of the Self (*ātṃākāra-vṛtti*), which only occurs after the completion of the experience of the results of that quantum of merit and demerit which initiated the life in which enlightenment was attained (*prārabdha-karma*). (3) After the death of the body the knower of the Self will attain unconditional identity with undifferentiated Consciousness, called 'bodiless transcendence' (*videha-kaivalya*).

And on this theory examination of the three states of consciousness beginning with waking is meaningful. For it is possible through reflection of this kind to discriminate the supreme Self from all the not-self and enable it to be known. And it is in particular through reflection on the state of dreamless sleep that an example of realizing one's true nature is found, on account of the disappearance in that state of all connection with objects. Admittedly realization of the supreme Self in a way that precludes return does not occur in dreamless sleep. But one can teach the method of bringing wrong knowledge to a halt through describing that state, so it is a useful topic to ponder over. And the doctrine does not imply that listening to the upanishadic texts, pondering over them and subjecting them to sustained meditation is useless. For it is held that right metaphysical knowledge will not arise without that discipline, and Ignorance can only be completely eliminated by right knowledge. And on these lines they believe that their doctrine covers everything.

SECTION 4: THE ORDER FOR APPEAL TO TEXTS
AS AN AUTHORITY IN AN ARGUMENT

10. The necessity for reflection

Shortly we shall go on to examine where right and wrong lie in the preliminary doubt and the tentative answer so far advanced. First, however, something will be said about the order in which arguments should be put forward. For it is commonly found in modern times that people will introduce arguments or citations that support their own case in the course of a debate without following any regular procedure. Of two contenders, one will say something from his own standpoint and then the other will speak from his standpoint and mention a fault in something that the first speaker said, but do so from his own different standpoint, and on this basis neither of the two views can possibly hold up, nor is anything whatever critically established. So we must decide how arguments should be set forth in a debate.

Perhaps you will ask whether any such decision is necessary. The subject in hand, you will say, is reflection over the teachings of the Upanishads. All that we have to do is to determine what the essential message they communicate is. The texts of the Veda are eternal and of superhuman origin. They are free from characteristic human defects like carelessness and deceit. As they deal with a subject-matter that is beyond the range of the other means of knowledge, their teaching has to be accepted as authoritative and true. In a debate between two opponents, therefore, we have to accept the principle that only his view can be correct whose argument agrees with the Upanishads, while the other person's view will not be correct.

Well, this might admittedly be true if there were no disagreement amongst philosophers about what was eternal and what was of human or superhuman origin. But on this point there has been much disagreement both in ancient and modern times. Thus in modern times we hear the complaint that the argument that the Veda is eternal is circular. It amounts to saying that the Veda itself is the only authority for the eternity of the Veda, while proof of the authoritativeness of the Veda depends on its eternity.

On the question of human origin there is also a problem. Is a doctrine inauthoritative merely because it is associated with a human being? Or does it have to be shown to be inauthoritative under the light of some other authority? Mere transmission through a human being cannot undermine authority. For it is accepted that the Veda itself was transmitted through great seers like Vāmadeva. So we should perhaps suppose that one revelation can only be reversed in the light of another. But in adopting this position the exponent of the Veda is really defending his enemy's camp. For he has powerful opponents in the Christians who hold that the authors of the Bible were great saints inspired by God, and who speak on the authority of the Bible about matters such as heaven which are beyond the range of other means of knowledge.

Or let us suppose for argument that we are dealing with philosophers who somehow agree over the eternity and superhuman origin of the Veda. Even so, it will have to be explained how an argument between two of them about the nature of reality can be settled merely on this basis. No doubt we have said that he whose argument agrees with the Veda must be correct. But this was itself not correct, as the question about which view really agrees with the Veda cannot be decided. For your way of decision would only be appropriate if it had

already been settled 'This view and this alone, is supported by the Vedā'. But what will be the commonly agreed criterion when there is doubt over which of two views really agrees with the Veda? For there is still today argument about the nature of reality amongst those who accept the need for adherence to the teaching of the Upanishads, but who follow this or that different version of them as favoured by Śaṅkara, Bhāskara, Śrīkaṇṭha, Rāmānuja, Vijñāna Bhikṣu, Madhva, Vallabha, Baladeva or others. Who is the arbiter to decide here which is truly the teaching of the Upanishads? Or who could we accept as able to decide without dispute what exactly were the views of each of these great founders of systems? For students of eclectic works like the Siddhānta Leśa Saṁgraha find that it is not unknown to encounter the greatest divergence of view amongst the followers of these various authorities.

Nor can it be claimed that variety of human opinion does not affect the interpretation of the Veda, on the ground that the true meaning of the latter has to be settled (not by private human speculation but) by a consideration of traditional exegetical signs, such as the opening of a new topic or the ending of a topic with a closing summary in recapitulation. This view would have us believe that the founders of the various great systems may differ amongst themselves on points of detail, while agreeing on the essential message. After all, each of the great commentators establishes his philosophy through applying the six exegetical criteria (4) (4) for the interpretation of the Upanishads, and holds that his is the true doctrine of the Veda as supported by the Law Books, Purāṇas and Epics.

Very well. But although the followers of the different systems may appear to agree on the essential message, they feel that it cannot be presented following any other method but their own. They therefore eagerly heap mutual recriminations on each other and so leave us still wondering what the true method for establishing the upanishadic doctrine could be.

Let us pass on, then, to consider another claim. The classical Advaita teachers (Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara, Sureśvara), it is rashly claimed, were intent only on establishing the identity of all as the Self. For this they relied on what could be known through direct experience. They attached no importance to the various systems arrived at by empty ratiocination. For them (according to the rash view now under discussion) there was no mutual contradiction between a variety of different systems. Hence, as one ancient authority (Sureśvara) put it, 'By whatsoever method of instruction men are brought to a realization of the innermost Self, that method is good here. There is no fixed rule about it' (B.B.V. 1.4.402). Śrī Sureśvara's words 'There is no fixed rule about it' mean (according to this rash claim) that there are various different systems of equal value. So any statement that there is disagreement amongst the various followers of Advaita must be made by one babbling in a dream, who did not understand how ancient teachers rose above the standpoint of practical experience when expounding the teaching from different standpoints.

But people who speak in this way should be prepared to show why and in what circumstances heed is not paid to matters as viewed from the standpoint of practical experience. Otherwise students will not understand the secret of the distinction between the standpoint of practical experience and the standpoint of the final truth. They will wonder how the various different systems could all be proclaiming one truth. The contradictions between the various methods of presentation will be clear to them. It will be clear that the teachers find fault with what does not agree with their own system. And since the feeling 'It is wrong. Why is it not thus (i.e. as I say)?' is applicable everywhere and hard to withstand, it is clear that they will end up

with the conviction 'None of the different presentations of the (upanishadic) teaching can be trusted at all'. For out of all these various contradictory methods there can only be one path for right knowledge. As it has been said, 'The path that leads to the eastern ocean does not lead to the west. There is only one path for liberation. Hear about it from me in detail' (M.Bh. 12.266.4).

Or consider the matter from this angle. Supposing an outsider were to say 'These disputants with their adoption of thesis and counter-thesis merely proclaim that all the views propounded are wrong'. Who could refute him? Nor are such observers wanting. Even here in India alone there are hundreds who adopt Christ or Muhammad or Zoroaster or Jina or Buddha and so on as their authority. They cling with stubborn faith to the teachings of one or other of these. They try to convince others also that their's is the only truth, and set out hundreds of arguments in support of their own views.

Then there are those who purvey free-thought and follow the lead of western thinkers like Spencer, Huxley, Hume, Berkeley or Bergson. They are naturally uninterested in the minutiae of disputes over minor points amongst the followers of the Veda. And they are unwilling to accept any point that can be overturned by their own free-thinking methods of enquiry.

On this subject you might think as follows. These people, you might argue, stand outside the Vedic tradition. Believers should not pay attention to them. Questions such as the nature of bondage and liberation can only be settled through the upanishadic teaching. They cannot be settled by those who stand outside it. Rationalists should be totally excluded from discussions about liberation. For the educated have condemned empty ratiocination not based on traditional Vedic revelation as flawed by lack of any firm foundation (cp. Śaṅkara, B.S.Bh. 2.1.11, Ś.S.B. 5.175.)

Over this point we should pause. We know that even enquirers possessed of faith are troubled with doubts. When we see that even the great founders of systems disagree, how can we be sure that we ourselves know the correct interpretation of the Vedic teaching? This being so, it is incumbent on those who are active (read ādarair) in promoting reflection over the meaning of the Veda to demonstrate the fallibility of non-Vedic thought. (5)

On this there are the following verses from the Sūta Saṁhitā: 'O Brahmins, great efforts must be made to justify this path by reason. When the Vedic path has been justified, all that is worth-while has been established. It is the settled conclusion of the Upanishads that it would not (read na for 'sa') be a sin to slay that deluded person who was capable of justifying the Vedic path by reason but omitted to do so. He who strives in faith to justify it by reason even though he lacks the capacity to do so is relieved of the demerit of all his sins, and attains direct and immediate metaphysical knowledge' (Sūta Saṁhitā 2.20.54-6).

And there are the cases where even the minds of the faithful have been affected by the arguments of rationalists outside the Vedic tradition, and have become plunged in doubt and have begun to wonder 'What is the defence against these strictures on the Vedas made by outsiders? Hence those well-educated in the Vedic system must certainly examine even the non-Vedic systems to expose their hollowness as a protection for their own pupils. So even non-Vedic systems like that of the Logicians must surely be refuted for the sake of pupils following

the Veda. Otherwise, why did the commentators mentioned above refute the doctrines of the Buddhists and Jainas and so on where they thought that the latter were contradicting the Vedic doctrine? So we do have to enquire to see what is the correct method of determining the meaning of the Vedic texts.

11. The order in which one should appeal to texts, arguments and personal experience

In this connection, it is clear that when the subject of disagreement is whether or not the Vedic texts themselves are an authoritative means of knowledge, even the disputant who is a Vedic believer must present his opponent with rational arguments, and he cannot appeal to the Vedic texts. Thus in his commentary on the Brahma Sūtras (B.S.Bh. 2.2.24, Ś.S.B. 4.269) Śrī Śaṅkara first says, 'And the ether is known to be a reality on the authority of Vedic revelation in such texts as "The ether arose from the Absolute"' (Taitt. 2.1). And then he adds, 'To those, however, who do not accept Vedic revelation (i.e. the Buddhists and so on) we must say that the existence of the ether has to be inferred from the fact that it is the vehicle of sound'.

The case is different, however, when there is agreement about the authority of Vedic revelation, and the dispute is only about its interpretation. Here the decision has to be made according to the methods of the Vedic exegetes by appeal to the group of criteria including 'indirect implication' (liṅga), 'context' (prakaraṇa) and so on, (6) and the group including 'treatment of all matter between an opening passage and a closing recapitulation as constituting one topic' and so on. (7) This was the rule accepted by the ritualists in ancient times, though it was modified by Śrī Śaṅkara. The latter wrote, 'In the case of enquiry into the Vedic ritual, the Vedic and other traditional texts alone are the criterion. But this is not so in the case of enquiry into the Absolute. Here it is the same texts that are the authority, but with immediate experience added in the case of the purely metaphysical texts. For knowledge of the Absolute requires to culminate in immediate experience (anubhava), and (unlike the part of the Veda dealing with commands and prohibitions) has an already existing reality for its object' (B.S.Bh. 1.1.2, M.V. p.72).

But when the object is not merely to interpret the meaning of the Vedic texts but to attain to knowledge of their content in immediate intuition, as is the case in purely metaphysical enquiry into the true nature of the Self, then reference to immediate experience should come before the exposition of the texts, since the enquiry has to culminate in immediate experience. In the case of heaven and other entities whose existence can only be known through the Veda, immediate experience cannot arise from experiences pertaining to the body in this present life. But it is not right to say that it follows in the same way that the personal experiences of one still alive cannot lead to knowledge of the true nature of his own Self, as the claim is not warrantable on the evidence. As Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'In the case of action, the reward, such as heaven, is not immediately evident, and there can be doubt as to whether it will come or not. But the result of knowledge of the Absolute is immediately evident, for the Veda speaks of "the Absolute which is immediately and directly evident"' (Bṛhad. 3.4.1) and teaches "that thou art" (Chand. 6.8.7) as an already accomplished fact' (B.S.Bh. 3.3.32, Ś.S.B. 6.233, M.V. p. 210, 447, 573).

It follows that, since reflection over the Upanishads is for the sake of immediate experience, nothing based on the mere authority of words can be accepted in the course of such

reflection if it contradicts immediate experience. So in commenting on the Upanishads, Gītā and Brahma Sūtras alike the revered Commentator based himself on the principle ‘Words give information but do not have causal efficacy’, and taught that words could not establish anything that contradicted immediate experience. It follows that in arguments one should only set forth reasoning that does not contradict immediate experience.

Sometimes texts are quoted to support reasoning, or reasoning is used as a subordinate confirmation of revelation. The principle to be observed is that a bare text may be contradicted by a more authoritative text that overrules it. But when the appeal of the opponent is only to reasoning and experience (excluding revelation), then the part of the argument that is open to objection has to be refuted on the basis of reason and experience alone. This was referred to by the revered Commentator in his introduction to the second chapter of the second book of the Brahma Sūtras (B.S.Bh. 2.2.1), when he explained how the doctrines of the Sāṃkhyas and others had been refuted in the previous chapter (i.e. at B.S.Bh. 2.1.1 f.) with the help of Vedic quotations (while they would be refuted in the chapter to come, Brahma Sutra 2.2.1 f., on a purely rational basis). His words were: ‘The Sāṃkhyas and other non-Vedic schools quote texts from the Veda to support their own positions and interpret them in line with their own systems. Up till now our effort has been to show that these interpretations were false. From now on we shall be refuting those opponents on purely rational grounds without regard to Vedic texts. That is the difference between the procedure in this and the preceding chapter’.

The point to understand here is as follows. Where there is mere unreasoned resort to Vedic texts for proof, or where there is a show of reasoning unaccompanied by a proper understanding of the Vedic texts, such quotation or reasoning must be carefully refuted. When Vedic texts have been (improperly) quoted as authority, this refutation must be carried out without compromising the authoritative nature of Vedic texts as such. Here there can be appeal to other Vedic texts of greater authority (as determined by traditional exegetical criteria) But where the opponent has confined himself to logical argumentation it is not right to bring in Vedic texts.

12. The difference between revelation and reasoning combined with experience

There is nothing to prevent anyone engaged in argument from resorting to any time-honoured means of proof that has long been accepted by trained experts in its field. So it seems to go without saying that revealed texts may be used in argument, since they have been accepted as authoritative by experts. But it should not be forgotten that even trained experts disagree over the interpretation of revealed texts. This is true, and in great measure, of the ancient as well as of the modern teachers. Promoters of orthodox doctrine accept as authoritative only what seems to them true. But even the experts contradict one another on such questions as whether the Veda is eternal or not eternal, whether it is superhumanly revealed or not, and whether revelation on the one hand, or reason as combined with experience on the other, is the stronger authority in case of conflict. One must conclude that one should not begin an argument at all if the disputants cannot agree about these particulars in the conduct of a debate. So no investigator has denied, or ever could deny, that reason and experience are relevant over and above mere appeals to Vedic texts. And indeed everyone makes use of reasoning when enquiring into the nature of existent realities, whether they accept the full range of the other traditionally accepted means of knowledge or not.

Introduction to the Subject

We do not accept that view according to which *all* reasoning is to be excluded for lack of any firm foundation. For all the ancients claimed was that reasoning based on empty speculation not backed by universal experience could not contradict reason that did have such support. One could not establish that *all* reasoning was without foundation, as the proof of such a proposition would itself depend on reasoning. This refutes those who quote such texts as ‘This insight cannot be gained through logic’ (Kāṭha 1.2.9), ‘not for the expert in logic’ (M.Bh. 12.238.17), ‘the one attached to the useless science of logic’ (M.Bh. 12.173.45) or ‘one should not even mention sceptics or hypocrites’ (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.18.99) in order to denounce *all* reasoning. For it is only empty reasoning not based on universal experience that is denounced, as is shown by the invariable use of terms (like) ‘mere’ reasoning (e.g. B.S.Bh. 2.1.11 *ad init.*, Ś.S.B. 5.174). If the standpoint that denounces *all* reasoning were adopted, scientific enquiry into the meaning of the Upanishads could not be begun, as it is an enquiry based on logical thinking. So reasoning is not ruled out altogether.

And immediate experience must certainly be accepted by everyone, otherwise it will be impossible to ascertain the nature of the real. Śrī Sureśvara says: ‘The philosophers of the various schools do not disagree over the presence of the Self as immediate experience. If there were disagreement over that, what else would there be to appeal to as a remedy?’ (B.B.V. 1.4.1398) and ‘For all philosophical schools take their stand on bare experience’ (N. Sid. 2.59, prose intro.). For the word ‘reality’ (tattva) means ‘being an object according with experience’. That is why theorists and investigators resort to the means of knowledge which yield right knowledge in harmony with immediate experience.

One should not object, ‘Even immediate experience is not totally uniform’. Otherwise there would be no difference between error and right knowledge. For the immediate experience that is accepted by both sides in a debate is a final court of appeal that cannot be contradicted by any other form of experience. The nature of this experience will become clear later in the present work (cp. paras 71 and 121 below).

So it is established that immediate experience too (i.e. besides reason) is accepted by all investigators (whereas Vedic revelation is only accepted by some). Thus we note that different disputants have different views about revelation, while all necessarily rely on reasoning and immediate experience. From these two points it follows that in argumentation one must resort first of all to reasoning based on immediate experience.

13. The place for citation of texts in argument

When a philosophical issue has been decided, it is then proper to cite revealed texts as long as they are acceptable to both sides. It is true that once a point is known the Vedic texts become useless, as there is nothing further for them to do. Even when it is not yet decided, appeal to Vedic texts may turn out to be useless in the manner explained above, and then quotation of texts would seem superfluous after a decision or before. But in fact there will be scope for them after the dispute is over. For if they are quoted then they will palliate the misery of the loser, expressed in the feeling ‘I have been defeated by this opponent’. The loser’s mind will begin to become reconciled to his loss and he will feel ‘This doctrine was not thought up by my victorious opponent on his own. It is a doctrine that is supported by the Veda and was embraced by the experts of ancient times. So there is no occasion to feel miserable’. Thus Śrī Śamkara says

in his *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Commentary*, ‘What is sanctioned both by Vedic tradition and reason alike must be accepted in faith, as there can be no deviation from truth in such a case’ (*Bṛhad. Bh. 4.5.1, intro.*).

Even in the middle of the argument quotation of Vedic texts is not totally excluded. There are cases where the argument is between two people following the approved method agreeing with the Vedic tradition. Sureśvara, however, has said, ‘This well-known Vedānta doctrine we have expounded, though it has to be learned from the authoritative texts with the help and grace of a teacher, by no means depends on the help and grace of a teacher, but exists and asserts itself as true in its own right’ (*N. Sid. 4.19, prose intro.*). All we are saying here is that if we cite a Vedic text or the words of some human authority in the course of an argument we should not attribute any fault to the opponent either for accepting it or not accepting it as revealed authority (i.e. an opponent may, but need not, accept as authoritative our Vedic quotations). In this connection Sureśvara has said, ‘Nor do we maintain that the reason for faith in the Veda is its own statement that it is of superhuman origin (at *Bṛhad. 2.4.10*); the reason is (not the mere claim but) the impossibility for the Veda of the usual (psychological) causes of invalidity in statements (of human origin)’, (*B.B.V. 2.4.325, M.V. p. 325*). Whatever one disputant claims, whether or not it is found in some authoritative source, should be open to the critical scrutiny of the opponent to see if it does or does not stand to reason. Otherwise anyone could advance anything without proof, and a genuine dispute would be impossible. Thus, in the course of a philosophical dispute, that argument should be recognized as a bad one which is based on nothing more than quotations from the teachings of the Lord, Vedic texts, human authorities, or mantras and secret formulae arising from yogic practice, while failing to take proper account of reason based on universal experience.

14. How Vedic revelation is nevertheless an authoritative means of valid cognition

But will not the above mean that Vedic revelation in the area of metaphysics is a mere re-statement of what is already known through reason — and so not a means of valid cognition? And will this not also apply to the words of the qualified teacher? If reality can be known in advance merely through logic, how could the upanishadic texts have any authority if they came in afterwards?

We reply that they can. For reasoning (in the field of metaphysics) must conform to the Veda. The argument that is to decide a philosophical point must itself be in harmony with the Veda: the Veda is not a mere confirmation of reason. The classical authorities made use of reason in order to interpret the meaning of indirect hints in the Vedic texts. *Bhagavatpada Śaṅkara* wrote, ‘For in the present context only those arguments that are sanctioned by the Veda may be resorted to, and that only as an auxiliary to the attainment of direct experience’ (*B.S.Bh. 2.1.6, M.V. p. 73*). And Sureśvara followed him, saying ‘Only the holy text, as supported by reasoning through the method of agreement and difference, conveys knowledge of that Self which is not the meaning of any sentence’ (*N. Sid. 3.39, prose intro.*). So it is not right to dismiss Vedic revelation as inauthoritative (in the name of independent reason), since in metaphysical matters reason itself, properly conceived, depends on Vedic revelation.

It was also incorrect to say that, if reasoning were accepted, that would undermine the

authority of the Vedic texts. For a means of knowledge is only properly such when it has been tested through reason. As the commentator on the Nyāya Sūtras said, 'True knowledge arises from the intrinsic power of a means of knowledge, after reasoning to confirm it has been tested and found convincing' (Nyāya Bhāṣya 1.1.40). (8)

But dialectic of this kind is a mere auxiliary to all other kinds of knowledge. Suresvara says, 'Even in other disciplines (9) auxiliary reasoning is described as a weaker authority than any of the means of knowledge that it is used to support. Therefore it cannot refute these by its own intrinsic power' (B.B.V. 3.1.7). So no means of knowledge can be discredited *merely* by arguments used in reflecting over it, since reasoning so used is subordinate to all of them without exception. Sureśvara also said, 'The independent validity of the Veda cannot be undermined by reasoning used in its support, as auxiliary reasoning has a different subject-matter from that of the means of knowledge that it is used to support (and it is not itself a valid means of knowledge in the special field of the valid means of knowledge that it is supporting, since a given means of knowledge is the only authority within its own field)' (B.B.V. 3.1.6). Thus reflection over Vedic revelation is (only an auxiliary and) not itself a (proper independent) means of knowledge. It is therefore not able to reduce the means of knowledge that it is used to support to the rank of a mere confirmation of its own independent findings. And what undermines the authority of a cognition is always the fact of its producing no knowledge, or doubtful knowledge, or wrong knowledge — not the fact of requiring to be supported by auxiliary reasoning. The Veda is in no way harmed as an authority in its own field if it depends (for interpretation and justification) on reason. No objection could arise from inference used as an independent means of knowledge, for its scope, as an independent means of knowledge, does not encompass what is the special province of the Veda as means of knowledge, (the after-life and direct metaphysical intuition of the true nature of the Self). So the Veda is not deprived of its authority just because it depends on reason (for interpretation and justification).

As for the fact of Vedic revelation requiring to culminate in immediate experience, this is in no way a reason for supposing the Veda to be inauthoritative. For authoritative means of knowledge are authoritative precisely because they lead to immediate experience of reality. Indeed, as Sureśvara says, the establishment of any means of knowledge itself depends on immediate experience. His words are, 'The means of empirical knowledge themselves rest in and depend on pure awareness' (N. Sid. 1.89, prose intro.). And Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'Since they result in immediate experience of the Self, the authoritative Vedic texts communicating this cannot be refuted or contradicted' (B.S.Bh. 1.1.4). In the field of metaphysical knowledge, neither the Veda nor the teacher (ācārya) can be an authority if what they teach is either not based on, or in contradiction with, immediate experience, since their teaching requires to culminate in immediate experience. Suresvara says, 'Before vision arises from Vedic revelation there must be pondering over it and pondering over the words of the teacher (ācārya). Vision becomes firm when there is the co-operation of the three factors — hearing the texts, discussion with the Teacher, and one's own experience' (B.B.V. 1.4.219). And there are the words of the Smṛti, 'Many are the arguments and treatises mentioned by the different philosophers. One has to meditate on that alone which has been expounded by the Veda as interpreted through reason and the true teachers' (M.Bh. 12.203.20). And it is said in the Sūta Saṁhita, 'I swear to you three times over that only those people attain to metaphysical knowledge who come through proper reasoning to see the identity of their own Self as here defined (through "that thou art traditionally interpreted) and the Lord as here defined, and this through their own immediate experience and proper instruction from the Guru (Sūta Saṁhitā, 4.12.36-7). So one should not

object to the Veda as inauthoritative if it requires to be supported by reasoning and subsequent immediate experience.

15. Recapitulating summary of our doctrine
about the Vedic texts

Therefore in an argument one must resort to reason first, and support that with quotations from Vedic and Smṛti texts afterwards. One cannot either establish or refute a thesis without reasoning and merely through abusing the opponent. If one can only cite the names of famous founders of systems or of holy books one simply proclaims that one is bankrupt of argument and personal experience, and thereby supports the words of the opponent.

Thus we have set out in general terms the rules for citing the authority of the Veda and Smṛti in the course of an argument. In the later part of the book we will be taking the argument further on these lines. In limiting it thus, it is not our intention to belittle the authority of citation of Vedic texts. But the intelligent reader will see that our intention is to show that what is guaranteed by authentic experience cannot be seriously undermined by the mere force of quoted texts.

And we have the traditional verses: 'A text loudly advanced in its mere capacity as a text would not be a proof, even if it were cited by Indra himself' and 'If an idea is pure and true, free from doubt and insufficiency of knowledge, untainted by any suspicion of error, arising from the fullness of experience and clarified by powerful reasoning, then the Veda says that it is an authoritative evidence'.

PART II — EXAMINATION OF AN UNORTHODOX VIEW

SECTION 1: FAILURE TO ESTABLISH ULTIMATE REALITY ON THE UNORTHODOX VIEW

16. The need for a proper explanation of ultimate reality

So far we have given an account of the typical doubts that arise in the mind of the enquirer into the transcendent Self taught in the Upanishads, along with a certain unorthodox answer to them that is propounded by some (i.e. by almost all Advaita Vedānta authors after Sureśvara). And we remarked in Part I (para 2) that the purpose of the present treatise was to establish what was, and what was not, valid in both the doubt and the answer, and to discover the truth about the dispute. But when the unorthodox view is examined, it is found to be wholly in contradiction with the true method, and consequently to have numerous faults of various kinds.

We will set them out one after another. First of all we will show that it cannot give a proper account of ultimate reality.

An initial point to discuss is, ‘How can we controvert the distinction set up in the unorthodox view between dream and waking?’ The champions of the unorthodox view will say, ‘It cannot be controverted. For we hold (with perfect justification) that dream is of purely phenomenal character, whereas waking experience has practical reality. So although we distinguish between dream and waking, we do not accept that either of them constitute ultimate reality (and the latter can stand as void of plurality as taught in the Upanishads)’.

But this is not right, as it fails to give a true indication of ultimate reality. One can only see how states like waking and dream are anything different from ultimate reality if a proper explanation of the latter is given in the form ‘This alone is ultimate reality’. And that the unorthodox view fails to do (since it attributes practical reality to the plurality of waking experience).

17. Circularity of argument by the unorthodox if they rebut our criticism by claiming that individual experience (samsāra) is due to Ignorance

The unorthodox opponent will perhaps continue as follows. Individual experience, he will perhaps say, is caused by beginningless Ignorance. Ignorance can be abolished by metaphysical knowledge, and only then will one realize the falsity of individual experience. Until there is liberation from the sense of individual experience, the world will continue to be perceived and to have practical reality. But the dream-world suffers contradiction and cancellation every day. This is the only distinction we accept between waking and dream. So there is no contradiction in our doctrine.

But this whole theory of Ignorance is wrong. For individual experience could only be halted through metaphysical knowledge if it were already established as set up by Ignorance.

And individual experience could only be established as set up by Ignorance if it was already established that it could be halted through metaphysical knowledge. Neither proposition can be proved, as each stares helplessly at (i.e. depends on) the other.

18. One cannot establish that individual experience is based on positive Ignorance with the experience of the enlightened person for 'proof'

Perhaps the champion of the unorthodox view will reply, 'Circularity of argument does not apply, as the question is solved by the authority of the immediate experience of the enlightened person'. The enlightened people, he will perhaps say, the true experts, those whom we call 'liberated in life', realize that the world of plurality is unreal. So this idea that our doctrine of Ignorance rests on circularity of reasoning is wrong.

But this is itself wrong. For if we were to accept that the truth about ultimate reality could be established merely by what a philosopher supposed to be his immediate experience, then this would suffice to establish any theory whatever. Indeed, not all philosophers accept the experience of people liberated in life as evidence. Nor can ultimate reality be decided on the sole authority of the word of an expert. And one might raise the question 'In what state do those liberated in life make their assertion that the world of plurality is unreal?' It cannot be in waking, dream or dreamless sleep, as that would contradict your own view. For you say that they are free from waking experience and all the other evils of worldly life. How could there fail to be a contradiction if you now say that those liberated in life teach that worldly life is an evil, and do so in waking, or in one of its other states? If those liberated in life are still in any of the three states, such as waking, they do not have the right to claim that they have perceived the evil of worldly life themselves, let alone having the right to teach it to others.

And there is another point to consider. Those people liberated in life who are engaged in teaching metaphysical truth in the waking state — are they aware of the unreality of the world in dreamless sleep, or does this awareness take place in some other state? Not in dreamless sleep. For what could be the distinction between the dreamless sleep of an ignorant person and the dreamless sleep of one who knew the Self, whereby one could reasonably say that causal Ignorance was present in the case of the sleep of the ignorant person, whereas it was contradicted and cancelled in the case of enlightened people? Does not Śrī Śaṅkara say, 'Passing into waking, dream and dreamless sleep successively is common to all living creatures' (Prašna Bh. 4.4) and 'Dreamless sleep, dream and waking are admitted to be common to all living beings even in the sections of the Veda dealing with metaphysical knowledge. This admission is made to promote understanding of the subject being taught, and not to specify the states as characteristics of the enlightened person' (B.S.Bh. 4.2.7, intro.)? If even the slightest difference were admitted between different kinds of dreamless sleep then dreamless sleep would no longer be dreamless sleep. For dreamless sleep is experienced as having absence of distinctions as its exclusive characteristic. And this is precisely the way in which it is different from other states.

If, however, you accept on these grounds that the dreamless sleep of the enlightened person and the dreamless sleep of the ignorant are not different, then what follows? In that case Ignorance will inevitably characterize the dreamless sleep of the enlightened person. And what then will happen to the claim that Ignorance is cancelled in dreamless sleep in the case of

enlightened people? In order to avoid these two faults you will have to point to some further (fourth) state in which Ignorance is abolished. But (since all 'states' are abolished with the abolition of ignorance) no such fourth state is known. And even if one were to be admitted, the required point would not be established, for the people of the world do not experience such a state. So the enlightened would not then be able to instruct the unenlightened.

**19. Nor can it be established by experience
of 'the Fourth'**

Perhaps you will say 'Let us assume that the enlightened ones have direct experience of the unreality of the world in a state other than sleep and called "the Fourth". And they give us their metaphysical teaching in the waking state. What is wrong with that?' The fault lies in the fact that it is only in the course of actually having experience of the waking state that they declare it to be unreal. Investigators are not expounding an impeccable means of knowledge when they contradict their own experience.

**20. Refutation of the counter-objection 'The enlightened
ones experience the mere (harmless) appearance of a
world of waking and so on through the presence
of a remnant of Ignorance (avidyā-leśa)'**

Perhaps you will say that a limited impression (or trace, *saṃskāra*) of Ignorance accompanies the enlightened one even after indubitable knowledge of the true Self has been attained. That would explain the perceptions of the world that occur in the case of such a person and his practical dealings in response to them. As such a person has the clear feeling that such perceptions are false, he does not give them credence, and it follows that when he declares the world of waking experience to be unreal he is not contradicting his own experience.

But this does not appear to be correct. The question that has to be asked is, 'If the enlightened person is aware of himself as having worldly experience, and if he has practical experience of the world like any other denizen of it, how could he avoid belief in its reality?' If the reply is given that he merely conforms to a trace (*saṃskāra*) of Ignorance but knows through his metaphysical knowledge that it is false, then Ignorance (*avidyā*) has not ceased in his case, and he should not be called an enlightened person (*vidvān*).

**21. One does not escape the difficulty by declaring
that 'liberation in life' is a figurative expression**

A reply to our argument so far might be attempted as follows. One does not need the *total* dissolution of Ignorance in order to know that the world is unreal. What is required is the dissolution of all Ignorance *except* that which stands as the material cause of the portion of one's total previous merit and demerit that initiated the body in which enlightenment was obtained (*prārabdha-karma*). And since this is what happens in the case of the enlightened person, there is no contradiction between his perceiving and acting in the world on the one hand, and his conviction that it is unreal on the other. And there is the view of some who follow our tradition

that the real liberation only occurs at the time of release from the body (through death), and that the total abolition of all Ignorance, gross and subtle alike, only occurs then. In liberation in life, on the other hand, a certain form of Ignorance remains, producing an appearance of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. It is a diluted form of Ignorance, otherwise known as a 'trace' (saṃskāra) of Ignorance. So there is no question of the enlightened person not attaining to perfect transcendence on the fall of the body.

But this view will not stand examination either. For Ignorance and metaphysical knowledge cannot co-inhere in the same place (i.e. in the same person). Contradictories like darkness and light cannot co-exist in the same place. And Sureśvara has said, 'Only a fool would claim that Ignorance and knowledge could inhere in the same seat (the same individual consciousness), and that ignorance of a thing could remain on, uncanceled, after the thing had been rightly known' (B.B.V. 2.4.209, cp. B.B.V.S. 2.4.59).

↳) But what is so wrong, you might ask, about darkness and light co-existing in the same place? An element of darkness is found where there is only a small lamp. Even in the shade we have to infer the presence of an element of sunlight, since an element of warmth is perceived. But such an argument is not right. Darkness is the absence of light. It is impossible to show that there could be absence of light, in the form of darkness, where there was light.

Against this we might hear the following reply. It might be said: Darkness is perceived with degrees of more or less and also as having a kind of colour (black). (10) How could it be accepted as a 'non-existence' (i.e. as the mere negation of light)? There is no universal rule of the form 'Everything that has colour must be tangible' that would justify you in denying that darkness was a substance having a colour (blackness) for its attribute. For if we accept that the wind is colourless but tangible, why should not darkness have colour even though it lacks tangibility (cp. Viv. p. 53)? And there is the general rule 'One cannot deny what is actually perceived'.

Or again, take the case of the lighting and extinction of a lamp in a place already illumined by the sunlight. Here, on the extinction of the lamp, there would have been the non-existence of its light in three forms — namely, non-existence before production (before the lamp was lit), non-existence after destruction (after it was extinguished), and mutual non-existence (in that the lamp-light was extruded by the sunlight even while the lamp was lit). And yet despite the occurrence of the non-existence of the light of the lamp in these three forms there is (due to the continual presence of sunlight) no apprehension of darkness. (11) Nor can we accept the argument that darkness is only *total* absence of light. For if darkness were total absence of light it could never be removed unless all light in its totality were brought to bear. And this does not agree with experience. So it is not right to say that darkness is mere absence of light. (12)

But all this (we reply) is the argument of people who contradict experience. Our position was that darkness is the absence of light in general. As darkness is never actually perceived in the presence of light of any kind anywhere, how can mere argumentation establish that darkness exists as a positive entity? Where there is so much as a faint light, no one can detect darkness even after washing their eyes out. So how can one bring up the idea that light and darkness could co-exist?

Another wrong argument is also heard. Wherever there is a pot (it is said) there is the

impossibility of anything else occupying that place. By this is implied that what is excluded is 'non-pot', but positive in character. This idea is to be rejected. For there is regularly vision of darkness (as absence of light) wherever there is non-vision of the universal 'light'. And in the same way, in the example, wherever there is vision of the universal 'pot', there is non-vision of non-pot (without the implication that the latter is a positive entity). So darkness is only absence of light.

Perhaps we shall be told that, because darkness is a positive entity standing in contradiction with light, it is revealed by the absence of light, and that is why darkness is only seen in the general absence of light. But this is very weak reasoning. (For — as we have shown — darkness is mere non-existence of light and) one cannot show that there are any distinctions in non-existence. (13) An argument that a non-existence can be revealed by another non-existence is about as secure as a report that the son of a barren woman has been anointed in a non-existent city. For no one has yet succeeded in proving that darkness was a positive entity, or that a non-existence (e.g. absence of light) was capable of revealing anything (e.g. darkness).

And one might ask in what this contradiction between light and darkness consisted, on the basis of which it was claimed that darkness was a positive entity, revealed by the absence of light. It cannot be the impossibility of their co-existence, as it would be self-contradictory to suppose that what was not co-existent with something else could contradict it. We cannot say that the contradiction is one between existence and non-existence, as the opponent would not accept this (since he does not accept that darkness is a non-existence). From the very fact that co-existence of darkness and light is not accepted, it follows that the contradiction could not lie in the total exclusion of one by the other.

You will say that there is a contradiction between two things standing naturally in the relation of contradictor and contradicted (where there is light there is no darkness, where there is darkness there is no light). But on this basis they could not co-exist in the same place at the same time (and absence of light could not stand as that which revealed darkness).

So let us suppose that contradiction means absence of mutual identity of nature. But this will not do, as it would imply that a pot and a cloth were contradictories. Perhaps you will say that 'identity' means (only) 'mutual co-alescence', like that of universal and particular. As there cannot be mutual co-alescence here, (you might argue), we can say that there is a contradiction. Nor would it be an objection to say that in that case a pot and a cloth would be contradictories. 'For (you would say) we admit it. We ourselves hold that they cannot be of identical nature'.

But all this is wrong. For since there is no proof of any distinction between universals and particulars, (that we could definitively assert the existence of universals and particulars), the notion that there could be a form of identity based on them has even less to commend it. For the truth is that there is only one reality variously imagined as substance, attribute, universal, particular and so on. As Śrī Śamkara has said, 'Hence it follows that the attribute *is* the substance. And this also shows that the other categories, movement, universal character, particular character and inherence are also of the nature of substance' (B.S.Bh. 2.1.17, Ś.S.B. 4.228).

Thus you cannot prove that darkness and light are contradictories. So the theory that darkness is revealed by absence of light because it is the contradictory of light will not hold. And

this reflects the earlier argument that, because darkness was revealed by absence of light, it was itself (a positive something) visible to the eye without the help of light. For light is necessary for the perception of anything having colour (including darkness, if the latter is taken as a positive entity having black colour and capable of being perceived by the eye).

But would not this imply (against the orthodox view that darkness was mere absence of light) that (darkness as) the non-existence of light, too, could not be the object of visual perception, any more than the absence of a pot can? But we do not accept an objection in this form, as we do not accept that there are any distinctions in non-existence. And a non-existence cannot be an object of visual perception anyway, from the mere fact of being a non-existence.

Thus darkness is not an object of perception. And the expression used in worldly converse 'I see darkness' must be taken as a loose way of saying that there is no light, because the idea expressed by the words, if they are taken in their literal sense, will not stand up to critical scrutiny.

But the view according to which the eye is able to give immediate apprehension of a coloured substance (i.e. of darkness coloured black) without the help of light, because the eye is by nature a sense-organ which reveals coloured substances, just as the sense-organ of touch also reveals coloured substances in the dark — that was wrong. For even though the organ of touch is equipped to reveal coloured objects, it does not reveal their colour, and the case with the realm of sight is different (in that sight reveals the colours of objects and depends on light). But who could object (reading *asaṅgata* for *saṅgata*) to the statement that light was needed only for the apprehension of colour? So we conclude that it is not wrong to say that darkness is a non-existence (i.e. the absence of light).

The erroneous idea that darkness has attributes and active properties (of 'hiding' and 'shrouding' and so on) is a different point. This idea is an illusory appearance set up by adjuncts, like the illusory appearance of something being located in a mirror through the appearance there of its reflection. So it does not conflict with what we are now saying.

And that is enough for a discussion of the notion of darkness as a positive entity. But no one should suppose that darkness and light could be perceived together at the same time standing as contradictories in the form of contradicted and contradictor. And Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'Darkness and light could not be brought together in one place by a hundred Vedic affirmations, let alone by mere indirect indications' (Mund. Bh. 1.1.1, intro., Gambh. Upanis, II, p. 81). And that has already been explained. So one cannot use the example of darkness and light to show that, because darkness is a positive entity, Ignorance can also be regarded as a positive entity.

In the same way, neither shade and burning sunlight, nor cold and heat, can co-exist. Just because one may perceive warmth in the shade, this is not enough to establish that shade and warm sunlight are co-existing, since the burning sunlight is located elsewhere (i.e. outside the shaded area). It is the burning sunlight that is the location of the heat. Nor does cold inhere in shade as a positive attribute, that heat and cold could be said to co-exist in a shaded area. For shade is no more a positive reality than darkness is (i.e. the term 'shade' is a conventional way of referring to absence of warm sunlight when the latter is obstructed). Nor can you say that 'cold' and 'heat' are words denoting two mutually exclusive realities. For one and the same thing can be referred to by either of them, according to the point of view. What is cold compared

to one thing may be warm compared to another. (14)

Be all this as it may, no one has the feeling 'cold' when there is the feeling 'hot' So experience of cold and hot, too, fails to provide an example of co-existence of contradictories. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'There cannot be a conjunction between knowledge and Ignorance because Ignorance cannot appear where there is metaphysical knowledge, since it will have been abolished by the rise of the latter. Where there is once knowledge that fire is heat and light, there cannot then follow doubt, or ignorance, in the form 'Fire is cold' or 'Fire is non-luminous' (Īśa Bh. 18).

Therefore this whole conception that knowledge and Ignorance, being contradictory by nature, can both inhere together in, and have as their object, the same one reality, the Self, contradicts experience. Kāṭha Upanishad 1.2.4 says, 'Widely apart and leading to different ends are these, Ignorance and what is known as enlightenment'. And Śrī Śaṅkara comments, 'They are contradictory, mutually exclusive like darkness and light, being of the nature of non-discrimination and discrimination respectively'. In his Brhadāranyaka Commentary he writes: 'One and the same person cannot possess metaphysical knowledge and Ignorance at the same time, because they are contradictories, like light and darkness (Brhad. Bh. 3.5.1, intro., Mādhavānanda p. 337).

22. On the unorthodox view it is impossible to establish Non-duality

In the case of all ordinary unregenerate people, the merit and demerit from their actions in their present life is something that remains to be experienced in some future existence. The merit and demerit from their (innumerable) previous lives, apart from that portion of it required to initiate the present life, does not come into the question. And they regard only that portion of the merit and demerit from their previous lives which has occasioned their present life as effectively real. In the course of experiencing it, they feel that the actions, instruments and body performing the actions are their own. Now, if the actions, instruments and body of the enlightened person are also felt to be his own, it must be accepted that it is only through belief in Vedic revelation that he supposes his empirical experience to be false, and not through direct experience of its falsity.

As for the claim that his Ignorance is abolished at the death of his body, we do not accept it as proved. The texts of the Upanishads are not enough to prove it, for the knowledge they yield may only be indirect. For if the abolition of Ignorance only occurred after the death of his body his 'liberation' would not be anything directly experienced. For if one only lost Ignorance after the death of one's body, liberation would only be something known about indirectly from hints in the Vedic texts. And Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'One cannot twist the meaning of the text "that thou art" into "That thou shalt be when thou art dead"' (B.S.Bh. 3.3.32, Ś.S.B. 6.233). On this basis it would be futile to declare that the metaphysical knowledge taught in the Upanishads was immediate knowledge based on one's own experience. And we find in Śrī Śaṅkara's writings the words 'And we have more than once explained previously how the fruit of enlightenment is immediately evident and not something, like the fruit of ritualistic action, which will only accrue in the future' (B.S.Bh. 3.4.15, Ś.S.B. 4.15). So it is clear that the unorthodox view cannot establish the true nature of reality, as it fails to explain the possibility of the elimination of Ignorance.

SECTION 2: ONE CANNOT SUBSTANTIATE A
THEORY OF POSITIVE IGNORANCE

23. There is no immediate experience of positive Ignorance in the waking state: the feeling 'I do not know' arises otherwise

It was only for argument's sake that we have been speaking of a positive form of Ignorance in the course of showing that the opponent cannot establish the true nature of reality. In truth, no positive form of Ignorance can be established either. Perhaps you will say that it is established by the experience 'is not' that occurs in perception and so on throughout waking, dream and dreamless sleep. But this is not so, as the reasons advanced do not prove the point.

How is this so? Well, it is said that the feeling 'I do not know who I really am' that arises in the waking state is a proof of 'Ignorance' as a positive entity. (15) But this is not so. For the feeling can be explained differently. Ignorance is in fact only experienced in three forms, namely absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt. And Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'Whether Ignorance be understood as absence of knowledge, as doubt or as wrong knowledge, in any case it can only be eliminated through knowledge and not through action' (Bṛhad.Bh. 3.3.1, M.V. p. 68 and p. 184). (16) A consideration of Śaṅkara's use of the term 'ajñāna' in this passage shows that he took 'Ignorance' as having three forms (only).

Why should it not be accepted that this feeling 'I do not know who I really am' falls within the realm of these three (well-known and commonly experienced) forms of Ignorance (so that one is not obliged to posit a strange 'positive Ignorance' that no one experiences to account for it)? For example, in the course of our worldly experience we might have the idea, in regard to things lying by the wayside, 'I was not aware of this or that, I only saw such and such'. This is called 'absence of knowledge', and it is ignorance of particular objects based on the conviction that other objects are known. In the same way, there are cases where we have such notions as 'This is silver', 'This is a snake', 'This is water'. And then these notions are contradicted by better-considered later notions in the form of 'That was a mistake I made, this is not silver but mother-of-pearl', 'This is not a snake but a rope', 'This is not water but a mirage'. This is wrong knowledge, the conviction of the presence of something where it does not actually exist. And sometimes we have indefinite knowledge embracing two alternatives, of such form as 'Either that (distant object) is a post or a person'. That is doubt.

The impression (or trace) of one of these forms of Ignorance associated with a particular moment of consciousness evident in empirical experience is the universal cause of the feeling 'I do not know'. So you cannot say that positive Ignorance is established for the waking state by the experience 'I do not know'.

Now, the proponents of positive Ignorance (as a quasi metaphysical principle) do not accept this. For them, the experience 'I do not know' does not betoken wrong knowledge, as wrong knowledge belongs to the realm of knowledge (not to that of absence of knowledge). But it does not have absence of knowledge for its object either, for there cannot be absence of knowledge in the Self, which is of the nature of knowledge. It does not imply doubt, as there is the conviction 'I do not know'. Nor could the object of the notion 'I do not know' be absence

of knowledge of any mental modifications, because knowledge of the absence of mental modifications would be impossible, either when the modifications were known or when they were not known. (17) A further reason why the experience 'I do not know' does not imply absence of mental modifications (according to the unorthodox view) is that we experience it in the presence of mental modifications but in relation to things that never can be known. So as the only remaining alternative (the upholders of this view say) we must accept that the feeling 'I do not know' implies positive Ignorance (as a quasi metaphysical principle) for its object.

But all this is wrong. For there is nothing to show that the object of experience 'I do not know' is anything beyond the three forms of ignorance that we have described above (wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt), which depend (not on unsupported hypotheses but) on instances of concrete cognition. Apart from these three forms of ignorance, no other entity called 'Ignorance' comes into our experience. And thus Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'Ignorance may be a positive wrong apprehension, or it may consist of doubt, or it may be simply failure to apprehend. It is rightly said to conceal because, when the light of discernment shines, it disappears. And the triad of non-apprehension, doubt and misapprehension are only found in the presence of some obscuring factor such as the disease of double-vision in the eyes' (Bh.G. Bh. 13.2, M.V. p. 68). The feeling 'I do not know' can apply to doubt, wrong knowledge or absence of knowledge without incongruity. For in this context the word 'knowledge' means 'right knowledge'. So we see no difficulty in applying the phrase 'I do not know' either to absence of such (right) knowledge, or to knowledge of a different nature (e.g. doubt) or to knowledge of a contradictory nature (i.e. wrong knowledge).

24. In the phrase 'I do not understand what you said', in what sense is 'What you said' an object of valid cognition?

You might (18) raise an objection against this (by attempting to show that 'what you said' did not fall within absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge or doubt). We have the experience, you might say, 'I do not understand what you said'. One cannot say (your argument would run) that there is no valid knowledge about 'what you said' here, but only doubt. For the statement 'I do not have valid knowledge about what you said' is itself the expression of a valid cognition. And 'what you said' must fall within (the hearer's) valid cognition, as it falls within *this* valid cognition. So how could it fail to be an object of valid cognition? (19) And the opponent will claim that we cannot remedy this defect in our view (and render ignorance of what was said into mere absence of knowledge) by saying 'I had no valid knowledge (in this matter) except that which informed me that I did not understand what I was told'. For the knowledge 'I had no valid knowledge' will itself be valid knowledge, and the remedy will be bedevilled by the same defect (of implying positive valid knowledge of what I was told, and hence of excluding absence of knowledge).

But all this argument is wrong. We can quite well admit that there is valid knowledge of the fact that I did not have valid knowledge of what I was told, because this does not imply that I must have had (some inscrutable form of previous) knowledge of what I was told in order to know that I did not know it. We can have the experience 'I do not know' (as mere absence of knowledge) in regard to things we shall never know, as when we assert 'I have no knowledge of a hare's horn'. Here, the immediate knowledge that enables us to assert in determinate

language 'I have no knowledge' is itself valid knowledge. But it does not imply that there was ever valid knowledge bearing on a hare's horn. The idea engendered by the phrase 'The horn of a hare' is not positive wrong knowledge like mistaking mother-of-pearl for silver, but it is not valid knowledge like perception of a pot either. So one can reply to the objector by saying that since knowledge of the horn of a hare is no more than a piece of imagination it does not imply valid knowledge, even though it can be referred to in determinate form by words. And while the cognition 'I have no knowledge of a hare's horn' is impeccable determinate knowledge, this cannot be said of the knowledge of a hare's horn itself. So the latter is nothing (and 'not having knowledge of a hare's horn' is simple absence of knowledge). So (one can refer to one's absence of knowledge without implying knowledge and) the opponent's view can be dismissed.

The truth is that a formula like 'I do not know x' is used by one who has a general (abstract) knowledge of something through words and seeks a concrete particular knowledge of it through some means of valid cognition.

To this you might raise the following objection. If the particular aspect of a thing is known, you might claim, one cannot say that one does not know the thing. But if the particular aspect of a thing is not known one cannot enquire into it. So you (cannot explain Ignorance as falling within absence of knowledge, positive knowledge and doubt and) will have to accept (our theory of) Ignorance as a positive entity that can be known. But we ask in reply to this objection 'What is this strange new rule you are appealing to according to which there cannot be enquiry into what is not known? The fact is that it is always unknown things only whose true nature everyone strives to know through the various means of knowledge. It is true that what is *totally* unknown cannot be an object of enquiry. So that is why it has been said that it is what is known in a general (abstract) way that can be an object of enquiry. You cannot claim that if the particular aspect of a thing is totally unknown it cannot be an object of enquiry. For no particular aspect of a thing can exist apart from a general aspect. And if (only) the general aspect is known there can still be enquiry into a thing (to know it in its concrete particulars, even if the latter are initially unknown).

This (explanation that enquiry follows ignorance — in the sense of absence of knowledge — of the particular nature of a thing when it is already known in a general or abstract way) also disposes of another (false) objection (against our view that ignorance can be mere absence of knowledge). The (false) objection claims that if absence of knowledge is itself an object of knowledge in the form 'I do not know', this knowledge itself constitutes a known object. For there cannot be determinate knowledge without knowledge of an object. (According to the objection, if ignorance is conceived as absence of knowledge, the expression 'I do not know' is a self-contradiction because it expresses absence of knowledge and knowledge at the same time.) But the point has been answered, because we can only feel 'I do not know' in regard to something of which there is a general knowledge. The point that the notions of general and particular and so on are themselves only imaginary conceptions that arise in regard to one and the same thing according to different standpoints from which it is viewed has also been explained above.

Hence neither the feeling 'I do not know' nor the commonly used statement 'I do not understand what you said' are a proof of the existence of positive Ignorance. Nor is its existence proved by the statement 'I do not know who I really am (am not aware of my own true nature)'. For here too the statement means 'I do not know my own Self in its particular nature', not 'I do

not have any idea of myself at all'. (20)

25. The meaning of the phrase 'I know nothing at all'

Here the following objection may be raised. It may be said that in the experience 'I am totally bemused, I do not understand what you said, I do not know my own nature or anything else', no other object of knowledge except positive ignorance remains through which such an affirmation would be explicable. But this objection should not be raised. For an experience exactly of the sort here depicted can never actually arise. For every particular experience depends on some cognition other than itself. A particular cognition focuses on its object only by withdrawing from other objects of like and different kind. So there cannot be experience, memory or imagination of anything totally independent of all other experience, memory or imagination. In this way the idea 'I know nothing' is not ignorance of all objects, but depends on knowledge of some sort. Even he who is totally bemused has knowledge of some sort, such as 'I am so and so, son of so and so'. What he lacks is particular concrete knowledge of what he is in his true nature, where he has come from, where he will go when he dies and so on. So the experience 'I know nothing at all' really only bears on the absence of such particulars in one's knowledge.

Wrong knowledge and doubt (as well as absence of knowledge) also fit well into our definition of ignorance. On this view the meaning of 'I know nothing' may be 'I know nothing rightly, but my knowledge is wrong or doubtful'. Here also, when anything whatever has been rightly known, or when there is only the feeling that it has been rightly known, there is experience of some other different thing (as well). And one should not suppose that it is possible to have the notion of wrong knowledge or doubt in relation to everything. Thus one totally bemused will know his own nature in a general way though not knowing it in a particular way, when he says, 'I know neither myself nor anything else'. And this experience is not enough to establish the existence of a (quasi metaphysical) positive Ignorance.

26. All the less can the presence of positive Ignorance be established in dreamless sleep

So it is clear that the existence of (a quasi metaphysical cosmic power or force of) positive Ignorance cannot be established for the waking state. All the less can it be proved for dreamless sleep. No such positive Ignorance has ever been experienced in dreamless sleep or ever could be.

But has it not been said that absence of experience in dreamless sleep is due to the absence of any manifesting factor (such as the mind in an active condition) and not to the absence of anything (such as positive Ignorance) to experience as an object? Certainly it has been said, but wrongly. There is nothing in dreamless sleep to decide whether absence of experience is due to absence of knowledge or to the absence of a manifesting factor (the mind being then in dissolution). And there is no manifesting factor present in dreamless sleep that would enable us to make such a decision. Our opponent's view is undermined simply by the presence of doubt. Nor is there any rule that a manifesting organ (such as the mind) is invariably

necessary for the knowledge of anything. Śrī Śaṅkara has said. 'One cannot establish any universal rule that, whenever one thing has knowledge of another, there is also an instrument of knowledge that is different from either' (Bṛhad. Bh. 4.3.7, Mādhav. p. 434, Ś.S.B. 4.292). Otherwise there could be no knowledge of the mind itself.

Perhaps you will say that though the mind is by nature non-conscious it is a transparent substance, so that it (is a special case in that it) does not require any other manifesting factor in order to be illumined by consciousness (since it is automatically illumined by a reflection of the Self) — whereas positive Ignorance (being non-transparent) does require to be illumined in order to be known. But this will not help. For a dark substance would not tolerate light at all, and the existence of such a thing could not be established even assuming the existence of a manifesting instrument. Nobody but a lunatic would go about searching for the darkness of night with a lamp. So this idea that Ignorance could be known through a manifesting factor (and so could be present in dreamless sleep but unknown on account of the absence of a manifesting factor because of the dissolution of the mind) is mere idle fancy.

Senseless also was the whole idea that the self-luminous Self could require another manifesting factor in order to experience a 'positive Ignorance' based in itself and free from any other obstructing factor. For a revealer derives its power to reveal from itself alone. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says, '(The ear has the power to reveal its own special object, sound). But that power to reveal its own special object is only found because of the presence within all of Consciousness as the light of the Self, and would not be found if the latter were not present. So to speak of (the Self as) 'the hearer of hearing' was but right' (Kena Bh. 1.2, Ś.S.B. 1.209). And the absence of experience in dreamless sleep is not due to the absence of any instrument (i.e. the mind) to reveal positive Ignorance (as would be required on the theory that positive Ignorance was present in dreamless sleep, but that we were not aware of it for lack of a cognitive instrument).

Perhaps you will then claim that there *is* experience in dreamless sleep. But even this will not help your cause. For dreamless sleep is natural for all living beings. If there were particular experience of any kind in it, that would imply that sleep had been broken. So the more reasonable view is that there is no experience in dreamless sleep of positive Ignorance as found described in the theory.

Those who propound positive Ignorance speak of Ignorance as known by the witness-consciousness. And they claim that there is no particular experience in dreamless sleep, so that it cannot be broken (before definitive waking). No one on waking up from dreamless sleep has the feeling 'During sleep I experienced (positive) Ignorance'. And the fact of positive Ignorance being witnessed in dreamless sleep is not universally recognized, and it cannot be shown that Ignorance is experienced there. Particular experience (of any kind) is not admitted for dreamless sleep and never could be. So the theory that positive Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep is refuted by the fact that it is never experienced.

27. The reflection of one awaking from dreamless sleep 'I was bemused' is not a ground for an inference establishing positive Ignorance

Perhaps you will object that one can infer the experience of positive Ignorance in dreamless

sleep through the reflection that he has on waking in the form 'I was bemused'. But this is not right. For the experience one has on waking up from sleep arises from the mental activity of comparing waking and dreamless sleep. One who says in reflection, 'I knew nothing' means 'I did not then have knowledge of plurality in the form "Here am I and here are Devadatta and the others" as one does in waking'.

Perhaps you will argue against this that there cannot ordinarily be knowledge of the non-existence of anything without positive knowledge of that thing. Nor can the one who awakens from dreamless sleep reflect over anything that he did not experience. So it cannot be that he remembers absence of knowledge. But because one has the memory of positive Ignorance contradictory to knowledge, one could not logically accept that one had experienced absence of knowledge too. But this view is wrong. For on awakening one has the memory of the non-existence of anything in the form of 'I knew nothing'.

Perhaps you will argue that if the non-existence of anything were experienced there would have to be an experiencer and so on. And this would mean that there would not have been dreamless sleep. Or if there were no experience, then how could there be any subsequent memory on waking up? Our reply is that one has to examine the meaning of the phrase 'There is the experience of the non-existence of anything'. Nobody could admit that there existed an entity called 'non-existence of anything'. The one who experienced it would exist, so there could not be absence of anything. And if there were no experiencer, 'Non-existence of anything' could not be established for lack of a witness. Nor can such a non-existence be the object of an inference. Sureśvara has said, 'He, on the other hand, who says that all is void cannot set up any inference; he has no substance about which to make a proposition; he has no well-founded rule to substantiate his proposition and no example to illustrate the rule' (B.B.V. 1.2.21). Therefore, when a person says 'I knew nothing' on awakening from dreamless sleep, the force of the statement is to affirm the existence of the experiencer and the absence of anything to experience. Otherwise, if you were to claim the presence of a certain positive attribute called 'Ignorance' both in the Self as asleep and in the Self as awake, this would imply changes in the state of the Self, which would contradict Advaita doctrine.

You will say that your doctrine only implies a change of state undergone by the Self as viewed from the standpoint of empirical experience, which does not contradict the Advaita view of the Self. But this is not so. For if your view is accepted it becomes hard to establish any final reality over and above reality as viewed from the empirical standpoint (since Ignorance with its modifications is accepted as the cause of superimposition, and therefore as not itself superimposed, and so as real). On your theory, therefore, the changes undergone by the Self would be real. But this is unacceptable for those who hold to a changeless Self.

This also disposes of another fallacy. This fallacy consists in the claim that Ignorance (though a kind of 'entity' and other than wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt) is not really positive in nature, but is only *called* positive to distinguish it from what never comes into experience, like the horn of a hare. So it is not right (says the exponent of this view) to say that we cannot distinguish the standpoints of empirical truth and final truth. But this defence is wrong. For though Ignorance in this conception may be other than that which is never experienced, this will not show that it does not have final reality. They may say that it is other than a positive existence, but they accept its existence throughout the states, and even its existence in the case of the enlightened person. This being so, they can hardly say that it is

eliminated by metaphysical knowledge, so for all these reasons they cannot show that it is not fully real, and the attempt to argue that it is 'not positive in nature' is vain. And so we conclude that the true import of the one reflecting 'I knew nothing' after awakening from sleep (has nothing to do with positive Ignorance but) is simply the affirmation 'That distinction of knower, knowledge and known, found both in waking and in dream, is not found in dreamless sleep'.

28. Knowledge of something as existent is not invariably required to recognize its non-existence

The opponent is wrong to maintain that there cannot be experience of the non-existence of anything without knowledge of that thing (so that there could not be absence of knowledge in dreamless sleep: in dreamless sleep one must have knowledge of positive Ignorance, cp. Viv. p. 74, quoted M.V. p.756). For there are examples showing that it can. Supposing it was said, 'There is no Eskimo in our society', then that would be understood by somebody who had never seen an Eskimo in his life, provided that he was sure that all citizens of this province were Kamatics. He would then be sure of the absence of people of different races (such as Eskimos), even though he might never have seen one. So there is no universal rule that for knowledge of the non-existence of anything there must always be knowledge of that thing.

Well, but could not we say that wherever there is knowledge of the non-existence of anything that thing must be known, whether 'known as known' or 'known as unknown'? (21) So the Eskimo race is 'known as unknown', and the opponent's position that there can be no knowledge of the non-existence of anything without the knowledge of that thing can be maintained.

But if that were so, then (by parity of reasoning) it would not only be for knowledge of non-existence, but for knowledge of existence also, that knowledge of something else would be required, whether as 'known' or 'unknown'. And who could assent to the (ludicrous) proposition that knowledge of one thing cannot arise unless there is knowledge of something else, and use that as a 'proof' that knowledge of absence invariably implies previous experience of the absent thing? This also rules out the view that even in the waking state the feeling '(I am bewildered), I do not know my own Self' cannot be (an example of) knowledge of one's absence of knowledge, claimed (22) on the ground that there could not be absence of such knowledge, since merely to assert it would imply knowledge both of the alleged absence of knowledge of the Self and of the Self as the one to whom it belonged.

So we conclude, in the manner earlier explained, that knowledge of the non-existence of something does not depend on knowledge of that thing. Hence the common experience 'I do not know' in regard to things that can never be known is perfectly explicable (as mere absence of knowledge). (23)

29. There can be memory even of that which has never been experienced

[Dreams are a kind of memory: but not a waking experience that is real.] It was claimed that

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there can only be memory of what has been previously experienced. But there are exceptions to this also. It is said (Yoga Vāsistha 5.49.31) ‘Sometimes all that is remembered is something previously seen. But the mind sometimes “sees” (in a kind of memory) what has never been seen as if it had been seen’. In dream thousands of memories are thrown up, and not all the objects seen in them have been seen before.

You will say that things seen in dream are always like things seen in waking, never unlike. It is just that on account of the defect of sleep things are seen in different inter-relations. In a dream a person may see himself with his head cut off and held in his hands. Now, you will say, although there is a sense in which this has never been experienced, since one cannot see one’s own head or remember it being held in one’s hands, nevertheless everyone has experience in the waking state of heads being cut off and of things being held in one’s hands. The dreamer beholds these things that he has experienced, but oddly arranged on account of the defect of sleep. All memories should be regarded in this way as distortions of things previously experienced. And so we can announce the general rule, ‘Every memory has a previous experience for its object’.

But we reply ‘No’. For you yourself have referred to the complex ‘head-cut-off-and-put-in-the-hands’. No such complex has been experienced in waking, and yet in dream it is remembered. Do you deny that it is remembered? If so, you are wrong. For there is nothing to show that memories of this kind cannot occur. But if one has a memory in dream which says ‘I saw then my head cut off and lying in my hand’ such a ‘memory’ is false, and you cannot say that it must have rested on an actual experience.

Perhaps you will argue as follows. Memory, you will say, is impossible in dream. Dreams of any kind simply arise from (jumbled) impressions of waking experience. To speak of (them as memories of) actual experience is out of place. But without an actual experience there cannot be a memory in the strict sense. So the dream-cognitions mentioned are mere erroneous cognition.

We reply that the maxim ‘No memory without actual experience’ has not yet been proved. So the claim resting on it that there is no memory in dream has not been proved either. The universal experience of everyone that dreams contain memories cannot be contradicted by a mere unsupported assertion.

Lastly, if it were really true that waking and dream were different and that dreams were composed of impressions from waking experience, the claim that it was a regular rule that things that had been experienced in the waking state were remembered in dream could be substantiated. But it will be shown again and again that this (relationship between waking and dream) is not the case (cp. paras 32,34,35,42, etc.). So the rule does not hold.

30. There is no experience of absence of knowledge in dreamless sleep

We have shown that two premises of the opponent do not hold. It is not invariably the case that knowledge of non-existence depends on knowledge of the non-existent (absent) thing, and that it is not invariably the case that memory bears on something previously experienced. It follows

that the later Advaitins were on a wrong path when they claimed to be able to infer the existence of positive Ignorance from the data of dreamless sleep and waking (in particular, their claim to be able to infer the existence of positive Ignorance from the memory 'I knew nothing' after awaking from dreamless sleep).

Or let us concede for argument's sake that the two premises did hold. Even so, this would not be enough to prove the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep. For you conceive of positive Ignorance as something essentially contradictory to knowledge. For just as a contradiction arises (according to you) on the theory that Ignorance is absence of knowledge (since this paradoxically implies knowledge of the unknown thing, whether as known or unknown), so does the same sort of contradiction arise between contradictory positive Ignorance (as conceived by you) and the cognition by which it is revealed as contradictory and cancelled, whether the latter be (as yet) known or unknown. This contradiction is what eventually arises, and not the substantiation of your theory (that positive Ignorance exists).

You also have a theory that asserts the existence of positive Ignorance and claims that it is brought to an end by a cognition (vṛtti) arising from an authoritative means of knowledge, while not being destroyed by the light of the witnessing-consciousness, since it is witnessed by the latter, just like the cognition by which it is cancelled. But this conception does not escape a defect which we have already explained. For not everyone agrees that there is a positive Ignorance illumined by the witnessing consciousness. And it has not yet been proved that such a form of Ignorance exists and can be brought to an end through a cognition arising through an authoritative means of knowledge.

So your theory could not be substantiated even if it were accepted that memory was invariably based on actual experience. And you would also have to accept that argument saying 'the matter is inexplicable otherwise', that you yourselves laid down in favour of positive Ignorance, as the very proof that establishes Ignorance as absence of knowledge.

But in fact we do not admit the experience of absence of knowledge or of anything else in dreamless sleep. Our claim is that particular experience is not then possible at all. We do not admit awareness (in dreamless sleep) of any existence or non-existence, so how can you drag in your positive Ignorance as if it were something accepted and proved? You yourself have shown that there is nothing to prove that the memory (after dreamless sleep) 'I did not know anything' refers to anything previously experienced. (24) But it does not follow from this that such a memory can prove nothing (because it proves absence of knowledge).

It might be asked, 'If this is so, how can there be valid knowledge of the fact that there are no objects in dreamless sleep?' We reply that here again the objector misunderstands what we mean. We do not claim that there are no objects in dreamless sleep merely on the basis of the memory 'I knew nothing'. On what basis then? On the basis of there being then no perception of objects and no opportunity for perception. On your theory memory is admitted. If memory is memory of what was perceived, then perception and memory (relating to dreamless sleep) cannot (on the basis of your theory) be substantiated, because they contradict one another (since you would have to claim that there was perception of positive Ignorance while the memory was 'I knew nothing'). You accept that there is the memory 'I knew nothing'. What this would demonstrate is that there was previously non-perception of anything, not that there was perception of positive Ignorance.

31. Argument to show that 'I knew nothing' is not a memory of an experience in dreamless sleep

And there is another point. Suppose we accepted the rule, 'Memory implies previous experience'. Well, we find that, whenever anything is known, it is invariably known in a state (such as waking or dream) favourable to subject-object experience (and not in dreamless sleep). Nothing to contradict this is ever reported. So how could one who intended to base an inference on what was normally perceived extend his conclusion beyond that without warrant? You might as well make such an inference as 'The eye apprehends colour. Therefore all the other senses must apprehend colour, because they share with the eye the common feature of being a sense-organ'. So we must accept that the feeling 'I did not know anything' is not memory of sleep. Or even if it were a memory, it would not be established that it was based on previous experience. It is an appearance of a memory that is in fact in contradiction with what is experienced in dreamless sleep — and it must be explained in some other way, but not by importing positive Ignorance.

SECTION 3: ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO ACCEPT POSITIVE IGNORANCE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE WORLD OF WAKING EXPERIENCE

32. Waking and dream do not stand as cause and effect

Here is another point to consider. It is clear, you might claim, that dream is different from waking because it is composed of mere impressions (*vāsanā*). Impressions of the waking world stand (on such a view) as the cause of the dream-world. But on the view of him who does not accept positive Ignorance, you will say, there is nothing that could cause the re-manifestation of the world of waking after it had vanished in dreamless sleep. And yet there must be such a cause. Otherwise, having totally disappeared in dreamless sleep, the world would re-emerge without a cause. (25) You will say, therefore, that to avoid this consequence the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep must be accepted.

But anyone who raised that difficulty should be asked how he knew that dreams were caused by impressions from waking experience. Perhaps the reply will be given that dreams are many and not governed by uniform rules, whereas the things of the waking state have uniformity, and the waking state therefore represents things as they really are. But the dreamer can only see objects *like* those of the waking world, so dream is an effect of waking.

However, the question then arises about when one knows that a dream is fleeting. Is it during the experience of the dream or at another time? Why does this matter? Well, if there had been certitude during the dream itself that the dream was fleeting, just as at the time of waking one had the conviction that the objects of the waking world were permanent and fixed, then waking and dream would be different in kind. But the fact is that it is only in the subsequent waking state that you are aware of the transiency of the dream-world. Therefore, since both the dream and the waking worlds suggest, while they are being experienced, that they are permanent, nothing can be established (by appeal to the transiency of dream). Śrī Śaṅkara has

said: 'But are not the objects beheld in dream found to be unreal by a person when he wakes up? True. But they are only false from the standpoint of waking experience, not false in their true nature as the Self. And similarly, the objects of waking experience are false in relation to dream experience, but not in their own true nature (as the Self)' (Chānd. Bh. 8.5.4, Ś.S.B. 2.227). Space, time and causation hold within dreams and waking, each according to their kind. The body, sense-organs and mind accepted as belonging to the waking state do not exist in what is (later) realized to have been the dream-state. Thus we have at Gauḍapāda Kārikā 4.36, 'And the body that is seen (in dream) as roving about is itself unreal, for on waking up we are aware of quite a different body still remaining at the place where it was at the time of going to sleep'. If it were not for this distinction between the realms of dream and waking the objects of one realm would be of service in the other. But they are not. So we cannot accept that dream and waking stand in the relation of effect and cause. Śrī Śaṅkara, too, introducing Kārikā 4.41, says 'The author introduces the next verse to avert the suspicion that the states of dream and waking, both unreal, stand to one another as effect and cause'. And no one could accept that the unreal proceeded from the real either. Śaṅkara also says, 'And though you may think that the dream-experience springs from a waking experience that is real, this view is wrong. It is not generally admitted that anything unreal can spring from anything real' (G.K.Bh. 4.38, Ś.S.B. 2.221).

You have claimed that the objects of waking experience are real and permanent. And dream is manifestly transitory and illusory. So how could unreal dream-vision arise from a waking realm that was real? Nor could the realm of waking arise from the unreal dream-world. Śrī Gauḍapāda said: 'Neither the real nor the unreal can be caused by the unreal. Nor can the real (since it must be eternal) be caused by the real. So how could the real cause the unreal?' (G.K. 4.40).

So, even if one accepted that the realm of waking was real and permanent, one could not establish that waking and dream are cause and effect.

33. The reality and the permanence of the waking world cannot be established

And the realm of waking cannot be real and permanent. You will object that everyone experiences the reality and permanence of the realm of waking. Does not everyone proceed on the basis, 'This is my same house, this is my same land, this is my same son, and all these and the rest existed yesterday and will exist tomorrow'? And do not people feel 'I have got this today and will get that tomorrow'? If the notion of permanence were undermined everywhere in the waking realm, not only would this make an end of all worldly undertakings, but 'hearing' and all the other activities taught in the Veda would be rendered meaningless, as there would be the conviction that everything was transitory.

We reply that we do not claim that there is no *notion* of permanence in regard to the things of the waking realm. What we say is that permanence is not the final truth about them. All activity in the world is based on the idea of permanence. But it will not undermine practical experience if we point out that there is no need for it to be based on *real* permanence.

You may object that although one could have activity based on the mere notion of permanence, such activity would be vain. Nobody's hunger is satisfied by eating imaginary

food. But the objection is wrong. For just as the cause is imagined to be real, so is the result. When cause, result, action, factors of action and so on are all taken as real, no one can imagine that their activity will be without result. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says: ‘And so from the experience (notion) of a cause — which is a piece of imagination — follows the experience of a result. From this follows memory of cause and result, and from this further experience of them. In this way the soul imagines many kinds of external objects, acts, factors of action and results. From these arise further memory of these distinctions, and from that memory there arise further experiences of them. In this way the soul imagines many kinds of external objects and mental ideas standing to one another as cause and effect’ (G.K.Bh. 2.16). Thus we conclude that we have the notion of permanence in the waking world, but this imagined permanence is illusory (vitatha). Or, as Śrī Śaṅkara expresses it, ‘It might be argued that... dream-experience is fleeting, while waking experience proves durable. This is true enough for those who lack the power to discriminate. (But those who possess the power of discrimination do not recognize that anything that is real can come into being’, G.K. Bh. 4.37, intro., Ś.S.B. 2.221).

Now, it was claimed above that there was experience of the waking world as permanent and durable. For we sometimes have the feeling ‘I had experience of this very object yesterday’. Here there arises this question. Objects are found to be recognized in dream and waking alike. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said, ‘(Nothing is unreal as the Self.) It is the determinate form of all things, and that only, which is caused by false notions’ (Chānd. Bh. 8.5.4, Ś.S.B. 2.227). So how could anyone who claimed that objects were fleeting in dream but permanent in waking fail to be contradicting himself? You will perhaps reply that dream-recognition is itself contradicted, whereas waking recognition is not. It is true. But neither dream-recognition nor waking recognition are contradicted in their dream-time or waking time respectively. Otherwise, if dream-recognition were contradicted within the dream-time, the state would cease to be one of dream, since the notion ‘This is a dream’ would occur in the middle of it. For what makes a dream a dream is the fact of one’s not being aware during the course of it that it is subject to cancellation, whereas it undergoes cancellation afterwards. Therefore all permanence yielding recognition based on previous experience is only apprehended as such through a notion of permanence arising according to the standards of permanence peculiar to the time of apprehension (be the latter waking time or the time pertaining to dream). Whatever is contradicted by later experience is determined as transient.

Dream is adjudged illusory in present-time waking, and there is no experience anywhere of the contradiction and elimination of present-time waking, so that dream and present-time waking appear to be different. Nevertheless, one should not forget that a dream, too, though now adjudged illusory, manifested during its own dream-time as if it were waking experience, different from previous dreams and not subject to contradiction at any stage. From this we may conclude that waking (likewise) is not permanent or real. How, then, could waking and dream stand as cause and effect?

34. There is no distinction between
the waking world as external
and dream as mental

But is it not the case that the objects experienced in the realm of waking are not merely mental (as in dream) but also external? The objects seen in dream, though manifesting as if external,

turn out to have been merely imagined in the mind: but it is not the case that one's house and so on as experienced in waking are non-external in this way. The sense we have in a dream of a harmony subsisting between inter-related parts of a reality that is one is a mere appearance, since that 'reality' is mental. Even other people in the dream who recognize the dreamer must also be his own mental creations; or otherwise, when he awoke they would awaken with him. But in the waking state there is one reality universally known by everybody, perceived as the same by each person, not mental but external. How could this reality reduce itself to equality with dreams? Thus although waking and dream are the same in point of presence of recognition, harmony and so on, nevertheless the distinction between 'external' and 'mental' differentiates waking from dream. The waking realm is real from the mere fact of being external; because dream is mental it must arise from impressions from waking, so that the relation between the two states is clear.

But all this is wrong, as both waking and dream are imagined. Śrī Gaudapāda has said, 'Experiences conditioned by the time-scale of one's own mind alone (dreams and day-dreams, etc.) are (called) "internal"; experiences conditioned by a two-fold time-scale (i.e. experiences lasting "as long as" something that appears to be external to the mind) are (called) "external". But both alike are imagined. The (supposed) distinction between the two kinds of experience is itself imagined' (G.K. 2.14). Both the external and the mental are imagined, as the same distinction (between apparent 'external' and apparent 'mental') is found in dream. The same reasoning that leads us to conclude that the dream-experiences are mental leads us to conclude that the objects of the waking world are mental too. Thus we find in Śrī Śaṅkara's writings the phrase 'Mental objects are verily external, and external objects are verily mental' (Chānd. Bh. 8.5.4). Just as the objects seen in dream are not seen in waking, so the objects of the waking world are not seen in dream. On that score there is no difference between them. So it was the remark of a simpleton to say that because dream was mental it owed its origin to waking. All experience comes as present experience and orders past and future succession in relation to that, the same whether in dream or in waking. In both states all things are associated with the ideas of past, present and future, which suggests that they are mental in character, in the manner already indicated. There is no difference between the two states on that score.

35. Enquiry into the appearance of permanence

And our claim is that the experience we have of the objects of the world as being durable and permanent is false. For example, we may have the experience 'I perceived this same object yesterday'. But this in fact only amounts to a memory of a thing we perceived yesterday. The remembered thing is not being perceived now like the present object of perception. To 'recognize' the remembered thing and the thing being presently perceived as 'the same' is convenient for practical purposes. But it will not stand critical examination, there being no experience to support it. There is therefore no permanence in objects of perception. The conclusion is that the permanence of perceived objects is just a conviction on the part of materialists who do not have the power of discrimination. Thus we read in the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha, 'Just as these other dream-visions in the night come and go in instant, so do these visions that we have of the material world' (Y.V. 5.77.37). (26)

When there is the notion 'This is that same world' there cannot in fact be a world that would justify such a 'recognition'. If this world of multiplicity were real and continuous, even

then it would require another being outside itself to recognize it as such, as the multiple cannot be self-luminous. (27) Nor is it a fact that this world *is* continuous, for it is totally absent except in the waking state. And the Self could not recognize it as a continuously existent reality, for the reason just given. One who witnesses the breaks in anything cannot believe in its continuous identity, especially when there is no experience to support such a belief. Nor does any third reality apart from the Self and the not-self exist that could stand as that which recognized the continuous identity of the world of multiplicity. Hence no identity (and durability) can be recognized in the world.

Again, the following arguments are found. There are recognizers, it is said, in dream, who must themselves be mental creations, and that is proper in the dream-state, where recognition must be illusory. Against this the defenders of recognition of objects as something valid reply that if there were a universal rule that all recognizers were mental creations the absurd result would follow that recognizers in the waking state would have to be mental creations. Therefore the truth is that recognition in dream is the private work of the dreamer, while what is recognized in the waking world is recognized by everyone. But this defence of recognition as valid is also untenable. For it has been shown that the experience of permanence (of objects) in waking is a mere false appearance. So it cannot be claimed that there is permanence in the world of objects merely because people go on saying that there is.

When the notion that there is permanence (and that there are permanent objects) in the realm of waking experience has been undermined in this way, it becomes impossible to show that there is any difference between dream and waking. For both consist of mere illusory phenomena. That is why Śrī Śaṅkara said, 'Therefore in dream it (the soul) experiences "worlds" (situations) which do not really exist and which are falsely superimposed on the Self as if they really belonged to it. And one should realize that this is exactly what happens in the waking state also' (Bṛhad. Bh. 2.1.18 (*ad fin.*), Ś.S.B. 3.100 f.). Both states (dream and waking) engender within their own time-period the notion that the objects belonging to them are real. It is proper to call both of them 'dream' because both suggest to the experiencer that he is awake, without there being any real grounds for it. (28).

Since both these states are thus dreams (cp. Śaṅkara, 'these dreams called waking, dream and dreamless sleep, Ait. Bh. 1.3.12, Ś.S.B. 3.6), neither can be regarded as cause of the other. Dreams may be regarded either as independent of any cause or as dependent on an imaginary cause. Expounding the first view we have the text, '(In the same way as one is sometimes the victim of hallucinations in the waking state) so in dream one imagines illusory phenomena like elephants as if one were actually seeing them. One sees them only in dream: they do not derive from waking experience' (Śaṅkara, G.K. Bh. 4.41). Expounding the second view we have, 'The production of phenomena is comparable to an illusion, and that illusion (like all illusions) itself has no existence' (Gaudapāda, G.K. 4.58). This is how the apparent world of plurality in the waking state should be understood. It does not depend on positive Ignorance. So it is not right to assume the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep to account for it.

36. Just as one can account for awakening from dream without appeal to positive Ignorance, so can one account for awakening from dreamless sleep without the assumption of positive Ignorance

In dream the world of waking does not exist. But when a person has awoken from dream into the different state of waking he perceives a world that was not present in dream. The same will occur when he has awoken from dreamless sleep. What is the need for assuming positive Ignorance?

But is not positive Ignorance present in dreams? So how could our example be accepted? Do not say so. For we do not actually experience in dream anything we could label 'positive Ignorance' over and above the three forms of ignorance (mentioned by Śrī Śaṅkara) — wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt. To imagine a 'positive Ignorance' beyond these (as their supposed cause) is both unjustifiable and useless. Also, if positive Ignorance really existed in dream, how could there be perception of the world on the part of one who had woken up? One cannot claim that the waking world is found in dream. Nor can one claim that the Ignorance pertaining to dream is the cause of the world of waking, as the opposite hypothesis is equally possible. And it has been shown above (paras 32 and 35) that dream and waking do not stand in causal relation. Nor does any cause exist which could bring the (alleged) positive Ignorance constituting the waking world into being after the cessation, on the cessation of the dream, of the (alleged) positive Ignorance constituting the dream. There is thus no positive Ignorance producing experience of the waking world different from the factors that produced dream (absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt). If, on the other hand, it be assumed that there is one positive Ignorance present both in dream and waking, then, since dream and waking would be effects of the same one cause, positive Ignorance, there would be nothing to explain how there could be the perception of two different (and mutually exclusive worlds), which is a bad difficulty. For you cannot just blandly assume that positive Ignorance spontaneously withdraws the dream-world and assumes the form of the waking world without cause. To assume this would be to (identify your 'Ignorance' with 'Nature' and so to) betray contamination either by (the materialism of) the Naturalists or by (the dualism of) the Sāṃkhyas. Another point is that if one accepted that a dream could be cancelled and revealed as illusory while the Ignorance that produced it had not ceased, then one ought likewise to admit that all worldly experience and transmigration could be cancelled and revealed as unreal through metaphysical knowledge without the cessation of positive Ignorance (which the opponent could not accept).

Perhaps you will argue as follows. There is one positive Ignorance in dream and waking, you may say, but it has two forms, so that the objections raised above do not apply. When that form of Ignorance which assumes the aspect of dream comes to an end, there is no logical difficulty if waking experience continues. For that specific form of Ignorance that causes it may still exist in the waking state. But this argument is also wrong. For we should have to (and would not be able to) point to a cause for the cessation of this or that different form of Ignorance. (Metaphysical knowledge, for instance, could not be the cause, as it would extirpate *both* forms of Ignorance.) And one cannot sustain the proposition 'Ignorance has different varieties'. We shall be refuting the doctrine that Ignorance has different forms at the proper place below (cp. para 61). So the fact remains that even if one accepts the presence of positive Ignorance in dream one cannot account for the perception of the waking world on the part of one who has

awoken from dream. And the fact that one perceives the waking world on awakening from dreamless sleep may be cited as a parallel example indicating the impossibility of positive Ignorance just as effectively as the fact of perceiving it on waking up from dream does.

**37. Consideration of the theory that
dream-effects (only) are purely phenomenal**

The above is also enough to refute those who say that although there is only one Ignorance in dream and waking, nevertheless dream is different on account of the presence of an additional defect. On account of this extra defect (they claim) it is justifiable to speak of dream as 'purely phenomenal' (prātibhāsika), while the realm of waking, as just a plain product of Ignorance, has practical reality (vyāvahārika). (29) So that explains (they say) how there is perception of the waking world after a dream has been contradicted and revealed as purely phenomenal. Parallel with this, when purely phenomenal objects like shell-silver are contradicted and revealed as illusory in waking experience, the latter as a whole is not contradicted and revealed as illusory. For when the illusory silver produced by Ignorance associated with an extra defect (e.g. mental greed for silver) is brought to an end (by knowledge of the mother-of-pearl) that does not mean that Ignorance in general is brought to an end.

But this is wrong, because there is nothing to prove that any extra defect above Ignorance is present in dream and absent in waking. Both appear as waking during their own time of manifestation. During the time of dream there is no awareness that it is a dream, or that the dream is arising on account of the additional defect of sleep. When there is nothing to prove any extra defect in dream, how can one establish a distinction between the objects perceived in dream as 'purely phenomenal' and those of waking as 'of practical reality', when both (according to you) are 'transformations' (parināma) of Ignorance? Nor can you claim that there is an obvious difference because pots and so on in waking are produced as parts of (more permanent substances such as) clay and so on. For in dream also effects (like dream-clay) may have parts during the time of the dream. And it will also be difficult for those who accept a root-Ignorance to explain why purely phenomenal effects are not produced in dreamless sleep. One could not say that no purely phenomenal objects are produced in dreamless sleep because of the absence in that state of mind as efficient cause. For it will be shown below (para 39) how, if there were no efficient cause in dreamless sleep, no efficient cause could ever arise in it, and in that case there could be no awakening from it.

**38. How there is no proof of difference
of nature amongst purely phenomenal things**

And this (elimination of the notion of a defect) also demolishes another theory. According to this theory, illusory shell-silver is a modification of the 'effect-Avidyā' (tūlavidyā) which, while resting in pure Consciousness, is circumscribed by the shell, and is not a modification of 'root-Avidyā' (mūlavidyā, which, in so far as it is the material cause of the mother-of-pearl as substratum of the silver-illusion, remains unchanged). On this view, amongst purely illusory phenomena, some are effects of root-Ignorance, some are effects of effect-Ignorance. But this theory is wrong, because it would imply that all effects were purely phenomenal like shell-silver. One could not parry this on the ground that transformations of effect-Ignorance through a defect

were not the universal rule (so that there could be purely phenomenal illusions based on a defect, while transformations of root-Ignorance in the absence of a defect had practical validity). For defects are not universally found in association with erroneous cognition. The superimposition of the appearance of a tent-like shape and contamination by dust or the vapour of clouds on the pure ether of the sky does not depend on any special defect. And one cannot say that Ignorance itself is the defect. For that would be the same in the case of shell-silver, so that the same difficulty would follow — everything everywhere always would be a shell-silver type error. And all this is a baseless fabric anyway, as there is no evidence for effect-Ignorance (*tūlāvidyā*) any more than there is for root-Ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*). And as the problem of different forms of Ignorance will be examined at the proper place (cp. para 61 below) we need not labour the point here.

Thus no reason can be found for characterizing dream as purely phenomenal and waking as having (the higher reality-grade of) practical validity. There is in fact no difference (in point of reality-grade) between the two states. It was therefore correct to say that, just as one who has passed from dream to waking perceives the waking world so also does the one who has passed from dreamless sleep to waking, without dependence on positive Ignorance in either case.

39. Even on the assumption of a root-Ignorance,
the difficulty of accounting for perception
of the world of waking experience remains

Even if a positive root-Ignorance is accepted, the question of how we come to perceive the world remains a thorny one. The difficulties arise as follows. Should one regard dreamless sleep as depending on or as not depending on an efficient cause? If no efficient cause were involved, then either everyone would be always in dreamless sleep or else there would be no dreamless sleep at all — and no one could accept that.

So let us suppose that dreamless sleep depends on an efficient cause. In that case, we should consider whether that efficient cause was Ignorance or something else. If it were Ignorance, then (the absurd conclusion would follow that) everyone would be in dreamless sleep all the time. (An efficient cause, like a chemical law, operates constantly while in being, unless there is an impediment.) And this would last for everyone until final liberation with the death of the body, for the theorists under discussion hold that even the one liberated in life is associated with Ignorance.

Well, let us suppose that the efficient cause for dreamless sleep is something other than Ignorance. But in that case, unacceptable results follow, whether one takes such a cause as accompanying dreamless sleep or not. If the cause accompanied dreamless sleep we could never awaken out of the latter. If the cause did not accompany it, how could dreamless sleep be maintained in being? It will not avail to point out that the removal of the efficient cause in the case of the potter's stick (30) does not imply that the pot can no longer continue in existence. For the state of dreamless sleep is not a material substance like a pot that it should have characteristics like a separate material and efficient cause. Therefore clay, pot, stick and so on are not a relevant example to explain it.

Or let us assume for argument (even though it is not really possible) that sleep could

continue unbroken even though its efficient cause broke off. Even then, there will still be a defect concealing the truth. For it will be impossible to explain how Ignorance, the cause of perception of the waking world, can be present for a time in dreamless sleep without its natural effect, the waking world, manifesting.

Against this you might argue as follows. Even when the material cause, clay, is present, there will be no production of pots if the stick and other efficient causes are absent. So let it be the same here (i.e. the world does not manifest in dreamless sleep for lack of an efficient cause). Not so. For on this theory dreamless sleep could never come to an end. For if there were no efficient cause present in dreamless sleep to promote manifestation of the waking world, how could one claim that such a cause came into being to promote manifestation later?

Against this you might claim that there could be an impression (*samskāra*) remaining in dreamless sleep left by previous action. In the seed of a banyan tree (you might argue) there lies a potency towards the production of a new tree. But it will burst forth into a shoot only with the full co-operation of other necessary factors, such as a sufficient supply of good earth, and after activity such as watering. Even when these factors are present the shoot bursts forth only at its natural time, not indifferently at any time. In the same way, in the present case, though the support of the latent impression left by action is there, the waking world does not manifest after the onset of dreamless sleep before the lapse of a certain time: it manifests only at its appointed time (i.e. as conditioned by the impressions).

Here, however, we ask what the cause is that prompts the impressions to produce their result. You cannot just say that the seed has a natural knowledge of the moment when the impressions of action are ready to unfold, so that there is no need to look for any further cause. For we have already shown (beginning of the present para) how, even accepting Ignorance, the waking world would on this basis either always be perceived or never be perceived. And you have not yet established either the existence or the nature of positive Ignorance. How could you fail to be an object of derision to critical philosophers when you set out to prove the presence in dreamless sleep of an Ignorance whose nature has not been established, basing yourself on the unproved proposition 'The nature of Ignorance is that it is that which undergoes modification (*parinama*) into the form of the world'? Nor can you appeal to the maxim 'What is actually perceived can never be regarded as unproved'. For neither the positive Ignorance which you proclaim nor its modification are to be perceived anywhere.

Thus even if the existence of a positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep were conceded, that would not suffice to explain the perception of the world of waking experience. And if, to effect this, it were claimed that Ignorance underwent modification to assume the form of the waking world, that would be just one extra unproved assumption. Rather than rely on two unproved assumptions, it would be better to explain the perception of the world of waking in some other way. So one should not resort to claiming the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep even to explain perception of the world in the waking state.

Now, a world (*prapañca*) may also be defined as a system of causes and effects. For one cannot conceive of causes and effects without a world. There is no evidence for such a thing. Conversely, the word 'world' is unintelligible without knowledge of the presence of cause and effect. For in a world, cause and effect are invariably found operating throughout. This being so, it is illogical to accept that a world itself could come into being through any cause. So it will

not do to say that one has to accept that the positive Ignorance of dreamless sleep is the cause of the world. There can be no previous time to call time into being, no space to produce space. Similarly one cannot demand an extra cause as cause of the universe that is pervaded by the notion of causality, since the idea would imply logical fallacies such as self-dependence. (31) Vedāntins do not hold that time, space, mind, atoms and so forth are eternal realities, that our example could be contradicted. Śrī Śaṅkara said, '(The ether... (cannot be eternal as the Vaiśeṣikas hold, but must be a product of modification.) And space, time and the primary atoms (of the Vaiśeṣika system) must also be effects' (B.S.Bh. 2.2.7, Ś.S.B. 4.246). Time and the rest are illusory modifications of the Self.

Perhaps you will argue that positive Ignorance itself falls within the world. Although the world forms a system of causes and effects, you may say, nevertheless positive Ignorance, standing within that world, may be regarded without contradiction as the cause of what differs from it. My objection, you might say, would only hold if we were seeking for the cause of the whole universe, including positive Ignorance. But that is not what we are seeking, so my objection does not hold. But I reply that this is wrong. If positive Ignorance existed within the world-system, it would have to have a cause. And you cannot say that it has no cause because it is beginningless, because we have already shown that Ignorance can no more be beginningless than there can be fragrance emanating from a lotus growing in the sky. (32)

So the effort to maintain that one has to accept a 'causal Ignorance' (kāranajñāna) to explain the creation of the world is useless.

40. How there is no need to accept positive Ignorance to explain how the world of waking experience is perceived, since that world is illusory (mithyā)

And there is another point. One must agree that waking dissolves into dreamless sleep just like dream. Then what is there whereby the one who has awoken from dreamless sleep could know that this waking world is different from an illusory dream? It has already been explained (para 35 above) how there is no characteristic of waking experience whereby it could be distinguished from dream. The distinction between dream and waking cannot be supported by reason. Waking is similar to illusory dream in every respect. How, then, can we presume to argue for the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep on the basis of illusory and imaginary perceptions of illusory objects in the waking state? It is like inferring the presence of fire (on a distant hill) from an illusory vision of smoke (i.e. from a dust-cloud hanging round the hill and taken for smoke).

Well, let us suppose it is accepted that we cannot infer directly from our perceptions of the waking world that positive Ignorance must be present in dreamless sleep, to stand as the cause of the latter. But could we not say that we are forced to assume the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep on the ground that the perception of the waking world afterwards would otherwise be inexplicable? Examples such as that of the manifestation of illusory silver in mother-of-pearl, followed by its cancellation and abolition, are found to be inexplicable without appeal to positive Ignorance as the material cause of the false appearance. And in the same way, does not the perception of the waking world prove the presence of positive Ignorance in

dreamless sleep as the material cause of the waking world?

Not so. For an illusory object does not require a material cause. We cannot say that a thing belongs to a system of causes and effects and at the same time is false. This will become clear later (paras 128 and 129) when we explain the nature of false appearance.

And so the general conclusion of our argument is that there are no grounds for resorting to the assumption of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep in order to explain the perception of the world of waking.

SECTION 4: ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO ACCEPT POSITIVE IGNORANCE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SOUL AND THE ABSOLUTE

41. The view that one must accept a distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute even in dreamless sleep

On this subject people sometimes speak as follows. We do not lay so much stress (they say) on making a distinction between the 'practical reality' (vyavaharika-sattva) of waking and the purely phenomenal character (pratibhāsika-sattva) of dream. For different methods of teaching are devised for students at different stages, and the traditional texts and the spiritual teachers conform to them. Some metaphysically naïve people suppose that waking has more reality than dream. In consonance with this standpoint there is given this teaching about a distinction between practical reality and purely phenomenal being (where the whole being of objects lies in their manifestation). In truth, however, the correct view is that the whole realm of the objectively perceived is purely phenomenal like a dream, because its projection and its perception are one (drsti-srstatvāt). For world-projection (creation) is the vision a person has on awakening from dreamless sleep. And world-dissolution is the non-perception one has in dreamless sleep. Thus we have various Vedic texts to this effect, such as 'From this being in the body come forth all living creatures, all worlds, all the Vedas, all the gods and all beings' (Maitrī 6.32, and for the connection with awakening from dreamless sleep, cp. Brhad. 2.1.19-20). And the Smṛti says, 'All beings are like bubbles, and come from the womb of Ignorance; having risen for an instant they dissolve back into the one ocean of Consciousness'. (Y.V. 6 (1). 127.20, quoted Madhusūdana, A. S. ed. Yogīndrānanda. I. p. 469)

Thus the proponents of this view maintain that no harm results to their position if no distinction can be established between dream and waking, since all duality is purely phenomenal. Nevertheless, they admit that if objects are not annihilated before direct experience of the Self (in liberation) some account must be given of what happens to them in dreamless sleep. Otherwise, since no distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute is apprehended in dreamless sleep, no such distinction would exist, and there would be liberation every time there was dreamless sleep, followed by a return to bondage on waking. And that is not acceptable. (This consequence is unacceptable because it would mean that liberation could always be followed by a return to bondage, and could never be secure.) So, in order to avoid the idea that there is liberation in dreamless sleep, it must be accepted that there is a distinction

between the soul and the Absolute in that state.

Further, in the course of refuting the Buddhists, it is taught in the Brahma Sūtras, and in Śaṅkara's commentary on them (B.S.Bh. 2.2.25), and in other classical works, that the objects of the waking world have permanence as there is recognition and so on. And there would be contradiction with that if it were denied that the objects of the waking world had permanence of any kind. So, in order to offset this, it must be accepted that the objects of the waking world remain in being in dreamless sleep in the form of root-Ignorance.

Another point is that a distinction between the Absolute and the individual soul is effected by ignorance. If that distinction were absent in dreamless sleep, the ignorance pertaining to that state would afflict the Absolute (which is absurd). So, to avoid this, we must affirm a beginningless distinction between the Absolute and the soul, which must also obtain in dreamless sleep. And this distinction must be assumed to depend on Ignorance. The relation between Ignorance and the Self is itself conditioned by Ignorance, though it does not have Ignorance for its material cause. And the same is the case with the distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute.

42. There is no distinction, conditioned by Ignorance, between the individual soul and the Absolute

But the above view (outlined in para 41) is speciously attractive only for lack of reflection. It was said, for instance, that if objects were never annihilated before direct experience of the Self, one has to explain what happens to them (in dreamless sleep). Here, one has to ask what is meant by the word 'annihilated'. Does annihilation mean literal physical annihilation, or does it mean cancellation and revelation as illusory through knowledge of the real substratum? It cannot mean literal physical annihilation, since (in our school) we all admit that objects are illusory (*mithyā*, so that there is nothing that could be destroyed). But on the second view, how can a person (like the exponent of positive Ignorance) first admit that all objects have purely phenomenal existence only (i.e. have their existence limited to their manifestation), and then speak without contradiction of their unmanifest (causal) state (*avastha*)?

Perhaps you will claim that projection identified with perception is not the only cause of illusion. For there are beginningless illusions (where projection does not apply), such as the connection between the individual soul and the Absolute, and for which there would have to be other causes of falsity, such as 'the (mere) fact of being perceived' (On 'the fact of being perceived' as a sufficient cause for illusion, see Śaṅkara, G.K.Bh. 2.4, Ś.S.B. 2.217.) But even on this basis the assumption of an *unperceived* distinction between the soul and the Absolute (in dreamless sleep) would remain unproved, and, (because the distinction was unperceived), useless.

You will perhaps argue that the distinction between the soul and the Absolute in dreamless sleep has been proved, because it was shown that the awakening of someone from dreamless sleep was inexplicable without it (cp. above, para 40). And it is not useless, since it (asserts the existence of a separate and eternal Absolute and thereby) serves to refute the doctrine of the Buddhists that all is momentary. But this is wrong. For, once the standpoint that projection and perception are one (*drsti-srsti-vāda*) has been adopted, there is no longer any

point in investigating how awakening from dreamless sleep can occur. For it will have been accepted that everything is known in the manner of a dream, and not as anything real. So awakening from dreamless sleep will fall into this category (of being unreal like a dream, and not requiring or being capable of an explanation).

If you ask how the permanence of (the objects of) the world can be established on this basis, we reply (happily) that it cannot. For on the doctrine that projection and perception are one there is no occasion for establishing the permanence of objects. But will not this imply association with the Buddhist doctrine that all is momentary, and hence stand in contradiction with the commentaries of Śrī Saṃkara? Not so. For there is no law that one's only course to escape undesirable consequences is to accept your unproved hypothesis. We shall show later (see the reference to Śaṃkara, T.T. prose section 109, at para 89 below) how the difficulty you mention does not arise.

Perhaps you will continue to argue that distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute based on Ignorance must be accepted, otherwise inextricable association with Ignorance will be attributed to the Absolute (i.e. since the soul will be non-different from the Absolute, Ignorance will afflict the Absolute). But this is wrong, as it will lead to the fallacy of mutual dependence. For Ignorance itself could only exist on the basis of the prior (circular) distinction, 'there is Ignorance of the Absolute in the soul'. (33) So how could there be a distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute based on Ignorance?

To this you might reply that we are familiar with the situation 'That is different from this' Here, difference is by nature associated with difference. So why should not Ignorance set up a distinction, even if it is by nature associated with that distinction? Not so. A difference cannot be established without the prior establishment of the mutual distinction of the two different things. (While practical life naturally depends on difference), the attempt to establish the existence of difference on a rational basis fails, because there is mutual dependence between the presence of difference and the fact of the two different things being mutually distinct. In the same way, there is mutual dependence between Ignorance and the presence of difference between the soul and the Absolute. Each depends on the other.

43. The notion of beginningless Ignorance is indefensible

Perhaps you will say that there is no problem here, because Ignorance and the distinction between the soul and the Absolute go back together in a beginningless series like seed and sprout (cp. Mandana, B. Sid. p. 10, quoted M.V. p. 265). But this is wrong. For resort to the universal panacea of the appeal to 'beginninglessness' is what occurs when the disputant does not know what to say for an answer. And also because it is in truth difficult to prove that anything is beginningless. It is no good saying that an example has been given (that of seed and sprout). Nothing is proved merely by citing an example (without clearly explaining the legitimacy, relevance, purpose, limits and so on). And after citing an example you have to go on afterwards to show that it illustrates something else by virtue of its similarity. There is in fact no example to illustrate beginninglessness. Nobody has ever perceived the beginninglessness of either a seed or a sprout. Nor does any entity called series-of-seeds-and-sprouts exist over and above the individual manifestations of seeds and their sprouts. The fact that nothing is beginningless is shown by the very example (seed and sprout) quoted to prove

beginninglessness. As Śrī Gauḍapāda has said, 'The example of seed and sprout always begs the question' (G.K. 4.20, cp. Ś.S.B. 2.204 f.). (34)

Perhaps you will claim that it is only Ignorance that is beginningless, not the alleged beginningless cycle of Ignorance and the distinction of an individual soul from the Absolute. For it is the doctrine of our school (you will say) that all distinction is wrought by Ignorance. And if all Ignorance has a beginning it would depend on an efficient cause, and that on another, leading to infinite regress. And liberation is unthinkable without its special cause, the abolition of Ignorance. So we accept the natural beginninglessness of root-Ignorance (you will say), in accordance with an ancient verse from the teachers of our school, which runs 'There are six beginningless principles in our system — the individual soul, the Lord, pure Consciousness, the distinction between the soul and the Lord, Ignorance and the connection of Ignorance with Consciousness'. (35)

To this we reply that if you are dissatisfied with the two earlier hypotheses, that is all very well. But we cannot regard your own hypothesis as faultless. For a beginningless Ignorance could not in fact *be* uprooted, so your theory would imply the impossibility of liberation. Śrī Gauḍapāda says, 'One cannot prove that reincarnation is beginningless but has an end' (G.K. 4.30). And on this Śrī Śaṅkara comments, 'Nothing is found in the world that is beginningless and has an end'.

You will perhaps reply that the non-existence of a thing before its production, though beginningless, comes to an end with the production of that thing. (36) Thus the Buddhists hold that, through the accumulated power of meditations on reality, the beginningless stream of (false) impressions (that constitute worldly experience) is brought to an end. The Logicians hold that the stream of false cognitions, (whereby the soul, though really separate, identifies itself with the body), comes to an end, though it is beginningless. The Sāṅkhyas hold that metaphysical non-discrimination (whereby the soul feels identified with the mind), though beginningless, comes to an end through the rise of discrimination. The ritualists (Mīmāṃsakas) hold that ignorance of the truth about the results of our deeds in lives to come, (though beginningless), comes to an end (through suitable practice of ritual). So why should not this beginningless metaphysical Ignorance end with the rise of metaphysical knowledge?

But this argument is unacceptable. For one does not abolish the defects of one's own system merely by cataloguing the erroneous beliefs found in the systems of others. The examples cited have no probative force, because the very concept of beginninglessness itself is open to criticism. One cannot claim that the view that what is beginningless can have an end is beyond criticism just because all philosophers are driven to have recourse to it. For the classical authors of Vedānta (Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara) do not have recourse to the theory of beginninglessness. How this is so will become clear from what follows.

An example appealing to the non-existence of a thing before its production is in one sense out of place in the present context. For you favour the conception of Ignorance as a positive existent (i.e. not conceived as mere absence of knowledge). But the same failure to establish the beginninglessness of Ignorance would follow even if you took it as mere absence of knowledge (i.e. you cannot also claim that, though beginningless, it comes to an end through metaphysical knowledge, like the beginningless non-existence of a thing before its production, because there cannot be any distinctions in non-existence such as those alleged by the Logicians

between a thing's non-existence before its production, its non-existence in other things during the time of its existence, and its non-existence after destruction). (37) Śrī Śamkara has remarked, 'There are no distinctions in non-existence either, but it is imagined as a substance and in other ways when it is associated with action, attributes and so on' (Taitt. Bh. 1.1, intro., *ad fin.*, cp. Gambh. Upan. I. p.236). One cannot follow the Logicians when they assume innumerable different kinds of non-existence, such as non-existence before production and the rest. For it is impossible to explain the distinction between such (alleged) different forms of non-existence, either according to their nature (*svabhāva*) or characteristics (*lakṣana*). Here Śrī Śamkara remarks, 'For no one can point to any (positive) characteristic that would establish a distinction between the non-existence of one, the non-existence of two, the non-existence of everything, the non-existence after destruction, mutual non-existence and total non-existence (Bh.G.Bh. 18.48, trans. Mahādeva Śāstrī p. 480; Ś.S.B. 4.243). And if one were to accept that non-existence could undergo production and destruction one would be floundering about in a circle in trying to speak of a distinction between existence and non-existence. Having taken fright at a jackal, one would find oneself in the mouth of a tiger. Thus Śrī Śamkara said, 'Unlike existent objects such as a blue lotus, non-existence cannot have qualifications. If it had qualifications it would be existence!' (Taitt. Bh. 1.1, *loc. cit.*). Hence one cannot appeal to the example of non-existence before production to establish the beginninglessness of Ignorance.

This suffices to dispose of another faulty theory. The theory runs: 'Ignorance is not really positive in form. It is spoken of as positive only to avert the idea that it is totally non-existent like the horn of a hare (that could not even impinge on consciousness). Thus, because positive Ignorance is other than being (in the full sense of that word), it (is not eternal and) can cease at some future point, like non-existence before production'. (38) But this is wrong. For if it is said that it can cease because it is not being in the full sense, why could it not be said with equal cogency that it will never cease because it is not total non-being?

Perhaps you will say, 'The maxim "Ignorance is brought to an end by knowledge" is invariably true. The proposition "What is beginningless never comes to an end" is only true-in-general. So the first maxim prevails, because it is *invariably* true'. But this is not right. For the little imp of mutual dependence will get in. Only that which is proved to be Ignorance can be proved to be brought to an end by knowledge, while the fact of Ignorance being present can only be proved when there is proof of it being brought to an end by knowledge. The existence of Ignorance as you conceive it has not yet been proved. Nor can you deny the existence of that Ignorance in the form of wrong knowledge (error), absence of knowledge and doubt of which I speak, for Ignorance in these forms is experienced by both of us, and known generally under the name of 'ignorance'. It is these forms of Ignorance, in truth, which hold invariable sway. So your conception of Ignorance does not escape that sway, and in fact falls beneath it (as wrong knowledge).

Thus, because the notion of the beginninglessness of Ignorance is untenable, one cannot claim that the distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute depends on positive Ignorance, as the idea clearly suffers from the fallacy of mutual dependence.

41. If the distinction between the soul and the Absolute is accepted for dreamless sleep, it cannot have the mode of existence called 'false' (mithyā)

Then there was (para 42 above) that point about Ignorance having to be assumed to account for the distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute in dreamless sleep, veritably a life-giving mantra to revive a man-eating tiger that had by good fortune been killed. For the seeker of liberation takes distinction itself for bondage, and strives to get rid of it. Nobody experiences that distinction in dreamless sleep, and nobody wants to experience it in dreamless sleep, any more than they do in waking, since it is undesirable by nature. What human end do you gain by establishing this distinction? By what sign are you able to infer it? If the distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute extended to dreamless sleep, it would be (permanent and so) a reality. It would not be a false phenomenon, so there would be no hope of escaping it for ever.

Perhaps you will say that your theory does not imply that there is a real distinction between the soul and the Absolute. You hold the distinction to be conditioned by Ignorance. And you say that there is nothing wrong if this distinction, like relationship with Ignorance also, is itself founded on Ignorance. But this is wrong. For we have already shown (end of para 42 above) that the idea that the distinction is conditioned by Ignorance, while Ignorance implies the distinction, is vitiated by the fallacy of mutual dependence. (It will be recalled that Ignorance implies the distinction as its pre-condition, because it implies an individual experiencer capable of having Ignorance.)

And when you spoke of relationship with Ignorance being founded on Ignorance, did you mean that this was something of which you had proof? Only if it were proved would it serve as an example. But Ignorance itself, in the form you conceive it, has not yet been proved, so how could one even talk of its relationship with the Self? And is this alleged relationship real or false? If it were real, the Self could never be liberated from that relationship — so that is not an assumption you could accept. Is it then false? But in that case you have to explain how you could establish it at all. And yet your doctrine is that Ignorance affects both those who are, and those who are not, involved in further reincarnation, without permitting liberation to anyone before the death of the body.

No doubt you will say that you do not teach that the one liberated in life is still afflicted by Ignorance. What we teach, you will say, is that he is only affected by an impression of Ignorance, as a result of which he perceives the world. But this we cannot allow. For if it is Ignorance that is the cause of the appearance of the world, even though it is called 'an impression', it will remain Ignorance and nothing else. What do you gain merely by giving it another name?

Perhaps you will reply that, unlike Ignorance proper, the impression of Ignorance does not give rise to future reincarnation — it is simply exhausted with the exhaustion of the remainder of the merit and demerit that brought about the life in which enlightenment was attained. But this is no better, as there is no proof to support it. There is no proof that, even after the abolition of Ignorance, its impression remains on for a certain time, and is finally exhausted only through some later enquiry into the real. Sureśvara has said, 'When Ignorance (in the sense of lack of knowledge of the Self), the cause of desire, has been eradicated, no latent impression

remains over, or anything else either, as Ignorance is the root of every phenomenon in the empirical world' (B.B.V. 4.4.379, quoted M.V. p.353).

And there is another point. If even those who have heard the Upanishads and acquired knowledge are affected by an impression of Ignorance, then no one will seek knowledge of reality to abolish Ignorance and its effects, since these will remain on without any difference even after the rise of knowledge. So one will have to look for some other means to put an end to reincarnation. You cannot, on your own theory, claim that the relation of the soul with Ignorance is false. And yet you do not accept that it is real.

Thus on your theory it is impossible to account for the relation of the soul with Ignorance, whether that relation be taken as false or real. So you cannot cite this relation as a proof that the distinction between the soul and the Absolute can be conditioned by Ignorance. So it must logically be real — but you do not accept that either. Thus we have demonstrated that one cannot appeal to the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep even to account for the difference between the soul and the Absolute.

SECTION 5: NEITHER IS NON-EXPERIENCE OF ANY MANIFESTATION OF THE REAL IN DREAMLESS SLEEP A PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF POSITIVE IGNORANCE

45. Exposition of the view that the experience
'The Self neither exists nor manifests'
is a proof of causal Ignorance, because the
experience cannot otherwise be explained

Well, let us consider another view. The Ignorance of dreamless sleep (it is claimed according to this view) is not real, because it is abolished by knowledge. Yet it is not unreal, as one cannot rid oneself of the experience of it before knowledge. Ignorance is not different from the Absolute, as it has no identifiable nature of its own. Yet it is not non-different either, since (before enlightenment) it (invariably) conceals the true nature of the Self as pure Consciousness. In the same way, this causal Ignorance is indeterminable as real or unreal, and indeterminable from other points of view too. So naturally it is not capable of being either of the two alternatives you mentioned above (at para 44 — i.e. it is neither real nor false).

Nor should you (strict classical Advaitin) raise the objection that if it is indeterminable it should not be regarded as positive, for you have not understood what we mean by 'positive'. The fact that Ignorance is called 'positive' does not mean that it has final reality. It is only intended to mean that it is not non-being. (39) Thus Ignorance is indeterminable either as being or non-being, or in other ways (e.g. as real or unreal, as the same as the Absolute or different and so on).

Although the presence of causal Ignorance is not testified by experience (in dreamless sleep) and although the world of waking is false like that of dream, so that one does not have to infer the presence of causal Ignorance to account for its development; and although one cannot say of dreamless sleep that it can be characterized alternatively as either having or not

having a special cause: and though everyone experiences dreamless sleep as void of objects; although, in a word, causal Ignorance is indeterminable as characterized by any pair of alternative opposites — nevertheless, it has to be accepted as present in dreamless sleep, as otherwise one cannot account for the non-manifestation in that state of the self-luminous Self. For everyone has the feeling ‘My Self is not manifest in dreamless sleep’. And this non-manifestation is not due to wrong knowledge, as that is absent in dreamless sleep. Nor can it be due to absence of knowledge. For, since absence of knowledge is fitful and transient, it could not be capable of preventing the manifestation of reality. Nor could the non-manifestation of the Self in dreamless sleep be due to the impressions left by wrong knowledge. For there is no proof that mere impressions could impede the manifestation of the Self in the way that it is impeded in dreamless sleep. So there will be nothing wrong if we say that we have to assume the existence of causal Ignorance, as the feeling (in dreamless sleep) that the Self neither exists nor manifests is inexplicable otherwise.

46. How one cannot prove the existence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep from the experiences of waking which appear to bear on dreamless sleep

To this we reply as follows. We never have the experience ‘My Self does not exist’. Nobody has the idea ‘I do not exist’. The notion ‘The Self does not manifest’, when the Self is manifesting but misperceived as the body and so on, is an experience due to absence of knowledge (as opposed to positive Ignorance), as it consists in the non-manifestation of *the true form* of the Self, the form taught in the Upanishads. And the experience ‘The Self does not manifest’ occurs in waking and not in dreamless sleep. So how could that experience, so defined, serve as a proof of the existence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep? The term ‘practical experience’ (vyavahāra) has four senses and refers to practical understanding, accepted modes of speech, procuring things and effective action (cp. para 58 below). These four kinds of practical experience may occur either in waking or in dream. But not one of them is possible in dreamless sleep. So one cannot argue for the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep by analogy with experience in perception.

Perhaps you will claim that there must be positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep, or otherwise certain facets of practical experience in waking would be impossible. For practical experience in waking includes reference to dreamless sleep, as when we say ‘My Self was not manifest in dreamless sleep’. Because this practical experience is in the form of memory, we should infer that positive Ignorance was present in dreamless sleep. But this is wrong, since the argument is unsound. It is not proper to infer what must have been experienced in one of the three states (of waking, dream and dreamless sleep) from memory occurring in another. For example, it would not be proper if, of two non-erroneous experiences in two different states, one were held to contradict the other. In the same way, this conviction about the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, on the basis of a memory in waking, is no better than an inference of the form ‘Because my throat now feels hungry in waking, I could not have eaten anything then in my dream’.

Perhaps you will say that we are not arguing about the same thing. In the example I cited (you will perhaps tell me) there is no (genuine) memory ‘Formerly at that time (i.e. in the dream)

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I did not eat . But in regard to the subject in hand, (you will perhaps claim). there is a genuine memory bearing on dreamless sleep, when we say 'I was not aware of my Self when I was asleep'. So your own inference, you will claim, was quite proper.

But this is not correct. For we have already stated (above, para 31) a reason which shows that a reflection about dreamless sleep in waking cannot be a memory. And we have also shown that it is improper to make an inference about experience on the basis of memory.

47. There is no inference that could establish positive Ignorance anywhere; so how could it be established for dreamless sleep?

Something that is actually perceived may be inferred to be present in other things of the same class. But positive Ignorance is never perceived in dreamless sleep. If it were correct for you to infer that, because Ignorance was found in dream and waking, it must also be found in dreamless sleep, on the ground that the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep are (states of consciousness and therefore) of the same class, then why should we not equally be able to infer that dreamless sleep was associated with a world of plurality, on account of being of the same class as waking? But in fact positive Ignorance is not even perceived in dream and waking. For perception is explicable without it. (40)

Here you will perhaps interpose with another argument which runs as follows. The maxim 'Only that which has been perceived can be inferred' is not right. For there will have to be some general hypothesis to account for the memory of dreamless sleep, and this general hypothesis will find its final specification in (unperceived) positive Ignorance.

A further argument in favour of beginningless positive Ignorance is advanced on the basis of inference as follows. (41) The right knowledge, it is said, of one individual knower — the topic under dispute (and about which we are going to present an inference) — must put an end to a beginningless entity other than its own previous non-existence. For it is right knowledge, like the right knowledge of other individual knowers. And you cannot say that the example cited (other people's right knowledge) does not embrace the conclusion (i.e. the [sophistical] conclusion that right knowledge puts an end to a beginningless entity other than previous absence of knowledge). For consider. It is well known that Caitra's right knowledge puts an end to its own previous non-existence, which is other than the previous non-existence of the right knowledge of Maitra. But the right knowledge of Maitra does not put an end to any previous beginningless non-existence except its own. So if it is to stand as right knowledge (on a level with Caitra's right knowledge, which brought to an end a beginningless entity other than the previous non-existence of Maitra's knowledge, namely the previous non-existence of Caitra's knowledge) we shall have to assume the existence of some other beginningless entity capable of being brought to an end by knowledge (namely, beginningless positive Ignorance).

In this way the positive Ignorance accepted by our school (i.e. by the later Advaitins who veered away from Gaudapāda, Śaṅkara and Suresvara) is inferred to exist, through an analogy based on the general character of right knowledge.

But all this is wrong. In regard to the (alleged) memory of dreamless sleep — since that

(apparent) memory can be accounted for in a different way. as we have already explained (para 31 above), there is no occasion for an inference through analogy to account for its rise.

We pass on to your inference about the right knowledge possessed by an individual knower. Here you should be asked how you know that Maitra's right knowledge 'does not put an end to any previous non-existence except its own'. Perhaps you will say that you were not out to show that it did not put an end to any previous non-existence except its own. You meant, on the contrary; that it did put an end to something beginningless (namely its own previous non-existence), but that 'something' was other than the previous non-existence of Caitra's knowledge, the implications of which with regard to beginningless positive Ignorance are now under dispute. And we both agree, you will say, over Maitra's previous beginningless absence of knowledge before knowledge.

But this does not help your argument. For we find that even there the only thing that can be brought to an end (through knowledge) is absence of knowledge in its threefold form (that is, absence of knowledge with its two results, wrong knowledge and doubt). You have not pointed to any evidence for the existence of anything beginningless for Maitra, except his previous absence of knowledge, with its results.

Here you will perhaps claim that what Caitra removes through right knowledge is other than the previous non-existence of Maitra's knowledge, and that Maitra also, if he has right knowledge, must remove something other than the previous non-existence of his own knowledge (and so, as the only remaining possibility, must remove beginningless positive Ignorance). (42) But that is not right. For all is explicable if it be taken that Maitra's right knowledge brings to an end his own previous absence of knowledge alone, just as Caitra's right knowledge brings to an end his own previous absence of right knowledge alone. It may be true that if nothing was perceived to be brought to an end by Maitra's right knowledge, we might have to assume that something unperceived (*viz.* beginningless positive Ignorance) was brought to an end, if it was to have the status of right knowledge, (which is recognized as having the power to bring to an end something beginningless). But (since Maitra's right knowledge visibly brings to an end its own previous non-existence) this is not the case. The reason why what Caitra's knowledge puts to an end is other than anything (such as absence of knowledge) pertaining to Maitra, is that Caitra is different from Maitra. The reason is not any strange law that all right knowledge must necessarily depend on removing something over and above Maitra's previous lack of knowledge (and so of removing positive Ignorance).

Even if we were to admit (for argument's sake) the existence of something brought to an end apart from the previous non-existence of Maitra's knowledge, we would still have to ask you how you knew that 'something' was something positive. You could not argue that it must necessarily be positive simply because it was brought to an end by knowledge, as you yourself have given the example of a previous non-existence (the previous non-existence of Maitra's knowledge) brought to an end by knowledge (so that on your own admission there is no universal rule that what is brought to an end by knowledge is positive, and we are dealing with inference here, which demands universal rules). Nor could you argue that what was brought to an end must be something positive 'as the only remaining alternative'. For (what can be brought to an end by knowledge can only be ignorance and) there is no independent evidence (*pramāṇa*) that any such thing as positive Ignorance exists. (43)

Examination of an Unorthodox View

Some say that in discussions about Ignorance there is no counter-argument to disprove the thesis that knowledge puts an end to something beginningless and positive; for Ignorance (they say) must exist as the meaning of the word 'Ignorance', which is accepted by both sides in the dispute, while there is no opponent coming forward to deny that knowledge brings to an end any positive beginningless entity over and above the previous non-existence (of knowledge) already agreed. Even that has been disproved by what was said above, because for us only absence of knowledge and its results can be brought to an end by knowledge (so that there is a party to the dispute who denies that knowledge can bring to an end a positive beginningless entity). So until it can be proved that the view that knowledge only brings to an end a previous absence of knowledge is wrong, the inference in favour of positive Ignorance remains invalid.

And we ask: What about the inference 'This pot puts an end to something other than its own previous non-existence, from the mere fact of being a pot, like other pots'? Does that really establish the existence of some positive entity brought to an end by the pot? And if not, what is the difference here (i.e. how do your arguments establish positive Ignorance)? And we have already explained the fallacy in supposing that positive Ignorance could be beginningless (para 43 above), and the fallacy of distinguishing different kinds of non-existence, such as non-existence before production and the rest (para 43).

Then there is another inference which runs: 'Error, here under discussion, must have a material cause other than that uncontradictable principle (the Self) that is the ultimate cause of its being known. For it is an error, like the error of Devadatta and others'. (44) Here also, the notion of 'other than' must be explained differently (i.e. without recourse to the assumption of beginningless positive Ignorance) It would be easy to show how this inference was sophistical, just like the previous one. So one cannot establish through inference that positive Ignorance is the material cause of error.

Then there is another argument that is advanced. (45) A cognition effected through a means of valid knowledge, the subject here under discussion, must be preceded by another entity (i.e. beginningless positive Ignorance) — an entity that is present in the same locus as the cognition, that is brought to an end by the cognition, that conceals the object of the cognition and is other than the mere previous non-existence of the cognition. For a cognition illumines something previously not illumined, like the light of a lamp (which illumines the positive entity darkness) when first lit in the dark.

But this argument (and its illustration) are wrong. For it can be shown that darkness itself is (not a positive entity but simply the) non-existence (of light, cp. above para 21). And it is not right to say that in both cases (the example and the exemplified, the lamp and the cognition), there is an active illuminator (having an object). The claim that there must be an active illuminator, (even where there is no positive object to illumine), just because we have the word 'illuminator' is ridiculous. For if that were true, then the following inference would also be true, namely 'This person (my friend) called "Kubera" can rid me of my poverty, because he is "Kubera, lord of Alakā" (i.e. the real Kubera, god of wealth)'.

Nor can you claim that your doctrine is correct because what the Veda refers to as an 'illuminator' must be the same as that which is always and everywhere meant by that word in ordinary discourse. For if mere spoken usage were your sole criterion, then that which was merely referred to metaphorically as a river (e.g. a river of blood) would include all that would

have been implied by the presence of a real river. Or if a wooden elephant were invariably referred to as the elephant that would be enough (on your present way of arguing) to show that it really *was* an elephant. So the inference (that purported to establish beginningless positive Ignorance) from the maxim 'A cognition illumines something previously not illumined' was invalid. We admit that right knowledge can put an end to wrong knowledge or to darkness, in so far as the latter is merely a false idea. But that is no excuse for trying to introduce (the notion of) positive Ignorance.

The claim is sometimes made that the object of wrong knowledge is indeterminable because only existent while it manifests, and that it is therefore not the object of an authoritative cognition. This idea should be rejected. For indeterminability in this sense is not accepted, as it is only a mere word (unsupported by anything experienced). The refutation of this concept will be supplied on the occasion of examining what is implied by the manifestation of a false object (para 129 below).

It follows that what is removed by valid means of cognition is either the triad of absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt, or one or other of them according to the context. This also will be made clear later (paras 52 and 53). So the inference about indeterminability is another point that has to be rejected.

As there is no general knowledge through inference establishing positive Ignorance, how could there be further specification of that into particular knowledge? Still less, in that case, could there be a memory in waking that would establish the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. This shows that there can be nothing, even in waking experience, to establish that there is absence of all manifestation in dreamless sleep, and no proof that there must be positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep to explain this absence of all manifestation.

48. The reasons advanced to establish positive Ignorance are in contradiction with what we actually experience in dreamless sleep

And there is another point. Our direct experience in dreamless sleep is 'There is nothing, either positive Ignorance or anything else'. The reasoning applied to establish the presence there of positive Ignorance runs, 'The idea "There is nothing" must be wrong, as our memories of dreamless sleep in waking are inexplicable without the assumption of the presence of positive Ignorance'. But universal experience cannot be contradicted by hypothetical reasoning (*yukti*), which is always under suspicion of being unfounded (as it is not supported by a universal rule based on repeated perceptions). What has been directly known in experience through valid means of cognition cannot be undermined by hypothetical reasoning aiming to show that it was impossible. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'It is not that the question of whether or not we can apply the various means of knowledge to it depends *a priori* on the logical possibility of the thing. Whatever is apprehended by any of the authoritative means of knowledge, beginning with perception, is possible, from the mere fact of being apprehended' (B.S.Bh. 2.2.28, Ś.S.B. 4.280). What more need be said to show that what is sought for through the authoritative means of knowledge is always experience corresponding with reality, which cannot be overturned afterwards by negative dialectic? So that is another reason showing that positive Ignorance cannot be established.

49. Does the opponent properly explain why one is not aware of the Self in dreamless sleep?

We have also to examine why it is that there cannot be knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep. Is it that knowledge of the Self simply does not arise on account of Ignorance? Or is it because there is nothing to cause knowledge of the Self? Or is it for some other reason?

What is the difference? Well, if it was on account of the presence of Ignorance that knowledge of the Self did not arise in dreamless sleep, then knowledge of the Self would never arise. For it is admitted that everyone has Ignorance until liberation, and Ignorance is an effective obstacle to knowledge. Is it then that there is no knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep because there is nothing to cause it? In that case, (i.e. if knowledge of the Self required a cause), even a liberated person could have no knowledge of the Self, since he has transcended the realm of cause and effect. Nor can we see any other obvious reason why there is no knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep. So the reason for this lack of knowledge requires investigation.

Perhaps it will be said that no one has knowledge before being taught, so that there is no occasion for the doubt that we have been propounding. It is not Ignorance or anything else that is behind lack of knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep, but simply lack of the teaching that would confer knowledge. But this idea is against logic, as it would imply a positive effect arising from a non-existence (*viz.* absence of teaching). Perhaps you will say that it is not the absence of teaching that causes the obstruction, but the positive Ignorance associated with it. But this is wrong. For there is no opportunity for teaching in dreamless sleep. So there cannot be any sense in which it is lack of teaching that prevents the rise of knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep.

Well, let us suppose that the reason for knowledge of one's Self not arising in dreamless sleep is the lack of any cause which would produce it. In waking, for instance, there are means to knowledge like the mind and so on. So one could argue that it is because these are absent in dreamless sleep that there is no knowledge in that state. But it appears that this cannot be right. For in that case there could be even less knowledge for the one who had reached transcendence (*kaivalya*), void of any relation with instruments of knowledge even in seed form. But the teaching of our school is that it is only he who has (metaphysical) knowledge who can be liberated.

Well, but does not the one liberated in life have instruments of knowledge? Yes, he does. But you do not accept him as liberated in the full sense. You insist, do you not, that it is only at the time of parting from the body that liberation in the full sense supervenes. But when liberation in that form arrives there certainly will be no knowledge for the liberated one, who will be separated from his instruments of cognition. And if you accept that, you will be saying that there can be liberation without knowledge.

Perhaps you will say that it is only an inessential mark of the liberated one that he should have known reality (reading *jñāta-tattvam*). 'What is known' includes 'what is known' before liberation. In the world, if Devadatta is a cook or a reaper, he does not cease to be such when he is not actually cooking or reaping. nor does he cease to be referred to as such. So it is the same here (i.e. the liberated one is liberated whether or not he is engaged in knowing the Self).

Not so. For the one liberated in life (and so still embodied, according to the opponent's conception), cannot have experience of his own true nature as transcendent and void of the body, for that would not be reasonable.

Perhaps you will say that attaining transcendence does not depend on knowledge, because attaining transcendence has to do (not with knowledge but) with being. As fire is hot, and not not hot, (irrespective of whether this is known or not), so, since liberation is an attribute of reality, it is such without dependence on knowledge. Our response to this, if you still believe it to be the case today, is to ask what importance you attach to the teaching of knowledge (which is after all found in the Veda).

Well, let us test the hypothesis that it is the seeker of liberation only who depends on knowledge, not the liberated one. For the Self is self-luminous, and not dependent on anything else for self-manifestation. It is only through Ignorance that people say 'The Self cannot know without (the help of) knowledge'. In truth the Self is never not aware of itself, for it is eternal knowledge by nature. But if all this were true, it ought to be true in dreamless sleep as well, and then there would be no need of this enquiry into the special reasons why the Self was not known in dreamless sleep.

Perhaps you will say that we do not find in dreamless sleep the rise of any particular and definite awareness, in the form 'I am the Self, eternal knowledge by nature'. But it is that form of knowledge that is meant when we speak of 'Self-knowledge'. It is because this kind of knowledge does not arise that we infer the existence of root-Ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*), on the ground that there is no other possible explanation. Our reply to that is that knowledge in that form would not arise even for the liberated one after the death of the body, as he would be in the same condition as the one in dreamless sleep — so that the argument gets nowhere, like the driver of the ox-cart who spent all night roaming about off the road to find a way past the toll-gate, and found himself in front of the toll-gate at dawn.

Again, since particularized knowledge implies duality, and in dreamless sleep there is no duality, how could there be any experience of the Self in that state, of the form 'I am the Self, of such and such a nature'? For in dreamless sleep there is a total interruption of all particular experience. No one has any experience at all in dreamless sleep, not even one in delusion. So it is not right to suppose that one must assume the presence of root-Ignorance in dreamless sleep because one could not otherwise explain the absence of knowledge of the Self in that state.

Thus we have shown that the opponent (i.e. the post-Sureśvara Advaitin who propounds the doctrine of root-Ignorance) was not able to give a proper account of the impossibility of knowledge in dreamless sleep. And thereby we have shown again that it is not possible to establish the existence of root-Ignorance by an appeal to the absence of knowledge of the Self in dreamless sleep.

**SECTION 6: POSITIVE IGNORANCE CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED
ON THE GROUND THAT THE TEACHING ABOUT THE
NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE IS OTHERWISE INEXPLICABLE**

50. The view that there is evidence for positive Ignorance in the implications of the upanishadic texts teaching knowledge

Well, to pass on to a new point. Knowledge is enjoined as the means to liberation in such upanishadic passages as 'Transcendence (kaivalya) is attained only through knowledge (untraced, but cp. Yoga Tattva Up. 1.16), 'The knower of the Absolute attains the supreme (Taitt. 2.1), 'It is only through knowing Him that one passes beyond death' (Śvet. 3.8 and 6.15) and so on. And that (you will say) is unintelligible unless you accept that there exists a positive Ignorance which requires to be removed by knowledge. If the existence of the positive Ignorance under discussion is not accepted as present in waking, dream and dreamless sleep, who would there be in bondage to whom the teaching could appropriately be given? So we must accept that positive Ignorance must exist to stand as that for the abolition of which the metaphysical teachings of the Veda were given.

51. The presence of teaching about knowledge can be explained differently

But does the existence of positive Ignorance really have to be accepted to render the presence of the metaphysical teachings in the Veda intelligible? For establishment of the truth does not depend on the realization of any human end. If the truth happened to be that no positive Ignorance existed, its existence would not be proved even by the presence of teaching about knowledge. So it was not right to say, 'The teaching about knowledge must be meaningful, therefore the existence of positive Ignorance must be accepted'.

Even if we accepted your claim for the sake of argument, we would have further observations to make. For instance, there can never be teaching of knowledge in dreamless sleep, so there is no need to assume the presence of positive Ignorance (to account for the absence of teaching there). Where, in waking, there is teaching for knowledge, that may be said to imply Ignorance; but that Ignorance, as we have already shown (para 23 above), is nothing other than absence of knowledge, with its two results, wrong knowledge and doubt. For it has been demonstrated that whatever appears to be positive Ignorance can in fact be reduced to wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge or doubt (para 23 and 43). (46)

52. An objection against the view that it is (mere) absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge or doubt that is removed by knowledge

Perhaps you will ask how Ignorance can be reduced to absence of knowledge and so on. The upanishadic teaching about knowledge (you will perhaps argue) implies some (positive) concealing factor that requires to be removed by knowledge. Absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt do not constitute a (positive) Ignorance of such a kind. None of them can be what has to be removed by knowledge in the upanishadic teaching. Why do we say this? Well, only that can be removed by knowledge which is invariably contradicted and cancelled by knowledge. Otherwise (i.e. without this factor of invariable contradiction and correction) even correct previous knowledge that was superseded by later knowledge (based on new events)

would have to be dismissed as wrong knowledge. And we do not find that earlier knowledge is invariably contradicted and cancelled by later knowledge. Similarly, doubt and wrong knowledge are not invariably removed by right knowledge. Doubt is sometimes removed by conviction based on wrong knowledge, and there is no reason why such a wrong conviction should not later be removed by a resurgence of doubt. And doubt and wrong knowledge cannot properly be termed 'Ignorance', as they lie within the sphere of knowledge.

In the same way, absence of knowledge is not invariably removed by knowledge. It can sometimes be removed by doubt or wrong knowledge. Because absence of knowledge is a 'non-existence', it cannot be an (existent and positive) concealing factor, so it is inexact to say that it is subject to removal by knowledge. And one cannot say that absence of knowledge is removed by the mere rise of knowledge, its contradictory (pratiyogin). (47) For when the knowledge that is to effect this removal arises there is nothing (i.e. no positive thing) for it to remove (but only absence of knowledge) — so how could there be the relation of remover and removed? And you cannot object that, because positive Ignorance is also accepted (by us) as being destroyed by the mere rise of knowledge in the same way, our own definition of Ignorance fails. For on our principles the simultaneous destruction of positive Ignorance on the rise of knowledge is rationally explicable, since we hold that positive Ignorance cannot remain an instant in being after the rise of knowledge.

And there is another point in your (classical Advaitin's) doctrine that requires explaining. You have to explain what knowledge could be if Ignorance were only absence of knowledge. It could not be Consciousness, since the latter (is eternal and all-pervading and so) could not be the counter-positive of a negation (which would imply absence of Consciousness somewhere). Nor could knowledge be a modification of the mind if Ignorance were mere absence of knowledge. For then, since 'knowledge' would (not be true knowledge but would only be flimsy mental knowledge and thus) something figuratively spoken of as such for practical purposes, 'absence of knowledge' would have to be understood as mere figurative usage too. (48) Or suppose for argument that it were somehow possible to understand the term 'knowledge' as literally meaning a modification of the mind. Then, by the phrase 'absence of knowledge' the reference would be to a state, having the mind for its material cause. And that would not be an absence of any kind. (49)

Perhaps you (strict Advaitin) will claim (in line with the Logicians) that knowledge is neither Consciousness nor a mental modification, but an attribute of the soul. If so, we would ask you whether Ignorance was the absence of some particular cognition or of cognition in general. It could not invariably be the absence of some particular cognition only. For we sometimes have the experience 'I am totally overcome by Ignorance, I have no knowledge of anything at all'.

Well, but could not 'absence of cognition in general' be regarded as amounting to a particular element in experience? No. For we cannot accept such an assumption. And unless there were a special condition, to take a universal as somehow particular would amount to abolishing the universal. And you (strict Advaitin) cannot claim that this abolition of the notion of universal ignorance is just what you accept. For dreamless sleep, which (is universally experienced and) is characterized by universal absence of objects, would be impossible on such a view. And if universal Ignorance were assumed to be identical with particular Ignorance, then the (ridiculous) result would follow that total cancellation of all Ignorance would result from the

removal of ignorance of some particular object like a pot. So Ignorance cannot be absence of particular knowledge.

But Ignorance cannot be universal absence of knowledge either. For there can be no knowledge of (and therefore no proof of) total absence of knowledge, whether the latter be taken as positive or negative, as known or unknown. You cannot say that such absence of knowledge is known through the faculty of 'determination of absence' (anupalabdhi). For the operation of this faculty is not here possible, since 'determination of absence' implies positive knowledge of what is absent, as already explained (cp. para 7 above).

So we conclude that Ignorance cannot be mere absence of knowledge and must be something different — some form of positive entity.

53. How (on the contrary) if Ignorance were taken as positive, its abolition through knowledge would be all the more impossible

Here we must ask whether the term 'abolition' implies the total dissolution of Ignorance, or whether the latter is supposed to remain in being as a potency (śakti). On the first alternative, absence of knowledge and its results in the form of wrong knowledge and doubt cause no difficulty. For, with the presence of knowledge, they can no longer remain in being. But on this view the abolition of positive Ignorance becomes impossible. For those who accept positive Ignorance accept its continued presence after knowledge in the case of those liberated in life. Let us assume, then, that in an effort to make the abolition of positive Ignorance plausible one adopts the second alternative, and accepts that abolition of Ignorance implies that it remains over as a potency (śakti). But this view would contradict non-duality, as it would imply that the Self would still have a second thing (the śakti of Ignorance) over against it on account of that very Ignorance which had (allegedly) been removed by knowledge. For, apart from knowledge, there is nothing else that could abolish the potency of Ignorance. Or if there were something else which could abolish positive Ignorance, then the latter would be 'false' (mithyā) only in some figurative sense, not in truth. For it is not right to hold that what cannot be abolished by knowledge could be false.

Perhaps you will argue against my position as follows. It has been seen, you will say, that absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt can overcome and replace one another mutually. Nor do they each retain one and the same identical form throughout the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. It has been claimed, too, that only that form of Ignorance is capable of abolition which remains in being till removed by knowledge. And Brahma Sūtra 2.3.30 supports this, saying 'And because the contact between the soul and the intellect persists so long as the worldly state of the soul continues, our doctrine stands, since that is what the Veda teaches'. And, indeed, if Ignorance did not persist in that way, who would suffer reincarnation? And if no one suffered reincarnation, what would be the point of the teaching of metaphysical knowledge in the Veda?

To this we reply as follows. You wish to establish a distinction between reincarnation and liberation, and thereby safeguard the utility of the metaphysical teaching of the Upanishads. But we ask whether you mean to claim that positive Ignorance persists throughout the three states as a reality. If you do, you are working your own destruction. For Ignorance conceived

in that illegitimate way will never be able to be removed by knowledge.

It was claimed (para 52) that, if Ignorance were conceived as absence of knowledge, its abolition could not be effected by the rise of knowledge because the two would be separate in time. (If there is knowledge, there cannot be absence of knowledge. Knowledge cannot destroy absence of knowledge, since destruction is an act which must take at least a modicum of time. But since absence of knowledge would disappear simultaneously with the rise of knowledge, it would not be available as an object for knowledge to destroy.) But similar difficulties arise for positive Ignorance. For if your positive Ignorance remained even an instant after the rise of knowledge, then, assuming that there was no special obstacle to its destruction, and that its contradictory, knowledge, was present, that would undermine the power of knowledge to contradict Ignorance. Nor could you claim that there was a special obstacle in the unexpended portion of the merit and demerit that initiated the life in which metaphysical knowledge arose (prarabdha-karma). For merit and demerit are effects of Ignorance. If they could not here be removed by metaphysical knowledge, that would again (supply an exception that would) undermine the power of knowledge to contradict Ignorance.

Nor is it correct to say that the power of knowledge to contradict positive Ignorance lies merely in its power to prevent future rebirth, while it does not have the power to abolish the merit and demerit that have initiated the life in which metaphysical knowledge is attained (and prevent them from running their full course). For if that were the case, then even after metaphysical knowledge one would remain afflicted by the doubt 'Will I or will I not attain liberation?' Even if one felt convinced that the reward of liberation would come, the view would still have the fault of implying that knowledge of the Absolute did not culminate in direct experience.

And there is the following consideration. Where knowledge is attained through an authoritative means of valid cognition it necessarily removes some ignorance when it comes into being. Thus Sureśvara has said, 'When a means of cognition is directed to its proper object, it cannot come into being (as a cognition) without removing ignorance in the form of absence of knowledge and so on (i.e. absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge or doubt), as is shown by worldly experience' (B.B.V. 4.4.786). The 'validity' of the various means of knowledge lies in their power to remove ignorance in regard to their special objects. Nor could one imagine that any further action on the part of a means of knowledge was required later in order to remove ignorance, once the cognition arising from the means of knowledge had come into being. In the case of cutting wood, there is further action to be done after producing the axe, such as using it to cut. But that is not the case after the production of a cognition through a valid means of knowledge. Thus Suresvara has said: 'Metaphysical knowledge destroys Ignorance merely by arising, and is bereft of the distinctions that would render action possible. Once it has risen, then there is no further need or possibility of further action to shake off Ignorance. Metaphysical knowledge is not a piece of action with elimination of Ignorance as its result, still less is there any distinction between two actions. Metaphysical knowledge eliminates Ignorance of the inmost Principle automatically by its mere rise. You may produce an axe, but it will not cut wood unless you use it. But knowledge arising from a valid means of cognition achieves its end by its mere rise, and does not imply further action in this way' (B.B.V. 1.4.865-7).

54. There is nothing wrong if, in the phrase 'absence of knowledge', 'knowledge' refers to modifications of the mind

It was said by our opponent that the term 'Ignorance' would sink to mere figurative usage if it were taken that (the) knowledge (that was its opposite) was a modification of the mind (para 52 above), or else that the term 'absence of knowledge' could be reduced to a reference to the bare mind itself (void of modifications). But this is wrong. For the primary meaning of the word 'knowledge' is 'a modification of the mind'. The classical Vedāntins do not regard the Self as subject to denotation by such words as 'knowledge' (jñāna). For no words apply properly to the Self. The Self, however, may be indirectly indicated by the word 'knowledge', when that word is used to mean an idea (vṛtti) of the mind. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says: 'And this shows that the Absolute cannot be literally designated by the word 'knowledge'. It is indirectly indicated, and not directly designated, by the word 'knowledge', a word which designates directly that which is a mere semblance of the Absolute, that is to say knowledge considered as an attribute of the mind' (Taitt. Bh. 2.1.1, Ś.S.B. 1.184).

And even if absence of mental modification is taken to imply the presence of the mind (void of mental modifications), that does not prevent Ignorance from being a form of non-existence, (i.e. non-existence or absence of knowledge). For it can be shown that the notion of non-existence always implies reference to (something else in) existence. The non-existence of a pot can be expressed by saying, for instance, 'That is a cloth and not anything else'. So the one who holds that ignorance is absence of knowledge is not the only one who would have to defend himself against the charge that to speak of an 'absence' (or non-existence) implies an existent. (50) He, on the other hand, who accepts that, over and above the pot and the cloth, there is also an 'absence of the pot' accessible to the special faculty of 'apprehension of absence', will also have to accept (against the law of parsimony) that, over and above the mental idea and the mind, there is also a 'non-existence of a mental idea' apprehended through 'apprehension of absence'. More could be said on this topic, but we desist.

Nor can anyone say that the ancients did not use the term 'Ignorance' to mean 'absence of knowledge'. For we have examples of it in such a text as: 'Those men who have knowledge of the presence of snakes, spiky grass and (concealed) wells are able to avoid them. But some who, through ignorance, do not know of such traps, fall into them. Behold the great advantages of knowledge!' (M.Bh. 12.194.17, Poona ed., quoted by Śaṅkara, B.G.Bh. 13.2, *ad init.*, Ś.S.B. 1.71). As for the criticism of our view based on the theory that knowledge is an attribute of the soul (cp. above, para 52), that should be taken as answered by the mere fact that we reject the premise (since the doctrine that knowledge is an attribute of the soul is taught by the Logicians, not by us Advaitins).

Thus it is possible to explain how Ignorance is removed by knowledge if Ignorance is taken as absence of knowledge. And similar reasoning will show that wrong knowledge and doubt (which follow from absence of knowledge) can also be removed by knowledge.

55. The meaning of 'removable'
is 'removable through knowledge'

The objection was also raised (paras 50 and 52) that absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt were found to supplant each other mutually, and that they did not persist throughout the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep (e.g. no wrong knowledge or doubt in dreamless sleep). But there is nothing wrong here. For though they may supplant one another mutually, they cannot eliminate one another finally without the advent of metaphysical knowledge. Nor is it true that Ignorance (as absence of knowledge) does not pervade the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep in its own characteristic nature. For its characteristic nature is to be that which has to be removed in the way we have described. (51) And one should not raise the objection that our conception involves mutual dependence, on the ground that it implies that Ignorance only exists as that which has to be removed by knowledge, while knowledge only exists as that which removes Ignorance. For, in the end, we do not accept that removal of Ignorance is anything other than the rise of knowledge.

Well, but will not this mean that there is nothing which has to be removed? Not so. For we accept that there are absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt on the plane of practical experience, and that these are removed by the mere rise of knowledge.

And it does not follow that because absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt are not all common to the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep that they cannot be removed. For we have already given the answer to this potential objection (in that absence of knowledge is common to all three states, and the other two are only its transitory effects). If they were all present in all three states it is *then*, as already explained (at para 27 above), that they (would be real and so) could not be removed. (52)

So we conclude that there is nothing contradictory to knowledge that has to be removed by it over and above the triad of absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt. And thus we have the verse of Suresvara: 'When a means of cognition is directed to its proper object, it cannot come into being (as a cognition) without removing ignorance in the form of absence of knowledge and so on (i.e. absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge or doubt), as is shown by worldly experience' (B.B.V. 4.4.786). So we have proved that one cannot establish positive Ignorance on the ground that knowledge and Ignorance are otherwise inexplicable.

SECTION 7: ONE CANNOT ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF ROOT- IGNORANCE IN DREAMLESS SLEEP EVEN ON THE BASIS OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

56. The objection that, though root-Ignorance cannot
be known through the means of valid cognition,
it is known by the witnessing consciousness

We have pointed out that neither perception nor inference nor presumption nor Vedic revelation establishes the existence of this 'Root-Ignorance'. It is true that the later Vedāntins claim that the manifestation of illusory objects, followed by their cancellation, is a proof of it, inasmuch

as this phenomenon is otherwise inexplicable. And it is true that in their conversations amongst themselves they take it for granted that the existence of Ignorance is known from the texts like 'There was darkness then' (R.V. 10.129.3). Nevertheless we can say with certainty that there is no satisfactory evidence for 'Root-Ignorance'. For we have replied to their arguments (para 40 above) by showing that the illusoriness of an illusory object is a sufficient explanation of its manifestation (without appeal to an occult 'power of Ignorance' behind it). And there is nothing to show that the references to 'Avidyā' in the Veda refer to the Root-Ignorance as conceived by the later Vedāntins. And the faults of our opponents' view that there can be perception of an illusory object of indeterminable reality-grade, and that there is any proof for Root-Ignorance in the Veda, will be detailed below. (53) So we may take it that there is no proof for Root-Ignorance.

But consider the following argument. It is true, the argument runs, that people put forward perception, inference, presumption and Vedic revelation as proofs of the existence of Ignorance. But that is not what carries weight with us. For we do not claim that Ignorance can be known through valid means of cognition. What we say is that it is directly apprehended through the witnessing-consciousness. (54) And this does not mean that it is useless to advance proofs of Ignorance through the various means of valid cognition, as if Ignorance were an object of the latter. For the purpose of such proofs is to eliminate the idea that Root-Ignorance is totally without existence. Ignorance is apprehended by the witnessing-consciousness and apprehended as other than the (totally) non-existent.

What then is this witnessing-consciousness? It is Consciousness reflected in a modification (vrtti) of Ignorance. We agree that experience of Ignorance is present in waking and dream, as well as in dreamless sleep. But when the modification of Ignorance in the form of dreamless sleep is over, Ignorance in that particular form is no longer perceived by the witnessing-consciousness. It (this form of Ignorance) does, however, still manifest as a modification of Ignorance produced by an impression, so it can stand as a memory, having the form '(In dreamless sleep) I knew nothing'. The witnessing-consciousness merely witnesses Ignorance as a phenomenon: the fact that, as such, it is something existent, is demonstrated by the various means of valid cognition. So there is no contradiction if we say that it is (merely) apprehended by the witnessing-consciousness, but proved to exist by the means of valid cognition.

57. This view that Ignorance is apprehended through the witnessing-consciousness is also wrong

But this is also wrong. If it is impossible to define what Ignorance actually is, then it will be all the more impossible to show that it has modifications, or that Consciousness is reflected in the latter. Nor is Ignorance proved by the existence of the witnessing-consciousness. For if Ignorance is apprehended by the witnessing-consciousness just as 'ignorance', that will not lead to the establishment of your conception of the latter. For the witnessing-consciousness does not actually apprehend Ignorance in the form that you conceive it. The proofs advanced are not sufficient to establish Ignorance in that form. We have already shown that in an earlier part of this book (para 23). And it is a strange form of argument on your part when you say that we must accept the existence of a modification of that Ignorance which has never been established, that it must be accepted that there is a reflection of Consciousness in that modification, and that

Ignorance is known solely through that reflection of Consciousness (i.e. by the witnessing-consciousness as reflected in a modification of Ignorance).

58. Nor is it right to say that root-Ignorance is known through practical experience, as practical experience itself is not satisfactorily defined

Perhaps it will be said that the defects of the opponent's view mentioned above do not arise because, although Root-Ignorance cannot be proved to be present in dreamless sleep from the standpoint of the highest truth, nevertheless its presence is a matter of practical experience. But this also is wrong, as the nature of practical experience is itself left obscure.

For what is meant when we speak of practical experience? Perhaps it will be said that practical experience is that which is apprehended, and yet which is eventually contradicted and cancelled from the standpoint of the final truth.

But this invites the question, 'What is the nature of the final truth?' If you say that the vision taught in the Veda is the final truth because it is right vision, then the question arises 'How do you know?' You have this obstinate insistence that, even in the case of those who have been enlightened by the Vedic teaching, Ignorance, under the name of an 'impression' (samskāra), veils the truth until death (cp. Note 3), even for the one who feels himself to have been anointed over the head (with metaphysical knowledge). So how can you claim that the Vedic standpoint is the standpoint of truth?

Perhaps you will say that the Veda is our authority for valid knowledge in matters that transcend sense-perception. So we accept the standpoint there taught as right knowledge. Empirical vision is not such, so we do not consider it in this context.

This reply would be all right for one who thought that the rewards of the upanishadic teaching were intended to accrue at some distant time in the future. But Śrī Śamkara has said: 'Nor is it any way correct to say that liberation arises according to conditions of time, place and cause (in just the same way as the results of actions do). For if it arose in this way it would be transient, and in any case the result of knowledge cannot be anything that requires time to supervene' (B.S.Bh. 4.1.13, Ś.S.B. 6.224 f.). And it is not right to suppose that the rewards of the upanishadic teaching were intended to accrue in the distant future. Such a view (had it been correct) would have abolished the need for any distinction between the part of the Veda dealing with ritual and the part dealing with knowledge (a distinction which is in fact valid). For both would then have dealt equally with rewards that would only accrue after the death of the body. So (your interpretation of) the vision taught by the Upanishads (implying, as it unfortunately does, *prārabdha-karma* and the survival of an impression of Ignorance until the death of the body) is not correct. And if your interpretation of the upanishadic teaching is not correct, your interpretation of the practical standpoint will not be correct either.

You remind us (cp. para 46 above) that the term 'practical experience' may refer either to practical understanding, accepted modes of speech, procuring things or effective action — and the object of all these may be known as 'the practical' (or 'the empirical'). Well, should these meanings be taken individually or collectively? If they are taken individually, 'practicality'

would mean 'power to exert effective action'. If so do you say that this power does or does not apply to the Absolute? If it did apply, what would be the difference between the merely practical and the completely real? And if, to avoid this difficulty, you say that practical activity does not apply to the Absolute, then how could one take practical steps to gain knowledge of the latter?

And there is another point. If one upheld the view that 'the practical' was the object of practical understanding and the rest, what answer could one give to the dualist when he asked, 'Then why is that object not completely real?' So the view that attempts to combine affirmation of the practically real with affirmation of the completely real breaks down.

Nor should it be forgotten that this fourfold form of practical experience can occur in dream. Yet dream-objects are not accorded practical reality. So 'being the object of practical understanding' cannot be equated with 'practical reality'.

Nor can practical reality be 'that which cannot be established as subject to contradiction and cancellation'. For one can always ask the question, 'That which you call "the merely practical" and yet which, you say, cannot be shown to be subject to contradiction and cancellation — why is not that completely real?' And the Self, because it cannot be contradicted and cancelled, would fall into the category of that which has mere 'practical' reality.

Thus formulations like 'All that is other than the Self belongs to the realm of the practical', 'That which is not finally real is the practical', 'All that contradicts non-duality belongs to the realm of the practical', 'What is beheld in the state of Ignorance is the realm of the practical' are mere empty claims. It would not in any way be possible to establish 'practical reality' through them as anything genuinely existent over and above final reality. For it would always be possible to object, 'Why should the opposite not be true? (i.e. how could it be anything over and above final reality?)'

Nor could one argue that the characteristic mark of the realm of the practical was that it should be subject to contradiction and cancellation through knowledge of the identity of all as the Self, the means to liberation — and claim, on this basis, that beginningless positive Ignorance, or what depended on it, constituted the realm of the practical. For we have already shown that Ignorance cannot be anything positive (para 23), and that distinctions cannot flow from it (para 42). Nor are we and our opponents yet agreed that knowledge of the Self, the acknowledged means to liberation, could be accepted as being able to contradict and cancel Ignorance, if the latter were assumed to have this form (beginningless and positive, etc.). For our opponent himself does not deny that a modicum (*lesa*) of Ignorance remains after the attainment of metaphysical knowledge. So what would be wrong in supposing that, on his view, it would continue to set up 'the realm of the practical' (even in the face of metaphysical knowledge)?

This has also refuted the definition of the practical realm as 'that which cannot be contradicted and cancelled by anything except knowledge of the Absolute'. (55) For when one has not yet established (the possibility of) knowledge of the Absolute (according to one's system), it is useless to speak of or argue about what is 'other than the knowledge of the Absolute'. For only one thing is knowledge of the Absolute, and that is the conviction 'Only the Absolute exists: all else is illusion'. And no one who holds that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep can accept that (since for him Ignorance will be constant and so real).

It has also to be explained what it is that is contradicted and cancelled by knowledge of the Absolute, for that is a difficult point on the opponent's theories. You cannot on those theories say that it is practical experience that is contradicted and cancelled by knowledge of the Absolute. For they hold that in liberation in life there is metaphysical knowledge of the Absolute, while practical experience remains uncontradicted. And one cannot say that it is the last cognition before death (only) that constitutes knowledge of the Absolute, and that practical experience is contradicted and cancelled by that. For, on this basis, it could only be a matter of faith that practical experience was contradicted and cancelled by knowledge of the Absolute.

In any case, the whole conception of the realm of the practical as 'that which cannot be contradicted and cancelled by anything except knowledge of the Absolute' founders. Even a dream, which is uncontradicted as long as it manifests, is seen to be contradicted and cancelled on waking. And that is enough to dispose of another theory — the theory, namely, that that which suffers contradiction and cancellation most quickly is the 'purely phenomenal', that which is contradicted and cancelled after some delay is the 'practical', and that which is not subject to contradiction and cancellation is the highest truth. (56) For before actual cancellation, nothing is discernible as 'subject to cancellation' or 'subject to quick cancellation'. Even in dream, the notion of permanence lasts as long as the dream.

There is a claim that 'being subject to transformation' (*pariṇāma*) and 'having practical reality' are equivalent terms, while final reality results from eternal fixity (*kūtasthatva*). But this is of no account. For if all but the Self were taken collectively as 'the practical', there would be no means of establishing the falsity of the latter. Nor could the Self be established as void of the universe of plurality on that view, as there could be no means of cancelling the world — because, though changing, it would be eternally changing. So this view fails.

Another definition of the realm of the practical is given which runs, 'That which is not the result of any other defect apart from root-Ignorance'. This is not acceptable, because the nature of Ignorance has not been satisfactorily defined nor its existence proved.

But there is another fault in the definition. You do not want the definition of the practical to extend unduly to cover the purely phenomenal, which has been defined as 'that which arises through an extra defect over and above Ignorance'. So you will have to define the practical as that which has for its origin the sole defect of Ignorance. But Ignorance, in your view, though in the realm of the practical, cannot have an origin, or it would not be all-pervading. So you will have to provide another definition of the practical which includes that which is without an origin. So when, in order to prevent undue extension to the purely phenomenal, you make the definition of the practical 'that which is not originated by any extra defect over and above root-Ignorance', the implication of the term 'not originated' (in the context of the sentence as a whole) is that the practical *does have* an origin. But when you are trying to prevent the definition from failing to cover all the practical, 'not originated' will have to mean 'totally without origination' (in order to cover beginningless Ignorance itself). So the definition cannot be the same in the two cases, since the meaning of 'not originated' will be different. So your definition of the practical fails.

Let us pass on to consider another view. It will be said that Ignorance is an illusory modification (*vivarta*) of the Self. So there is a sense in which even Ignorance is produced by the Self. Since 'being produced' applies to Ignorance in a certain sense, why raise unnecessary

objections? But this is wrong, as it would undermine your other view that Ignorance is beginningless. And you cannot claim that 'beginningless' here only means 'not produced from anything except the Self', (with the latter also taken as beginningless). For if this were true, everything would be beginningless, since everything is produced from the Self.

But could you not say that everything apart from Ignorance was produced from the Self and Ignorance, so that Ignorance itself was in a different case from everything else, and your statement that, in the case of Ignorance, 'beginningless' meant 'not produced from anything except the Self' could stand? No you could not. For the argument involves the fault of mutual dependence. The existence of Ignorance could only be established if it had practical reality, and practical reality could only be established if Ignorance were already established. You also hold that the individual soul and the Lord and so on are beginningless, and in their case 'beginningless' does not mean 'not produced from anything except the Self'.

So on this definition of Ignorance it cannot be said that the phrase 'not capable of being produced' can invariably be interpreted in another way to mean 'capable of being produced'. So the definition of Ignorance as an illusory modification (*vivarta*) of the Self will not hold.

Nor can we find any other satisfactory definition of the practically real on your theories. Hence it follows that your claim that 'practically real' Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep is also unjustified, since you have failed to give a satisfactory definition of the 'practically real'. And we could go further, but let that suffice.

SECTION 8: OTHER DEFECTS IN THE VIEW THAT IGNORANCE IS PRESENT IN DREAMLESS SLEEP

59. On the theory of positive Ignorance, it cannot be shown how the bondage of duality could be false

We have now described a number of faults that attach to the doctrine of positive Ignorance propounded by the later Advaita Acaryas, who did not grasp the full import of the Advaita tradition. They failed to establish a satisfactory definition of positive Ignorance. Even if their definition were accepted, it would not adequately explain such points as the distinction between bondage and liberation (notably because the theorists in question attribute the continuation of a modicum (*leśā*) of Ignorance to the one liberated in life). It has been shown that (for the reason indicated in the bracket just above) they cannot explain how Ignorance is eliminated by metaphysical knowledge. And they leave us without any reason for distinguishing between the finally real and that which has mere practical reality. And the reasons advanced to establish positive Ignorance have been exposed as sophisms.

This has shown that the 'indeterminability', attributed by them to positive Ignorance is itself (quite literally) indeterminate. For not even a lunatic could argue that there was any real difference between Ignorance so conceived and the Void. And thus, since on this view there is no way of establishing the falsity of the bondage of duality, enquirers who follow this line are left having to conclude that non-duality is a mere unsupported claim.

60. The notion that waking, dream and dreamless sleep precede and succeed one another in time is untenable

There are other defects in this doctrine too. We will draw attention to them in brief outline. The first is the false assumption that the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep precede and succeed one another in time, and stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect.

Our opponents hold that there is first dreamless sleep, and then at a later time waking, and then dream after waking. They take it that in this way there is a series consisting of dreamless sleep, waking and dream, in which each earlier member of the series is the cause of the one which follows, and each later one the effect of the one which precedes it. And they maintain that there is no other way of explaining the emergence of the waking world from dreamless sleep, or the fact that dreams are accepted as arising from impressions of waking experience.

But we reply that these assumptions are not correct, as there is no proof in support of them. There is no proof, for instance, that it is waking that regularly follows dreamless sleep. For there is nothing to prevent dreamless sleep being followed by dream. And in any case we have already shown (para 32 above) that there is no essential difference between dream and waking. On the same grounds, one cannot say that dream follows waking. So there is no absolute rule that waking is what immediately succeeds dreamless sleep and arises from it — or that waking is what immediately precedes dream.

This also shows that dreamless sleep and the others cannot stand to one another as cause and effect. For those who believe in (efficient) causality believe that the cause of an effect is what immediately precedes it. And we have just shown that there is no proof that the states of dreamless sleep and the rest precede and follow one another in any fixed regular order.

Perhaps you will admit that there is no regular order between waking and dream, but claim that dreamless sleep is the cause of waking and dream, as it invariably precedes them. To this we reply as follows. Those who say that dreamless sleep is the cause, and waking its effect, implicitly affirm the existence of a time which comprehends both these states as well as an interval in between in which there is neither dreamless sleep nor waking. (According to classical Hindu physics, efficient causality requires time to operate, even if this is reduced so low as to consist in intervals too small for our senses to perceive.) But such an assumption is unjustifiable. For no interval between two states is experienced, nor could it be rationally demonstrated to exist. For we must ask whether such an interval would be associated with objects or void of them. If it were associated with objects, it would be either waking or dream. If it were void of objects it could not be shown to be different from dreamless sleep. And there is no other alternative. So there cannot be an interval between dreamless sleep and waking (and hence sleep cannot be the cause of waking).

Perhaps you will say that it is possible to infer the existence of time interpenetrating and supporting the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep, because they come and go. One cannot defend the notion of an absence of time. But this argument is not correct. For in dreamless sleep no one has experience of time. The claim that the three states (of waking, dream and dreamless sleep) come and go and belong to a single time series is in contradiction with experience, and should therefore be rejected as an error. And even if you set small store on

experience, you still cannot claim that time is present in dreamless sleep. It is true that the mind is characterized by time, and cannot conceive the absence of it, and that practical experience would be impossible without the idea and name of time. But in dreamless sleep we experience absence of time. And from this it follows that people of sharp insight will clearly see that the inference intended to establish the existence of a single time embracing all three states does not hold. And everyone agrees that what passes for time in dream should not count as waking time. And in dream the unbroken (waking) time in which the dream takes place is not experienced. So the view that the three states of dreamless sleep, waking and dream take place in one common time is untenable. And when that has been conceded, one cannot make out that they stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect.

The fact that they are not mutually dependent underlines and confirms three points that have already been made earlier. First, it is wrong to accept the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep as a way of explaining (i.e. as a material cause for) the pluralistic world of waking. Secondly, it is wrong to suppose that the experience on waking up from dreamless sleep 'I knew nothing' is a memory of the deep sleep state. Thirdly, it is a mistake to suppose that dreams consist of impressions (*vāsanā*) of waking experience. For our arguments have shown that it is impossible, without new proof, to accept that there is a time embracing all three states, or that the states stand to one another as cause and effect.

61. A defect in the view that dreamless sleep has Ignorance either for its cause or for its nature

Those who hold that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep should be asked the following question. If Ignorance is the cause of the world of plurality, do the three states of dreamless sleep, waking and dream fall within that world or do they not? If they do, then, since its cause would be present, why is there not dreamless sleep eternally? It cannot be because there is an impediment. For if there were an impediment, dreamless sleep would be impossible, either when there was or when there was not an antidote to that impediment. If there were no antidote, the impediment would take hold, and dreamless sleep would be impossible. And if there were an antidote, then this antidote's mere existence as a second thing over against the Self would rule out dreamless sleep. But if, on the second alternative, sleep, dream and waking do not fall within the world of plurality caused by Ignorance, then one might ask whether Ignorance was supposed to be the cause of dreamless sleep or not. In the same way as has just been mentioned, if Ignorance were the cause, there would be dreamless sleep continuously, and if it were not the cause, there could never be dreamless sleep. In other words, it is hard to escape the conclusion that dreamless sleep has no extrinsic cause. And that has already been refuted (on the ground that it would then never come to an end, cp. para 39 *ad init.*).

Perhaps you will say that Ignorance just *is* dreamless sleep. But (that would be absurd, for) in such a case positive Ignorance ought to come to an end when dreamless sleep came to an end, as that would then be the only possible explanation of the feeling (relating to past time) 'I slept' — (and yet in fact Ignorance continues).

Perhaps you will say that Ignorance leaves its causal state and assumes an 'effect' state, the latter consisting of waking and dream — and claim that is enough to explain the experience

one has on waking up from dreamless sleep. In that case we ask the following questions. If causal Ignorance is not found in waking and dream, then, even if it existed in dreamless sleep, how could anyone recognize it? And if, to ask an even more searching question, causal Ignorance was entirely unknown in waking, how could its presence in dreamless sleep be inferred from a sign based on perception in the waking world?

Perhaps you will retort that both the causal and the effect form of Ignorance are known in waking and dream. For when the clay is formed into a pot it does not give up its nature as clay. But even so — it would not follow that Ignorance was dreamless sleep, as it would be present in other states too. Nor is it right to identify dreamless sleep with bare causal Ignorance. For it is admitted on your system that causal Ignorance co-operates with effect-Ignorance. And this would imply the absurdity that dreamless sleep and waking would relate to one another like clay and pot, and would both be present together in the same person at the same time.

62. Even the nature of dreamless sleep is hard to make out (on the assumption of the presence of positive Ignorance)

We must now consider another point — namely, what could have been the nature of the dreamless sleep that the opponent had in mind when he affirmed that Ignorance was present in it. Perhaps you will wonder what there is to speculate over. Does not everyone know that dreamless sleep is the causal form of the gross and subtle worlds, that supervenes when the mind and senses and other organs of knowledge cease their work? But here we must ask whether dreamless sleep is the activity whereby that state is assumed, or the result of such activity, or is it just the nature of that state itself? It cannot be activity. For no one (in dreamless sleep) has the experience ‘This is a transformation, of the nature of dreamless sleep’. If there was so much as the affirmation ‘is’, that would mean that dreamless sleep was already over. For both parties to the argument agree that all particular knowledge ceases in dreamless sleep.

Dreamless sleep cannot be the result of any activity, as it would be impossible to explain how it could be a result. It could not, as ‘result’, be a substance, attribute, action or any of the other of the Logicians’ categories. So to say that dreamless sleep is the result of action setting up a particular state is a mere unsupported claim.

Nor is the last alternative (i.e. that Ignorance is just the nature of dreamless sleep) acceptable. Is the cause of that ‘nature as dreamless sleep’ different from Ignorance or not different? If the cause were something different from Ignorance, you would be at a loss to explain the nature of Ignorance. But you cannot say that Ignorance was the cause either, for the reason already given (namely, that there would always be dreamless sleep, cp. para 39 above). And again, if positive Ignorance alone were the cause of and also identical with dreamless sleep, why does not everyone experience dreamless sleep as positive Ignorance? And we have explained how it is impossible to justify an inference that dreamless sleep could be the cause of the world of waking experience (cp. para 60 above).

Perhaps you will claim that dreamless sleep is a mental modification (vṛtti) taking cognisance of non-existence, on the ground that this will be in agreement with what is said in certain other schools (cp. *Yoga Sūtra* 1.10). But that is not right, as nothing that could have such a modification is present in dreamless sleep. If you say that Ignorance itself is what has the

modification. it will still be a useless claim to aver that dreamless sleep is a modification of Ignorance and that Ignorance is present within it. For it is all very well to be in agreement with the Logicians about that which has a modification being the material cause of the modification. But you have not been able to establish either the nature or the existence of Ignorance. So to speak of its states is like painting a fresco on a wall that is not there. And thus we have shown that, since the nature of dreamless sleep has not been determined, the assertion that positive Ignorance is present there is a mere unsupported claim.

63. And a 'state' cannot be defined on the opponent's theories

And we should ask what 'a state' is, for it is only when 'states' have been defined and shown to exist that we can label dreamless sleep a 'state', and discuss the doubt whether Ignorance is its material cause (lit. locus, adhikarāṇa).

'Being a state' is not 'being subject to modification'. For we would have to ask what it was that was subject to modification. It could not be the mind, as there is nothing to show that the mind is present in (the state) of dreamless sleep. It could not be the Self, as (in our school) we do not accept that the Self undergoes modification. It cannot be 'being aware of being in a particular state', as in dreamless sleep one is not aware of being in a particular state. Nor can it be defined as 'being a time in which experience is enjoyed', as we do not have any idea of 'a time in which experience is being enjoyed' in dreamless sleep. And there is indeed no other definition of 'being subject to modification' which would cover all three states, and enable us to entertain a clear notion of dreamless sleep as a state.

Perhaps you will claim that everyone knows quite naturally what 'a state' is, and ask why we raise all these unnecessary difficulties. Even the most stupid person, you will say, understands what the state of dreamless sleep is. But is it not the case, we reply, that you yourself abandon that form of ignorance with which everyone is familiar, and argue for a form of 'positive' Ignorance that is neither perceived nor taught in the Veda?

Perhaps you will shift your ground and ask what is the need for this insistence on what everyone knows. You will ask what is wrong if you accept that positive Ignorance that is established by philosophical reflection. But this is to be rejected, as we would have to ask why you did not accept (as final) that form of ignorance which is known to everybody (i.e. accept the absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt guaranteed by universal experience, without rashly appealing to positive Ignorance, a mere empty hypothesis).

Perhaps you will say that you do accept Ignorance in the form that it is known to everyone (as an empirical phenomenon), but that you do not accept it as a form of Ignorance that can be overcome through metaphysical knowledge, as the notion that the latter exists does not stand up to critical examination. But if you adopt this standpoint, then you should subject 'the state of dreamless sleep that everyone knows' to an equally rigorous examination. If it is refuted by such an examination, it, too, will have to be rejected, and if not it will have to be accepted — according to the same rules.

This is enough to refute certain claims made by our contemporaries. They accept the view of western philosophers that the states of dreamless sleep, waking and dream are changes.

The Self, in fact, is reduced to a series of changing states, without beginning or end. This stream develops by acquiring ever new experiences as it proceeds along its path, in the manner of a river like the Ganges. The mind wishes to ascertain how the development of the stream proceeds, but it cannot take in the whole stream, and observes it (reading *vikṣate*) piecemeal bit by bit. In reality, the world-stream is continuous and without 'bits'. But, for purposes of interpretation and description, the 'bits' are imagined by the mind and called 'states'. It is denied that there is any eternal and changeless Self over and above the stream of states, on the ground that nothing changeless can be found in this unbroken stream of modifications. Just as the mind imagines separate states in what is really a continuous flow, so does it equally erroneously imagine that there is an eternal changeless principle underlying these states called 'the Self'. But in truth the only reality is the beginningless and endless unbroken stream.

This doctrine, with its specious appeal, is a revival in a new form of the old doctrine reducing reality to a stream of momentary flashes of consciousness — the false theory put forward by the ancient Buddhists. Having claimed that everything falls within a continuous stream, how can one go on to claim that the mind can conceive separate distinctions called 'states'? For the mind would itself fall within the stream of things that it had to observe, and how could it (as subject) observe itself (as object)? (57)

And there is another point. In all living beings there is present the Self as Consciousness, continuously affirming itself as 'I'. Is this Self different from the mind or not? On the view at present under discussion, the Self will fall within the stream of mental presentations, as no changeless eternal substance is admitted. But in that case, how could the mind observe any distinction (i.e. temporary fixed state) in the Self when it (the mind) was in continuous motion? On the other view — the view that the Self was different from the mind — we would have to ask the following further question. If this continual change was the nature of the mind and the world, then fixity would be something unknown to the mind, either directly or indirectly. How then could the mind apprehend the Self?

Perhaps you will say that, while you do not know the laws of nature whereby this changing stream brought forth a mind that erroneously perceives fixities, nevertheless you can explain reality as itself a fixity (i.e. as eternal change, see below). But in this case we must ask you how you know that the fixities and so on apprehended by the mind are error, while the reality consists in change.

Perhaps you will say that individual fixities, because they are apprehended by the mind, are errors, while reality is an eternal flow that can be apprehended in direct intuition without the intervention of the mind. But we shall have to ask, 'Is this (alleged) change in the form of a continuous stream always (and continuously) experienced?' How do you explain that you yourself are not able to experience it in dreamless sleep?

And if there were apprehension of a flow of mobile and (relatively) fixed things, nevertheless even he who argues that all is subject to change must accept the presence of a self-existent Witness of the stream that is different from the things, both mobile and fixed — otherwise he would not even be able to make the claim that all things underwent change. And it is not right to say that the Witness, too, must fall within the world, and so be characterized by transformation. For if that were so, you would have to accept that the stream might possibly go forward without a witness before the transformations of the latter began. Nor could you

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say that that is exactly what you hold, for the mind cannot conceive of anything that is not witnessed by a witness.

And there is another point. He who holds that reality is of the nature of an unbroken flow, because the world continues on for ever in a never-ending stream, must be asked the following question. Whence has this flow come and whither is it going? He will perhaps reply that the stream just constitutes Nature, so that the question is illegitimate. But this reply cannot be sustained. For then he will have to accept that space, though infinite, falls within the world, (58) which cannot be established rationally, and is not a matter of experience. And if he does not accept that space falls within the world, he cannot properly speak of 'a stream'.

Another defect of this doctrine is that if the world is fixed and determined as Nature, the human beings living in the world will not be free agents, and this will undermine the established laws of merit and demerit.

So this view that the world is a stream open to observation by the mind does not stand critical examination, and the notion that in the midst of this stream the mind imagines the states of dreamless sleep, waking and dream is a totally impossible one, that could only be propounded by one who did not know what a 'state' was. And this will perhaps be enough for a refutation of a modern way of thinking similar to that of the Buddhists, some consideration of which was germane to the subject we were discussing.

Indeed, it might have been thought that, as those who propound positive Ignorance do not regard the world as 'a stream', a refutation of that view was not in fact germane to the issue. But one who held that waking, dream and dreamless sleep were successive states might resort to the theory of a stream of these states, on the model of the seed and shoot, in order to defend his doctrine (against the charge of circularity) (59) by claiming that the cycle was beginningless. So there was no harm in pointing out that he would have been wrong.

Nor is it correct to suppose that those who have faith in the Veda and propound a doctrine of positive Ignorance are not wrong in their affirmation of its beginninglessness, because their doctrine has the support of the Veda and the Smṛti. For they are unable to establish their distinction between the practically real and the illusory, so that on their view all the world that is experienced in reincarnation would be completely real, and their doctrine does indeed have the faults we have attributed to it.

And he who claims that the world includes permanent elements is no more able than he who claims it is a flux to show that 'a state' is a temporary distinction imagined by the mind. For in dreamless sleep neither the mind nor its experiences are perceived, and this defect applies equally to both theories.

But let us not prolong the discussion unnecessarily. The essential point here made is that since on the theories here discussed 'a state' is unintelligible, it cannot be made out on this basis that dreamless sleep is a state. All the less could one hope to show that positive Ignorance was present in such a state.

64. Seven objections brought by the dualists
that are hard to rebut if positive
Ignorance is accepted

And this theory of positive Ignorance has a dangerous enemy in the rear. For the dualists say that it involves seven inconsistencies. (60) We will show here briefly how it is difficult to bring a defence against these charges.

The first difficulty is about the seat or *locus* of Ignorance, the entity which it afflicts. One could not attribute Ignorance to the self-luminous Absolute. And since the individual soul is imagined by Ignorance, in what could Ignorance itself have its seat in order to produce the individual soul?

The second difficulty concerns the power of Ignorance to conceal. If the Absolute were self-luminous, its true nature could not be concealed, even by Ignorance. If it could be concealed, that would imply (the absurdity) that it had lost its true nature.

The third difficulty concerns the nature of Ignorance. It is not real, for the Advaitins do not accept that. And it is not unreal, for the dualists themselves do not accept that, as they raise objections against the view that what is unreal could produce an error. For what is totally unreal (and so outside experience), like the horn of a hare, does not produce errors. And if the Advaitin defending positive Ignorance were to say that he accepted on these very grounds that Ignorance was neither real nor unreal, that would contradict our powers of conception. For our conceptions are all either of the form 'it exists' or 'it does not exist'. What evidence is there of anything that is indeterminable as existent or non-existent? And you cannot argue that the Self is real, and that anything distinct from that would be unreal, while that which is indeterminable as real or unreal constitutes a third category separate from these two. For you, (as a later Advaitin, assert the existence of positive Ignorance, and) have not so far established that the Self alone is real, without sharing that reality with anything else.

The fourth difficulty in your theory of Ignorance is the logical impropriety of this very theory of its 'indeterminability'. The fifth difficulty is that it would undermine the possibility of an authoritative means of knowledge. Perception and the other authoritative means of knowledge could not (intelligibly) bear on Ignorance. Whatever can be shown to be an authoritative means of knowledge bears on ignorance conceived as absence of knowledge in the way you do not accept.

This also serves to dispose of the claim which runs as follows. 'A cognition' (the claim runs) 'effected through a means of valid cognition, the subject here under discussion, must be preceded by another entity (i.e. beginningless positive Ignorance) — an entity that is present in the same locus as the cognition, an entity which is brought to an end by the cognition, an entity that conceals the object of the cognition and is other than the mere previous non-existence of the cognition. For a cognition illumines something not previously illumined, like the light of a lamp when first lit in the dark', (Viv. p. 85, cp. above, para 47). It appears that this is not correct. For the qualification 'other than the mere previous non-existence of the cognition' cannot be justified. For it is not right to say that the previous non-existence of the cognition is not brought to an end. And the example cited is inappropriate. For the light of a lamp cannot illumine on its own without a cognition. And the opponent's contention is open to the retort, 'A valid cognition,

the subject under discussion, cannot exist without being preceded by its own previous non-existence, just like the valid knowledge that establishes your own version of Ignorance' (61) So your inference (about cognition implying a previous positive Ignorance) was wrong. And our earlier contention that positive Ignorance could neither be defined nor proved to exist has been well confirmed.

There is another defect in the theory — namely, that if it were true (that Ignorance was something positively existent) there could be nothing that could bring Ignorance to an end. The idea that the knowledge of the identity of one's true Self with the Absolute, taught in the Upanishads, puts an end to Ignorance, would be a mere idle dream for one clinging to this wrong tradition about the nature of Ignorance.

Those who hold to the reality of difference (i.e. the dualists) interpret the final message of the Upanishads differently, so they condemn the whole idea of the cessation of Ignorance. Their argument runs as follows. If subject, object and act of knowledge are taken as false, then knowledge will be false. So something other than false knowledge will have to be found to put an end to false Ignorance. But this leaves us either with infinite regress in the form 'Putting an end to Ignorance depends on knowledge, while knowledge depends on something else that puts Ignorance to an end' — or else it simply leaves us with the failure to bring Ignorance to an end. Nor can you avoid this by saying, 'The Absolute is of the very nature of knowledge, and that knowledge puts an end to Ignorance'. For since the Absolute would already exist as knowledge (before the cessation of Ignorance), there could not be the rise of any (extra) knowledge (to put Ignorance to an end).

And again, who is the knower who could know the knowledge that puts positive Ignorance to an end? Whether the knower be taken as the individual soul or the Absolute, there will be defects in either case. The individual soul cannot be what produces the knowledge that puts Ignorance to an end, since the soul is superimposed through Ignorance by its very nature. And though there can be (and is) knowledge in the Absolute, that knowledge cannot be false (in the manner the post-Śaṅkara Advaitins take it to be, see Note 3). For if that knowledge were false, Ignorance would be its source. And that would mean that it could not bring Ignorance to an end.

Even if it were assumed that Ignorance somehow did come to an end, there would still be the difficulty (62) of imagining who could be the one who had the knowledge that put positive Ignorance to an end. So to avoid these difficulties it will have to be accepted that the knowledge that brings Ignorance to an end is a cognition of the Absolute that is not itself unreal. But that will contradict the opponent's own doctrine. For he who propounds the doctrine of root-Ignorance does not accept that anything real apart from the Absolute exists. Nor could a knower (who conceived himself real) strive for knowledge that would destroy himself. So that is another reason why the cessation of positive Ignorance is unintelligible.

And thus we have expounded briefly seven of the objections raised against positive Ignorance by the dualists. And we do not see any way in which the one who holds to the presence of positive Ignorance in all three states (including dreamless sleep) can escape from these objections. So that is another reason why this conception that we have been considering is not rationally defensible.

Concluding Verse

Those who propound positive Ignorance infer the existence (in dreamless sleep) of a seed of the waking world from the (alleged) memory of sleep. With great effort and enthusiasm, they support this evidence (alleged to be) derived from perception and other means of valid cognition. How can they avoid the conclusion that the soul and the Absolute are different in dreamless sleep? But this is not the right doctrine about the supreme reality.

PART III — EXPOSITION OF OUR OWN DOCTRINE

Introductory Verses

I bow to that venerable Guru of all Gurus (Śrī Śaṅkara) who illumined the meaning of the Upanishads, and for want of study of whose commentaries people have fallen into darkness and accepted the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep, saying that it undergoes transformation (into the world) on waking, and have given a subordinate place to liberation in life, and the chief place to liberation after death, accepting that even the enlightened one is tainted with a modicum (leśa) of impurity.

I bow with reverence and devotion to that 'neo-Indra' (nūtana-sureśvara) Sureśvara, that noble figure who gave forth the Brhadāranyaka Vārtika with solicitude and with freedom from all prejudice — veritably a draught of nectar churned forth from the ocean of Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary for the benefit of sufferers from repeated worldly lives.

SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF OUR OWN VIEW

65. Knowledge of the supreme reality can be gained merely through a critical examination of the three states

What has been expounded so far has been the conception of some Advaita authors only. It is a doctrine which is not sanctioned by reason, and arises from accepting positive Ignorance — a concept which is hard to define, and is established only through their own private speculations. And it is a useless conception. For even when accepted it cannot fail to give rise to a whole series of doubts in the enquirer's mind — a fact which has been brought out by a host of reasons in the earlier part of the present work.

We are now going on to describe, in contrast, the system accepted by Śrī Gaudapāda, Śrī Śaṅkara and others for interpreting the upanishadic texts. To begin with, from the point of view of the enquirer there appear to be three states called 'waking', 'dream' and 'dreamless sleep'. Since there is no approach except through the examination of one or other of these three states, when they have been examined nothing further is left to be known. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said, '(For nothing apart from the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep can be known). since everything ever thought by any philosopher falls within them' (G.K. Bh. 4.88.

Ś.S.B. 6.287). Therefore everyone must accept that it is through a consideration of them that one attains to a knowledge of the truth.

66. General objections against making examination of the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep the chief item of the discipline

An opponent of our methods might argue as follows. He might claim that it was worth examining the waking state, as that is the field in which all secular and Vedic practice takes place. But we cannot see that there is anything worth examining in dream and dreamless sleep. Dream is a mere intermittent phenomenon, an error conditioned by the defect of sleep. There is no place there for the real objects of the waking state. As for dreamless sleep, it is just the cessation of all the instruments of cognition. There is no experience over and above that. This being so, what is there about dream or dreamless sleep that requires to be established by investigation? Of course you (i.e. the present author) could always say that error and the cessation of our instruments of cognition were part of our experience, so that they had to be taken into consideration, or otherwise our appraisal of truth would not be based on a complete account of our experience. But if that were so, then delirium and coma should also be taken into account, as well as dream, in a philosophical evaluation of our experience (which is not normally done).

Further, how can everything be known through an examination of the states of experience enjoyed by one person? There exist other people also, whose experiences should not be neglected in the search for truth. And again, this world has been continuing from beginningless time. How can its true nature be known through a consideration of the states of one person within it only?

67. Answer

To this we reply as follows. In so far as it is claimed that waking experience is the field of all practical experience, we can accept this. But there will of necessity have to be an enquiry into the nature of dream and dreamless sleep, on account of the doubt whether the practical experience we have in the waking state is totally real or whether it is only equivalent to a dream.

Then there was the point about dream being a mere intermittent moment of error, and dreamless sleep being the mere cessation of the operation of the instruments of knowledge — so that there was nothing about them worth enquiring into. Here, too, it will be agreed by people who have a fixed prejudice in favour of the waking state that dream and dreamless sleep should be regarded as intermittent phenomena. But there will nevertheless have to be an examination of dream and dreamless sleep to see whether they are apprehended as they truly are or otherwise.

As for the objection that, if dream is to be taken into account, delirium and coma should also be taken into account, that also can be accepted. Let delirium, coma and the like be considered if you wish. But that does not mean that it would be right to place them on a level with dream. For delirium and coma are not common to all human beings, that they could be

regarded as equivalent to dream. Delirium and coma and so on are states that happen to a few people only, and at a few times only, and as a result of special causes. So it must be accepted that they are different from dream, which occurs to everyone naturally and without special cause. Mystical trance (*samādhi*) should also be included in this category amongst the phenomena induced by special causes.

In any case the notion that delirium, coma and so on are extra states over and above the three well known ones of waking, dream and dreamless sleep does not stand examination. The right view is that all other states are finally reducible to these three. For there can be no argument over the fact that there are two mutually exclusive states in which we respectively do and do not have vision (of objects). There cannot (by the Law of the Excluded Middle) be any third state other than those of seeing or not seeing objects, as two contradictories cannot co-exist. So we must conclude that all states are included within the pair of contradictories 'seeing and not seeing objects'. Waking and dream pertain to the category 'seeing objects', dreamless sleep pertains to that of 'not seeing objects'. Whatever be the case with the delirium or coma of the enquirer himself, the delirium and coma of others will be observed by him only in the waking state, as, (*qua* phenomena), they are by nature limited to the realm where objects are observed. In the case of the enquirer himself, whether delirium and coma are taken as pertaining to the realm of seeing objects or to that of not seeing objects, in either case they fall within the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. And this is enough for a correct determination of their nature, so that our argument so far is sound.

Then there was the objection that there are other people whose experiences have to be taken into account besides one's own if there is to be a proper account of reality. On this we would observe that those who are taken for other people are apprehended by us only in our waking experience. So nothing is lost in regard to determination of the real if one takes it that, in considering one's own experience, they also have been taken into consideration. So this objection does not hold either. (63)

Then again there was the difficulty about the world having been in progress from beginningless time. How could its nature be known through reflection over the states of one person, who could not behold the whole universe from within? (reading *antargata*) That objection, too, arises from ignorance of the proper method of enquiry into metaphysical truth. One who sincerely wishes for an unbiased knowledge of the truth cannot without preliminary investigations just start from the propositions 'Time is beginningless' and 'The world has been in progress from beginningless time' and 'I am only a single human being within that world' as if they were already proved, and then start his investigations into the nature of the real on the basis of them. If one who wanted to know the truth about himself and the world revealed as space, time and causation were to give in to a prejudice without cause, he would be in the position of one giving away his daughter in marriage only as a means to slaughter the bridegroom. So it was true when we said that enquiry into the truth (begins and) ends with reflection over the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep.

The subject which is ultimately under consideration in Vedānta philosophy, through this examination of the three states, is that witnessing consciousness which witnesses waking and dream, and does not depart in dreamless sleep. Thus Śrī Śamkara says, 'The mind and its activities are the sole object of the Witness in waking, just as they are in dream. But in dreamless sleep neither the mind nor its activities exist. There is then only pure Consciousness.

omnipresent and eternal' (T.T. (verse) i 1.4, cp. Ś.S.B. 6.147). By contrast, perceptible objects exclude one another even in that state in which they are perceived, and are not found at all in dreamless sleep. As Śrī Sureśvara says, 'The various manifestations of the not-Self (are known to be unreal because they) exclude one another mutually. And in dreamless sleep, coma meditative trance and other such states, they disappear and reduce to the Witness' (B.B.V. 2.3.222). So it is the Self alone as bare Consciousness that is real, and all else is unreal. It is just this that the Upanishads teach when they say that the true nature of the Self is the Absolute (Brhad. 2.5.19, etc.). And so knowledge of the identity of the Self with the Absolute is the culmination of enquiry into the nature of truth — and it is to be obtained by an examination of the three states alone. (read samadhigamyā, not samādhi-gamyā) As Śrī Śaṅkara says: 'To begin with, there is knowledge of the three kinds of knowable in order. First comes the gross world. Afterwards, when this is absent, comes the private world (of dream). Then, when this is absent, comes "the beyond" (i.e. dreamless sleep). When these three states have been eliminated one after the other, one knows the ultimate reality, the Fourth, non-dual, beyond danger. When this occurs, that man of great intellect, being now himself the Self, attains to omniscience here in this very world' (G.K. Bh. 4.89, Ś.S.B. 6.288). Such is the conviction of those who have known the final truth.

**68. The objects perceived in the waking state
are unreal because they are inconstant**

Every knowable object in the waking state represents a false manifestation of the Self. How? Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'When a thing is determined as being of a particular form and that form never fails, that is its real form. When a thing is determined as being of a particular form and that form fails, it is said to be unreal' (Taitt. Bh. 2.1, Ś.S.B. 1.179). By 'unreal' he meant 'imagined through a false idea'. When the distinction between real and unreal has been established in that way, it has to be acknowledged that everything perceived in the waking world is false. Nothing perceived in the waking state lasts for an instant without changing, as observers well know. Since there is no way of determining 'This and this only is verily the true form of such and such a thing', all objects disclose themselves as of unstable nature and as verily unreal.

To this an objection might be formulated as follows. Though the objects assume different forms, they remain the same objects and are infallibly recognized as such. So this alone is enough to secure their reality. Or even if it were accepted that they underwent change, they would remain the same in point of being open to apprehension by the mind. And even though they cannot be regarded as eternal, since they change, it does not follow from this that they are unreal.

But this objection is wrong. This notion of 'open to apprehension by the mind' turns out to be totally unintelligible. It cannot mean 'open to apprehension by the mind' unqualified, as it is not true that everything is always manifest to the mind. Nor do you improve your case if you say that the pot or other object is regularly open to apprehension through the idea of 'pot' and so on. For when you ask, 'What is the idea of the pot?', you find that without the pot there can be no idea of the pot, and without the idea of the pot one cannot establish the existence of the pot — so that one cannot establish the true nature of either 'pot' or 'idea of pot' as independently existent.

[Commenting on *Gaudapāda Kārikā* 4.67, Śrī Śaṅkara explains this further by saying, ‘The idea and its object are in mutual dependence. The idea is dependent on the soul or its other objects for its existence. And the soul and other objects of the idea are dependent on the latter for their existence. (In the case of the soul at least,) soul and idea are each objects for the other. Therefore, when the question is raised, “what is the idea and what is the object of the idea?” people of insight say, “They are neither of them anything”. In a dream, there is neither a real elephant nor the real idea of an elephant, and people of insight see that the same is the case here in the waking state. Why is this so? Because neither idea nor object is capable of being either defined or proved. Each is apprehended in dependence on the other. The pot cannot be apprehended without the idea of the pot, and the idea of the pot cannot be apprehended without the pot. The meaning is, “There is no distinction between idea and pot whereby one could be established as the proof of the other”’.]

Further, the reality of objects depends on our having valid knowledge through the sense-organs. If we ask how we know the sense-organs exist, the answer is ‘Through the mind’. But there is nothing to show that the sense-organs are anything separate from the mind. For when the mind is in abeyance we have no experience that could determine their existence. The truth is that all organs reduce to the mind, as is shown by our experience in dream

In this context the following verses from the Mokṣa Dharma section of the Mahābhārata are relevant. ‘The higher mind (buddhi) sends out and withdraws the sense-organs even as a tortoise sends out and withdraws its limbs. The (cosmic) Higher Mind governs the constituents (of Nature, *guṇa*). The (individual) higher mind governs the sense-organs and the lower mind. Without the (cosmic) Higher Mind (to project them) how could the constituents of Nature exist?’ (M.Bh. 12.239.17,19). And likewise: ‘The (individual) higher mind (buddhi) is a person’s Self (*ātman*). The higher mind exists in his Self and through his Self. When it undergoes fluctuations it assumes the form of the lower mind (*manas*). It is because of changes in the lower mind and sense-organs that the higher mind undergoes fluctuations. When it hears, it assumes the form of the organ of hearing. When it touches, it is called the organ of touch. When it sees, it is the seer. When it tastes, it is the organ of taste. When it smells, it is the organ that perceives odour. The higher mind undergoes fluctuations into different forms’ (M.Bh. 12.240.3-5).

So for these reasons also, objects do not have independent existence.

As for the claim made above that the fact of objects being recognized as ‘the same’ was enough to prove their reality, that was rash indeed. How can recognition in the form ‘This is the same’ be certain when there is the possibility of our making mistakes about external objects? How can we be sure that an object is not illusory? And we have already shown above (para 35) how recognition, though necessary for practical activity, is not based on incontrovertible experience. So neither recognition nor anything else demonstrates the reality of objects. For it is the very nature of an object that it should change its nature every instant.

When the objects of the waking state are unintelligible even in that state, and their reality cannot be proved there, how could their reality be proved in other states where it cannot even be observed? And nobody either supposes or could suppose that the world perceived in waking is present in dream, when when there is no guarantee that that world exists even in the waking state.

69. While the dream-world is manifestly illusory,
the guarantees for the waking world are no different

The existence of the apparent world perceived in dream is limited to that state (the dream-state), and it cannot exist apart from it. On this basis, its illusory character is obvious. Thus Śrī Sureśvara has said, ‘Even in the realm of the waking world, action and the factors of action are only accepted through lack of reflection, what to say of those appearances of action and its factors that are confined to the realm of dream!’ (B.B.V. 4.3.921). But remarks of this kind are only made in a spirit of concession to the ordinary commonsense view. In truth, however, there is not the slightest difference between dream and waking apart from that sanctioned by speech usage.

Consider the state thought of as waking. It manifests along with the body appropriate to that state, and the things connected with that body, desirable, undesirable or neutral as the case may be. As long as the series of waking experiences lasts unbroken, the waking state superimposes the Self within onto the mind, and connects what was associated with its past impressions with its present experience, and supposes that its future waking experience will be based on the merit and demerit of its present acts. It takes its previous dreams as mere mental constructions unworthy of credence, but has no doubts about its own reality, regarding itself as having the benefit of rigid rules of space, time and causation, and as being a field for the activity and experience of numerous different performers of action and enjoyers of experience. In the same way, the state later considered as dream also regards itself as waking as long as it lasts, and arrogates to itself all the attributes of waking we have described. This is a matter of direct perception for all of us. And the details of how this has happened have already been explained (para 35, etc.).

No one can deny this total parallel between dream and waking, for any opponent will himself necessarily be a being falling within the succession of states as described. We do not find any of the people perceived in our dreams trying to affirm that they (do not belong to the dream but) belong to the waking state. Therefore the ultimate truth is that both waking and dream are species of dream. And so Śrī Gaudapāda has said, ‘Because of the well-known reason that the characteristic distinctions (into subjective and objective factors) are common to both states, the wise have called the waking and dream states one’ (G.K. 2.5, cp. Ś.S.B. 2.217 ff.).

The world that is perceived in any given state (waking or dream) of subject-object consciousness is peculiar to that state, and cannot be separated from it. It cannot be separated from that state and apprehended in another. It follows that neither the world of the waking state, nor that of the dream state, affirm themselves as real. Thus both the states called waking and dream, with all their objects, are mutually exclusive and inexplicable in character, even during the time they are being perceived. So it is correct to say that, if dream is manifestly unreal, waking is also.

70. In dreamless sleep there is no world of any kind

In dreamless sleep neither the world of dream nor the world of waking are found. This is an even stronger argument for the unreality of any world of plurality. It is agreed that in ordinary worldly experience things — such as the apparent silver that manifests when mother-of-pearl is mistaken

for silver — which have only a phenomenal nature that is perceived only for a limited time, and which are found on proper examination to have no true nature at all, are only imagined through erroneous conception. So in the same way it is right to dismiss the worlds of waking and dream as mere false appearances. For they are only perceived in the states which condition them, and in dreamless sleep they disappear.

71. The reality of the witnessing consciousness

But the Witness (the ultimate witnessing consciousness) does not fail to assert its nature as existent in any of the three states. The ultimate Witness of dream is not different from the witness of waking. Even those who hold that waking is real, and that dream is a false appearance composed from impressions of waking, accept that the one who witnesses both states is identical.

As for those who hold (like us) that both dream and waking are false appearances, for them there is no difference in the true nature of Consciousness in the two states, and hence reality has no intrinsic distinctions. Nor can any distinctions be introduced into it from without. For one cannot show how a false appearance could introduce real distinctions into what is known to be ultimately real.

He who is seeing a dream sees himself as if belonging to the dream. He experiences attachment and aversion and so on, along with pleasure and pain, from the various objects perceived in the dream. He takes no thought whatever of the waking body, or of the wife and sons and other matters pertaining to it. And for these reasons you would think he ought to be manifestly different from what he is in the waking state. And yet there is no question of any difference in the Witness of the two states. And one should realize that, if there had been any difference, there could not have been a Witness of anything.

For the matter is thus. Through all the successive mutually exclusive states with different modes of vision one entity stands regularly present. It determines how each successive state is contradicted and cancelled in the case of dreams, errors and so on. It is that which raises and explores the doubt whether two things are the same or different, through its power of being able to view things both earlier and later. It is that which can recognize things as 'This is certainly such and such' — such an entity cannot change and be one thing at one time and another at another. This is enough to show that the Witness must be real in the full sense, and must be itself untouched by the universe of objects which it apprehends. So its nature must be pure Consciousness.

Verse

We infer from the parallels with dream that the waking state is not real and has, together with all its objects, no distinguishing attributes or signs that would mark it off from dream — and verily it is dream. This dream undergoes total dissolution in dreamless sleep. The Witness of all, of the nature of reality and Consciousness, shines in purity and transcends any illusory dream.

72. How our doctrine does not contradict
practical experience

People apprehend 'pots and 'cloth' and other objects as real in practical life, and if they are real they cannot be illusory. But it must be realized that this contradiction that our doctrine seems to have with practical experience is only apparent and not real. People in the world agree that even in one state of consciousness (either waking or dream) mirage-water and other illusions are contradicted and cancelled by later cognitions. On the other hand things that manifest permanently in a period either of waking or dream are taken as real. But the reality of these (apparently 'real') objects themselves does not stand examination (since they are contradicted and superseded when another state supervenes). So our doctrine does not contradict experience.

Perhaps you will say that instead of taking these relatively permanent objects as illusory we should, on the contrary, take them as real, in accordance with what we perceive. For one should not put them on the same footing as mirages and so on, since one cannot deny that they are objects of our valid instruments of cognition. But if you argue in this way, we would remind you of what was set forth earlier (para 68) about the qualifications for being ultimately real. It is not the case that we first accept that everything known through the instruments of valid cognition is true, and then afterwards contradict ourselves by denying the reality of the world. If 'true' were defined as that which was the object of an instrument of valid cognition, then, because the truth of that instrument of valid cognition could only be known through that instrument, we should have the fallacy of self-dependence (i.e. the instrument of valid cognition would only be true, so to speak, if it was true). Or if it were claimed that one instrument of cognition could validate another, then the doubt would extend to the second one and we would end up in infinite regress.

And there is another point. An instrument of valid cognition is something that falls within a world of plurality (prapañca). How could the instrument of cognition determine the reality or unreality of that world itself? For no one could accept that a world had to be known through that world. For nothing (such as a world of objects) that has to be known by something other than itself can ever be self-luminous. Therefore the criterion of reality is not the fact of being known through an instrument of valid cognition, but the fact of never failing to be present (avyabhicāritva). And no world of plurality satisfies this criterion. A mere idea may refer to something established by error, and one cannot speak of anything in the world as being always known. Therefore our contention that the world perceived in waking is unreal does not contradict experience

73. Ignorance is only superimposition in the
form of a synthesis of the real with
the false

In the manner explained, it is purely through failure to awaken to the metaphysical reality that people in the world have their natural practical experience. It is based on the wrong apprehension of the Self and the not-self, which are totally contradictory in nature, and respectively real and false, as if they were identical, and had identical attributes. Afterwards, through proper reflection, people come to see not only that there is no connection between the Self and the not-self, but also that the very distinction between real and false arises from

ignorance of the metaphysical reality, just like an illusory object. Thus Śrī Suresvara has said. 'The very distinction between real and unreal arises in regard to the supreme reality, which is without distinctions, only through ignorance of the inmost Self. When one awakens to the true nature of the inmost Self it disappears' (B.B.V. 1.3.52).

The case is comparable with that of a person in the world (when he sees and corrects an error). When (for instance) he comes finally to perceive the mother-of-pearl he does not just see that it is different from the apparent silver. He sees also that the synthesis and identification of two different substances, mother-of-pearl and silver, in one and the same substratum was false. In the same way, those who know the true tradition of Vedānta refer to the synthesis of the Self and the non-self, which occurs through lack of reflection, through such terms as Ignorance (*ajñāna*, *avidyā*) or false knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna*), because it is later cancelled and contradicted by right knowledge. Thus we read in Śrī Śaṅkara, 'This very superimposition, thus defined, the wise call Ignorance (*avidyā*, B.S.Bh. 1.1.1, intro., cp. M.V. p. 46), and in the Viṣṇu Purāna, 'Listen to what is the true nature of Ignorance, O you who are the pride of your dynasty. It is the notion that the not-self is the Self' (V.P. 6.7.11). And the mental cognition that brings such Ignorance to an end is referred to by such terms as knowledge (*jñāna*), right knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*) and enlightenment (*vidyā*). This is but a brief indication of the faultless method of teaching of the true experts in Vedānta.

SECTION 2: OUR PERCEPTION OF THE WAKING WORLD

74 (1). At the time of dreamless sleep, no world
of plurality is found outside it

But how, our opponent might ask, could such a method be regarded as faultless? The world cannot go out of existence in dreamless sleep. And even if it did, it could not suddenly and for no reason jump back into the field of perception on our waking up. How do we answer that?

In fact we do not teach that a universe that exists in waking goes out of existence in dreamless sleep. What we teach is that the universe that is seen in waking is related only to the waking state, and is not perceived or found in any other state.

To this you might reply as follows. You might concede that the waking world could not be perceived outside waking, but claim that it must also exist somewhere outside dreamless sleep (during the course of the latter). Otherwise, how could it emerge again on waking? In reply to this we ask what sort of existence it could be supposed to have. Are we to say that during the course of dreamless sleep the universe of waking exists somewhere outside in some other receptacle? If not, can we explain how the universe comes to be perceived after dreamless sleep is over? On the first supposition, how could the opponent know of any other receptacle in which the universe could exist? For he has no particularized knowledge at the time of dreamless sleep.

But could he not point out that there were other people existent and awake during the time that he was asleep, who could be cited as a proof that the waking world was then in existence? For we have experiences in the world such as, 'I slept during the night of Śivarātrī, whereas this other person kept awake'. So why should we ignore the experience of other people

during the time we are in dreamless sleep?

To anyone who objected in that way we would reply as follows. These 'others' that you mention — do they fall within your waking universe or not? If they fall within your waking universe, how could they be perceiving anything during your dreamless sleep? For their existence would undergo the same fortunes (regarding existence and non-existence) as your waking universe. And there is no evidence in dreamless sleep for the existence of any other universe, distinct from one's own waking universe. Nor is there anything to prove that the world bound by one's waking experience actually exists during one's dreamless sleep. This is taught by the Veda in the words, 'When he is asleep and sees no dream he becomes one in this vital energy, and then the power of speech dissolves in him with all names, the power of sight dissolves in him with all forms, the power of hearing dissolves in him with all sounds, the mind dissolves in him with all thoughts' (Kauṣītaki 4. 19-20). And so one should realize that no waking universe besides one's own universe could exist on its own for an instant, except through one's waking state.

74 (2). What happens to the world of waking when the state of waking is in abeyance?

The following mode of argument is also incorrect. It is incorrect to argue that the qualification 'waking world' is invented by those with a bias against the existing world, and to claim on this ground that this 'waking world' is the 'real world', and not just 'the waking world', and that it could subsist somewhere independently of waking experience. For we reply that what in the waking state is called 'the world' has never been perceived by anyone in any other state except the waking state. How could it be referred to by the general term 'the world', unqualified? No one, however great his intellect, is able to perceive the waking world in dream. Why do we say this? Because people agree that the waking world does not and could not possibly exist in dream.

Perhaps you will persist in your own view that the world of waking experience exists independently of the waking state and argue as follows. It is true, you will say, that the world as qualified (e.g. qualified as waking world or as dream-world) cannot exist everywhere, but the world as substratum open to qualification can. Just as a blue lotus may be perceived at one place and a red one at another (and in each case what we are perceiving is 'a lotus'), so may 'the world' be seen as the waking world in the waking state, and as the dream-world in the dream-state.

But this is to betray an unreasoned prejudice in favour of a point that is quite unjustified. For, as just mentioned, one cannot establish the existence of a (world as) support of attributes unless these attributes are actually apprehended. (And no attributes of a world-in-itself are apprehended, but only the attributes of the worlds of waking and dream.) Nothing taken as a world can be established without a witness experiencing it. The worlds of waking and dream can only be established with the help of a witness. So what basis have you for assuming the existence of a 'world-in-itself', for which any experience through a witness is lacking?

And you cannot establish that at the time of dream there are others perceiving a world,

because the same fallacies result (i.e. the 'others' turn out on enquiry to be denizens of a waking world only). And if there is no evidence whatever of the waking world in dream, there is all the less reason to suspect its existence during dreamless sleep, in which all objective knowledge is ruled out. So one cannot suppose that the waking world, in abeyance at the time of sleep, exists at that time in any way, either in dreamless sleep or outside it.

**74 (3). Even in the waking state, the world
that manifests is false like shell-silver**

Perhaps you will say that you are not trying to prove the existence of the world during dreamless sleep. The question you are raising is about how the world could rise up again if it had totally disappeared during dreamless sleep. Here we ask you to clarify the meaning of your words. Perhaps you will reply that the same world that was perceived in an earlier waking period rises up again in a later one. And perhaps you will ask how that could be, if, (as on our own doctrine), it would be something that had lost its existence.

We answer that (on your premises) you are right, and that you are good at reasoning. But please ask yourself why, when engaged in an enquiry to discover whether the world is real or not, you start off by accepting for it that very reality that is under discussion, as if it were something that had already been proved. You should also remember how the reasoning that aims to establish the reality of the waking world (in its successive manifestations) on grounds of recognition has already been refuted (cp. para 35, above).

**75. The identity of the waking world
throughout its successive manifestations
cannot be established through recognition**

Let us consider the following suggestion. The refutation of (the argument for the reality of the waking world from) recognition that was given above will not stand examination. For how can you overlook the conscious experience 'This is that same' which acquaints us with that recognition with certitude? Now, it is true that you (strict classical Advaitin) have argued that in this experience 'that' is indirect knowledge (memory), whereas 'this' is direct knowledge (perception), so that there cannot be identity between the objects of the two cognitions, since the latter have contradictory attributes ('direct' and 'indirect'). But the argument is incorrect. For the combination of two contradictory attributes can be observed in a single cognition. For instance, there can be the cognition 'This hill has a fire (because it has smoke)'. Here 'this' (hill) portends perception and direct knowledge, while 'has a fire' is an inference, and so indirect knowledge, yet the two are combined. So the refutation of recognition based on mere abstract reasoning (i.e. the argument that cognition is logically impossible, because it comprises direct and indirect knowledge at the same time) stands contradicted by a perceived example (i.e. that of inference, which is actually perceived to take place, and which consists of a combination of direct and indirect knowledge).

Nor is it correct (we shall be told) to argue that recognition is without validity because it cannot constitute a single cognition, since it embraces two separate objects. For separate objects (i.e. knowledge of the separate objects 'smoke' and 'fire') are found in the example (of

inference) cited.

No doubt (the provisional argument continues) the objection is raised against recognition that in 'this is that' the element 'that' is a memory arising from an impression, while this is an experience through direct perception. (64) Therefore the objection is made that recognition is not a single unitary cognition, since an impression arising from a previous experience. and a cognition (such as perception) arising through direct contact with an external object, arise from different causal complexes. What we have are two different kinds of cognition, a memory and a direct experience, brought together and referred to by the term 'recognition' .

But this objection (the provisional argument continues) fails, because we can cite an example of a single cognition embracing these two disparate factors. The cognition 'This hill has a fire', already referred to, is a single act of inference. Here the knowledge that smoke was a sign of fire was mere knowledge of a general rule derived from induction, whereas the perception of a hill derived from direct contact of the senses with an object. Yet the two combine together to stand as the cause of the single act of inference, 'This hill has a fire'. So we conclude that a recognition is neither a medley of two cognitions, nor an error, but a single cognition worthy of credence.

This whole defence of recognition, however, is also faulty, because the point made by the one claiming that the example represents a single unitary cognition is untenable. For in this cognition the part that reveals the hill cannot be an inference: it is only the part that reveals fire as implied by smoke that can be so designated. In all inferences there is an element dependent on perception. But this would not be enough to permit the inference that perception was itself an inference! Inferential knowledge is indirect, it is produced by knowledge of a sign, its content goes beyond its immediate object (goes beyond the perceptible sign to the imperceptible conclusion). But no logician could show that the same conditions that govern recognition were anywhere found in inference, as the combination of perception and the other means of valid cognition is not the same in the two cases.

(In inference there is a perception of a subject, [e.g. a hill], plus perception of a sign, [e.g. smoke], showing that the subject is accompanied by something else, the validity of the sign being grounded on a universal rule derived from previous perceptions. The knowledge derived from the sign is abstract in the sense that it yields no image of a concrete particular [e.g. no image of a particular fire]. In recognition, on the other hand, there is only one perception, but this is accompanied by a concrete memory image of a particular, derived from previous experience. Unlike a valid inferential sign grounded on a universal rule, a memory image does not amount to authoritative knowledge.)

And so, since recognition consists of two cognitions, respectively a memory and a piece of direct experience, it is not anything known wholly and solely (reading sakala) through immediate experience. We are therefore very far from being able to rely on its authority to determine with certainty that the universe of waking is identical in its various manifestations during successive periods of waking experience.

Nor should you complain that, if this were true, there could not be any recognition of the means or objects of valid cognition, so that all practical experience would be at an end. For the play of means and objects of valid empirical cognition, and the play of action. its factors and results, are attested by everyone's experience, and there is no question of anyone's practical

experience being brought to an end merely through penetration to the metaphysical truth. The enquirer into metaphysical truth does not attempt to alter, and would not be capable of altering, the nature of the world. He merely tries to ascertain the nature of the fixed and eternal truth through his mind. So our doctrine does not imply any break in practical experience.

Since this is so, and the permanent identity of the world has not yet been proved, how could it be right for you to raise the question ‘How could the world arise again when we wake up?’, as if it constituted a genuine objection to our doctrine?

76. Perception of the world occurs in Ignorance only

Perhaps the question will again be raised against us — if the world is totally non-existent in dreamless sleep, how does it come to be perceived once more when we wake up? Suppose we reply that as a matter of fact no real world is perceived every time we wake up. Even so, we shall be asked to explain how a new appearance of a world arises today (when we wake up in the morning), resembling that of yesterday. For one cannot claim that the world arises from nothing.

To this we reply with a counter-question. (In repeated vision of illusory shell-silver) how does the illusory shell-silver reproduce itself in a form similar to that in which it was last seen? Perhaps you will say that there is not really any silver there at all, it was just something imagined by a greedy mind in error. In that case, you must allow us to make the same defence.

But what of him who follows the neo-Vedāntins and says that Ignorance exists there as a material cause, so the rise of illusory silver is explicable through that? Such a person appears ridiculous to those who keep to experience, and should be corrected by the reasoning refuting the whole notion of the rise of silver in mother-of-pearl to be given below (para 129).

Even so, we shall be asked, how can the world, incapable of being experienced in dreamless sleep, and yet assumed to exist somehow during the time of dreamless sleep, suddenly appear with no intelligible cause when we wake up? The example of shell-silver is not an exact parallel, because in that case there is a defect in the organ of sight that sets up the illusory manifestation. And, as strict classical Advaitins, we do not accept the presence of root-Ignorance in dreamless sleep, which could otherwise stand as the defect enabling an illusory universe to manifest in the waking state.

But this objection does not apply, as it is a fact of experience that the world is experienced by people in bondage, even though it is illusory in the vision of the liberated ones.

Perhaps you will object that there is a difference between the case of the liberated ones and that of those in bondage. The liberated one is not afflicted by Ignorance, the one in bondage is. So the enlightened one and the one in bondage are two different people. Since they thus belong to different spheres, there is no contradiction if the world is manifest for one, but not for the other. But in the case of one (metaphysically ignorant) person, how could ‘not having the world manifest before him’ and ‘having the world manifest before him’ fail to be contradictory notions?

But this does not upset the parallel we drew with the case of the enlightened person and the person in bondage. For, even in the case of one ignorant person, we do not accept the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, whereas we accept it in waking. Perception and non-perception of the world are not mutually contradictory, since the different states in which they occur (waking and dreamless sleep) form different spheres.

But is it not the case that we are talking about one and the same person only, undergoing different states? Yes, we are. But our parallel still holds. For, in the case of one and the same person, the world manifests (as real) when he is in the state of bondage, but not when he is liberated. Even so, the liberated one does not apprehend the world (as real) because he has become aware of the final reality through the Upanishads as his means of knowledge. The one in bondage imagines it through Ignorance, and experiences it. So our example holds.

You will point out, no doubt, that whether in bondage or liberated he is still the same person. If he is liberated in dreamless sleep, he cannot very well be supposed to find himself in bondage when he wakes up. So what we are saying appears to be incorrect.

Compose your mind and listen. We do not say that a person is liberated and wakes up in bondage. What we say is that a person, though eternally liberated by nature, may imagine bondage in himself through a failure to reflect sufficiently on the true nature of his own Self. In this way he may suppose that in dreamless sleep he does not perceive the world, and that the world is real when he is awake — while all the time the eternal truth is that he is not in the presence of a world at all.

On this the words of Śrī Śamkara are: ‘And as we have already said in the sixth chapter (i.e. near the end of the commentary on Chāndogya 6.15.2), the journey to the states of waking and dream and awareness of external objects represents a fall from our true nature, the result of a failure to burn up the seed of Ignorance, desire and karma through the fire of knowledge of the Absolute’ (Chānd.Bh. 8.6.3).

SECTION 3: OBJECTION AGAINST THE VIEW THAT THE WORLD IS UNREAL AND REPLY TO THAT OBJECTION

77. Objection claiming that the world cannot be shown to be illusory, either because it breaks off in (dreamless sleep), or because it is contradicted and cancelled

We could imagine someone overhearing it said that the world was unreal and, unable to bear it, coming out with the following objections.

That claim about the world being illusory (he might say) can be refuted dialectically. For we begin by asking whether the world is referred to as illusory because it first accompanies the Self and then fails to accompany it, or whether it is for some other reason. On what grounds is it claimed that the Self is first connected with and later disjoined from the not-self? Is it because of logical incompatibility or for some other reason? In any case, either of these theories seems to us hard to prove.

Why are they hard to prove? Well, consider the case when it is said that the world is illusory because it breaks off (e.g. in dreamless sleep). In that case, wherever any other thing could be described as breaking off from the Self, the Self would (break from it too, and so itself) be illusory. If 'breaking off' meant 'not being existent anywhere', then shell-silver and the like would be real (would never break off). For silver is found in the market and elsewhere. If, on the other hand, 'breaking off' meant being destroyed, then 'destroyed' and 'illusory' would be convertible terms. But this must be wrong, as on the contradiction and cancellation of an error like shell-silver through the discovery 'This is not silver', no one would say that any silver had been destroyed.

Nor can 'breaking off' be defined as 'negation in the location where it is perceived'. For if 'negation in the location where perceived' and 'breaking off' were equivalent terms, then, just as the remark 'This is not a snake', made with the idea that there was no snake where one appeared to be, would imply the negation of the snake, so would the remark 'This is not the world' imply the negation of the world. And you (strict classical Advaitin) cannot say that this agrees with your own view. For you do not accept that the negation of the notion of the world follows in exactly the same way as the negation of an illusory snake. (65)

Perhaps you (strict classical Advaitin) will say that 'breaking off' means 'being perceived to occur only at particular times and places'. But this is not right. For what is perceived anywhere, at any time, is by that very fact shown to be real.

Suppose you (strict Advaitin) were to maintain that light was illusory because there are places where there is no light. Then it would be difficult for you to answer the question 'Why should it not be *absence* of light that was illusory, since it is contradicted by the presence of light in places?' And even the light of the Self is not universal. The teaching of metaphysical knowledge given in the Veda would be useless if the Self were fully manifest even in transmigratory life. And thus if 'being luminous only in places' were equated with that 'breaking off' which betokens illusoriness, then it would be as much as to say that even the Self was illusory. And there is no other way of defining 'being broken off'. So we conclude that what is broken off is not to be equated with the illusory.

It is clear from this that being subject to 'contradiction and cancellation' cannot be a reason for being illusory either. The contradiction and cancellation of illusions like the rope-snake consists in the discovery that their apparent form (e.g. as snake) is other than their true nature (as rope). Here 'illusoriness' means 'being discovered not to be manifesting one's true nature'. The world does not anywhere in any degree suffer cancellation of this kind. So it is not illusory, and in fact there is no such thing as illusoriness in the sense understood by the strict classical Advaitin.

78. An objection against the view 'There cannot be any relation between the Self and the not-self'

Pursuing his attack against the strict classical Advaitin, the realist considers that he (the realist) has to show that it is wrong to maintain that in the final analysis there is no relation between Self and not-self. How is this? The enquiry (he thinks) should run as follows. Is it that one comes to

see that the relation is illusory because it is intrinsically illogical? Or is it that the relation is shown to be illogical because one has discovered (see below) that one of the terms is illusory? If it is the fact that the relation is illusory because it is intrinsically illogical, then this illogicality will have to be demonstrated.

Let us consider the following argument. Between Self and not-self (the strict classical Advaitin will perhaps say) there can be none of the recognized forms of relation such as contact, intimate inherence (*samavāya*) and so on. For the Self (according to the strict classical Advaitin) is not a substance, and there cannot be any relation of cause and effect between Self and not-self. So one can very well maintain that the relation is intrinsically illogical.

But the realist replies that this is wrong. For one cannot disprove through a few hypothetical arguments a relation that is the object of uncontradicted perception. If the perceived relation is dismissed by you (strict classical Advaitin) as logically impossible, then you will have to assume some other relation.

Perhaps you (strict classical Advaitin) will say that any assumed relation would be illogical, like the perceived one. Well, of course it would appear illogical to one who (like the strict classical Advaitin) first assumed that the relation between the Self and the not-self was illogical, and then, on this basis, dismissed the perceived relation and assumed another one that would contradict it. And again, if the illogicality of the relation between Self and not-self implied that the world was illusory, why should it not follow from the same line of reasoning that the Self was illusory?

So (the realist holds that) the intrinsic illogicality of the relation between the Self and the not-self cannot be made out (in face of the fact that to do so would contradict perception), and one cannot accept the presence of illusion on the ground of this alleged illogicality.

Perhaps the strict classical Advaitin will take the other line and argue as follows. Let it be, he will perhaps say, that a relation between the Self and the not-self would be illogical because it is already known that the not-self is illusory. For one cannot accept that a real relation could exist between what was real and what was illusory. But if the strict classical Advaitin says this, then we (realists) would want to know how you (strict classical Advaitin) knew that the world was illusory. For we have already shown, they would say, that there is no compelling reason to show that this is so.

Or here is an alternative argument. You (Advaitin) might say that if the world were real (as we realists claim) we could not ourselves account for a relation between the Self and the not-self [because the difference between them would be real, and therefore unbridgeable, cp. T.P. p. 75]. So we would have to admit that the world was illusory (against our own system.). But we deny that any such theory is possible. For there could not possibly be any relation between the Self and an illusory world. Or if a superimposed relation were regarded as intelligible in such a case, then the Advaitin would have to accept as intelligible a superimposed relation between Self and not-self (in the case of his illusory world, and not 'no relation').

And there is another point. Since the relation between the Self and the not-self has to be accepted as intelligible, how do you (strict Advaitin) account for the falsity of the world? Is it because no other hypothesis is possible? Or do you say that the relation is *perceived*, so that the

world must be illusory as such a perception would otherwise have been impossible? The same defect vitiates either view. For if a relation between the Self and the world is accepted, the (reality of) the world must also be accepted, as it is one of the relata. Or if you claim that one of the relata must be illusory because it is *perceived* to be so, then what would contradict the (acknowledged) rule that a relation can be perceived between two reals only? So the perception (of one of the relata as false) is (therefore) impossible.

So we conclude that it is not right to say that the world is illusory. Nor is it right to say that any relation between the Self and the not-self would be unintelligible. So we have shown that this mode of argument (to show that the world is illusory) is untenable.

79. How the world of waking is in fact illusory

But all this fancy footwork is out of place. For those who maintain that the world is real will have to explain which world it is that they think is real. We see hundreds of worlds in dreams. We read in the Yoga Vāsistha, ‘Just as our own illusory world stands supported by our own consciousness, so are there thousands of other illusory worlds seen by other souls. And just as we see many cities in our dreams, and each is different from (and excludes) the others, so do the various worlds we experience exclude one another equally’ (Y.V. 4.17.9-10). And imagined worlds are legion.

If you say that you were not referring to dream-worlds or to day-dreams, but to what is perceived in waking only, we ask in reply how you could affirm the independent reality of what is limited to the waking state, when you observe that in other states it is not found? Why should not one who accepts as real whatever appears as real during the time that it is being experienced accord independent reality to shell-silver and dream-objects? Do not all such things fall into the same class? So we conclude that the waking world must be illusory, as it does not exist outside that particular state (waking) to which it is limited.

But surely, it is not absence elsewhere, as proof of falsity, that is the point at issue. For it was the opposite point that was made (para 77 above), namely that, because silver was also real and present in the market, its reality would invade the mother-of-pearl. True, this was the point made. But we think that the correct view there also is that the shell-silver does not exist except where it is perceived. For the silver that manifests (falsely) in the shell is not the same as the silver found in the market and elsewhere. The latter is that which is taken as completely real by the people of the world. Otherwise the cognition contradicting and cancelling the illusory silver would take the form (not ‘This is not silver: it is mother-of-pearl’ but) ‘The silver is not here: it is in the market’. Therefore the best course is to take the fact that the world breaks off as a proof of its illusory character.

80. The objection that even the dream-world is real, as there is no such thing as wrong knowledge

Let us consider another view, which runs as follows. We who adhere to the reality of the world

do not accept the unreality of the dream-world. For philosophers agree that all knowledge as such is true. It is claimed that, when mother-of-pearl is taken for silver, then a later cognition which shows that there was no silver there may show that the earlier cognition (i.e. of silver) had an unreal object. But this will not carry conviction. For the logically intelligible view is that it must be accepted that silver was actually present (even if in minute quantity) in the mother-of-pearl. Otherwise it could not have manifested. Nor does this imply that anything could appear indiscriminately as anything, with the consequent abrogation of all consistent practical experience. For there is nothing in the theory of us realists to undermine the validity of separate cognitions of the form 'This is mother-of-pearl', 'This is silver'. It is just that one may use the different appellations 'mother-of-pearl' or 'silver' according to which element predominates (in that mother-of-pearl contains a minute proportion of silver and *vice-versa*). When some physiological or other defect (e.g. physical distance or psychological greed for silver) hides the (predominant) mother-of-pearl element, the eye picks up the (minute) silver element and the mind registers 'silver'. This is spoken of in the world as 'an error' because it arises from a defect, and also because, when the 'error' disappears, it is cancelled for ever. (67)

Perhaps you will ask how the idea 'mother-of-pearl' could contradict and cancel the idea 'silver', if silver were real and present along with the mother-of-pearl. We reply that you must see that it is a question of what predominates. For when, through the removal of the defect, the predominance of the mother-of-pearl is fully perceived, then, because of its extreme inferiority, the silver-element is no longer perceived, and it is quite right to speak of the idea of silver as 'contradicted and cancelled'. And as error can always be accounted for in this way, it is useless to imagine a distinction between 'real' and 'false'. So it is wrong to say that the worlds seen in dream are illusory.

But is it not the case that in dream one may perceive vast areas of ground, covering many hundreds of miles? How could that possibly be real inside the body of one seeing a dream only for an hour or two? And the one seeing a dream visits different places, and perceives the objects they contain. How is that possible when the necessary time is not available? And when the one who supposes himself to have visited such a place in dream wakes up he finds that he is not there, but in the place where he went to bed. And when the dreamer dreams that he goes out and meets with friends and others, in real life these friends and so on do not perceive him, or otherwise they would tell him, when asked, that they had perceived him in his dream. But this is not found to be the case. So this idea that what is seen in dream is real should not be adopted.

To this the one who holds what is seen in dreams to be real replies as follows. Listen. It is true that there is not the time to go to the distant places sometimes visited in dreams. But we affirm on the authority of the Veda that real objects that are only open to the experience of each individual person are projected by the Lord for such and such a time, according to the requirements of that person's merit and demerit. (68) And so dreams are not illusory, what to say of waking experience.

81. Wrong knowledge has to be accepted

This arbitrary opinion, which contradicts the universal experience of mankind based on the means of valid cognition will not stand examination. If silver really existed in mother-of-pearl, it would be perceived there, either by ordinary people or by scientific experts (reading

parīksakāih). But this is not what we find to be the case. Had there been even a minute fraction of silver in the mother-of-pearl some expert in chemistry would have made us aware of its presence there, even though unperceived, by the proper scientific procedures. But we do not find that happening either.

Perhaps you will say that the silver is perceived (not through ignorance but) simply through a defect in the perceiving organ. But in that case, why do you not see that, if such silver is universally connected with a defect of the organ, it must be imaginary and not real?

Perhaps you will say that the silver must be real because error cannot have an unreal object. If you say that, we congratulate you indeed! You will have accepted an organ with a defect as your sole authority, and on that basis will have ignored what has been said on the basis of valid means of cognition, along with the experience that everyone in the world has when the senses are not suffering from a defect.

**82. There is no evidence whatever that
dreams are real**

Perhaps you (realist) will say that you have an utterly pure and unimpeachable authority for your view — namely, Vedic revelation. Vedic revelation speaks of the threefolding of the elements to form the world (Chānd. 6.3.3). The author of the Brahma Sūtras, too, affirms (B.S. 3.1.1-2, cp. Ś.S.B. 5.32-6) implicitly that the Veda teaches a plurality of reals when he declares that if the Veda says ‘water comes to be called a man’ (Chānd. 6.9.1, cp. B.S. 3.1.1), the ‘water’ involved implies the other elements, on account of the doctrine (Chānd. 6.3.3) of threefolding. So what fault can you find in our evidence for the reality of the world (which is the Veda itself)?

Our reply to this is, if you want to pull back from the frontiers of philosophic reflection and take refuge in the spoken word, then stay there by all means if you wish. But it will not afford you any succour. For the subject now under discussion is one which falls within the domain of the empirical means of valid knowledge, not within the domain of revelation (which is not an authority in matters which can be decided by empirical means). If a matter that fell within the province of other means of knowledge (i.e. perception, inference, presumption, etc.) could be contradicted by Vedic revelation, in what sense would perception and the rest be authoritative means of knowledge at all, being everywhere open to contradiction by the Veda? The Advaitins, who say that the duality that falls within the range of perception and so on is itself open to contradiction and cancellation, are not exposed to this charge. For what is cancelled and contradicted by the Veda is the notion that duality is finally real, not the fact that it falls within the range of perception and the rest (which are authoritative within their own field). Advaitins do not hold that Vedic revelation has jurisdiction in areas where it could contradict the deliverances of the other means of knowledge. So this is a difficulty that confronts the opponent only, and not the Advaitin.

As for the Vedic text about threefolding (Chānd. 6.3.3), its concern is to assert the presence of all three elements (and not of just one only) in all objects. And the author of the Sūtras was only concerned to show that where there was a reference to ‘earth’ or either of the other two elements (water and fire), the intention was not to isolate the element mentioned, but to affirm its predominance over its partners in the formation of some substance. But it is

nowhere the policy of the Veda to contradict perception and to say that what perception registers as real is false or *vice-versa*, or to negate things in general *qua* objects of perception. So what is invalid is the opponent's notion that the Advaitin contradicts other valid knowledge in the latter's own field.

It was also claimed that dream was real, and was projected by the Lord, its reality limited to the time of its manifestation. On this we would ask, 'How do you know?' If you say, 'From Vedic revelation', we ask whether this Vedic revelation was heard in waking or in dream. If the revelation was only apprehended in waking, we ask whether authoritative teaching given in dream would or would not be authoritative for you in regard to the reality or unreality of the world of waking (and naturally assume it would not). Nor does the Veda actually teach what you say it does. For there are other Vedic texts which show that dream was not understood by the Veda in the way you maintained — for instance 'In the state of dream the shining one rises and falls, creating many different forms, appearing to be sporting with women and laughing, or again appearing to behold objects of terror' (Bṛhad. 4.3.13). The Veda could not have used the phrase 'appearing to' if the intention had been to say that that sporting, laughing and terror were real.

83 (1). Error of the view that, while dream and waking are both real, dream-experience is private to the dreamer, waking experience is public for everyone

It is sometimes said that while a dream is private to the individual dreamer, the waking world is not so. But this also is mere wishful thinking.

You will perhaps object that, if a dream was really common to everybody, everyone would see one's dream at the time one was dreaming — which is evidently not the case. So we must conclude that a dream is private to the person who sees it. But we ask in reply: Is any person awake in the waking world seen by all who are dreaming? If not, what is the special property of dream that enables you to say that the dream-world is private to the dreamer, while the waking world is common to everyone (even though we have just shown that the waking world is not common to everyone, because it is not perceived by those who are dreaming)?

Śrī Gauḍapāda has said: 'To the dreamer, and to him alone, his dream seems like the common world of waking' (G.K. 4.37). And on this Śrī Śaṅkara comments, 'To the dreamer himself, and to him alone, the dream-experience seemed (during the dream) like a reality known to all. And therefore his waking experience, too, being taken as its cause, seems to him like a reality known to all. But in fact it is not a reality known to all, any more than the dream was. That is the meaning of the Teacher's (Gauḍapāda's) words' (cp. Ś.S.B. 2.221).

Perhaps you will argue that dream is different from waking on the following grounds. In waking, an effect can only result from a cause, but this is not so in dream. In dream a pot may sometimes be produced through all the necessary instruments like the potter's stick (for revolving his wheel), sometimes without them. And sometimes, in dream, the whole assemblage of causes which would have necessitated the rise of an effect in waking is present, without the production of the effect.

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Our reply is that this may be true, but what does it matter? There are other people in the dream apart from the dreamer who experience these things in the same way that he does, just as (there are other people) in waking experience. You who claim that dreams are real are in no position to say that these people are only false imaginations.

And the opponent has another difficulty. If, as he holds, dreams are real, why do not the rules of causality hold in dreams in the same way that they do in the waking state, which he also holds to be real? He may reply that wonders are created by the Lord in dream, so that the dreamer can have special private experiences in consonance with his merit and demerit. But there are other people in the dream apart from the dreamer, and they will have to be real on the opponent's theory (and therefore have to be having experiences). So how could the dream be created specially for the dreamer's experience alone? Thus the opponent's wild convictions come to grief. He cannot either refute or establish the equality of dream and waking. He contradicts the universal experience of everyone in the world, and confounds error with valid knowledge.

And the claim that dream is different from waking because it contains wonders such as overruling the rules of causality that obtain in the waking state was wrong. For during the period of the dream one does not doubt that causality was in operation. One only does so afterwards in reflecting over the dream from the waking standpoint. We have pointed out earlier (para 37 above) how in all states, when observed as occurring 'now', the notion that they are the waking state necessarily prevails.

So it was not the right path to claim that dream was real like waking.

83 (2). It is wrong to say that either dream
or waking is real just because actions
produce expected results

This also disposes of the claim that dream is real because it deals with objects that produce their expected results, just as objects do in waking. For the system of causality that prevails in dreams does not prevail in waking, and, as it is inconstant, it must be illusory. There are some dream objects, indeed, that are observed to exert the same effects in waking as they did in dream. The fear occasioned by seeing a snake in dream in no way deserts a person when he is awake. A person will experience in waking the same pleasure from sense-objects that he experienced from them in dream. Some thoughts that occurred to one in dream may sometimes persist and command assent in waking. It is not unknown that people should meet with holy men in dream, and receive mantras and teaching from them, and find this confirmed in waking through meeting these same holy men (later) in the waking state, and hearing from their own lips that it was so. And for these reasons some people hold that the view that dreams are illusory must be unsound, as it is sometimes contradicted in practice.

But this idea also can be refuted. For how could the mere memory on waking 'Formerly I saw a dream, and this same pleasure, pain, knowledge and certitude that I experience now (in waking) arose (also in the dream) from the objects of the dream' be enough to establish any real connection between dream and waking, (seeing that dreams are palpably illusion, and a real connection can only subsist between two real terms)?

Perhaps it will be said here that the previous experience which is the source of memories of dream that arise in waking cannot be waking. And so, if we follow experience, the cause of such memories in waking must be dream-events (so that a causal connection between dream and waking does exist). But this also is wrong. For, as the basis is only mere appearances, a causal connection so conceived would extend unduly beyond dream to mere fancy (i.e. if you try to establish that memories of dream in waking establish a real causal connection between dream and waking — with dream conceived as real — your argument would imply the possibility of a real causal connection between things seen through error and the waking world, which is absurd).

It was claimed, too, that there was a causal connection between dream and waking on the ground of common features evident in direct experience (*anubhava-siddhi*) subsisting in both. But this does not prevent either dream or waking from being contradicted and cancelled. And one has to accept, whether one wishes to or not, that the pleasure, pain, knowledge and so forth of dream, though similar to those of waking, are nevertheless different, and the two cannot be identified. It is parallel with the case of objects seen in dream — they are *like* the objects of the waking world, but this is not the same as *being* objects of the waking world. For surely you will not say that one who perceives himself appearing to experience pleasure and pain and so forth in a dream will suppose himself (later in waking) to have had any real connection with such experiences? So it does not follow that the dream-state is real just because one's experience includes results which have their source in dream.

Even in the waking state one may insist that dream objects are real because they have (some kind of) causal connection amongst themselves. But do you therefore admit that the waking objects that do not fit into the causal schemes of dream are unreal? If not, how can you maintain that the dream worlds are real, merely because they are consistent within their own causal framework, (which is contradicted by the causal framework of waking, here admitted to be real)? So it stands proved that in regard to all error there is a concomitant conviction of its truth at the time, while fulfilment of causal expectations agrees with the type of error in question. The error may persist even after its falsity has been discovered, but that does not prevent it from remaining false. (69)

So it stands proved that one cannot insist on the reality of the dream-world without a wave of doubtful surmise, swollen by the winds of various fallacies in the argument. Therefore the view that we have established as correct is that, just as ordinary people and scientific experts agree that dreams are illusory, so waking experience must also be illusory, as there is no fundamental difference.

84. Concluding summary of the falsity of the world of plurality

The objection has been raised that proof of the falsity of the world depends on the incompatibility of subject and object, while proof of the incompatibility of subject and object depends on the falsity of the world, so that the argument suffers from the fallacy of mutual dependence. But this objection does not apply. For the real argument for the unreality of the world of plurality is its disappearance at the time of dreamless sleep, so that its intrinsic falsity stands proved without depending on the establishment of anything else. With that unreality

established, the incompatibility of subject and object is easily demonstrated.

A further objection was raised (para 77) in the form ‘It is impossible to establish the proposition “It is a fact that the world is sometimes not illumined by light and that light must (therefore) be illusory”’. We reply that we do not say that non-illumination of the world is a fact. What we say is that the universe must be unreal because its form alternates by nature between illumination and absence of illumination. The Self, on the other hand, never lacks illumination, so it cannot be regarded as unreal.

But have we not agreed (para 77) that it must be admitted that the Self lacks illumination during worldly life, or otherwise the metaphysical teaching of the Upanishads would be useless? No we have not. For an eternal light cannot be contradicted by an imagined lack of light. For even in worldly life the Self remains of the nature of light, while it is imagined as not being evident. And once it has been known through the enlightenment that stems from the Veda, its natural light can never again disappear. So this was no objection against our doctrine.

So the right road (lit. the thornless path) is the conviction that the world is unreal because its manifestation is inconstant, while the Self is the opposite of that (*viz.* constant eternal and real).

SECTION 4: STATEMENT AND EXAMINATION OF THE VIEW THAT DREAM IS A FACET OF WAKING, AND FALLS WITHIN IT

85. Objection maintaining that dreamless sleep and the rest cannot be separate states, as they are intermittent and transient

Perhaps someone will oppose us with the following view. There is no separate experience called dream apart from waking, he will say. Just as perceptual errors like mistaking mother-of-pearl for silver are taken to arise in the course of the waking state through some defect, so we should take it that states like intoxicated delirium, coma, dream and so on also belong to the waking state. We should not take them to be anything separate. Consequently the view maintained earlier (para 69) that the world of waking is unreal because on a par with dream is untenable. Transient states, like dream and coma, are not separate independent states, and cannot occur except in the context of continued waking experience.

Against this one might maintain that dreamless sleep could not belong to the waking state, since it is of contradictory nature. For dreamless sleep means the suspension of causality, while waking is the opposite of this. So how can one state belong to another, when the two are of contradictory nature? And so what is referred to by the name ‘dreamless sleep’ must be some (kind of different and) independent state.

But this (says our opponent) is wrong, as dreamless sleep is a transient state. Waking is the natural state of man. Sleep is simply the lapse of awareness of waking, and not a separate positive experience. This can be illustrated by an example. A surgeon will anaesthetize his patient before commencing his operation. He will then not hurt the patient by his surgery, as the

latter will be asleep. But when the surgeon wakes him up again he feels 'I am the-patient' as everyone knows. So we conclude that when there is a suspension of the characteristic activities of waking, and a temporary lapse of the perception of external objects, this is spoken of in ordinary conversation as a 'sleep', but there is not really any separate state so named. So it is correct to say that dreamless sleep, dream, coma and so on are temporary phases of waking.

And so, since dream belongs to waking, the waking experience that precedes and follows it is real. One cannot say that waking is false on a par with dream, because dream is simply a particular feature of waking experience. Just as people, while still awake, will have a day-dream in the manner of Somaśarman's father (cp. Sureśvara, N. Sid. 2.51) 'I am the son of such and such, and my name is now such and such, and I now have so much and will soon have such and such, and will then want such and such extra', even so do they imagine themselves in dream, in a way that takes them beyond what they are in the waking state. There is nothing to show that it is a separate experience. Nobody thinks that pieces of imagination, like the rope-snake, occurring during waking transport one out of waking into some other state. And there is a Vedic text that says that dream belongs to the waking state, namely 'And so they say that this (dream) verily occurs to him in the realm of waking. For he sees when asleep the same things that he saw when waking' (Bṛhad. 4.3.14). So one cannot point to dream, (characterize it as illusory,) and use it as an illustration to undermine the validity of waking experience.

86. How dream and so on do not belong to waking, as the latter is only a state, just like them

Against that we reply as follows. The objection that all transient states belong to waking will not stand examination. It is common to waking, dream, dreamless sleep and so on that they should be experienced as coming into being and passing away. How can you claim, in the face of this, that all belong to waking, and are not essentially different from it? Just as you can say that there is first of all waking, and then dreamless sleep in the middle, followed by waking again, so you can equally say that there is first dreamless sleep, and then waking in the middle, followed by dreamless sleep again. All this is only admitted as a concession to everyday experience: there is never any real temporal succession between separate states. (Dream-time, for instance, is manifestly different from waking time, and in dreamless sleep there is no time at all.) It has already been explained earlier (para 60) how impossible it is to explain how the states precede and follow one another in time. So the prejudice in favour of the waking state is mere obstinacy.

87. The view that waking is the natural state is also incorrect

The view that waking is the natural state is also hard to substantiate. There is nothing to disprove the assertion of one who says that dreamless sleep is the natural state because, whereas dreamless sleep depends on nothing at all, waking depends on the perception of external objects.

Perhaps you will say that this thesis can be disproved, on the ground that if it were true, everybody would always be in dreamless sleep, since there would be nothing that could bring about waking. But this is not right. For one could argue, by the same reasoning, that if waking

were natural, it could never be brought to an end (e.g. by sleep or liberation). Nor is it the case that if the nature of something is such and such it cannot appear in a different guise. For we see that mother-of-pearl retains its nature as mother-of-pearl while appearing as silver. In the present case there is nothing to contradict the claim that dreamless sleep is the natural state, and that waking is just an erroneous appearance. So one cannot establish the claim that dreamless sleep and the rest belong to waking as particular phases of it.

88. Dream is an independent state, as it has its own peculiar causal conditions

It was claimed that dream was just a particular piece of imagination occurring in the waking state (para 85 above). But this cannot be so. For the peculiar causal conditions required for dream are not found in waking. Thus Sureśvara has said, 'Dream does not belong to the realm of waking, as it does not have the wherewithal for waking experience (i.e. the organs and objects of the waking world). For the Spirit sees dreams in the absence of the individual knower, knowledge and known found in individual experience in the waking world' (B.B.V. 4.3.963). It would not be correct to say that the body and organs experienced in the waking state are also present in dream, for one cannot accept that the perfumes and garlands enjoyed by the body in a dream normally persist on afterwards in the waking state. So it appears to us correct to think of dream and waking as occupying different areas, since they arise from different causal factors. As for the Vedic text locating dream in waking (Bṛhad. 4.3.14, quoted para 85 above), that was intended to say that the two states were illumined ultimately by the same light. The text was not intended to affirm the reality either of waking or of dream. For its theme was affirmation of the existence of the Self as self-luminous light. So our doctrine does not conflict with that Vedic text.

It has also been claimed (cp. Vācaspati, Bhāmatī 3.2.1, quoted and discussed, M.V. p. 607 f.) that dream is just a piece of false imagination occurring in waking, like day-dreaming. But this claim does not correspond with facts. For in a piece of day-dreaming or error, the notion of being awake is not confined to the time of the imaginative or erroneous experience. Even after it has been contradicted and cancelled, there comes the reflection 'I was awake then: I just forgot the external world all around me and indulged in various forms of imagination, without the objects of it being present'. In the case of a dream it is different. As far as the dream goes, there also one has the idea that one is awake. But on waking up one does not feel 'I have been awake all along'. One feels as if one had a dream in which one had appeared (for instance) to have mounted a great elephant and fought with enemies. So dreams and day-dreams cannot be identified, as they are different both in nature (in day-dreams the waking organs are still present), and in the fact that dreams are cancelled and contradicted on waking, day-dreams not. This also explains what is the case with errors, which are experienced as relating to waking, and arise through a defect in the organ, through long distance or through faint light or darkness. It also covers what happens in delirium, coma, madness, seizure and other states which are different from dream. In all these cases there is some sort of connection with waking, or with the cognitions of other people in the waking world. Although in the various examples of error, and in such states as drunken delirium, madness, seizure and the like, there are, as in dream, private visions not shared by any of the other people in the waking world, nevertheless everyone would agree that they are not in every respect the same as dream. For dream is totally free from the suspicion of any connection with waking. It is equipped with its own private microcosm and

macrocosm, a private experience enshrouded in a peculiar ego-sense of its own. And again, not everyone experiences drunken delirium, coma and so on. They are only experienced occasionally and by certain people afflicted with physical or mental defects. But it is well known that dream and dreamless sleep are experienced regularly by everyone of sound body and mind. So it stands proved that dream is another (unique) state of experience, just as waking is. And we did not undermine our own case for the unreality of waking by bringing in the example of dream.

89. Waking perceptions are on a par with dream perceptions

The perception and memory expressed as 'I am now awake, formerly I both enjoyed dreamless sleep and saw a dream' can only occur in waking. And in that state one never has the experience 'Now I am in dreamless sleep' or 'Now I am having a dream'. And memories of dreamless sleep and dream that arise in waking are not the equivalent of actual experience. People have the experience of having formerly eaten and reflect on that experience thinking 'I had formerly the experience "I am eating"'. But no one has the conviction 'I have had the experience "I am asleep"'. And because one never has such an experience, or a memory exactly corresponding to it, one can affirm that knowledge of the three states belongs to waking alone.

All this may be so. And yet one can affirm without contradiction that waking is unreal in the same way as dream. For waking is an idea (*pratīti*) in the same way that dreamless sleep and dream are ideas. Why this insistence on the reality of waking alone?

Perhaps you will say that dreamless sleep and dream are mere ideas, whereas the idea of waking is based on an object of immediate apprehension, so that there is a difference. In that case we must ask whether the fact that the object is immediately apprehended is what makes the difference, or is it that its reality imposes itself by force? Remember that it is never right to say that the fact that something is immediately apprehended guarantees its reality. The fact that 'shell-silver' is immediately apprehended does not enable us to affirm that it is real. So the fact of the immediate apprehension of the waking state serves only to indicate its difference from dreamless sleep and dream, not its reality. But since dreamless sleep and dream are not different from waking in point of being ideas, and because they are experienced simultaneously with waking [in the sense that it is only in waking that we are aware 'I dreamt' or 'I slept'], all three states must either all be real or else equally unreal. So how could it be correct to take waking *alone* for real?

Perhaps you will claim that the objects of the ideas of waking are not contradicted and cancelled in the way that the objects of dream-experience are, or in the way that dreamless sleep is. An object of the waking world, perceived at the time of the idea of waking, may be recognized (later) as having that same form. But there are no objects beheld at the time of dream or dreamless sleep that persist uncontradicted and uncanceled in that way. So it follows that waking alone is real.

But this reasoning is wrong. For the notion that one is awake is present in dream. And the objects perceived in dream are recognized with feelings of certitude in the dream. Objects persist uncontradicted within the period of a dream. This knowledge itself only arises (through

reflection) after the dream, (when the dream-objects have been contradicted and cancelled). So the fact that objects in waking (likewise) persist uncontradicted in waking is not a guarantee of their reality.

And even if recognition were taken as peculiar to the waking state, it would still remain to be explained how that proved the reality of the waking state. For recognition is only a cognition (*pratyaya*). And since the validity of all cognition is in the present context — metaphysical as opposed to practical enquiry — itself at issue, the question of what is real or unreal cannot be settled merely on the authority of recognition.

But if all three states have the common form of cognition (*pratyaya*), could not that be taken as a proof that they were real (since they would consist essentially in cognition, and cognition would be eternal and real because it would never fail)? So why this theory that they are unreal? But this objection will not hold. For (if all cognition as such were real and) there was no distinction between the real and the unreal, shell-silver perceived in error would be no different from real silver.

But would not there be a similar fallacy if all cognitions were taken as false (so that shell-silver would still be no different from real silver)? This objection, however, does not affect our position. First of all because (we do not admit that all knowledge is false, since) the Self (is knowledge and) is real. And secondly because, while the cognitions of waking, dream and dreamless sleep are equally false (from the standpoint of metaphysical truth), we find (at least an) imaginary reality (sufficient to distinguish real silver from shell-silver) where there is no contradiction and cancellation. But no empirical cognition is undeviating in character — all without exception come into being and pass away. Śrī Śaṅkara expresses this (through the words of a pupil) as follows: And thus it is, revered Sir, that from the standpoint of ultimate truth there is no break in awareness, which is the Light of the Self and hence raised above all change, one without a second. For it is invariably present amidst all the different cognitions, whereas none of them are invariably present with it. We say that the various cognitions of blue and yellow, etc., seen in a dream, do not exist from the standpoint of ultimate truth, because they pass away, while awareness remains. But the various cognitions of blue and yellow beheld in waking, too, pass away, while that same awareness remains. Hence they, too, must be of illusory nature' (T.T. (prose) section 109, cp. Ś.S.B. 1.207 f.).

Thus, by contrast with our empirical cognition, the Self never deviates. For we cannot enjoy an empirical cognition without its presence.

90. How the Self is self-established

An objector will perhaps take us to task for first proving the existence of the Self as that which experiences objects, and then denying the reality of objects. To deny the reality of your own proof, he might say, and to rely on what does not exist as a proof of what exists is a new technique, so far unknown to logicians!

But this is not a correct assessment. I did not first prove the reality of the Self on the basis of the reality of objects, and then claim that those very objects were unreal. All I said was that it was possible to infer the existence of the Self from experience of unreal objects,

established on the basis of worldly experience. On this topic Śrī Sureśvara has said: ‘The manifestations of this world that occur before its true nature has been known are like dream-cognitions, and cannot be established as real by the means of valid cognition. Nevertheless, this (world) can become a means to the rise of true metaphysical knowledge, just as a person may overcome his sleep and awaken on account of the cognitions (e.g. violent ones) he has in dreams’ (B.B.V. 1.2.132-3). By the word ‘this’, Śrī Sureśvara means ‘the world’. The manifestations are of the nature of objects associated with name and form. And just as through dream-cognitions (of a certain kind) sleep is thrown off and one awakens, so metaphysical Ignorance may be thrown off, and right metaphysical knowledge may arise, through experience of objects when the latter is properly reflected over and analysed.

Now you (strict Advaitin), it will be said, first claimed that dream and deep sleep were only experienced (as such, through an act of reflecting) in the waking state. (70) And you accepted, consequently, that waking was the only state for experience. If, on this basis, you suppose that there could not have been any previous dreamless sleep or dream, for lack of any trustworthy evidence, you will have to accept that the Self, as always present in present time, is unconnected with objects that (are supposed to) belong to another time. You infer that the notions that one is asleep or is having dreams pertain (only) to waking. You do not accept that there is any evidence that dreamless sleep and dream are experienced as dreamless sleep or dream before waking. On such a view, other notions of objects not belonging to the present moment will be notions only. It will not be possible on their account to connect the Self with objects that are not of the present moment. Nor could I (realist) accept that the Self could have present moment existence (on these [false] premises). For one could not assert the existence of a ‘present’ that was unrelated to ‘past’ and ‘future’. The present is accepted as the contrary of past and future. How could it exist if they did not exist?

On these conditions, you will ask, how can the non-dual Self be established? Realize that it exists because it is your Self. The Self does not depend on the means of valid cognition to be known. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said, ‘For the Self is self-evident. Only when the Self is already self-established and self-evident as the one applying the instruments of cognition can there be anyone desiring knowledge, and only when there is someone desiring knowledge can investigation through instruments of cognition proceed’ (Bh.G.Bh. 2.18, cp. Ś.S.B. 1.121). Our experience is that instruments of cognition are accepted in order to determine objects of cognition for the Self. Nor can you object that if the Self is not an object of valid cognition it cannot exist. For it cannot be denied. He who denies cannot suppose that his own Self as denier does not exist. So the Self is self-established, without depending on anything else (e.g. an instrument of knowledge through which to be known).

91. No break in practical experience
follows from the determination
that objects are unreal

Perhaps you will object that, if the object is suppressed, this will amount to the suppression of all practical experience. The Advaitin, you will say, negates the object totally, which contradicts what we actually see. And he holds that the Self has no internal distinctions. So how can he explain practical experience, which everyone sees?

Here we would ask our opponent what it is in our theory that particularly frightens him. Is it the fact that the one who knows the Self that is without internal distinctions will not have practical experience that could claim final reality? Or is it that the enlightened one would have no practical experience at all? On the first alternative there would be no quarrel. The metaphysical enquirer will go on to find out whether this practical experience that is had before philosophical reflection is ultimately real or not. And at the end of his enquiry he will find that it is not real. Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'The notions "I am the son of so and so", "I own this land" and "I own that money" and "I am (now) happy", "I am (now) sad" are all produced by Ignorance. The Ignorance of the enlightened one has been eliminated without remainder. This being so, how could particular cognitions (of this sort. i.e. taken for real and significant) arise in the one who has direct knowledge of the Absolute, and is identified with his own true nature as Consciousness?' (Brhad. Bh. 2.4.12, *ad fin.*). So there is nothing wrong when one speaks of the enlightened person as 'one who has done all that has to be done (kr̥ta-kr̥tya)'.

But what of the second alternative, according to which the enlightened one had no practical experience at all? Here we would want to know how the words 'practical experience' were understood. Does the objection mean 'The Advaitins ought to want the enlightened one to have personal experience (so as to give teaching, etc.), but on their own theory he could not have it'? Or does the objection mean 'The enlightened one is observed to have practical experience. But this would not be possible if (the Advaitin were right and) his metaphysical knowledge revealed the total non-existence of all objects'? On the first assumption, our answer would be to say that everyone has practical experience, so why should not the enlightened one have it if he wants it? What is the obstacle? We read in the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha: 'Practical experience applies equally to the ignorant person and the one of sovereign wisdom and intelligence. The distinction between bondage and liberation depends solely on whether the experience (is or is not associated with attachment and therefore) does or does not leave impressions. As long as the body lasts, the wise perceive pain in pain and pleasure in pleasure with their minds unattached, like one not properly awake' (Y.V. 4.15.37-8).

If you object that the enlightened person would not have the wherewithal for practical experience, our response is to ask whether you really mean to object that the whole universe would dissolve when one person attained enlightenment.

Perhaps you will ask how there could be an enlightened person if there were still ideas (pratīti) and practical experience. If so, we reply, 'Well asked'. But we are not claiming to adjudicate on whether having, or not having, an idea of the world does, or does not, settle the question who is, or who is not enlightened. What we are concerned with is whether there is or is not the conviction that the objective realm is unreal. Consider the following verse from Suresvara: 'The one who has immediate apprehension of the Absolute cannot be characterized either as having or as not having all the attributes of the world' (B.B.V. 3.5.209). In the Sūta Saṁhitā we read: 'He who knows the supreme Self — although he sees it as the world and the soul and so on, nevertheless does not see it as being of those forms, since he sees all as the (one) reality, the Absolute, alone' (Sūta Saṁhitā, Brahma Gītā 4.54). And we find in the Smṛti, 'The wise one, though living amidst the sense-objects, does not live amidst them; the foolish one lives amidst the sense-objects even though they are not real' (M.Bh. (Mokṣa Dharma Śāstra) 12.287.6). So there is no fault in our doctrine on that score.

And this is enough to refute the other alternative. If the enlightened one is perceived

having practical experience, well, let him be so perceived. But you should see that all practical experience is illusory. In this context Śrī Śaṅkara has said: 'From the standpoint of worldly thinking all that we have said above is an inversion of the truth. For those who have not the power of discrimination, everything (that we have said to be a mere property and subordinate) exists (in its own right); but for those who have the power of discrimination, nothing exists (in its own right except the Self)' (T.T. (verse) 18.95).

So the fact of the enlightened one's 'having done all that he has to do' is explicable on our doctrine. So do not feel any fears like 'What will happen to practical experience of the world on the rise of metaphysical knowledge?' And we shall be explaining this again further when expounding liberation in life (paras 136-7 below). Here we have pursued the implications enough for our present purposes.

What we have shown here is this. There are those who hold that there is only one 'state', namely waking, and that the other apparent states are not separate from it. We have shown that even on their view one can perfectly well hold the conviction that the world is unreal and that the Self is both real and undifferentiated.

SECTION 5: OBJECTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE UNREALITY OF WAKING AND DREAM

92. Objection claiming that the waking world must be real because different from the ideas we have of it, and so on

We are discussing this whole topic, as a concession to our opponent, on the basis that different states called waking, dream and dreamless sleep actually exist. Let us suppose, says the opponent, that dream and waking are on a par. But it does not follow from this that they are illusory, for that would contradict what we actually see. One cannot establish an inference that waking is illusory even when that is manifestly out of harmony with what we see.

Moreover, even if it is taken provisionally that the two states are on a par, the fact remains that the events of one have no causal efficiency in the other. Eating in dream does not relieve hunger in waking. Nor will the great riches a person may experience on waking up serve to dispel the aching poverty he may have experienced in a dream. He who feels hunger or thirst in waking must eat and drink in that state to relieve himself of it. He who experiences poverty in dream must amass wealth in that dream-state if he is to rid himself of that poverty. Therefore a certain reality must necessarily be granted to a world which contains different states, in which a system of causal efficiency holds within each state, but is limited to that state with others excluded. Here in the world, a cloth is reckoned to have a real existence different from that of a pot because it will produce different results. And in the same way, waking and dream must both be accepted as real as long as they last. They are neither of them mere illusory superimpositions like shell-silver, (which has no causal efficiency at all).

No doubt the silver and so on do not manifest as the mother-of-pearl and so on which are actually standing in front of the perceiver. Nevertheless something real is actually perceived,

which is the true nature of the silver and so on. But on the view that waking and dream were both illusory superimpositions, what could be the reality in relation to which they are both illusory appearances? If dream and waking were each superimpositions on the other, both would have to be accepted as real in their own right (i.e. as forming the substratum of the superimposition of the other). Or even if it be accepted that dream is illusory because it is subsequently contradicted and cancelled, it would not be right to dismiss waking as illusory in the same way, as that would contradict what we actually see.

93. The reality of the waking world is not guaranteed by the mere fact of its being perceived

Here a distinction must be drawn. What is the opponent's argument? Is his opposition to the view that the worlds of waking and dream are unreal grounded in the mere fact that they are perceived? Or is it grounded, rather, on the fact that their objects have practical efficiency? Or is it grounded on some universal rule that whatever is superimposed at one place is real at another?

On any of these suppositions, the opponent undermines his own doctrine. For instance if perception could not be false, how could shell-silver be false? If people do not even accept that shell-silver is false we do not set out (reading *prastārayante*) the arguments to refute them here, on the ground that the proper corrective instruction has already been given to them in the works of the ancient Ācaryas, (and if they do not understand it there, they will not understand it here). And we have already above (para 81) illustrated briefly the way to refute the view that in the case of 'shell-silver' there actually is silver in the mother-of-pearl.

But was it not said that waking experience must be true, because it contradicts dream-perception? Well, it was wrong. For there is no universal rule that what contradicts dream-perception must be true. There is no rule that wherever there is a perception there is a reality.

Perhaps you will say that dream is actually perceived to be illusory, because it is contradicted and cancelled by waking — but waking is not perceived as illusory in any of the states. But this contradiction has no more relevance than that of a contradiction occurring within a dream. Even though the dream-cognition that effected a contradiction was perceived at the time as if it were a piece of waking experience and uncontradictable, it does not follow that it was not illusory.

So we cannot say that the waking world is real just because it is perceived.

94. Neither does the reality of the waking world follow from the causal efficiency found amongst its objects

Nor does the presence of causal efficiency imply reality. A person who is ill may perceive bitterness in sugar, but it does not follow that bitterness was really present,

Perhaps you will say that the example is inappropriate in that it contains a real feature, namely a defect in the form of illness, which is not present in what is being illustrated. Indeed,

it is impossible to explain error without recourse to a real defect. But once that is admitted, the dualist wins.

But we do not accept this argument. All that is needed for error is the presence of a defect. To add the extra quality of 'reality' to the defect is superfluous. In the matter under discussion, metaphysical Ignorance is the defect (i.e. ignorance of the Self, from which the appearance of a manifold world flows as a natural result). The Śrīmad Bhāgavata says: 'Mind projects bodies, attributes and actions for the Self. Māyā projects the mind. Hence the reincarnation of the individual soul' (Bh.P. 12.5.6).

95. Nor is it correct to say that whatever
is superimposed must be real elsewhere

Perhaps you will ask how the world (of plurality) could be superimposed (on Ātman) if it did not exist anywhere. It must exist somewhere in order to be superimposed. But this idea is not right. If the world is to be inferred to be a superimposition, it is enough that it should be a mere appearance (i.e. it need not be a false appearance at one place of what is actually real at another). For its existence cannot be established anywhere apart from the place where it is superimposed.

Even he who supposes that a thing superimposed at one place could have an existence at another should not on that account try to infer the existence of anything impossible. On the other hand nothing that is actually perceived can be accounted impossible. We see the fitful appearance of the world. We see its total disappearance in dreamless sleep. And at that latter time it is not perceived to exist anywhere else, nor could one argue that it could be perceived. So this confirms the fact that the world is both superimposed and illusory. One cannot argue that it must exist somewhere first in order to be superimposed. For apart from the world and the Self, there is no other possible locus. And there we desist.

As for what was said about everything in one state appearing as real as long as the state lasted — to that we reply 'Yes'. That is accepted, as long as the world of plurality continues to manifest as if it was real. And taking this reality for our subject-matter, we may reflect over the question whether it is *ultimately* real. We conclude that, being a mere appearance, it is not ultimately real. And there is nothing wrong here.

So we should conclude with confidence that the world perceived in waking and the world perceived in dream are both equally illusory. For the appearance of both is of limited duration, and they cease to exist in dreamless sleep.

SECTION 6: OBJECTION CLAIMING THAT THE WORLD CANNOT BE SUPERIMPOSED, AND ANSWER TO THAT OBJECTION

96. Objection claiming that the contradiction
and cancellation of the world cannot be
established, because it must be different
from contradiction and cancellation as
known in worldly experience

Here is a proposition to consider. The contradiction and cancellation of the world would not establish its illusory character, since that contradiction would not obtain in dreamless sleep. Why do we say this? Because in dreamless sleep we do not find the typical characteristics of contradiction and cancellation found in worldly experience. For a thing is said in worldly experience to be contradicted and cancelled when its absence in the place (upādhi) where it appears has been established, (not just for the moment but) for all past, present and future time. Contradiction and cancellation of illusory silver is the idea 'There is no silver (here) now, nor was there in the past, nor will there be in the future, for this is only mother-of-pearl'. And this conviction holds only there where the fact that silver has been superimposed on mother-of-pearl has been established through determination of the reality as mother-of-pearl — for it is then seen that the imaginary form has (and has had and will have) no existence. But contradiction and cancellation of this kind cannot be established in the case of the superimposition of the world. When the dream-world is present in dream, or the waking world in waking, then no one perceives or determines the non-existence of dream in dream, or the non-existence of waking in waking. In these circumstances, if no world is perceived in dreamless sleep, how can that prove that the worlds of dream and waking are illusory (i.e. when they manifest, and yet it can never be established that they are contradicted and cancelled there where they manifest)? So there cannot be any inference that the waking world is illusory, for lack of an appropriate example.

97. Rebuttal

To this we reply that the example is not inappropriate. The non-existence of the world is described there where its 'existence' appeared, namely in the Self. What is strange in that? We did not ever say that the world is superimposed either in waking or in dream. The point we wished to make was that though waking and dream, with their inevitable attendant 'worlds', do not exist in the Self, they are imagined to do so by the deluded. In this way, the notion that the Self 'has a universe' is contradicted and cancelled. And so we conclude that the relation between the Self and the world is itself illusory.

Perhaps you will say that the Self never has the experience 'In dreamless sleep I do not have the slightest connection with a world, the worlds of dream and waking were only superimposed'. There is therefore no conviction at the time of cancellation, of the form 'There is no world here', answering to the conviction 'There is no silver here'.

Well, we admit you are good at raising objections, but please listen carefully to the following. We have not claimed that certitude, doubt and so on did not fall within the world of multiplicity. Those who say that there is no world in dreamless sleep also say that doubt and certitude, along with their objects, have no scope there either. And if that is the case, there cannot be the contradiction and cancellation of the world in dreamless sleep. It is the very glory of the absence of a world in dreamless sleep that the world cannot be re-instated as the counter-positive of a negation, (the possibility of a counter-positive being required before a negation can be regarded as significant. Had dreamless sleep included the conviction 'There is no world', there would have had to have been a real world somewhere to make the negation intelligible or significant).

By raising objections against the absence of contradiction in dreamless sleep, the

opponent has thus been strengthening the strict Advaitin's case with different words and arguments.

But here in the waking state there is a discussion about the possession of a world on the part of the Self, whether perceived or heard about, to see whether it is merely apparent, or whether it has reality also. And in this discussion in the waking state the conviction is attained, in the manner described, that the relation is illusory.

Finally, one should not argue that if one claims that there is no world in the Self when the latter is asleep, but that a world is perceived in waking and dream. then the same defect in the argument returns, namely that a limitation (upādhī) is perceived in the Self, and is not negated. For there is nothing to show that the Self is differentiated into states, or that it has any differentiation through qualification (e.g. as awake or asleep). Nor is the mere idea of such differentiations a proof of their necessary existence, or otherwise mother-of-pearl and so on would really have the attributes of silver and so on.

Therefore it is one (unchanging) Self alone that persists (as Witness) in all states, as this is what we actually experience. And the doctrine that the world is illusory is inviolable, as the world is contradicted and cancelled just there (in the Self) where it is perceived.

SECTION 7: THE VIEW THAT IN DREAMLESS SLEEP AWARENESS (ANUBHŪTI) IS AN ATTRIBUTE OF THE SELF— AND ITS REFUTATION

98. Summary of the view according to which
the Self has knowledge as an attribute,
while its nature is designated by the word 'I'

Some think in a different way and raise the following objection. In dreamless sleep, they say, we experience awareness without objects. But that awareness is not anything that exists independently. It is an attribute of the Self. In this way dreamless sleep is not evidence that Consciousness is the very nature of the Self. Consciousness, rather, is its attribute. In the same way, in the other states in which we have awareness without objects, such as total inebriation, coma and so on, we have awareness of the Self as characterized by an attribute. In consonance with this, the Self is invariably the object of the ego-notion. Even in the case of dreamless sleep and so on, the Self is only able to reflect back and feel 'I did not even know myself' because it is the object of the ego-notion. Knowledge is its attribute. For whenever the Self is manifest to itself it manifests as 'I'. So it is not right to say that the true nature of the Self is objectless, undifferentiated Consciousness. Rather, one should acknowledge that it is the constant and unbroken foundation of the attribute of (fitful) knowledge, as a lamp is the foundation from which its light proceeds (as attribute).

99. In what sense the Self is the object of the ego-notion in waking and dream

Here we would ask what it was that the opponent was trying to prove. Was it the proposition 'The Self is known as "I"'? Or was it 'The Self is only the knower, not knowledge'? Or was it some other point?

To begin with, practical experience of the Self's being known through the ego-notion can only be admitted there where there is the possibility of the ego-notion namely in waking and dream. On this point Śrī Suresvara has said, 'If the ego-sense were really a property of the Self it would continue after liberation and in dreamless sleep' (N.Sid. 2.32).

You will perhaps point out that you have said that it is only as object of the ego-sense that the Self manifests in dreamless sleep. But that was incorrect. For no one in dreamless sleep makes the identification 'Now in my true nature I am the object of the ego-notion'. Such an idea only occurs in reflection to one who has awoken from dreamless sleep. We only admit an object of the ego-notion there where it is actually observed to be.

You will perhaps say that the Self is never manifest to itself in any other form except 'I', and to this we would assent. But one does not infer from this that the Self is limited to being the object of the ego-notion. What one infers is that *when* the Self is an object of practical experience, *then* it has to be experienced as 'I'. And it was in this sense that Śrī Śaṅkara said, '(the Self) is not altogether a non-object, for it is the object of the ego-notion' (B.S.Bh. 1.1.1, intro., cp. Ś.S.B. 1.95).

This reply is appropriate to a number of other objections, for example the one that runs 'If the Self is not the object of the ego-notion, how could it be the inmost reality?' Or 'If liberation is simply the cessation of the ego-notion, how can people talk about liberation when it would only mean self-annihilation?' For the ego is neither independently self-existent nor the inmost principle. Establishment of the ego-sense itself depends on the Self as immediate experience. How could establishment of the latter depend on the ego-sense? As Śrī Suresvara has expressed it, 'How could immediate experience depend for its establishment on the ego-sense, when the ego-sense itself, like any other object, depends on immediate experience for its own establishment?' (S.V. 1058, ed. Mahadevan, 1059). But the establishment of the existence of all objects apart from the ego follows on after the establishment of the ego, so that compared to external objects the ego is subtle and participates (more) in the vision of the Self.

So it is only from the standpoint of practical experience that the Self is regarded as accessible through the ego-sense — and this is because the ego-sense is internal (relative to external objects and to other aspects of the mind) and for other such reasons. (71)

100. The idea that the Self can be known through the ego-sense is never the final truth

Well, why do we say, when speaking from the standpoint of the highest truth, that the Self cannot be known through the ego-sense? Because the Self is not an object, we reply. The Self,

indeed, is the true nature of the enquirer himself. How could He Himself be his own object? There cannot be simultaneous objecthood and subjecthood on the part of something that has no parts. Śrī Śaṅkara has said: 'That which has no parts cannot be object and subject at the same time. And if the Self were knowable like a pot (i.e. like an object) there would be no point in the metaphysical teachings about knowledge (in the Veda)' (Taitt. Bh. 2.1). (72)

And if the Self were an object, what would, indeed, be the purpose of metaphysical teaching about it if it were given? Nor is the Self a possible object of an act of knowledge, since it is void of sound and the other elements that make up the objective world.

Perhaps you will say that 'presumption' (forms of reasoning that are valid without involving the rigour of a universal rule) about the meaning of Vedic texts would lead us to conclude that the Self was the object of an act of knowledge, as otherwise texts like 'One should know (Him) as "He is my Self"' (Kauṣītaki 3.8) would be falsified. But in fact one would not be forced into such a conclusion, as that text can be explained in the same way as others of the same kind. Even though one may find such texts as 'The Self, verily, is to be seen', one cannot suppose that the Self is open to the activities of the senses like sight, as it has no form or colour, etc. But the meaning of such texts can well be a figurative way of teaching abstention from the natural tendency to dwell on the not-self. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'Because the knower is without visible form or any other knowable quality, it is not an object of sight or other means of empirical cognition. Hence we conclude that the Infinite is not an object of knowledge' (T.T. (verse) 9.9).

In the same way we think that those texts also which teach that one should desire to know the Self are intended to say that one should not strive for knowledge of other things, as in this way one avoids the charge of fallacies like mutual dependence and others already mentioned — as is shown by such texts as 'No one sees him with the eye' (Kaṭha 2.3.9) and 'It is other than what is known' (Kena 1.4), when interpreted in the light of reason.

Since the Self thus cannot be an object, it is intrinsically internal relative to all subjects and objects in empirical experience, beginning with the ego. The one undergoing liberation does not suffer elimination along with the elimination of the ego-sense, for his true nature is to be the Witness of that very ego by which his own true nature is indicated indirectly. So it is logically in order to talk about liberation. On the other hand we can say, speaking from the standpoint of practical experience, 'The Self is always experienced as "I"'. So there is no contradiction. (That is, the Self may be referred to as 'I' from the standpoint of practical experience, while from the standpoint of ultimate truth the texts teaching that the Self is beyond the reach of words and the mind are not violated.)

101. In dreamless sleep there is no
experience of an ego

There is no possibility of practical experience of 'I', or of verbal reference to it, in dreamless sleep. Why not? Because of the rule that saying 'I' is invariably accompanied by the possibility of saying 'you'. 'I' and 'you' constitute a pair of opposites. As is well known, knowledge of one member of a pair of opposites entails knowledge of the other (e.g. one could only think or speak of a thing as 'hot' if one knew of things of a lower degree of heat which were 'cold' relative to

it). Since in dreamless sleep no 'you' is perceived, it is only right to say that there is no knowledge of 'I'. And again, one who wants the results of a certain action engages in it with the thought 'Let me do this', but the one about to go to sleep is not able to go to sleep while actually maintaining the resolution 'Let me go to sleep now'. Nor can anyone resist sleep when it finally overpowers him. We see some people with old age and other disabilities longing for sleep, and suffering because they cannot get it. And sometimes a person like a sentry will be overcome by sleep even though he is intent on staying awake. Why is this so? It is because dreamless sleep is contradictory to one's knowledge of oneself as 'I'. So there cannot be knowledge of 'I' in dreamless sleep. Also, everyone from cowherds to great scholars knows that it is the nature of dreamless sleep that there should be absence of any kind of practical experience. And for this reason no one can reasonably maintain that the Self is of the nature of 'I' as represented by the ego-sense. For one is not aware of oneself as 'I' in dreamless sleep.

102. Being the one who has individual
experience is not the true nature
of the Self either

It should be seen that this also refutes the idea that the Self is the one who has individual experience. For in dreamless sleep there is no idea either 'I know' or 'I do not know'. And dreamless sleep is a state where there are no objects. Even if the Self were there an individual experiencer, what sort of an experiencer could he be? To be an experiencer without objects of experience is a manifest contradiction.

Perhaps you will claim (in the manner of the Logicians) that to be an experiencer does not imply an object, on the ground that the word 'experiencer' applies to the one in whom knowledge rests as an attribute. But in that case you will have to say what the nature of the Self is, if it is not knowledge. It cannot be non-conscious, nor can it be of the nature of consciousness, for you have rejected both these alternatives. Nor can anyone conceive of anything that is not either consciousness or non-conscious. (73) So the one who says that the Self is other than knowledge is left holding the doctrine of the Void. And this is not logically defensible, as the Void cannot have attributes.

103. If knowledge were an attribute, it would
be difficult to distinguish attribute
and substance

Perhaps you will say that you do not maintain the doctrine of the Void. You hold that knowledge is an attribute, and that it is eternal and natural. So consciousness never fails in the Self. How then could the doctrine of the Void arise? It is not implied by the above.

But this is not so. If the Self never lost its nature as consciousness it would *be* consciousness, not a substance that has consciousness as its attribute. The case would be like that of fire in worldly experience. Fire, since it is never other than heat, *is* heat. It is not something other than heat (having heat as its attribute).

Here you will perhaps interpose and argue as follows. It may be that light is (an essential

attribute of fire and) not a transitory attribute in the manner of white colour and so on, nevertheless in practice it is treated as an attribute of fire and depends on it. And yet light is not to be identified flatly with (say) the lamp (or any other object that has light). Otherwise, if a jewel and its sheen were identical, the sheen of the jewel would be thought of (lit. spoken of) as parts broken off from the jewel and issuing out of it — and the emanation of sheen from the jewel would (eventually) entail the destruction of the latter. So we infer that the Self as Consciousness has consciousness as its attribute in the sense illustrated by the example, (i.e. as an essential attribute, and therefore not as an accidental and transient attribute, such as the whiteness of fire, which might give way to redness).

No, we do not think so. Nothing is ever settled by a mere example, as there is always the possibility of bringing up a contrary example in refutation. And in the present case, the examples you have cited carry an implication that goes against your own view. How is this so? One and the same fire-substance is called either ‘a lamp’ or ‘light’ according to whether its component parts are more compacted or more diffused (i.e. the light *in* the lamp is more intense, the light emanating from the lamp is less intense, but it is one and the same substance, call it fire or light or lamp).

As for the argument from the example of the jewel, according to which the light and the one which has the light must be different or else the jewel will ultimately be destroyed — that was weak. For the jewel is only a possessor of light in a figurative sense, since it merely reflects back the light of the sun and of other genuine sources of light. But even where there is genuine possession of light, as in the case of the sun and so on, destruction at another time is not denied. For we have such a Vedic text as ‘The Creator projected the sun and moon *as before*’ (R.V. 10.19.1).

104. Reasoning and experience both show that the notion
that consciousness is an attribute is not the final truth

And if it were taken that there is a distinction between pure Consciousness (cit) and empirical consciousness (caitanya), as if they were two things like light and the possessor of light, then the unwelcome result would necessarily follow that the Self had parts, as the example of the lamp would show:

Perhaps you (the opponent) will recall that an example is never totally similar to what it illustrates, and say that, although there is a distinction between light and what has that light, there is (also) similarity (as light). But how would you reply if someone (i.e. ourselves, the strict classical Advaitins) were to contradict you and say, (When we speak of “the consciousness of the Self”) there is no real distinction (between pure Consciousness and empirical consciousness): it is the same as when we speak of “the head of Rāhu” (where Rāhu, the monster who swallows the moon in an eclipse, is only a head *apparently* devouring the moon in its jaws, so that there is a mere verbal suggestion of a distinction between two things — the monster and its head — not grounded in fact)? Here the one contradicting you will have logic in his favour. There is no distinction here between Consciousness and that which has consciousness, answering to the (plausible) distinction of principal and subordinate (root and derivative) in the case of the more intense and less intense light of the lamp itself and the lamp-light.

Perhaps you will ask if the difference is not implied by the expression 'I know'. But we reply that this is not right. If it were supposed that 'I' meant 'pure Consciousness', and 'know' meant 'an attribute of consciousness', then how could you avoid the conclusion that the Self is not of the nature of Consciousness and does not have empirical consciousness as its attribute — on account of the perception 'I do not even know myself' that we have in dreamless sleep?

You will say that this interpretation of dreamless sleep only comes afterwards in reflection, and is not what we actually perceive in dreamless sleep. For in dreamless sleep itself (you will say) there is no experience of the form 'I know myself and another' or 'I do not know myself or another'. But here your punditry only avails to undermine your own position. But if it were really true that there was no experience in dreamless sleep, that would show all the more clearly that consciousness could not be an attribute of the Self. [For the truth is that experience does not lapse in dreamless sleep: the memory about dreamless sleep 'I knew nothing' could only occur to one who had had the experience. M.V. p.98]

105. There cannot be two different forms of consciousness standing towards one another as subordinate and principal

Or suppose, again, that you hold that knowledge is an eternal principle ever present in the Self, and that the Self has this knowledge for its attribute. Then when considering the experience 'The Self knows', how could you help conceiving the Self as something that resorted to knowledge as an action?

Here you will perhaps say that knowledge is a substance subordinate to the Self. So it is not truly an attribute like whiteness or an activity like walking. Therefore knowledge was figuratively spoken of as an attribute of the Self, to show that its locus was the Self, and that it was in its ultimate nature non-different from the Self as knowledge. But we do not insist on this figurative expression as conveying the final truth.

But this also is unacceptable, as knowledge cannot be subordinate to anything else. We read in the *Sūta Saṃhitā*: 'In the same way, those intent on rituals fall into a well, even under the delusion "We have fulfilled all our ends". For when their merit is exhausted they inevitably fall: without metaphysical knowledge they cannot attain to final transcendence. Those deluded ones, too, who think that secular good works (*iṣṭā-pūrta*) are the finest thing, undoubtedly fail to reach the supreme goal' (74).

For that whose nature is subordinate to the Self must be other than knowledge, and therefore non-conscious. But that is not what you wish to say. And the non-conscious cannot stand as a subordinate attribute of the Self, or pots and other non-conscious objects could be attributes of knowledge. Nor could that to which knowledge was subordinate be of the nature of knowledge (like the Self). For the relation of chief and subordinate depends on difference. But here the proposition is that both chief and subordinate should be knowledge. Nor could the Self, being of the nature of knowledge, really be different from knowledge as attribute, even though conceived as 'other'. For if it were, it would be non-conscious, and to regard that which is of the nature of knowledge as non-conscious is contradictory.

This also suffices to disprove the idea that the soul as consciousness is subordinate to the Lord as conscious (Creator), since it is impossible to distinguish two different entities, consciousness and the conscious. The conscious could only be established (as chief) if consciousness were shown to be subordinate to it, and the subordination of consciousness could only be established if the conscious were already established (as chief), so that there would manifestly be the fallacy of mutual dependence.

So it was not right to say that consciousness existed as a substance subordinate to the Self, and spoken of figuratively as its attribute.

Therefore, because knowledge, conceived as an attribute different from consciousness, can neither be proved logically nor experienced, it is impossible to make out that there is a distinction between consciousness as essence and consciousness as attribute.

106. The distinction between the stem and the termination in the word 'jānāti' (he knows)

Even so, you claim that because of our idea 'he knows' the attribute 'knowledge' manifests in the Self. But how can I rest contented with your doctrine here? You put your faith in appearances. One who goes by appearances should stick to them. What do I mean? There appears to be an activity which is a modification of the mind. And in the Self, even when the mind is absent, consciousness is manifest, since it continues through dreamless sleep. Therefore the meaning of the idea of knowledge in 'he knows' is always the (actionless) Self alone. It is the mind alone that resorts to activity, since activity is not found in the Self as Consciousness when the mind is absent. But in the course of worldly experience people say 'The Self knows', after falsely imputing to the Self that action which belongs properly to the mind, and falsely imputing to the mind the consciousness that belongs properly to the Self. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'Superimposing onto the Self the agency pertaining properly to the mind, we say of the Self "he knows", and call it the knower. And superimposing onto the mind the consciousness (that properly pertains to the Self), we speak of the mind as the knower' (T.T. (verse) 18.65).

In ordinary practical experience, failure to discriminate the true nature of the body and the Self gives rise to the false apprehension 'I am a man'. But this does not mean that the Self actually is the body. And in the same way, our notion in practical experience 'The Self knows' results from a failure to discriminate the mind from the Self.

107. How it is proper to speak of the Self as 'the Knower of the Field' even though it is not an active knower

If the Self is never the locus of the activity of knowing, how does one explain the Vedic expression 'Knower of the Field' used in regard to it (e.g. at Śvet. 6.16) and the Sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa 'And so it (the Self) is a knower' (B.S. 2.3.18)? The 'ka' suffix (which transforms the root jñā into the element 'jñā' of 'kṣetra-jñā', 'Knower of the Field', in the sense of an active knower, cp. Pāṇini 3.1.135) is traditionally held to be used in the sense of a performer of an act.

True. But, for the reasons given, the role of the ‘performer of an act’ is not predicated of the Self literally, but only attributed figuratively. It is as when we say, ‘The sun gives light’ (when we do not mean that it does any act of giving, but that its mere presence affords light). In this connection, Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘The Self, as Consciousness, is the “knower” in the same sense that the sun is the effortless “illuminator” of a snake that suddenly happens to emerge from its hole into the sunlight’ (T.T. (verse) 15.46).

A suffix may equally indicate permanent activity or transient activity. One may apply the present indicative terminations equally to motionless things like mountains and say ‘The mountains are standing’, (where no particular action is implied), and to animals like cows who are potentially able to move and say, ‘The cows are standing (still)’. So the usage here may be the same (i.e. we may have the use of a grammatical form that, literally taken, would imply activity, used in a sense that does not imply activity). If Bādarāyaṇa spoke of the Self as ‘a knower’, therefore, it was a figurative way of referring to the Self as being of the very nature of eternal, changeless Consciousness, and there is no contradiction. The idea ‘he knows’ that occurs in worldly experience, on the other hand, arises from failure to discriminate the true Self from the cognition as modification of the mind.

The idea we have in practical experience ‘The Self does not know’ also occurs in the same way as the result of superimposing the absence of modifications in the mind onto the Self. For he who says ‘I do not know’ remains eternal knowledge in his true nature. Otherwise, how could he know or conclude from reflection that he did not know?

Here, because the ‘He knows’ of practical experience can best be explained as an error, those who set store on perceived evidence should have the conviction that the Self is pure knowledge, and that parts, attributes, actions and so on are falsely imagined in that by the deluded. And we have the verse, ‘Cause, effect, part, whole, universal, particular, substance, attribute, having or not having action — all these conditions are falsely imagined in pure Consciousness’ (attrib. T.T., but not traced).

Since the doctrine that the Self is the individual active knower and also the ego has been thus disposed of, the method of explanation which says that in dreamless sleep we have the Self as undifferentiated Consciousness can stand uncontradicted.

SECTION 8: CONSIDERATION OF THE NATURE OF METAPHYSICAL IGNORANCE

108. Metaphysical Ignorance is only the mutual superimposition of the Self and the not-self

We will now set forth, in accordance with the system we are expounding, the nature of Ignorance, the object it conceals, the subject in whom it inheres (technically, its ‘locus’) and the means to bring it to an end. The Self is pure Consciousness. Metaphysical Ignorance is imagining the Self both to be, and to be related to, an illusory entity of a different nature. Its pre-condition is a failure to apprehend the true nature of the Self and the not-self respectively. In this

context, whatever is affirmed in empirical experience to exist, and which is different from the Self and has characteristics in contradiction with it, is not-self. The not-self cannot exist independently. It is always dependent for its existence on the Self.

The not-self does not have eternal unfailing reality. Even while it is being apprehended as real, it is changing all the time. In dreamless sleep and similar conditions it goes out of existence altogether. So the wise speak of this Ignorance as 'indeterminable' and 'illusory'. By contrast, the Self has independent reality, and is of the nature of pure unbroken Consciousness. In dreamless sleep nothing at all that is different from the Self is found present, which shows that the Self exists independently. And it must be accepted as undifferentiated, as all the appearances by which it appears to be differentiated reveal themselves to critical scrutiny as illusory. It must be pronounced indeterminate, in that no ultimately real determinations can be found in it anywhere. This Self is of pure (homogeneous) nature, inasmuch as it does not contain a trace of anything else. It is of the nature of Consciousness, because that is the nature of whatever establishes itself as real independently, and also because it is the support of the world of practical experience.

Those who know this Self label 'metaphysical Ignorance' that which brings about the apparent identification of the Self and the not-self — though they are of contradictory nature — and makes each of them appear to have the attributes of the other. In the world, indeed, that is labelled 'ignorance' which obstructs one's apprehension of the true nature of anything, and by whose power living beings fall into trouble — as, for instance, when a child repeatedly gets burnt because he does not understand the scorching nature of fire. In the present context, when there is a failure to ascertain the true nature of the Self, people in the world superimpose on it identity with something unreal. They identify it with the mind and other limiting adjuncts. As a result of this they experience consequences in the form of repeated births, deaths, joys and suffering and wander about blindly at the beck of their past merit and demerit, with their minds fascinated by what they experience, quite forgetting their true nature. In this context Śrī Śaṅkara says of the worldly man: 'His mind becomes engrossed in these (body, sense-organs and so on) and resembles the mind of the villager, who, engrossed in counting the number of his confederates, failed to take note of his own self which would have completed the number, even though he was in no way separated from it. Like the mind of the villager, man takes his own true Self, the supreme reality, to be non-existent, and on account of this ignorance he identifies himself with various external 'selves' (such as the mind, etc.)' (Taitt. Bh. 2.1, cp. Ś.S.B. 1.160).

And so this mutual superimposition of Self and not-self is the source of all evil. That is why it is specifically *this* superimposition that is held to be Ignorance *par excellence* by the great thinkers. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says of it, 'This very superimposition, thus defined, the wise call "Ignorance".... All commerce between the attested means of knowledge (perception, inference, etc.) and their objects, whether in the Vedic or secular sphere, proceeds on the basis of this same mutual superimposition of the Self and the not-self, called Ignorance...' (B.S.Bh. 1.1.1, intro.). And thus we have described the nature of Ignorance.

109. The nature of metaphysical Ignorance according to those who teach 'root-Ignorance', and the case against it

Here some fall into confusion. They say that Ignorance is not superimposition. What is it then? It is a certain potency (śakti), existent and positive in form (bhāva-rūpa), which has bare Consciousness as its locus and as the object which it conceals, which is beginningless and indeterminable, and which is referred to indifferently as 'Māyā' or 'Avidyā' or by other names, and which is subject to destruction through enlightenment in the form of realization of the identity of one's true Self and the Absolute. Superimposition is its effect, which is sometimes called 'Ignorance'(avidyā) because it invariably accompanies Ignorance in the true sense (i.e. accompanies root-Ignorance, the potency). This superimposition is sometimes called 'effect-Ignorance'. And the Ignorance which is its cause is called 'root-Ignorance'.

This conception of theirs is shallow, contradicted by reason and experience alike, and unfruitful, as we have already shown in detail (paras 16-64 above). And we shall be showing later that it contradicts the Veda and other sacred texts (Part 4, paras 139-187 below).

Others (Maṇḍana, Vācaspati) spoke of an Ignorance of this kind, but held that it had its locus in the individual soul, concealed the Absolute, and was (not one but) many (one for each individual soul).

As the faults in the theory of root-Ignorance are not difficult to discern, we do not rehearse them here again in detail. They include the impossibility of a correct definition of Ignorance or of its locus, impossibility for the soul of attaining liberation, absence of any possible proof of non-duality and so on.

110. Objection against the view that Ignorance
is superimposition

We will, however, now refute the objections that these two schools try to bring against our own view, each from its own standpoint. First there is the objection that we cannot establish our definition of the nature of Ignorance. If superimposition alone were the cause of reincarnation, (it is said), then it would be difficult to explain the place and role of mind. For no one who does not have a mind can superimpose. But if everything that is superimposed is superimposed by a being that has a mind, then by what (or whom) is mind itself superimposed? Or if you (i.e. the strict classical Advaitin) say that the mind is not superimposed, then how could it be illusory? And if it is not illusory, how can there be non-duality? Moreover, the question has to be answered, 'By whom is the superimposition of the Self and the not-self performed?' Not by the Self, as that is accepted as being pure. But it could not be by the mind either. For the mind cannot (falsely) see its own attributes elsewhere, as it cannot itself be the object of its own knowledge. So, since superimposition is impossible, this school (i.e. our own school of strict classical Advaita), which identifies it (superimposition) with Ignorance, cannot produce an intelligible definition of Ignorance either.

111. Superimposition is not open to question,
since it is guaranteed by universal human experience

We now rebut the above objection. What was the intention of the objector? Did he mean that because superimposition was indescribable it could not exist? Or did he intend to bypass our

system, on the ground that it could not give a cause for mind, and teach that root-Ignorance beyond superimposition should be regarded as the cause of the mind? On the first alternative, did he intend to say that because superimposition was unintelligible it did not exist? Or did he mean that it did not exist because it was never observed?

That superimposition should be logically unintelligible we ourselves accept. If superimposition could be established by reasoning or by any of the other attested means of knowledge it would be real, and efforts to put it to an end would be useless. Śrī Sureśvara has said, 'The very mark of Ignorance as Ignorance is that it should not be accessible to the attested means of knowledge. It has an existence of some other kind' (S.V. 181). But though superimposition is logically unintelligible, nobody could deny that it is observed by everybody. So the right view is that superimposition exists, but as an observed illusory phenomenon only, (and not as the object of any attested means of cognition).

But is there not a difficulty here? It has been said that superimposition is unintelligible, and the reason advanced has been that one cannot give an intelligible account of the one who did the superimposition. It would have to be either the Self or the not-self (since any pair of contradictories exhausts reality). Yet the Self is pure, (and not the performer of any action), while the not-self (in the form of the mind) cannot stand to itself as its own object. But one cannot have superimposition without some being that does the act. For to claim that action occurs without a performer is to fall back into the nihilistic doctrines of the Buddhists.

But this is not really a difficulty. For a performer of the act of superimposition is as intelligible as the appearance of a reflection of the face. The mirror-image of the face cannot actually be said to *be* the face, since the latter is perceived separately as different from the mirror-image, and as located on the neck of one's own body (cp. Śaṅkara, T.T. (verse) 18.87, also 18.31 ff., etc.). Nor is the image an attribute of the mirror or other reflecting medium, as it is not found in the reflecting medium when the face is removed. Nor is it a reality separate from both the original and the reflecting medium, as it does not have independent existence anywhere. Nor is it a natural attribute of both the original and the reflecting medium, as it is not perceived to belong to them jointly, either when each is considered on its own, or when they are considered as somehow brought together.

In this example, the nature of the reflected image cannot be intelligibly explained. And yet it is perceived. In the same way, the one who performs the act of the superimposition of the Self and not-self, namely the reflection of Consciousness (in the mind), is perceived by everyone in the world, (even though the existence of the act may be logically unintelligible). On this topic Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'The individual soul is only a reflection (ābhāsa) of the deity (i.e. of the Self). It arises from the association of the Self with the mind and other objects (in which it can be reflected), like the reflection of a man appearing to enter into a mirror' (Chānd. Bh. 6.3.2).

Very well. The reflection has been shown to be a mere phenomenon and not the reality. And the Self is eternally pure and enlightened and bereft of change. And the mind is *per se* non-conscious and incapable of independent action. But it does not follow from all this that one could raise the objection, 'Who is it who undergoes reincarnation through this superimposition — that superimposition for the removal of which the Upanishads would be of use (and in the absence of which the very existence of the Upanishads cannot be explained)?' For the purpose of the Vedic texts is to teach that reincarnation is mere Ignorance, and that in the end it does not

belong to anybody. There is therefore nothing wrong with our own explanation, which says that superimposition is unintelligible logically, but is observable and exists on the phenomenal plane.

In connection with the constitution of the reincarnating soul the following two texts of Śrī Śaṅkara are relevant: ‘To whom, then, belongs the property of being the transmigrant? Not to pure Consciousness. for it is not subject to modification. Not to the reflection, because it is not a reality. And not to the ego-sense (the receptacle of the reflection), since it is *per se* non-conscious. Transmigration, therefore, must be mere Ignorance, arising from non-discrimination’ (T.T. (verse) 18.44-5).

And secondly: ‘But, if the individual soul is only a reflection, must not its experiences in this world and the world to come be equally unreal (which would undermine the Vedic teaching, some phases of which promise rewards here and in the life to come)?’ This apparent defect, however, does not apply. For it is accepted that the individual soul is real in its true nature, as the real Self. And the whole body of modifications that exists as name and form and so on (i.e. all the objects of the empirically known world) is real as the real Self but unreal (if considered in abstraction from the Self) on its own merits. For the Upanishad (Chānd. 6.1.4) has said, “A modification is a name, a suggestion of speech”. The same is true in the case of the individual soul. One knows the proverb, “The sacrificial offering must agree with the nature of the intended recipient” (Chānd. Bh. 6.3.2). (In laying out an offering on the ground to propitiate a sprite, one must consider its nature and wants, and choose the offering in the light of that — similarly one must accept and conform to what one finds in worldly experience, even if it is not intelligible or to one’s liking. It may not be possible to give an intelligible account of one’s empirical nature, but one must accept and deal with one’s situation as one finds it.)

112. It is no objection if mind is unintelligible
as the cause of superimposition

It is sometimes said, as we have seen, that superimposition (in our sense) cannot be established, because it is unintelligible how mind could be the cause of it. Our reply here is that we do not look to mind as the cause. It is you (opponent) who (involuntarily) supply the insight how there can be no intelligible cause for superimposition. How is this? Each member of the whole complex of act, agent, factors of action and results depends on superimposition to come into being. It is therefore with prior acceptance of some relation between Self and mind, based on superimposition, that people in the world enquire into the play of cause and effect.

If you hold that, in order to establish itself after superimposition, the play of cause and effect must also occur before it, that would extend the range of cause and effect too far. The mind is not equipped to comprehend its own cause. And yet there is no other instrument that could do so. And it would not be correct to appeal to Vedic tradition for authority on the point. For matters revealed by Vedic tradition also have to be comprehended by the mind. Nor could even Vedic tradition suffice to enable the mind to enquire into its own cause. For we do not find anyone who could engage any of the attested means of knowledge on some goal that stood in contradiction with its own nature. And for the mind to examine its own true nature would be an impossible task, like trying to climb up on one’s own shoulders. So it is not wrong if someone urges that the mind cannot enquire into its own cause, when this is in fact the case.

‘What is the cause of the mind?’ is thus a question that cannot properly be raised.

113. Even if root-Ignorance is accepted as the cause of superimposition, the question of the ultimate cause remains unsolved

The claim made (para 110 above) that Ignorance must be taken as the cause of the mind is also unacceptable. For even if root-Ignorance be accepted as the cause of the mind, the question remains ‘What is the cause of root-Ignorance?’ Anyone who goes searching for that will have to find the cause of that, and then the cause of that, and so fall into vicious regress. Nor can you say that there is no question of a cause of root-Ignorance, on the ground that it is itself the cause of all and beginningless, as the doctrine that it is beginningless has already been refuted (above, para 63, *ad fin.*).

We are pointing out defects in the opponent’s theory even after making an unnecessary concession to his view (in allowing him to speak of beginningless Ignorance). Unnecessary because beginninglessness implies time. And if root-Ignorance depended on time it could not be the cause of time, and one would still be left unsatisfied looking for other causes. In fact there cannot be a cause of time. For the notion of cause depends on the notion of time. And if you say that the Absolute is the cause of time you say little. For on the view of the strict Advaitins the Absolute is the cause of everything as viewed from the standpoint of practical experience. And the purpose of accepting the Absolute as the cause (of all) is not to establish the ultimate reality of cause and effect. Its purpose, rather, is to denounce all possibility of a cause, and to show that, in doing so, the strict Advaitins did not just have trivial causes in mind. (Cp. M.V. pp. 75-7, where the author quotes many texts of Śaṅkara teaching that the doctrine of cause and effect is accepted as a preliminary device to help induce the mind to understand the unity and sole reality of the Self.)

Thus it is impossible to establish the existence of root-Ignorance. And if you claim that the mind is the locus (āśraya) of superimposition, and that Ignorance is the cause of the mind, then you must say whether Ignorance itself is superimposed or not. If it is not superimposed, it will be perfectly real, and how could it be brought to an end? If it has been superimposed, then it (is illusory and) cannot be the cause of the mind. Either way you get caught in a trap. So it is not right to say that Ignorance is the cause of the mind.

And we have already shown (para 109, etc.) that root-Ignorance is not an (existent and) definable entity. How, then, can it now be admitted and spoken of as cause of the mind? So it was futile to posit root-Ignorance as cause of the mind on the ground that there could be no other cause. In this way failure to account for superimposition would not follow either from its having nothing to cause it, or from the implication that, if it existed, it would entail the absence of a cause for mind (since the question of a cause for mind has been shown to be illegitimate, para 112, *ad fin.*). And there is no other obstacle to the acceptance of superimposition (as a spontaneous phenomenon). So it is clear that one should drop this objection that its nature (and existence on the practical plane) cannot be made out (except as an effect of root-Ignorance).

SECTION 9: THE OBJECT CONCEALED BY IGNORANCE

114. The disagreement over the object concealed by Ignorance

We now take up the question 'What is the object concealed by Ignorance?' Perhaps the strict classical Advaitin would say that, if Ignorance is the superimposition of the Self and the not-self, it is clear from this very definition that the object concealed by Ignorance must be these two things (Self and not-self), so what more is needed (in the way of investigation)?

But his opponent will claim that this is not right, as there could be further doubts. For the Self (he will say) cannot be an object, since it is the subject. And yet no metaphysical enquirer accepts that it is only the not-self that is the object of (i.e. that is obscured by) Ignorance (since the very impulse to enquire is often Ignorance over 'What am I?'). And here is a further doubt that requires investigation. If the Self is not the object concealed by Ignorance, then Ignorance will not be removed by knowledge of the Self. But our school (i.e. Advaita in general) holds that it is removed. So we must certainly investigate to see what the object concealed by Ignorance is.

Which, then, is the better view? The not-self only, you might say, must be the object concealed by Ignorance, since the not-self can be an object. But against this one must object that one is forced to regard the Self also as an object, in answering the question 'How could there be superimposition?' (75) And we have just above pointed out the difficulty that would arise if the Self were not accepted as the object concealed by Ignorance — namely, that this would render the metaphysical knowledge taught in the Upanishads useless. And again, the not-self could not be the object concealed by Ignorance, as it is illusory (and so not a genuine object).

Another reason why the not-self cannot be the object concealed by Ignorance is that it must itself be of the very nature of Ignorance, as it is not perceived independently of Ignorance. And there is no act that Ignorance could be supposed to perform here (to conceal itself in its form as the not-self). One could not say that Ignorance introduced any new distinction into itself by concealing itself, any more than darkness could conceal darkness (cp. N.Sid. 3.1; intro.). And erroneous superimpositions like illusory silver could not be the objects concealed by an Ignorance already established as existent (since they are not concealed at all, but manifest). So the not-self cannot be the object concealed by Ignorance, whether the latter be taken as absence of knowledge or wrong knowledge.

However, if one argues on this basis that it is the Self that is the object concealed by Ignorance, because the objections against the not-self being the object do not then arise, further objections still remain. For when you ask the question 'What is superimposed?', you are forced to concede that the not-self, too, must be the object concealed by Ignorance, (since there is mutual superimposition of Self on not-self and not-self on Self). And the Self is of the very nature of knowledge. It cannot be associated with Ignorance any more than darkness with the sun. Nor can one say that the object concealed by Ignorance is both the Self and the not-self. For that would compound the difficulties that apply to both theories. And so, our opponents conclude, unless their own doctrine of positive Ignorance is accepted, one cannot explain what it is that Ignorance conceals. Such is the argument of some.

115. The character of the Self as 'object' is only imagined

To this whole argument we reply as follows. Ignorance is familiar to everyone in the world as doubtful knowledge, absence of knowledge and wrong knowledge. It is true that the Self, as a non-object, cannot strictly be the object of Ignorance in any of these forms, since they can only apply to objects. But in the course of practical experience the Self becomes (phenomenally) the object of the ego-sense, and so becomes an object. Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'To this we reply that it (the Self) is not altogether a non-object, as it is the object of the ego-notion' (B.S.Bh. 1.1.1, intro., Ś.S.B. 1.95). And we have already shown (above, para 100) that the Self cannot be an object in practical experience in any other way except as the object of the ego-sense.

Well, but does not this imply that there could be no subject? If the Self assumes the role of object, what other entity could stand as subject? In examining dream, we have already (above, para 83[2]) rejected as mere illusion the 'other Self' proposed (as a real experiencer in a real dream) by the dualists, taking it to be a mere illusion like the various (illusory) performers of action and experiencers perceived in dream. Nor do we see any other Self that could stand as a subject which had the Self and the not-self for its objects. And he who argued that the Self was the subject would contradict himself if he tried to argue that it was the object at the same time.

All this, however, is an objection against a point we never made. We have never said that the Self *is* an object, but only that it *appears to be* an object. Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'The Self imagines the distinctions through assuming the form of the intellect and other adjuncts, and has the experience of knowing Himself through Himself in this way' (Kena Bh. 2.2, cp. Ś.S.B. 5.207). The Self is an object from the standpoint of Ignorance only, and this because it is there related with the mind and other adjuncts. The relation of the Self to the mind is comparable to the (imagined) relation of the sun or moon to the monster Rāhu (imagined to be devouring them) in an eclipse, and the Self is the 'object' concealed by Ignorance in the same sort of sense (i.e. figurative) that the monster Rāhu is the object of the vision of the eye. The Mokṣa Dharma says, 'Just as no (real) darkness is seen approaching or leaving the moon (at the time of an eclipse), so, you must see, nothing approaches or leaves the "embodied" Spirit in its true nature. Just as darkness is (falsely) perceived associated with the sun and moon (in an eclipse), so the "embodied" Spirit is (falsely) perceived as associated with a body. Just as no demon Rāhu is perceived apart from (its false relation with) the moon and the sun, (76) so no "embodied one" is perceived apart from the Spirit's (false) relationship with the body' (M.Bh. 12.196.20). The point here is that in both cases the word 'body' (body of Rāhu, body of the 'embodied Spirit') means (false) association with a body, in each case superimposed only in special conditions (i.e. during the eclipse of the moon or sun in the one case, or during the period of Ignorance in the other). But there is no true relationship of a demon with the moon or sun. The demon Rāhu is not really an object for the eye. It cannot be established as such, since it is only a shadow. In the same way, the Self is not really an object for the mind or other faculties (such as the ego-sense). But, on account of its proximity to adjuncts such as the mind and so on, the Spirit appears to be encased in the 'waistcoat' (kañcuka) of the ego, and in this condition appears to be an object for the mind (cp. Śaṅkara, Bṛhad. Bh. 4.3.7, Ś.S.B. 3.53 ff.). So in this sense we were justified in speaking of the Self as the object concealed by Ignorance.

In truth, however, the Self cannot be the object concealed by Ignorance, as it is the Witness of Ignorance. Śrī Sureśvara says, 'The inmost Self, eternally free from production and dissolution, is the Witness of Ignorance. Even so, through Ignorance we speak of it as concealed

by Ignorance!' (T.B.V. 2.438). So the Self only appears as an object through the superimposition of an apparent relation to the mind. He to whom the Self manifested falsely as an object remains the seer, the subject and the Self: even during the time of the superimposition, the Self stands unbroken as the subject. Nor does the Self suffer any damage from becoming an object through superimposition, any more than the pure ether of the sky undergoes any change through being imagined as blue. In the same way, the Self is imagined to be an object when in truth it is not an object. Nothing can be an object and a subject at the same time. The 'part' (aṃśa) that was accepted as the subject could never be the object, otherwise the latter could not be dependent on a subject, and so could not be an object. Again, the Self cannot be an object because the same entity cannot without contradiction be agent and object of the same act, and also because there is no way of showing that anything else apart from it is the subject. So all notion of an object-element in the Self must be rejected, and what remains is the eternally changeless element, and that is the Self. There is of course no real objective element in the Self anyway, as it is partless. In Śrī Śaṅkara's Brhadāraṇyaka Commentary we read the following exchange: '*Opponent:* Even if the Self is only one, it can still be subject and object of illumination, like a lamp. *Answer:* No, it is logically impossible that the Self should be subject and object of the same act at the same time' (Brhad. Bh. 1.4.7, cp. Ś.S.B. 4.249).

So there will be no objection if we say that the Self is not in fact an object, it merely assumes the appearance of an object (for those afflicted with Ignorance).

116.. Its being an object is not natural or intrinsic

Here an objector might speak as follows. He might ask us whether the Self did or did not manifest as the subject at the time of superimposition. If we said that it manifested, how could it then be the substratum of a superimposition? If we said that it did not manifest, then we would have to explain why it did not manifest. For nothing can ever abandon its true nature. Nor would we be right to claim that, though the Self was apprehended in a general way, its particular nature was not then (i.e. in Ignorance) apprehended. For one cannot attribute a general and a particular aspect to undifferentiated Consciousness.

To this we reply that no one has ever said that the Self was not manifest. But this does not mean that it cannot be the substratum of a superimposition. For it is enough for superimposition if, while the thing on which the superimposition is made manifests (though only partially) in its true nature, it does not manifest in a form that overtly contradicts the superimposition.

But how is it that the Self, whose nature is to manifest, does not manifest in a form that contradicts superimposition (as, for example, the manifestation of the rope obliterates the rope-snake)? Well, this whole problem only arises, we reply, for lack of adequate reflection. For it is not the nature of this Self that it should manifest in a form which would contradict a superimposition — its nature is simply to manifest. Contradiction and negation of the superimposition has to be effected through a (determinate) cognition arising through some authoritative means of knowledge. And he in whose case no such determinate knowledge has arisen — for him the Self does not manifest (fully in its true nature) for lack of adequate reflection.

As for your statement that the Self as undifferentiated Consciousness cannot have a universal and a particular aspect — with that we agree. Nevertheless, the fact that one has to deny any distinction between universal and particular in the attributeless Self is in fact its particular nature!! But as long as this particular nature remains unknown in concrete experience, the feeling of a distinction between an unknown particular nature and a general nature that is manifest persists, and is due to superimposition.

But if superimposition itself is such, will it not itself depend on superimposition? Yes, it does. For this superimposition, which is the true nature of Ignorance, is not admitted to exist in its true nature as a reality. How then does it exist? It only appears to exist, as we have already said, on account of inadequate reflection. That is why 'subjecthood' is no more a true and natural attribute of the Self than 'objecthood' is. Both depend on superimposition. Our apprehension of a distinction between subject and object is thus sanctioned only through error, and no weight should be placed upon it (except as a facet of that erroneous vision of duality which we wish to overcome).

**117. Ignorance and its object are not
successive in time**

How could the Self be the object concealed by Ignorance at the actual time of an error (about the Self)? For superimposition of the Self depends on the fact of the Self already being an object, while the Self depends on superimposition to become an object. So are we not faced with the fallacy of mutually dependent origins? Not so, because the superimposition and the Self's assumption of the state of (apparently) being an object can occur simultaneously, as in the case of dream. In dreams, things that actually happen simultaneously may appear to happen in temporal succession. But that does not mean that there was any actual succession. And so, in the case under consideration, it is possible for the Self to become an object, and for a superimposition to be made on (it as) the object simultaneously, without the two events being mutually dependent. For in all cases we are dealing (as in dream) merely with false ideas.

We do not admit, and do not believe that it could be admitted, that the Self first *really* becomes an object, and that it is afterwards *really* superimposed on the mind and other objects. So our view is not at fault here. Therefore in the sphere of practical experience, the Self can stand as the object concealed by Ignorance. We reject the view that it could really be an object, so there is nothing wrong.

SECTION 10: THE LOCUS OF IGNORANCE

118. A doubt about the locus of Ignorance

Consider the following suggestion. Although there is talk of the object of Ignorance, it does not seem that there could be such a thing. For in what locus could this Ignorance lie, if it were to take the Self as its object and as that which it concealed? It could not lie in its own object, as the object concealed by Ignorance (from the mere fact of being an object and so non-conscious) could not be the locus of Ignorance (i.e. the conscious being whom it afflicts). Knowledge and Ignorance cannot inhere in different loci (since Ignorance depends on knowledge). But under

what conditions could *both* knowledge and Ignorance be shown to inhere in the Self? It could only be done if one could find a perceiver, itself unrelated to either, which could perceive the relation between either knowledge or Ignorance and the Self. (That is, you would need a third entity to establish the presence either of knowledge or of Ignorance in the Self. Ignorance will not establish knowledge — so the opponent's argument runs — and knowledge will not establish Ignorance, but rather obliterate it.) But no such third entity different both from the Self and the not-self is either admitted or perceived.

So Ignorance can have no locus, and if it had no locus how could it exist at all? And if it could not exist at all, all the less could it have an object which it concealed.

119. The locus of Ignorance is also imagined

Well, all this might have been true had we admitted a real locus for Ignorance. But the locus is imagined. Just as Ignorance can have an object if that object is imagined, so can it have a locus if that locus is imagined. It has already been explained before how the reflection of Consciousness in the mind which constitutes the Self in the form that it is imagined by the people of the world, is the locus of Ignorance. In this connection Śrī Śaṅkara has said: 'That which appears to the people of the world to be the Self has the nature of the mind. It is external to the true Self, which is of the nature of eternal Consciousness, motionless like the ether, pregnant with all else. The mind is of a different nature. As a fire comes and goes with its (rapid) jets of flame, so does the Self, as identified by the people of the world with the mind, appear to have transient cognitions and to be happy and sorrowful through these cognitions illumined by the reflection of Consciousness' (Kena [Vākya] Bh. 1.4).

The final truth, however, is that one cannot say that Ignorance really has either an object or a locus. For (Ignorance cannot be real, since) what is real cannot be brought to an end.

120. The existence of Ignorance is itself imagined

Perhaps you will suggest that Ignorance can have a positive and existent object and locus. These, you may say, do not come to an end when Ignorance does.

Well, that might have been possible if Ignorance was a reality which actually came to an end. But the reality of Ignorance itself is something that is merely imagined. How could one speak of it (properly) as coming to an end? Not only is Ignorance not found in dreamless sleep and similar states — but even in waking and dream, when there is belief in its existence, adequate reflection shows that there is no reality 'Ignorance' over and above different forms of (wrong) knowledge.

121. Ignorance has no true existence as a reality over and above knowledge

Ignorance is either absence of knowledge or doubtful knowledge or wrong knowledge, as Śrī Śaṅkara has remarked (cp. Bṛhad. Bh. 3.3.1, trans. Mādhavananda p. 313 f.). Absence of

knowledge cannot be established as a reality. For when knowledge is present (and it would require to be present in order to establish absence of knowledge) its absence cannot be present at the same time. But how can we disprove the absence of knowledge, guaranteed by the direct experience 'Knowledge came, but now I have lost it'? This objection, however, is not legitimate. For it would imply that there was no knowledge before the rise of knowledge or after it was lost. And this will not serve the objector's cause. For, if there were no knowledge wherewith to be aware of the rise and loss of (particular) knowledge, there could be no knowledge at all, and the world would be blind darkness.

Perhaps you will claim that the knowledge whereby one is aware of the rise and loss of knowledge is knowledge of a kind that is different from the knowledge that rises and falls. If so, we ask you further whether this second knowledge, which takes cognisance of ordinary knowledge, is or is not something that escapes rise and destruction. If it is something that undergoes destruction, then there will have to be another cognition to be aware of its destruction, and another cognition to be aware of that second cognition, and so into infinite regress. Perhaps you will therefore say that the second knowledge, by which the first knowledge is known, is itself free from destruction, while the first knowledge, which is ordinary knowledge of objects, undergoes destruction. In that case you must explain what different point it is about the first knowledge that enables it alone to take (external) objects for its province, while eternal changeless knowledge does not. And what is this essential element in knowledge, implied by both these forms of it, that raises the transient form to effective knowledge?

It is not the mere fact of being an illuminer (lit. an epistemological subject, *viṣayin*) that does so, or otherwise there would be effective knowledge in a lamp. (77) Nor could there be an independent knowing subject if knowledge were conceived on your principles (i.e. if knowledge were held to consist of two separate elements, including a form of knowledge that could perceive absence of knowledge). Nor could one think of any other attribute that would fit the case, in virtue of which such knowledge could exist.

And there is another point. You cannot deny that there is another knowledge at the time of the knowledge of an object, as it is accepted that such a knowledge is constantly present. And if this is knowledge, what is the need of another cognition (to know objects)?

But, you will say, if the knowledge that took cognisance of objects were pure Consciousness itself, then all objects would be known at the same time, and no object could be forgotten. So the correct view is that the knowledge that first extracts and then loses knowledge from light and the sense-organs and so on is one kind of knowledge, while the constant and eternal knowledge (possessed by the Self) is of a different kind. But this is wrong. For it would not escape the earlier defect. Although there would be knowledge of various rising and falling cognitions, the same defect would remain, as the eternal knowledge would know all these cognitions simultaneously. But he who holds that knowledge (is not of two different kinds but) one and eternal, does not fall into this difficulty. For in his case a mental modification is (not itself a cognition *per se* but) an object. It is intelligible that other objects should depend on mental modifications to be brought before the knower in sequence. You yourselves hold that cognition is intrinsically transient but that it is limited to this or that object and prevented from knowing everything at once, not spontaneously but through specification through the sense-organs. Even so, the eternal knowledge that we both admit may quite well be, from the standpoint of practical experience, limited to this or that object through specification by mental

modifications. So our view is quite tenable on that score.

Thus there is no real existence of a second kind of knowledge, different from eternal knowledge and transient in character. So we may take it as proved that (in the final analysis only eternal consciousness exists and) there is no reality called 'absence of knowledge'. As for such pieces of practical experience as 'Knowledge came, but now I have lost it', their rise and fall are dependent on the rise and fall of the objects they represent. Two verses of Śrī Sureśvara are relevant to the general topic we are discussing: 'This immediate experience, which is birthless and eternal appears to come into being through (an illusion due to) the not-self, which is an appearance arising from metaphysical Ignorance. And when items of the not-self pass away, immediate experience seems to pass away, because it is their witness. But God Himself could not make it really subject to the actions of another' (B.B.V, 1.4.335-6, also 3.4.115-6).

In the same way, neither doubtful knowledge nor wrong knowledge are separate realities apart from knowledge. One must realize that it is always knowledge that appears in different forms through the influence of different adjuncts. Right knowledge, doubtful knowledge and wrong knowledge can be designated by different words, and it would therefore appear that they ought to be mutually distinct. Otherwise, error and authentic knowledge could not be distinguished. Yet the element of knowledge that is common to all of them is not intrinsically different: the distinctions come in practical experience from changes in the different objective adjuncts. But he who earnestly holds that doubtful knowledge and the rest are mutually distinct will find it hard to make them constitute knowledge at all, since they are not self-established, and cannot be known by one another mutually. For doubtful knowledge is not self-established, (from the very fact of being doubtful), and not knowable through wrong knowledge either.

If you ask why they should not constitute knowledge even though they are not self-established, we reply by asking whether you would agree that, where knowledge of pot and knowledge of cloth are both knowledge, they are not necessarily excluded from being knowledge simply because they are respectively 'knowledge of pot' and 'knowledge of cloth'. If you do agree, then here also knowledge can be one and the same thing, present in doubtful knowledge and wrong knowledge respectively. The distinctions 'doubtful' and 'wrong' are not intrinsic to knowledge, but have to be accepted as due to extrinsic adjuncts. And this shows that there is no reality 'absence of knowledge' separate from knowledge.

122. It is only from the standpoint of practical experience that one can speculate about Ignorance and its locus

When, from the metaphysical standpoint, there is no proof to establish the existence of such a non-entity as positive Ignorance itself, then what to say of its locus and object! But all this speculation is quite possible from the standpoint of practical experience. It is accepted that before due reflection has set in, a distinction between Self and not-self is familiar from experience. Ignorance is present at this time in the form of a superimposition of a relation between Self and not-self. At that time a reflection of Consciousness is perceived through Ignorance — a reflection that is illusory in character (reading māyikātmā), and has its ground (āśraya) in knowledge and ignorance both. On this topic Śrī Sureśvara says: 'Ignorance is compatible with the Self. For in reality the Self remains undifferentiated. It becomes

differentiated into Self and not-self through mere Ignorance alone, just as it is through mere Ignorance that the rope becomes a snake (without the rope being affected). (N. Sid., 3.1, intro., *ad fin.*, Kṛeṣāpahāriṇī p. 238.) And Śrī Śaṅkara dismisses the reality of Ignorance as follows: ‘If you now ask “To whom, then, does this absence of enlightenment pertain?” we reply that it pertains to you who are asking the question. And if you then object, “But am I not declared in the Veda to be the Lord?” we reply that if you are awake to this (you will see that) there is no absence of enlightenment for anyone’ (B.S.Bh. 4.1.3 *ad fin.*, cp. Ś.S.B. 3.78). And he says much the same thing in his Gītā Commentary (Bh.G.Bh. 13.2, Ś.S.B. 1.81).

And we have already (above, para 115) explained how it is the same being (namely the Self) which stands as the locus of Ignorance, and also appears to be the object concealed by it.

Thus the reflection of the Self is misperceived as the Self through Ignorance, and becomes in practical experience the locus of Ignorance and also the object which it conceals. And here we have perhaps pursued the ramifications of this topic far enough.

SECTION 11: THE EFFECTS OF IGNORANCE

123. The nature of the effects of Ignorance

We now extend the argument to consider the effects of Ignorance. It is a matter of universal experience that superimposition has the two results of setting up the appearance of illusory entities and of producing ideas of what is not ‘x’ in regard to ‘x’. It sets up an appearance of some silver that does not actually exist, and superimposes it onto mother-of-pearl. It superimposes the not-self onto the Self in the same way. In between false-imagination and superimposition there sometimes intervenes the experience of doubt, as when one wonders, ‘Is this mother-of-pearl or silver?’ and ends up with the wrong idea that it is silver. The precondition for all this is not being awake to the true nature of the real. Thus it is through not being awake to the true nature of the Self that there arise, in relation to the latter, various mental modifications consisting in such illusory notions as relationship with the not-self and doubts and errors regarding this. Hence arise attachment and aversion in regard to illusory objects. And from these arise engagement in action and withdrawal from action to acquire or avoid, and from these arise results in the form of pleasure and pain. All this that we call ‘transmigration’ (saṃsāra) is also called ‘the effect of Ignorance’.

124. What does the phrase ‘effect of Ignorance’ mean?

Let us now consider the meaning of the word ‘effect’ here. Does it mean everything that Ignorance produces, with ‘produces’ understood in the same sense as when one says ‘A potter produces a pot’. Or is the reference to what comes into being through Ignorance as instrument, as the pot comes into being with the help of the potter’s instruments, such as his stick? Or does Ignorance stand as the substance from which its effects arise, as clay is the material cause of the pot? [That is, is Ignorance the efficient or active cause of its effects, or is it the instrumental cause, or is it the material cause?]

Whichever way it be taken, it seems hard to make out how the world of transmigration could be the effect of Ignorance. We cannot, for instance, say that it is Ignorance which actively produces the world of transmigration on its own, for it is non-conscious (reading acetanatvāt) and so incapable of purposive action. And even if it were taken as an agent, one would have to go on to enquire what ulterior cause enabled it to be an agent. Nor is Ignorance necessarily to be regarded as the cause of the world of transmigration at all. For it is possible to raise the question ‘Why assume Ignorance as the cause of the world, when it might be that the world was independently existent?’

Nor does the second view, the view that Ignorance is the instrumental cause of the world of transmigration, appear to stand up to examination. If Ignorance were only the instrumental cause of the world, what would be the material cause? It does not appear correct to say that Ignorance is the material cause of the world in the same sense that the clay is the material cause of the pot. Ignorance is not a positively existent substance like clay. The opponents of Advaita have well shown that the acceptance by later Advaitins that transformation and other such characteristics (of a substance) apply to Ignorance is in contradiction with the evidence. When today people adopt this later view of Ignorance but label it a material cause, that is only a difference over names. So the question still remains for sincere enquirers, ‘In what sense is Ignorance the cause of transmigration?’

To this difficulty we reply as follows. We do not offend against any of the Logicians’ definitions of a cause as material, instrumental or efficient, such that a difficulty of the above kind could apply to our view. What then do we say? Our view is that, since the world of transmigration is illusory, it does not have any true nature (svabhāva) that could be discerned from the point of view of ultimate truth. Observers do not say, ‘A second (real) moon arises, like the universally familiar moon, from its own particular cause, which is a physical transformation undergone by the diseased eye through a defect’. What they say is, ‘The moon, remaining one, appears as if it was accompanied by a second moon through faulty vision’. And similarly, in the present context, it is said that the vision of the world of transmigration arises through a false notion in the same way, and that it is removed through the right vision that arises through the Vedic revelation. It is (only) in this (figurative) sense that Ignorance is called the cause of transmigration. We do not admit that any real relation of cause and effect subsists between Ignorance and the world of transmigration at all.

125. The doctrine that Ignorance is the material cause of its effects

Here is a view held by some. Why can you not accept (they say) that the illusory world has an illusory cause, as experience shows? Just as illusory silver has illusory Ignorance for its material cause, so can the world-illusion generally. There can never be the false notion of silver (in mother-of-pearl) without Ignorance of the mother-of-pearl; and illusory silver regularly disappears with the cessation of the ignorance of mother-of-pearl, as repeated observation shows. Thus Ignorance is the material cause of illusory silver (as it universally and regularly accompanies it, as clay pots are universally and regularly accompanied by clay). (78) Nor need it be supposed that the whole of Ignorance enters into the constitution of illusory silver like clay entering into the constitution of a pot, as there is no iron law saying that the whole of a material cause has to enter into the constitution of its effects, and we do not find that to be the case here. Here there can be a partial entry of the material cause (i.e. Ignorance) into the constitution of the

illusory object in the form of non-consciousness and so on.

It will perhaps be said (our opponent continues) that there is just the idea 'silver was produced, silver was abolished', and no more. But such a view (he claims) is not right. For at the time of the rise of the silver it is perceived as non-different from the mother-of-pearl, while at the time of its contradiction and cancellation its total absence for past, present or future is perceived. This shows that (Ignorance and its transformations were involved and) that the process cannot be (reduced to) the mere ideas 'silver was produced', 'silver was abolished'. (79)

Perhaps it will be asked (continues the opponent) 'If we claim that silver (even though it be false silver) is actually produced, how could it be negated for past, present and future?' Our reply (he says) is that there is nothing wrong, as we do not negate silver-in-general, we only negate silver that is totally real or silver that is accepted as real in worldly dealings. We do not also negate silver that merely manifests (without practical efficiency). (80) For if there is to be silver subject to cancellation, it implies the memory of such (merely manifesting) silver (as previously present). Again, in the error 'This is silver' there is no manifest difference between the practically real and the purely phenomenal. But the cancelling cognition 'This is not (real) silver' reveals their distinction.

So speaks our opponent. And with these and other dialectical arguments of the same kind some people claim, on the ground that every mental idea must have an external object, that purely phenomenal silver arises and exists for the time it is experienced, with Ignorance as its material cause.

And if you ask if there is anything to be said against that, we reply that it is wrong, because an illusory entity does not depend on a cause.

126. An illusory entity cannot depend on a cause

It is not right to say that an illusory effect has an illusory cause, while a real effect has a real cause. For an illusory entity cannot enter into the practical inter-relation of cause and effect, from the mere fact of being illusory.

Equally incorrect was the inference that, because repeated observation revealed that illusory silver was invariably associated with ignorance of mother-of-pearl, ignorance of mother-of-pearl must therefore be its material cause. (81) For it is contradicted by the conviction at the time of cancellation 'There is not, never was and never will be silver (of any kind) here (i.e. in the mother-of-pearl)'.

Nor can the opponent connect illusory cognition with causality in any way. He cannot say that it bears on ultimate reality. And he cannot say (in the manner of the Logicians) that it bears on empirically real silver (supernormally perceived in the distant market-place and wrongly referred to the mother-of-pearl in front). For (as a pseudo-Vedantin) he regards even empirically perceived silver as an effect of Ignorance (and so as unreal).

127. The distinction between the practically real
and the purely phenomenal will not hold
if all is taken as the effect of Ignorance

Our opponent will perhaps claim that, even though taken as an effect of Ignorance, the purely phenomenal may be regarded as different from the practically (or empirically) real in that it is due to an adventitious defect. But this is wrong. For the defect would belong to the realm of the practically real, so that the theory would contradict the (opponent's own) rule that the purely illusory has the purely illusory for its cause. If the defect itself were taken as purely phenomenal, one would have to look for a further defect to prompt its manifestation, and would end up in infinite regress. Nor is this difficulty covered by the claim that the illusory has the illusory for its material cause. For the notion of Ignorance as an illusory cause has not been proved and will not stand examination.

As for the claim made earlier (above, para 125) that illusory silver had Ignorance for its material cause, since repeated observation showed that it was invariably accompanied by it — you have to reckon with the fact that Ignorance of the mother-of-pearl could well here be absence of knowledge of the mother-of-pearl and nothing more.

Nor can it be taken that Ignorance must stand as the material cause of the objects of the world because it has certain features such as non-consciousness in common with the latter. If this were true, then empirically real silver would be the same as illusory silver, since both would have the common feature of being non-conscious. It would also be difficult to distinguish between dream and waking, and so between dream-silver and the silver of the waking world — so what then would be accomplished by claiming that the purely phenomenal is caused by an adventitious defect? So because for this reason you could not show that illusory silver had any special features in common with Ignorance whereby you could distinguish it from empirically real silver, the whole theory that illusory silver has Ignorance for its material cause is wrong.

128. A purely phenomenal entity does not
require any special form of Ignorance
for its material cause

An opponent proposes another view. There is one form of Ignorance called root-Ignorance (*mūlāvidyā*), with its locus in pure Consciousness: its effect is the silver that is valid for practical experience. But there is another different form of Ignorance, with its locus in Consciousness as delimited by the mother-of-pearl. And that is the material cause of the false appearance of silver. But this view is untenable, as there is no proof that silver could have such a material cause.

Our opponent will perhaps claim that inference supplies the evidence. Ignorance (he will say) must be the immediate material cause of the silver-superimposition, as the latter must have a material cause, and no other one is possible. The case is the same as that of the element ether. That Ignorance is the material cause of ether is guaranteed by such a text as 'One should know that Nature is an illusory magic display (*māyā*), with the Lord as magician' (*Śvet.* 4.10). And it must be the same in the case of the illusory silver. One cannot say that mind alone is the cause of the illusory silver during the time of the error, as the mind itself, being something that has a

beginning, depends for its existence on Ignorance. Nor can you (strict classical Advaitin) say that there is nothing to refute your opposite view (that Ignorance is not the material cause of error). For it stands refuted by the very reason that illusory objects would be impossible if it were true (i.e. if Ignorance did not stand as their material cause).

But all this is wrong, as it remains unproved that an illusory appearance can ever have a material cause. One could never establish that illusory silver either did or did not have a real attribute like relationship with a material cause in the manner of empirically real silver. Nor can Ignorance stand as the material cause of the empirically real, as there is nothing to prove that it (is a substance that) undergoes transformation (*pariṇāma*), as we have already shown (above, paras 58 and 124). Not has it been proved that Ignorance is the material cause of the element ether. The text 'One should know that Nature is an illusory magic display (*māyā*)' speaks of Nature only as a magic display (*māyā*), and does not speak of it as 'Ignorance'. The reference is to Nature (and not specifically to the element called 'ether'). And the meaning is that Nature is illusory (*māyikī*), that is, that it has wrong-knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna*) for its condition (*nimitta*). It does not have a material cause at all. (82)

The claim that an illusory object must have a material cause, or else it could not manifest at all, was also wrong, as it can manifest (without a material cause) from the very fact of being illusory. For it is precisely this that stamps a thing as illusory, namely that it manifests without being real.

So we conclude that the purely phenomenal does not have a material cause, and that 'positive Ignorance' is all the less that material cause, since positive Ignorance can neither be defined nor proved to exist. (83)

129. How a purely phenomenal entity cannot be produced

It was also wrong (on the part of the moderns) to speak of the production of (false) silver, as there is no experience 'illusory silver has been produced, illusory silver has undergone destruction'. They claim that this view has already been countered. For it has been said (by them) above (para 125), 'At the time of the rise of the silver, it is perceived as non-different from the mother-of-pearl, while at the time of its cancellation and contradiction its total absence for past, present and future is perceived. This shows that (Ignorance and its transformations were involved and) the process cannot be (reduced to) the mere ideas 'silver was produced, silver was abolished'.

But this is not so. For if we follow what we actually experience we have to accept that there was no (production of illusory) silver (as an object), but only an idea of silver. Thus Śrī Saṅkara says, 'One merely imagines silver, and the mother-of-pearl is not really silver' (B.S.Bh. 4.1.5, Ś.S.B. 6.14). Nor is it right to deduce that experience shows that there must have been production of illusory silver, on the basis of the mere idea 'The silver that manifested was false' that occurs at the time of cancellation. The experience is not 'There was silver, and it appeared as illusory through a false conception'. The experience must be taken to be 'An illusory experience like silver manifests': one should not add the extra idea 'Illusory silver was produced'.

But, if we speak of something non-existent manifesting, are we not in danger of falling into the doctrine of the Void proclaimed by the Mādhyamika Buddhists? Not so, because we accept mother-of-pearl of empirical reality as the support (ādhāra) of the appearance. (84)

Here we may anticipate another objection. If all this is so, you may say, is it not a contradiction to claim that mother-of-pearl is the object of the perception, while silver is what manifests? But it is not a contradiction, as we do not admit the existence of any silver apart from the mother-of-pearl. Our doctrine is that it is mother-of-pearl that manifests (illusorily) in a form that could be mistaken for silver in the course of practical experience. You will perhaps ask how it is that silver could be imagined when it is mother-of-pearl that is perceived. We reply that the substratum (mother-of-pearl) is imperfectly perceived owing to some defect.

One should therefore take no notice of those (85) who say that there is a change into silver on the part of the mother-of-pearl, elicited by some defect somewhere in the collocation of causes required for perception, and say that it is silver actually present in the mother-of-pearl that is picked up by those whose organs are afflicted with a defect.

And there is another elaborate view that should be rejected. It posits (in the case of the illusory cognition 'This is silver') a sixfold production of (illusory) entities — the threefold production of (illusory) entities in the 'this' as substratum (adhiṣṭhāna), namely indeterminable silver, identity of that (silver) with (the mother-of-pearl only vaguely perceived as) 'this', (illusory) relationship of that (illusory) silver with the genus 'silver', along with a further production of additional illusory entities in the silver — namely a 'this' with identity (with the silver) for adjunct, identity (of the silver) with 'this' and relationship (of the silver) with 'thisness'. (86) But it should be understood (against all this) that no illusory thing can come into being.

This also refutes another theory — that of those who propound a doctrine of production of illusory silver, and of an illusory cognition (jñānābhāsa) assuming its form. Here the mental modification (antaḥ-karaṇa-vṛtti) 'this (is) silver' applies to the substratum-element (adhiṣṭhāna-aṃśa, i.e. the 'this' element in the mother-of-pearl), while there is a modification of Ignorance itself (avidyā-vṛtti) to form the silver element. On this basis these theorists accept transformation (parinati = pariṇāma) of Ignorance (as if the latter were a material substance). (87) Since no illusory silver over and above the mother-of-pearl exists, it cannot have come into being, and it is totally impossible that there should have been a transformation of Ignorance corresponding to its form. And, as the substratum of the illusion (the mother-of-pearl) could appear in this or that illusory form through modifications assumed by the mind on account of defects (in the sensory system, etc.), there is no need to assume other modifications in anything else. And there is no reason to contradict the universal experience (of error in the form) 'I see silver' in favour of the unproved hypothesis that the object of erroneous vision is a transformation of Ignorance. So we conclude that no illusory entity comes into being here in any way.

Some say that there is a universal law that all effects other than non-existence must have a material cause, and that illusory silver, being (not a non-existence but a positive existence) of indeterminable reality-grade, must have a material cause of indeterminable reality-grade (cp. I.S. p.48 and p.144, quoted M.V. p.667 and p.662). We should remind these people of the meaning of the word 'indeterminable'. The indeterminable is that which manifests as if it were a reality without being in any way explicable. This being so, how can those who insist on the

indeterminability of an illusory entity shamelessly try to explain it as depending on a material cause?

Perhaps we shall now hear an argument like this. The indeterminable, we shall be told, is that which cannot be made out to be real, unreal or real-and-unreal — but it is not what is altogether inexplicable (cp. I.S. p. 35, quoted M.V. p. 657 f.). So, if a thing is indeterminable, that does not prevent it from being dependent on a material cause. Nor should you criticize the formula ‘neither real nor unreal’ as illogical on the ground that real and unreal are contradictories (which between them exhaust all possibilities, and which therefore cannot both be denied). For there is no universal law even over that. For each of a pair of contradictories can be denied, since all one has to do to exclude one of them is to mention the other.

But this is wrong. Nothing of the nature of an entity could be ‘neither real nor unreal nor both’. (88) For the same reason, what was ‘neither real nor unreal’ could not be dependent on a material cause. And this circumstance undermines the whole claim for indeterminable entities. So it is not true that illusory Ignorance is the material cause of illusory silver. Therefore it is incorrect to say that the world has a cause, and that root-Ignorance is that cause.

And from this another point follows. Cause and effect stand as the essential nature of the world. Because the world is invariably accompanied by space, time and causation, while space, time and causation invariably imply a world, the two notions ‘space, time and causality’ and ‘world’ coincide. And this has already been explained (above, para 39). From this it follows that any statement that all the objects of the world stand to one another as cause and effect should be taken as literally true, while cause and effect themselves cannot bravely step out of the cosmos. So anyone who says that Ignorance is literally the cause of the cosmos in the strict sense of the word ‘cause’ is implicitly saying that there is another cosmos outside the cosmos.

Perhaps someone will say that although there is no causality outside the world, Ignorance operates as the cause of the world inside the world, yet different from it. Of him we would ask the following question. You speak of Ignorance as the cause of the world. Is this Ignorance illusory or not? It cannot be ‘not-illusory’. For that would be to contradict your claim that an illusory effect must have an illusory cause. But if Ignorance be taken as illusory (and as falling within the world), some other illusory cause for Ignorance itself will have to be sought, and then a cause for that and so on into infinite regress. If, in order to avoid this difficulty, you claim that Ignorance is illusory and beginningless, it will imply that time is real, and other difficulties previously mentioned will also return. (On beginninglessness, cp. above paras 43 and 63).

Another difficulty with the theory that Ignorance is the cause of the world is that it contravenes the Vedic statement that the Absolute is the cause of the world (cp. Taitt. 2.1). And the above-mentioned difficulties do not affect the teaching of the Veda that the Absolute is the cause of the world, as we shall be explaining below (para 169). So we conclude that it was correct to say that, speaking in the literal (non-figurative) sense, there is no illusory material cause for the world.

SECTION 12: THE QUESTION OF THE CAUSE OF IGNORANCE

130. The impropriety of the very question
whether Ignorance has a cause

We now consider the question ‘What is the cause of this Ignorance?’ As everything has a cause, so it will be proper (it might be thought) to enquire what is the cause of Ignorance. So we ought to say what it is — such is the opinion of some.

But we reply that the question is illegitimate. For the very notions of space, time and cause are themselves effects of Ignorance, as they are invariably accompanied by it. The notion ‘cause’ implies a previous cause to bring that cause into existence. By its very nature, a cause depends on an earlier cause. The very notion ‘cause’ implies ‘produced by some (other) cause’. But it is only the *notion* of cause that establishes the rule that everything has a cause, so all search for a cause is limited to effects of Ignorance in the form of notions of causes, and it cannot step beyond that, (either to enquire into a first cause, or to enquire into reality).

131. In truth, Ignorance is not the effect or
cause of anything, so the question of
its cause is illegitimate

Our opponents will perhaps say that the question of an efficient cause for Ignorance is certainly legitimate from our own (strict Advaitin’s) standpoint, since we do not accept any other form of Ignorance apart from superimposition. For if Ignorance is only the mutual superimposition of Self and not-self, such a superimposition is inexplicable without previous failure to awaken to the Self. And if one raises the question of the efficient cause of this failure to awaken to the Self, the answer must be that there is some positive efficient cause, whether positive Ignorance or another. And again, the strict Advaitin accepts (according to the opponent) that absence of knowledge is the root-Ignorance causing wrong knowledge, and that wrong knowledge arises from it. In this way he accepts that the existent arises from the non-existent, which contradicts received canons of knowledge. Nor can he claim that he does not teach the rise of being from non-being by saying that superimposition is a modification of the mind, and has the mind for its material cause. For the mind itself presupposes a material cause, and the demand for a first cause cannot on this basis be satisfied. So, because the strict Advaitin cannot account either for an efficient or for a material cause of Ignorance, his whole system is faulty.

But all this argument only arises from ‘ignorance’. We do not admit that Ignorance is either the efficient or the material cause of the world, since it has no real existence at all. In the same way, we do not admit that it requires either itself or anything else as an efficient or material cause if it is to come into being — for the same reason (namely, that it never does come into being). Vedāntins hold to the doctrine of the reality of the effect (as the material cause) before its production (cp. M.V. p. 80 ff., Ś.S.B. 2.95 ff.), and so do not accept that an unreal effect could come into being at all, or that any effect could arise from an unreal cause. Their view is that it is the real that assumes another apparent form through illusion (*māyā*). Thus Śrī Gauḍapāda says, ‘The real can undergo “production” through illusion, but not in truth. He who holds that such production is real affirms (absurdly) that that which has already been produced

undergoes production' (G.K. 3.27). And commenting on this Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'Like the magic elephant and other productions of the mass-hypnotist, the production of the world is intelligible as proceeding from a real cause, not from an unreal one. But it must be remembered that the Self cannot undergo real production of any kind. Alternatively, we might argue that it can undergo production "through illusion (māyā)", but not in reality. Just as a real object like a rope can undergo "production" as a snake through illusion but not in reality, so can the Self, which is real though not perceived, undergo 'production' through illusion as the world' (G.K. Bh. 3.27, Ś.S.B. 1.196).

Not-being-awake-to-the-Self (not being a positive entity) requires no antecedent cause that it should arouse all the difficulties that bedevil the theory of positive Ignorance.

However, the point was made by the opponent that if it was accepted that failure-to-awaken, which is not a reality but a negation, was accepted as the cause of wrong knowledge, then that would amount to (the absurd position of) accepting that being came out of non-being. But that was not right either. If failure-to-awaken is non-being, do you mean to say that its result, wrong knowledge, is real being, that you should query whether being was being made to come out of non-being? And one does not get rid of one's difficulties by dismissing 'failure-to-be-awake' and summoning positive Ignorance to take its place. For positive Ignorance, too, must be non-being, since it is capable of being abolished through knowledge. No real being can be demolished by knowledge. Therefore, since failure to attain a definite knowledge of the true nature of the Self is the source of wrong knowledge and doubt, failure to awaken to the Self is their cause. And that is why Śrī Sureśvara said, 'From doubt we deduce absence of knowledge. From wrong knowledge we deduce the same. If we are asked, "What is the essence of doubt and wrong knowledge?" we reply "Their essence is absence of knowledge"' (B.B.V. 1.4.440, quoted M.V. p. 311 f.).

When doubt or wrong knowledge occurs in regard to anything, then, on the mere removal of that doubt or wrong knowledge, there is nothing to prevent other doubts or wrong cognitions cropping up. But if the absence of knowledge that gave rise to the doubt or wrong knowledge is removed by knowledge of the thing, then their abolition is definitive. Nor could one wish or be able to proclaim any real relation of cause and effect between absence of knowledge and wrong knowledge, as the whole conception of cause falls within the domain of Ignorance, as we have already explained (above, para 130).

He, however, who has a doctrine proclaiming that positive Ignorance, or indeed anything else, is the cause of wrong knowledge will have accepted an interval of time between the cause and its effect. He will thus be accepting that the cause of wrong knowledge preceded it in time. But that is impossible. Time as well as causation and space are of the nature of wrong knowledge. So how could time and causation be present in advance, when wrong knowledge (alleged to be an effect) was not yet present?

Therefore absence of knowledge and wrong knowledge are (ultimately) not related as cause and effect either: they are the very nature of Ignorance. As Ignorance thus needs no efficient or material cause, we have shown that the question about what such an efficient or material cause might be is an illegitimate one.

132. In reality Ignorance does not exist at all,
so for this reason also the question
was illegitimate

One might ask again, from a different angle, why the question of the cause of Ignorance should be ruled out as illegitimate, seeing that Ignorance is actually perceived to exist. The Self is accepted as being pure and luminous in nature. So why should one not raise the question, 'How could there be Ignorance in it?' Or if you say that there is no such thing as Ignorance, what does it mean when you say (repeatedly) 'This world is caused by Ignorance (avidyā-nimitta)'?

Our answer is that we do not say that anything called Ignorance really exists. We say that Ignorance and its effects are really of the nature of the Self, and when the latter is known in its true nature they all disappear. Hence we read in the *Sūta Saṃhitā*: 'Even this whole speech consists of Ignorance. And there could be no speech through *mere* Ignorance (reading *ajñāna-bhāvād eva*) without the co-presence of Śiva. Therefore, O great deities, my considered opinion is that both Ignorance and its effect are the Absolute alone and nothing else' (*Sūta Saṃhitā* 4, *Brahma Gītā* 5.97).

Imagine that it is noon, with the sun shining brilliantly on high, and that a person with his mind completely deranged asks 'What is the reason for this darkness in the presence of the sun, which prevents the owls from being able to see colours and forms?' Someone else might inform him, 'There are no owls or darkness here apart from your imagination'. Such is the case here also (i.e. Ignorance is only imagined: it is illegitimate to ask for its cause).

Our opponent might return and ask, 'How could the Self forget itself when it was eternal pure Consciousness, and thus be so foolish as to imagine Ignorance in itself, like owls and so on imagining darkness in the presence of the sun?' To this we reply, 'Who has ever said that the Self either remembers or forgets itself?' Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'For the Self, being unbroken Consciousness, neither remembers itself nor forgets itself' (T.T. (verse) 14.16). Even now, at the time of raising a metaphysical question, we cry out 'This is verily the Self as Consciousness (within me enabling me to have experiences and to ask)'.

Well, if that is the case, we might be asked, for whose benefit is the Vedic metaphysical teaching? We reply to such an objector that it is for the benefit of him who raises metaphysical questions. He will perhaps rejoin that there can be no metaphysical questions, since it has been shown that the Self cannot forget itself. But in that case he ought to explain how it is that hundreds of living beings are convinced of their identity with the body, and are not aware of their own Self as separate from the body, senses and mind. Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'As for the objection "If a person is the real Self, how could he fail to know himself?"', we reply that there is nothing wrong with our doctrine. For we see that living beings in general are by nature unable to realize that, as performers of action and enjoyers of experience, they are the individual soul, separate from the mind-body complex — what to say of their inability to realize the true metaphysical nature of that soul as the (universal) Self' (*Chānd. Bh.* 6.16.3).

Perhaps you will say that this whole theory is the result of error, since the beings of the world really are of a nature different from the Self. Well, if you are going to talk about error, we can affirm that it is the result of error if one imagines (as you appear to do) that the Self has remembrance, wrong remembrance or absence of remembrance at all. So we conclude that it is

indeed illegitimate to raise the question ‘What is the cause of Ignorance?’.

And who is it who raises the objection ‘How could there be Ignorance in the Self?’ (thereby implicitly raising the question of the cause of Ignorance)? Śrī Sureśvara has said, ‘The objection “How can Ignorance exist (in face of the Self)?” is illegitimate both before and after (spiritual realization). Before spiritual realization its presence cannot be contested: and after spiritual realization it stands abolished for past, present and future’ (N. Sid. 3.116). The metaphysically ignorant person is not in a position to raise the question, as he does not himself know the true nature of the Self. Nor can the person who does have metaphysical knowledge raise it, since he knows that Ignorance does not touch the Self in past, present or future. So there are further reasons why one cannot raise questions about the cause of Ignorance.

133. Inadequate reflection alone is the cause of Ignorance

Thus there cannot be an enquiry into the cause of Ignorance, the final truth being that the question about the cause of Ignorance itself results from ‘ignorance’. From the standpoint of practical experience, however, it is the nature of living beings not to practise adequate reflection, to follow their usual custom and to insist on the truth of an erroneous idea. And so this metaphysical Ignorance arises from failure to discriminate the true nature of the Self. Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘The conjunction between the Knower of the Body (kṣetra-jña) and the body, which are respectively subject and object and of utterly distinct nature, is in fact (no real conjunction at all but) a (mere mutual) superimposition of their attributes, conditioned by a failure to discriminate from one another these two utterly distinct entities. It is comparable to the process whereby “conjunction” with a snake is superimposed on a rope, or where silver is superimposed on mother-of-pearl through a failure to discriminate the two’ Bh.G.Bh. 13.26, cp. Ś.S.B. 1.102). And you should not ask how this ‘failure to discriminate’ arises, as we have already explained earlier that it is due to lack of adequate reflection. For there is never determinate knowledge of the thing under consideration while deliberation is continuing. Therefore metaphysical Ignorance is a negation — absence of knowledge — the absence of knowledge occasioned by lack of (sufficient) reflection. Wrong knowledge arises from that, through lack of discrimination. And on this topic we may let that amount of argument suffice.

SECTION 13: THE CESSATION OF IGNORANCE

134. Ignorance is brought to an end by right knowledge

Here is the place where we ought to consider the cessation of Ignorance. Since Ignorance is wrong knowledge, it stands to reason that it is brought to an end through right knowledge. And our position is that the cancelling cognition which removes Ignorance is itself, as knower, knowledge and known, totally the product of wrong knowledge, while in truth the real is the one pure Consciousness. And when such knowledge arises, it demonstrates its own falsity, as well as the falsity of the subject-object plurality of the world to which it belongs. Thus all duality is proved to be illusory.

135. Objection against Ignorance as absence of knowledge
being subject to termination by knowledge

Here an opponent might criticize the above as follows. This account of the cessation of Ignorance, he might say, is incorrect. For you do not only accept wrong knowledge as Ignorance, but accept doubtful knowledge and absence of knowledge as well. Doubtful and wrong knowledge are regarded by you as conditioned by absence of knowledge. So in the last analysis it is absence of knowledge that is for you root-Ignorance, and knowledge must be achieved to put an end to it.

But this (our opponent continues) will not do. It is not right to claim that there is no (positive) Ignorance by which a soul is covered over so that he wanders deluded in the world of transmigration. Unless there were some (positive) veil to obscure the true nature of the soul as self-luminous Consciousness, this delirium of transmigratory life would proceed without a cause. For if there were no (positive) impediment in the form of a delusion that had to be removed through knowledge, then every living creature would stand always liberated. And that would mean that the metaphysical knowledge taught in the Upanishads was useless, as it would have no function to perform. So to avoid these two objections (89) it must be admitted that there exists some positive veil which hides the true nature of the real.

Further, it is well known that the elements, like the ether, which go to make up the world, are non-conscious. This would not be possible unless there were some non-conscious primary material cause (*prakṛti*) from which they came forth. We do not accept the principles like 'Pradhāna' advocated in this connection by the Sāṃkhyas. We hold that there is a certain non-conscious primary material cause of the world, superimposed on the Self — and it is that which has to be accepted as the veil hiding the light of the Self. It is that which has to be brought to an end through metaphysical knowledge. The non-consciousness that characterizes all objects of the world, and the metaphysical Ignorance that besets all living beings, implies a cause that is itself characterized by non-consciousness and Ignorance, and suggests that the true nature of this cause must be that Ignorance that is attested in everyone's experience. Hence one must inevitably accept the existence of some entity of positive form that has the power to conceal the conscious and enlightened (non-ignorant) Self, and is subject to abolition through knowledge — in short, must accept the positive entity we call 'Ignorance'.

136. The rise of metaphysical knowledge is
itself the cessation of Ignorance

Against such an opponent we (strict classical Advaitins) reply that there is nothing wrong with our own doctrine (which dispenses with positive Ignorance). We think little of your objection that if metaphysical Ignorance is absence of knowledge there will be nothing for metaphysical knowledge to abolish (so that the upanishadic teaching would be useless). For we do not admit any abolition of Ignorance apart from the rise of knowledge itself, so that your objection has no point. Śrī Suresvara says, 'The abolition of Ignorance is nothing over and above the rise of knowledge. The abolition of transmigratory life is nothing other than the abolition of Ignorance' (B.B.V. 2.4.195). Thus our doctrine is that it is the rise of metaphysical knowledge itself that is both the cessation of Ignorance and the cessation of transmigratory life.

As for the impertinent claim that one has to accept positive Ignorance in order to be able to explain how the elements forming the world are universally associated with non-consciousness, and how living beings are universally beset by Ignorance — we have more than once refuted that before. Such an 'Ignorance' could not be either the cause or the effect of anything, as it would be impossible to prove that it could. (And your own doctrine shows that there is no universal rule about souls being always beset by root-Ignorance, since) you accept that there is nothing further requiring or able to be terminated by knowledge in the case of those souls who have attained metaphysical knowledge and liberation in life. So your whole argument breaks down (for lack of a universal rule). Any statement that a cessation of Ignorance takes place through knowledge is merely a figurative way of speaking. There is no real cessation of anything: it is just that the rise of knowledge is spoken of as the cessation of Ignorance.

And one should not suppose that there is any relation of cause and effect here. (From the standpoint of practical experience) one and the same thing (*viz.* liberation) may be referred to either 'as about to occur through the rise of knowledge' or as 'having occurred through cessation of Ignorance'. It is analogous to awakening from sleep — an occurrence which has the two aspects of being a break-through into waking, and an abolition of sleep.

Neither are we troubled by the claim that if there is no positive veil covering the Self transmigratory life will have no cause. For on our doctrine neither a real veil nor a real transmigratory life nor a real liberation from it are admitted.

137. The cessation of Ignorance is not
a real change

This also refutes another theory that has been advanced by some of the proponents of the doctrine of positive Ignorance. Some have argued that everyone agrees in worldly experience that the destruction of an object, like a pot, is a change (*vikāra*) undergone by the pot, occupying a moment in time. The abolition of Ignorance, they say, should be taken as a change occupying a moment in time in the same way, because it is an effect resulting from knowledge of the Absolute. If cessation of Ignorance were not a modification occupying the next moment after the rise of metaphysical knowledge, then the doctrine of the Logicians and others would apply, and the destruction would continue to exist indefinitely with a reality of its own, even in liberation, which would contradict non-duality. (Cp. Appaya Dikṣita 4.7) Nor should there be any anxiety (these theorists hold) over the inexplicability of the rise and destruction of objects, if one rejects as illogical such concepts as that of a non-existence before production which has no beginning but an end, and a non-existence after destruction which has a beginning but no end. For the inexplicability of production and destruction (they say) is precisely our own doctrine. Similarly, because both Ignorance and its termination are accepted as being logically inexplicable, there can be no logical objections raised against our conception of them.

It might be objected against us, they say, that if the cessation of Ignorance (had a beginning in time and so) was not eternal, how could liberation be spoken of as eternal and the highest good of life. But that objection would be an error. For we do not regard the mere cessation of Ignorance as liberation. Cessation of Ignorance requires to be supplemented by the manifestation of unbroken bliss, and the total abolition of the suffering of transmigratory life. Or we might identify the termination of the suffering of transmigratory life with the cessation

of Ignorance, and say that liberation consisted merely in the manifestation of unbroken bliss.

But this whole doctrine is just a piece of private opinion, and wrong anyway. For how could Ignorance itself be positive in nature, when it is the source of all notions such as positive and negative, being and non-being? And we have already shown above that there is no difference between the rise of metaphysical knowledge and the loss of metaphysical Ignorance. And the doctrine of positive Ignorance contradicts the teaching both of the revered Commentator and of the author of the Vārtikas. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'We have explained at length how nothing else apart from the supreme Self exists. And that is why we also said that the cessation of Ignorance is what is spoken of as liberation, (although the liberated one is not liberated from any *real* constriction)' (Bṛhad. Bh. 4.4.6, Mādhavānanda, p. 500 f.). And Sureśvara stated succinctly, 'Liberation is the disappearance of Ignorance' (N. Sid. 1.7). And the notion that 'cessation of Ignorance' is a change that sets in the instant after metaphysical knowledge is gained is quite inappropriate, both because of the word of an Ācārya, 'When the Self is known, duality does not exist' (G.K. 1.18), and also because there cannot logically be time after metaphysical knowledge of the Self. The cessation of Ignorance is in fact the Absolute and that alone. For the Absolute is that in which Ignorance is in eternal 'cessation' (i.e. is something into which Ignorance gains no entry). And Śrī Śaṅkara occasionally mentions this in his commentaries. (90) So there is no room for the erroneous idea that the cessation of Ignorance implies a change of state like the change that ensues when one when smashes a clay pot with a pestle. Śrī Sureśvara has said: 'Metaphysical knowledge annihilates Ignorance. But it does not assume the form of the factors of action and strike down darkness by way of an action, as if it were cutting it in two with a sword' (B.B.V. 4.4.942). One cannot say that metaphysical knowledge assumes the form of an instrument of action like a pestle, and destroys Ignorance as if the latter were something positively existent like a pot.

138.(1) Knowledge is not a factor of action,
so the termination of Ignorance is not
a real event

If anyone were to claim that knowledge was a factor of action, and the termination of Ignorance a real event, that would contradict experience. For we see that the cancellation of the superimposed snake is not effected by resort to factors of action, but only by correct knowledge of the rope. The proponents of root-Ignorance, however, describe even a perceived fact as other than it is. The experience 'I do not know the rope' may, according to them, be described in three alternative ways, either as the absence of a mental modification bearing on a rope, or as bearing on relationship with indeterminable root-Ignorance, or as bearing on a veil obscuring the rope. If it is taken as bearing on the absence of a mental modification, then knowledge will merely dissolve all error temporarily, and not contradict and cancel it totally, (there being nothing to contradict or cancel). If it is taken as bearing on some 'root' veiling power, then, since the rise of such a relationship is superimposed on Consciousness as witness, the function of knowledge will be to put an end to relationship with the veil. If, finally, it be accepted that the wrong cognition bears directly on the veil hiding the rope, then again the correcting cognition will only negate the veil. On none of these alternatives is root-Ignorance terminated by knowledge of the rope, since root-Ignorance can only be terminated by knowledge of the Absolute.

Or sometimes a material cause other than root-Ignorance is assumed for the rope-snake,

under the name of 'effect-Ignorance' (tūlāvidyā). (91) On this view, when this and that are known in ordinary life, 'effect-Ignorance' is removed but not root-Ignorance.

But in fact there is no evidence, either for the existence of positive Ignorance, or for its distinction into root-Ignorance and effect-Ignorance, or for its role as a veil hiding the Self as Consciousness, with the latter standing as Witness, or for its being removable by knowledge of the Absolute. The whole argument is like a painting without a canvas, and so we do not take the trouble to refute it.

But all who follow experience accept that the process of cancellation involves only the right knowledge of the true nature of the rope, and the abolition of the snake. And because there is an analogy with that, one must accept (that liberation consists in) the right knowledge of the true nature of the Self, and the abolition of Ignorance of the Self and of its results (in the form of wrong knowledge and doubt). Neither Ignorance nor its termination introduce any change into the Self, that its having or losing Ignorance should be considered as real events. As Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'Neither having nor losing Ignorance introduce any change (into the Self)' (B.S.Bh. 1.4.6, *ad fin.*).

So it is not strictly true to say either that an Ignorance as root of all imagination exists, or that it is brought to an end. This being so, it is in vain that philosophers dream up theories saying that the cessation of Ignorance is 'indeterminable', or 'by nature contradictory', or 'of a fifth kind' or 'a non-existence resulting from destruction' or 'a modification (vikāra) occurring in Ignorance considered as a positive entity'. (92) For it is not fruitful to raise objections against or to attempt to refute what is actually experienced.

Perhaps it will be said that such theories are educative and helpful for people of weak understanding. But that will not do either. For the mind of one whose thoughts are already impregnated with distinctions is not educated by being fixed on any form of distinction. Or let the doctrine stand if you wish. We have no quarrel with it as long as its proponents do not uphold the existence of Ignorance as a positive entity and teach the cessation of that entity (considered as a real event).

The point at issue here is the following. If the Self is really one and pure, how should one conceive the presence and subsequent termination of Ignorance within it so as to avoid all difficulties? The answer is, 'Ignorance and its cessation are perceived in practical experience, and it is not right to attack with theoretical arguments what is perceived in practical experience'. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'You will say that removal of Ignorance is impossible if only unity exists. But we reply that you are wrong, for your statement contradicts what is actually found to be the case, namely the practical fact of the removal of Ignorance through knowledge of unity' (Bṛhad. Bh. 1.4.10, Ś.S.B. 1.108). And there is a verse in the Sūta Saṁhitā: O ye deities! Ignorance and the cessation of Ignorance are spoken of from the standpoint of practical experience. But from the standpoint of ultimate truth neither Ignorance nor its cessation exist' (Sūta Saṁhitā 4, Brahma Gītā 12.10). And the (strict classical) Vedantins (Gaudapāda, Śaṅkara, Sureśvara) do not recognize 'Ignorance' as an existent entity.

SECTION 14: CONCLUDING SUMMARY ABOUT THE NATURE AND SO ON OF IGNORANCE (NATURE, OBJECT, LOCUS, EFFECTS, CAUSE, CESSATION)

138.(2) Summary of the nature and circumstances of Ignorance

It is clear that there is no room in Ignorance as we have described it for the seven arguments against Ignorance adduced by the dualists (cp. para 64, above). For, unlike the 'positive Ignorance' of the later Advaitins, this is not something for which the only evidence is experience as imagined by philosophers in their hypotheses. Nor does it depend on proof through the means of empirical knowledge (sense-perception, inference, etc.). For in its nature as superimposition it is immediately evident to everyone. So our account of the nature of Ignorance is not vulnerable to logical attack.

The fallacies of mutual dependence (cp. para 43), infinite regress (cp. para 121) and so on which attach to the doctrine of root-Ignorance do not apply to our view, because the locus of Ignorance and the object it conceals have been shown to be themselves of the nature of an illusion in Consciousness.

The fact of the Self's being concealed is logically accounted for because this 'fact' is not accepted as an ultimate metaphysical truth (but only as a fact registered in practical experience within the realm of Ignorance). And our doctrine does not have the fault of contradicting the self-luminosity of the Self (a fault incurred by the later Advaitins, cp. para 64 above, *ad init.*): for the concealment of the Self by Ignorance is (on our view) only imaginary, and is accepted on the basis of illusory experience while that illusory experience lasts.

The cessation of Ignorance as we conceive the latter is also intelligible, since Ignorance is by nature false imagination, and no real cessation is admitted (so that no real change is introduced into the Self). And although the terminating cognition is imaginary like the Ignorance that has to be terminated, it does not (in the manner of the latter) imply the need to look for anything to terminate it, since it is of the nature of a conviction of the falsity of all the not-self.

The notion of the falsity of all (but the Self) conveys its own falsity when it emerges, so that it does not require anything else to bring itself to an end, as other illusory cognitions do. And another reason why the suggested difficulty does not apply is the fact that the cessation of Ignorance is, on our view, itself the Absolute. But from the standpoint of natural experience it is natural to refer to what is really only the conviction of the falsity (of all but the Self) as if it were the cessation of (a 'thing' called) 'Ignorance'. Thus our theory of what brings about the cessation of Ignorance, in justifying itself, at the same time strengthens the case for our theory of the nature of that cessation itself.

There is another theory which holds that bondage and liberation must have the same locus, and that it would be wrong if one's theory implied that the loci were different. Exponents of this theory say that if the individual experiencer no longer existed on liberation, bondage and liberation would apply to two different entities, since liberation would mean the destruction of the individual experiencer. And the form of liberation (taught by the strict classical Advaitins) is inconceivable without the abolition of individual knowerhood and objects of knowledge. Nor

could a knower be supposed to engage in his own self-destruction, so that the whole strict Advaita theory of liberation stands refuted.

But this has been dealt with by what we have just said above. We do not accept the destruction of the knower in his true nature on liberation. What we accept is that liberation means the realization that his apparent state as individual experiencer is not his true nature, and is illusory.

In this way Ignorance has the reality of purely phenomenal manifestation, not to be identified with the total unreality of a hare's horn (which is never encountered in any way at all and does not impinge on consciousness). But it is not real like the Self, as its illusory character has been thoroughly proved. One and the same entity cannot be both completely unreal and real at the same time, as that would be contradictory. So Ignorance cannot be both real and unreal. When investigators teach that Ignorance and its effects are indeterminable, that is therefore acceptable from the standpoint of practical experience.

Nor is there any fear that our doctrine about Ignorance might conflict with the means of cognition, as we have shown that the means of cognition have no bearing here (on inference, cp. para 47 above). And the play of the means and objects of empirical cognition can only take place in dependence on Ignorance as its prior condition. So there is no room for unjustified logical objections, and one may accept all we have said without reserve.

PART IV – STATEMENT OF VEDIC AND OTHER AUTHORITY

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STATEMENT OF TEXTS QUOTED AS AUTHORITY

139. The reason for quoting Vedic and other texts as authority

There should not be too much occasion to doubt our doctrine so far expounded in the earlier part of the present work, as it is based on reasoning that does not conflict with experience. But there will be some who put their faith in texts who will be inclined to overlook it on the ground that it is all my own personal theory, arrived at without the slightest regard to the acknowledged experts in the field, or to Vedic and other ancient texts. We now proceed with an attempt to quell their doubts.

140. Not much emphasis is placed on refuting the objections of the dualists

Here in Part IV not much attention will be paid to the objections against non-duality raised by the dualists on the ground of the Vedic texts, objections that are rejected by all schools of philosophers who hold that the Self is one. For the ancient Ācāryas have explained how duality is excluded from all the Vedic and traditional (smṛti) teaching. There are texts in the Vedas and Smṛtis decrying duality and calling it illusory. From the Veda we have such texts as ‘There is no plurality here’ (Bṛhad. 4.4.19), ‘One should know that Nature is an illusory display (māyā)’ (Śvet. 4.10), ‘He goes from death to death who sees the appearance of plurality here’ (Bṛhad. 4.4.19), ‘A modification is a name, a suggestion of speech’ (Chānd. 6.1.4), ‘When, however, this soul makes in this one the smallest interval (difference), then, for him, there is fear’ (Taitt. 2.7), ‘Assuredly it is from a second (thing) that fear arises’ (Bṛhad. 1.4.2), ‘But there is no second thing’ (Bṛhad. 4.3.24), ‘For where there is an appearance of duality... (but when all has become his own Self, then what could a person see, and with what?)’ (Bṛhad. 2.4.14). And from the Smṛti we have ‘Darkness (Ignorance) masquerading as light’ (M.Bh. 12.290.58), ‘My power of illusion (māyā) composed of the three constituents (guṇa)’ (Bh.G. 7.14), ‘standing appearing to be divided’ (Bh.G. 13.16), ‘The dualists who do not see the truth’, ‘This (realm of) distinction is caused by wrong knowledge’ and so on. And there are other texts which proclaim the non-dual Self as the true nature of the final reality. We might cite, ‘In the beginning, my dear one, this was Being alone, one only without a second (Chānd. 6.2.1), ‘This whole universe is (in truth) nothing but the Absolute’ (cp. Muṇḍ. 2.2.11), ‘All this (world) is but the Self’ (Bṛhad. 2.4.6), ‘That is the real’ (Chānd. 6.8.7), ‘That thou art’ (*ibid.*), ‘He who knows the Absolute attains the supreme reality’ (Taitt. 2.1), ‘This Self is the Absolute’ (Bṛhad. 2.5.19), ‘All this is verily the Absolute’ (Chānd. 3.14.1), ‘He sees the Self (in the Self within)’ (Bṛhad. 4.4.23), ‘There is one shining deity (present hidden in all beings)’ (Śvet. 6.11), ‘What delusion, what grief can there be for the one who sees the unity of all?’ (Īśa 7), ‘Resting in the hearts of all’ (Śvet. 3.11), ‘Know Me as the Knower of the Body’ (Bh.G. 13.2), ‘All is Vāsudeva’ (Bh.G. 7.19). Thus it is clear that non-duality is the heart of the real teaching of these traditional texts.

According to a certain theory, there is mention of words such as ‘the individual soul’.

(jīva) and ‘the world of plurality’ (prapañca) which imply duality. The texts proclaiming the creation of the world have to be understood literally, for we find injunctions to meditate on the Absolute (associated with form) and also because the authority of the ritualistic texts would otherwise be undermined.

This view, however, is quite wrong. For it may be replied that the Veda accepts duality provisionally, as that is the starting-point of the hearer, but duality is not what it intends to teach, since there is no criterion to show that duality is its final message. This is easy to ascertain. For in the passages describing creation it is nowhere overtly said ‘Creation is real’, and there is nowhere any reward or advantage mentioned as arising from a knowledge of the manner of creation. In the texts on meditation in the Upanishads, there would be nothing wrong if there was an injunction to meditate made without the intention to teach that duality was real, while if the same text was regarded as *both* teaching a meditation *and also* as proclaiming that duality was real, that would involve the fallacy of introducing an unjustified break into the topic (vākya-bheda). (93) And from the standpoint of the highest truth there is a direct denial that the texts proclaiming the true nature of the Absolute are subordinate to those enjoining meditations, in the passage ‘(That which cannot be uttered by speech and through which speech makes utterance — know that only is the Absolute and) not that which people here worship (meditate on)’ (Kena 1.5). There is also the fact that the texts proclaiming the metaphysical truth about the Self have no alternative explanation (niravakāśa), and are therefore a stronger authority in case of conflict than texts teaching meditations, which are susceptible of alternative explanations (sāvakāśa). (94) Again, the ritualistic section of the Veda, like the section on symbolic meditations, is concerned primarily with the actions that it enjoins, and is not concerned to establish that the realm of duality is real (which it accepts provisionally in harmony with the initial standpoint of the hearer). In various places the Veda and Smṛti also denounce the results of action as transient, and on all these counts the dualistic standpoint is rejected.

The ancient teachers have said everything else that needs to be said on this subject in the course of explaining the Upanishads on Jaimini’s principles of exegesis. They have established that the teaching of the Upanishads is non-duality, and reduced their opponents to silence. So (because the answers are to be found in their works) we desist from further examination of the objections raised by the dualistic interpreters of the Veda here. (95)

However, there are some supporters of Advaita who do not accept our correct method of interpretation. It may be that they do not accept the right interpretation of the Upanishads that we have expounded because they have heard, on the basis of wrong argumentation, that one should start from another way of interpretation, and have come to look upon the texts alleged in support of such interpretations with faith as if they really did support them. In order to help such people, we will show how our own view is correct in the light of the Vedic texts, the true Gurus and the true tradition, demonstrating on the way how the texts quoted by the Advaitins who do not accept this are capable of a different interpretation from the ones they offer.

141. What is the Vedic justification for the philosophic examination of the three states of consciousness (waking, dream and dreamless sleep)?

Here an opponent might ask us what justification we had from the Veda for investigating the nature of the pure Self through an examination of the three states of consciousness. For it is well known (our opponents might argue) that hearing the Veda depends on materials supplied by perception. But in dream and dreamless sleep the senses are not operative: they come into action only on the plane of waking. Nor do inference and the other forms of empirical knowledge (which depend on and are extensions of perception) operate outside the waking sphere. Since the scope of the authoritative means of knowledge is thus limited to the waking state, there is no prospect of extending its range to cover reflection over all three states of consciousness, including dream and dreamless sleep as well. When a person has a form of enquiry that undermines the authority of the Veda, how can we hope to satisfy his whim of denying the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep by appealing to the Veda as authority?

Faced with this criticism, we reply as follows. We ask who it is that is speaking in this way. Is it one who has already attained a correct apprehension of the transcendent Self through an examination of the three states? Or is it one who is still enquiring? It cannot be one who has knowledge. For the operation of the authoritative means of knowledge after metaphysical knowledge has been attained is not admitted. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said, 'Once the true nature of the Self is known, the interplay of knowledge and objects can no longer continue' (Bh.G.Bh. 2.69, Ś.S.B. 5.260). For the strict classical Ādvaitins do not hold that the enlightened one acquires his certitude about the unity and identity of all as the Self on the authority of the means of empirical cognition. And again, Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'The Self knows itself as unborn through this unborn knowledge, which is its own nature. Like the sun, which is in constant light by nature, the Absolute requires no other knowledge to illuminate it' (G.K.Bh. 3.33, Ś.S.B. 1.157). And this does not involve the impropriety of the same entity being agent and object of the same act. For there is no dependence on agency or other factors of action in the light of that (the Self) which is not an object, and which is eternally free from modification.

Let us suppose, then, that a question about how the Veda could be an authority on the examination of the three states when its scope does not extend to dreamless sleep has been raised (not by one who already knows the Self but) by a mere enquirer. In that case, we would reply as follows. If a means of knowledge is really to be authoritative, this does not imply that it must necessarily extend over all three states of consciousness, but only that it conveys its content free from the stain of contradiction or doubt. Nor can one say that in this context there is no proper communication. For doubt and wrong knowledge do not arise in the case of anything known through the Veda. Still less is there any question of the metaphysical texts of the Veda not bringing enlightenment (when rightly apprehended), since that to which they awaken one is of the very nature of eternal enlightenment. Nor is the support of any other means of knowledge (apart from the Veda) required for certitude in this matter. Śrī Sureśvara has said: 'In the matter of immediate apprehension of the Absolute there is no dependence on meditation or on any other means of knowledge. For here that which is known transcends the world (is alaukika), and is itself knowledge by nature. It is only in worldly knowledge that there is dependence, also in knowledge derived from some external source' (T.B.V. 2.608-9).

After hearing the desultory remark, 'There are fruits by the river-bank', confirmation through perception is required if there is to be knowledge (cp. Śabara on P.M.S. 1.1.2). But no such confirmation by the other means of knowledge is required after hearing (and properly understanding) the Vedic texts proclaiming the pure Self. For in the case of the Self there is no intervening obstacle that has to be removed (as there is in the case of external objects requiring to be known through perception and so on).

Some argue as follows. They say that if the Veda is accepted as authoritative there is no room for the discipline of the examination of the three states of consciousness which our (strict Advaita) school promulgates. If your whole life depends on this discipline (they say), then abandon the idea that the Vedic is authoritative at all. But what we have already said above obviates this criticism too. For the authoritativeness of the Veda does not depend on the mere fact that it is the Veda. As already mentioned just above, it depends on the fact that it awakens one to the fact that one is the eternally established Self in its true nature. In the case, therefore, of some great person who can attain immediate apprehension of the true nature of his Self as the meaning of such Vedic texts as 'That thou art' heard only once, we do not think that the examination of the three states of consciousness or any other discipline is relevant. As Śrī Śaṅkara has said: 'When the meaning of the sentence, which is an authoritative means of knowledge, has been correctly comprehended as "All is the Self", no other authoritative means of knowledge can remain. How then can any injunction to act apply to such a person?' (T.T. (verse) 18.224). When he says, 'No other means of knowledge can remain', he means 'other than the Self', and he includes the idea 'no object and no knowledge other than the Self' by implication. The followers of strict non-duality understand by 'means of knowledge' that which, having communicated knowledge of (i.e. having awakened one to) that Self which transcends the practical knowledge associated with instruments and object of knowledge, ultimately negates its own status as means of knowledge. Thus Śrī Śaṅkara has said: 'For once the true nature of the Self is known, there can no longer be any experience of the means and objects of empirical cognition. For the final means of knowledge puts an end to the condition of the Self as a knower whose knowledge comes through the empirical means of knowledge. And in putting an end to this condition, the final means of knowledge ceases any longer to be a means of knowledge, just as the means of knowledge present in a dream cease to be such on waking' (Bh.G.Bh. 2.69, cp. M.V. 62 f., Ś.S.B. 5.260),

But he who on account of doubts and other difficulties is unable to attain immediate apprehension of the Self in its true nature merely from hearing the relevant texts — for him there is occasion to think of other methods whereby to proceed in order to attain a proper comprehension of the Self in its true nature.

SECTION 2: VEDIC AUTHORITY FOR SAYING THAT THERE IS NO CONNECTION WITH IGNORANCE IN DREAMLESS SLEEP

142. The texts mentioning Ignorance do not specify any particular form of it

There are some who raise objections against our doctrine and say that the ancient Vedic texts refer to Ignorance even in the case of those whose minds have attained knowledge, so that

Ignorance cannot be superimposition, as in that case it would have had its seat in the mind alone (and then would have been absent in the case of those who were enlightened}. They cite such texts as ‘He (the Creator) is other than ye, the individual souls revealed by the ego-sense’ (R.V. 10.82.7, interpreted according to Sāyana), ‘Ye are enveloped in mist (Ignorance) and cannot know Him’ (*ibid.*), ‘enveloped in falsity’ (Chānd. 8.3.2), ‘These same are true desires, with a covering of the false’ (Chānd. 8.3.1), ‘Although the desires are true, there is a covering of the false’ (*ibid.*), ‘He grieves helplessly, bewildered’ (Muṇḍ. 3.1.2), ‘Ye do not know Him who brought these beings forth’ (R.V. 10.82.7), and ‘In the same way, others are deluded (and speak of time as the cause of the world, not knowing the greatness of God)’ (Śvet. 6.1). The text, ‘When all creatures have reached Being in dreamless sleep they have no knowledge “We have reached Being”’ (Chānd. 6.9.2) points to the existence of Ignorance even in dreamless sleep, which does not take cognisance of mind. And so we hold on the authority of the Vedic texts that there exists a certain veil (āvaraṇa) in the Self, positive in form, over and above wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt. And there are texts from the Smṛti to the same effect, such as ‘Knowledge is veiled by Ignorance: thereby the creatures are deluded’ (Bh.G. 5.15) and (others from the Śruti such as) ‘He whose Self is concealed, who is surrounded by (the) mists (of Ignorance), who is like one blind from birth, bent on the joys of the penis and the belly, does not find the path’ (R.V. 10.82.7).

And so, we conclude, one has to accept the existence of a certain Ignorance over and above superimposition, having its seat in Consciousness — and this on the authority of Veda and Smṛti.

But all this is wrong. For the Vedic revelation and Smṛti take the Self (not as it truly is but) as it is familiar in ordinary unregenerate experience, as in the case of the texts enjoining the performance of ritual. In the case of the texts enjoining the performance of ritual, it is not accepted that they are also concerned with affirming the reality of the subject-matter of the injunctions, since their function is exhausted in delivering the injunction. In the same way, the texts about Ignorance are exhausted in their function of indicating that there is something that has to be removed through knowledge: it should not be supposed, we would maintain, that they could also be concerned with expounding the nature of Ignorance, or its locus, or the object it concealed or other such points. Otherwise, duality would be proclaimed by the texts enjoining ritual and symbolic meditations, and Advaita would have to give way to the dualists.

143. The text ‘Having reached Being...’ is not an authority for the existence of positive Ignorance, as that is not part of the topic where it occurs

Our opponent will perhaps claim that the reason why a special form of Ignorance is meant in the Upanishads has already been given. Some of the texts refer to Ignorance in general, the text ‘When all creatures have reached Being in dreamless sleep they have no knowledge “We have reached Being”’ (Chānd. 6.9.2) points to the presence of Ignorance when the mind is in abeyance (so that ‘Ignorance’ as conceived in the Upanishads cannot be equated with the triad of lack of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt, all of which are associated exclusively with the mind). That is why (he will say) we hold that there must be an Ignorance over and above wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt.

But this is not correct. The purpose of the Chāndogya text in question is not to assert the existence of Ignorance, but to affirm the identity of the true Self of man with Being. In order to teach this identity to his son Śvetaketu, Uddālaka mentions ‘attainment’ (sampatti), declaring that by the word ‘svapiti’ (he sleeps) one understands dissolution (apyaya) in one’s own Self (sva = ātman). By using the example of the bird (Chānd. 6.8.2) he illustrates how the soul, with the mind as its adjunct, resorts in dreamless sleep to the Absolute, here figuratively indicated by the term ‘vital energy’ (reading prāṇa for pramāṇa). By explaining the nature of hunger and thirst (Chānd. 6.8.3) he shows why the Absolute is referred to as ‘the root’ of the Self individualized by an adjunct as the individual soul. And then he again refers to attainment to the supreme deity spoken of successively under different names such as ‘speech’ and the rest (Chānd. 6.15.1 ff.).

Then Śvetaketu, not understanding how, if we attained identity with Being in dreamless sleep, we were not aware of the fact, asked to be instructed again about this matter in a different way. Uddālaka removed his doubt by resorting to the example of sap and honey, and by showing by it that the reason that the Self was not recognized in dreamless sleep as the real was its very unity, since it is plurality alone that occasions knowledge of specific differences. And one concludes that the topic of the whole section is the identity of all as the Self (and not the existence of a positive Ignorance) from the fact that further doubts about the Self in its true nature are removed successively in later passages by the introduction of new examples to show that the true nature of the individual souls is the pure Self. And so if texts of this kind were interpreted as *also* teaching the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, that would imply the fallacy of introducing an unjustified break into the topic of a text (cp. note 93).

144. Statement and refutation of the objection, ‘There is not complete attainment of Being in dreamless sleep’

An opponent might urge that ‘When all the creatures have reached Being...’ (Chānd. 6.9.2, cp. above para 143 *ad init.*) could not mean to teach identity with Being. For the topic begins, ‘Learn from me, my dear one, the true nature of sleep’ (Chānd. 6.8.1). It takes attaining Being for granted in conformity with the hearer’s standpoint, and teaches the presence of Ignorance through the phrase ‘they have no knowledge’ (Chānd. 6.9.2). The idea is that when the soul takes leave of waking and dream and goes to dreamless sleep, then it attains to pure Being, its own Self. Inasmuch as it is dissolved in its own Self, and one says of such a soul ‘svapiti’ (i.e. he sleeps = he is dissolved in his Self, a contraction of svam + apyeti). You might object and ask, ‘If he dissolves in his own Self, why does he not know his Self?’ It is in response to this that the text says, ‘having reached Being they do not know “We have reached Being”’, which teaches the presence of Ignorance. On account of the presence of Ignorance, the soul is not completely dissolved in the Self in dreamless sleep. It is just figuratively said to be dissolved because it does not then identify itself with the adjuncts of waking or dream experience. That is why Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘In the state of dreamless sleep the soul *appears to be* dissolved in the Self on account of the absence of those particular adjuncts (waking and dream)’ (B.S.Bh. 1.1.9). It is precisely because the dissolution is not complete that dreamless sleep is here used as an illustration. And the thing to be illustrated is mentioned later in the words ‘He who has a Teacher can know. He feels, “I shall remain here only so long as I shall not be released (from Ignorance). Then I shall

attain the Self (definitively)” (Chānd. 6.14.2). So this text is concerned with proclaiming the existence of (positive) Ignorance.

But this is all wrong. The text ‘That is why they say of him “he sleeps”, meaning that he has become one with his true Self’ (Chānd. 6.8.1) explains the meaning of the word ‘svapiti’: there is nothing to show that it is proclaiming either total dissolution or lack of total dissolution. You quoted Śrī Śaṅkara’s words ‘In the state of dreamless sleep the soul appears to be dissolved in the Self’ (B.S.Bh. 1.1.9), but this goes against your own doctrine. For the reference was to the dissolution of adjuncts, not to any real dissolution on the part of the soul (i.e. so far from dissolving in anything else in dreamless sleep, the soul attains there its true nature). This is supported by the clear teaching of Śrī Śaṅkara at Brahma Śūtra Bhāṣya 3.2.7, where he say: ‘Of course, it is also true that the individual soul is never anything but united with the Absolute, as it can never lose its own nature. But in waking and dream it appears to acquire a foreign nature on account of its contact with apparent conditioning adjuncts, and it is relative to this appearance that it is said to “attain” its true nature in dreamless sleep, because the apparent foreign nature is then lost’ (B.S.Bh. 3.2.7, cp. M.V. p. 97). So it stands proved that what is taught by the Veda in the words ‘attainment of the real’ is that in dreamless sleep the soul assumes the form of Being, which is established as its own true nature, and this ‘attainment of Being’ is spoken of in relation to the dissolution of particular adjuncts. So there is not the slightest room for the introduction of the doctrine of Ignorance here.

145. The phrase ‘They have no knowledge’
teaches absence of empirical knowledge
but not positive Ignorance

And there are other reasons which show that one cannot base a belief in positive Ignorance on this Vedic passage. The text ‘When all creatures have reached Being in dreamless sleep they have no knowledge “We have reached Being”’ (Chānd. 6.9.2) only teaches absence of empirical knowledge. So when nothing else is added, how can this text be an authority for positive Ignorance?

Perhaps you will claim that the text teaches absence of knowledge, and that positive Ignorance is the cause of this. But this is not correct, as the text explains, with the help of an example, how the cause of the absence of knowledge in dreamless sleep is pure unity alone (cp. Chānd. 6.9.2, which explains how the different elements of sap collected from different flowers are one and indistinguishable as honey). And this agrees with other passages in the Veda. For the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad aims to lay down the true nature of Ignorance. First it teaches how to escape from pleasure-desire, and from the effects of action, through discerning that one’s true Self is other than what it appears to be in waking and dream. Then it describes dreamless sleep. Afterwards it describes, with the help of the example of a woman embraced by her dear one, how the Self can become identified with pure Consciousness (prājña) in dreamless sleep, to the exclusion of all empirical consciousness of external objects or internal mental states, and that the reason for this identity is pure unity. Śrī Sureśvara says, ‘It is verily pure unity which is the reason why there is no vision of distinctions in dreamless sleep. This is expounded (in the Upanishad itself, Bṛhad. 4.3.21) through the illustration of the man and woman in embrace’ (B.B.V. 4.3.1310, quoted M.V. p. 349 f.). And the Upanishad itself says, ‘In the same way, embraced by the Self as Consciousness, he (the one in dreamless sleep) has no knowledge of

anything, within or without' (Brhad. 4.3.21, cp. M.V. p.99). Later the text makes it clear that the cause of the absence of all empirical knowledge in dreamless sleep is the absence of any second thing, in the words, 'But there is not any second thing that he could see' (Brhad. 4.3.23). So non-perception in dreamless sleep is not due to Ignorance. And we cannot see any other ground for inferring the presence of Ignorance in that state.

146. The same thing follows from the example
of the seed of the banyan tree adduced
by the Chāndogya Upanishad

And there is another point. It is true that when all particulars have disappeared in dreamless sleep the true nature of the Self cannot be apprehended in any form of particularized consciousness. But this absence of knowledge occurs because the Self is by nature transcendent — not because, like the particulars, it is unreal by nature.

It can, however, be known in another way through knowledge brought about by the Teacher. Hence we find the examples given of the seed of a banyan tree (Chānd. 6.12.1) and of salt dissolved in water (Chānd. 6.13.1). And there is the text, 'This subtlety is the true nature of all this (world). That is the real. That thou art, O Śvetaketu' (Chānd. 6.8.7). That is why Śrī Śaṅkara said, 'Pure Being, though imperceptible to the senses like the subtlety of salt dissolved in water, can be apprehended in another way' (Chānd. Bh. 6.13.3). These two points agree with the doctrine of him who claims that the pure Self alone is present in dreamless sleep, and not with that of the philosopher on the other side (who argues for the presence of Ignorance). For the opponent would claim that it is only because it is concealed by Ignorance that the Self is not experienced in dreamless sleep, not because it is too subtle (for subject-object experience). (96)

Perhaps the opponent will say that attainment of the Self in dreamless sleep as taught in the Chāndogya Upanishad does not imply total unity but only 'identity' (tādātmya), and that 'identity' in this sense is a form of non-difference that includes an element of difference. All that 'attainment of one's true Self' in dreamless sleep is intended to mean is that the more manifest agitation of waking and dream is absent. But this is wrong, as it would imply that it had been a vain effort on the part of the Veda to have produced the examples we have mentioned, and to have spoken of the subtlety of the Self (Chānd. 6.8.7 ff.). It is also wrong because one cannot say that the expressions 'dissolution in the Self' and 'attainment of the Self' cannot be used in the sense of transcendence and of non-difference in the pure literal meaning, (and where a Vedic text is intelligible in its literal meaning it should not be interpreted figuratively).

It was therefore also wrong to have claimed that it was not taught that there was total unity with Being in dreamless sleep, and that attainment was only taught as an (approximate) example. For the text can very well have meant just what it said, in the manner we have explained.

**147. What is taught in the Veda in texts
about awakening from dreamless sleep?**

Well, but if there is total, and not mere figurative, unity with pure Being in dreamless sleep, how can that be reconciled with the teaching that on awakening the soul assumes the same individual form conditioned by Ignorance that it had before?

We reply that what the Veda teaches is as follows. He who attains unity *having first come to know that he is the Self* attains liberation, but not he who attains to unity with Being in dreamless sleep without such prior knowledge. That is what the text means (at Chāndogya 6.9.2-3) in speaking of tigers and so on attaining to pure Being in dreamless sleep, and returning in waking to the form set up by their own Ignorance. In the words of Śrī Śaṅkara: ‘This being so, they unite with pure Being without knowing that their Self is of the nature of pure Being. And so, whatever species they may belong to according to their previous merit and demerit, whether they are a lion or a tiger or whatever, they are stamped with the latent tendencies of the action and experience typical of that species, and (in the waking state) they feel “I am a lion” or “I am a tiger” as the case may be’ (Chānd. 6.9.3, Ś.S.B. 3.135).

And in the eighth book of this same Chāndogya Upanishad we have a passage beginning, ‘Having attained the form of the supreme Light, he manifests in his own true form’ (Chānd. 8.3.4, quoted B.Sid. p.121, cp. M.V. p. 287). On our own interpretation this passage is meaningful, since the ‘attainment’ refers to that of a person who has had knowledge of the Self, and it is said of him that he attains the form of the supreme Light. On this passage Śrī Śaṅkara comments: ‘At the time of dreamless sleep, he attains unity with pure Being, and feels perfect serenity. The term “serenity” implies that he abandons the impurities brought by the contact of the sense-organs with objects in waking and dream. Although this attainment of Being in dreamless sleep is common to all creatures yet because it is said that “he who knows thus” (he who has already had knowledge of the Self through the Advaita discipline pursued in the waking state) “goes to heaven”, (97) it means that the latter is different from the majority. It is said that he feels perfect serenity. And we know that this refers to the person who has attained knowledge of the Self, because of the deliberate step of including the word “thus”, which refers to the man who has attained knowledge (in the waking state)’ (Chānd. Bh. 8.3.4).

Another difficulty for the opponent is that, if dreamless sleep were really associated with Ignorance, then this would reduce to fanciful eulogy a whole passage of the Chāndogya Upanishad which is evidently meant to state the simple truth. It is the passage which starts ‘He who knows this goes every day to “heaven”’ (Chānd. 8.3.5) and continues, ‘Now the Self is the bridge, the (separating) boundary for keeping the worlds apart. Over that bridge, day and night do not cross, nor old age, nor death, nor sorrow, nor well-doing nor ill-doing. For this realm of the Absolute is beyond evil’ (Chānd. 8.4.1). So one should pay no attention to the claim that the texts speaking of attaining ‘Being’ and ‘unity’ (sampad) are concerned with affirming the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. And it was therefore not right to say that the Veda affirms that in dreamless sleep, when the mind is in abeyance, Ignorance is present, and that this constitutes a proof of the existence of the entity ‘positive Ignorance’, and that there are other Vedic texts teaching that conscious beings are associated with Ignorance in this form.

148. The objection that positive Ignorance is established by texts teaching transcendence, by the texts describing 'the Fourth' (turīya), and by the texts denigrating dreamless sleep

The opponent will perhaps claim that there are other Vedic texts teaching the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. For example we have 'In the state of dreamless sleep in which all things disappear, overcome by Ignorance (tamas), he experiences happiness' (Kaivalya Up. 13). And there are hundreds of other texts differentiating the pure Self from the one in dreamless sleep. For example, in the text 'Not a mass of consciousness, not conscious (in terms of subject-object consciousness), not non-conscious' (Māṇḍ. 7) it is taught that 'the Fourth' is not 'a mass of consciousness' or anything else that could be conceived as an object for 'the conscious one' (prājña). Another such text is, 'In this way this serene one, having arisen up out of this body and having attained the form of the supreme Light, manifests in his own true form' (Chāṇḍ. 8.3.4). This teaches rising up out of the state of 'the serene one', a designation of the one in dreamless sleep — rising up out of Ignorance in the form of the causal body (kāraṇa-śarīra). And again, after Yājñavalkya had spoken to Janaka about dreamless sleep, the latter asked again, as before, 'Please instruct me further, for the sake of liberation' (Bṛhad. 4.3.15). And there are other texts which clearly indicate that there is a state beyond dreamless sleep.

There are also a few texts in the Upanishads here and there which denigrate the state of dreamless sleep as characterized by Ignorance in the form of dissolution, such as 'Even before reaching the gods he saw this danger. In truth, this one does not know himself in the form "I am He", nor indeed (does he know) the things here either. He has become one who has gone to annihilation. I see no good in this' (Chāṇḍ. 8.11.1). And the text teaches that Indra (here speaking) again practises Brahmacharya for five years with a view to gain knowledge of the Self other than the one asleep. After that, Prajāpati, designated as 'the supreme Spirit', taught him 'the fourth Self'. It is true that in some places in the Upanishads dreamless sleep is equated with the pure Self. But these passages have to be harmonized somehow with the examples implying duality, otherwise the other texts implying a state beyond dreamless sleep will have no place, and will be rendered useless, (and a theory intended to expound the doctrine of the Upanishads which leaves some of their texts apparently useless must be wrong). And there is the word of the revered Commentator, 'All these have been examples of liberation (and bondage)' (98)

There are thus texts teaching that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep. The pure Self is declared to be other than the one in dreamless sleep in texts that denigrate dreamless sleep. The Vedic texts which appear to equate dreamless sleep with the Absolute are susceptible of another interpretation. So on all these grounds we hold that the state of dreamless sleep is not entirely free from the defect of Ignorance. So why do you say that the doctrine that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep is not part of the Vedic traditional teaching?

149. The true message of the phrase
'At the time of dreamless sleep'

But this whole claim is unacceptable. For it is wrong to suppose that expressions like 'At the time of dreamless sleep' (Kaivalya 13) are intended to imply the presence of Ignorance in that state. How is this so? Well, the topic of the passage in which this text appears is laid down at

Kaivalya Upanishad 11 as repeated affirmation of knowledge, in the words 'A wise person burns up sin through a repeated churning of knowledge, using "Self" as one stick and "OM" as the other'. And the passage closes later by recapitulating the theme of knowledge that one's true Self is the Absolute in the words, 'Everything was produced from me alone, all creatures are supported by me, everything will dissolve in me: I am that non-dual Absolute' (Kaivalya 19). So when that was the topic, how could teaching about positive Ignorance be inserted into the midst of it, for no explicable reason?

Perhaps you will essay the following view. Briefer factual passages in the Veda (you will claim) may communicate their own meaning even if they occur in the midst of a longer passage concerned with something else. So there is nothing wrong if the present text digresses to affirm the existence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep. There is no contradiction. It may be considered that the meaning of the passage as a whole is included in the subordinate passage within it, the latter to be taken also as an affirmation of the knowledge (of the Self) communicated in the main passage. Here the passage expounds its meaning (the Self) indirectly, viewing it as (existent but) overcome by Ignorance.

But this view is pure wishful thinking. It is only proper to think of the subordinate theme as present in the main theme when it is not in contradiction with any other authoritative means of knowledge. Here, if the secondary theme were accepted, the primary theme would stand contradicted. For if positive Ignorance were present in dreamless sleep, this would undermine the import of the passage as a whole, which teaches the identity of one's true Self with the Absolute. For there is no other sentence stating that the said positive Ignorance comes to an end. The view advanced at para 148 above (as far as it concerns the Kaivalya Upanishad) is a case of losing one's capital through grasping at profit.

And we might also ask you how you came to know that knowledge was overcome by Ignorance in dreamless sleep. For the people of your persuasion do not hold that knowledge is overcome by Ignorance in dreamless sleep alone, and that it is free from Ignorance in waking. No doubt you will claim that although knowledge is overcome by Ignorance in dreamless sleep, dream and waking equally, there is the difference that in dreamless sleep all false projection (viksepa) is absent, and Ignorance is left over in its mere seed-form as concealment (this idea, though not the word 'āvaraṇa', is found at Maṇḍana, B. Sid. p. 22, quoted M.V. p. 271). The word 'darkness' (tamas, used in the ancient texts for dreamless sleep and for Ignorance) stands for concealment (you will say), and we have the words 'when all has been dissolved at the time of dreamless sleep' (Kaivalya 13). And that text (you will say) agrees extremely well with your own position.

But this argument is no better. The words that immediately follow on after 'at the time of dreamless sleep' are 'when all has been dissolved', not 'when knowledge is overcome by (positive) Ignorance'. If dreamless sleep were connected with 'being overcome by Ignorance', the Kaivalya Upanishad would contradict itself at verse 13 by saying that in dreamless sleep the soul is overcome by Ignorance and becomes happy (so that it would be more reasonable to take the meaning as 'having been earlier overcome by Ignorance (in the waking state *before* dreamless sleep, in dreamless sleep itself he is not overcome by Ignorance, and becomes happy). The text does not set out to explain how one is overcome by Ignorance in dreamless sleep. Its purpose is to exhibit the true nature of the soul as free from all impurity and of the nature of the non-dual Absolute. That is the meaning. This soul, that is overcome by Ignorance in waking and

dream, realizes its true nature as happiness in dreamless sleep, when all that is other than itself is dissolved, and there is no plurality, and the pain resulting from the superimposition of plurality is left behind.

150. Reflection over the happiness of dreamless sleep

Some hold that the Self is not of the nature of happiness in dreamless sleep. For it is then enshrouded in Ignorance, and there is no evidence that it is of the nature of happiness. The recollection 'I slept happily' is not evidence of it. Happiness is not an object of recollection here. If it were an object it would be distinctly remembered. But it is not. The recollection is 'I knew nothing'. Nor is it correct to say that one can infer that there must have been happiness from such signs as the feeling of lightness in the limbs after awakening from sleep. For if there is direct experience of sleep, (and there is, or we could not make assertions about it), there is no scope for inference (which is a means of cognition giving us indirect knowledge about what we cannot perceive). Added to which our limbs sometimes still feel heavy after sleep, which also rules out scope for inference, (since inference depends on universal rules that do not admit exceptions). Therefore dreamless sleep is not characterized by happiness. It is merely that we use the word 'happiness' figuratively in regard to it to stand for absence of pain. (99)

Others have held the view that, even though absence of pain is a fact, it cannot be an object of experience (being a mere negation). So the 'absence of pain' theory of dreamless sleep cannot be right. How then can there be recollection of happiness? But in fact there is no problem. There is actual experience of happiness. The claim that happiness was concealed by Ignorance in dreamless sleep, and could not be experienced, was wrong. For the element in the soul that stands as Consciousness and Witness is not concealed in dreamless sleep. Why, then, is this happiness not experienced in waking? Well, it is not entirely unexperienced. But because in waking (as opposed to dreamless sleep) positive wrong knowledge is interposed, it is not clearly experienced, and one's experience of happiness in waking and dreamless sleep is to that extent different. So it is not (mere) 'absence of pain' that is experienced in dreamless sleep, nor is 'absence of pain' what is recollected on waking. It is happiness only that is remembered, and absence of pain is presumed as a consequence, on the grounds that if there had been pain one could not have experienced happiness. (100)

But you will ask (say the exponents of this theory) how there could be a memory of the happiness of dreamless sleep when it was constituted by Consciousness as Witness, and so would not leave an impression (saṃskāra, which would imply activity of some kind). We reply (they say) that the experience of happiness in dreamless sleep is associated with the conditioning adjunct of the rise of a reflection (ābhāsa) of Consciousness, the latter being associated with Ignorance. This is possible, since there are different forms of reflection of Consciousness corresponding to different states and conditions of Ignorance. Particular forms of reflection of Consciousness in Ignorance can therefore come and go. Hence it is possible for the Self as the locus (āśraya) of Ignorance, and as that which is qualified (visista) by Ignorance, to experience happiness in dreamless sleep and to remember that experience on waking. (101)

Both these views are untenable. For it is not right to make inferences about the sleeper on the basis of memories arising after awakening from sleep. This has already been explained

in the course of disposing of the theory of positive Ignorance (cp above, para 31). Further, memory is not associated with any universal law derived from experience, and so cannot supply material for an inference. And since there can be no particular experience in dreamless sleep, the appearance of a 'memory' we have of it is a mere piece of imagination. If we ourselves spoke of a memory of dreamless sleep, that was only as a concession to popular modes of speech. The form of our reflection over dreamless sleep is 'I slept happily', not 'I had experience of happiness'. So we conclude that 'happily' does not refer to experience of happiness as an object, but only to the absence of any factor to disturb sleep. You will perhaps ask how this absence of any disturbing factor could be an object of reflection (i.e. could be the object of later thought in waking) if it had not previously been an object of experience. Our reply is that we do not speak of a memory of any non-existence. Our idea is that if there had been anything to disturb dreamless sleep the latter would have been punctuated by particularized knowledge. It is a kind of inference of the form 'Since I did not experience anything, it follows that I was not awake but was in deep sleep, so there cannot have been anything to disturb my sleep'.

But is this not just a dispute about words, as if one were to say 'This is not my son-in-law, it is my daughter's husband'? For absence of particularized consciousness (being a negation) cannot be anything experienced. So how could that 'absence of particularized consciousness' be determined, on the basis of which one could claim that there was an absence of causal factors in dreamless sleep?

Well, this is an ingenious piece of logic indeed if it establishes that there are any differences of opinion about absence of particularized consciousness amongst those who accept (102) that there is such a thing as dreamless sleep. The truth is that people actually experience dreamless sleep as the absence of any particularized knowledge. So when people say 'I slept happily', 'happily' is just an adverb qualifying the verb 'slept' (and not part of an affirmation that happiness was perceived).

151. In what sense is dreamless sleep spoken of as being of the form of happiness?

How, then, can the Veda (e.g. Praśna 4.6) speak of dreamless sleep as being 'of the form of happiness'? We have reached the point of saying that dreamless sleep is neither absence of pain nor positive experience of happiness, and there does not seem to be anything else that could answer to the meaning of the word 'happiness'. True. So the conclusion is that the Self is of the form of happiness (and not of the experience of happiness).

But if the Self *is* happiness, how is it that there is mention of *attaining to* happiness (in dreamless sleep)? This, however, is no difficulty if 'being asleep' is seen as dissolving into one's true nature. No doubt the Self remains ever in its true nature. But due to distinctions arising from the conditioning adjuncts of waking and other states, it appears as if it had fallen from its true state. But in dreamless sleep all conditioning adjuncts go, and it appears to dissolve back into its true nature. It is in relation to this apparent process (that only occurs from the standpoint of Ignorance) that the Upanishad says, 'He becomes one with his true Self (svapiti = svam hy apīto bhavati', Chānd. 6.8.1). In this way, although in truth the Self never deviates from its true condition, it is spoken of (from the worldly standpoint) as 'going to' its true nature in dreamless sleep, because there is nothing there to introduce (the appearance of) any disturbance. Nor would

it be correct to claim that our own doctrine was the same as that of the opponent, on the ground that he also accepts the continuous presence of the witnessing consciousness, even in dreamless sleep. For according to him there is happiness in dreamless sleep arising from a reflection of Consciousness in positive Ignorance, (103) and there is also (a memory of and) reflection over this in waking. But we do not accept either of these two points. So the Veda does not teach that in dreamless sleep the Self is overcome by Ignorance and goes to happiness, and it does not teach that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep. Rather it teaches that dreamless sleep is a state where the Self rests in its own nature, bereft of the suffering entailed by the superimposition of plurality. And that is why Śrī Śaṅkara said, 'Although there is said to be happiness in that state (of dreamless sleep), what the text means to convey is that the Self is itself of the nature of happiness' (B.S.Bh. 1.3.9).

152. Although we accept that 'a Fourth State' is taught by the Veda, there is nothing to prove the 'Ignorance' taught by our opponents

It has been claimed that the Vedas teach of the Self in another form apart from the Self in dreamless sleep. On this we remark that if the Veda teaches a 'fourth state' (turyāvasthā) other than waking, dream and dreamless sleep, then let it be so — what of it? Perhaps you will reply that the consequence is that the Self in dreamless sleep is covered over by Ignorance, while in its state as 'the Fourth' it is not. Hence we have the text from Śrī Gauḍapāda, 'The Self as Prājña knows neither itself nor others, neither the real nor the unreal — it knows nothing at all. But as the Fourth, the Self beholds everything always' (G.K. 1.12).

Here we would raise the following question. If 'the Fourth' is other than dreamless sleep, is the one in 'the Fourth' awake or not? If not, then how could enquirers know what his experience was, or who could there be to expound what such a state was like? But if he is awake, then why does he abandon 'the Fourth' for waking in the waking state? There cannot be any positive Ignorance in such a state (in 'the Fourth'), as you (later unorthodox Advaitins) would not accept it. Yet your system provides no other reason why the one in 'the Fourth' should pass into waking.

Perhaps you will claim that even in 'the Fourth' there remains a small hidden element of Ignorance, too subtle to be perceived. And you will claim that it is this that brings to manifestation a world on waking. But this is also wrong, for it would reduce dreamless sleep and 'the Fourth' to equality. For Ignorance (on your view) would be present in both. And from both of them there would be a sudden awakening.

Our opponent will perhaps reply that when 'the Fourth' is taken in this sense (as including an almost insignificant element of Ignorance) it is not the same as dreamless sleep. For experience of dreamless sleep is common to all living creatures. But none of them are relieved of reincarnation in the midst of worldly life through the mere accomplishment of the feat of going to sleep. But those who experience 'the Fourth' are properly spoken of as knowers of the Absolute, because in their case the effects of Ignorance are abolished.

Here, however, the opponent shows culpable forgetfulness. If one whose Ignorance had ceased could arise from 'the Fourth' into the waking state, why were all those efforts made (cp.

Viv. p.263, quoted M.V. p. 783) to establish the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep on the mere ground that the sleeper awoke from it?

Perhaps we shall hear the following argument. Even one who experiences ‘the Fourth state’, we shall be told, is afflicted with enough Ignorance to effect the manifestation of the waking world till the death of the body. But his experience is different from that of the ignorant person in dreamless sleep, since it is only a subtle element of Ignorance that is left, with the gross element burnt out.

But this is also wrong, for it would rule out the possibility of anyone gaining full knowledge of the Absolute while alive. Nor can you say that this agrees with our (strict classical Advaitin’s) own view, on the (pretended) ground that we accept liberation in life as (different from and) inferior to liberation on the death of the body. For (on our view) there is nothing to show that any one form of liberation exists superior to others (cp. Śaṅkara, B.S.Bh. 3.4.52, Ś.S.B. 6.280, also M.V. pp. 164 ff.). And we have already pointed out how one and the same person cannot combine metaphysical knowledge with metaphysical Ignorance at the same time (cp. para 136 above). Further, there is no evidence to show that positive Ignorance exists and has gross and subtle elements. And the whole theory of ‘elements’ of Ignorance is due for refutation later. (104)

So even if we admit that the Veda speaks of ‘the Fourth state’, this does not yield any advantage to those who propound the doctrine of positive Ignorance.

153. And in any case the Veda does not teach
‘the.Fourth’ as being a ‘state’ (avasthā)

And the Veda does not teach the existence of any ‘fourth state’. The Māṇḍūkya Upanishad does not intend to convey the existence of another ‘state’ beyond dreamless sleep. In speaking of Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña as the three ‘quarters’ (pāda) of the Self, it merely showed that ‘the Fourth’ was something that transcended them. The intention of this text is to indicate the true nature of the Self by negating imagined ‘states’ such as Prājña and the rest. In the sentence ‘This is a rope not a snake’ we have a negation of the (imagined) snake. Similarly, when the Māṇḍūkya Upanishad says (of the Self) ‘It is not a mass of Consciousness’ (Māṇḍ. 7) and so on, the intention is to negate the mistaken notion that it is ‘Prājña’.

But are not Taijasa and Viśva equally imaginary with Prājña? Yes, they are. But this can only be established by showing that in dreamless sleep no plurality is found. But is not the Self eternally void of plurality? It is. But those who are extraverted and identified with states like waking are incapable of apprehending this without prior reference to dreamless sleep, the place where the absence of plurality is actually apprehended. Thus we read in Śaṅkara: ‘Hence dream is necessarily accompanied by desire and merit and demerit, the causes of continued transmigratory experience. In dream, therefore, the soul does not “go to the-Self”. And this is supported by other Vedic texts such as, “(In dreamless sleep (he is not accompanied by merit, he is not accompanied by demerit, for he has passed beyond all sorrows of the heart” (Bṛhad. 4.3.22) and “This (dreamless sleep) is his state beyond desires” (Bṛhad. 4.3.21) and “This is his highest bliss” (Bṛhad. 4.3.32). With a view to show that it is in dreamless sleep alone that we find the Self as a deity, liberated from its condition as individual soul, the argument proceeds

(further and discusses dreamless sleep)' (Chānd. Bh. 6.8.1, Ś.S.B. 3.131).

The truth is that the Self is eternally void of plurality. But those whose hearts are clouded by the illusory vision of knower, knowledge and known feel 'Consciousness pertains only to waking and dream; and in dreamless sleep we were aware of nothing', as we know from common experience. It is only in dreamless sleep that the Self stands unrelated to the world of action, its factors and results. In waking, the connection is felt to be real. Against this common view, the Veda proposes an examination of the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep with a view to show that Consciousness is unbroken in dreamless sleep, and that there is no real plurality even in waking. As Śrī Sureśvara says: 'This Self has unbroken vision. This has already been declared to be the case in dreaming and waking. But it is true in the case of dreamless sleep also, as the text "When there is the state of dreamless sleep..." (Bṛhad. 4.3.22) shows. And just as the Self transcends the factors of action in dreamless sleep in the form of bare eternal Consciousness raised above all change, so does it also transcend the factors of action in dream and waking' (B.B.V. 4.3.1907-8, cp. M.V. p. 359).

This absence of all taint of duality in the Self can only be taught and understood through reference to dreamless sleep. So we conclude that when the Veda speaks of the Self as 'not with the consciousness of the internal' and so on (Māṇḍ. 7, cp. M.V. p. 107), its function is to show first by reference to dreamless sleep what absence of plurality is, and then, on that basis, to negate the previously imagined states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. And this is confirmed by the fact that this Vedic passage ends with the words 'being the dissolution of all plurality, perfectly peaceful, auspicious (śiva), without duality. This is how they conceive "the Fourth". This is the Self. This is what has to be known' (Māṇḍ. 7, cp. M.V. p.110).

And the text at Chāndogya Upanishad 8.12.3 'And that serene one, having risen up from this body...' does not refer to anything other than the Self in dreamless sleep. Its aim is to teach that the Self is other than the complex of the body and the lower and higher mind. It refers first to the bodiless state, familiar to all in dreamless sleep. And then it explains how the Self is bodiless by very nature. In commenting on the earlier part of the passage, Śrī Śaṅkara says: 'Being embodied is the conviction on the part of the unembodied Self — based on lack of discrimination — "I am verily that body" and "that body is verily myself".... But when non-discrimination from the feeling of identity with the body has been abolished by knowledge of the Self as unembodied, then a person becomes "bodiless" and pleasure and pain no longer affect him' (Chānd. Bh. 8.12.1). So there is no hope of introducing the idea of a 'fourth state' in this context either.

At Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad 4.3.15 there is teaching about dreamless sleep, after which Janaka says, 'Please instruct me further for the sake of liberation', which has been used to support the claim that Ignorance is not entirely suppressed in dreamless sleep. But this claim is made on the basis of an imperfect understanding of the Vedic text. For it is a different series of texts, that expounds how liberation and bondage appear from the standpoint of waking experience. Waking experience is the basis for all secular and Vedic dealings. Therefore bondage and liberation, creatures of Ignorance, are only relevant there. It is to expound this that the Veda will explain the words 'reincarnation' and 'liberation'. How could it at the same time be engaged in conveying the existence of positive Ignorance, or of another 'state' beyond dreamless sleep?

Play has also been made with Indra's remarks denigrating dreamless sleep, 'I see nothing to enjoy here' (Chānd. 8.11.1) and 'He goes to destruction' (Chānd. 8.11.2). It must be understood, however, that this passage merely recapitulates the commonly held view of mankind, and does not convey any teaching of its own. The text also teaches the absence of any particularized consciousness in dreamless sleep, as in the sentence 'Verily, a person does not then know himself as "This am I"' (Chānd. 8.11.1 and 2). As Śrī Śaṅkara notes in commenting on Brahma Sūtra 1.3.19, the text at Chāndogya 8.11.1 and 2 'teaches only the absence of any particularized consciousness in dreamless sleep in the words "Verily, a person does not then know himself as 'This am I' nor does he have any knowledge of these creatures (found in the world of waking)'" (B.S.Bh. 1.3.19). And the words there in the upanishadic text about 'destruction' and 'dissolution' refer to the loss of particularized consciousness arising from the dissolution of conditioning (adjuncts in dreamless sleep). So Śrī Śaṅkara adds: 'But when Indra says "He goes to destruction there", the reference there also is only to the loss of particularized consciousness (but not to the destruction of the Self as eternal unbroken Consciousness)' (B.S.Bh. 1.3.19).

And so, having denied the absence of *all* knowledge that is attributed to dreamless sleep from the worldly standpoint, Prajāpati went on to teach Indra from the Vedic standpoint about the constant presence inherent in unbroken Consciousness even in dreamless sleep, saying 'Live in celibate pursuit of the divine (brahmacārya) for another five years'. And it is not correct to say that there was here any reference to a 'fourth state', for there is nothing in the words of the text to substantiate such an idea. And so it stands proved that the Veda does not teach any 'fourth state'.

154. The texts affirming the purity of the Self in dreamless sleep mean what they say

If there were to be Ignorance present in dreamless sleep, that would only be possible if the Vedas spoke of a state beyond (and superior to) dreamless sleep, and that could only be through the indirect implications of the text (since it has been shown that there is no direct mention of any 'state' higher than dreamless sleep). So we must see if we can find a Vedic text which would imply the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. But in fact there are a number of Vedic texts which declare that the Self in dreamless sleep is bereft of Ignorance and all other evils. For example we have, 'There the thief becomes no thief' (Bṛhad. 4.3.22). Śrī Śaṅkara refers to this, saying 'Here the text "The thief becomes no thief" (Bṛhad. 4.3.22) shows the purity of the Self, as also the text (*ibid.*) "not followed by his merits"' (T.T. (verse) 17.38). At the same place it is said, 'This (dreamless sleep) is his highest realm' (Bṛhad. 4.3.32). It is also in reference to dreamless sleep that it is said 'Having attained to the supreme Light' (Chānd. 8.3.4), 'the ruler of all' (Bṛhad. 4.4.22) and 'Embraced by Prājñā' (Bṛhad. 4.3.21). And there are other texts also which teach openly that the Self in dreamless sleep is pure and without the slightest suspicion of any defect. If it were supposed that the Veda taught that Ignorance both was and was not present in dreamless sleep at the same time, that would be to attribute self-contradiction to the Veda. That would not be correct. And we have explained how the alleged hints about Ignorance in dreamless sleep have to be interpreted (above, paras 143-151).

Perhaps you will claim that the Upanishads do speak of a 'fourth state', and quote, in

support of your contention, the text ‘When one has the knowledge “I am that Absolute which illumines the realms of waking, dream, dreamless sleep and the rest, one is released from all bonds’ (Kaivalya 17). You will say that it is openly proclaimed in such a text as ‘This mass of consciousness rising up supports the vital energy.... It burns up waking, dream, dreamless sleep and “the Fourth”’ (Subāla 15.1), also in the text ““States” are fourfold as waking, dream, dreamless sleep and “the Fourth”’ (Śārīraka Upanishad 5, Rāghorām p. 359). How could anyone oppose that? And you will claim that no one can say that ‘the Fourth’ falls within waking, dream and dreamless sleep on the ground that it is non-different from them. For if ‘the Fourth’ is guaranteed by the Vedic texts, one has to follow the latter, and conceive dreamless sleep and so on as defined differently from ‘the Fourth’, and conceive ‘the Fourth’ as having a definition that marks it off and excludes it from dreamless sleep, dream and waking.

But to all this we reply as follows. Nobody could show that at Kaivalya Upanishad 17 (quoted by the opponent above) the phrase ‘and the rest’ referred to any ‘fourth state’, as that is not the subject of the teaching of the passage. And it is clear from the verse that follows on afterwards, which begins ‘In the three states of consciousness, whatever appears as the object of experience, or the experiencer or the experience...’, that the Upanishad accepts three ‘states of consciousness’ only. In the passages quoted by the opponent from the Subāla Upanishad and the Śārīraka Upanishad there is admittedly verbal reference to ‘the Fourth’ as a ‘state’. But this cannot be accepted literally, or otherwise it would undermine the teaching of the whole upanishadic corpus that the Self is in its true nature bereft of ‘states’. If anything said in the Veda is accepted as true merely because it is said in the Veda, then the ‘Allāh Upanishad’ and other (late and unorthodox) Upanishads would have to be accepted as authorities proving the existence of Allāh (as conceived by the Muslims) and other dubious beliefs. So there is no proof of a ‘fourth state’ on the authority of the Veda. Nor should it be forgotten that even if a ‘fourth state’ were proved, this would not prove the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. This will be clear from the Vedic texts when interpreted according to the rules mentioned above (subsection 11, with Note 6).

What we have already said is enough to show that the purpose of the texts dealing with dreamless sleep is not merely to supply an example of non-perception of duality. Texts which have the intrinsic force of proclaiming the pure Self in its true nature cannot be confined merely to teaching non-perception.

Play has also been made with Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkara’s words ‘And all that is an example to explain the meaning of the word “liberation”’ (Bṛhad. Bh, 4.3.34, trans. Mādhavānanda p. 480). (It could be argued that if dreamless sleep was only an *example* to illustrate liberation, it must be different from what it is used to exemplify, and so must include impurity and Ignorance.) But this does not occasion any difficulty for us, as it only meant that the example of dreamless sleep could be used to illustrate the notions of bondage and liberation entertained (by ordinary ignorant people like us) in the waking state. What Śrī Śaṅkara’s words meant was that, just as the Self is naturally void of plurality and void of Ignorance in the state of dreamless sleep, so one who has dispelled his metaphysical Ignorance by knowledge of that Self would be without plurality and without Ignorance in the waking state — this is how the matter is viewed from the standpoint of practical experience. And from that standpoint we may speak of a ‘state of knowledge’ which is a ‘state of liberation’. As it is said in the Brahma Sūtra Commentary: ‘The case, indeed, can be illustrated by the example of a carpenter, who becomes an agent and suffers pain when he takes his chisel and other instruments in hand, and yet, when

he has returned home and put down his chisel, becomes himself again, relaxed, at rest and happy. In the same way the soul, in the states of waking and dream, becomes interpenetrated by duality set up by Ignorance, and becomes an agent and suffers pain. And then afterwards, to shake off its weariness, it enters into its own Self (in dreamless sleep); the Absolute, the transcendent, takes leave of the psycho-physical organism and becomes a non-agent, and feels happy in the state of highest serenity (dreamless sleep). And in the same way, in the state of liberation, too, having removed the darkness of Ignorance with the lamp of spiritual knowledge, the Self remains in the state of transcendence, contented and happy' (B.S.Bh. 2.3.40, Ś.S.B. 3.42 f.).

Thus it is only in appearance that certain texts in the Veda seem to affirm the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, as there is nothing to show that texts referring to mere 'ignorance' refer to the 'positive ignorance' (of the later Advaitins). The Vedas do not speak of any 'pure state' beyond dreamless sleep. If certain Vedic texts speak of 'dreamless sleep and "the Fourth"' one is forced (by the teaching of the Veda taken as a whole) to take the two terms as having equivalent value. (105) For there are many Vedic texts which openly proclaim the purity of the Self in dreamless sleep. So for all these reasons dreamless sleep is a state in which Ignorance is nullified. And it has been shown that positive Ignorance can be refuted merely by following the evidence of the Vedic texts.

SECTION 3: HOW THE AUTHOR OF THE BRAHMA SŪTRAS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES AGREE THAT IGNORANCE IS ABSENT IN DREAMLESS SLEEP

155. An opponent's view, set forth to test the words of the author of the Brahma Sūtras and other authorities

Here a doubt might be raised. If the Veda shows — in the way you have indicated — that the Self is free from all stain in dreamless sleep, how is it, then, that the author of the Brahma Sūtras sometimes speaks of the Self in dreamless sleep as different from the supreme Self, and speaks of the presence of 'the Unmanifest Principle' (avyakta) as a conditioning adjunct in dreamless sleep? There are such Sūtras as, '(The subject of the passage is the supreme Lord, because of the declaration of) difference in dreamless sleep and death' (B.S. 1.3.42), 'the absence of dream (i.e. the presence of dreamless sleep) takes place in the subtle canals (i.e. those within the pericardium) and in the Self, for so the Veda says' (B.S. 3.2.7), 'But (this connection with the mind) continues to exist potentially (during dreamless sleep), like virility, etc., because it retains the power to manifest' (B.S. 2.3.31, cp. Ś.S.B. 3,5). And there are words in Śrī Śaṅkara's commentaries on these Sūtras such as, 'And the Veda itself shows that awakening from dreamless sleep is caused by the presence of a seed of Ignorance' (B.S.Bh. 2.3.31, Ś.S.B. 3.5) and 'But the case of the soul uniting with the Absolute in dreamless sleep is not parallel (with that of a drop of water uniting with the ocean), as there are factors able to produce a distinction — such as merit and demerit from past action and the merit arising from meditations practised in the context of the Vedic ritual' (B.S.Bh. 3.2.9, Ś.S.B. 3.121) and 'It must be that one and the same external adjunct (the subtle body) persists through (the cycle of repeated states of) dreamless sleep and waking, just as (one and the same plant persists through the repeated cycles

of) seed and sprout (*ibid.*, Ś.S.B. 3.122). And he also says, in support of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, ‘In the case of dreamless sleep and of deep meditative concentration (samādhi), as well as in (coma and) other such states, we find that, although the natural state (of the Self) where no distinctions of any kind obtain has been reached, still, because wrong knowledge has not been altogether eradicated, when one awakens from dreamless sleep or from deep meditative concentration there are distinctions just as before’ (B.S.Bh. 2.1.9, Ś.S.B. 3.138 f.). And the author of the Vārtikas affirmed the existence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep in emphatic tones when he said in the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi, ‘And if this Ignorance were not present in dreamless sleep, then it would be a fact that all living creatures would realize the complete destruction of transmigratory life (saṃsāra) merely by falling asleep, and without the discipline of hearing, cogitation and sustained meditation on “I am the Absolute” and other upanishadic texts’ (N.Sid. 3.58, prose intro.). And there is the verse in the Māṇḍūkya Kārikās of that knower of the true tradition, the revered Śrī Gauḍapāda Ācārya, who could see the essence of the whole Vedic tradition as clearly as if it had been a plum held in his hand — the second line of which runs, ‘Prājña is in bondage as cause; but neither Prājña nor its effects (Viśva and Taijasa) are found in “the Fourth”’ (G.K. 1.11). And in the following verse (G.K. 1.12), having declared that there is Ignorance in dreamless sleep, he speaks of the Self as ‘the Fourth’, and as being different from the Self asleep, and as able to see everything always. So it seems that the denial of Ignorance in dreamless sleep contradicts the teaching of the classical experts of our school.

156. What the author of the Brahma Sūtras really meant

To this we reply as follows. The author of the Sūtras says, ‘... because of (the declaration of) difference in dreamless sleep and death’ (B.S. 1.3.42). The reference is to two places where the Veda appears to be talking about ‘states’, because it teaches that in the two states of dreamless sleep and death the supreme Self is different from the individual soul. (106) It is not that there is prior acceptance of Ignorance in dreamless sleep here, followed by a declaration that the supreme Self is different from the individual soul. What is accepted here is the Self in its true nature, bereft of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, dream and waking alike. And this is confirmed by the commentary, (107) which quotes Janaka’s question ‘Teach me further for the sake of liberation’, followed by Yājñavalkya’s reply, ‘He is not accompanied by merit’ (Bṛhad. 4.3.22).

Then consider ‘The absence of dream (i.e. the presence of dreamless sleep) takes place in the subtle canals (withdrawn into the pericardium) and in the Self, for so the Veda says’ (B.S. 3.2.7). This also affirms that the state of dreamless sleep is the supreme Self. The phrases ‘In the subtle canals’ and ‘in the Self’ do not affirm that the soul is simultaneously in two different things. For the meaning is that the soul has attained unity with the Absolute through the attainment of (that part of) the subtle canals which lies within the pericardium. Accepting the common view that in dreamless sleep the soul withdraws from the body and lies in the heart within the pericardium, the text goes on to teach that this is really attainment of the Absolute. The words ‘in the Self’ are not part of the significant new teaching conveyed by the Sūtra, as the identity of the individual soul with the Self has already been taught earlier at Brahma Sūtra 1.1.9. The topic of the present section is (not directly the Self but) the nature of dreamless sleep, as we see from the following Sūtra, ‘And so (i.e. because dreamless sleep takes place in the Self) awakening from dreamless sleep is an emergence from the Self’. (108)

That dreamless sleep and the transcendence found in liberation are the same in point of absence of particularized knowledge is taught at Brahma Sūtra 4.4.16. Explaining this Sūtra, Śrī Śaṅkara writes: ‘The word “svāpyayaḥ” refers to dreamless sleep. This is on the basis of the Vedic text “He goes to his own Self (svam apīto) and therefore they say “He sleeps (svapiti)”’ (Chānd. 6.8.1). And by the word “sampattiḥ” the author of the Sūtras means realization of one’s true transcendent state (kaivalya), in consonance with the Vedic text “Although he is already the Absolute, he ‘attains to’ the Absolute” (Bṛhad. 4.4.6). And the Sūtra says that absence of all particularized consciousness is predicated of both these two states’ (B.S.Bh. 4.4.16). The implication is that, as in dreamless sleep there is regularly a dissolution into one’s own true nature as the Self, there is then no second thing, and so the absence of any particularized cognition is intelligible.

Consider, again, Sūtras 3.2.31 and 3.2.34. The provisional view, given at Sūtra 3.2.31, states ‘There is some entity superior to the Absolute, because of the mention of embankment, measure, connection and difference’. And the final view, stated at Sūtras 3.2.34 and 35 is, ‘On account of particular different conditioning adjuncts, as in the case of light and so on’ followed by ‘And because (such a position alone is) intelligible’. A distinction of two different lights can be set up in one light through different adjuncts (apertures, reflecting media, etc.), and will disappear with the disappearance of the adjuncts. In the same way, when there is the cessation of the adjunct of particularized consciousness (as in dreamless sleep), that constitutes connection with the supreme Self. The two Sūtras expounding the finally accepted view (B.S. 3.2.34 and 35) imply that it is in this way and no other that the text ‘He has become one with his own Self’ (Chānd. 6.8.1) is intelligible (i.e. they exclude the possibility of Ignorance in dreamless sleep).

The Sūtra 2.3.31 runs, “But (this connection with the mind) continues to exist potentially (in dreamless sleep), like virility, etc., (in a child), because it retains the power to manifest’. It may appear to assert the presence of a seed of Ignorance in dreamless sleep [cp. Ś.S.B. 3.5], but cannot be taken literally because it belongs to the topic inaugurated by the Sūtra ‘The soul is spoken of in this way, because in it the qualities of that (the mind) appear to predominate’ (B.S. 2.3.29, Ś.S.B.3.23). And it cannot be interpreted in any way that would contradict the teaching about the supreme Self. It is the same with the two Sūtras, ‘And because contact between the soul and the mind persists so long as the worldly state continues, there can be no defect, for so it is taught in the Veda’ (B.S. 2.3.30) followed by ‘But (this connection with the mind) continues to exist potentially, like virility, etc., because it retains the power to manifest’ (B.S. 2.3.31). The meaning is as follows. As long as reincarnation, imagined through Ignorance, lasts, the adjunct of the mind will seem to remain too, assuming sometimes a manifest and sometimes an unmanifest form. So it stands proved that the author of the Brahma Sūtras, too, nowhere accepts the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep.

**SECTION 4: HOW OUR POSITION AGREES WITH THAT OF
THE REVERED COMMENTATOR**

157. The real meaning of the words spoken by
opponents cited in the Commentator's works
which appear to attribute Ignorance
to dreamless sleep

It is quite clear that the revered Commentator explained these Sūtras in the same way that we have done. As for his phrase, 'Awakening from dreamless sleep is caused by the presence of a seed of Ignorance' (B.S.Bh. 2.3.31, Ś.S.B. 3.5) — it cannot be maintained that it implies the actual presence of a seed in dreamless sleep. The soul feels, 'As long as the seed consisting in Ignorance remained unburnt by metaphysical knowledge, so long I alternately slept and awoke'. Hence the revered Teacher (Śaṅkara) speaks of awakening for waking experience as being due to wrong knowledge.

Consider also what he says in his Chāndogya Upanishad Commentary. 'This being so, they unite with pure Being (in dreamless sleep) without having known that their Self is of the nature of pure Being. And so, whatever species they may belong to according to their previous merit and demerit, whether they are a lion or a tiger or whatever, they are stamped with the latent tendencies of the action and experience typical of that species, and (in the waking state) they feel "I am a tiger" or "I am a lion" as the case may be. And after they have entered pure Being in dreamless sleep, they come back from it in the same form as before...' (Chānd. Bh. 6.9.3). Here you cannot say that Ignorance present in dreamless sleep is taught as the cause of awakening from dreamless sleep. For that would not agree with the past indeclinable participle referring to earlier time in the phrase 'without having known' at the beginning of the passage. Nor is it correct to suppose that Ignorance is present in the dreamless sleep of ordinary people but not in that of enlightened ones, for dreamless sleep is of the same nature everywhere. On the latter point Śrī Śaṅkara says, 'Successive entry into waking, dream and dreamless sleep is common to all living creatures' (Praśna Bh. 4.4). And in the 'Up to the beginning of the path' section of the Brahma Sūtra Commentary we find the words, 'Even in the section on metaphysical knowledge, the Vedas treat of sleep and so on, which are common to all living beings, when such an exposition is helpful towards understanding the matter in hand, but such states are not attributed specifically to the enlightened person' (B.S.Bh. 4.2.7, intro.) (109) Thus Ignorance is a condition (nimitta) for self-identification with the experiences of waking and dream, and it is in this sense (and in this sense only) that awakening from dreamless sleep arises from a seed of Ignorance. (110) So why reject this, and claim that Ignorance actually invades dreamless sleep, even when that was not what the Ācārya said?

This explains the passage towards the end of Brahma Sutra Bhāṣya 3.2.9, '(The case with the soul in dreamless sleep is not the same as that of the water-drop falling into the ocean, as) here there is the individualizing factor action and Ignorance'. There cannot literally be action in dreamless sleep (so one may suppose that Ignorance is absent likewise). (111) And in the same passage we read: 'Therefore, (since one retains a sense of one's own identity as an individual after awakening from sleep), it must be that one and the same external adjunct (i.e. the subtle body) persists through (the cycle of repeated states of) dreamless sleep and waking, just as (one and the same plant persists through the repeated cycles of) seed and sprout' (cp. Ś.S.B. 3.122). The meaning here is that relationship with the mind, apprehended as an adjunct

through Ignorance, remains until Ignorance is abolished (i.e. without the implication that either the mind or Ignorance are continuously in manifest existence even on the empirical plane: they lapse into seed or potential form in dreamless sleep). And there is the same teaching at another place: 'This connection of the soul with the (superimposed) adjunct of mind is invariably associated with Ignorance, and Ignorance cannot come to an end except through right knowledge' (B.S.Bh. 2.3.30, Ś.S.B. 3.4).

In support of this we may quote such texts as 'The mind is in sleep when, like fire latent in wood, it exists in the body, pervading it as a whole, in the form of general (as opposed to particularized) consciousness' (Prašna Bh. 4.6, trans. Gambhīrānanda, Eight Upans., Vol II p. 462), and 'Hence, even though everything proceeds from the same deity, this merging (at death) here taught implies an unresolved residue in the form of a seed of future empirical existence, just like the merging that occurs in dreamless sleep, and at the time of cosmic dissolution at the end of a world-period' (B.S.Bh. 4.2.8, Ś.S.B. 5.50 f.). Such texts (despite appearances) do not affirm the real existence of a seed of Ignorance either in dreamless sleep or in world-dissolution. Their function is to affirm the necessity of acquiring metaphysical knowledge, because in the case of those afflicted with Ignorance wrong ideas persist even after attainment of identity with pure Being (in dreamless sleep). And this is clear from the proximity of such texts as 'And one cannot get rid of the bondage caused by wrong knowledge without right metaphysical knowledge' (B.S.Bh. 4.2.8) and 'But when the phases of the world-appearance that arise from wrong knowledge have been dissolved through right metaphysical knowledge, they have no remainder' (B.S.Bh. 4.2.16).

158. The text about 'dreamless sleep' and 'samādhi' (B.S.Bh. 2.1.9) does not affirm Ignorance but negates it

The exponent of the doctrine of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep has given an incorrect interpretation of Śrī Śaṅkara's words, 'In the cases of dreamless sleep and of meditative trance (samādhi), as well as in (coma and) and other such states, we find that the natural state (of the Self) where no distinctions of any kind obtain has been reached' (B.S.Bh. 2.1.9, Ś.S.B. 3.138 f.). For the revered Commentator holds that the non-differentiation to which we attain in dreamless sleep is our true nature (as the universal Self). For he goes on to (contrast dreamless sleep with waking and dream and) say, '(Although in dreamless sleep there are no distinctions, yet) because wrong knowledge has not been finally eradicated, when one awakens there are distinctions just as before' (*ibid.*). (112)

Here you will no doubt claim that the revered Commentator's words can be otherwise interpreted. You will say that it is Ignorance, of indeterminable reality-grade (*mithyā*), that exists in dreamless sleep and stands as the (material) cause of the differentiations at the time of the future world-manifestation.

But all this is wrong. For nothing is said by the revered Commentator about the presence of Ignorance (*ajñāna*) in dreamless sleep. The example offered here does not agree with what it is intended to illustrate. No differentiation is perceived in dreamless sleep or meditative trance, so there cannot be any real distinction. Still, differentiation is found in waking, so what is its cause? In the words of the Commentator, 'Because wrong knowledge has not been altogether

eradicated, when one awakens there are distinctions just as before' (B.S.Bh. 2.1.9). In agreement with this there is a later passage: 'One has to infer that just as there is the experience, through wrong knowledge, of differentiation in the undifferentiated Self during the period of world-manifestation, so must there be a potentiality (śakti) of (future) manifestation through wrong knowledge during world-dissolution' (*ibid.*).

The meaning is as follows. There is no differentiation whatever in the supreme Self. So if distinctions are perceived during world-manifestation this is conditioned by wrong knowledge, and they are like a dream. In the same way, even in world-dissolution there is no *real* potentiality of future differentiation, so its presence is something that is inferred by those under the sway of wrong knowledge. As long as one conforms to wrong knowledge, so long does differentiation persist during world-manifestation, conditioned by wrong knowledge, and at world-dissolution the potentiality of future differentiation persists equally, also conditioned by wrong knowledge. We know this from the uses of the phrases 'experience of differentiation conditioned by wrong knowledge' and 'one has to infer that... (there) must be a potentiality of (future) manifestation through wrong knowledge during world-dissolution'.

Reference was made at the beginning of the present para (158) to the passage in Brahma Sūtra Commentary 2.1.9 speaking of reaching to 'the natural state (of the soul) where no distinctions of any kind obtain'. Some explain the 'natural state' as referring to the real as associated with bare (undifferentiated) Ignorance. But this is no objection to our position, as they have not penetrated to the heart of Śrī Śaṅkara's teaching. (113) For in commenting on the conversation between Bālāki and Ajātaśatru given in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad he begins by saying that the question (at Bṛhad. 2.1.16) 'Where was it then?' is made with a view to begin a topic explaining the nature (svabhāva) of the Self. And then he says: 'Therefore, since dreamless sleep is not the result of merit and demerit, we conclude that it is the very nature of the Self. Ajātaśatru then raises a further question in order to bring out the point that the one experiencing transmigratory life (in waking and dream) has fallen from his true nature as the Self and is different' (Bṛhad. Bh. 2.1.16, cp. Mādhavānanda, p. 193 f.). Here it is clear that the words 'true nature' do not designate Ignorance, but refer rather to the true nature of the Self, void of Ignorance and not caught up in the process of transmigration.

Then there was the mention of 'in dreamless sleep and meditative trance (samādhi)'. If that had been a proof of Ignorance in dreamless sleep it would prove the presence of Ignorance in meditative trance too, which you do not accept. What an example of cutting off your own nose in an effort to discredit your opponent! So the true meaning of the texts of the revered Commentator cited by our opponent was actually to deny Ignorance. Hence they do not harm our case.

159. Passages from the revered Commentator
openly denying the presence of Ignorance
in dreamless sleep

And there are other passages in the writings of the revered Commentator which deny Ignorance plainly and without doubt. Consider, for instance: 'The soul is called "utter serenity" (samprasāda) when, after functioning in the course of waking experience as the overseer of the cage of the body and its sense-organs, and after experiencing dreams in the subtle canals of the

body, it becomes tired and seeks a refuge, and transcends identification either with a waking body or a dream body, and attains in dreamless sleep the supreme Light, the Absolute in its highest form, sometimes referred to (in this context) as the ākāśa (“ether in the heart”). Here it abandons particularized knowledge and attains its true nature’ B.S.Bh. 1.3.20). And one should not suppose that because there is mention here of transcending two bodies (i.e. the waking body and the dream body) that transcendence of the ‘causal body’ is not here taught. For in dreamless sleep there is no possibility of identification with a body of any kind. In commenting on Brhadāranyaka 2.1.19 the revered Commentator says, ‘At the time of dreamless sleep there is no connection with a body’ (Brhad. Bh. 2.1.19, see Mādhavānanda p. 199 for the context). Then there is the passage in the Taittirīya Commentary: ‘Nor can you retort that the apparent non-perception of another in dreamless sleep is due to the mind being engrossed in something different from oneself but changeless, (on the analogy of the arrow-maker so engrossed in the arrow that he is making that he is unaware of anything else). For non-perception in dream is total (in that the sense-organs are withdrawn from the objects of the waking world). Nor can you say that because an “other” is perceived in waking and dream it must be real, for these two states are set up by Ignorance. That “perception-of-another” which characterizes waking and dream is the work of Ignorance, for it does not occur except in the presence of Ignorance (of the infinitude of the Self). Perhaps you will say that the non-perception characteristic of dreamless sleep is also the work of Ignorance. But this would be wrong, as it is the essential nature of the Self’ (Taitt. Bh. 2.5.8, Ś.S.B. 3.126). Commenting on Praśna Upanishad 4.6, Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘At that time (i.e. in dreamless sleep) cause and effect resulting from Ignorance, desire, merit and demerit cease’. In the commentary to Chāndogya 6.8.1 we find: ‘Hence dream is necessarily accompanied by desire and merit and demerit, the causes of continued transmigratory experience. In dream, therefore, the soul does not “go to the Self”.... With a view to show that it is in dreamless sleep alone that we find the Self in its form as a deity, liberated from its condition as an individual soul, the argument proceeds further’ (Chānd. Bh. 6.8.1, Ś.S.B. 3.131).

The presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep is repeatedly denied in the Brhadāranyaka Commentary of Śrī Śaṅkara. ‘Where Ignorance, desire and action are absent’ (Brhad. Bh. 4.3.21, M.V. p. 782), ‘This is the form of the Self where it is beyond fear and danger’ (*ibid.*), ‘For Ignorance, which sets up the idea of otherness, is absent’ (*ibid.*) ‘that form of the Self which is directly perceived in dreamless sleep, and which is devoid of Ignorance, desire, merit and demerit, is the subject of the discourse here’ (Brhad. Bh. 4.3.22), ‘Those things that caused the particular visions (of the waking and dream states), namely the mind, the eyes and forms, were all presented by Ignorance as something different from the Self’ (Brhad. Bh. 4.3.23, cp. Mādhavānanda p. 469), ‘When, however, that Ignorance which presents things other than the Self has ceased, in that state of dreamless sleep’ (Brhad. Bh. 4.3.32, Mādhavānanda p. 475) and ‘It is Ignorance that separates a second entity, and that has ceased in the state of dreamless sleep’ (*ibid.*).

Thus the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep is repeatedly denied, which would not have been possible if the revered Commentator had really accepted the presence of a seed of Ignorance.

160. The point of the denial of Ignorance in dreamless sleep in the Brhadāraṇyaka Commentary

One might contend that Śrī Śaṅkara was only denying the presence of wrong knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna*) in dreamless sleep, not that of positive Ignorance. For it is not Ignorance itself, one might argue, that produces evil. In dreamless sleep and kindred states Ignorance is present, but not evil, while there is even experience of pleasure. And so (the argument might run) it is only when Ignorance undergoes transformation into the form of an effect called wrong knowledge that it gives rise to evil. Thus although Ignorance is present in seed form in dreamless sleep, the Commentator denies that it is present, but only means that it is not producing evil. There is no contradiction if he says that Ignorance is present in waking and dream, and absent in dreamless sleep, since in waking and dream it is an object of clear experience, in dreamless sleep not. In dreamless sleep there is no clear experience of Ignorance, since there is no ego-sense. But in waking it becomes an object of clear experience, inasmuch as it produces results such as 'I do not understand this, I am perplexed'. That is all that the Commentator means when he sometimes declares that Ignorance is absent in dreamless sleep. (Cp. Sarvajñātma Muni S.Ś. 3.125-8, quoted M.V. p.933 f.). His idea is that, although it is really present, it is as good as absent for practical purposes. It cannot be that he means to deny that it is really present, or otherwise there would be no difference between dreamless sleep and the transcendence attained in liberation. Therefore, in saying that Ignorance was absent in dreamless sleep he only meant that it was present in mere seed form, and not as an object of concrete experience. And he cited dreamless sleep only as an example to illustrate the transcendence of liberation, (and an example is never identical with what it is intended to illustrate).

But all this is wrong. For it stands in contradiction with the Commentator's words 'That form which is clearly perceived in dreamless sleep, free from Ignorance, desire and action' (Brhad. Bh. 4.3.22. cp. M.V. p. 271). Here you might object as follows. You might say that it has been earlier declared that Ignorance is wrong knowledge, (i.e. the positive misconceptions of waking and dream), and nothing else (cp. above, para 108). If this is not borne in mind, the words 'clearly perceived' in the above passage would be meaningless, since no form is literally perceived in dreamless sleep. 'Clearly' refers to the person after he has woken from dreamless sleep, and 'perceived' refers to his recollection of it. So 'Ignorance' refers to the form that Ignorance assumes as manifest effect (and *this* form of Ignorance only is declared by Śrī Śaṅkara to be absent in dreamless sleep, while that same Ignorance in seed form is present).

But this is wrong. For the revered Commentator nowhere accepts 'causal Ignorance'. Nowhere in his commentaries on the three starting-points of Vedānta (Upanishads, Brahma Sūtras and Gītā) does he accept 'causal Ignorance', conceived as something over and above superimposition and standing as its cause. So there is no positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep conceived as something over and above superimposition.

From this it follows that claims that positive Ignorance is the cause of the unhappiness and evil that are experienced outside dreamless sleep, and that it is an object of clear experience, are not sanctioned by the commentaries of Śrī Śaṅkara. Positive Ignorance is not accepted in the commentaries at all. So there is no more chance of its appearing there as the cause of evil or as an object of experience than there is of a discussion of the varieties of knowledge produced by a sixth sense-organ (in view of the fact that no such organ exists). So when the revered

Commentator speaks of the absence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, he means its total absence.

The matter has to be understood in this way also on account of the manner in which the Commentator introduces one of the texts of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka dealing with dreamless sleep. He says: 'If we consider all these passages together, the resulting sense is that the Self is by nature eternal, liberated, enlightened and pure. This comprehensive view has not yet been shown; hence the next paragraph. It will be stated later on that the Self becomes such only in the state of dreamless sleep' (Bṛhad. Bh. 4.3.18, Mādhavānanda p. 455). There would be a contradiction if one were to restrict the meaning of the term 'Ignorance' without justification, and interpret the commentary as saying that the supreme knowledge only abolished Ignorance in its form as transformed into an effect. Similar remarks apply to another passage from Śrī Śaṅkara, namely: 'Even so does this individual conscious soul rest in its own natural state at the time of dreamless sleep, devoid of all the attributes of the world of transmigration' (Bṛhad. Bh. 2.1.19, Ś.S.B. 3.125).

There is another text in the Brahma Sūtra Commentary that is relevant. 'The upanishadic doctrine is that, in dreamless sleep, the individual soul unites (in pure identity) with the Absolute, and it is from the Absolute that the world, beginning with the vital energy, springs forth. The dreamless sleep of the individual soul, a state of untrammelled purity, represents its true nature, void of all particular cognition set up by adjuncts. Its return from thence is a fall. And it is declared by the Veda in this passage that that state must be known to be none other than the supreme Self' (B.S.Bh. 1.4.18, Ś.S.B. 3.134). So it is clear that it is some pseudo-Ācāryas who have followed their own latter-day tradition without noticing that it is in contradiction with this commentary, and have spoken of a distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute, and of Ignorance designated as 'dissolution' (laya). (114) No one could deny that the word 'unites' in the passage just quoted excludes any distinction between the soul and the Absolute in dreamless sleep, while the phrase 'a state of untrammelled purity' excludes the presence of Ignorance. It is true that Vācaspati Miśra says here in his Bhāmatī sub-commentary: 'Therefore, because this Self, when it loses empirical consciousness in dreamless sleep, is said by Śrī Śaṅkara to have the form of purity, he means that it *seems* to have the form of purity, not that it *actually* has it. For in dreamless sleep the impressions of dissolution and projection are present' (Bhā. 1.4.18, cp. M.V. p. 550 and p. 612). But this contradicts what has been taught in the Veda and advances what has not been taught. The claim that in dreamless sleep there is only the *appearance* of purity would imply that the text 'O Bālāki, do you know who is the creator of the spirits you have mentioned, and who is responsible for all this work?' (115) would not apply to the Absolute, and that would contradict a point that the Veda had promised to make. Further on in this passage it is emphatically implied that there is no impurity in dreamless sleep, and this should be taken as a general negation of Ignorance in dreamless sleep.

The opponent has also (earlier in the present para) rebutted our explanation of the phrase 'that form which is clearly perceived in dreamless sleep' (Bṛhad. Bh. 4.3.32). But his arguments were wrong. He argued that 'clearly' referred to the sleeper after he had woken and 'perceived' the latter's recollection of dreamless sleep. This was wrong because 'clearly' here refers to self-luminosity. In the world, what is known mediately is said to be a case of indirect (parokṣa) knowledge. But the knowledge of the Self here referred to is the opposite of that. Here the Self is known immediately and void of Ignorance. It is rightly said to be known immediately because it is self-luminous. And this shows that it was wrong to interpret 'perceived' as referring to

‘recollection’ on the part of the one who had woken from sleep, as agent and object of any act here could not apply. So the right view is that in dreamless sleep the Self is immediately apprehended.

161. Concluding summary of the agreement of
our view with that of the commentaries

Here and there in his independent works also, the revered Commentator speaks of the absence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. Thus we have, ‘All this world is unreal and proceeds from Ignorance, because it is seen only by one afflicted with Ignorance, and is not seen in dreamless sleep’ (T.T. (verse) 17.20). Also: ‘There is then (on liberation) the conviction that the above-mentioned (at T.T. verse 17.26) darkness, the (apparent) seed (of waking and dream experience), does not exist’ (T.T. (verse) 17.60). Also: ‘This is that Ignorance that promotes transmigratory experience in the form of waking and dream’ (T.T. [prose] para 110). Also: ‘This Spirit which is deluded by Māyā in dream and waking’ (Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra 8). In this way, those who understand how to interpret earlier passages in the light of later ones will interpret other passages in Śrī Śaṅkara’s independent works which appear to teach the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep as really being concerned to point out that the whole notion that there was such a thing as a (transient) state of dreamless sleep was itself a figment of Ignorance. But we desist from going into this in detail, as it would take us too far.

162. Sometimes the classical Ācāryas accept
Ignorance, but even then it is not the
‘positive Ignorance’ of the later
metaphysicians of the school

It is claimed that Sureśvara argued in favour of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep in the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi and other works. To explain this matter we will recount a little story. A rich man about to die called his sons around him and said to them affectionately, ‘I have seventeen proud elephants. My final command is that the eldest of you should receive half the number, the second a third of them, and the youngest a ninth of them’. And even in the act of saying these words he passed away. When the sons had completed the funeral rites they set about distributing the elephants according to their father’s expressed wish. But finding themselves unable to divide seventeen elephants into two, three and nine, they grew tense and fell into a quarrel. They went to the courts and related their case before a magistrate. The magistrate, being a clever fellow, said to them: ‘Suppose I give you one of my own elephants, would you take it and put it in with your father’s herd and then divide the herd up according to your father’s wish?’ To this they acceded with great joy and relief. From the eighteen elephants that were now available, the eldest took his half (nine), the second his third (six), and the youngest his ninth (two). And in this way they received just seventeen elephants between them. Then the magistrate said, ‘As you have fulfilled your father’s wishes, and none of you has cause for disappointment, I shall take back the remaining elephant, that was mine anyway’.

The case with Ignorance should be understood according to the above example. There is a subtle body, as is generally accepted, made up of seventeen components. Those who try to distribute it into three parts find that they cannot do so, and the subtle body cannot logically be

accounted for as present in dreamless sleep. Still, people have an unshakable conviction that it must be present in dreamless sleep, so the true experts teach that it is merely imagined to be present through Ignorance. But they do not thereby introduce any new entity called 'Ignorance'. It is just a way of speaking. The magistrate did not actually make a present of any elephant to the litigants. In like manner, the true classical Advaita Teachers taught the existence of Ignorance as a mere nominal entity, as a step in the teaching for the benefit of those who had faith but still retained their firm conviction that there must be some entity (other than the Self) that persisted everywhere throughout waking, dream and dreamless sleep. And for this purpose they would say, 'There is a certain thing in dreamless sleep called Ignorance, and this whole world is its effect'. Let the students conceive it like that (for the moment). But when the final reality is known it will become clear that Ignorance is a name for what does not exist.

But is not all this parallel with the case of the driver of the ox-cart, who spent all night roaming about off the road trying to find a way past the toll-gate, and found himself in front of the toll-gate at dawn? Why did we spend such effort in refuting the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep when its presence there was admitted in a certain sense by the classical Advaita Teachers all along? We reply that you do not understand what we accept as positive reality (bhāva). The true classical Teachers did not accept the presence of Ignorance as a positive entity in dreamless sleep. The positive entity that they accepted as present in dreamless sleep was Knowledge and that alone.

163. In what sense does the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi speak of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep?

The texts of the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi have to be understood in the same way. For the author nowhere teaches 'causal Ignorance'. His mode of exposition is as follows. First he raises a doubt. One can infer that that which witnesses the coming and going of waking, dream and dreamless sleep must be the Self that does not come and go. But if that is really the case, what purpose is served by the metaphysical texts of the Veda? To this he answers as follows. There cannot be immediate apprehension of the Self as long as the subtle body in the form of waking and other experiences persists as an obstruction. The metaphysical texts of the Veda are needed to promote immediate perception of the Self.

But the opponent returns and says, '(If things were as you say), all interest in the metaphysical texts of the Veda would be at an end. For, even without them, reality as divorced from all human notions is attained by everyone from cowmen to great scholars merely by falling asleep' (N. Sid. 3.58, prose intro.). And the answer follows: 'Not so, for in deep sleep there is present that very Ignorance of the Self which is the seed of all evil. And if this Ignorance were not present in dreamless sleep, then it would be a fact that all living creatures would realize the complete abolition of transmigratory life merely by falling asleep, and without the discipline of hearing, pondering over and sustained meditation on "I am the Absolute" and other upanishadic texts' (*ibid.*). There is no categorical denial of all knowledge of reality in sleep here. What is said is that, where there has been no previous knowledge of the Absolute, transmigratory life does not come to an end merely through falling asleep, so that one should pursue the discipline of the great metaphysical texts of the Veda. That is why a little later on he raises the doubt whether there is absence of knowledge in dreamless sleep, and answers it by saying, 'If

Ignorance were present in dreamless sleep, then we ought to have direct awareness of the fact during the time of sleep, just as we are directly aware of our feelings of attachment and aversion and of our ignorance of external objects (outside the range of perception, etc.) in the waking state. For in the waking state we know through direct experience (at the time) "I cannot see the pot". But in dreamless sleep we are not aware of such Ignorance. Hence there is no Ignorance in dreamless sleep' (*ibid.*). So this 'ignorance' that accompanies dreamless sleep is clearly not positive Ignorance, as is shown by the use of the example of ignorance of the pot (which is mere absence of knowledge). (116)

One should also observe that objections and answers about Ignorance are given as the subject-matter of the third book of the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi. Thus the objection is raised, 'Ignorance is nothing but absence of knowledge, and since the latter is a non-entity by nature, it cannot stand as the cause of transmigratory experience. For the existent cannot spring from the non-existent'. And the answer given is, 'Since every object is unknown before the first idea of it arises in our minds, and since (even as unknown) it exists by the power of the one reality (sat), it is that reality which is (ultimately) the thing that is unknown' (N. Sid. 3.7). If Śrī Sureśvara had accepted 'positive Ignorance', he would not have agreed that ignorance was absence of knowledge, and would simply have affirmed that the doubt was groundless, since Ignorance was a positive entity. He would not have said that the cause (of the objects of the world) was reality *qua* unknown. So even when he admits Ignorance, to conform with the notions of people with deluded minds (and make his teaching intelligible to them), he does not admit the existence of Ignorance as a positive entity. His view is that Ignorance as mere absence of knowledge is falsely attributed by people of deluded minds to that Self that is ever free from it. And that is how at numerous points he adopts the standpoint of enlightenment, and declares that Ignorance is evident only to those of deluded minds, who lack the power of philosophical reflection. Thus we have, 'Bare Ignorance accepted on the basis of uncritically accepted familiarity' (N.Sid. 3:113, prose intro.), 'Ignorance (i.e. absence of knowledge, aprabodha) has a precarious seat' (N. Sid. 3.110) and 'Once the Self is known, there is no more knowledge to gain and no Ignorance left unconsumed' (N. Sid. 4.58).

Thus the mention of Ignorance in dreamless sleep occurs (in Sureśvara's works) in the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi only, and is made in accordance with the ideas of people of weak minds impregnated with sense-objects.

164. A denial of the presence of Ignorance
in dreamless sleep is also found in
the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi

In reality, not only is the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep not taught in the Naiṣkarmya Siddhi, there is evidence that the author totally rejected the idea. For in the following passage that Ācārya wrote: 'The Witness knows objects as "this", the "I" knows them as "mine". The notion "this" arises through the adjunct of Ignorance. "Mine" is thus a modification of the "I" (aham, N. Sid. 3.60). The meaning is as follows. When reality is known, there is nothing further to be known. It is only before knowledge of reality that the object has a 'this' form, and the knower the form of one enjoying an act of knowledge. So knowledge of a 'this' is the object of knowledge of a 'knower' whose existence is dependent on the adjunct of Ignorance. Knowledge of 'mine' depends not only on Ignorance but also on a modification of the ego. In a subsequent

verse the author confirms this with a negative argument: ‘In itself the Self is free from Ignorance and modification, and hence feels neither “this” nor “mine”. For it is only the one who has woken up from sleep (i.e. the individual knower engaged in empirical experience) who experiences Ignorance and feels (retrospectively) “I did not know anything then”’ (N.Sid. 3.62).

The point being made is this. There is no knowledge either of ‘mine’ or of ‘this’ in dreamless sleep, for the Self is then void of all individual knowerhood and of ego-sense, and there is no modification (of the ego or of anything else), and no Ignorance. So all must admit that dreamless sleep is a state void of Ignorance and individual ego. (Cp. also N. Sid. 4.47.)

There are those who feel the doubt ‘How could there be absence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep when its presence is proved?’ They claim that Sureśvara wrote that verse as he did because there is no clear experience ‘I am ignorant’ in dreamless sleep. In interpreting it, they have taken the word ‘for’ (in ‘For it is only the one who has woken up from sleep’, N. Sid. 3.62) to imply ‘At least when he is awake he feels “I did not know anything (then, in dreamless sleep)”’, so that Ignorance in dreamless sleep is intelligible’. And on this basis they refute our view and claim to establish root-Ignorance. But their view involves various defects. They contradict what is taught, which is the absence of Ignorance. They advance what is not taught, in claiming that the verse is expressed as it is on account of the absence of clear experience of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. They reject the natural meaning of the sentence ‘I knew nothing’, which merely signifies the absence of all empirical knowledge in dreamless sleep, and involve themselves in the troubles that flow from assuming that it refers to positive Ignorance. And their view (if true) would undermine the negative argument of the author (who argued that there was no knowledge of ‘this’ in dreamless sleep — an argument they would contradict by claiming that there was knowledge of positive Ignorance).

Perhaps you will say that my own argument is not free from defects. The recollection ‘I knew nothing’, you will perhaps say, demonstrates the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep on the evidence of memory. How can you reject this view — they will ask me — and claim, unjustifiably, that there is no universal rule that memory is associated with experience? Further, in claiming that one could not come to know that one’s true Self was the Absolute without the discipline of hearing the great metaphysical texts of the Upanishads, Śrī Sureśvara was implicitly teaching that Ignorance was present in dreamless sleep. If you deny that — they will say — you are once more in the difficulty of having undermined the utility of these texts.

Our reply to this is as follows. Our evidence for the absence of empirical knowledge in dreamless sleep is not recollection in retrospect during subsequent waking experience, but direct experience in dreamless sleep itself. For no one is aware of anything in dreamless sleep. It is true that Sureśvara’s Vārtika (e.g. B.B.V. 4.3.1420, quoted M.V. p. 350) speaks of the knowledge of someone who has woken up (that he knew nothing in dreamless sleep). But the reason for this is that it is only one who was woken up from dreamless sleep into the waking state, where particularized knowledge occurs, who has the notion that in sleep he knew nothing. From this it follows, also, that one cannot infer that there was any particularized knowledge in dreamless sleep. And one must conclude that the meaning was that there was no positive Ignorance.

Or consider the question ‘How could it be that in the case of the Self in dreamless sleep there is no modification of Ignorance?’ One might suggest that it was well known through the memory ‘I did not know’, and from an inference drawn from the fact that there was no

knowledge of an ego. But Sureśvara replies, 'From the feeling "I did not see anything" on the part of the one who has woken up, we know that, in dreamless sleep, the absence of the individual subject and his knowledge and its objects has been directly experienced in that state by Consciousness in its true nature' (B.B.V. 4.3.1420, M.V. p. 350). The meaning is that this knowledge (i.e. the knowledge of the form 'I did not see') pertains only to an individual experiencer limited by the conditions of the waking state. The intention was to show that the inference as to the presence of a modification of Ignorance in the pure Self pertains to an individual experiencer limited by the conditions of waking experience, and is not a valid inference leading to absolute truth.

As for the objection that, if there is no Ignorance in the Self, that would undermine the utility of the metaphysical texts of the Upanishads, that is answered by the Ācārya himself later on. He says, 'Even so, the man who is penetrated by the spirit of duality does not know the one Self that is all in all unless he is told "That thou art", etc. It is no use enquiring into the reasons for his delusion' (N. Sid. 3.65). The utility of the upanishadic texts is analogous to the utility of the sentence 'You are the tenth' in the case of a person who knows (in one sense) quite well that he is the tenth (of a group of ten people he has been deputed to count), but who (also) lacks that knowledge (through forgetting to count himself through his obsession with counting the other nine). In the same way, hearing the text 'That thou art' is of use even where there is no real association with duality. There is no need to assume an Ignorance that is a positive entity to enable such a text to have utility. So our interpretation of the text was right.

If, therefore, Sureśvara says, 'In sleep there is present that very Ignorance of the Self which is the seed of all evil' (N. Sid. 3.58, prose intro.), and thereby accepts Ignorance in dreamless sleep, this does not refer to that 'root-Ignorance' of the later Advaitins. What it refers to is the absence of perception (in dreamless sleep) attributed to the Self by people who judge from the worldly standpoint.

165. Explicit rejection of Ignorance in
dreamless sleep in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka
and Taittirīya Vārtikas

And there is no disputing this, for we have the Ācārya's own words. 'It is the true form of the Self that is here being taught. It is that which is severed from Ignorance, desire and action and is found in dreamless sleep' (B.B.V. 4.3.1205, M.V. p. 353) and 'But in dreamless sleep that duality is not found. Ignorance, the cause of evil, is not present. There is no duality for the soul to perceive through distinction into individual subject, empirical knowledge and objects, as there is in the waking and dream states' (B.B.V. 4.3.1519, M.V. p. 355). And in the Taittirīya Vārtika we find: 'That Self which is free from all differentiation and whose nature transcends verbal communication is attained by us in dreamless sleep. This statement is not wrong, as it has behind it the weight of the authority of the Veda' (T.B.V. 2.664, referring to Bṛhad. 4.3.23). Because it concerns the same subject, whatever has been said (on this topic) in the course of our examination of the commentaries of Śrī Śaṅkara is all relevant for consideration here.

Thus we have shown that our view is in agreement with that of Sureśvara.

166. Our view agrees with that of Śrī Gauḍapāda

It is a commonly held view that when the author of the Māṇḍūkya Kārikās said ‘Prājñā partakes of the limitation “cause”’ (G.K. 1.11) he was maintaining that Ignorance was present in dreamless sleep, while not being present in ‘the Fourth’. But this, too, has been virtually demolished by what has been said. The subject-matter of the topic where the verse appears is to show that distinctions such as Viśva, Tajjasa and Prājñā, that appear in the Self, are as imaginary as those of a snake or a stick or a trickle of water that may appear in a rope in the twilight. What the Ācārya was intending to say was that in Prājñā there was only the imaginary idea that the Self in dreamless sleep lacked knowledge, whereas in Viśva and Tajjasa there was the additional imaginary idea that it had wrong knowledge, both the imagined lack of knowledge and the imagined wrong knowledge preventing discernment of its true nature. Our task is to realize the Self in its true form, void of all plurality, after rejecting through spiritual discrimination the bondage of identification with each of the three states. So the Ācārya did not at all intend to say that the Ignorance that was merely imagined in Prājñā was a positive entity. This is why he said ‘That which always sees everything is “the Fourth”’ (G.K. 1.12). It means that it sees everything while waking, dream and dreamless sleep are being imagined. And Śrī Śaṅkara confirms this when he says, ‘The three states (of waking, dream and dreamless sleep) are only predicated of the Self with a view to show that they are in reality nothing but “the Fourth”, just as the text “That thou art” (is given for negating the not-self’ (Māṇḍ. Bh. 7). And so Śrī Gauḍapāda says, ‘When the illusory notions of lack of knowledge and wrong knowledge have been eliminated “the Fourth” is attained’ (G.K. 1.15). ‘Illusory notion’ means the illusory notion that one is in some particular state. Lack of knowledge means dreamless sleep. Wrong knowledge means dream (embracing both dream and waking, the latter conceived as a form of dream).

167. The meaning of, ‘Dreamless sleep is different’ (G.K. 3.34)

But is it not the case that Śrī Gauḍapāda is going to differentiate between dreamless sleep and meditative trance (samādhi) and say that they are not the same (G.K. 3.34)? Some here identify meditative trance with ‘the Fourth’ and say that it is attainable through the sustained meditation (nididhyāsana) spoken of in the Vedānta discipline. But this is not correct. For here rewards are stated for restraint of the mind on the part of those who can achieve spiritual discrimination — rewards such as a concrete realization of the true nature of the Self and so on. After the mind has effectively become no-mind, duality is no longer apprehended. It is known that to become no-mind is to realize one’s own true Self, since it is the nature of waking and of all other states to be transitory. The reward for attainment of restraint of the mind is non-apprehension of duality. And the non-apprehension of duality achieved in that way is not the same as the non-apprehension of duality found generally amongst ordinary people when they fall asleep. It is total, eternal and final non-apprehension of duality. From then onwards the idea that duality is real is like the offspring of a barren woman. On this point the commentary of Śrī Śaṅkara is worthy of note. ‘For the condition of the mind in dreamless sleep is one thing and its condition when stilled is another. In dreamless sleep it is swallowed up in the darkness and delusion of Ignorance. It is dissolved into seed-form, retaining the latent impression of evil and activity. In its stilled state, on the other hand, the seeds of Ignorance, evil and activity have been burnt in the fire of the awakening to the sole reality of the Self. In this state it is independent and free

from all the dust of the passions. So the two states, as the Ācārya (Gauḍapāda) says, are “not the same” (G.K. Bh. 3.34). There is a difference between the idea of a snake in regard to a rope whose true nature as a rope has been forgotten, and the idea of a snake in regard to a rope well known to be such. Similarly, there is great difference between the dissolution of the mind in dreamless sleep, and the restraint of the mind through spiritual discrimination. So there is no place here for the doctrine of the presence in dreamless sleep of Ignorance (in the form of a positive entity capable of undergoing transformations).

168. What the Kārikās mean by ‘restraint of the mind’

In a later Kārikā Śrī Gauḍapāda gives some separate teaching about restraint of the mind as a means to enlightenment. He says, ‘For all yogins, fearlessness depends on restraint of the mind’ (G.K. 3.40), and more to this effect. (117) His meaning is that going to sleep is a natural process, and ordinary mediocre people with their minds attached to external objects do not suddenly acquire knowledge of their true Self by experiencing it. As Śrī Śaṅkara puts it, ‘But those other yogins, still on the path, possessed of lower or middling insight, behold the mind as something other, as something different from their Self — for them, who are bereft of any concrete experience of the Self in its true form, restraint of the mind is necessary in order to produce fearlessness’ (G.K. Bh. 3.40). In their case, on awakening from dreamless sleep, the notion of duality breaks out again, while there was no room for any undifferentiated cognition in dreamless sleep.

But when the mind has been restrained, since restraint is the result of effort and is the result of the abandonment of the contemplation of external objects, the fact that the Self is unrelated to objects can be known in unhindered intuition. This shows that Ācārya Gauḍapāda did not identify ‘the Fourth’ with meditative trance (samādhi). For he speaks of samādhi as a transient experience, (while claiming that on attainment of restraint through spiritual discrimination) ‘the mind becomes the Absolute’ (G.K. 3.46).

Thus it is shown that the texts from the holy Teacher Gauḍapāda about ‘Prājñā’ and ‘restraint’ were concerned with devices (upāya) for communicating the truth, and it is wrong to suppose that he would not have approved of the rejection of the notion of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep.

169. How the proponents of positive Ignorance contradict both the author of the Sūtras and the revered Commentator

It is accepted that our system follows the path laid down by the author of the Sūtras and other great authorities of classical times. Whatever contradicts them is therefore effectively the doctrine of an opponent. We will just indicate this briefly. The author of the Sūtra says, ‘From whom comes the origin, maintenance and withdrawal of this (world)’ (B.S. 1.1.2) and ‘(The Absolute is) also the material cause, because that would agree with the statement and the example’ (B.S. 1.4.23). In Śrī Śaṅkara’s commentary on the latter passage we find: ‘The phrase “from whom” implies an ablative meaning and a material cause (i.e. implies that the Absolute

is the “prakṛti” or material cause of the world), on account of the Sūtra of the Grammarians (118) which specifies this in the words “The originating cause of the act of production (is put in the ablative)” (B.S.Bh. 1.4.23). We collect from that passage (and its immediate sequel) that the Absolute is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. So as the Self alone, being present in dreamless sleep, is capable of undergoing illusory transformation (vivarta) into the world-appearance, it is mere obstinacy to claim that Ignorance alone is the seed and material cause of the world.

But is it not the case that Ignorance (avidyā), labelled ‘Māyā’, and the Self, jointly constitute the material cause of the world, like two strands brought together to constitute a rope? This would be in consonance with such upanishadic texts as ‘From Him came forth Brahmā and this food (matter), consisting of name and form’ (Muṇḍ. 1.1.9) and ‘One should know that Nature (prakṛti) is Māyā’ (Śvet. 4.10).

But this is not so, for we have texts in the Veda and Smṛti (which show that the Self or the Lord is the ultimate cause of the world). For example there are, ‘But the great Lord is the wielder of Māyā’ (Śvet. 4.10), ‘My Māyā’ (Gītā 7.14) and ‘It (the world) is intelligible because it depends for its existence on Him’ (B.S. 1.4.3). When the Self or Lord is taught to be the cause, it is not right to assume an extra different cause, as it offends against the law of parsimony. Nor do we accept the idea that the Absolute is the material cause of the world by way of vivarta transformation, while Ignorance is its cause by way of pariṇāma transformation. If Ignorance (were really a substance which) underwent pariṇāma transformation into the world, then it could never return back into its nature as Ignorance, since pariṇāma transformations are irreversible, as in the case of milk that has undergone transformation into curds.

Well, but could not the transformation be like that of clay into pots, where the pots can be broken down again into clay? Not so. For reversible transformations like that of clay are to be regarded as of ‘vivarta’ nature. The clay remains one and the same entity, but *appears* (only) to assume a plurality of illusory forms contradictory to its previous nature without actually doing so. (119)

But could not Māyā be an instrumental cause? No, because if it were a cause at all it would itself have to have a cause. But is not that just what we hold? No, because in that case it could not be beginningless. On this, some hold as follows. Māyā, they say, can have a beginning, as is evidenced by such a text as ‘From that arose food (i.e. from the Absolute arose matter)’ (Muṇḍ. 1.1.8). They argue that even though a cloth is composed of fibres that come from a stem, it comes ultimately from the stem. And in the same way, since the Absolute is the ultimate cause of Ignorance, it is the ultimate cause of the world, even though the latter is an effect of Ignorance. But this is wrong. For if Brahman were the sole cause of Māyā (the latter would be indestructible and) liberation would be impossible. For as long as its cause remains in being, an effect will remain in being unless destroyed by some special cause. Or if it could be destroyed (it would be irrational and) it would always be liable to spring up again. Sureśvara, too, says ‘If Ignorance arose from the supreme Self, it would mean that liberation would be impossible. Or if Ignorance were (taken, as by Bhartṛprapañca, to be an attribute arising in the Self and) destroyed, it would imply the destruction of the Self, the erroneous doctrine of the Buddhists’ (B.B.V. 2.3.131, M.V. p. 306).

Finally one might, to avoid these difficulties, claim that Māyā on its own was the

material cause of the world, and that the Absolute was only referred to as the cause figuratively, according to the formula, 'Māyā is the material cause of the world, but it rests on the Absolute'. But this would only be to contradict the Sūtras and the Commentary, as already explained (see the present para, above).

Perhaps you will claim that the notion that Ignorance undergoes pariṇāma transformation is not foreign to Śrī Śaṅkara. For he says, 'But the Absolute becomes subject to modification (pariṇāma) and to all empirical experience through distinctions consisting of name and form, manifest and unmanifest, which are imagined through Ignorance and are indeterminable as being the reality itself or as being anything different' (B.S.Bh. 2.1.27, Ś.S.B. 2.26). But this is wrong. For one must observe that, since the distinctions are said to be 'imagined through Ignorance', the notion that Ignorance undergoes modification must itself be imagined through Ignorance. All mention of modification is made to conform to the practical standpoint conditioned by Ignorance. The meaning implicit in the passage from the commentary quoted is that from the standpoint of the highest truth there is no transformation (pariṇāma).

Well, but the Absolute is one and partless, and there is resort to examples such as clay which are made up of parts, so does not this show that there must be another material cause besides the Absolute, one (which is made up of parts and) can (therefore) undergo pariṇāma-type transformation? No, for the answer to this has been given already. Clay and the like are material causes undergoing the vivarta type of transformation (which is strictly no transformation at all, but only an appearance of a transformation). This objection is also raised and answered in Śaṅkara's Chāndogya Commentary. The passage runs: 'How can there be modifications and configurations of Being when it is known to be partless? There is nothing wrong. For modifications and configurations can very well arise from parts of Being that have been imagined by the mind, just as configurations like "snake" arise from parts mentally imagined in the rope' (Chānd. Bh. 6.2.2, Ś.S.B. 2.118). Had the revered Commentator really believed that Ignorance underwent pariṇāma transformations he would have said, 'There is nothing wrong. For Ignorance undergoes pariṇāma transformations, and the Absolute is said figuratively to undergo modification on account of the transformations undergone by Ignorance'.

And it is clear that those who hold that Ignorance (and not the Absolute) is the material cause of the world are in conflict with the Sūtras '(The Absolute is) also the material cause, because that would agree with the statement and the example' (B.S. 1.4.23) and 'Because the Absolute acted on itself through transformation' (B.S. 1.4.26) — and also in conflict with Śrī Śaṅkara's commentaries on these Sūtras (cp. Ś.S.B. 2.17 and 2.20).

And those who claim that there is any distinction between the soul and the Absolute in dreamless sleep are so obviously in conflict with passages in Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary on the Brahma Sūtras that there is no need to rehearse them in detail. We may refer to Sūtras 1.4.18, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 (cp. Ś.S.B. 3.133 and 3.113 f.).

170. The doctrine of positive Ignorance contradicts the teaching of Gauḍapāda and Sureśvara

Similarly, this doctrine of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep contradicts the views of

the author of the Kārikās (Gauḍapāda) and of the author of the Vārtikas (Sureśvara). Śrī Gauḍapāda establishes in detail how the pluralistic world of duality does not really come into being at all. The very notion 'is' is a false one (cp. G.K. 4.83). So the pseudo-Ācāryas are in conflict with this when they assert that the world of plurality comes into being.

Nor would it be right to say that you only accept the coming into being of the world of plurality from the standpoint of practical experience and that it was accepted by the true classical Advaita Ācāryas in this sense too, as evidenced by Śrī Gauḍapāda's words 'Birth is always taught by the enlightened ones to those who (because they perceive the world and identify themselves with a body and with caste duties) are afraid of non-birth (of the unborn principle of Reality, thinking it means their own destruction)' (G.K. 4.42). (120) For you hold that Ignorance is present in all states (including dreamless sleep), so that it is ever present and real and you have no right to speak of it as a mere appearance arising in practical experience. What the Ācārya Gauḍapāda taught was that Māyā did not exist at all (G.K. 4.58, etc.). Our opponents are not able to affirm this.

Similarly, the Kārikās contradict the doctrine that there is literal transcendence after the death of the body but not before (i.e. that there is a distinction between jīvan-mukti and videha-mukti), as is shown by their rejection of this doctrine (of the Bhāgavatas) in the words, 'The soul that resorts to worship remains within that form of the Absolute which (apparently) undergoes birth as the world. Before the (apparent) creation of the world, all was (one as) the unborn supreme principle. Therefore a worshipper of this kind is deemed pitiable' (G.K. 3.1, cp. M.V. p. 208 f.).

As for the texts of the author of the Vārtikas teaching that it is the pure Self (void of Ignorance) that is present in dreamless sleep — we have quoted some of those already (cp. paras 164 and 165). That the doctrine of our opponents is in conflict with that is evident. And it should not be forgotten that there is no hint of an acceptance of 'positive Ignorance' in either the Upanishads, Gītā and Brahma Sūtras or in Śrī Śaṅkara's commentaries on them, or in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya Vārtika of Śrī Sureśvara. Thus we have described in brief how the doctrine of those who hold to the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep conflicts with the doctrine of the true experts in Vedānta.

Thus our doctrine does not in any way conflict with the words of the authors of the Sūtras, Commentaries and Vārtikas. On the contrary, we are only clarifying that refutation of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep that was part of their own doctrine.

171. How the refutation of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep is in agreement with the Upanishads and other authoritative tradition

We will now set forth two reasons in particular why the system given above is in agreement with the Upanishads and other authoritative teaching. The first is that it is the inevitable conclusion of an examination of the three states of experience in worldly life (waking, dream and dreamless sleep). Throughout the Upanishads these states are under examination, either explicitly or implicitly. Why is such a line of enquiry undertaken? It cannot be to establish that the Self is

definitively afflicted with Ignorance, as to know this would be of no benefit to man. Nor can its purpose be to demonstrate the presence of the impurity of duality and of its material cause Ignorance in all these states, and to give instruction about a further state beyond them.

This is so because many Upanishads concentrate largely on the description of dreamless sleep, and place little value on the description of other states, and also because they contain particular passages which directly contradict the idea that Ignorance could be present in dreamless sleep. For example, they refer to dreamless sleep as a person's 'highest bliss' and his 'highest realm' (Bṛhad. 4.3.32). Again, no further state is mentioned after speaking of dreamless sleep, such as would make up four states. And we have the Sūtra, 'The Self does not have both characteristics (of being with and without differentiation) even if viewed as associated with states, for so (it is taught in the Upanishads) everywhere' (B.S. 3.2.11). This teaches that the Self not only does not have the two characteristics of being with and without differentiation intrinsically, but also that it does not have them when viewed as associated with states either. This implies that a consideration of the three states is enough to afford a knowledge of the pure Self.

It is true that the Upanishads occasionally speak of 'the Fourth' (Bṛhad. 5.14.3, Maitrī 7.11.7), and that we find in the Brahma Sūtras 'The Absolute is also revealed in samādhi (samrādhana), as we know from the direct statement of the Veda and from inferences about the implications of its texts' (B.S. 3.2.24) and '(This must be wrong) because (such a denial) would imply that there could not be samādhi' (B.S. 2.3.39), texts which could be taken as implying a certain 'fourth state' by referring to it by such terms as 'samrādhana' and 'samādhi'. But this is of no significance. For the Upanishads do not speak of 'the Fourth' as another 'state', and the Sūtras do not teach that positive Ignorance is abolished in samādhi.

The opponent claimed that merely by the mention of vision of the Self (in samādhi) abolition of Ignorance was included. But we ask of him, if Ignorance were abolished in samādhi, how there could be emergence from samādhi back into the waking state? Alternatively, if there could be emergence from samādhi into waking, how could samādhi differ from dreamless sleep? In this way we would have to bring back arguments earlier mentioned (para 167 above) which it would be hard for him to refute. So the mere mention of meditative trance (samādhi) in the Sūtras is not enough either to establish or to refute the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. For it should not be forgotten that both are 'states', and for that reason fall within the realm of Ignorance.

Thus we have shown that those who insist on the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep cannot practise examination of the three states in a fruitful way. But in our own system it is that very practice that removes all the misery of doubts.

172. How the refutation of Advaita in the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha is inexplicable otherwise (i.e. unless early Advaitins had held the view of Ignorance here advocated)

There is, however, another point to be made. All philosophers who taught the doctrine of the

Absolute as non-dual (originally) agreed in teaching the absence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. But through a break in the tradition, and either on account of association with the Logicians or through some other cause, this part of the doctrine was forgotten and the members of our own school began to accept a doctrine of the presence of positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep — though positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep is not anything that is either perceived in experience or taught in revelation.

There is a certain anonymous work, the *Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha*, which was composed by someone who could not tolerate the doctrines of the Vedic Advaita tradition. It contains a part called the *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* which is divided into four sections. Here the author denounces the *Vivarta Vāda* form of Vedic Absolutism, the doctrine of the eternally non-dual nature of the real and other doctrines subscribed to by the traditional followers of our school. For example we find the following verses: ‘Those who hold that the soul had an origin and those others who hold that origination, maintenance and withdrawal (of the world) are powers that really belong to the supreme Principle are to be preferred to those who maintain that the world is a mere illusory appearance (*vivarta*). A teacher of this *Vivarta Vāda* school, incompetent, attached to his own self-willed pleasures, intent on gaining wealth, a deceiver, will happily tell his pupil that he (the pupil) is the formless Absolute. Liberation is generally said to be a state of the soul in which it realizes its identity with the Absolute. If that state stood already obtained, the (Vedic) teaching about it would be useless (and any theory expounding the Veda that rendered any part of the Veda useless must be wrong).

The teachings of this author include the doctrine of the real transformation of the Absolute to assume the form of the world, the doctrine that the knowledge of the Absolute depends on obedience to Vedic injunctions (and hence falls within the scope of the rules pertaining to the ritualistic teaching), the doctrine that the Absolute has three forms, and the doctrine that even the enlightened person remains bound by the duties of his stage of life. On account of his inadequate analysis of what practical experience is, the author maintains, on the basis of mere stubborn prejudice, that in the state of practical experience duality veritably exists, while there is non-duality when the final reality has been realized, and also maintains the doctrine in which everything is mixed up with everything else. (121) We abstain from rehearsing and refuting all this in detail in the belief that it would be a mere vexation for those who follow a holy figure like revered Śaṅkara,

This miserable pundit, undaunted by the idea that he was deceiving himself and others, served up through mere animosity against pure Advaita a rehash of the Difference in Identity doctrine of *Bhartṛprapañca* and of the *Vṛttikāra* and others, which had been utterly destroyed, along with the principles on which it rested, by holy Śaṅkara in his *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and other commentaries (cp. M.V. chap. 5). He produced no new defence of the doctrine. He eulogized it in the following words: ‘Whatever was written in their commentaries by the Advaitins, the Dvaitins (dualists of Madhva’s school) and *Viśiṣṭādvaitins* (followers of Rāmānuja) was wrong. Whatever was written in their commentaries and other works by the authors of our school, those who hold that the Self is both dual and non-dual, was right’.

The second section of this work is furnished with a commentary called the *Adhikaraṇa Kañcuka* by a certain person called *Apayya Dīkṣita*. Who this *Dīkṣita* was is not known. But there must be a strong suspicion that he was altogether different from the famous author of that name who wrote several works on Advaita. The work refutes almost all the doctrines of the

revered Śaṅkara with specious arguments. To show that the texts of the Advaitins carry no weight it says, 'There are millions of texts by the Advaitins advancing wrong views: our conclusion is that all are of weak authority'.

All through the book our great exegete, overwhelmed by the traditions of his own school, shows a special interest in quoting those who deny the existence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep, with a view to refuting them. For example, we find the following verses.

'O Brahmin, some texts expounding the Upanishads say that the one in dreamless sleep is the Absolute, others say that "the Fourth" is the Absolute. Listen to an enquiry about this....

'The soul called Prājña, they say, lies in "the Fourth" in self-liberation. Throughout the time of dreamless sleep, they say, it is dissolved in the Self. This is clearly not the highest Self, as it is referred to as "overcome by darkness" (Kaivalya Up. 13). If in this state it is said to be "free from evils" (Bṛhad. 4.3.21, cp. M.V. p.464), that is only figurative speech. It merely means that the gross and subtle distortions of waking and dream are not present. It is also said (*ibid.*) that in dreamless sleep the soul knows nothing, within or without. But it is only of "the Fourth" that that can be predicated without a figure of speech (so that it can only be applied to dreamless sleep metaphorically). The three states of the soul (waking, dream and dreamless sleep) are examined in order to establish "the Fourth". The view that two states (waking and dream) are examined in order to clarify dreamless sleep (as a glimpse of the true Self) is wrong. For it is repeatedly said that the Absolute is something more than dreamless sleep.

'Some hold that when the soul is spoken of as resting in the subtle canals (nāḍī) in dreamless sleep there is a metaphorical reference to (identity with) the supreme Self, but this view is wrong. For thousands of Vedic texts declare that the true Self transcends the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. One could not suppose even in a dream that the supreme Principle could enter the state of dreamless sleep. If the true state of the Self were dreamless sleep it would be attained by the birds and the beasts, and that is wrong.

'Although this doctrine that the one in dreamless sleep is the Absolute is ridiculous, it is seen to predominate everywhere amongst the people. Some say that the one in dreamless sleep has attained transcendence and has become the supreme Light, and behold, the people call them wise! Those who maintain that the one in dreamless sleep is the Absolute claim, forsooth, that in the text "That thou art" the Absolute is the indicated meaning of "that", while the meaning of the word "thou" is the unusual one of the soul asleep, present in the subtle canals. These people who falsify the true meaning of the Upanishads, my son, say that the one in dreamless sleep is the Absolute in its supreme form as undifferentiated Consciousness and Bliss.

'Although the doctrine that equates the one in dreamless sleep with the Absolute is weak and of no authority, yet it has been expounded by some and we make this attempt to refute it. (122) These exponents of the doctrine that the one in dreamless sleep is the Absolute, though pretending to be competent teachers, are in fact incompetent and of no account, always deceiving their pupils. Totally untrue, O Nārada, is this doctrine of those who equate the one in dreamless sleep with the Absolute, accompanied by the example of people walking unwittingly over a treasure of gold (Chānd. 8.3.2). That state spoken of in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad and referred to as a state of utter serenity (Bṛhad. 4.3.15) was a state of the individual soul in dreamless sleep, not of that different being, the supreme Self. So this doctrine of the people who

equate the one in dreamless sleep with the Absolute and say that people become identical with the undifferentiated Absolute in dreamless sleep is to be refuted.

‘It is true that all the words that apply to the supreme Self, “the Fourth”, are found applied to dreamless sleep in the Veda and Smṛti. But you should not forget, O Gārgya, O best of the wise, that this application is always metaphorical.

‘The faulty doctrine of those who proclaim that all these people go in dreamless sleep to the partless, homogeneous, stainless Absolute is ruled out by the text on the three souls. (123) If one’s state in dreamless sleep were the true nature of the Self, then there would be no difference between dreamless sleep and liberation. How could the individual soul be released from bondage in that state, composed as it is of the constituents (gunas of Prakṛti), and depending on its Ignorance of the Self for its very existence? The supreme Self, non-dual homogeneous Consciousness, void of the constituents of Prakṛti, can only emerge into manifestation when the vital energy (prāṇa) is dissolved. But the vital energy is not destroyed in dreamless sleep. So you should give up altogether your teaching that the soul attains the supreme Self, void of the constituents, in dreamless sleep.

‘Do not expose yourself to the sorrow of feeling in your heart “Could it have been right to have expounded a doctrine not taught in the Veda?” For everywhere else it is accepted that it is (not dreamless sleep but) “the Fourth” spoken of in the Veda that is beyond the constituents. And everywhere else it is accepted that the one in dreamless sleep cannot be equated with the Absolute because he is spoken of as void of knowledge within and without (Bṛhad. 4.3.21), because in this form he is without bliss, and because it is a state common to all, including beasts and birds’.

But enough of quoting verses composed from a wrong standpoint. Our point is to show that at every step they contain references to a ‘doctrine of dreamless sleep’ or a ‘doctrine that equates the Absolute with dreamless sleep’, a doctrine that they criticize as one that must be rejected. If we raise the question ‘Whose is that doctrine?’ we do not find any of the well-known systems (outside strict classical Advaita) expounding the view that there is identity with the Absolute in dreamless sleep. Yet the author has in mind some universally known doctrine that he refers to in such phrases as ‘the doctrine which some propound’, ‘the prominence of the doctrine that equates the one in dreamless sleep with the Absolute’ and ‘Some say (this) and the people call them wise’. His mind is clearly angry and he cannot endure it that the doctrine should be so widely familiar, and he promoted his own self-esteem by mere unsupported abuse. But we notice that this critic accepts the doctrine that identifies dreamless sleep with the Absolute as typical of the Advaitins, since he places it alongside Vivarta Vāda and other long-accepted Advaita dogmas as the object of his special criticism.

The Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha thus provides inescapable evidence that at the time of its composition Advaita was generally accepted in the discussions of its opponents who proclaimed Duality in Non-duality (Identity in Difference) as a doctrine that identified dreamless sleep with the Absolute. Later the (true form of the Advaita) tradition was lost, and even those who supposed themselves to be Advaitins became unable to see that their doctrine had been infested with alien views through contact with other schools. They embarked on a tortuous path and attacked the founding fathers of their own tradition without even being aware of the fact that they were doing so. We presume, therefore, that it was this faulty system (Duality in Non-

duality) or some similar one that was the cause of the degeneration of the pure Advaita doctrine among its later followers. Or it may be that there were some deliberate deceivers who concealed the fact that their doctrines derived from other schools and promulgated their own opinions under the credentials of another, pretending to teach Advaita, while altering the name of their own doctrine and giving it the name and external form of the doctrine of Śaṅkara. And we may surmise that this new departure was unhesitatingly accepted by deluded followers of Śaṅkara's school, who for some reason or other had become ignorant of what their own tradition had really taught. Otherwise, how could doctrines which had been rejected in the Upanishads, Gītā, Brahma Sūtras and classical commentaries alike have gained entry as Advaita teaching and become adopted by people who associated themselves with holy Śaṅkara?

Here for the convenience of enquirers we shall mention the main doctrines advocated in the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha that were rejected by revered Śaṅkara, but which have been adopted by modern Advaitins. First the acceptance of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep; then acceptance of a 'state' called 'the Fourth' labelled 'samādhi' and regarded as void of Ignorance; then acceptance of perception of the world on the part of those who had awoken from that 'state' (of samādhi), followed by the contradictory doctrine that, if the presence in dreamless sleep of Ignorance as a seed of the world were not accepted, there could not be vision of the world when one awoke; then again the view that no one could gain their final end in life by mere hearing of the metaphysical texts of the Veda (124) and that everyone required the discipline of sustained meditation for it; the teaching that even those who have direct knowledge of reality have the contradictory experience of identity with the body; the notion that subtle distinctions are present even in meditative trance (samādhi) when Ignorance is (alleged to be) absent; rejection of the upanishadic doctrine 'The knower of the Absolute becomes the Absolute' (Muṇḍ. 3.2.9) by explaining that this is something that will happen in the future (i.e. on obtaining 'videha-mukti' at the death of the body); the statement that definitive realization of the Absolute occurs (only) after the death of the body, along with the view that even the enlightened one remains subject to the merit and demerit that occasioned his present life (prārabdha-karma) and remains also subject to the injunctions and prohibitions of the Veda; the statement, conflicting with the Upanishads and Sūtras and so on, that Ignorance together with the Absolute stands as the cause of the world; the acceptance of the existence of two conditions, those respectively of practical experience and of knowledge of the final truth, without being able to give a consistent explanation in terms of their own doctrine of what practical experience could be.

Such are the main common points of teaching between the modern Advaitins and the anonymous author of the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha, a partisan of the doctrine of Duality in Non-duality. Whether this author or another was the first to promulgate these doctrines, the members of our school followed him and abandoned the ancient path and landed themselves in a sorry plight. How great is the power of infatuation!

Another point that is relevant here is the following. Later on in his work, the author of the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha, after having refuted the Advaitins of his day, tried to revive his own doctrine of Duality in Non-duality, that had become almost extinct. When doing so, he gave special attention to the refutation (by opponents) of the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep. This is a strong sign that at that time there were (still) Advaitins who held to the view that the Self in dreamless sleep was the pure Self (uncontaminated by Ignorance).

**SECTION 5: HOW EXAMINATION OF THE THREE STATES OF
CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE NORMAL DISCIPLINE
PROCLAIMED IN THE UPANISHADS**

173. An objection against the above-mentioned view

Although it has been shown that the method of the examination of waking, dream and dreamless sleep is sanctioned by the Veda and other authoritative sources, the question is nevertheless still raised by some ‘How do we know that the proper Vedantic method is examination of the three states of consciousness and not another?’ For we find that various parts of the upanishadic texts start from various different standpoints. And the Gītā starts from a different standpoint again. The Brahma Sūtras proceed in a yet different way. The various Purāṇas and Itihāsas (Epics) adopt this or that different method in describing world-creations and minor-creations. And it is well known that the various teachers resort to different principles to establish truth in their various systems, such as Bimba Pratibimba Vāda (the theory that the soul is a reflection of which the Absolute is the original), Avaccheda Vāda (the theory that the soul is the Absolute under apparent limitations, as space in a pot is only an apparent delimitation of universal space), Dṛṣṭi Sṛṣṭi Vāda (phenomenalism, the theory that perception and creation are one), Anirvacanīya Vāda (the theory that things in the world are ‘indeterminable’ as either real or unreal), Ekātva Vāda (monism) and Nānātva Vāda (pluralism). So if no one else can establish a firm unchallengeable doctrine one would expect to find that those who teach the discipline of the examination of the three states could not do so either. What special character could there be in this doctrine to make it an exception? And Śrī Suresvara has said, ‘By whatever method of instruction men are brought to a realization of the inmost Self, that method is good here. There is no fixed rule about it’ (B.B.V. 1.4.402). In these circumstances how can we decide that any one system is the right one? So you will have to come forward with some way of convincing us that your system and yours alone is the right one.

174. The essence of the upanishadic standpoint

To that we reply as follows. You should remember what we said at the beginning of the work (para 1). It is true that the different Upanishads appear superficially to follow different procedures. But on a close inspection it becomes clear that they all constitute one collective procedure in which they fill out each others’ deficiencies and answer each others’ unsolved questions.

Some upanishadic passages make a distinction between object and subject and put transiency, impurity, non-consciousness and being a source of pain on the side of the object, and eternity, purity, knowledge and bliss on the side of the subject. Other passages teach how the Self is self-luminous by setting forth the nature of dream. Others strengthen the hearer’s conviction that his true Self is the Absolute by demonstrating the presence of the Self in its pure form in dreamless sleep. In this way the Upanishads divide up the three states of consciousness one by one and examine them separately, and this is manifestly the main method of teaching with which they are concerned.

To illustrate this we shall make some brief quotations. The Īśa Upanishad says first that

the Absolute is one and unmoving (Īśa 4), and then hints at the concluding summary of the topic that the method of instruction is an examination of the three states of consciousness when it says, 'He has filled all; He is radiant, bodiless, invulnerable, devoid of sinews, pure, untouched by evil' (Īśa 8). In the Kena Upanishad it is shown, by discriminating the Self, as Witness, from the sense-organs and so on (i.e. from objects, body and mind), how the Self establishes and supports all (else) as its object. The upanishadic method (of considering the states of consciousness) is indicated in the Kaṭha Upanishad by the words 'that by which one sees both dream and waking' (Kaṭha 2.1.4) followed by 'that Spirit who is awake in those that sleep' (Kaṭha 2.2.8) and 'knowing that the senses are different' (Kaṭha 2.3.6). The Muṇḍaka has, 'Divine and immortal is the Spirit! It exists within and without, unborn. Without vital energy, without mind, pure, beyond what is beyond the indestructible Principle' (Muṇḍ. 2.1.2), which hints at the method (i.e. at the method of considering the three states of consciousness and looking for the common element that witnesses all). The Taittirīya Upanishad surveys the three states by the device of considering the five sheaths. The method is stated openly in the Aitareya in the words 'It has three abodes, three dreams (i.e. waking, dream and dreamless sleep)' (Ait. 1.3.12). A single glance at the Brhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya and Māṇḍūkya Upanishads would show very clearly that they advocate the method of examination of the three states of consciousness. Thus it is plain that the ultimate purpose of the ten Upanishads broadly accepted as authoritative even by the dualist Vedantins is to communicate metaphysical reality by the method we ourselves have suggested. There is no contradiction if in certain places they adopt other methods of exposition, as these are to be counted as special explanations of minor points from the standpoint of one or other of the particular states.

No exponent of the doctrine of one Self regards the upanishadic passages explaining how different souls attain the 'worlds' (of different deities) through meditation as expounding the ultimate message of the Upanishads. And one has to accept that there may be incidental considerations of other matters pertaining specially to one or other of the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep, as well as other devices to make the teaching about the three states easier of comprehension. Admittedly one cannot insist on the intrinsic truth of passages that are a mere device, since all devices are false by nature. It has to be accepted that their essence lies in what they illustrate, for that is what they are intended to teach. Nevertheless, all the different modes of teaching are meant to promote the examination of the three states. But the intelligent observer will see that none of the minor methods of teaching is able to communicate the final reality on its own.

175. The case with the Brahma Sūtras and the Gītā

The Brāhma Sūtras accept the existence of the world initially on the basis of its being perceived in the waking state, but afterwards reject it when they accept that the effect is non-different from the cause in the words 'The world as effect is non-different from the Absolute as cause, as is shown by such texts as "a suggestion of speech" and others' (B.S. 2.1.14, cp. M.V. p.77). Again, having first given the example of the falsity of dream to illustrate the falsity of waking in the words 'It (dream) is a mere illusion, because its nature is to be incomplete manifestation' (B.S. 3.2.3, cp. M.V. p. 504), revered Bādarāyaṇa afterwards extolled the merits of dreamless sleep in the words 'Absence of dream (i.e. dreamless sleep) occurs in the subtle canals (nāḍī) and in the Self, as that is the teaching of the Upanishads' (B.S. 3.2.7, cp. Ś.S.B. 3.113 ff.) and finally concluded with phrases like 'Nor does the supreme Being either have or not have finite

characteristics according to the conditioning adjunct under which it is viewed; for it is everywhere taught that it does not have finite characteristics' (B.S. 3.2.11, cp. M.V. p. 505).

It is true that some of the Sūtras deal with other topics apart from the three states of consciousness, such as the fate of the soul after death, 'paths' like 'the Path of the Flame', the limits of the divine powers of the liberated one and so on. But this can all be understood as part of the process of helping those whose vision is limited to the waking state to enter on an understanding of the true method.

It is true that no view on this topic emerges from the Gītā. But Karma Yoga and Jñāna Yoga are there both concerned with acquiring knowledge of truth, so only waking experience comes under examination (since that is required in connection with Karma Yoga). Thus it speaks of the whole 'Field' (the physical body and the subtle body or soul) and of the Unmanifest Principle from which it springs in the verses, 'The five great elements, ego, mind and the Unmanifest Principle, the ten organs (five of perception and five of action) and the five objects of the senses (i.e. the elements in their developed form making up objects)' (Bh.G. 13.5) and 'Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, the conscious organism (samghāta, body and senses as revealed by the modifications of the mind), buoyancy of spirit — this is a brief statement of "the Field" and its modifications' (Bh.G. 13.6). And this is said after first laying down the distinction between object and subject in the words, 'O son of Kuntī, the body is called "the Field", and the one who knows it (the Lord as witnessing consciousness within) is known as "the Knower of the Field"' (Bh.G. 13.1). So one cannot suppose that the Gītā represents a different independent tradition.

176.(1) Texts from the Epics and Purāṇas and so on

Special attention is also given to this method in the Epics and Purāṇas and allied literature. In the Mokṣa Dharma section of the Mahābhārata, for instance, it is mentioned that waking and so on are mutually exclusive states through which the Self passes, without sharing their attributes. 'In his higher nature as mind (buddhi), a person will remember what the senses formerly brought to form an apparent limiting adjunct. A person does not observe all objects at the same time since they appear at different times, but the enlightened one reaches the motionless realm. He, therefore, is the greatest of the embodied ones. But the embodied one passes through the three constituents rajas, tamas and sattva (in their psychological aspect, passion, dulness and goodness) and through different states. Similarly, he enters into contact with the senses as air is sucked into a fire with fuel' (M.Bh. 12.196.1-3). And then an example is given to show how, even when the adjuncts constituted by particular conditions come to an end in dreamless sleep, the Self that remains is not nothing. 'Know that the embodied one does not cease to exist in dreamless sleep, any more than the moon ceases to exist when there is no sign whereby it can be perceived in the period preceding the new moon' (M.Bh. 12.196.15).

In the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa we find: 'One should know that the Self is free from waking and the other states, and its existence, knowledge and infinity by nature; it is pure, enlightened and ever at peace' (A.R. 4.8.44) and 'The marks of Ignorance are sorrow, joy, fear, anger, infatuation, pride and so on. How could they belong to the Self as pure Consciousness? Even in the serenity of dreamless sleep, pure joy is experienced on account of the absence of duality'.
(125)

In the Brahma Purāṇa we find, 'He deludes Himself with his own Māyā, the Māyā of duality, and assumes the form of Viśva and Taijasa, concealed under waking, dream and dreamless sleep' (cp. Brahma Purāṇa 235.19). In the Liṅga Purāṇa we find, 'He is neither consciousness turned outward nor consciousness turned inward, nor both. Similarly, He is not consciousness as a homogeneous mass, nor is He either conscious (in the usual worldly sense) or non-conscious' (Liṅga Purāṇa 86.97). And in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa of the Vaiṣṇavas we find: 'Waking, dream and dreamless sleep pertain to the realm of the constituents and are therefore modes of the mind. The soul is discerned as different from them because it is their (unchanging) witness. Since this bondage of the Self is brought about by modifications of (the mind embedded in) the constituents, the one who is established in Me, "the Fourth", should give them up. This represents abandonment of (i.e. disidentification with) the constituents and the mind. The enlightened one should stand firm in "the Fourth", and, wearying of his harmful bondage brought about by the ego, should give up all thought of the world of transmigration. Until a person's harmful thoughts are brought to an end by reasoning he remains in Ignorance, and fancies himself to be awake when he is really dreaming, just as one fancies oneself to be awake in dream. Because the other conditions of the Self are unreal, the various distinctions and states and the actions bringing them about (especially the Vedic rituals and symbolic meditations) are false like visions seen in a dream, He who, through the mind and all the senses, experiences objects with attributes every moment in waking, who experiences images similar to them in the heart in dream and who withdraws everything in dreamless sleep — He is one, as we know because all these experiences are connected in memory. He is the witness of the modifications of the three constituents, and (as Consciousness) He is the Lord presiding over the operations of the mind and senses' (Bh.P. 11.13.27-32).

In the Sūta Saṁhitā we find such passages as: 'How could action efface pure Consciousness, the Witness of the three states called waking, dream and dreamless sleep?' (Sūta Saṁhitā 4.42.13) and 'At the time of that waking state that is also called dream, the Lord apprehends what is perceived, then He afterwards projects it again on his own in sleep (as dream). Just as everything in the dream-world is oneself, so, in truth, is everything in the waking world too' (Sūta Saṁhitā 4.45.13-4).

And we find the method of the examination of the three states of consciousness applied in the course of reflecting over the true nature of the Self in the other Purāṇas. Nor is there any mention of a power of positive Ignorance present in dreamless sleep. So it is established that it is this examination of the three states of consciousness that is the chief method of spiritual enquiry taught in the Purāṇas.

176.(2) The mutual contradiction found in the
treatises of the (later Advaita) Teachers

It is true that one sometimes finds in the Purāṇas passages agreeing with the doctrine that the soul is an 'apparent delimitation of the Absolute' or a 'reflection of the Absolute'. (126) There is nothing wrong here: exponents of the examination of the three states of consciousness may use different examples to make non-duality intelligible and credible. For we do not find any of the typical doctrines of the Ācāryas of one-sided views figuring as the main message in the Veda or other traditional classics.

Also, Śrī Gauḍapāda and others have explained that it is a special point about the Yoga of the Vision of Non-duality, marking it off from other systems, that its followers harbour no dissensions and contradictions amongst themselves. We have the Kārikā, for instance, ‘I bow to that Yoga of Non-contact, beneficent and a source of joy to all creatures, taught without quarrels and contradictions’ (G.K. 4.2). He also said that the adherents of dualism, by contrast, contradict one another mutually. ‘The dualists are keenly engaged in establishing their own doctrines, and are contradicted by one another mutually. But this doctrine of ours is not contradicted by them’ (G.K. 3.17, cp. Ś.S.B. 4.155 f.). The fact that, on the contrary, the later Advaitins constructed mutually contradictory doctrines like solipsism and pluralism, is a great sign that their doctrines derive from dualism. They dispute with one another, one saying ‘This is what is wrong with your doctrine’ and the other saying ‘This is what is wrong with yours’, while the one thing they do not quarrel over is the method of examining the three states of consciousness. So our own method is established as common ground amongst all schools.

177. The faults in Advaitic solipsism pointed out by its Advaitic opponents

We will now illustrate in brief outline how these modern systems become grounds of attachment and aversion, since they are mutually contradictory. Some say that there is (ultimately) only one soul with the apparent delimitation of Ignorance, and that Ignorance is one. Others say that there are many souls, and that there is a different Ignorance for each soul. Some say that there are many universes.

The opponents of the solipsistic Advaitins say as follows. If there is only one soul, how does it come about that it is taught in the ancient texts that Vāmadeva (127) and others were liberated? How does it come that the Brhadāranyaka Upanishad can say, ‘And whichever of the gods was awakened to his true nature as the Self became the Absolute. It is the same in the case of the seers (ṛṣi), it is the same in the case of men’ (128), or the Brahma Sūtras say, ‘Those who have a special function to perform remain on (as individuals even though liberated) until that function is complete’ (B.S. 3.3.32, cp. Ś.S.B. 6.229 ff.)? And how, on the solipsistic theory, could the universe continue to manifest if Vāmadeva and the others were liberated and their Ignorance abolished on liberation? A thing made of silver could not continue to manifest after the silver from which it was made had been destroyed. If all souls had already been liberated with the liberation of one, what other soul could remain at the present time that the Veda could be meaningful? (129)

In face of this some suggest the following theory. (130) There is only one body with a soul, and all other bodies are imagined, like dream-bodies. But such a theorist should be required to show how there could be only one body with a soul, a body different in nature from other bodies. Perhaps it will be replied that, in order to give their due meaning to the Vedic texts communicating knowledge, one must accept that one body must remain unimagined and associated with a soul as long as there is Ignorance. But in that case, why could not some other theorist equally well accept another soul and another body to render the metaphysical teachings of the Veda and other traditional texts significant?

178. View that there is one soul called Hiranyagarbha

Then there is the theory of those who say, 'There is one soul, which is a reflection (pratibimba) of the Absolute, and it is Hiranyagarbha' (131). But others contradict this and ask, 'Out of all the different Hiranyagarbhas presiding over the different world-periods, which could you select as the chief one?' And they say that no one who keeps to experience can accept this theory, which contradicts all the Veda and the Smṛti. For no one has the experience 'I am a reflection of Hiranyagarbha appearing as a soul', and there is no traditional text to support such an idea. Nor is there any evidence that it is Hiranyagarbha alone who projects other souls as reflections.

Then there is another theory according to which it is the Absolute itself, intrinsically devoid of any diversity, which undergoes transmigratory life, beholding the diverse imaginations set up by its own Ignorance. It is awoken to its true nature as the Absolute through a mental cognition of the form of the Absolute (brahmākāra-vṛtti). (132) Thereafter, 'error ceases' and all practical experiences in the world are seen for what they are worth, namely as dreams.

But this theory is also criticized as wrong. For if the Absolute imagined bondage, Veda, Guru and liberation as being present in itself without any specific cause, what would there be to prevent it from doing so again and again (thereby rendering final liberation impossible)? And if experience of enlightenment and Ignorance was no more than a dream, then there could be nothing to cause Ignorance before the dream, and consequently there could be no bondage. It would perhaps be replied that Ignorance is beginningless. But in that case, since it has already been equated with dream, to say 'Experience through Ignorance is like a dream' would be a meaningless tautology.

Some say that ignorance has different parts, and that the distinction between different individual souls is accepted because it is conditioned by the different parts of Ignorance. But this also is criticized as wrong. If one admits different parts for Ignorance, why not admit that Ignorance itself is many? You cannot say that the assumption of one Ignorance having different parts is made for the sake of simplicity. For this 'simplicity' cannot be achieved, since there is no proof that Ignorance has parts.

179. The objections raised against those who hold to a plurality of souls

The opponents of the theory of a plurality of individual souls find faults in that also. On this view, the universe is produced by Ignorance. Ignorance is accepted as inhering in the soul. And since that Ignorance is many, there must be a different universe for each soul (S.L.S. 1.51). And this cannot be an implication that the theorist could accept. For it contradicts both experience and reason. For what could be the nature of a universe different from other universes, each of the latter imagined by a (different) single soul? It cannot be claimed that any soul could imagine 'My universe is limited to this (but there are others)'. Further, one soul 'x' could not establish the existence of another soul 'y' falling outside his (x's) own universe, and able to imagine another universe (cp. V.S.M. 9, p23). This also refutes the theory that there could be a single universe arising from the Ignorances of all souls collectively, like a cloth woven from many threads (S.L.S. 1.50). For all souls fall within a universe. Otherwise you would be claiming that a universe equipped with agents and experiencers arose directly and without intermediary from

the Absolute, and would thereby be contradicting the Veda and the Smṛti and the classical Advaita Teachers alike. And again, if one assumed that souls were many and universes many, one would fall into the indefensible doctrine that the Lord (īśvara) was many. And even if souls are many, what is the use of a theory that there are many universes? If you answer that it is because a universe arising through error could not have a single form, one could reply that, by parity of reasoning, the plurality of souls supposed to arise as phenomena through error could not (each) have a single form. But enough of these fruitless hypotheses.

Then there is another view. The universe is created by the Māyā of the supreme Lord only. Bondage is (eventually) abolished by each soul through its private metaphysical knowledge, and bondage (which comes to an end) is different from the universe composed from the great elements and their products (which continue indefinitely). Nor could one suppose that, though the universe continued to exist, it would not manifest to the liberated one, any more than colour manifests to a blind person, arguing that all the organs of knowledge of that liberated one would have been dissolved. For if the universe remained in existence it would be real even in enlightenment.

Suppose, then, that the universe was illusory just because it was the creation of the Māyā of the Lord. Then if He were possessed of such a Māyā by his own free will He would be cruel (for creating so much suffering), while if He were not possessed of it by his own free will He would be a mere individual soul and so not a Lord. And there is no divine decree saying that it is only the bondage of being an individual performer of action and so on (being an individual experiencer, etc.) that is imagined through the Ignorance of the soul. The notion of the existence of a real universe composed of the great elements and governed by the Lord could equally well be so imagined. So this theory that there exists a plurality of souls is also untenable.

180. The dispute between those who hold that
the individual soul is a reflection
(pratibimba), and those who hold that it
is the result of an apparent delimitation
(avaccheda)

Similarly there is disagreement between the reflection theory and the delimitation theory. Here some (the exponents of the delimitation theory) say that the soul is apparently delimited from the Absolute, as the ether of space in a pot is apparently delimited from the ether of space in general (without there being any real delimitation of such a subtle substance as the ether of space by such a gross object as the clay of the pot). (133) The exponents of the theory that the soul is a reflection of the Absolute dispute this view. And they show that it has faults. How? If all that part of the Absolute that lies within the cosmic egg is delimited as the soul, that will leave the undelimited part of the Absolute outside the cosmic egg. This would mean that the Absolute was neither all-pervading nor all-controlling, as it would not be possible for the undelimited aspect of the Absolute to penetrate the delimited parts. Perhaps you will say that the Absolute can be present in its true nature (because that is what is delimited), though not in the form in which it lies outside the cosmos. But this cannot be accepted either. For we have the text, 'He who, dwelling in the intellect, (is within the intellect, whom the intellect does not know... — He is your Self, the Inner Ruler, the immortal)' (Bṛhad. 3.7.22). (134)

But on the reflection theory, because one sees the reflected ether of the sky actually present in the natural ether (space) occupied by the water, the ether can perform two functions in the same place — and in the same way the Absolute can be ‘the Controller’ and so on while present inside the (apparent) delimitations formed by the individual souls (cp. Viv. p.289, quoted M.V. p.777).

181. The faults in the reflection-theory
of the soul

Those who oppose the reflection-theory of the soul argue as follows. They say that although the reflection ought not to be accepted as a reality over and above the original, people do in fact obstinately accept in just that way. Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘One should understand that the individual soul stands to the supreme Self as the little image of the sun reflected in water stands to the real sun. The individual soul (as such) is not identical with the Self. Yet it is not a separate entity either’ (B.S.Bh. 2.3.50, cp. M.V. p. 431). And he continues, ‘And because a reflection is a product of Ignorance, it is intelligible that the transmigratory life that rests on it should also be a product of Ignorance’ (B.S.Bh. 2.3.50, Ś.S.B. 3.19 f.).

Defenders of the reflection theory sometimes quote the text: ‘One should never look at the sun when it is rising or setting, or when it is in eclipse or present (i.e. reflected) in water, or when it is in the middle of the sky (at noon)’ (Manu 4.35) as evidence that the sacred traditions show that the reflected sun is identical with the original (135). But their opponents deny it. For an authoritative text concerned with making one point is not evidence for another. The verse here in question is concerned with prohibition, not with the reality of what is prohibited.

The defenders of the reflection-theory also argue as follows. In the case of illusory silver, though the latter has the same appearance as real silver, its illusory character is revealed through a cancelling cognition (whereby it disappears). But the soul is not cancelled in this way (i.e. it is merely known for what it truly is, without being cancelled in the sense of being made to disappear). However, if cancellation were equated (in the manner of the opponent) with non-perception, then, when the point the example was intended to illustrate was known — that is, when there was knowledge of the identity of the soul and the Absolute as the Absolute — (there would have been no cancellation and so) manifestation of distinctions would still remain. But the fact is that one cannot say that the text ‘That thou art’ (when effectively understood) does not result in proper cancellation in the full sense. For if the individual soul were not cancelled the Upanishads would (communicate incorrect information and so) forfeit their status as authoritative texts.

It is true that the reflection-theorists say that the mirror-example does not claim to explain everything. All it illustrates is that, just as the face remains in one place but appears to be different or to be located at a different place (the mirror), so the unity of the Absolute appears (through error) to undergo distinctions. But this is not acceptable either, because, as earlier explained (cp. above, para 83(2) *ad fin.*), even when the unity of the original was known, it would continue to appear (in reflection) under distinctions. And in the same way, illusory vision of the thing to be illustrated (the Absolute) would not cease. It might be replied that, in the case of the example, the continuation of vision of distinction was not caused by the reflection, but by ignorance of the presence of an apparent conditioning adjunct. (136) But then the ‘reflection in

a mirror' example would not suffice to illustrate how the soul could be a reflection. What is (merely) delimited by an apparent conditioning adjunct arising from Ignorance is not an example (to show that the soul is a reflection).

Again, if the soul were a reflection, it would not be able to know that it was the original, any more than the mirror-reflection of the example could. And you cannot say that this inability to know itself as the original on the part of the mirror reflection is due to its being intrinsically non-conscious, and not to its being a reflection. For no reflection is ever found to be conscious. You cannot (in the manner of the author of the *Vivarāṇa*, *Viv.* p. 289, *M.V.* p. 777) cite the text 'He assumed a form corresponding to each form; that "assuming a form" (in which He was reflected) was to make Himself known' (*Bṛhad.* 2.5.19) and other such texts to show that a reflection can be conscious. For it is not the function of texts to confer any supernormal power on an object. It is agreed that the authority of texts lies in the information they communicate, not in their power to do anything.

And again, the soul cannot be a reflection of the Absolute, since the latter is formless. (137) The reflection-theorist will say that the formless Absolute can be reflected, just as the formless ether of the sky can be reflected in water along with the stars and clouds. But this is wrong. We do not see a reflection of the actual formless ether. For a form depends on visual perception. The features which are reflected, such as blue colour, clouds and so on, are forms, and therefore do not supply an example to show how the formless Absolute could be reflected.

He who claims that, even though the Absolute is formless, it can have a reflection like the reflection of a form, should be told that experience shows that all reflections are reflections of the forms of things that have forms. We do not accept that the Absolute is dependent for its existence on another entity, as a form is. Thus the Absolute, being formless, cannot have a reflection. And it should be understood that there is a further reason in that the Absolute cannot be separated from anything else (whereby it could be reflected in it).

Thus there are those who say that the theory that the soul is a reflection of the Absolute is unclear, and this they do on many different grounds. Even if a reflection were possible, it would be non-conscious. Even if recognized to be identical with its original, it could not be cancelled. Or, if you admitted that it could be cancelled in liberation, that would imply that no one was ever in bondage. Again, if you held that the reflection was imaginary only in the sense of being falsely related (i.e. that the reflection in the mirror existed, but was falsely identified with the face on the neck) then there would be no cancellation of the mirror-image in the form 'There is no other face in the mirror' (i.e. even on the realization that the true face was on the neck, the mirror-image would continue to manifest). Finally, the reflection-theory breaks down because reflection is not a genuine example (to illustrate the nature of the soul). (For instance, nothing can 'illustrate' the 'relation' of pure Consciousness to the soul, because pure Consciousness is intrinsically transcendent and relationless.)

And there are many other theories thought up (by the later Advaitins) over which they contradict one another mutually. But the method of the examination of the three states of consciousness is accepted by all Advaita philosophers — and there lies a big difference (i.e. between the method of enquiry, which is common to all and which we ourselves espouse, and the individual theories, which are distinct and mutually contradictory).

182. The meaning of the saying of Sureśvara
'By whatever method...

What did Śrī Sureśvara mean when he said, 'By whatever method of instruction men are brought to a realization of the inmost Self, that method is good here. There is no fixed rule about it' (B.B.V. 1.4.4025)? Here every method is said to be good. On this, however, we would observe that this remark was made on the subject of theories of creation: it was not the intention to say that every method of Vedantic instruction was good.

The essence of the matter here is as follows. Vedantins do not attach much importance to the question about the order in which the objects of the world were created. Any teaching on this point which helps to promote knowledge of the inmost Self is acceptable. We have the Sūtra, 'In accounts of creation starting with the ether, it is the Absolute that is the cause, because it is taught (in every passage) the same (i.e. endued with the same attributes of omniscience and omnipotence) as in others' (B.S. 1.4.14). On this Śrī Śaṅkara's commentary says: 'It does not matter if the different accounts of the effect differ in the different creation-texts, as the aim of these texts is not to teach the existence of the effect (the world-appearance). To teach anything about this creation or world-appearance is not what the Veda has in view. For such knowledge would not be connected with any human end, either evident or revealed. Nor would it be possible to assume that there was such a connection, for the passages marking the opening and closing of topics found at intervals in the Upanishads show that all the material there has to be taken as forming a unity with (and as being a subordinate annexe to) the texts proclaiming the (sole reality and) existence of the Absolute. There are texts in the Veda itself which show how the passages teaching the projection, maintenance and withdrawal of the world-appearance are given solely as a means to teach the existence of the Absolute' (B.S.Bh. 1.4.14, Ś.S.B. 2.187 f.). And Sureśvara clarifies his meaning in his next verse: 'The rise, maintenance and destruction (of the world) are nowhere really possible. This will also be explained later, using words in their plain meaning' (B.B.V. 1.4.403, cp. M.V. p.15). So one should not have the idea that it is possible to reconcile contradictory methods of expounding Advaita on the authority of the previous verse from the Vārtika. What the Ācārya actually said was, 'Only that method of interpretation is to be respected through which the metaphysical enquirer can obtain knowledge'. And we have shown that it is the examination of the three states of consciousness that is the universal method common to all varieties of the system. And this explains why Ācārya Sureśvara enters on an examination of the three states in the course of describing the Unmanifest Principle (cp. B.B.V. 1.4.340-2, quoted M.V. p.333).

Thus we have shown that the Upanishads unanimously focus on this method. There is no disagreement on the point in the Sūtras, the commentaries of Śrī Śaṅkara and the Vārtikas of Śrī Sureśvara. It is taught in the Purāṇas and Epics. Attention to the versions of other theories leads to confusion and they contradict one another mutually. So one should not abandon faith in this method. One should have perfect confidence that this was the method that lay closest to the heart of the true experts in the interpretation of the Upanishads.

**SECTION 6: DEFENCE AGAINST SUCH CHARGES AS
RENDERING THE VEDA USELESS**

**183. Objections against the doctrine of the
absence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep**

Even so, an opponent might tell us, your doctrine is open to charges such as that of making the Veda useless and so on. For if all creatures lose their Ignorance in dreamless sleep without instruction, what is the purpose of listening to the upanishadic teaching? No doubt you (strict classical Advaitin) will say that, when dreamless sleep ends, Ignorance returns and there is a place for hearing the upanishadic teaching in order to remove it. But on this basis what certainty would there be that Ignorance would not revisit the hearer after it had been cancelled through hearing the texts? For after it has broken off of its own accord in dreamless sleep it is seen to re-appear in waking. If Ignorance was going to return again after having been cancelled through the discipline of hearing, and one were to practise hearing again to remove it that would be like continually bathing an elephant while it continually rolled back in the mud.

And there is another point. For those who hold to the presence of Ignorance in dreamless sleep the passages in the Upanishads which expound dreamless sleep are intelligible. For on their view there is cessation of evil in dreamless sleep, on account of all projection being in abeyance. And dreamless sleep there stands as a hint that one's goal, attainment of pure Being, may be achieved through bringing Ignorance to an end. But since Ignorance is not totally dissolved in dreamless sleep, one re-emerges into the waking state through that. And the teaching of metaphysical knowledge is for the *total* eradication of Ignorance. On the upanishadic view all this is intelligible. But on your (strict classical Advaitin's) view, no purpose can be made out for the descriptions of dreamless sleep found in the Upanishads.

Again, if dreamless sleep is without Ignorance, there is the difficulty of not being able to establish its nature as dreamless sleep. And this would render impossible the experience of the three states of consciousness. For there is no possibility of any other conditioning adjunct except Ignorance in dreamless sleep. And that is why the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha said: 'The faulty doctrine of those who proclaim that all these people go in dreamless sleep to the partless, stainless, homogeneous Absolute is ruled out by the text on the three souls' (cp. para 172 above), and also 'When the soul in its form called "Taijasa" withdraws into the subtle canal within the pericardium, it assumes the form of the soul called "Prājñā": it does not become the Absolute'. And the Upanishads support this distinction between the state of dreamless sleep and the Self dwelling in it, as is shown by such texts as 'The third quarter is Prājñā' (Māṇḍ. 5). Thus both the Veda and the traditional teaching confirm that dreamless sleep is a separate state, and that the 'Self' which enters it is 'Prājñā', who is not the same as 'the Fourth'. And all this would just be thrown into the salty ocean if one were to accept that the state of dreamless sleep was void of Ignorance. So it seems that it is difficult to defend the latter doctrine from many charges like that of rendering the Upanishads useless and so on.

184. Refutation of such objections as saying
that our doctrine renders the Veda useless

But all this is wrong. For it is a complaint against assertions that we never made. For we do not admit the permanent existence of any entity called Ignorance, that it would make sense to speak of its breaking off and then returning again. How then do we explain the saying 'There is no Ignorance in dreamless sleep, while there is Ignorance in waking and dream'? The Self is in reality untouched by Ignorance, as we know from such texts as 'Beyond darkness, of the splendour of the sun' Śvet. 3.8, Bh.G. 8.9) and 'He is said to be beyond darkness' (Bh.G. 13.17). But in waking and dream it appears to be associated with Ignorance to those whose minds have been deluded by error arising from apparent limiting adjuncts. In dreamless sleep, however, all apparent limiting adjuncts disappear, the Self manifests in its true form and there is no association with Ignorance. That is what we have said.

Well, but in that case what is the point of the discipline of hearing the upanishadic texts? Why should anyone perform this discipline for the sake of bringing his Ignorance to an end, when it comes to an end regularly (in dreamless sleep) anyway? If you are already aware of yourself as the Self, void of Ignorance, there is no point in the discipline of hearing the Upanishads. For removal of Ignorance is the only reason for engaging in it.

This objection that, if Ignorance disappeared naturally in dreamless sleep the discipline of hearing the upanishadic texts in order to bring it to an end would be useless, we refute. For we do not admit that there is really any such thing as 'cessation of Ignorance', or that liberation is attained merely by going to sleep. We hold that liberation can only be attained through awakening to the Self, void of Ignorance, through knowledge arising from the Veda, so we cannot be accused of rendering the Veda useless. Nor do we agree to the objection that, if our view were accepted, there could be no guarantee that Ignorance, once cancelled through hearing, would not return to afflict the hearer (cp. above, para 183). For one cannot suppose that, once the Self has been known to be void of Ignorance, association with Ignorance will again be superimposed. We do not see the re-appearance of silver once the mother-of-pearl has been discerned. (138)

185. The reason for the references to
dreamless sleep in the Upanishads

It has been claimed (above, para 183, *ad fin.*) that, on the view of those who hold that Ignorance is present in dreamless sleep, the upanishadic references to dreamless sleep are meaningful, whereas on our own view they are not. But that is wrong. For all the faults that we are accused of attach to their own doctrine also. For if it is admitted (as our opponents must admit) that the Upanishads teach that there is an attainment of Being in dreamless sleep that is not found in waking and dream, then (for him who accepts dreamless sleep as a really existent state) the example of dream would prove that liberation also was temporary. For both equally would be attainment of Being.

Perhaps our opponent will say that in dreamless sleep there is only a cessation of projection (*vikṣepa*, while concealment, *āvaraṇa*, remains), whereas this is not the case with liberation (as there concealment ceases also). (139) But on this view there could not really be

attainment of Being in dreamless sleep (as the Upanishads teach that there is), because the soul would be restricted by Ignorance. And on this view (of the opponent), plurality manifests in the waking state even for those liberated in life. Or, if all that were required for the attainment of Being were the cessation of projection, then (on the opponent's view) pure Being would be attained by ordinary uncultured people in dreamless sleep, but would not be attained by becoming liberated while yet alive, which would render the attainment of metaphysical knowledge (taught by the Upanishads) useless.

And there is another point. On the opponent's view, the connection between the Self and Ignorance would be real because, since it would be present in all three states of consciousness, there would be nothing that could show it to be illusory. And that again would render the Upanishads useless. For the Veda could not either bring into being a non-existent liberation, or remove a really existent connection between Consciousness and Ignorance.

Therefore the opponent's view cannot be defended against such charges as that of rendering the Veda useless. This being so, it is powerless to explain the point of the references to dreamless sleep in the Upanishads. But on our own view the upanishadic references to dreamless sleep (are significant as they) teach the true fact of the non-existence of Ignorance. And that is a great difference between our doctrine and that of our opponents.

186. How dreamless sleep can be reckoned a 'state'

It has been claimed (above, para 183 *ad fin.*) that if Ignorance were absent from dreamless sleep it could not be explained how the latter counted as a 'state of consciousness', and if this were true it would mean that we could not experience three states of consciousness. But that is not right either. For dreamless sleep can stand as a state of consciousness in practical experience on our own doctrine too. Just as a waking state and a dream state are imagined in practical experience, so do those whose vision is mainly conditioned by the waking state imagine, as long as practical experience lasts, that the Self undergoes a state called 'dreamless sleep'. And thus the Sūta Saṃhitā says, 'I bow to the Witness, the Lord, the substratum of all illusions, in which this state of dreamless sleep appears to manifest and appears to exist' (Sūta Saṃhitā 4.38.26).

Those whose vision is limited to the waking state think as follows. A state of consciousness is a temporary condition experienced by everyone. Every soul in the world has a variety of experiences of pleasure and pain in accordance with his previous merit and demerit, and experiences objects through his sense-organs in the waking state. In dreamless sleep, on the contrary, both sense-organs and mind lie still, and the souls rest in themselves and experience the joy of repose. And we ourselves do not deny that dreamless sleep appears from the practical standpoint to be a state where one rests as pure Being, on account of the withdrawal of the sense-organs and mind.

But when the matter is viewed from the standpoint of the final truth, then dreamless sleep can no longer be seen as dreamless sleep, and the other two 'states' also lose their identity. Thus Sureśvara says, 'The relationless Self does not undergo either dreamless sleep or waking. How could it undergo the state of dream? Waking, dream and dreamless sleep are but natural (uncaused) Ignorance of the Self' (B.B.V. 2.1.264, M.V. p. 360). There cannot be any independent entity called time, broken up by waking and the other states successively. For in

waking and dream we perceive time, space and causation associated with the time, space and causation, along with the factors and results of action, peculiar to this or that state. And in dreamless sleep no one has any perception of time and the rest at all, so dreamless sleep cannot be an attribute of time. Nor do we find any one single time common to waking and dream; so they, too, cannot be attributes of time, from the standpoint of the final truth. It is only a minor point to say that dreamless sleep is not a state. It is wrong knowledge alone that causes the ideas that there are three states at all.

187. Concluding Summary

In truth there is only one truly existent thing, and that is the Self, called ‘the Fourth’. And when it is called ‘the Fourth’, this does not imply that (the three) waking, dream and dreamless sleep are real. In what sense, then, is it called ‘the Fourth’? It is called ‘the Fourth’ to express the fact that the (three) states (that appear as) other than it are imaginary.

This also explains what ‘being beyond the Fourth’ (turīyātīva) is. And we have as authority from the Smṛti the following verses from the Sūta Saṃhitā: ‘I bow to the Lord as massed Consciousness, in whom “the Fourth” arises as separate relative to the three empirical abodes of consciousness (waking, dream and dreamless sleep), but who is Himself free from any such state as being “the Fourth”, and ‘I bow to the great Lord, the pure one, undifferentiated, transcendent, on whom (even) “being beyond the Fourth” is an (illusory) superimposition, since even “being beyond the Fourth” does not ultimately exist’ (Sūta Saṃhitā 4.38.27-8). Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña are negated in the sense that they exclude one another, but in ‘the Fourth’ they are negated in the sense that they do not exist. But no negation of ‘the Fourth’ is found anywhere in the Upanishads. Thus it stands that the three modes of empirical consciousness are three great waves imagined in the peaceful ocean of ‘the Fourth’.

And this explains the phrase ‘Prājña is the third quarter’ (Māṇḍ. 5). Śrī Śaṅkara says, ‘The author will go on to describe separately (i.e. at G.K. 1.10) that seedless state of the being called “Prājña”, its supreme and ultimately real state, in which it has no connection with waking and other states of the body, and is known as “the Fourth” (G.K. Bh. 1.2, Ś.S.B. 3.162). But the passage quoted earlier (140) speaking of ‘The faulty doctrine of those who proclaim that all these people go in dreamless sleep to the partless, stainless Absolute, etc.’ should be ignored, because it was made by one without competence in the field, and because it is in contradiction with the Veda, Smṛti and reason. So our doctrine in no way renders the Veda useless. Those whose eyes are blocked by the bondage of Ignorance find faults everywhere, due to the deficiencies of their own vision. And with that let us cut short what would otherwise be a long topic.

Verse

*Some creatures of poor vision (like bats and owls), who
turned their gaze to the dark, beheld even the one sun
shining in the sky as if covered in shade — even so, how
could those who have seen their own Self in dreamless sleep
shining forth free from impurity speak of it as ‘concealed’,
except through the delusion of Māyā?*

NOTES

- 1 Citsukha argues in exactly this way, appealing to the maxims of the Navya-Nyāya Logicians, T.P. p.99.
- 2 This is essentially the argument given by Prakāśātman at Viv. pp.106-8, quoted M.V. p. 759.
- 3 The doctrine of the ātmākāra-vṛtti (or brahmākāra-vṛtti) as the last vṛtti, coinciding with the death of the body, is reflected in the following passage at Madhusūdana, A.S. Ed. Yogīndrānanda p.1284-(N.S. Ed. p.885): ‘Nor should it be said that, since there is no superiority in point of manifestation of bliss between the mental modification (vṛtti) that produces the highest (parama) form of liberation (at death) over the earlier modification that produces liberation in life, it follows that the highest form of liberation is constituted, not by the pure Self, but merely by the Self as associated with the last moment of life or the last breath. For we hold that the last self-effacing mental modification is superior to the earlier one producing liberation in life in point of manifestation of bliss, because it is not affected by further mental activity (vikṣepa) arising from the merit and demerit that produced the present life (prārabdha-karma), whereas the earlier modification was’. Thus, in contrast to Śaṅkara’s doctrine of sadyo-mukti or total liberation in life, the later authors tended to regard liberation in life as a mere preliminary to liberation at the death of the body, altogether inferior to it.
4. The six criteria are: (1) a commentator should safeguard the unity of theme found in the opening and closing passages of a topic; (2) he should take account of the emphasis implied by repetitions; (3) in judging what is significant and what is subordinate, he should observe the principle that all significant teaching has the characteristic of not being available elsewhere; (4) he should observe the principle that all significant teaching has utility; (5) there need not be a literal interpretation of passages of eulogy or condemnation; (6) interpretations should have logical consistency. The relevant Sanskrit terms are given at M.V. p.11. See also Sadānanda, ed. Col. Jacob, section 30. These are the broad criteria for interpreting texts, to be distinguished from the ritualists’ criteria for establishing relative importance in the case of apparent conflict between texts, detailed at note 6 below
- 5 Or otherwise students of the Veda who are not sure of themselves might be tempted by the secular systems to turn away from the Vedic path, cp. Śaṅkara, B.S.Bh. 2.2.1, Ś.S.B. 4.153.
6. These are: direct relation (śruti), indirect implication (liṅga), syntactical connection in a sentence (vākya), context (prakaraṇa), position (sthāna) and etymology of names (śabda). See Laugākṣi Bhāskara, pp. 9-20 and M.V. p.23. Śaṅkara also refers to these criteria at B.S.Bh. 3.3.25, Ś.S.B. 5.283, and Gambhīrānanda refers back to Jaimini, P.M.S. 3.3.13 (see Śābara in Bibliography). More detail, Keith, p.89 f.

- 7 See note 4 above.
8. Reading laksanād ūhā with ed. of Ganganath Jha, p.54.
9. Logic, etc.; the commentator Ānandapūrma refers to Nyāya Vārtika 1.1.40.
10. This argument is found at Viv. p.51.
- 11 So it follows that darkness is not just absence of light. Viv. p.53.
- 12 Viv. p.54.
- 13 Cp. Ś.S.B. 1.134, 2.116 f.
- 14 Fill one bucket with hot water and another with tepid water. Put one hand in the hot water and keep it there for a minute. Then put both hands in the tepid water. The same tepid water will then feel warm to one hand and cold to the other.
- 15 Viv. p.74, M.V. p.756 f.
16. Author's note: The enumeration of three different meanings of the word 'ajñāna' in this commentary is a sign that there are three different kinds of ajñāna (i.e. absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt).
17. If known, mental modifications could not be absent; if not known, they could not be *known* to be absent. For knowledge of absence requires both knowledge of the absent thing and also of the locus in which it is absent. In regard to the following sentence, Śaṅkara cites, as an example of an idea that we can have of something that can never be known 'the presence (together) of all the philosophers who ever existed', B.S.Bh. 2.1.11, Ś.S.B. 5.176. The standard example of this usually given in the classical philosophy of the West, e.g. by Kant and others, namely the back of the moon, is, so to speak, no longer available.
18. This argument is found in Nṛsiṃhāśrama's Tattvabodhinī comm. on Sarvajñātman, S.Ś. 1.20. Cp. K. Narain, p.155.
19. The opponent is contending that Ignorance cannot be reduced to absence of knowledge, wrong knowledge and doubt. For here we have a case of ignorance which implies valid knowledge, and therefore excludes wrong knowledge and doubt as well as absence of knowledge. It must be (he claims) right knowledge of a positive thing called Ignorance.
20. The arguments about 'I do not know' here are parallel with a famous clash of views found in the history of western philosophy. Kant held that we could not know 'things-in-themselves'. Hegel held that Kant's assertion was self-contradictory. One would not have the right to say that one could not know things-in-themselves unless one already had some knowledge of them. In fact one cannot help having *some* knowledge of reality. It is the philosopher's job to improve that knowledge.

21. Cp. Viv. p. 83 f., quoted M.V. p.757 f.
22. Viv. p. 74, cp. M.V. p.756.
23. The opponent wished to deny this because he wanted to explain ignorance as always being a positive entity, and never mere absence of knowledge.
24. Cp. para 6 above.
25. If that were the case, liberation would be impossible, as the world could re-emerge at any time in the consciousness of the enlightened person without a cause.
26. It can hardly be denied that at any given instant in the waking state all the past and all the future are imagination, and that the next instant will introduce changes, and will also be such that all the past and all the future will be imagination, including the instant we began with.
27. On the Advaita view, whatever is multiple or composite is brought together by some conscious being with purposes, for whose sake it exists. It is an object for a subject, and therefore non-conscious. Śamkara, T.T. (prose part) sections 64 and 71, Ś.S.B. 3.12 f.
28. Cp. Sureśvara, 'Just as, when the mind is awake, one identifies with it falsely and feels "I am awake", so, when the mind is dreaming and one is witnessing the dream, there is the false idea whereby one identifies oneself with the dream', B.B.V. 4.3.448, quoted M.V. p.352.
29. The purely phenomenal (prātibhāsika, prāītika) is that whose whole being lies in its manifestation, the latter itself illusory, cp. para 41 below. Differing in reality-grade from this, the vyāvahārika is conceived as that which has practical efficiency in daily life.
30. The stick he inserts between the spokes for leverage to set whirling the horizontally placed wheel, on the spinning hub of which he fashions the wet clay into a pot.
31. ātmāśraya, the fallacy of taking a thing to be the cause of itself, a belief which implies that one and the same thing could be two different things, cause and effect, cp. Bagchi p. 156 f.
32. For instance, if Ignorance were beginningless, it would precede superimposition, and so be real, cp. para 27 above: see above all para 43 below.
33. I.e. in order to have Ignorance you need to have in advance an individual soul that can be ignorant, yet in order to have an individual soul that can be ignorant you need to have Ignorance in advance.
34. The reference is to the fallacy of sādhyā-sama — i.e. the beginninglessness of the cycle of seed and sprout is as much in need of proof as the beginninglessness of cause and effect which it is cited to illustrate; on sādhyā-sama, cp. Potter, 1977, p. 196.

35. Quoted at Madhusūdana A.S. 1 p.460 (N.S. Ed. p. 534).
36. There is explicit reference here to a ‘pratiyogin’ or contradictory. The older western logic distinguished between a pair of contraries (white and black) and a pair of contradictories (white and not-white). Here, the existence and non-existence of the thing make up a pair of contradictories and mutually exclude one another.
37. In later Advaita, when Ignorance was conceived as a kind of thing and as beginningless, the question arose how it could have an end and make way for liberation. If it was beginningless, would it not also be endless? An example of a beginningless ‘thing’ that had an end, however, was found in the ‘previous non-existence’ of a product before the latter was produced. This was alien to Śaṅkara’s way of thinking, as the author shows — it is also an example of the influence of the thought of the Logicians entering into later Advaita, another of his favourite themes.
38. Reading prāg-abhāva-vad.
39. Cp. Citsukha, T.P. p.97, bhāvābhāva-vilakṣaṇasya ajñānasya abhāva-vilakṣaṇa-mātreṇa bhāvatva-upacārād.
40. Perception and other forms of empirical knowledge are explained by Śaṅkara as due to (1) a failure to be aware of the true nature of the Self and (2) a consequent misapprehension of it as identified with a psycho-physical organism, cp. the opening passage of his intro. to B.S.Bh. 1.1.1, Ś.S.B. 1.94 f. This misapprehension is labelled superimposition. It is not the positive Ignorance of the later Advaitins, which latter is conceived as the material cause (upādāna-kāraṇa) of superimposition. Superimposition came to be regarded as a kind of ‘thing’ requiring a material cause. For Śaṅkara, superimposition was ‘natural’, ‘without a cause’, ‘beginningless’. It had no positive cause, and was, on the contrary, the consequence of *failure* to apprehend.
41. A form of this argument may be found at Citsukha, T.P. p.98.
42. This form of the argument appears at A.S. 1 p.547 (N.S.ed. p.566), concisely stated at S. Gupta, p.17. It is slightly different from the argument referred to at note 41. Maitra’s knowledge brings to an end something beginningless other than Caitra’s beginningless absence of knowledge, namely Maitra’s own beginningless absence of knowledge. But knowledge always has the same properties. Therefore it is a property of knowledge in general that it brings to an end something beginningless other than Caitra’s beginningless absence of knowledge. But the only thing that knowledge can bring to an end is ignorance. So Caitra’s knowledge must bring to an end beginningless positive Ignorance in addition to his own beginningless previous absence of knowledge. Therefore beginningless positive Ignorance must exist.
43. ‘He who wishes to perceive Ignorance with the vision that arises from the means of valid cognition (pramāṇa) is like one trying to perceive darkness at the back of a cave with the help of a lamp’, Sureśvara, T.B.V. 2.177, quoted above, para 26.

44. A literal quotation, with an insignificant alteration. from Madhusūdana, A.S. 1 p. 547 (N.S. ed. p. 566).
45. Viv. p.85, cp. also para 64 here below.
46. This view of Ignorance as consisting essentially of absence of knowledge, with wrong knowledge and doubt for its results, can be supported from Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and Sureśvara. See Gauḍapāda, G.K. 1.11-5; Śaṅkara, Bṛhad. Bh. 3.3.1, intro.(trans. Mādhavānanda p. 313 f.); Sureśvara, B.B.V. 1.4.480 and (very explicitly) at 1.4.1368, quoted M.V. p. 311.
47. Cp. note 36 above.
48. These last two points are found in the later authors. See, for instance, Rāmānirṭha's Vidvanmanorañjanī comm. on Sadānanda's Vedānta Sāra (section 6, ed. Jacob p. 87, lines 5 and 29). There is a brief notice at A.K. Ray Chaudhuri, The Doctrine of Maya, p.79.
49. The claim here is that the strict classical Advaitin would be contradicting himself. He would be saying that Ignorance was mere 'absence of' or 'non-existence of' knowledge, but what he was referring to would actually be the mind, and so something positive and not a negation.
50. The strict classical Advaitin holds that Ignorance is absence of knowledge. The theorist of Ignorance as a positive existence argues against him that absence of knowledge always implies positive knowledge. But on this view, when the theorist of Ignorance as positive knowledge himself comes to speak of the absence of Ignorance in liberation, he will find that he is affirming its presence.
51. I.e. absence of knowledge of the Self lasts through waking, dream and dreamless sleep until it is removed: and wrong knowledge and doubt spring from it in waking and dream, though not in dreamless sleep.
52. The 'unorthodox' Advaitin is later (para 185 below) charged with making Ignorance real — and hence ineradicable — by presenting it as a positive entity, present uniformly in all three states. Whatever is constantly present is real.
53. On indeterminable reality-grade, see paras 64 and 129: on the Veda, see paras 142-3.
54. Cp. Viv. p.209, quoted at M.V. p.761. For the theory of Consciousness reflected in a vṛtti of avidyā (stated in the next paragraph), see Madhusūdana, A.S. 1 p. 561 f. (N.S. ed. p. 575 f.).
55. The dualist opponent attributes to the Advaitin the view: 'What has practical validity is cancelled only by knowledge of the Absolute: what is purely phenomenal, such as shell-silver, is also cancelled by things other than knowledge of the Absolute, such as knowledge of the shell' He holds to a distinction (viśesa) between what is cancelled by knowledge of the Absolute (namely Ignorance in general), and what is cancelled by

knowledge other than that (tad-bhinna. namely knowledge of particular items in the realm of Ignorance). A.S. I p.749 (N.S. ed. p. 658).

56. Attributed to the Advaitin by the opponent at A.S. I p.746 (N.S. ed. p.657).
57. According to the tenets of ordinary commonsense, the mind is self-conscious. can practise introspection and so on. But Śaṅkara has shown in detail in the eighteenth book of the verse section of T.T. that the commonsense view, acceptable for practical purposes, will not stand logical scrutiny. The mind is not self-sufficient as a conscious entity. What ultimately has knowledge is the universal principle of changeless eternal Consciousness, called in this context 'the Witness'. If we have knowledge of the states of the mind, it is not because the mind as performer of an act can have knowledge of its own act — no performer of an act can be the object of his own act — but because universal Consciousness, present within us as our true Self, witnesses the states of the mind. To make a parallel point, it seems to commonsense as if the body could scratch itself. But on closer scrutiny we see — from a consideration of the body as a corpse — that the body is not a performer of action. We, conscious beings different from the body, use one part of the body to scratch another part. There is a curious point in the author's text here that perhaps invites investigation. There is a reference to western models, and those models could hardly be other than Bergson and William James. But Bergson and James stressed continuity, whereas the Buddhists stressed discontinuity, more in the manner of Hume. Common to Bergson, James, Hume and the Buddhists alike, however, is emphasis on change and denial of static permanence.
58. Reading jagad-antaḥ-pātino.
59. The charge of circularity would take the form 'No states without an individual to experience them, no individual without Ignorance to individualize him, no Ignorance without an individual experiencer to undergo it'. The later Advaitins vainly tried to evade the charge that the argumentation was circular by appeal to the analogy with the allegedly beginningless cycle of seed and sprout. Texts on this point from Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and Vācaspati Miśra are discussed at M.V. pp. 557 ff.
60. At Darśanodaya p. 396 ff. M.M. Lakshmipuram Srinivasachar summarizes the 'seven fallacies' (sapta doṣāḥ) in the Advaitins' theory of positive Ignorance, as treated at Rāmānuja, Śrībhāṣya 1.1.1, Mahāsiddhānta section, ed. Abhyankar pp. 83-95. He relates them to (1) its seat, (2) its power to conceal the Self, (3) its nature, (4) its indeterminability, (5) its being an object for a means of knowledge, (6) its being an agent in an act of self-termination, (7) its being the object of an act of self-termination. It seems that it may be these objections that Swami Satchidānandendra here has in mind.
61. The opponent claims to establish positive Ignorance through reason. He would not and could not do this, if the cognition in which his reasoning issues had not been previously non-existent. One cannot *establish* through reason what one already knows.
62. Reading durantā, with the hyphen deleted, agreeing with cintā.

63. Although it is both natural and necessary to treat other people as ‘others’ in practical life in the waking state, we do not, within the limits of normal knowledge, have direct acquaintance with their consciousness as individuals. Even in practical experience, our notion of the experience of other people is only a construction of our own minds. In considering our own experience, we have considered all that can be known of the experience of others.
64. This objection was actually raised by the Buddhist idealists against the Hindu realists: ‘The judgement “This is that same crystal” is an illicit association of two utterly heterogeneous elements which have nothing in common. The element “this” refers to the present, to a sensation and to a real object. The element “that” refers to the past, to something surviving exclusively in imagination and memory. They are as different as heat and cold. Their unity cannot be created by the almighty god Indra’. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, Vol. I p.88.
65. The negation of the illusory snake is total, and is private to the person who has had the illusion. The nature of the negation of the world-appearance is a more complex problem, as the Vedic traditions refer to ṛṣis like Vāmadeva who negated the world-appearance in the past, and yet it still continues in the case of students like ourselves.
66. Because the difference between them would be real and consequently unbridgeable, cp. T.P. p.65
67. This was the doctrine, for instance, of Rāmānuja, cp. Radhakrishnan, I.P. Vol. II p.675.
68. Rāmānuja, for instance, held that dream-experience was sent as a corrective to the imperfect rewards for past merit and demerit received during the day. Cp. Radhakrishnan, *ibid.*
69. A standard example of this in western philosophy is our persistent belief, in practice, that the sun rises in the morning over a stationary horizon.
70. On the ground that all experience is experience of the present, and all present experience seems like waking, cp. paras 34 and 83 above.
71. E.g. it is that which is tinged with a reflection of the Self as Consciousness, cp. Sureśvara, N.Sid. 2.53.
72. The function of an authoritative means of knowledge is to give knowledge that could not be obtained by any other means. If the Self could be known through perception, like a pot, the Veda would not be an authoritative means of knowledge in regard to it.
73. This is true, as we should say in the west, by the Law of the Excluded Middle. Of two contradictory propositions, one must be false. So a thing (here the soul) must either be or not be conscious. The Logicians and the Ritualists held that the soul was *per se* non-conscious, having consciousness as its temporary attribute under certain conditions. For these schools liberation implied disidentification with a body in any form and consequent permanent lapse of consciousness. The author argues that, logically, their

doctrine would imply the Void.

74. **Brahma Gītā, 7.17-19. In Yajña Vaibhava Khanda of Sūta Samhitā.**
75. **Cp. Śaṅkara, B.S.Bh. 1.1.1 intro.: ‘But how can there be a superimposition of the object and its attributes onto the inmost Self, which is not an object? For a person normally superimposes one object onto another standing in front of him.... To this we reply that it (the Self) is not altogether a non-object, for it is the object of the ego-notion’. Ś.S.B. 1.95, cp. also M.V. p.625. For the view of this taken in the Bhāmatī, see M.V. p. 625 f.**
76. **In an eclipse, there is no ‘monster’ that is an object for the eye, though in ancient times people spoke and thought as if there was; similarly, the Self is not an object of cognition, though in practical life it is convenient to think and speak of it as the ‘object of the ego-sense’. See below.**
77. **At T.T. (verse) 18.123 Śaṅkara argues that individual cognitions, which embrace the triad of knower, knowledge and known, are not independently self-luminous, but require to be illumined by an independent witnessing consciousness, like a lamp, which is also luminous in a sense, but which itself requires to be illumined by the consciousness of a perceiver. Again, when the Buddhist is represented as pleading that his cognitions are self-luminous like lamps, Śaṅkara replies that such lamps would twinkle unheeded, like lamps encased in a fold of rock. For a lamp itself requires to be illumined by a separate conscious factor before it can perform its function of illumining. B.S.Bh. 2.2.28, Ś.S.B. 4.283.**
78. **Vimuktātman argues that Ignorance must be accounted the material cause of errors, since it invariably accompanies them, I.S. p.48, quoted M.V. p.671.**
79. **The opponent claims that Ignorance is implied because the silver is not merely abolished but cancelled, i.e. known never to have existed in the past, not to exist in the present, and not to be going to exist in the future. On cancellation, cp. above, para 96 *ad init*.**
80. **This is the doctrine of Viv. p.122 ff., quoted M.V. p.800, also given at Ānandabodha’s Nyāya Makaranda, pp. 119-20, quoted with refutation M.V. p.863.**
81. **The appeal was to the law that might be expressed, ‘If x is never apprehended without y, while y is sometimes apprehended without x, y must be the material cause of x’.**
82. **Śaṅkara reduces the ‘māyās of Indra’ to sense-cognitions ‘of the nature of nescience’ in commenting on G.Ḳ. 3.24 and Brhad. 2.5.19, cp. Ś.S.B. 2.82.**
83. **I have omitted ‘atirikta’ from ‘bhāvāvidyātirikta’, as it would contradict the author’s teaching. I have little doubt in my mind that what he originally wrote, or intended to write, was, ‘mithyā-jñāna-jñānābhāva-saṃśaya-jñānātirikta’. That is, he intended to say, ‘... since positive Ignorance, as something other than wrong knowledge, absence of knowledge and doubt, cannot be defined or proved to exist’.**

84. In the false notion in regard to a rope 'This is a snake', 'this' and 'snake' are mistakenly identified and therefore mutually superimposed. If the 'this' element in the rope had been the substratum (adhiṣṭhāna) of the illusion there would effectively have been no substratum, as the 'this' is superimposed. And if Ignorance operated in this way throughout, the world would have no substratum, which is the erroneous doctrine of the Buddhists. But all this is not the case, as the element 'this' of the rope is not the true substratum, which is the rope itself and which remains untouched. The 'this' element of the rope is only the 'support' (ādhāra) of the illusion. See Sarvajñātma Muni, S.Ś. 1.31.
85. The reference is to P.P. (Madras ed.) p. 51, Eng. trans. Venkataramiah p. 28 f., quoted M.V. p. 398 f.
86. In case the reader should find this presentation of the argument from the A.S. incredible, I quote a sentence from V.P. Upadhyaya, p. 161 f.: 'This is the view, shared by most of the writers on Advaita-Vedānta, and according to it the Avidyā... produces five effects: (1) silver, (2) the identity of the silver, (3) the relation of the generality with the silver, (4) the identity of the substratum, "this", and (5) the relation of its attributes'. This is in summary of the Laghu Candrikā comm. on A.S. (N.S. ed.) pp.38-47. An indication of the hyper-analytic style of that passage is its inclusion of the phrase 'a twofold experience of the form "this is silver" and "silver is this"' (p.43), which justifies the present author's (Satchidānandendra's) words 'production of... a "this" with identity with the silver for adjunct (and) identity (of the silver) with "this"', etc. Further, if an illusory thing is brought into being, it will require a distinct nature, so there will have to be production of another illusory 'thing' in the form of an illusory relation connecting it with its eternal genus. Hence the author's mention, in expounding the Advaita Siddhi view, of relationship of the silver with the genus 'silver', even of a relationship of the silver with 'this' and 'thisness'.
87. The antahkarana-vṛtti removes the veiling power of the Ignorance constituting the object on which it (the vṛtti) bears, and, so far as it penetrates the object, yields correct knowledge. In the case of the illusion 'this is silver', the antahkarana-vṛtti only picks up the object, the mother-of-pearl, as a vague 'this': it does not penetrate to its specific nature as mother-of-pearl. Hence the veiling power of the Ignorance constituting the object remains uneliminated, as does its projecting power, whereby it assumes the form of illusory silver under the attraction of the saṃskāras of some observers. This latter modification is called an avidyā-vṛtti. See Appaya Dīkṣita, S.L.S. 1.108-9 and Madhusūdana, A.S. Vol. I p.735 (N.S. ed. p.652). There is a brief reference at Gupta p. 44, more detail at Chaudhuri, pp. 49 ff.
88. The appeal here, as just above, is to the Law of the Excluded Middle — 'Of two contradictory propositions, one must be false'.
89. The objection that transmigratory life arises uncaused, which means it might come back again in irrational fashion after liberation; and the objection that all living creatures must already be liberated, an implication that carries the defect of making part of the Veda useless.

90. Śaṅkara, who did not differentiate the Lord (īśvara) from the Absolute, speaks of the Lord as eternally bereft of Ignorance, B.S.Bh. 3.2.9, Ś.S.B. 3.120.
91. Today, the word 'tūla' is usually used in northern India to mean 'cotton'. In classical times it also meant 'the flower of a plant', and the phrase 'mūlam tūlam brhati' meant 'He pulls out root and flower', rather like we might in English use the phrase 'root and branch'. See 'tūla' in Böhtlingk's Sanskrit-Wörterbuch, kürz. Fass.
92. These twists and turns are found in Vimuktātman, Ānandabodha and others — see for instance M.V. p.711 and 883 — because, having granted Ignorance a kind of reality, they found that they still had 'the cessation of Ignorance' on their hands as another reality existing over against the Self in liberation.
93. In Vedic exegesis, breaking up a passage dealing with a single topic into sub-passages with different topics (vākya-bheda) was only permitted where the Vedic text expressly commanded it, or where the text was otherwise incomprehensible. Otherwise, if subdivision could be done *ad lib.*, what was intended in the Veda as one single complicated act could be broken down arbitrarily into separate acts, to which special results could be unjustifiably attributed. Keith, p. 82.
94. According to the principle, 'sāvakāśa-niravakāśayor niravakāśam balīyah' quoted by G. Devasthali, *Śaṅkara's Indebtedness to Mīmāṃsā*, Journal of the Oriental Institute of Baroda, 1951-2, p. 23. For a brief explanation, see Ś.S.B. 5.214.
95. The chief opponents in mind are the ritualists (Pūrva Mīmāṃsakas) and Sāṅkhyas. The author's concern is not with dualistic secular philosophy, but with false interpretations of the Veda on dualistic lines. The Sāṅkhyas are criticized as faulty interpreters of the Veda throughout the first four chapters of the sixteen chapters of the B.S. Criticisms of the ritualists are found scattered throughout Śaṅkara's work, but are particularly plentiful at B.S.Bh. 1.1.4, and in the Gītā commentary, and in the commentary on the first chapter of the Taittirīya Upanishad. Sureśvara deals at length with the ritualists in the corresponding parts of T.B.V., also throughout S.V. and the first Book of N.Sid. The author is saying that he is not concerned to rehearse these arguments in detail, but rather to correct misapprehensions about the Advaita tradition of Vedic exegesis that arose among Advaitins after Śaṅkara's day.
96. The opponent's view implies the false idea that the Self would be known as an object if it were not for the intervention of Ignorance. He misses the point, made above, that the Self is by nature transcendent.
97. In quoting the present passage from Śaṅkara, the author assumes the reader's familiarity with Śaṅkara's interpretation of the phrase 'goes to heaven' as it appears at Chānd. 8.3.3. Śaṅkara's commentary here runs: 'Every soul is the Absolute and nothing but the Absolute, whether he is aware of the fact or not. But the enlightened one who has been awakened by the text "That thou art" is conscious that he is pure Being, and feels "Verily, I am pure Being and nothing but pure Being". In the same way, both the enlightened and unenlightened attain to union with pure Being in dreamless sleep, but it is only the one who is *conscious* of this who 'goes to heaven' (in the form of

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consciously “attaining” the Absolute daily in dreamless in sleep). The text calls the Absolute “heaven” in order to indicate that — apart from what happens in dreamless sleep — on the death of the body, too, the knowledge of the enlightened one will necessarily bear fruit (and he will be united once and for all with the Absolute) (Chānd. Bh. 8.3.3, Ś.S.B. 3.136-7).

98. Bṛhad. Bh. 4.3.34, trans Mādhavānanda p. 480, i.e. dreamless sleep is *not* liberation but only an example used to illustrate liberation, and an example can never be identical with what it is used to illustrate.
99. The view of Kumārila Bhatta, quoted at Viv. p. 74. cp. M.V. p.756.
100. Cp. Viv. p.263, quoted M.V, p.783.
101. This is essentially the view of Prakāśātman, Viv. pp.265 f., cp. M.V. p. 783 f.
102. Reading abhyupajānanto.
103. Cp. Viv. p. 265, quoted M.V. p.784.
104. At para 160 below there is a denunciation of the distinction between ‘seed-Ignorance’ or ‘causal Ignorance’, alleged to be present in dreamless sleep, and the superimpositions of waking and dream.
105. The modern student may well agree with the author’s suggestion earlier in the paragraph (cp. his reference to the Allāh Upanishad) that later Upanishads may contain unorthodox teaching in places, even where, as in the Kaivalya Upanishad, the central core of the message may be regarded as sound enough. The Kaivalya, Subāla and Śārīraka Upanishads are not mentioned by Śaṅkara, and were possibly composed after his day, when distorted forms of the teaching had gained hold.
106. Śaṅkara’s commentary shows that the Sūtra is referring to two separate texts, which appear at first sight to be teaching that the supreme Self is different from the individual soul at the time of dreamless sleep and death. Thus at Bṛhad. 4.3.21 it is taught that the individual soul is enveloped by the supreme Self during dreamless sleep, and at Bṛhad. 4.3.35 the Veda speaks of the emergence of the soul from the body at the time of the death of the latter as ‘presided over’ by the Self as pure Consciousness (prājña). But the message of the Sūtra is that all the Veda is really concerned with in these passages is the affirmation of the existence of the Absolute as the true Self, void of all states.
107. The commentary says: ‘But if anyone thinks that because there is an exposition of the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep (introduced between the two affirmations of the Absolute that come at Bṛhad. 4.3.7 and 4.4.22), it follows that the text means to teach the true nature of the transmigrant (as characterized by these states), he might as well turn his face towards the west when setting out to travel east. For the purpose of the texts in expounding the three states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep is not to declare that the Self is subject to these states, but to show, on the contrary, that it is entirely *heretofore* of these states and is *not* subject to transmigratory experience in any

form'. B.S.Bh. 1.3.42, Ś.S.B. 3.91.

108. See B.S. 3.2.8; Śaṅkara's commentary on this Śūtra (Ś.S.B. 3.118) refers also to Bṛhad. 2.1.16 and 2.1.18.
109. Śaṅkara refers to the sleep, eating and drinking mentioned at Chānd. 6.8.1,3,5: since sleep and so on are common to all living beings, nothing is 'taught' in these passages; there is merely a recapitulation of common experience as a springboard for teaching something else.
110. There are two aspects of Ignorance as conceived by the strict classical Advaitins (Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara, Sureśvara): there is failure to apprehend the Self in its true nature (agrahaṇa), and there is consequent positive misconception (anyathāgrahaṇa, cp. G.K. 1.13 and 15). Flying in the face of the universal experience that it is failure to apprehend the rope that is the pre-condition for misapprehending it as a snake, the post-Sureśvara Advaitins rejected this teaching, on the ground that failure to apprehend, conceived as a non-entity, could not produce results. Hence they posited a positive Ignorance, and had the difficulty of explaining why, since it was beginningless and uncaused, it was not real. The doctrine of the strict classical Advaitins was that, as long as there is failure to awaken to one's true nature as the Self, misconception and rebirth will continue. But 'Ignorance' in the form of failure to apprehend the Self is only a pre-condition for misconceiving it: it may be referred to metaphorically as a seed, but it is not a substance (dravya) having a power (śakti) in any concrete sense. As Śaṅkara puts it, 'The "seed" is *only* failure to apprehend the real' (tattva-apratibodha-mātram eva hī bījam, G.K.Bh. 1.11). If it were anything else it would be real, and then it would be impossible to cancel it through metaphysical knowledge.
111. In an interesting footnote to the English intro. to his *Vedānta Prakriyā Pratyabhijñā* (also published separately as 'How to recognize the Method of the Vedānta?', 1964) p.107, the author points out that passages of this kind really go back to Bṛhad. 4.4.2, and refer, not to action and Ignorance (avidyā), but to merit and demerit from action (karma) and merit from meditation (vidyā). The old Bibliotheca Indica ed. of the B.S.Bh. (Calcutta, 1863) actually reads vidyā instead of avidyā at the present point, and the phrase is translated by Thibaut as 'the work and knowledge of each individual soul' (i.e. without reference to avidyā). Cp. Ś.S.B. 3.121.
112. Note that Śrī Śaṅkara speaks of the non-eradication of 'wrong knowledge' (mithyā-jñāna), not of the non-eradication of positive Ignorance (bhāvāvidyā). In the dreamless sleep of the unenlightened person there is no awakening to his true nature. So on account of his continued failure to apprehend the true nature of his Self, the way for further misconception (wrong knowledge) remains open.
113. It is worth noting that the Bhāmātī of Vācaspati is in harmony with the present author on the interpretation of the point at B.S.Bh. 2.1.9 now under discussion, cp. M.V. p. 586 f.
114. Cp. Vācaspati, Bhāmātī, 1.4.18, 2.1.36, 2.2.2, quoted M.V. p.550.

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115. Kauṣītaki 4.19, on which see also M.V. p. 786.
116. Although this quotation is from the pūrva-pakṣa, Sureśvara did hold, in common with Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara, that the 'Ignorance of dreamless sleep was merely a 'not being awake to the Self', not either an object or a śakti of any kind. Cp.N.Sid. 4.39-40. At N.Sid. 4.42 he says that all experience before enlightenment is Ignorance in this sense.
117. For the whole topic, see Ś.S.B. 6. 90 ff.
118. Pāṇini 1.4.30.
119. E.g. a clay pot looks like a pot, so we tend to forget that in its real nature it is nothing more than clay. The phrase about only 'appearing to assume a plurality of forms contradictory to its previous nature without actually doing so' comes from the definition of vivarta given at Viv. p. 653. The origins of this definition in the Svopajña comm. to Bhartṛhari's Vākya Padīya 1.1 are discussed at Hacker, Vivarta p. 40.
120. For Śaṅkara's explanation of these words at G.K. Bh. 4.42, see Ś.S.B. 2.197 f.
121. Advaitins commonly refer in these terms to the doctrine of Difference in Identity, held in slightly different forms by Bhartṛprapañca, Bhāskara, Nimbārka and others. This philosophy tends, in the manner of some of Hegel's followers in the west, to the view that, in the last resort, the whole world is implicated in the proper description of any single item in it.
122. Read kaiścit prapañcīto vādo, as quoted by the author below, Sanskrit text p.215, line 21.
123. The reference is to the Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña of the Māṇḍūkya Upan., cp. para 183 below.
124. This contradicts Śaṅkara, B.S.Bh. 4.1.2, quoted M.V. p.73, also N.Sid. 3.64 (prose intro.). See also Ś.S.B. 6.115 f.
125. Not traced, but there are several similar passages, e.g. A.R. 6.10.38.
126. On these two theories, see para 180 below.
127. Cp. Prakāśānanda, V.S.M. verse 9, author's comm.
128. Brhad. 1.4.10, quoted Appaya Dīkṣita, S.L.S. 1.45.
129. Vedānta sets out to explain a part of the Veda. A Vedantic theory is naturally wrong if its implications render a part of the Veda meaningless.
130. Appaya Dīkṣita, S.L.S. 1.43 and Prakāśānanda, V.S.M. verse 9, comm.

131. Appaya Dīkṣita, S.L.S. 1.44.
132. On the brahmākāra vṛtti, cp. note 3 above.
133. One could illustrate this conception as follows. Swing an empty receptacle of any kind in your hand. The air in the receptacle will have been moved, but not the space. This is enough to show that the natural feeling we have that the receptacle encloses space is erroneous.
134. This upanishadic text is inexplicable on the theory that the soul is a mere delimitation of the Absolute and not a reflection, because it asserts the presence of the Absolute within the soul in two different forms, as totally transcendent and as Inner Ruler, as unlimited and as limited. Unless it is admitted that the Inner Ruler is a reflection, a contradiction results. See Viv. p.290-1 and M.V. p.779. The argument in Viv. runs: 'The Absolute present within the cosmos as enclosed within the various conditioning adjuncts, universal and particular, would be totally conditioned as soul; and that same Absolute could not be omniscient and omnipotent. For it could not assume two (contradictory) forms and be present in its unlimited form in the places where it was present as limited.'
135. Cp. A.S. p. 1296, N.S. Ed. p 848
136. Reading ajñāna-janyatva:
137. Appaya Dīkṣita, S.L.S. 1.41. Viv. p. 289 claims that as the formless ether of the sky is reflected in water, so the formless Self, too, is capable of being reflected. The present author observes (M.V. p. 777) that if that were true it would reduce the Absolute to a worldly substance.
138. An opponent of the author's view will say that, according to the author, Ignorance disappears in dreamless sleep and yet it re-appears on waking. On such a view, why should it not re-appear after enlightenment? The author replies that dreamless sleep and enlightenment are not the same. For enlightenment one (normally) requires hearing of the upanishadic texts in the waking state in order to cancel the wrong conviction of the waking state 'I am a finite individual'.
139. Maṇḍana, B.Sid. p.22, advocates this view, though he speaks of 'agrahaṇa' not 'āvaraṇa'.
140. The passage from the Guru Jñāna Vāsiṣṭha quoted above at paras 172 and 183.

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if world is superimposed, it does not follow it must have been real elsewhere beforehand, 95; though waking and dream with their inevitable attendant 'worlds' do not exist in the Self, they are imagined to do so by the deluded, 96; mind is not cause of superimposition, 111-2; substratum of a superimposition can manifest as long as the form in which it manifests does not contradict the superimposition, 116; particular nature of Self is to have no particular and general nature. So long as this is unknown, superimposed feeling of a second particular nature in regard to the Self persists, 116; mutual superimposition of Self and not self is apparent, not actual, 114-117; unintelligible logically but observed universally, like a mirror-image, 111

support (*ādhāra*) *see* **purely phenomenal**

teacher

grace of, 14; his teaching must be based on, and not conflict with, immediate experience, 14;

three states (*avasthā*)

anything that appears as real in any state is real as long as that state lasts, 95; are merely imagined in the Self, 1, 187; are reducible to two states—seeing or not seeing objects, 67; are the inevitable starting point of enquiry, though their reality may not stand up to critical scrutiny, 65; cannot be defined on the opponent's theories, 63; cannot be established if experience is reduced to a 'stream of consciousness' on the Western model, 63; do not

three states (avasthā) continued

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three states (avasthā), examination of (as soocial discipline)

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time

Absolute is cause of time only from standpoint of practical experience, 113; as an effect, cannot be eternal, according to Śaṅkara, 39; mind is characterized by time (cp. Kant, form of the inner sense). But in dreamless sleep we experience absence of time, 60; no experience of an all-embracing time, as we lose sense of time in dreamless sleep, 60; there cannot be a time-interval between waking and dreamless sleep, and hence dreamless sleep cannot be the cause of waking, 60; there cannot be any independent entity called time broken up by the waking and other states successively, 186; time, space and atoms are illusory modifications of the Self, 39;

turīya see Fourth (state)

unreal

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Upanishads

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Veda

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Veda, exegesis of

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Veda, exegesis of *continued*

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Vedic texts

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waking world

all in practice agree that the Self is associated with waking and dream worlds, 4; at any given moment of waking, waking seems to contradict dream. But waking is not permanent, all the less could it be cause of dream, 33; claim that it must be real because it is different from our ideas about it refuted, 92; claim that it must be real because perceived to be real refuted, 93; does not include dream, according to Sureśvara, 88; dreamless sleep and dream are not phases of waking, 85-7; enquiry into dream and dreamless sleep necessary in philosophy, otherwise there will be the doubt whether or not waking is equal to dream, 67; even if it were real and continuous, it could not recognize itself as such because, being multiple, it exists for another and is non-conscious, 35; fact that waking is immediately apprehended shows it is different from dream and dreamless sleep, but not that it is real, 89; is a mere idea (*prāṇī*), 89; is unreal because it disappears in dreamless sleep, 79, 84; its unreality does not contradict experience, 72; no rule that 'whatever is immediately apprehended is real', 89; nothing to prove that waking is the natural state, 87; objects of waking world unreal according to Śaṅkara and Gaudapāda, 68; one has the notions of recognition and permanence in regard to dream objects as well as waking objects, 89; since it is illusory, its perception after waking up does not presuppose positive Ignorance in dreamless sleep as its cause, 40; there cannot be a world unqualified—open to being qualified as waking world or dream world, 74(2); waking, dream and dreamless sleep are all ideas. So they must be either equally real or equally unreal. No case for giving any preference to waking, 89; we do not say that a real world disappears in dreamless sleep. We say that the waking world is confined to the waking state, 74; when permanence and recognition in waking world have been undermined it becomes impossible to differentiate between dream and waking, 35; you cannot prove that your waking world existed during your dreamless sleep by saying 'others who were awake perceived it then', 74(1)

witnessing Consciousness

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world of plurality (*see also* *samsāra* and *superimposition*)

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