

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA
/
IN SAṆKARA AND RĀMĀNUJA

DOCTRINES AND METHODS USED BY
/ SAṆKARA AND RĀMĀNUJA TO ELUCIDATE THE
RELATION BETWEEN SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR COMMENTARIES
ON THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

by

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

September, 1977

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (1977)
Religion (Indian Philosophy)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Doctrines and Methods Used by Saṅkara and Rāmānuja to
 Elucidate the Relation Between Self-knowledge and Dharma
 with Special Reference to their Commentaries on the
 Bhagavad-Gita.

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NUMBER OF PAGES: **vii**, 412.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja were the two principal interpreters of Vedānta who inaugurated its two great traditions, Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita. They have been investigated here with reference to their understanding of the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma. Although the full corpus of their writings have been consulted, special attention has been given to their understanding of this relation with reference to spiritual discipline (sādhana) as expounded in their Gītā-bhāṣyas. The doctrines of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja and also the methods used by both to explain this relation have been investigated. Areas of tension between doctrine and method were demarcated. Both the areas of doctrinal difference and the implicit areas of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this relation were considered.

ABSTRACT

Careful study of the commentaries of both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja concerning the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma confirmed the usual doctrinal differences between them which have been the focal point of scholarship on Vedānta but as well it also uncovered areas of structural convergence co-existing with the former. Accordingly this investigation proceeded on two levels: the first level was concerned with those differences in their ontologies; the second level was concerned with the "meaning-structures" common to both. Previous scholarship on Vedānta has not made reference to these areas of structural convergence. The objective of this work has been to verify how these areas of structural convergence throw light on their respective explicit positions.

The following are the major findings of this work: Whereas generally Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja have been understood in terms of their doctrinal differences, with special attention to Rāmānuja's explicit refutation both of Śaṅkara's māyā-vāda and his doctrine of Brahman as Nirguṇa, I have sought out and argued for a common ground between them. Śaṅkara is usually understood as arguing for a radical discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. I have demonstrated his implicit concession to their continuity in sādhana and his use of two key categories to explain this apparent continuity: (i) Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" as vṛtti-jñāna, and (ii) dharma in

its "primary sense" as jñāna-yoga. Rāmānuja is usually understood as arguing for a continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. I have shown his implicit emphasis on their discontinuity which is especially evident when dealing with the question of prapatti where a discontinuity is set up between dharma, understood as man's own isolated efforts and Self-knowledge, understood as Self-surrender, which is the surrender to the Lord as the "eternally established means".

Two distinct but inseparable strands were discovered in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. They were respectively designated as the "explicit Śaṅkara", the "implicit Śaṅkara", and the explicit Rāmānuja" and "implicit Rāmānuja". Two major areas of structural convergence were discovered between these strands: between the "implicit Rāmānuja" and the "explicit Śaṅkara"; and between the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Śaṅkara". The structural convergence between the "implicit Rāmānuja" and the "explicit Śaṅkara" threw light on their explicit areas of agreement on the nature of dharma which they share as Vedāntins. The structural convergence between the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Śaṅkara" threw light on their explicit areas of agreement, which they share as Vedāntins, on the nature of Self-knowledge.

Areas of tension between their doctrines and methods were uncovered. The most striking example of such a tension is illustrated by Rāmānuja's explicit rejection both of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and of his māyā-vāda, in the context of Rāmānuja's use of methodological equivalents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge with deep gratitude the supervision, untiring labour and encouragement provided by my co-supervisors, Dr. K. Sivaraman, and Dr. W. Whillier. I also wish to acknowledge the helpful guidance of both Dr. J.G. Arapura and Dr. G.B. Madison.

Thanks should also be extended to Ivan Kocmarek for his kind and patient assistance in checking the Sanskrit; to Marg Moore for her painstaking editorial work; to Kauser Khan for innumerable discussions on Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja; and to Subuhi Medhi and Bill Bryant for their loyalty and support.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to McMaster University for the financial assistance given to me during the writing of this dissertation.

A Note on the Sanskrit Transliteration

Of the various forms of transliterating Sanskrit I have used the scheme as set out in Radhakrishnan's Principle Upaniṣads.

<u>Vowels</u>	ā	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	e	ai	o	au
anusvāra			m										
visarga			ḥ										
<u>Consonants</u>													
gutturals	k	kh	g	gh	n								
palatals	c	ch	j	jh	n								
cerebrals	ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ								
dentals	t	th	d	dh	n								
labials	p	ph	b	bh	m								
<u>semi-vowels</u>	y	r	l	v									
<u>sibilants</u>	s	as in "sun"											
	s	palatal sibilant as in "Russian"											
	ṣ	cerebral sibilant as in "shun"											
aspirate	h												

Various forms of transliteration occur in keeping with the sources cited. As there are no capitals in Sanskrit, I have allowed English usage to dictate. Whenever a Sanskrit term begins a sentence or refers to a proper name, I have used a capital letter. Whenever an anglicized form of Sanskrit has been used i.e., pluralizations of Sanskrit terms by the addition of "s" as in "dharmas", the addition of suffixes such as "ic" as in "vedic" etc., the Sanskrit has not been underlined with two exceptions: 1) when it refers to specific Sanskrit texts in the plural, and 2) when it has been underlined in the source cited. Whenever translations have been referred to the titles have been cited as published i.e., Aparokshānubhūti .

In
Memory
Of My Sister

BARBARA JILL McMURTRY

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Problematic of This Work

The relation between Self-knowledge and dharma, as understood by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, is the general topic of this work. The central issue within this general topic involves the question of whether or not the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma is real or illusory. Is dharma a mere appendage to Self-knowledge or an organic part of it? Is there an ontological ground for dharma in Vedānta?

Special consideration is given to the doctrines and methods that Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja use to explain the shift from the "level"¹ of Self-knowledge to dharma and back again. Whether or not there is ever a tension between their doctrines and their methods is a central concern which necessitates an examination of whether the way in which a doctrine is used conflicts with the way in which it is explicitly defined. I investigate whether their methods simply execute their explicit doctrines or whether they illustrate some problem areas in their doctrines that are not emphasized in scholarship on Vedānta.

In the enquiry into the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma I examine whether Śaṅkara's emphasis on this relation can be characterized simply as a radical discontinuity and whether Rāmānuja's emphasis on this relation can be characterized simply as a continuity.

¹Though strictly speaking the language of "levels" is rejected by Rāmānuja, in his dissociative use of the Self-body relation (sarīra-sarīrin) he does employ a methodological equivalent. Cf., Chapter Two.

This approach draws the investigation into the very core of their respective positions and in so doing reveals that there are areas of doctrinal and methodological similarity between them on this relation. Finally I examine whether these areas of agreement between them throw light on their explicit positions or whether they merely distort those positions.

2. The Historical Context and the Texts Used

Although the focus of this work is philosophical rather than historical, a general historical introduction and a note on the use of texts is offered here to provide a context for the argument.

The term "Vedānta" means the "culmination or end of the Vedas". Although the term is used to refer to the Upaniṣads which come at the end of the Vedas, it also denotes the darsanas ("view-points" or "systems" of thought) founded on these texts. This work focuses on the two major darsanas of Vedānta, Advaita ("non-dualism") and Viśiṣṭādvaita ("qualified non-dualism").

(i) Advaita

Gauḍapāda, the first proponent of Advaita, is reputed to have taught Śaṅkara's teacher, Govinda.² He is known for his commentary on the Māndūkya-Upaniṣad, entitled Māndūkya-Kārikā, which he wrote about

²Cf., Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy 9th ed; Vol. II (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971), pp. 452-53. Herein after cited as: Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II; S. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy 6th ed; Vol. I (Cambridge: University Press, 1969), pp. 418-20. Herein after cited as: Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol I.

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780 A.D.

Maṇḍana Miśra, the author of the Brahma-Siddhi is usually understood as preceding Śaṅkara.⁴ His concern was to reconcile Advaita with many of the claims of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, which was a darsāna that focussed on the problem of dharma, or the karma-khaṇḍa of the Vedas.

Śaṅkarācārya is generally considered to be the paradigm figure in the Advaita tradition. There is general agreement that he lived from 788 to 820 A.D.⁵ The full corpus of Śaṅkara's writings will be consulted, but his major works are emphasized. Śaṅkara wrote commentaries on the three central texts of Vedānta (prasthāna-traya): the Upaniṣads; the Bhagavad-Gītā; the Brahma-Sūtra (here referred to as his Sūtra-bhāṣya).

His Sūtra-bhāṣya is often considered to be more significant than his Gītā-bhāṣya. This work will accordingly draw heavily on his Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas, his Sūtra-bhāṣya and his Gītā-bhāṣya. As shall be demonstrated, Śaṅkara's Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas and his Gītā-bhāṣya throw additional light on many of the issues referred to in his Sūtra-bhāṣya. Some minor works attributed to him by tradition - the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi

³Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. I, p. 418.

⁴It is a matter of dispute among scholars whether Maṇḍana preceded Śaṅkara or was a contemporary of Śaṅkara. Cf., The Cultural Heritage of India, ed. H. Bhattacharyya, 2nd ed; Vol III (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission, 1969), p. 255. Herein after cited as: The Cultural Heritage of India Vol III; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. I, p. 449. Because of the phenomenological method employed in this work, I will be "bracketing" this question. Therefore Maṇḍana will be included only insofar as he throws light on Śaṅkara's implicit concession to the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana and insofar as he throws light on any possible areas of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

⁵Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol I, p. 418; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol II, p. 447.

the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, the Ātma-bodha, and the Aparokshānubhūti - will also be consulted. These minor works will be consulted only insofar as they throw light on crucial issues that are the concern of this work, but my argument, in the main, rests on evidence from the prasthāna-traya.

Sureśvara, who is reputed as living in the eighth century A.D.,⁶ wrote many commentaries on Śaṅkara's texts. His Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi and his Saṁbandha-Vārtika will be consulted in this work. The Vivaraṇa school which developed many of Sureśvara's ideas will also be considered. Attention will be given to one of their standard texts, Vidyāraṇya's⁷ Vivaraṇa-Prameya-Saṅgraha, which was written in the fourteenth century.

Vācaspati Miśra, who lived about 841 A.D., is understood as⁸ developing and systematizing the thought of Maṇḍana Miśra.⁹ These post-Śaṅkarite texts will be considered only insofar as they illuminate and radicalize points already implicit in Śaṅkara's works.

(ii) Viśiṣṭādvaita

Yāmuna, who is reputed to be Rāmānuja's teacher, lived about

⁶Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. I, pp. 418-19; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II, p. 451. Historians of Indian philosophy have debated the relationship between Sureśvara and Maṇḍana Miśra. Some scholars identify Sureśvara and Maṇḍana Miśra (cf., Radhakrishnan, Brahma-Sūtra (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1960, p. 28) whereas other scholars insist that they are different people. (Cf., M. Hiriyanna, "Sureśvara and Maṇḍana Miśra", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1923 and January 1924.) The latter interpretation is more in accordance with the findings of this work wherein Maṇḍana is understood as radicalizing Śaṅkara's implicit position, whereas Sureśvara is understood as radicalizing Śaṅkara's explicit position. Cf., Chapter Four.

⁷Cf., Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. I, p. 451; The Cultural Heritage of India Vol. III, p. 262.

⁸Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 418; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II, p. 451.

Cf., Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. III, p. 265.

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918 A.D. He was the first major proponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Of his several major works the most important is the Siddhi-traya. He sought to reconcile the teachings of Vedānta with the wisdom of the Ārvārs saints.

As Śaṅkara is the paradigm figure in Advaita, Rāmānuja is the paradigm figure in Viśiṣṭādvaita. According to tradition Rāmānuja was born between 1017 and 1027 A.D.¹¹ He wrote commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtra and the Bhagavad-Gītā, but unlike Śaṅkara he did not write separate commentaries on the Upaniṣads. His commentary on the Brahma-Sūtra (here referred to as his Śrī-bhāṣya) was in response to Śaṅkara's Sūtra-bhāṣya; therefore, many of the marked doctrinal differences between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja emerge in his Śrī-bhāṣya. Similarly his Vedārthasaṃgraha, which is considered to be Rāmānuja's first work, as well as his Gītā-bhāṣya, were written in critical response to Śaṅkara.

Whereas Śaṅkara is able to argue his position best on the basis of the Upaniṣads, Rāmānuja is most comfortable with the Bhagavad-Gītā. Van Buitenen says in this respect: "There is indeed a striking parallelism between the Gītā's reaction against the monism of the upaniṣads and Viśiṣṭādvaita's reaction against the monism of Advaita."¹² Despite this disparity in their approach to the Bhagavad-Gītā, the Gītā-bhāṣyas of both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja will be given special consideration because it is there that Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja specifically address themselves

¹⁰Cf., Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. I, p. 668; Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III, p. 97.

¹¹Cf., Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol II, p. 665; Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol III, p. 100.

¹²Van Buitenen, Rāmānuja on the Bhagavad-Gītā 2nd ed; (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968), p. 4.

to the general topic of this work; the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana. The Bhagavad-Gītā itself is the best locus for articulating this relation for two fundamental reasons: 1) One way of interpreting the Gītā is that the teaching of dharma is tapered according to the degree of Self-knowledge attained. Arjuna is first told to perform his caste duty - to fight. It is disclosed subsequently that he essentially had no choice as Kriṣṇa was the real agent. Arjuna had to reach a certain level of Self-knowledge before he was ready for the radical re-definition of dharma in chapter eleven. 2) A paradoxical freedom from dharma is described whereby one ceases to see the Self as a do-er. The guṇas ("qualities" or "constituents"), not the Self, are described as responsible for dharma and one achieves freedom from their activity by an act of de-personalization, i.e. by ceasing to identify with them.

I will refer to Rāmānuja's major works: his Srī-bhāṣya, Gītā-bhāṣya and Vedārthasaṃgraha as well as the more esoteric works attributed to him by tradition such as the Saraṇāgati-Gadya and the Gadya-Trayam. Although the major portion of my argument is drawn from his Srī-bhāṣya, Gītā-bhāṣya and Vedārthasaṃgraha, the minor works throw light on the issue of prapatti ("surrender") which is often only implicitly stated in the major works. Reference is also made to the later Viśiṣṭādvaitic text, the Yatīndramatadīpikā,¹³ by Srīnivāsadāsa, (c. early seventeenth century), because of its clear explication of many implicit distinctions in Rāmānuja's thought such as the distinction between the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna ("substantive

¹³Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III, p. 127; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. I, p. 670.

some of the differences in their understanding of these terms.

(i) A Common Model of Dharma for Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja

Although some translations of the term "dharma" are extensive, they are not totally exhaustive. For example, Monier-Williams lists the following meanings of "dharma": "That which is established or firm, steadfast decree, statue, ordinance, law; usage, practice, customary observance or prescribed conduct, duty; right, justice; virtue, morality, religious merit, good works"¹⁷. The translations would cover the provisional understanding of dharma used by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their common incorporation of the major portion of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā definition. As we shall see, however, much of their doctrine is a direct criticism of many of the implications of the Mīmāṃsaka definition of the term which concerns the purport of the Vedas. As shall be shown both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja extended their understanding of dharma beyond their provisional definition.

One cannot begin to grasp dharma as understood by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja before one comprehends how the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā understood the concept. Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja address themselves to the Mīmāṃsaka understanding of dharma at the commencement of their respective commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtras. Most of the discussion on the word "atha" in the first verse of their respective commentaries centers around the question of whether dharma as defined by the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā is a pre-requisite for the inquiry into Brahman of the Vedānta or Uttara-Mīmāṃsā.

¹⁷

Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960). Herein after cited as: Monier Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary.

consciousness") and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna ("attributive consciousness").

The followers of Rāmānuja have been classified under one of two schools: the Vadagalai school (here referred to as the "Northern school"), and the Tengalai school (here referred to as the "Southern school").

The foremost proponent of the Northern school is Vedānta Deśika who¹⁴ was born about 1268 A.D. Special attention has been given to his Īśa-bhāṣya and his Srimad Rahasyatrayasara because of their concern with the relation of Self-knowledge and dharma with reference to sādhana.

The foremost proponent of the Southern school is Lokāchārya who¹⁵ succeeded Parāśara Bhaṭṭārya, born c. 1078 A.D., the direct successor of Rāmānuja. Apart from the relationship to Bhaṭṭārya and his birth¹⁶ few scholars have set a definite date to Lokāchārya's life. Lokāchārya's Mumukshupadi is considered because it radicalizes the implicit emphasis in Rāmānuja on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in prapatti, and, therefore, throws light on an area of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

3. General Introduction to Terms and Concepts

Self-knowledge and dharma as understood by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja are the two primary concepts examined in this thesis. In this subsection, I will provide a provisional definition of both terms that would be acceptable to both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja before proceeding to point out

¹⁴Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III, p. 119.

¹⁵Parāśara Bhaṭṭārya's Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bashya is very briefly referred to in this work because of its clear articulation of the hiddenness of the Antaryāmin ("Inner Controller").

¹⁶Cf., Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III, p. 135; Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 669.

Jaimini, the author of the definitive Mīmāṃsā Sūtra, defines dharma as follows: "That which is indicated by the Vedic Injunction as¹⁸ conducive to welfare." Kumārila, commenting on this text, expands this definition: "Dharma...does not stand for the merit that is obtained by the doing of good deed, by right conduct; it is used in the much wider sense of what should be done, i.e., Duty."¹⁹ Prabhākara, the author of the Br̥hatī commentary, argues that dharma is the central purport of the Vedas, specifically dharmic injunctions, and not statements about existing things which thus become subsidiary (śeṣa) to the former (śeṣin): "The meaning of only these Vedic texts has to be investigated which are injunctive; because it is only the Sentence laying down²⁰ something to be done that is really directly expressive." The last point is critical for both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja reverse this position and argue that the purport of the Vedas is not to point to dharmic injunctions, but, rather, to point to statements about existing things, specifically, to statements about Brahman as the sole Reality. They disagree with one another on whether the inquiry into dharma is a necessary and natural part of the inquiry into Brahman. Śaṅkara, in refuting the Mīmāṃsā position, states in his Sūtra-bhāṣya: "We have proved so far that the only aim and the motive of the Vedānta-passages is to make us aware of the fact that Brahman is the Self of everything, that it

¹⁸G. Jha, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā in Its Sources (Benares: Benares Hindu University, 1942), p. 173. Herein after cited as: G. Jha, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā in Its Sources.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 173.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 173-74.

has no relation with action." ²¹ Rāmānuja, in commenting on the same sūtra from the Brahma-Sūtras, states that, "His (i.e. Brahmā's) constituting the true purport of the scripture is (the same as His being) the highest object of human pursuit; because the Brahman who is the highest object of human pursuit is alone intended to be denoted (by the sāstras)." ²² Though Rāmānuja explicitly admits a real Ātma-vidhi (the injunction pertaining to Self-knowledge) as dhyāna-vidhi (the injunction pertaining to meditation), as opposed to Śaṅkara who explicitly opposes such a dhyāna-vidhi, ²³ he never argues that the purport of the Vedas as such is this vidhi. Similarly, despite Rāmānuja's more explicit endorsement of viśama-samuccaya (the view that karma and jñāna are combined though karma is subsidiary to jñāna), he agrees with Śaṅkara that ultimately only Brahma-vidyā confers mokṣa. In his small Siddhānta Rāmānuja states: "We admit that release consists only in the cessation of Nescience, and that this cessation results entirely from the knowledge of Brahman." ²⁴ Thus both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja disagree with the Mīmāṃsā contention that dharmic injunctions are the purport of the Vedas. On these issues, the Mīmāṃsā constitute a common negative standard for both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

²¹ Śaṅkara, Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4, trans. V. H. Date (Bombay: Munshiram Manoharlal Pub., 1973) I, p. 32. Herein after cited as: Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date.

²² Rāmānuja, Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.4, trans. M. Rangacharya and M.B.V. Aiyangar (Madras: Educational Publishing Co., 1961) I, p. 253. Herein after cited as: Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya.

²³ Although as we shall see its possibility implicitly is a problematic for Śaṅkara, especially for the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara.

²⁴ Rāmānuja, Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, trans. G. Thibaut (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971) i, p. 11. Herein after cited as: Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut.

In their provisional understanding of dharma, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja incorporate much of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsaka definition of dharma in their uses of the term.²⁵ This is illustrated in Śaṅkara's definition of dharma, in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, as "virtue",²⁶ "religious rites",²⁷ "action to achieve liberation",²⁸ "virtuous deeds",²⁹ "obligatory duties".³⁰ In his Śrī-bhāṣya Rāmānuja defines dharma in a manner similar to Śaṅkara as "ritualistic works",³¹ "merit", "duty", "religious merit",³² "religious duties".³³

Their use and interpretation of the term dharma often differed not only from the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsakas, but also from each other. Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja demonstrate an extended understanding of the term "dharma" which exceeds the notion of dharma as ritual injunction. This is clear in their Gītā-bhāṣyas where the meaning of dharma is extended

²⁵ Van Buitenen comments on this incorporation of Mīmāṃsaka material by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja as follows: "For all Vedāntins, however differently they may ultimately conceive of the relation of the two mīmāṃsās, the First Exegesis is propaedeutic to the second" from Rāmānuja, Vedārthasaṃgraha, trans J. A. B. Van Buitenen (Poona: Deccan College, 1956), p. 39. Herein after cited as: Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen.

²⁶ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.IV.6.

²⁷ Ibid., II.1.1.

²⁸ Ibid., II.II.33.

²⁹ Ibid., III.1.5.

³⁰ Ibid., III.IV.34.

³¹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibuat, I.1.1.

³² Ibid., I.1.4.

³³ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, II.1.1.

beyond the simple meaning of ritual injunction to include the larger concept of the duty proper to one's caste (svadharma) and stage of life (āśramadharma).

Śaṅkara tends to be more conservative in his use of dharma in his Sūtra-bhāṣya than in his Gītā-bhāṣya³⁴ while Rāmānuja employs an extended definition of dharma both in his Gītā-bhāṣya and in his Śrī-bhāṣya. In I.IV.6 of his Śrī-bhāṣya Rāmānuja defines dharma as:³⁵ "a means of attainment" i.e. an upāya (means of realization). When Rāmānuja refers to "religious duties" or dharmic acts as "constituting the worship of the Supreme Person"³⁶ he is defining dharma as a religious act. This extended sense of dharma as worship is even clearer in his

³⁴ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, I.1.1, pp. 7-8; I.1.4, pp. 18-20; Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV.27. There is more of a discontinuity between Śaṅkara's understanding of the Brahma-Sūtras and his understanding of the Gītā than between Rāmānuja's understanding of the same texts because of Śaṅkara's insistence that smṛti should always be subordinated to śruti. Van Buitenen comments on this distinction between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja as follows: "One of the most striking features of Śaṅkara's exegetical method is the distinction that he introduces between the pure Vedānta texts, which set forth the paramārthajñāna and the far more sizeable texts in which definite upāsanas are set forth describing the absolute in anthropomorphic terms and which consequently are vyavahārika.... Rāmānuja who does not allow Śaṅkara's distinction between an 'ideal' and a 'practical' reality, rejects consequently its twofold reflection in śruti. To Rāmānuja all śrutis are equally authoritative." (Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, pp. 57-58.)

³⁵ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya I.IV.6.II, p. 209.

³⁶ Ibid., II.1.1, Vol. II, p. 304.

Gītā-bhāṣya where he refers to bhakti as: "This dharma...which is of the form of being surpassingly dear on account of its having for its object Myself who am surpassingly dear."³⁷ Whereas the provisional understanding of dharma as "obligatory duties" or "duty" tends to treat dharma as self-explanatory, i.e. as intelligible without reference to Brahman, this extended sense of dharma as worship tends to treat dharma as comprehensible only from the standpoint of the Lord. This extended sense of dharma as worship is confirmed in Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "transposition strategy" whereby dharmic problems are transferred to the "level" of the Lord.³⁸

In his Gītā-bhāṣya³⁹ Śaṅkara, like Rāmānuja,⁴⁰ extends the meaning of the term dharma from its restricted sense of "ritual injunction", to the more generalized sense of the duty proper to one's caste (svadharma) and stage of life (āśramadharma). He extends the meaning to include his

³⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya trans. M.R. Sampatkumaran (Madras: Prof. M. Rangaçharya Memorial Trust, 1969) IX, 3, p. 248. Herein after cited as: Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya.

³⁸ The "transposition strategy" should be defined as the re-examination of a dharmic problem that was first examined from the first level of truth (vyavahārika) by transferring it to the second level of truth (paramārthika). As shall be shown in Chapter Two, despite Rāmānuja's explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth, he offers a methodological equivalent in his dissociative usage of the Self-body relation (śarīra-śarīrin). Similarly, Rāmānuja offers a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "transposition strategy" in the transference of a dharmic problem to the "level" of the Lord, as illustrated in his understanding of prapatti (Self-surrender).

³⁹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, trans. A. M. Sastri, 6th ed. (Madras: V. Venkateswara Sastrulu Trust [diacriticals absent]), II, 31. Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya.

⁴⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.31, 37.

"primary sense" (paramārtham)⁴¹ of the term where dharma equals jñāna-yoga⁴² ("the discipline of knowledge"). This is illustrated in two passages in his Gītā-bhāṣya. In XIV:27, he refers to the "Dharma of Jnana-Yoga or wisdom devotion" which focuses on the Lord who is the "Eternal Dharma", "the abode of Eternal Dharma of Wisdom-Devotion, and the abode of the unfailing Bliss born of that Devotion."⁴³ In IX:2, he includes this "primary-sense" of dharma as part of Ātma-vidyā. He says: "What is possessed of many a desirable quality may be opposed to Dharma; but not so is the knowledge of Atman opposed to Dharma; on the other hand it is not separable from Dharma, i.e. not opposed to it."⁴⁴ (dharmādanapetam). Even more pointedly, in IX,3, he simply refers to "...this Dharma viz⁴⁵ knowledge of the Self".

It is in Śaṅkara's "primary sense" of this term, i.e. to dharma⁴⁶ as jñāna-yoga, and not in his "secondary sense" of the term that the similarity with Rāmānuja's extended sense of dharma as worship emerges for Rāmānuja used bhakti (devotion) as synonymous with upāsana

⁴¹ Śaṅkara distinguishes between the penultimate or secondary sense of a term (gauṇam) and the ultimate or "primary sense" of a term (paramārtham) in VI.1 and XVIII.66 of his Gītā-bhāṣya. See Chapter One for a full discussion of these terms. He argues in his Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII,66 that the "secondary sense" is mithyāpratyaya (an illusory notion). Cf. Chapter One.

⁴² This idea will be fully investigated in Chapter One.

⁴³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV,27.

⁴⁴ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IX,2.

⁴⁵ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IX,3.

⁴⁶ As we shall see in Chapter One, the "secondary sense" of a term is often linked with avidyā. This is the case, whenever the "secondary sense" involves an element of adhyāsa. Cf., Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII:66.

(meditation) and vedana (knowledge).⁴⁷ It is this explicit similarity between Śaṅkara's "primary-sense" (paramārtham) of dharma as jñāna-yoga and Rāmānuja's use of the term "bhakti" that provides the basis for what I have designated as the "implicit theism" in Śaṅkara and for Śaṅkara's implicit emphasis on the reality of the Ātma-vidhi.⁴⁸ This association is made on the basis that despite the fact that Śaṅkara argues against a real continuity between dharma in its "secondary sense" and Self-knowledge, he does admit of a real continuity between dharma in its "primary sense" as jñāna-yoga and Self-knowledge. It is with respect to this latter understanding that the convergence with Rāmānuja emerges.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue against the ritualistic emphasis of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsakas, specifically against the conception of dharma as an autonomous, self-regulating principle requiring no supervision (i.e. from a Lord) and explainable solely in terms of apūrva ("the unseen force of karma"). Thus in III.II.40, in their respective commentaries on the Brahmā-Sūtras, both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue against the Mīmāṃsakas, that the Lord and not the principle of apūrva is responsible for the fruits of action.

Just as they both argue that dharma is not autonomous and self-regulating, they both argue that dharma is not self-explanatory. It can only be ultimately "known" from the standpoint of Brahman.⁴⁹ From this

⁴⁷ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

⁴⁸ I will investigate these themes in Chapter Four.

⁴⁹ This is so whether the standpoint of Brahman is understood as the second level of truth (paramārthika) as with Śaṅkara, or as the "level" of the Lord as with Rāmānuja.

Śaṅkara argues against the Mīmāṃsakas that we can only finally "know" dharma from the standpoint of its sublation in Brahma-vidyā. He maintains a continuity in the order of discovery between both senses of dharma and Self-knowledge through his contention that dharma can be "known" only a-posteriori, i.e. from the standpoint of Brahma-vidyā. Although Rāmānuja does not use the language of sublation, he similarly argues that dharma is not self-explanatory; it can only be known from the "level" of the Lord. Thus with reference to the order of knowing, both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja use dharma and Brahman as joint concepts. This is the case even though, when speaking of the "secondary sense" of dharma, Śaṅkara insists that they are totally discontinuous pursuits; that is, the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in Śaṅkara refers to the order of knowing and not to the order of being.

Thus both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja employ some "transposition strategy"⁵⁰ whereby dharmic problems are viewed from the level of Brahman, whether understood as the paramārthika or as the "level" of the Lord. Śaṅkara⁵¹ transposes dharmic problems to the second level of truth (Paramārthika) while Rāmānuja, despite his explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth, presents a methodological equivalent in his transference of dharmic problems to the "level" of the Lord. This is especially illustrated in his second interpretation of the carama-śloka of the Gītā. Their common employment of a "transposition strategy" distinguishes them from the Mīmāṃsaka view of dharma as self-regulating and self-explanatory.

⁵⁰Cf., footnote # 38.

⁵¹Śaṅkara does not actually use the term "transposition strategy". This term has been coined to express his strategy of transposing dharmic problems to the Paramārthika.

Most important, they both agree that only Brahma-vidyā can confer mokṣa, not dharma as Jaimini had argued.

(ii) A Common Model of Self-knowledge for Both Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja

Because of its latitude, the following translation of the term "ātman" can be applied to both Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja: "the soul, principle of life and sensation,...self, abstract individual, essence, nature,... the understanding, intellect, mind, the highest personal principle of life."⁵²

Despite the surface similarities between Rāmānuja and the Mīmāṃsakas⁵³ on the nature of the Self the Mīmāṃsaka understanding of the Self constituted a common negative standard for both Rāmānuja and Śāṅkara. In their argument against the Mīmāṃsakas both maintained that the essential or proper form (svarūpa) of the Self must be of a homogenous nature, i.e. it cannot simultaneously be changing and un-changing, conscious and unconscious, active and inactive. As Śāṅkara continually⁵⁴ points out these conflicting attributes are the natural consequence of defining the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Self as an independent do-er,

⁵² Sir Monier William, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 135. Although Rāmānuja uses the term "ātman" to refer to both the Lord and the individual self, this work will initially focus on the latter in order to uncover any possible similarities with Śāṅkara. In accordance with this uncovering of similarities between Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja, the term "Self" will be capitalized in this work. The justification for this use in reference to Rāmānuja is that the individual self in its extended sense is comprehended by the term "Self" as capitalized.

⁵³ Both Rāmānuja and the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsakas understand the individual self as plural, as polarized in terms of subject and object and as a conscious agent.

⁵⁴ Cf., Śāṅkara's introductory section on adhyāsa to his Sūtra-bhāṣya.

cognizer and enjoyer. ⁵⁵ Sabara, the Mīmāṃsaka, ⁵⁶ defined the Self as follows: "The Act of Cognizing presupposes an Agent who does that act; and an Agent must be an Entity distinct from the Act itself. And it is this Agent of the act of Cognizing, Desiring and the like which we call 'Soul', Ātman." ⁵⁷ Radhakrishnan argues that the Mīmāṃsaka understanding of the Self was in consequence of the attempt to reconcile the Self with the claims of dharma: "For the sake of the integrity of dharma, it is obliged to affirm the reality of the soul and regard it as a permanent being, possessing a body to whom the results of acts accrue." ⁵⁸ It was precisely the conception that dharma could make a difference to the Self in life here and hereafter that was criticized by both ⁵⁹ Saṅkara and Rāmānuja.

⁵⁵ It is the independent agency ascribed to the Self by the Mīmāṃsakas that is rejected by both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja, not simply the distinction between agent and activity. For Rāmānuja knowership is intrinsic to the Self while for Saṅkara agency and knowership belong to the Self only by ascription.

⁵⁶ Sabara was one of the first Mīmāṃsakas to write a commentary on Jaimini's Mīmāṃsa-Sūtras.

⁵⁷ G. Jha, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā in Its Sources, p. 27. The understanding of the Self reflected in this definition is acceptable to both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja but only with reference to the manifested nature of the Self.

⁵⁸ Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971) I, p. 375.

⁵⁹ According to Kumārila adjuncts induce a change in the Self. Technically the change is called knowledge. Unlike Prabhākara and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, Kumārila argues that the Self "suffers" change but only in the sense that modal changes are possible in the Self. This position is similar to Rāmānuja but with this fundamental difference: whereas Kumārila describes the Self in its fundamental nature as inert and non-sentient (jaḍa), Rāmānuja describes the Self both in its svarūpa and in its svabhāva as conscious (ajāḍa). (Cf., Kumārila, Slokavārtika st. 74 cited in M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1951), p. 302. Herein after cited as: Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy.)

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue against the Mīmāṃsakas that knowledge is inseparable from the self, not adventitious to it. Knowledge is never described as a transitory transformation (pariṇāma) in the self and thus separable from it as Kumārila had argued. Although they disagree about the nature of that Self-knowledge, both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue against the Mīmāṃsaka contention that deep sleep involves the absence of Self-knowledge.⁶⁰ Śaṅkara insists that because the self is of the very nature of Pure Consciousness it is present as such in deep sleep although obscured by ignorance, whereas Rāmānuja argues that the knowledge presented in deep sleep is both determinate and indistinct. Accordingly, Rāmānuja states in his Great Siddhānta that, "The object of the word 'I'...is that 'I' which consists of a uniform flow of Self-consciousness which persists in sleep, also, but is then not quite distinct."⁶¹ Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja both hold that knowledge is inseparable from the self. Śaṅkara is more radical than Rāmānuja in that he insists on their identity. Rāmānuja, although not insisting on a literal identity, argues that they both denote the same reality. He insists that knowledge understood here as the "substantive consciousness" (dharmi-bhūta-jñāna) constitutes the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Self. This "substantive consciousness" constitutes the similarity of Selves both to one another and to the Lord, and constitutes their essential inseparability. Rāmānuja

⁶⁰ Cf., G. Jha, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā in Its Sources, p. 35. It is interesting to observe that while both schools of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā subscribe to the theory that Self-knowledge is absent in deep sleep, Kumārila regards the self in deep sleep as characterized by the latent power to know (jñāna-sakti). (Cf., Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 305.)

⁶¹ Srī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 69.

says in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Between you and other beings there is equality ...on account of (your self and all other selves) being solely of the form of knowledge...Then you will see all beings without exception in Me, because of the similarity of the thing, the self, everywhere in its pure state, with My nature."⁶² Yet as this passage indicates all Selves only perceive this similarity to one another and to the Lord via the "attributive consciousness" (dharma-bhūta-jñāna). This perception occurs fragmentally in saṁsāra but wholly in mokṣa. This point is the basis for an implicit convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. The convergence specifically involves the parallel between the actual inseparability between the Selves and the Lord for Rāmānuja, and the actual non-difference between the Self and Brahman for Śaṅkara.⁶³ The importance of the doctrine of the "attributive consciousness" cannot be over-emphasized for it is this doctrine which is the fulcrum of one important point of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

Just as Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree that dharma can only be ultimately "known" from the standpoint of Brahman, they also agree that the Self cannot be "known" apart from Brahman, whether understood as Nirguṇa (without attributes) or as Saguṇa (with attributes). Rāmānuja employs the image of "theft" to describe those who attempt to know themselves separately from the Lord: "'Theft', means, indeed the

⁶²Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 35, p. 138; cf., V, 7 and VI, 29-34. Compare Vedārthasaṁgraha, Van Buitenen, #79: "...any member of the order of souls is, when abiding in its proper form, equal to any other member, because it has the common form of knowledge as nirvāṇa."

⁶³I will examine this point at length in Chapter Two.

entertainment of the idea of one's own property in regard to a thing which is another's and is intended solely for the use of that other."⁶⁴

His de-evaluation of "abstract Self-knowledge" and his emphasis on "concrete Self-knowledge"⁶⁵ is based on this insistence.

The Lord, qua Antaryāmin ("Inner controller"), constitutes the essence of the Self and is central to the extended definition of the Self according to Rāmānuja: "Men...have no knowledge of Him who having entered into themselves as their inner soul by being their immanent Ruler, remains with them".⁶⁶ This is stated even more clearly in the following: "By the Supreme Self, who abides as his own Self, the individual Self has his knowledge imparted to him."⁶⁷ Thus the distinction between the Self and Brahman that Rāmānuja argues for never entails even the possibility of knowing the Self apart from Brahman (as Īśvara) or of the Self as existing in absolute separation from Brahman; rather, the Self is described as an eternal mode of the Lord, as His body: "The relation of body and soul exists at all times between cit-acit (on the one hand) and the Supreme Self (on the other)."⁶⁸ Śaṅkara argues that not only is the knowledge of the Ātman inseparable from the knowledge of Brahman, but the two are synonymous. For Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja the Self best perceives its inseparability from Brahman from

⁶⁴ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 12, p. 85.

⁶⁵ See Chapter Three for a full explanation and development of these terms.

⁶⁶ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, p. 236.

⁶⁷ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.IV.23, Vol. II, p. 274.

⁶⁸ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2, (translation mine).

an a-posteriori standpoint, i.e. from the standpoint of liberation (mokṣa). Thus the Self in mokṣa, even for Rāmānuja, realizes that, in fact, it was never separated from the Lord. The separation was only apparent.

It is from this standpoint that the implicit convergence between what has been designated as the "as-if duality"⁶⁹ in Śaṅkara (between the Self and Brahman) and the "as-if separability"⁷⁰ in Rāmānuja, (between the Self and the Lord) becomes clearer. Again, it is from this a-posteriori standpoint that one can uncover a similar model of mokṣa for both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. Both agree that the Self-realization in mokṣa is not an attainment in the strict sense of the term. That is, it never entails taking on a new nature. For Rāmānuja the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Self and consciousness do not change in samsāra. Only the manifested nature (svabhāva) of the Self and consciousness change. For both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, Self-realization is not an attainment, strictly speaking, but a recovery of its original nature. Rāmānuja states at the end of his Śrī-bhāṣya that, "That particular condition which this individual self reaches...consists of the manifestation of his own essential nature, but it does not consist of the production of a new form."⁷¹ Śaṅkara, in commenting on the same sūtra from the Vedānta-Sūtras, states that, "The word 'sva' in 'one's own form' (svena repeṇa) clearly shows that the form in which the soul manifests is not

⁶⁹I have employed the preface "as-if" here to indicate that the duality is only apparent, and not ultimately real.

⁷⁰For a full examination of this convergence, see Chapter Two.

⁷¹/Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, IV.IV.1, Vol. III, p. 534.

new, but its real own form."⁷²

Although Śaṅkara argues that the buddhi is sublated in mokṣa, he admits that saṃsāra is constituted by actual changes in the buddhi or vṛtti-jñāna which is falsely inferred as pertaining to actual changes in the Self. This is similar to Rāmānuja's insistence that the transition from saṃsāra to mokṣa refers not to an actual change in the Self but to the shift from a contracted dharma-bhūta-jñāna to an expansive dharma-bhūta-jñāna. Mokṣa is thus the recovery of the original all-expansive nature of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna.⁷³⁷⁴

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue against the Mīmāṃsakas that mokṣa is a positive rather than a negative condition. For them mokṣa involves the fullness of both bliss and knowledge not the absence of bliss and knowledge as the Mīmāṃsakas contend.⁷⁵

These explicit points of doctrinal agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on both the nature of dharma and Self-knowledge are the basis for the implicit areas of convergence between them. By means of a methodological examination of the key doctrines used one sees a development of many of the implications of the explicit points of doctrinal agreement in these implicit areas of convergence.

⁷²Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, IV.IV.1, Vol. I, p. 389.

⁷³The parallelism here is primarily structural and not doctrinal for whereas Śaṅkara argues that the buddhi, being sublataleable, is not ultimately real; Rāmānuja does not argue that the buddhi is sublataleable; rather, for Rāmānuja, the buddhi persists even in mokṣa.

⁷⁴I will fully examine this parallelism in Chapter Four.

⁷⁵Cf., G. Jha, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā In Its Sources, pp. 36-39.

(iii) Differences between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the Concept of Dharma

Their different interpretations of the word "atha" ("then"), the first word of the Brahma-Sūtras, is perhaps the best and most condensed summary of their differences on dharma. The first sentence of the sūtra states, "Then therefore the inquiry into Brahman." Śaṅkara is very insistent in arguing that "atha" does not refer to the knowledge of dharma as a necessary pre-requisite for the inquiry into Brahman; rather, "atha" refers to the following antecedent conditions: the discrimination between the transitory and the eternal; non-attachment; the possession of virtues such as tranquillity and restraint, and the yearning for liberation.⁷⁶ Śaṅkara's reasons for rejecting the knowledge of dharma as a necessary pre-requisite to Brahman knowledge provide the basis for critically distinguishing his position from that of Rāmānuja. In the following excerpt he outlines his reasons:

Knowledge of Religious duty and that of Brahman are not so related to each other that the study of the one will prepare a person to study the other. They differ in subject-matter and in results. Brahma-jñāna ends in salvation and eternal bliss, while Dharma-jñāna enjoins performance of religious acts while Brahma-jñāna does not...Brahman being eternal and an ever-accomplished fact, the knowledge of it is not something which will accrue at some future time as the result of human effort. The fruit of Dharma, on the other hand, is to be accomplished at some future time by the performance of some future time by the performance of some religious act...Whereas the knowledge about the Brahman is the immediate result of the Upaniṣadic statement, without requiring any intermediate human activity, the knowledge about Dharma is dependent not only on the statement from the Brahmana, but on human activity too.

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⁷⁶ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.1.

⁷⁷ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date I.1.1, pp. 7-8.

Thus Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā are regarded by Śaṅkara as two discontinuous disciplines differing in their respective aims, pre-requisites and results.⁷⁸ In his Gītā-bhāṣya Śaṅkara goes even further and explicitly links dharma with ignorance (avidyā). Dharma is described as actually causing bondage: "He from whom all desires have departed...incurs no sin which will produce evil effects. Even dharma is a sin, - in the case of him who seeks liberation, - inasmuch as it causes bondage. He is liberated from both (dharma and adharma) i.e. he is liberated from Samsara."⁷⁹ For Śaṅkara dharma becomes appropriate simply for the uninitiated man, and solely from the first level of truth (vyavahārika). What is most important is the implication that the discontinuity between Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā on dharma and Self-knowledge is based on the discontinuity between avidyā/vidyā, and on the non-relational nature of Self-knowledge. As T. R. V. Murti notes on this point: "To say that relation is of the nature of the relation between the false and the real is to say that all relations are false."⁸⁰

Śaṅkara rejects the view that knowledge and action are equally efficacious (jñāna-karma-samuccaya) in leading to liberation, but he does allow for what Suresvara terms "sequential combination" (krama-samuccaya)

⁷⁸ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4, pp. 19-20 (Date).

⁷⁹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 21, p. 137. See also IV, 36.

⁸⁰ T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita" (Amalner: Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1958), p. 142. Herein after cited as: T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita."

in the sense of giving a provisional value to dharma prior to the "arising" of Self-knowledge. When dharma is used in the sense of karma,⁸¹ as it often is in his Gītā-bhāṣya, the renunciation of dharma is described as accessory to Ātma-vidyā: "...renunciation of all action is enjoined on the seeker of Moksha...."⁸² Sāṅkara qualifies this somewhat by stating that the renunciation of karma involves primarily the renunciation of the idea of agency as pertaining to the Self rather than the act as such. This renunciation involves an act of "de-personalization" whereby one perceives it not as "my act" but as "that act". Such an act is not performed by the Self but by the guṇas. Certainly the most important qualification of his explicit insistence on the discontinuity between dharma and Self-knowledge pertains to his use of dharma in its "primary sense" (paramārtham).⁸³ The "primary sense" of dharma as jñāna-yoga is co-extensive with the "secondary sense" (gauṇam) of Self-knowledge as vyrtti-jñāna ("modifying consciousness") but not with Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" as svārūpa-jñāna ("essential consciousness").⁸⁴ This qualification is crucial in comparing Sāṅkara with Rāmānuja on the relation of dharma and Self-knowledge.

⁸¹ Sāṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.10.

⁸² Sāṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya Introduction, Chapter III, p. 86.

⁸³ Cf., footnotes 41 to 45, p. 14.

⁸⁴ Svarūpa-jñāna or the "primary sense" of Self-knowledge can only be described as identical with mokṣa itself. Vyrtti-jñāna or the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge is the process that is instrumental in leading to the reflection of svārūpa-jñāna. This distinction which was implicit in Sāṅkara, is made explicit in Post-Sāṅkarite writings. Cf., S. S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri (Madras: University of Madras, 1961), p. 291. For a full examination of this distinction see Chapter Four. Herein after cited as: S. S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri.

Rāmānuja's interpretation of the word "atha" differs sharply from Śaṅkara's view for he does understand "atha" as referring to the inquiry into dharma as the necessary antecedent for the inquiry into Brahman. Therefore, he states that, "Since the fruit of works known through the earlier part of the Mīmāṃsā is limited and non-permanent and since the fruit of the knowledge of Brahman which knowledge is to be reached through the latter part of the Mīmāṃsā is unlimited and permanent; for this reason Brahman is to be known after the knowledge of works has previously taken place."⁸⁵ The inquiry into dharma is described as accessory to the inquiry into Ātma-vidyā and not as equivalent to it. They are nevertheless inseparably united according to Rāmānuja, and can be compared to two parts of the same body. He says that, "The inquiry into works and that into Brahman constitute one body of doctrine."⁸⁶ Thus the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā are not two discontinuous disciplines as with Śaṅkara, but one continuous discipline. The continuity is based on his extended definition of dharma as worship. According to Rāmānuja both are concerned with the worship of the Lord, but in different ways: "Whereas the pūrvabhāga describes the ritual acts by which God, the Supreme Brahman, is worshipped indirectly in His multiple manifestations of the Vedic deities, the uttarabhāga describes the way in which God is directly worshipped by an immediate knowledge of perfect love."⁸⁷ The relation of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā to the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā is described in a manner similar to the

^{85/} Srī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 5.

^{86/} Srī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 5.

⁸⁷ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, Introduction, p. 55.

description of the relation of the body (śarīra) to the Self (śarīrin) where the former is an accessory (śeṣa) to the latter (śeṣin), and as a part (aṁśa) of the whole (aṁśin).⁸⁸ There is no co-relation of dharma with avidyā, but when dharma is understood as karma Rāmānuja does argue that kāmya-karma or action generated by desire is discontinuous and antagonistic to Ātma-vidyā. Such actions are "anṛta" or actions contrary to the law (ṛta): "The word 'anrita' therefore denotes actions of a different kind i.e. such as aim at worldly results and thus stand in the way of the soul reaching Brahman."⁸⁹ It should be noticed that in interpreting the term "anṛtāpidhānaḥ"⁹⁰ ("hidden by the untrue") Śaṅkara understands "anṛta" as referring to the category of māyā ("illusion"). In accordance with his seven-fold objections against māyā-vāda,⁹¹ Rāmānuja understands "anṛta" not in terms of māyā, but as "actions of a different kind, i.e. such as aim at worldly results and thus stand in the way of the soul reaching Brahman."⁹² For Rāmānuja dharma is not linked with avidyā, but, rather, it is admitted as a real means to mokṣa which primarily entails the purification of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. This emphasis on sādhana as a real process does not mean that the essential

⁸⁸ The relation between these two disciplines is outlined in his Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1. The analogy of the śarīra-śarīrin is suggested in this excerpt, "The inquiry into works and...into Brahman constitute one body of doctrine." Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 5.

⁸⁹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 125.

⁹⁰ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya trans. Dr. G. Jha (Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1942), VIII, iii, 3. Herein after cited as Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya.

⁹¹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

⁹² Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 125.

nature (svarūpa) of the Self or the essential nature (svarūpa) of consciousness is changed. It means only that the manifested nature (svabhāva) of consciousness is changed.

Although Rāmānuja rejects the view which advocates a combination of knowledge and works, i.e. jñāna-karma-samuccaya,⁹³ he accepts a mitigated form of samuccaya: viśama-samuccaya. Dharma can thus be understood according to viśama-samuccaya as accessory to Ātma-vidyā.

In marked contrast to Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja insists in his Gītā-bhāṣya⁹⁴ that Self-realization is the goal of dharma. Dharma is described co-relatively as based on Self-knowledge, specifically the knowledge of the Self as distinct from the body. In Rāmānuja's alternate interpretation of the carama-sloka of the Gītā, however, there is a suggestion of discontinuity between dharma and Ātma-vidyā in the implicit reference to prapatti ("surrender"). In this instance the renunciation of dharmas as upāyas should be taken literally, not just in the implied sense of renouncing the sense of agency and attachment to the fruits of action, etc. The designation of the Lord as the siddhopāya, "the eternally established means" becomes the ultimate means (upāya) to mokṣa. Karma-yoga ("the discipline of action"), jñāna-yoga ("the discipline of knowledge") and bhakti-yoga ("the discipline of devotion") thus become subordinated to the siddhopāya.⁹⁵ Prapatti entails a new Self-knowledge; specifically,

⁹³ See infra, ft. ##62,63.

⁹⁴ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.52.

⁹⁵ The Southern School go even further in arguing that man's upāyas interfere with the siddhopāya which thus becomes designated as the only means. Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #207.

the awareness that we have always been the Lord's and that it is only by surrendering ourselves to the Lord that Self-realization occurs. This emphasis involves a criticism of any Self-realization achieved by one's own efforts.

(iv) Differences Between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their Concept of the Ātman and Ātma-jñāna

Śaṅkara argues that the Ātman and Ātma-jñāna are identical. Self-knowledge is thus not added on to the Self as such; rather, Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" (svarūpa-jñāna)⁹⁷ is identical with mokṣa. It is a pre-given, not attained through dharma. Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" as vr̥tti-jñāna should be distinguished from the Self as such for it is by the purification of the former that the Ātman can be reflected and thus "known": "A modification of the intellect called an action ends in a result which in itself is the reflection of Knowledge, the Self. It is for this reason that this modification is called knowledge in a secondary sense."⁹⁸ It is here that the convergence between the thought of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja begins to emerge. Rāmānuja argues that the Self can only be known through the purification of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. Dharma in its "primary sense" as jñāna-yoga

⁹⁶ I will fully explore this implicit discontinuity in Rāmānuja and its possible co-relation with Śaṅkara in Chapter Three.

⁹⁷ See *infra* ft. 84, p. 26 on the distinction between Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna and Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" as vr̥tti-jñāna.

⁹⁸ Upadēsa-Sāhasrī, trans. Swami Jagadananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math., 1973), Part One, Chapter Two, #77, p. 47. Herein after cited as Upadēsa-Sāhasrī.

points to the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna and in this sense admits of a continuity that is similar to Rāmānuja's position. Self-knowledge in Śaṅkara's usual use of the term, in its "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna, is totally discontinuous with dharma because it is equated with mokṣa.

Rāmānuja does not treat the Self and Self-knowledge as synonymous. He argues that they are distinct yet inseparable. Unlike Śaṅkara who understands the Self as Pure Consciousness (Cit) only, Rāmānuja understands consciousness not as synonymous with the Self, but, rather, as the inseparable attribute of the Self. This is the "attributive consciousness" or the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. In his Great Siddhānta he attacks Śaṅkara's model of the Self as pure, non-dual consciousness (Cit). Rāmānuja insists that consciousness always possesses a dual structure because of its very intentionality, i.e. because it always points to something beyond itself. In his Śrī-bhāṣya, especially in the Great Siddhānta, Rāmānuja emphasizes the distinctness between the Self and its attributive consciousness, whereas in his Gītā-bhāṣya he emphasizes their inseparability.⁹⁹ The equality between the Selves and their similarity to the Lord is based on the fact that the Self is essentially of the nature of consciousness. Rāmānuja therefore refers to that "vision of equality", "which arises from their similarity to one another on account of their being solely of the form of knowledge."¹⁰⁰

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja have different concepts of the "Self-luminosity"

⁹⁹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, pp. 47-63 (Thibaut); Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.35.

¹⁰⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, 34, p. 183.

of the Self. For Śaṅkara, "Self-luminosity" refers to the capacity of the Self to intuit itself as the pure subject, not as any object of knowledge. He says, "By the word 'self' is meant that light which is different from one's body and organs and illumines them like such external lights as the sun, but is itself not illumined by anything else."¹⁰¹

"Self-luminosity" for Rāmānuja refers to the reflexive action of consciousness back into its substratum, the Self, in the midst of cognizing an object. Consciousness is understood both as referring to the Self, which is its substratum, and to objects. That these two are always illumined simultaneously is part of his idea of "Self-luminosity".

Whereas Śaṅkara argues that Pure Consciousness (Cit) is incapable of change, Rāmānuja argues that the manifested nature (svabhāva) of consciousness, although not its essential nature (svarūpa) is subject to change. Specifically, this change is its contraction in saṃsāra.

Śaṅkara speaks of the Self as Being (Sat), Pure Consciousness (Cit) and Bliss (Ānanda). This should not be understood as a definition in the usual sense, which points to qualities or differentia of a specific kind. Rather than being qualities of the Self as such, these designations are but three ways of denoting the self-same Ātman. On this point T. R. V. Murti observes the following: "The svarūpa-lakṣaṇa is a non-relational definition. Here the definiendum and the definition coincide. Sat is not a property of Brahman; it is not in Brahman or part of it. Similarly with Cit and Ananda."¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya trans. Swāmi Mādhavānanda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), IV.III.6, p. 602. Herein after cited as Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya.

¹⁰² T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita", p. 146.

Rāmānuja applies the threefold designation of Sat, Cit and Ānanda to Īśvara rather than to the Self, but he modifies the definition. Īśvara is understood not as synonymous with Sat, Cit and Ānanda, but as being characterized by True Being (Satya), Knowledge (Jñāna) and Bliss (Ānanda) as His "defining attributes" together with amalatva (purity) and anantatva (infinity).¹⁰⁴

Because Rāmānuja insists that one cannot know the Self without relation to the Lord, it is necessary to clarify his definition of the Self in its relation to the Lord. The Self is understood as an accessory (śeṣa) to the Lord (śeṣin) as ruled (niyāmya) by Him (niyantr), and as that which is to be grounded (adheya) in Him (ādhāra). This is in accordance with his definition of the body (śarīra) in II.1.9 of his Śrī-bhāṣya. Furthermore, the Self is referred to as a part (aṃśa) of the Lord (aṃśin), as a mode (prakāra) of the Lord (prakārin), and as an inseparable property (viśeṣaṇa) of the Lord (viśeṣya). The Self functions both as a substance and as an inseparable attribute of the Lord. Unlike Śaṅkara who insists that the Self is One, Rāmānuja argues for One Lord and plural Selves. It should be noted, however, that Śaṅkara admits of a provisional plurality in the sense of plural empirical selves (jīvas) from the first level of truth (vyavahārika), but this plurality is later disclosed to be a mere product of avidyā. It can never apply to the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of the Self. As I pointed out above, according to Rāmānuja the Ātman is essentially of the form of consciousness, which although

¹⁰³Cf., Taittirīya Upaniṣad II.1.1.

¹⁰⁴Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya III.III.13.

distinct as such from the Self, is part of its essential nature (svarūpa). This point is primary in locating the similarities between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the question of Self-knowledge in that knowledge is not separable from the Self.

Rāmānuja understands the Self not as Pure, non-dual Bliss (Ānanda), but as Ānandamaya (of the nature of bliss). Unlike Śaṅkara, he understands it as having some existence of its own,¹⁰⁵ and as different in each body.

Like Śaṅkara, however, he describes its essential nature (svarūpa) as eternal. Unlike Śaṅkara, however, he argues that the Ātman in its manifested nature (svabhāva) is a do-er, cognizer and enjoyer. The category of the empirical self (jīva) in Śaṅkara takes on these roles, but Śaṅkara explains this as due to the superimposition (adhyāsa) of agency etc., upon the non-dual Self while from the highest level of truth (Paramārthika) the jīva is the Ātman.

4. The Methodology Employed

I initially set out simply to contrast Śaṅkara's emphasis on the radical discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma with Rāmānuja's emphasis on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma by an examination of the key doctrines and methods of both for this relation. My initial plan was disrupted by what in fact happened as I read the primary texts¹⁰⁶ of Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara together. I did not start off

¹⁰⁵The independence referred to here is not an absolute one, as the selves as His modes can never be actually separated from Him.

¹⁰⁶Cf., Rāmānuja's Śrī-bhāṣya, Gītā-bhāṣya, Vedārthasaṃgraha and Śaṅkara's Sūtra-bhāṣya, Gītā-bhāṣya and his Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas.

with a doctrinal bias and super-impose it on the material; rather, the material itself naturally revealed these areas of convergence; specifically, the areas of convergence between the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja and the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, and between the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja and the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara.¹⁰⁷

My approach is not an exercise in apologetics, endorsing either Śaṅkara's or Rāmānuja's doctrinal a-priori's as such. The areas of structural convergence considered do not undercut the distinctiveness of those doctrinal a-priori's; rather, I examine the precise ways in which these areas of convergence co-exist with very real doctrinal differences.

The methodology used here is also not intended as a study in the "history of religions". Historical variables such as the possible influence of Maṇḍana on Śaṅkara, or of one specific text on another, are investigated only in so far as they throw light on the structural convergences that are being investigated. The methodology used here is an application of Vander Leeuw's phenomenological method. He states that, "'Structural connections' are never factual relationships nor causal connections. They do not of course, exclude the latter, but neither do they enunciate anything about them; they are valid only within the structural relations."¹⁰⁸ Thus the followers of Rāmānuja such as Vedānta Deśika and Lokāchārya and the followers of Śaṅkara such as Suresvara and Vacaspati Miśra who systematized much of the thinking of

¹⁰⁷ Cf., The Introduction for the "Major Constructs Used in this Work" for the fullest explication of these terms.

¹⁰⁸ Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1967), Vol. II, p. 673.

Maṇḍana Miśra, are considered only in so far as they clarify the areas of structural convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja themselves. This de-emphasis on historical variables is in accordance with the tradition of philosophical phenomenology; specifically, with Edmund Husserl's use of the époche.¹⁰⁹ Husserl insists that the époche brackets not only our "natural" attitudes, but also the historical conditioning of these attitudes.¹¹⁰ This is often referred to as the "historical reduction". In this work the application of the époche involves the bracketing of causal or historical connections.

I do not mean to imply by this that this approach is an exercise in "pure description" in the sense of being totally devoid of any pre-suppositions whatsoever. Such a claim would wrongly disregard the "hermeneutic circle" described aptly by Paul Ricoeur as follows: "We must understand in order to believe, but we must believe in order to understand."¹¹¹ More simply, because of the very intentional nature of consciousness (i.e., the fact that consciousness always intends something beyond itself) every intentional act of consciousness is an interpretative act. Because it is not purely descriptive in the absolute sense, the "expressions" of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, i.e. their doctrinal a-prioris,

¹⁰⁹ Husserl defines the époche as follows: "We put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the essence of the natural standpoint, we place in brackets whatever it includes respecting the nature of Being." Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, trans. W.R.B. Gibson (London: Collier-MacMillan Ltd.), p. 99. Herein after cited as: Husserl, *Ideas*.

¹¹⁰ "The philosophical epoche must be systematized and universalized to become philosophical reduction, or what might better be called a historical reduction." David Carr, *Phenomenology and the Problem of History* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 117.

¹¹¹ Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. E. Buchanan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 351.

are included in a bracketed form. Part of this investigation is devoted to a presentation of these "expressions" in bracketed form, in keeping with Ninian Smart's contention that, "Religious phenomenology requires not merely the oratio obliqua of beliefs that, but a bracketing of all that is being presented. This presentation, however, within brackets, uses many of the elements of Expression, not just doctrinal statements. Thus an important part of description is what may be called 'bracketed' Expression".¹¹² An example might serve to clarify this point: A purely descriptive account of a man praying could not be distinguished in itself from a descriptive account of a man who has just been shot in the knees and has thus fallen into a kneeling position. But by including the intention of the believer in a bracketed form, i.e. his intention to direct his prayer at an intended Focus, a personal Lord, one can distinguish between the two situations. Bracketed expressions thereby increase the intelligibility of a descriptive account.

I do in fact use a methodology that is phenomenological in the sense of being descriptive and non-judgmental although, as stated earlier, I do not claim pure neutrality as such. The central part of this investigation focuses on the common "meaning-structures" or areas of structural convergence within the distinct ontologies of Rāmanuja and Śaṅkara. These structural co-relations include factual or causal connections only in so far as they throw light on the structural co-relations. For this reason this methodology should be distinguished from Eliade's

¹¹² Ninian Smart, The Phenomenon of Religion (London: MacMillan, 1973), p. 33. Herein after cited as: Ninian Smart, The Phenomenon of Religion.

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"creative hermeutics" which sought to first describe these factual and causal connections in their own right, before proceeding to develop the possible "meaning-structures". The methodology employed here is closer to the traditional definition of the phenomenological method by E. Husserl. D. Sinha outlines this method as follows: "Phenomenology poses primarily a methodological program. It involves a line of analysis more than a system of truths regarding the nature and categories of reality. It strives to be thoroughly non committal so far as metaphysical questions are concerned. As a mode of analysis of experience which is neither to be psychological nor natural - scientific, phenomenology seeks to proceed with reference to meaning-essences." ¹¹⁴ The "meaning-essences" common to both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja, i.e. the areas of structural convergence such as their common structure of sādhana that exist within their very distinct ontologies, forms the central part of this investigation.

This investigation proceeds on two levels: the first is concerned with the points of difference in their ontologies, while the second level is concerned with the "meaning-essences" common to both. ¹¹⁵

In my consideration of their different ontologies in "level one" or what I call the "explicit Saṅkara" ¹¹⁶ and the "explicit Rāmānuja", ¹¹⁷

¹¹³ M. Eliade, The Quest (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 62.

¹¹⁴ D. Sinha, Studies in Phenomenology (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 108.

¹¹⁵ The structural convergence between jñāna-yoga in Saṅkara and prapatti in Rāmānuja is an example of a "meaning-essence" common to both.

¹¹⁶ The "explicit Saṅkara" is referred to in this thesis as "S₁".

¹¹⁷ The "explicit Rāmānuja" is referred to in this thesis as "R₁".

I employ a form of "bracketed expressions" whereby their doctrinal a-priori's are discussed but not endorsed; that is, I do not argue for Śaṅkara's or Rāmānuja's position as such. The consideration of the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "explicit Śaṅkara" include not only a bracketed expression of their explicit doctrinal a-priori's, but also the explicit strategies used to execute these doctrinal a-priori's. The methodology of Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara is "double-faced". Śaṅkara's methodology accounts for the explicit discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma¹¹⁸ and the apparent forms of continuity¹¹⁹ between the same simultaneously, while Rāmānuja's methodology accounts for both the explicit emphasis on continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma¹²⁰ and the implicit emphasis on a discontinuity between the same¹²¹ simultaneously. For this reason, the transition to the "second level" of this investigation is provided naturally by their methodologies for in this "second level" the "meaning-structures" common to both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara are usually methodological and not doctrinal.

The "second level" of this investigation focuses on the "meaning-structures" common to both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara such as their common structure of sādhana or the structural parallel between jñāna-yoga and prapatti. These common "meaning-structures" are revealed by a methodological examination of the key doctrines used by both thinkers

¹¹⁸ This is explicated in the "explicit Śaṅkara" or "S₁".

¹¹⁹ This is explicated in the "implicit Śaṅkara" or "S₂".

¹²⁰ This is explicated in the "explicit Rāmānuja" or "R₁".

¹²¹ This is explicated in the "implicit Rāmānuja" or "R₂".

to delineate the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma, which can only occur after a thorough examination of their methodologies.

While the "first level" of this investigation does not exclude methodological
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elements, the "second level" addresses itself primarily to methodological

concerns. In the methodological examination of their key doctrines, I examine the various ways in which these doctrines are actually used and, in so doing, un-cover some of the areas of tension between their doctrines and their methods. This can best be illustrated by the tension between

Rāmānuja's description of the Self-body relation, the śarīra-śarīrin as going against any hierarchical model of reality, and his implicit use of that doctrine as methodologically equal to Śaṅkara's two levels of
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truth. Although interpretative elements are included in the "second

level" of this investigation, they do not constitute an abandonment of the phenomenological method in that Rāmānuja is never reduced to Śaṅkara or vice versa. The distinctness of their ontologies is also not questioned; rather, the distinctness co-exists with the very areas of structural convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. The areas of structural convergence do not alter their doctrinal differences, and, therefore, the "second level" of this investigation should not be misread as interfering with the "first level". Whereas the "first level" of this investigation should be classified under "bracketed expression", the "second level" should be classified more as "structural description

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The "first level" restricts itself to an explication of that part of the methodology used to execute their doctrinal a-priori's. It does not include that part of the methodology which is applicable to the "implicit strand" in both.

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This will be investigated in Chapter Two of this thesis.

and explanation."¹²⁴ The "second level" must proceed from these very "bracketed expressions" of the "first level" which are often "suggestive of patterns of explanation of a structural kind".

Thus the areas of structural convergence should not be mis-read as doctrinal convergences nor as disregarding the uniqueness of each system.

5. An Identification of the Major Constructs:

The "Explicit Śaṅkara" ("S₁"); The
"Implicit Śaṅkara" ("S₂"); The "Explicit
Rāmānuja" ("R₁"); and, The "Implicit
 Rāmānuja" ("R₂")

As this thesis will concentrate on the relationship between these two strands in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, the "explicit Śaṅkara" ("S₁") and the "implicit Śaṅkara" ("S₂"), the "explicit Rāmānuja" ("R₁") and the "implicit Rāmānuja" ("R₂"), it is imperative that the nature and basis of these distinctions be clarified before proceeding further.

By the term "explicit", I mean not only what they manifestly say, but, also, their usual emphasis as evidenced in their doctrinal a-priori's. By the term "implicit", I mean not only what is left unsaid or implied in the former, but, also, their minor emphasis. For instance, Śaṅkara's reference to dharma as jñāna-yoga in his Gītā-bhāṣya¹²⁵ is "implicit" in the sense that it is not to be understood in light of his usual emphasis

¹²⁴ Cf., Ninian Smart's definition of these terms from The Phenomenon of Religion, pp. 39-42.

¹²⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IX,2.

in which he co-relates dharma with some form of avidyā¹²⁶. The "implicit" emphasis in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja is more evident in their Gītā-bhāṣyas and minor works than in their commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtras. Specific attention will be given to some of the differences between their definitions and uses of these terms in these respective texts.

By the term "implicit" I also mean to refer to that which is a development out of their "explicit" emphasis, including that which is left un-said in the latter. This "implicit" emphasis originates from certain key passages in their texts where their usual emphasis on this relation is substantially qualified. A good example of such a key passage is Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the carama-sloka where the implicit reference to prapatti entails a substantial qualification of Rāmānuja's usual emphasis on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. A corresponding example of such a key passage from Śaṅkara is his reference, in his Gītā-bhāṣya, to nirguṇa-bhakti as equal to jñāna-yoga. This qualifies the usual de-emphasis on theism in Advaita Vedānta.

It is critical to note that the methodology of both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja is "double-faced"; that is, it points to both strands simultaneously. For example, Śaṅkara's devices seek to explain not only his usual emphasis on discontinuity, but, also, the apparent continuity. In the same manner, Rāmānuja's use of the svarūpa/svabhāva distinction not only explains his usual emphasis on continuity, but, also, it points to the implicit emphasis on discontinuity because of its dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversibility. The methodology points to both strands simultaneously

¹²⁶Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 21, p. 137.

and provides the transition to the "implicit Śaṅkara" ("S₂") and the "implicit Rāmānuja" ("R₂"). "S₂" and "R₂" will both proceed from those key passages in the writings of both which articulate their implicit emphasis, from the areas of possible conflict in their doctrines, and from a methodological examination of the key doctrines used to establish this relation in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. The constructs "S₁" and "R₁" contain both their explicit doctrinal a-priori's and the methods used to implement these doctrinal a-priori's. The constructs "S₂" and "R₂" will help to examine the key-doctrines of "S₁" and "R₁" methodologically. In so doing they will uncover some of the possible problem areas in "R₁" and "S₁" and illuminate their explicit positions. "S₂" and "R₂" will be by no means purely interpretative; rather, the attempt will be to point to the full spectrum of Śaṅkara's and Rāmānuja's positions on the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma.

a. Doctrinal Components of "S₁"

The doctrines of the illusoriness of the world (māyā-vāda) and the attributeless nature of Brahman (Nirguṇa Brahman) are the central doctrinal ingredients of "S₁". The application of māyā-vāda to dharma and specifically to sādhana is also included in this classification. Śaṅkara's insistence in this "explicit strand" on the total discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma is based on the identification of Ātma-jñāna in its "primary sense" (paramārtham) with Nirguṇa Brahman and thus with mokṣa.

b. The Methodological Components of "S₁"

The methodological components of "S₁" are the devices which specifically implement these doctrinal a-priori's. One such example is what

I have designated as "the transposition strategy" which is the transposing of a particular dharmic problem to the second level of truth for its re-examination. Śaṅkara's devices, however, do not, as such, simply implement this emphasis on a radical discontinuity, but they also make sense of the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. Even his primary strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda is "double-faced" in this sense and thus points to both "S₁" and "S₂". Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and what I have designated as "simultaneous viewing", which is his consideration of a problem from two levels simultaneously, illustrate this "double-faced" aspect of his methodology.

c. The Doctrinal Components of "S₂"

The "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara originates, first of all, from Śaṅkara's methodology. Because of its "double-faced" nature his methodology points to both "S₁" and "S₂" simultaneously. It also arises from the areas of doctrinal conflict in Śaṅkara. For instance: if mokṣa is a pre-given why then is there any need for sādhana and how can Ātma-jñāna in its "primary sense" (paramārtham) ever be "known" as such? The different ways in which Ātma-jñāna and dharma are used by Śaṅkara to answer these doctrinal conflicts will be examined in consideration of this problem. Particular attention will be given to the "secondary sense" (gauṇam) of Ātma-jñāna as vṛtti-jñāna and to the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma as jñāna-yoga. "S₂" specifically points to the application of the doctrines of Ātma-jñāna and dharma to sādhana; that is, it points to the confrontation of consciousness with the world. The implicit continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in this "implicit strand" is manifested in these areas: the provisional efficacy

of dharmic injunctions prior to the origination of Ātma-jñāna; the "primary sense" of dharma as jñāna-yoga as continuous with the "secondary sense" of Ātma-jñāna as vṛtti-jñāna; the acceptance of the Ātma-vidhi as a vidhi in some sense; and, the implicit theism in Śaṅkara. The basis for this implicit continuity in Śaṅkara is the acceptance of the reality of the world as Brahman, although not as nāma-rūpa ("name and form").

d. The Methodological Components of "S₂"

Although Śaṅkara's methodology is "double-faced" in that it points to both "S₁" and "S₂", there are devices which specifically make sense of the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. What will be designated as his "intermediary categories" which are those concepts that function as bridges between the two main categories of Self-knowledge and dharma, and his successive use of the two standpoints of truth in which a provisional thesis is presented and subsequently sublated are two such devices.

e. The Doctrinal Components of "R₁"

Rāmānuja's presentation of the Self-body relation (śarīra-śarīrin) as endorsing an explicit continuity between the Selves and the Lord and the Selves and dharma by means of the doctrine of inseparability (aprthaksiddha) is perhaps the most important doctrinal component of "R₁". Rāmānuja's model of dharma as a real means to mokṣa and his presentation of Brahman as Saguṇa, as Nārāyaṇa, will be contrasted with Śaṅkara's māyā-vāda and Śaṅkara's emphasis on Nirguṇa Brahman. The transition from "R₁" to "R₂" doctrinally, however, is provided by his co-relative emphasis on discontinuity in his insistence on the separability of the three svarūpas of the Lord, the Selves and matter.

f. The Methodological Components of "R₁"

The methodological components of "R₁" involve his integrative use of the śarīra-śarīrin by means of such distinctions as aṁśa/aṁśin (part/whole), and viśeṣaṇa/viśeṣya (attribute/substance). It also involves his integrative use of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction in which the svabhāva is understood not as false (mithyā), but as the manifested nature of the same svarūpa. Rāmānuja's explicit emphasis on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma is further reinforced by his use of the maxim of "co-ordinate equivalence" (sāmānādhikaraṇya), by his explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth, and by his rejection of Śaṅkara's understanding of the "secondary sense" as implying an "illusory notion" (mithyāpratya). The transition from the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja ("R₁") to the "implicit strand" ("R₂") is provided by Rāmānuja's methodological introduction of the dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversibility into the śarīra-śarīrin which insure the śarīrin from the defects of the śarīra.

g. The Doctrinal Components of "R₂"

Rāmānuja's insistence on the separability and actual distinctness of the three svarūpas of the Lord, the Selves and matter is perhaps the most important foundation for what I have designated as "R₂". His emphasis on the inaccessible and unknown nature of the svarūpa of the Lord is also important in establishing an element of discontinuity between the Selves and the Lord. His implicit doctrine of prapatti ("surrender") contained in his interpretation of the carama-śloka of the Gītā and in his Saraṇāgati-Gadya also contributes to this contrasting emphasis on discontinuity. His insistence on the capacity for conscious-

ness and the Selves to be both dependent and independent likewise contributes to this contrasting emphasis on discontinuity. Finally, Rāmānuja's acknowledgement of the friction between a mere abstract Self-knowledge and a concrete Self-knowledge, which is his version of the "two truths", is another doctrinal component of "R₂".

h. The Methodological Components of "R₂"

The dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversability in the śarīra-śarīrin provide the methodological foundation for what I have designated as "R₂". His dissociative use of the śarīra-śarīrin and the co-relative svarūpa-svabhāva distinction are also included in this section. Rāmānuja's use of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth, his methodological equivalent to avidyā, and his methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "secondary sense" constitute perhaps the most crucial components of "R₂". These methodological equivalences to Śaṅkara must be understood in the light of Rāmānuja's explicit insistence on the separability and distinctness of the three svarūpas and the dimensions of irreversability and one-sidedness in the śarīra-śarīrin.

"R₂" and "S₂" arise from "R₁" and "S₁". They are distinct but inseparable strands. All of the various ways in which "R₂" and "S₂" threw light on "R₁" and "S₁" are summarized in the conclusion as a verification device. Specific attention is given to how "R₂" and "S₂" uncovered the inherent problem-areas of "R₁" and "S₁" in pointing to some of the frictions between doctrine and method. So, for instance, the ways in which a doctrine has been used will be contrasted with its explicit presentation.

CHAPTER I
SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA IN ŚAṆKARA:
A METHODOLOGICAL EXAMINATION

The predicament of trying to know the unutterable, "attributeless Brahman" (Nirguṇa Brahman) necessitates a strategy which is different from the everyday sense of knowing: that of "super-imposition-negation",¹ (adhyāropa-apavāda). For example, Śaṅkara initially describes the Self as identified with the five "sheaths" (kośas),² but subsequently argues³ that the Self is utterly distinct from these five sheaths. This example illustrates how this strategy starts from our empirical condition, i.e., our "unconscious identification" (adhyāsa) with the "adjuncts" (upādhis) of the body, the mind, the senses etc. Though this strategy starts from this adhyāsa, it effects a transcendence of that condition by "super-imposition-negation". The distinction between this unconscious adhyāsa and the conscious use of adhyāsa (adhyāropa) employed in Śaṅkara's strategy adhyāropa-apavāda is important for this chapter. For it is only the latter that can remove the former.

¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 13.

² They are the "food sheath" (annamayakośa), the "vital air sheath" (prāṇamayakośa), the "mental sheath" (manomayakośa), the "intellectual sheath" (vijñānamayakośa) and the "bliss sheath" (anandamayakośa). Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.13.

³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Ātma-bodha #15, 16, 17; cf. Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.ii.1.

1. An Exposition of Śaṅkara's Primary Strategy:

Adhyāropa-Apavāda

Śaṅkara outlines his primary strategy as follows: "That which is devoid of all duality is described by adhyāropa and apavāda,⁴ i.e., by super-imposition and negation, by attribution and denial." His preface to this passage is significant: Tathāhi sampradāya-vidāṁ vacanam ("This is the saying of the knowers of tradition"). Śaṅkara admits by this statement that he is not the originator of this strategy,^{4a} but, rather, conforming to the tradition. The roots of adhyāropa-apavāda can be uncovered in the Upaniṣads themselves. In the second brāhmaṇa of the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad there is a dialogue between Gārgya and Ajātaśatru on the nature of Brahman. Gārgya is first instructed to mediate on Brahman as endowed with "form" (rūpa). For example Brahman is spoken of as "the person who is yonder in the sun",⁵ "the person who is yonder in the moon",⁶ as "the person who is yonder in lightning,"⁷ etc. These statements offer only a provisional understanding of Brahman for they are subsequently negated.⁸ In the

⁴Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XIII, 13.

^{4a}By "tradition" here is meant the Upaniṣads.

⁵Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad II.1.2. All Upaniṣad citations in this work are from The Principal Upaniṣads trans. S. Radhakrishnan (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1953).

⁶Brhad. Upaniṣad II.1.3.

⁷Ibid., II.1.4.

⁸Cf., II.1.14.

fourth brāhmaṇa of the same Upaniṣad, Yājñavalkya is instructed in a similar manner. That is, he is first asked to meditate on Brahman as "the eye", as "the ear", as "the mind", etc. These provisional understandings of Brahman are subsequently negated as in the previous example. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Narada is first instructed to meditate on Brahman as "name", "speech", "mind", "will", "thought", "contemplation", "understanding", etc. These provisional understandings of Brahman are negated in the following verse: "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the infinite. But where one sees something else, hears something else,

⁹
Brhad. Upaniṣad, IV.1.4.

¹⁰
Ibid., IV.1.5.

¹¹
Ibid., IV.1.6.

¹²
Cf., IV.5.15.

¹³
Chāndogya Upaniṣad, VII.1.5.

¹⁴
Ibid., VII.2.1.

¹⁵
Ibid., VII.3.1.

¹⁶
Ibid., VII.4.1.

¹⁷
Ibid., VII.5.1.

¹⁸
Ibid., VII.6.1.

¹⁹
Ibid., VII.7.1.

understands something else, that is the small (the finite)."^{19a}

These three examples from the Upaniṣads can be understood according to the two phases of the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. The initial understandings of Brahman, in each example, all contain an element of super-imposition (adhyāropa). The final understanding of Brahman accepted, in each case, involves the "negation" (apavāda) of the initial understanding. These examples suggest that the Upaniṣads do not constitute a systematic whole so much doctrinally as methodologically. S. S. Saraswati, in his book on the vedāntic method makes that conclusion: "The Vedānta of the Upanishads...is not a rational system as has been already admitted....the Vedānta philosophy is systematic inasmuch as it brings everything under one and the same idea, that of Paramārtha or Reality and inasmuch as all truths are comprehended by the one grand truth Samyagjñānam that is revealed by one and the same method of Adhyārōpa-apavāda."²⁰ So it can be argued that the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda was not originated by Śaṅkara, but had its roots²¹ in the Upaniṣads.

The strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda must be distinguished from the doctrine of adhyāsa as described in the Sūtra-bhāṣya.²² As pointed

^{19a} Ibid., VII.24.1.

²⁰ Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta (Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, 1964), p. 27. Herein after cited as: How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta.

²¹ For further discussion on this point with reference to Rāmānuja, see Chapter Two, p. 45.

²² Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya Introduction to I.1.1.

out earlier adhyāsa is an unconscious condition, whereas adhyāropa is the conscious use of adhyāsa. Adhyāropa-apavāda is the means whereby ²³ adhyāsa is transcended. S. S. Saraswati translates the phrase ²⁴ adhyāropa-apavāda in Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya as a "deliberate super-²⁵ imposition and rescission". The word "deliberate" brings out the difference between adhyāropa and adhyāsa. That is, adhyāropa is a "deliberate" superimposition, whereas adhyāsa is an unconscious superimposition.

Adhyāropa-apavāda indicates that we can only arrive at the ²⁶ Real by negating the "false". We can only understand the Self by a deliberate intellectual detour. Sureśvara states this clearly: asatye vartmani sthitvā nirupāyam upeyate ("Through a means that is unreal, ²⁷ the Self which can be approached through no means whatever is realized.") Only the means that is capable of self-annulment can lead us to the Self, i.e., adhyāropa-apavāda.

The deliberate super-imposition (adhyāropa) of agency upon the

²³

Cf., Chapter Four for an examination of sādhana as adhyāropa-apavāda.

²⁴

Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XII, 13.

²⁵

How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta, p. 29.

²⁶

The "false" is a translation of mithyā, defined in Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.1, I.1.4, I.1.17, II.1.14, II.2.29, IV.1.3.

²⁷

Sureśvara, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi trans. S. Raghavachar (University of Mysore, 1965), III, 104. Herein after cited as: Sureśvara, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi, Raghavachar.

non-dual Self can be detected in the commandment: "fight then".²⁸ This deliberate superimposition is removed when Kriṣṇa declares to Arjuna: "Yours it is to be the mere occasion".²⁹ Śaṅkara argues, on this passage, that any imputation of agency to the non-dual Self involves avidyā ("ignorance"):

viññānasvarūpasya avikriyasyaiva viññātṛtva-
upacārāt.....avidyayaropitaiḥ eva kriyākāra-kādi
ātmani upacaryate

It is only by a figure of speech that the Self, the immutable consciousness is spoken of as the cognizerThe Self has in Himself no concern with action or with its accessories or with its results, that they are imputed to the Self by avidyā and that they are therefore said to belong to the Self only by a figure of speech.

30

So the question becomes, what form of avidyā will remove avidyā,³¹ or what "thorn" will remove that thorn.

28

The Bhagavad-Gītā, II, 18.

29

Gītā, Zaehner, XI, 33.

30

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XIII.3, p. 335.

31

Or to use an analogy from a Mahāyāna Buddhist text, The Lotus of the True Law, The question becomes: what "toy" will lure us from the "burning-house" i.e. saṃsāra? Spiritual means are classified as "toys" in this text, cf., Chapter Three. This understanding of spiritual means as "toys" is very close to Śaṅkara's understanding of sādhana as adhyāropa-apavāda. Cf., Chapter Four of this thesis; cf., The Lotus of the True Law, trans. H. Kern (Dover Publications, New York, 1965) III, pp. 74, 78.

Dharma is that form of avidyā which by a process of self-annulment, helps to uncover the Self: "Though the means is mithya or illusory, still it is true...And even in ordinary affairs, when we have to induce a child or a lunatic to drink milk or the like, we have to tell him that thereby his hair will grow and so on."³²

Most of the time Śaṅkara's methodology is implicit rather than explicit. But in these two examples considered here, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 13 and XVIII, 66, he explicitly refers to his methodology. In his Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 13 Śaṅkara is clearly employing the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda. The super-imposition of the adjuncts (upādhis) on the Self is first established: "The existence of Kshetrajñā is indicated by the upādhis of the sense-organs of all living beings....³³ 'It has hands and feet everywhere'." This superimposition (adhyāropa) is subsequently cancelled: "The purpose of this verse is to prevent the supposition that the Knowable is really possessed of the upādhis--the sense organs such as hands, feet and the like which are merely³⁴ superimposed upon it."

Using this explicit example of adhyāropa-apavāda as a model, the following excerpt from Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya can be classified in the following way: When the Lord is referred to as having "multi-³⁵ dinous arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes", the first phase of this

³²Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XVIII, 66, p. 514.

³³Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 13, p. 348.

³⁴Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XIII, 13, p. 349.

³⁵Ibid., XI, 16.

strategy, i.e., "deliberate super-imposition" (adhyāropa), is being used. The subsequent injunction to meditate upon the unmanifest Brahman devoid of all upādhis, ³⁶ belongs to the second phase of this strategy, i.e. sublation (apavāda). Similarly, any misrepresentation of the immutable Self as a doer belongs to the first phase, i.e., ³⁷ adhyāropa, and the subsequent sublation of this agency belongs to the second phase, i.e. apavāda. ³⁸ Adhyāropa-apavāda also explains the progression, in import, from the saṁguṇa śrutis to the nirguṇa śrutis. That is, the saṁguṇa śrutis employ some measure of super-imposition (adhyāropa). The nirguṇa śrutis sublimate (apavāda) these super-impositions by means of such phrases as: "not this, not this" (neti, neti).

2. The Relation Between Adhyāropa and Adhyāsa

The doctrine of adhyāsa is discussed in the introduction to the Sūtra-bhāṣya. There two definitions of adhyāsa are given: smṛtirūpaḥ paratra pūrvadrṣṭa avabhāsaḥ , "the apparent presentation in the form of remembrance, to consciousness of something previously observed in some other thing", ³⁹ and anyatrānyadharmādhyasaḥ ,

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Ibid., XII, 1. and XIII, 13.

³⁷

Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II, III, 34.

³⁸

Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II, III, 40.

³⁹

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 4.

"the apparent presentation of the attributes of one thing, in another thing."⁴⁰ When viewed from the second level of truth (paramārthika),⁴¹ adhyāsa is disclosed as an apparent (avabhāsa)⁴² and not a Real process. Brahman never appeared as the world. The first definition of adhyāsa⁴² indicates that the Self is not unknown but misknown.

Self-knowledge is not an acquisition, according to Śaṅkara, but, rather, a pre-given. This is another way of saying that the Self is Self-luminous (svayaṃ jyotis); it is not illuminated or known by anything but Itself. That is, it is immediately self-evident.

The second definition of adhyāsa illustrates that it works in both directions (itara-itara-adhyāsa). The Self is superimposed on the not-Self and the not-Self is superimposed on the Self. This reversability in adhyāsa, provides the basis for some continuity between the Self and dharma in the midst of Śaṅkara's explicit emphasis on their discontinuity. The Self is both the "ground" (āśraya) of avidyā and the cause of its sublation (nivarttaka). In the imagery of

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Sūtra-bhāṣya, Thibaut, p. 5. It may appear as if the question of adhyāsa has no parallel with Rāmānuja. But one does find parallel formulations, as for example in his presentation of abhimāna ("misconception") as the mis-perception of the attribute (viśeṣaṇa) as the substrate (viśeṣya). For a full discussion of this in Rāmānuja see Chapter Two.

41

When the prefix ava precedes the verb √bhās its meaning changes from "to shine" to "to appear". The derivative avabhāsa then means "the appearance".

42

This misknowledge is an example of avidyā not ajñāna. Whereas the former should be identified with the projecting power (vikṣepaśakti) (cf., Śaṅkara, Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #111) of māyā; the latter should be identified with the veiling power (āvṛtiśakti) (cf., Śaṅkara, Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #114) of māyā.

Śaṅkara's usual analogy of the rope/snake for adhyāsa the rope is the ground (āśraya) of the snake appearance. Perceiving the snake appearance as the rope is the cause of its sublation. Though one may distinguish between the sublation of the "false" (mithyā) and the realization of the Self in the order of discovery, there is no such distinction in the order of being.

Adhyāsa can only be seen as adhyāsa from the standpoint of its sublation. So the external world can only be understood from the standpoint of Self-realization i.e., from the standpoint of its sublation. Śaṅkara argues that sublation could destroy something only something that was masquerading as the Real (Sat), not the Real itself: "Are we up to destroy an actual existing world or a fictitious one? If the former we are asked to do the impossible....And if it could be done the first person who got his release would have done it once for all, and there would have been left nothing of it for us to destroy."⁴³

It is the function of adhyāropa to thrust us beyond this adhyāsa. The saṁgha śrūtis according to Śaṅkara perform this role: "Even The Śruti passages which refer to the transformation of Brahman have the only aim of directing us beyond the fact of creation or transformation to the knowledge of Brahman as being the Ātman of all."⁴⁴

3. Adhyāropa-Apavāda and the Devices of Teaching

The relation between the conscious use of adhyāsa, i.e., adhyāropa and adhyāsa, as our empirical condition should now be considered.

⁴³Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III.II.21, Volume II, p. 141.

⁴⁴Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, II.1.27, Volume I, p. 273.

Adhyāropa employs the devices of teaching. That is, the teaching is tapered according to the spiritual level of the pupil. The Bhagavad-Gītā begins its discourse from the standpoint of adhyāsa, i.e., according to the empirical condition of the pupil. The final teaching of the Gītā is withheld until the pupil is ready for it. "Let not a wise
45
man split the soul of witless men attached to work."

As pointed out previously, the Upaniṣads themselves can be understood as employing the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. Accordingly, their teachings on Brahman take into consideration the empirical condition of the pupil, i.e., one's participation in adhyāsa. This is
46
illustrated in two examples from the Upaniṣads, where Brahman is defined progressively, according to this strategy. In both examples, Brahman is initially defined, at the beginning, in terms that are only provisionally true. This is in accordance with the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda. It is only when these provisional theses are sublated that the real nature of Brahman is disclosed.

Śaṅkara, in accordance with this method used in the Upaniṣads, employs a similar device of tapering the teaching according to the spiritual level of the pupil. One notes this in the following excerpt from his Brhad-bhāṣya: "It may be that the sruti itself teaches us through the garb of a story by setting forth a mode of reasoning in

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Gītā, Zaehner, III, 26, p. 170.

46

Cf., Chāndogya Upaniṣad VIII, 7-12, Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad II.1.1, to II.4.5.

47

conformity with our ways of thinking."

Similarly, Śaṅkara's description of the five sheaths (kośas) in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya takes the empirical condition (i.e. adhyāsa) of the pupil into account. Accordingly, the description begins with the outmost sheath, the food sheath (annamayakośa). By a series of gradual steps the innermost sheath, the Bliss sheath (anandamayakośa), is uncovered. The five sheaths are subsequently disclosed as "deliberate super-impositions" (adhyāropa) which by a process of progressive elimination point to the non-dual Self. Śaṅkara states:

Brahman is the inmost of all the selves beginning from the physical sheath and ending with the blissful one. The scripture starts with the text tasmāt vā etasmāt annarasamayāt etc. with a view to revealing through knowledge, that Brahman as the indwelling Self by following a process of eliminating the five sheaths, just as rice is extracted from the grain called kodrava that has many husks.

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Śaṅkara, in accordance with this teaching device, often presents the reader with two teachings: one for the "enlightened man", the devotion of knowledge (jñāna-niṣṭhā), and the other for the "unenlightened man", the devotion of works (karma-niṣṭhā), and a radical

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Śaṅkara, Brhad-bhāṣya IV.iii.2, p. 598.

48

Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya, trans. Swāmi Gambhirānanda from Eight Upaniṣads, Volume One (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1972) II. iii. 1, p. 308-309. Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya.

49

discontinuity is set up between them. These two stages of teaching
 are evident in the Gītā itself. When Arjuna is first commanded to fight,
 this is in accordance with his present stage of ignorance. Later,
 when that ignorance has been overcome, it is disclosed that Kṛṣṇa
 is the true agent. Arjuna is merely the instrument.⁵¹ Śaṅkara states
 in his Īśa-bhāṣya that "the antithesis between knowledge and karma is
 irremovable like a mountain."⁵² He argues later in the same bhāṣya,
 that they are opposed with reference to their "causes, natures and
 results".⁵³ This same emphasis on the discontinuity between jñāna-
niṣṭhā and karma-niṣṭhā is argued at greater length in his Gītā-bhāṣya.
 There he states: "The Lord has made a distinction between Jñāna-niṣṭhā,
 and Karma-niṣṭhā between the devotion of knowledge and the devotion
 of works, as based respectively upon two distinct standpoints."⁵⁴

49

This radical discontinuity in Śaṅkara between these two teachings,
 is counterbalanced by the emphasis on their apparent continuity in the
 "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara. This implicit strand will be examined more
 fully in Chapter Four. There it will be shown, by specific attention to
 the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma as an jñāna-yoga, that ulti-
 mately, i.e. from the paramārthika, that jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga both
 fall into the category of dharma.

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Cf., Gītā, II.34.

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Cf., Gītā, XI. 33.

52

Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, trans. Swami Gambhirananda from Eight
Upaniṣads, Vol. I (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1972) #2. Herein after
 cited as Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya.

53

Cf., Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #18, p. 28.

⁵⁴ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 10, p. 24.

This results in two distinct criteria so that what is enjoined for the one devoted to karma-niṣṭhā, is reversed for the one devoted to jñāna-niṣṭhā.⁵⁵ Because of the opposition between jñāna-niṣṭhā and karma-niṣṭhā only one of them can be appropriate for an individual at one time. Śaṅkara states this in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Thus arguing Arjuna thinks that an ignorant man may either perform action or renounce it. But owing to the mutual opposition of the two paths...only one of them can form the duty of an individual at a time."⁵⁶ This is perhaps the most important passage where Śaṅkara speaks of the radical discontinuity between karma-niṣṭhā and jñāna-niṣṭhā. These two ways are sharply opposed both in kind and in effect, with one leading to worldly prosperity, and the other leading to liberation (mokṣa).⁵⁷ Just as knowledge and ignorance cannot be combined, so Śaṅkara argues that these two paths, being respectively based on ignorance and knowledge, are autonomous and discontinuous. The progression is thus from karma-niṣṭhā, as grounded in superimposition (adhyāsa),⁵⁸ to jñāna-niṣṭhā

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For parallels in Viśiṣṭādvaita, see Chapter Three. In, Lokāchārya's Mumukshapadi the sins of the initiated, i.e. the prapanna, are described as a joy to the Lord.

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Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya Introd. to Chapter Five, p. 155.

57

Cf., Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #2, #18; Śaṅkara, Katha-bhāṣya I.II.4 and Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.1.

58

This refers specifically to the superimposition of agency upon the Self.

as entailing sublation (⁵⁹apavāda), by the self-annulment of the former.
 Śaṅkara states: "Knowledge alone can cause total destruction of good
 or evil deeds caused by ⁶⁰avidyā."

However this emphasis on a radical discontinuity between
karma-niṣṭhā and jñāna-niṣṭhā, in what has been designated as the
 "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, is counterbalanced by many passages
 where Śaṅkara refers to some kind of a continuity; specifically, between
 the "path of works" (karma-yoga) and the "path of knowledge" (jñāna-yoga).
 The distinction between karma-niṣṭhā and karma-yoga is critical in this
 regard, for whereas Śaṅkara insists on a discontinuity between karma-
niṣṭhā and jñāna-niṣṭhā,⁶¹ he argues for some continuity between karma-
yoga and jñāna-yoga. Śaṅkara states in his Gītā-bhāṣya that: "Devo-
 tion to action is the means of attaining freedom from activity i.e.,
 devotion to knowledge...Karma-yoga is declared to be a means to
⁶²jñāna-yoga". The example of Janaka, cited in his Gītā-bhāṣya, is
 important in this regard for his actions proceeded not from ignorance,
 but from Self-knowledge. Speaking of such men, Śaṅkara argues that:
 "They tried to reach mokṣa with action i.e., without abandoning action,

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This refers specifically to the sublation of all dharmic
 injunctions in Brahma-vidyā.

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Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 66, p. 508.

61

Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.10.

62

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 4, p. 94.

with a view to set an example to the world." ⁶³ According to Śaṅkara, such action is an example of karma-yoga, not karma-niṣṭhā.

This emphasis on some continuity between karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga is more evident in what I have designated as the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara. There, it is evident that both karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga participate in the structure of adhyāropa-apavāda. ⁶⁴ Also, the "actions" of the jivān-mukta and the co-relative question of prārabdha-karma attest to this strand of continuity.

The strategy of tapering the teaching according to the spiritual level of the pupil often results in another device. This is the device of withholding the final teaching until the pupil is ready for it and affirming him in his ignorance until the time is ripe for its removal. Śaṅkara states, in this regard that: "The man who knows the All, the man who knows the Self, should not of himself unsettle such men, i.e. he should not disturb their conviction." ⁶⁵ For only the man who has renounced all desires is ready to receive this teaching. Accordingly, whereas the ignorant man is enjoined to fight, ⁶⁶ the man of knowledge is enjoined to renounce all actions:

⁶³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 20, p. 105.

⁶⁴ Cf., Chapter Four for a full investigation of this point.

⁶⁵ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 29.

⁶⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 15.

"Even dharma is a sin, in the case of him who seeks liberation inasmuch as it causes bondage."⁶⁷ But whether or not this renunciation of action pertains to the actions themselves, or to the sense of agency, as evidenced in the case of Janaka, is a critical point. For as we shall see, the latter allows for some continuity between karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga.

Whereas the distinction between these "two distinct classes of people",⁶⁸ specifically the "enlightened" and "the unenlightened",⁶⁹ is in the forefront in Śaṅkara's Īśa-bhāṣya and Gītā-bhāṣya, it is more implicit in his Sūtra-bhāṣya. The emphasis shifts from the two classes of initiates in the Īśa-bhāṣya and the Gītā-bhāṣya, to the two ways of viewing Brahman, i.e., with (saguṇa) or without attributes (nirguṇa Brahman), in the Sūtra-bhāṣya. A similar discontinuity is set up between "two distinct classes of people". In the Sūtra-bhāṣya these two classes refer respectively to those who focus on saguṇa Brahman and those who focus on nirguṇa Brahman. Yet Śaṅkara argues that the former can be spoken of as a means to the latter: "It is therefore known as parā-vidyā, due to which the immutable being or the Brahman is known

⁶⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 21, p. 137. There are some parallels in Viśiṣṭādvaita, as shall be examined in Chapter Three. Lokāchārya argues that because dharma "causes bondage" the prapanna must renounce all dharmas and surrender to the Lord as the only means (upāya).

⁶⁸ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 10, p. 25.

⁶⁹ Ibid., II.21, p. 45.

as distinguished from the aparā which is only a preliminary to the parā.⁷⁰
 According to the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda, the means must annul itself to "lead" to the end. Thus the "passage", so to speak, from saguṇa-Brahman to nirguṇa-Brahman is provided by the realization that Brahman was never saguṇa, but only nirguṇa: "The supreme Brahman, considered in Itself, cannot logically have both the characteristics, for it cannot be admitted that the very same thing is naturally possessed of attributes like form etc., and that it is also without these; for that is self-contradictory."⁷¹

The "dharmic problems", i.e., ethical issues, that appear in Śaṅkara's texts can often be sorted out by means of the following dual classification: the class addressed i.e., "the unenlightened man" or the "enlightened man"; and the corresponding standpoint from which it is stated; respectively, the phenomenal standpoint (vyāvahārika-satya) for the "unenlightened man" and the ultimate standpoint (paramārthika-satya) for the "enlightened man". So what would be valid for the first class from the phenomenal standpoint would by no means be valid for the second class from the ultimate standpoint. For example ritual injunctions apply to the "unenlightened man", whereas the renunciation of these ritual injunctions apply to the "enlightened man". Śaṅkara states in this regard that: "In the case

70

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.II.21, Vol. I, p. 103.

71

Śaṅkara, Sūtra-bhāṣya, trans. Swami Gambhirananda (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1972) III, ii, 11, p. 609. Herein after cited as Sūtra-bhāṣya, Gambhirananda.

of him who thinks that the Self is the doer of actions, there will necessarily arise the idea that he has this or that thing to do. A man who possesses this sort of knowledge is qualified for actions, and on him actions are enjoined. Such a man is unenlightened...The enlightened man who has seen the immutable Self and the man who is eager for emancipation have only to renounce all works."⁷²

Yet this dual classification in what I have designated as the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara becomes somewhat problematic in what I have designated as the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara.⁷³ In this "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara's thought it becomes clear that karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga participate in the same structure of adhyāropa-apavāda.⁷⁴ In this sense, and from the ultimate standpoint, only the jivān-mukta is the "enlightened man". For even the distinctions between the phenomenal and the ultimate standpoints, the "enlightened" and the "unenlightened" man are devised from the "phenomenal level" of truth.

Provisionally, these distinctions are useful methodological devices which Śaṅkara uses extensively. They are especially useful in sorting out ethical issues or "dharmic problems". The phenomenal standpoint (vyāvahārika-satya) and the ultimate standpoint (paramārthika-satya) are the logical means used to implement the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. The device that Śaṅkara employs is to set up a provisional

⁷² Śaṅkara, Gīta-bhāṣya II.21, p. 45.

⁷³ Cf., pp. 41 to 45.

⁷⁴ Cf. Chapter Four for a full investigation of this point.

thesis which functions as a form of adhyāropa from the first level of truth. The provisional thesis is subsequently sublated (apavāda) from the second level of truth. The transition from one to the other is provided by the self-annulment of the former which discloses its ground (adhiṣṭhāna).

4. The Two Levels of Truth and Their Application to Dharmic Problems

The phenomenal standpoint (vyāvahārika-satya) and the ultimate standpoint (paramārthika-satya) help to sort out what I have designated⁷⁵ as "dharmic problems" i.e., ethical issues. In this excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya Śaṅkara considers the question of whether the act of killing can, in any sense, be applied to the "enlightened man". The problem is viewed from both levels of truth: "He whose buddhi, which is an upādhi of the Self, is not tainted, does not repent thus 'I have done this: thereby I shall go to hell'. He is wise: he sees rightly: though he kills all these living creatures he commits no act of kill-⁷⁶ing." "Seeing rightly" implies an act of de-personalization. Instead of my killing it becomes that killing. The Self was never a doer. It is the guṇas which are functionally responsible for this act: "It is by the guṇas...manifesting themselves as the body and

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An example of such a "dharmic problem" is the question as to whether prārabdha-karma applies to the jivān-mukta or not.

76

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 17, p. 457.

the senses, that all our actions, conducive to temporal and spiritual ends are done."⁷⁷ Just as Brahman is forever unaffected by the māyā falsely attributed to Him, so the Self is not affected by the karma that is provisionally attributed to it through ignorance: "The Real Entity is not affected by the defect (saṃsāra) attributed to him through ignorance of that Real Entity."⁷⁸ In accordance with the phenomenal level of truth, the prakṛti is provisionally described in his Gītā-bhāṣya⁷⁹ as the cause of saṃsāra. In accordance with the ultimate level of truth, this provisional thesis is subsequently sublated⁸⁰ and the falsity of the prakṛti and the sole reality of the Self are simultaneously revealed. Śaṅkara here states: "They[i.e., those who discriminate between the Self and prakṛti] ...perceive the non-existence of prakṛiti, avidyā, avyakta, the material cause of beings,-- they reach Brahman, the Real, the Supreme Self."⁸¹

In his Gītā-bhāṣya, the level of truth is normally specified by the class of people he is addressing i.e., the "enlightened" or the "unenlightened man". When he is addressing the "unenlightened" man, the phenomenal level of truth (vyāvahārika-satya) is thereby

77

Ibid., III, 27, p. 108.

78,

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2, p. 330.

79

Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 19.

80

Cf., Ibid., XIII, 34.

81,

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 34, p. 377.

indicated. When he is addressing the "enlightened man", the ultimate level of truth (paramārthika-satya) is indicated.⁸² For the two levels of truth help to sort out the "dharmic problems" encountered in the Gītā. For example, Śaṅkara distinguishes between two kinds of abandonment of action in accordance with the two levels of truth. The abandonment of action from the first level of truth consists in the abandonment of the fruit of one's actions. The abandonment of action from the second level of truth consists in the abandonment of the very sense of agency which is falsely superimposed upon the Self.⁸³ The ultimate abandonment should be of this form: One must give up giving up insofar as giving up also involves the super-imposition (adhyāsa)⁸⁴ of agency. This is what is meant by the term naiskarmya. The progression is from an initial adhyāsa of agency, implied even in the abandonment of the fruits of one's actions, to a subsequent sublation (apavāda) whereby action itself is sublated in Brahman-realization. This progression is in accordance with the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda.

Śaṅkara's model of adhyāsa is applied to his concept of a body in a curious way. Someone in the body is someone who identifies

82

Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 15.

83

Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 9.

84

This discussion on the two forms of abandonment will be developed further in Chapter Four.

with his body, but someone no longer in the body is someone who no longer makes this identification. Śaṅkara accordingly understands⁸⁵ an "embodied being" as, "he who identifies himself with the body." By thus viewing the body from two levels of truth Śaṅkara can make sense of such paradoxes as the "body" of the jivān-mukta. Because the jivān-mukta no longer identifies with his body, the question of his body is only a problem from the level of the spectator.

Śaṅkara is usually explicit about indicating what level he is speaking from in his Gītā-bhāṣya.⁸⁶ This he does by specifying what class i.e., the unenlightened or the enlightened man, he is addressing. Accordingly, he often prefaces an argument by phrases such as "to an ignorant man of the world",⁸⁷ or, "to one who realizes that all is Brahman".⁸⁸ Such key phrases are absent in his Sūtra-bhāṣya. He is often intentionally ambiguous about specifying what level he is speaking from in his Sūtra-bhāṣya. For example, the world is described as if it were Real and as created by Brahman.⁸⁹ Śaṅkara

⁸⁵, Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XVIII, 11.

⁸⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 30, V, Introduction, p. 154.

⁸⁷, Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 18.

⁸⁸, Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 24, p. 141.

⁸⁹ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.3.

also insists that parināma-vāda be taken literally and not figuratively. This functions as a "deliberate super-imposition". The provisional thesis is sublated much later.⁹¹ Similarly śruti is first described⁹² as if it were the only source of Self-knowledge, but later it is disclosed that śruti itself is sublated in Self-realization when Śaṅkara says that: "In the non-dual condition of knowledge it is no objection to say that śruti also ceases to be operative."⁹³ At other places in the Sūtra-bhāṣya he presents a provisional position and the subsequent position on a "dharmic problem" successively. This excerpt is an example: "Iśvara...is distinct from the jīva who is limited by upādhis.... the jīva is nothing else but the highest Ātman, when viewed without the adjuncts of internal organ, body etc."⁹⁴ Just as the sky does not become blue because of our constant habit of super-imposing blue upon it, so the Self is unaffected by these upādhis. Their function is to reinforce the first phase of the strategy i.e., adhyāropa, by providing the content for the provisional adhyāropa and the target for the subsequent apavāda. Whereas the provisional position which views the Self as limited by the upādhis is in accordance with the first level of truth, the subsequent position is in accordance with the

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Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.IV.3.

91

Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.II.21.

92

Cf., Ibid., II.1.6.

93

Śaṅkara, Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, IV.1.3, pp. 323-24.

94

Śaṅkara, Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.III, 7, Vol. I, p. 121. See

second level of truth. By presenting both positions successively, a "dharmic problem" is viewed initially from the first level of truth⁹⁵ and then from the second level of truth.

Any discussion about the ontological reference of the paramārthika-satya becomes very problematic when it is realized that the paramārthika-satya involves the sublation of both language and thought, because to speak of the paramārthika-satya is strictly speaking to falsify it. Therefore one can only refer to the paramārthika-satya negatively, but this does not thereby imply a negative content. The very distinction between the two levels of truth is made from the first level of truth. Even this distinction is sublated in Brahman-realization for Brahman cannot be specified by any level or attribution, being unutterable (neti neti). However, this denial does not apply to Brahman, but to any false attribution of Brahman. Without Brahman as the ground (adhiṣṭhāna) there can be no negation. When one has "reached" the paramārthika-satya, the very distinction between the vyavahārika-satya and the paramārthika-satya is no longer applicable. K. Sivaramam states

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It is important to note that Śaṅkara would incorporate many theistic doctrines from the phenomenal level of truth, but later he subordinates their value from the ultimate level of truth. So, for example, Rāmānuja's doctrine of the Lord as the Inner Controller (Antaryāmin) is clearly alluded to in II.III.14 of his Sūtra-bhāṣya and in his introduction to his Gītā-bhāṣya. The doctrine of the Self as an aspect or part (aṁśa) of Brahman is alluded to in his Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.43. The emphasis upon mokṣa as the result of continual bhakti (Northern school of Viśiṣṭādvaita) is alluded to in III.II.7. For a full investigation of the question of bhakti in Śaṅkara, refer to Chapter Four. There it will be pointed out that though devotion to the Lord (saguṇa-bhakti) has a provisional value, devotion to the Self (nirguṇa-bhakti) functions as a catalyst (karana) in initiating Self-realization.

in this regard: "There is a demand in this awareness of the distinction of orders or levels to rise above this distinction to realize complete transcendence...This demand of course will remain always a demand and cannot be satisfied in 'thinking', being not a case of conscious awareness. It is lapsing into awareness itself. It is to this pure Experience present in all experiencing beyond even the duality of being and non-being that Vedānta refers by the name of Brahman."⁹⁶

The two truths are explicitly specified in Śaṅkara's Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya as, "the Parā ca, the higher, the knowledge of the supreme Self; aparā ca, and the lower, the knowledge of virtue and vice and their means and ends."⁹⁷ Śaṅkara himself argues, here, that these two truths should be primarily distinguished in a methodological sense. Thus in reply to the objector's question: "What is that which having been known one becomes all-knowing," Śaṅkara states: "The answer requires an order of procedure. For the lower knowledge is ignorance which has to be eradicated, inasmuch as nothing in reality is known by knowing the objects of ignorance, and the rule is that the conclusion should be stated after refuting the faulty standpoints."⁹⁸ So the progression

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K. Sivararam, "Some Reflections on Advaita Vedānta as Philosophy", unpublished article.

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Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya I.1.4. From Eight Upaniṣads, Volume Two trans. Swāmi Gambhīrahanda (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1973), p. 86. Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya

⁹⁸,

Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya I.1.4, p. 86.

from the first level of truth to the second level of truth is by means of adhyāropa-apavāda. These two levels of truth should not be understood as two realities. Rather, they involve the self-same Reality viewed either with or without its illusory adjuncts. Thus the vyāvahārika-satya is thus not one more reality over and against the paramārthika-satya.

5. Devices Used to Simultaneously Explain the Apparent Continuity in the Midst of the Explicit Emphasis on Discontinuity

5a. The "Transposition Strategy"

As was noted earlier, Śaṅkara's methodology is "double-faced". That is, it accounts simultaneously for the explicit discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma and the apparent forms of continuity. Thus it points to what I have designated as the "explicit Śaṅkara" and the "implicit Śaṅkara" at the same time. Although the whole of Śaṅkara's methodology is "double-faced", in this sense, the following devices primarily address themselves to this concern.

What has been previously designated as the "transposition strategy" is such a device. It was defined as, "the re-examination of a "dharmic problem" that was first examined from the first level of truth (vyāvahārika-satya) by transferring it to the second level of truth (paramārthika-satya)."

For example, in his Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.33 to II.III.39, the Self is provisionally described as a do-er in order to agree with the

dharmic injunctions laid down by śruti, but in II.III.40 Śaṅkara transfers this problem to the second level. By this device the same "dharmic problem" is examined from a higher level. Śaṅkara is very explicit in admitting this device when he says, "So far from Sūtra 33 to Sūtra 39, it has been proved that the jīva is the doer. The Sūtrakāra will now point out that the doing or the authorship of actions is not natural with the jīva but is due to its limiting adjuncts." ⁹⁹ Similarly, the theory that the effect is non-different from the cause (satkāryavāda) is provisionally asserted in II.1.7. of his Sūtra-bhāṣya but it is subsequently re-examined in II.1.14. of his Sūtra-bhāṣya. The "transposition strategy" is indicated in the latter passage by the phrase, ¹⁰⁰ "to explain the same". When this question of creation is transposed to the higher level of truth (paramārthika-satya), it is disclosed that the names and forms that were provisionally described as real are, in fact, mere products of avidyā. They are neither real nor unreal, but are "indescribable" (anirvacanīya). In II.II.10 of his Sūtra-bhāṣya, Śaṅkara argues for a provisional distinction between the sufferer and his suffering. Further on in the same verse he transposes the question of suffering to the higher level of truth (paramārthika-satya). From this second perspective the suffering is disclosed as merely apparent: "Brahman being the only reality, there can neither be the sufferer and the suffering as two distinct things

99

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, II.III.40, Vol. II, p. 44.

100

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, II.1.14, Vol. I, p. 254.

nor any relation between them...If the puruṣa be supposed to suffer as it were, simply because he is said to be reflected in the sattva,¹⁰¹ we have no objection to his being so imagined to suffer as it were."

The result of this transposition strategy is that this "dharmic problem" is seen finally as a quasi-problem. The Self is only "imagined to suffer as it were". This passage is also an example of "reversability";¹⁰² that is, of "reversing" the usual irreversible relation between the Self and dharma and moving from the second level of truth to the first.¹⁰³

An actual movement as such is not implied by this strategy. Rather, what is implied is a re-examination of a "dharmic" problem from the "a-posteriori" standpoint of self-knowledge. From this "a-posteriori" standpoint, it can be seen that, the Self is only "imagined to suffer as it were". This movement is constituted by the re-perception of that "dharmic problem" from the second level of truth. What was problematic from the perspective of the first level of truth, is perceived now in terms of

101

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, II.II.10, Vol. I, p. 297.

102

The verb "reversing" here is used not literally, but in a manner of speaking.

103

It might be argued that this movement in reverse constitutes an important exception to the general rule. This general rule is articulated by T. R. V. Murti as follows: "The progression is from the appearance to the real, from the false to the true and not vice versa. There is no passage from the real to the unreal nor is it needed." from "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita" (Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, 1958), p. 136. One might say, however, that this doesn't constitute an exception in the literal sense. The reversing, in this case refers to the order of knowing, not the order of being.

its resolution which is provided by the perspective of the second level of truth.

Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4 provides another example of this kind of reversability. There it is disclosed that the Self is a pre-given and is thus not, "a factor in any injunction about meditation".¹⁰⁴ In the Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.17 the dharmic injunction to meditate and search out the Self is re-examined in the light of this previous insight: "Yet in common experience owing to ignorance, the Ātman is identified with the non-ātman like body, senses etc., and so it is possible to say that the Ātman is to be searched, or heard, or attained."¹⁰⁵ It is significant that qualifying phrases like "yet in common experience" and "so it is possible to say" are used here for they specify the level referred to, i.e. the phenomenal standpoint, and they lead us beyond that level. In XIII, 31 of his Gītā-bhāṣya the Self is described as actionless and as free from the guṇas which are falsely super-imposed upon the Self. In Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya XIV.5 the shift is made from the perspective of the second to the first level of truth. The qualifying phrase "iva" (as it were) here specifies the level implied and the employment of what in effect amounts to a deliberate fiction.¹⁰⁶ Consider XIV.5:

104

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Gambhirandanda, I.1.4, p. 22.

105

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.17, Vol. I, p. 48.

106

The methodological value of such phrases as "iva" will be fully investigated in the last section of this chapter.

"(Objection): It has been said that the embodied one is not tainted (xiii, 31). How then, on the contrary, is it said here that the guṇas bind him? (Answer): We have met this objection by adding 'as it were',¹⁰⁷ 'they bind him as it were.'" The phrase "as it were" (iva) here operates as a lever which thrusts us away from the first to the second level of truth. Śaṅkara indicates in his Gītā-bhāṣya that freedom from the activity of the guṇas consists in an act of de-personalization whereby one no longer perceives them as my puppet show (yantrāruḍha)¹⁰⁸ but as that puppet show. That is, freedom from the guṇas is precisely to be free from any identification with them.

This reversability, illustrated here, in perspective from the second to the first level of truth should be sharply distinguished from those examples of a mere "relapsing" into the first level of truth. Whereas the former involves the conscious employment and extension of adhyāsa, i.e., adhyāropa,¹⁰⁹ the latter involves the lapsing back into

¹⁰⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XIV, 5, p. 382. The role of these qualifying phrases will be examined more extensively in the section on language, in this chapter, section 79.

¹⁰⁸ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya 18, 61. See also XIV, 24.

¹⁰⁹ The former was an example of what was designated earlier as the "transposition strategy in reverse"--i.e. the "dharmic problem" in this instance, is re-examined in the light of Self-knowledge. The latter, being an instance of a mere relapsing back into the first level of truth, is an instance where this "transposition strategy" is suspended. For the full significance of the suspension of the "transposition strategy", see Chapter Four.

an unconscious adhyāsa. In such cases of relapsing the "dharmic problem" is not re-examined in the light of Self-knowledge but is described on its own terms. For example, in his Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4 Śaṅkara insists that Brahman cannot be an object of meditation for "mediation implies the duality of the meditator and the object of meditation."¹¹⁰

But in I.II.1 of the Sūtra-bhāṣya this "as-if" duality between the meditator and the object of meditation is again re-asserted, but not in the light of the previous insight. That is, the duality between the mediator and Brahman is not presented as an as-if (iva) duality but as a real duality. Śaṅkara states that, "The object of meditation is Brahman alone."¹¹¹ The omission of a qualifying phrase like "as it were" or "as-if" (iva) indicates that this form of reversibility is an instance of what I have designated as a mere "relapsing" into the first level of truth. Another example of this kind of "relapsing" can be found in XVIII 55 of his Gītā-bhāṣya where the Self is understood as "immutable", and as devoid of the adhyāsa of agency. But this adhyāsa of agency that was negated in verse 55 is again re-asserted in verse 56. Because the dharmic injunctions described in verse 56 are not examined in the light of the previous verse, this is not an instance of what I designated earlier as "the transposition strategy in reverse".

¹¹⁰ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.4, Vol. I, p. 17.

¹¹¹ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.II.1, Vol. I, p. 79.

5. Devices Used to Simultaneously Explain the
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5b. "Simultaneous Viewing"

What I have designated as "simultaneous viewing" is the examination of a "dharmic problem" from both the first and the second level of truth simultaneously. This device clearly illustrates the "double-faced" nature of Śaṅkara's methodology. That is, it simultaneously points to Śaṅkara's explicit emphasis on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma with his apparent emphasis on continuity. Thereby both strands of Śaṅkara's thought, i.e., what I have designated as the "explicit Śaṅkara" and the "implicit Śaṅkara", are referred to.

For example, the creation of the four castes is described from both the first and the second level of truth, simultaneously, in this excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Though I am the author of this act when viewed from the standpoint of Maya, still know thou that I am in reality
¹¹²
[Paramārthataḥ] no agent and therefore not subject to saṁsāra."

"Simultaneous viewing" is also illustrated when Śaṅkara is addressing at the same time the two classes of the eligibles, i.e., the "enlightened" and the "unenlightened" man. Thus in his Sūtra-bhāṣya Śaṅkara discusses the question of samuccaya with reference to both classes: "Now the Upaniṣadic passage (Br. 4, 42) which speaks of the going together of vidyā and karma is applicable to men immersed in saṁsāra only,

¹¹² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 13, p. 126.

and not at all to those who desire to be released."¹¹³ Perhaps the most important example of "simultaneous viewing" in Śaṅkara can be found in his Gītā-bhāṣya II.30 to 31, where Arjuna is commanded to fight.

Arguments posed from both the first level of truth and the second level of truth are marshalled simultaneously to convince the skeptical Arjuna. He is commanded to fight, because it is his svadharma as a warrior, while at the same time, he is commanded not to be anxious about the possible outcome because the Self cannot be killed: "Though the body of any creature whatever is killed, the Self cannot be killed....From the standpoint of absolute truth there is no occasion for grief and

attachment."¹¹⁴ One example from his Gītā-bhāṣya is especially important as the problematic relation between Self-knowledge and dharma is there presented in a concentrated form. Self-knowledge is expressed not as a merely theoretical question, but as a concrete problem which is thus connected with the question of dharma: "If it be thought by Thee that knowledge is superior to action, O Janardana, why then dost thou, O Kesava, direct me to this terrible action."¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Sutra-bhāṣya, Date, III.IV.II, Vol II, p. 277.

¹¹⁴ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 30, p. 54.

¹¹⁵ Bhagavad-Gītā, trans. A. M. Sāstri, III.1, from Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, p. 89.

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5c. "Intermediary Concepts"

"Intermediary Concepts" are those concepts that function as bridges between the two main categories: Self-knowledge and dharma. They can function as bridges because of their bi-lateral nature, i.e., their simultaneous reference to Self-knowledge and dharma. The "intermediary concepts" in Śaṅkara are formed by dividing a category into two subdivisions. If, for instance, Self-knowledge is represented as "X" and dharma is represented as "Y", the formulation X_1, X_2 and Y_1, Y_2 represents the two subdivisions. This procedure can be seen to be synonymous with that of splitting up a word into its "secondary" (gaṇam) and "primary senses" (paramārtham).

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116

In his Gītā-bhāṣya V, 5 and VI, 1 Śaṅkara uses the term mukhyam and paramārtham interchangeably to denote the ultimate or "primary sense" of a category. In both V, 5 and VI, 1 of his Gītā-bhāṣya the term gaṇam is used to denote the secondary sense of a category in the sense of the merely figurative or penultimate sense. But in XVIII.66 Śaṅkara argues that the "secondary sense" of a category is not just its figurative sense (gaṇam), but ultimately an illusory notion (mithyā-pratyaya). This distinguishes Śaṅkara's position from a position like Rāmānuja's and the Mīmāṃsakas who do not argue that the "secondary sense" of a category is ultimately an illusory notion (mithyā-pratyaya). In his Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI, 3, Śaṅkara states in this regard: "All figurative notions are false (unreal)." Please refer to Chapter Two, for a discussion of the differences between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this concept of a "secondary sense". This distinction between the penultimate and the ultimate sense of a term should be distinguished from the more technical semantic distinction of word-sense as mukhya and lakṣaṇa which is elaborated by the Post-Śaṅkarites especially Suresvara in their discussion of the mahā-vākyas. For a discussion of the latter distinction in Śaṅkara, please refer to my exposition of lakṣaṇa in Suresvara in Chapter Four. The term gaṇam has been used to denote the penultimate or "secondary sense" of a category in Śaṅkara, but with due consideration of Śaṅkara's later point that the "secondary sense" is ultimately mithyā-pratyaya.

"X₁" for instance, represents the "primary sense" of Self-knowledge or svarūpa-jñāna. "X₂" represents the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna. "Y₁" represents the "primary sense" of dharma or jñāna-yoga. "Y₂" represents the "secondary sense" of dharma as ritual injunctions. The argument, then, is that whereas "X₂" i.e., vṛtti-jñāna, is continuous with "Y₁" i.e., jñāna-yoga, "X₁" i.e., svarūpa-jñāna is discontinuous with "Y₂" i.e., ritual injunctions. 117

As this example illustrates, these devices enable Śaṅkara to make sense of the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana, while arguing for the ultimate discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. In so doing, they ultimately function like safeguards which keep the Self ultimately immune from the effects of dharma and allow for an apparent continuity in the midst of the underlying discontinuity 118 between Self-knowledge and dharma.

Śaṅkara makes sense of the samuccaya suggested in the eleventh verse of the Īśa-Upaniṣad 119 by splitting up vidyā into its "secondary" and

117 Please refer to Chapter Four for a full investigation of this example. This example of the continuity between X₂ i.e. vṛtti-jñāna and Y₁ i.e. jñāna-yoga is the most important bridge that Śaṅkara uses to explain the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma as shall be demonstrated there.

118 This "implicit strand" of continuity existing side by side with the "explicit strand" of discontinuity in Śaṅkara is structurally parallel to Rāmānuja but in the reverse. That is, an explicit strand of continuity co-exists with an "implicit strand" of discontinuity in Rāmānuja. For an investigation of these two strands in Rāmānuja, please refer to Chapter Three.

119 "He who knows these two, vidyā and avidyā, together, attains immortality through vidyā, by crossing over death through avidyā." from: Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, 11.

"primary sense". He understands the "secondary sense" of vidyā there¹²⁰ as "meditation on the deities". The "primary sense" of vidyā he¹²¹ understands as, "the knowledge of the supreme Self". The advantage of this distinction is that Śaṅkara can make sense of the kind of samuccaya suggested in the eleventh verse, while maintaining his usual¹²² emphasis on the opposition between karma and vidyā. So whereas the "secondary sense" of vidyā i.e., "meditation on the deities", is continuous with karma, the "primary sense" of vidyā i.e., "the knowledge of the supreme Self", is understood as discontinuous with karma. The question of whether vidyā should be understood in its "primary" or "secondary sense" in verse eleven is the most critical issue in his Īśa-bhāṣya. Accordingly Śaṅkara presents a postlude devoted to this question at the end of this bhāṣya. In this postlude, this objection is raised against the interpretation of the word vidyā in verse eleven as the knowledge of the gods: "By the word vidyā why should not the knowledge of the supreme Self itself be understood; and so also (why should not) immortality (be taken in the primary sense)?"¹²³ Śaṅkara in accordance with the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda does not directly

¹²⁰ Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, 11, p. 20.

¹²¹ Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, 18, p. 29.

¹²² In verse 17 of his Īśa-bhāṣya, Śaṅkara argues that karma and vidyā are opposed with reference to their: "causes, natures, and results."

¹²³ Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, 18, p. 27.

answer this objection. Rather, he repeats what he had argued earlier,¹²⁴
i.e., that karma and vidyā are opposed and thus cannot be combined.

This illustrates Śaṅkara's reluctance to make his methodology explicit for the higher teaching is to be disclosed only when the pupil is ready for it.

The co-relative questions of whether the path of action (karma-yoga) or the renunciation of action (samnyāsa) is preferable for the "unenlightened man", and whether either is possible for the "enlightened man" is resolved by the use of "intermediary concepts". Śaṅkara distinguishes between two senses of the renunciation of action (samnyāsa)¹²⁵ in chapters five and six of his Gītā-bhāṣya to resolve this question. Samnyāsa in its "secondary sense" (gaṇam) consists in the renunciation of the fruits of actions, but not the renunciation of the sense of agency. Samnyāsa in its "primary sense" (paramārtham) consists in the renunciation of the sense of agency. Śaṅkara refers to them as follows: "This samnyāsa which consists in renouncing a few actions only while yet there is an idea of agency, is different from the one already spoken of, from the renunciation of all actions--which is resorted to by the man who has realized the Self."¹²⁶ These two senses of samnyāsa help to make sense of the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma while arguing for an actual discontinuity. For example,

¹²⁴
Cf., Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya, 2.

¹²⁵
Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V, Introduction, p. 58 and VI, 1, p. 183.

¹²⁶
Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V, Introduction, p. 158.

Śaṅkara can make sense of the assertion that: "Sankhya and Yoga are
¹²⁷one " by equating the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of samnyāsa
 with the "primary sense" of Sankhya and Yoga. The "secondary sense"
 (gaṇam) of samnyāsa is then equated with the "secondary sense" (gaṇam)
 of Yoga and used to explain the assertion that "Sankhya and Yoga are
¹²⁸one." The excerpt pertaining to this question is here quoted in
 full: "That Samnyasa which is based upon knowledge is regarded by Me
 as Sankhya, and Sankhya is the true (paramartha) Yoga. It is only by
 a figure that the Yoga through Vedic rites is called Yoga or Samnyasa,
¹²⁹inasmuch as it conduces to that true Yoga or Samnyasa."

By using the "secondary senses" (gaṇam) of both the terms
samnyāsa and yoga, Śaṅkara can make sense of the assertion, in
¹³⁰Gītā IV.1, that a karma-yogin is a samnyāsin and a yogin. In speaking
 of the karma-yogin Śaṅkara states: "It is intended to represent a
 devotee to action as a Samnyasin and a Yogin in a secondary sense of
 the two terms....It is not, on the other hand, meant that he is in reality
¹³²a Samnyasin and a Yogin." (...Samnyāsītvaṃ...yogitvaṃ ca iti gaṇam

¹²⁷
Ibid., V, 5, p. 162.

¹²⁸
Ibid.

¹²⁹
 Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, V, 5, p. 162.

¹³⁰
 Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, VI, 1, p. 182.

¹³²
 Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, 1, p. 183.

ubhayam; Na punaḥ mukhyam Samnyāsītvaṃ yogitvaṃ ca abhipretam....)

As both these examples indicate, the "secondary sense" (gaṇam)¹³³ of samnyāsa is finally an illusory notion (mithyā-pratyaya).

Nevertheless, it functions as a form of adhyārōpa which leads by self-annulment to the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of samnyāsa. These examples also illustrate that what I have designated as "intermediary concepts" are most often used to understand what I have designated as "dharmic problems". They enable one to look at the same "dharmic problem" from the vyāvahārika-satya and the paramārthika-satya.

As was pointed out earlier, both dharma and Self-knowledge are¹³⁴ divided into their secondary and primary senses. The "secondary sense" (gaṇam) of dharma refers to those actions enjoined in śruti, especially ritual injunctions. The "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma, unlike the former, is not outside the essence of Ātma-jñāna but continuous with it. Thus Śaṅkara says that, "What is possessed of many a desireable quality may be opposed to Dharma' but not so is the knowledge of Atman opposed to Dharma; on the other hand it is not¹³⁵ separable from Dharma, i.e., not opposed to it [dharmādanapetaṃ]."

¹³³Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, XVIII.66 for a full discussion of gaṇa-pratyaya and mithyā-pratyaya. Cf. footnote 116. Please refer to Chapter Four where these two senses of samnyāsa will be applied to the question of sādhana in Śaṅkara.

¹³⁴See infra on the "extended sense" of dharma in Śaṅkara in the Introduction.

¹³⁵Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, IX, 2. See infra on the extended sense of dharma in Śaṅkara in the Introduction.

In the next verse of his Gītā-bhāṣya he simply refers to this "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma as, "This Dharma...viz, knowledge of the Self."¹³⁶ Whereas dharma in its "primary sense" as jñāna-yoga helps to explain the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, dharma in its "secondary sense" as ritual injunctions maintains the usual emphasis on their discontinuity. Referring to the latter, Śaṅkara states that, "For one who seeks liberation [mumukṣu], even dharma proves to be a sin [pāpa]."¹³⁷ In accordance with the devices of teaching, the "primary sense" of dharma is presented later than the "secondary sense" of dharma.¹³⁸

The Self (Ātman) and Self-knowledge (Ātma-jñāna) are similarly divided into their "secondary" and "primary senses". Being (Sat), Pure Consciousness (Cit), and Bliss (Anānda) denote the Ātman in its "primary sense". The "secondary sense" of the Ātman is denoted by the empirical self (jīva-ātman). Both senses of the Ātman are given in this example from his Sūtra-bhāṣya: "The pure Ātman too is capable of being known as an object, whenever one becomes aware of oneself as 'I am', as also of the intuitive certainty of the existence of one's Self."¹³⁹ Whereas the Ātman in its "primary sense" (paramārtham)

¹³⁶ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, IX, 3.

¹³⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, IV, 36.

¹³⁸ For a further discussion on these two senses of dharma, see Chapter Four, where it is argued that the conflict between Self-knowledge and dharma is not between Self-knowledge and dharma as jñāna-yoga, but between Self-knowledge and dharma as ritual injunction.

¹³⁹ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.1, p. 3.

is discontinuous with dharma and ultimately sublates it, the Ātman in its "secondary sense" (gaṇam) is continuous with dharma as the apparent cognizer, enjoyer etc. Śaṅkara is insistent in describing the "secondary sense" of the Ātman as caused by adhyāsa. The Ātman as the jīva-ātman can only truly be understood from the standpoint of its sublation. From this standpoint it is disclosed that the "not-self" merely appeared to be super-imposed upon the Self because of the illusory "adjuncts" (upādhis). Both the "superimposition" (adhyāsa) and the "not-Self" which is superimposed are equally disclosed as "false" (mithyā).¹⁴⁰ In this regard Śaṅkara states: "The highest Ātman though one appears to be many on account of the various upādhis of buddhi etc; but the knowledge that I 'am' so and so, which arises falsely on account of these upādhis, is destroyed when the upādhis themselves are destroyed."¹⁴¹

Self-knowledge (Ātma-jñāna) is also divided into its "primary" and "secondary senses". Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" (paramārtham) can only be identified with release (mokṣa) itself, and thus with the "consciousness that is Brahman" (svarūpa-jñāna).¹⁴² Self-knowledge

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In this instance the "secondary sense" (gaṇam) involves adhyāsa and is thus an instance of mithyā-pratyaya. This should be distinguished from the "secondary sense" (gaṇam) understood as a more figurative sense as in the statement "You are my very life, which does not involve adhyāsa. Cf., Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII. 66.

141

Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III, II, 34, Vol. II, p. 156.

142

Cf., Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya I.4.

in its "secondary sense" (gaunam) refers to "Self-knowledge considered
as a process, as a function of the internal organ" (vṛtti-jñāna).¹⁴³

Vṛtti-jñāna is then described by Śaṅkara as a means to svarūpa-jñāna
not in the literal sense, but in the sense of leading to its reflection.
Consequently, the purification of the vṛtti-jñāna is crucial in
Śaṅkara's understanding of sādhana. As an "intermediary concept"
the vṛtti-jñāna plays a key methodological role in explaining the apparent
continuity in sādhana between Self-knowledge and dharma.

Two of the most important "intermediary concepts" in Śaṅkara are
thus the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna and the
"primary sense" of dharma as jñāna-yoga, in-as-much-as the apparent
continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma is sādhana is explained
by the continuity between Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna and dharma
as jñāna-yoga.¹⁴⁴

6. The Suspension of the "Transposition Strategy"

The "transposition strategy was defined as the re-examination
of a "dharmic problem" that was first examined from the first level
of truth (vyāvahārika-satya) by transferring it to the second level of

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Cf., Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II, 4. See also Upadeśa-Sāhasrī
Part One, Chapter II, #108. See infra footnote 84, p. 26 of the intro-
duction. For an extensive discussion of the distinction between
vṛtti-jñāna and svārūpa-jñāna in Śaṅkara, refer to Chapter Four.

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For a development of this co-relation see Chapter Four on
the section of jñāna-yoga.

truth (paramāṛthika-satya). This "transposition strategy" ultimately reinforces the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara. That is, it enables Śaṅkara to argue for the actual discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma after a provisional concession to the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. But there are a number of problematic instances where this strategy is suspended. In such instances a "dharmic problem" is only viewed from the first level of truth and is not transferred to the second level of truth. This suspension of the transposition strategy is of special significance in disclosing the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, especially as we shall see in pointing to the implicit theism and in the implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi in Śaṅkara. The "implicit theism" in Śaṅkara should not be understood as a methodological lapse i.e., as a failure to apply the adhyāropa-apavāda as a strategy and thus as only provisionally important for the "unenlightened man." The suspension of the "transposition strategy" not only brings out the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, but as we shall see provides the ground for a dialogue with Rāmaṇuja on these issues.¹⁴⁵

6a. Śaṅkara's Presentation of Prārabdha-Karma as Illustrating a
"Suspension of the Transposition Strategy"

A controversial example of such a suspension of the "transposition strategy" is Śaṅkara's approach to the problem of prārabdha-karma (that karma which has already begun to bear fruit). Prārabdha-karma is described, especially in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, as continuing even after

¹⁴⁵Please see Chapter Four for an extensive examination of both this implicit theism and this implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi.

the realization of Brahman. This is not the case with regard to other types of karma, i.e., sañcita-karma (the accumulated, past karmas) and kriyamāṇa-karma (future karmas), which are subject to destruction upon the realization of Brahman. Prārabdha-karma is described as continuing to exist until death when the body of the released one (jivān-mukta) is deceased. When describing the continuance of this karma, Śaṅkara compares it to the momentum of an arrow: "But so far as the prārabdha is concerned, it continues to exist till death, just as an arrow which leaves the bow continues to move so long as its initial motion is not exhausted."¹⁴⁶ The Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi employs the same arrow image to describe the prārabdha-karma.¹⁴⁷ Śaṅkara uses this image elsewhere¹⁴⁸ also. As this image indicates, the momentum of prārabdha-karma cannot be easily interrupted.

There are many places where Śaṅkara refers to this problem of prārabdha-karma,¹⁴⁹ but as shall be shown the presentation of the problem is not without some ambiguity. Śaṅkara, in both his Sūtra-bhāṣya

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Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III.III, 32, Vol II, p. 221.

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Cf., Śaṅkara, Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #452. To really grapple with whether Śaṅkara wrote the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi would constitute another thesis, but it can be argued that these possible references in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, Gīta-bhāṣya, and Chāndogya-bhāṣya to verse 452 of the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi may perhaps constitute some evidence that Śaṅkara was the author of this text.

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Cf., Śaṅkara, Gīta-bhāṣya XIII, 23; Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XIV.2.

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Cf., Śaṅkara, Gīta-bhāṣya XIII, 23; Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.13 to IV.1.19.

and Gītā-bhāṣya, argues that all acts without qualification are destroyed by the realization of the Ātman: He says, "Consumption of all acts has been taught here."¹⁵⁰ This assertion is clearly made from the ultimate standpoint (paramārthika satya). But the level of discussion is quickly shifted by Śaṅkara's subsequent qualification that "all acts" refers only to sañcita and kriyamāṇa-karma and not to prārabdha-karma.¹⁵¹ Śaṅkara justifies his qualification by arguing that prārabdha-karma has already begun to yield its fruit, like the arrow already projected by the bow. For this reason it is not finally destroyed until its energy is spent. This causes the "sloughing off" of the body.

The qualification here examined that "all acts" does not refer to prārabdha-karma is an example of a suspension of the "transposition strategy". That is, the problem of prārabdha-karma is not transferred to the second level of truth. On the contrary, this qualification that "all acts" does not refer to prārabdha-karma is an example of a lapsing back into the first level of truth. The question of prārabdha-karma in both his Sūtra-bhāṣya and his Gītā-bhāṣya is not re-examined in the light of Self-knowledge, but asserted on its own terms.

How then do we reconcile these two conflicting statements i.e., that "all acts", i.e., all three modes of karma are destroyed by Brahman-realization, and the subsequent statement that only two modes

¹⁵⁰ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 23, p. 363. Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.13.

¹⁵¹ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 23, and Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.15.

of karma, i.e., sañcita and kriyamāṇa karma, are actually destroyed by Brahman-realization?

One way of reconciling these two statements is to classify each of them according to the level of assertion, i.e. the first or the second level of truth, from which it was posited, and the class of eligibles, i.e., the "unenlightened" or the "enlightened" man, to which it was addressed. It seems clear that Śaṅkara's qualification that "all acts" excludes prārabdha-karma is directed to the "unenlightened man", and asserted from the first level of truth. His prior assertion, i.e., that "all acts", all three forms of karma, are destroyed by Brahman-realization was clearly directed to the "enlightened man" and asserted from the second level of truth. The following two passages, one from the Sūtra-bhāṣya and one from the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi, confirm this classification. So in his Sūtra-bhāṣya in speaking of prārabdha-karma in relation to the "enlightened man", Śaṅkara states: "In the case of him who has realized the Ātman, actions and the fruits thereof are as good as being destroyed." ¹⁵² That is, the assertion that "all acts" irrespectively are destroyed by Brahman-realization can be understood as addressed to the "enlightened man" and not the "unenlightened man". The following excerpt from the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi confirms this possibility even more clearly: "For the sage who lives in his own self as Brahman, the question of the existence of prārabdha work is meaningless, like the question of a man who has awakened from sleep having

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any connection with the objects seen in the dream-state."

In the above excerpt, the phrase "devoid of identification with the limiting adjuncts" indicates that prārabdha-karma still exists for one who identifies with his body, but not for the man who is no longer under the delusion of that adhyāsa. This understanding is further confirmed by Śaṅkara's application of adhyāsa to the concept of a body as hitherto discussed: "An embodied being: a body-wearer i.e., he who identifies himself with the body." Applying this understanding of the body, Śaṅkara argues that precisely because of this identification with the body, the "unenlightened man" is not equipped to leave all of his actions behind. The "enlightened man", on the contrary, is equipped to do this because of his transcendence of this identification. Accordingly Śaṅkara states: "...it is not possible for an ignorant man to abandon actions completely....The abandonment of all actions is possible for him alone who realizing the Supreme Reality is not a 'body-wearer' i.e., does not regard the body as the Self." Indeed, the overcoming of prārabdha-karma is possible only

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Śaṅkara, Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi, trans. Swami Madhavananda (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1974) #454. Herein after cited as: Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi. The Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi is a more esoteric work. Thus it makes sense that the teaching of this text on, prārabdha-karma was addressed to the "enlightened man".

154/

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 11.

155/

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 11.

for the man of realization (jivān-mukta) who has abandoned any identification with the body. Thus the problem of prārabdha-karma is ultimately a problem for the spectator and not for the jivān-mukta himself. 156

The Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi accordingly states: "Prārabdha work can be maintained only so long as one lives identified with the body. But no one admits that the man of realization ever identifies himself with the body. 157

Hence prārabdha work should be rejected in his case."

One way of reconciling these two apparently conflicting teachings on prārabdha-karma is to understand them in terms of the dialectics of teaching. In this light the final teaching on prārabdha-karma i.e. that it is a sublateable form of adhyāsa, is withheld until the initiate is ready for it. Śaṅkara accordingly states in his Gītā-bhāṣya:

"An ignorant man who is attached to action believes 'I should do this action and enjoy its result.' No wise man should unsettle that firm belief." 158

Thus a reconciliation can be reached between these two conflicting teachings on prārabdha-karma by seeing them in terms of Śaṅkara's adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. So the qualification that "all

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Cf., Vedāntaparibhāṣā, trans. S. S. Sastri (Adyar Library, 1942), footnote 85, p. 217. The problem only occurs when one super-imposes the stance of the spectator upon the jivān-mukta. One may see the relevance of the doctrine of the jivān-mukta when viewed in relation to adhyāsa. For liberation involves not the removal of a real body, but of all those adhyāsas, specifically here the adhyāsa of the body, apparently super-imposed upon the Self. That is, sublation pertains to an apparent reality, not an actual one.

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Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #460.

158/

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 26.

acts" excludes prārabdha-karma functions as a form of adhyāropa. Co-relatively, the subsequent teaching that "all acts" includes prārabdha-karma functions as a form of apavāda. The following excerpt from the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi confirms this interpretation: "'If the effects of ignorance are destroyed with their root by knowledge, then how does the body live?' - it is to convince those fools who entertain a doubt like this, that the Srutis, from a relative standpoint, hypothesize Prārabdha work, but not for proving the reality of the body etc. of the man of realization."¹⁵⁹

As regards this discussion on the suspension of the "transposition strategy", it is significant that both the Sūtra-bhāṣya and his Gītā-bhāṣya point implicitly, not explicitly, to this subsequent teaching. Only the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi presents this subsequent teaching explicitly. As was stated above, the suspension of the "transposition strategy" on this issue in both the Sūtra-bhāṣya and the Gītā-bhāṣya points to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara. Specifically, it points to the implicit importance of sādhana in Advaita including such things as the implicit concession to a Ātma-vidhi.¹⁶⁰

In concluding this section, it should be noted that the three categories of prārabdha-karma, jivān-mukta and the guṇas operate methodologically as one unit, and together furnish a provisional continuity

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Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #463.

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The significance of the suspension of the "transposition strategy" will be fully investigated in Chapter Four.

between the Self and dharma. This initial continuity is later disclosed, from the ultimate standpoint, as based upon adhyāsa.

6b. Śaṅkara's Presentation of the Question of a Fall from Chastity as Illustrating the Suspension of the "Transposition Strategy."

A classic example of a suspension of the "transposition strategy" concerns Śaṅkara's treatment in his Sūtra-bhāṣya¹⁶¹ of the fall from chastity. This "dharmic problem" is not transferred to the second level of truth in the Sūtra-bhāṣya or in any of his other texts. This should not be understood as a methodological lapse i.e., as a failure to apply the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. Rather its positive significance lies in pointing to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, and thus demonstrates the implicit concession to sādhana in Advaita.

This dharmic problem is posited from the first level of truth and is clearly addressed to the "unenlightened man". Therefore the brahmacārin who has fallen from chastity is enjoined to perform the¹⁶² expiation rites. In the next verse, there is an injunction to excommunicate such people from honourable men: "Whatever may be the nature of the sin, whether great or small, those who fall from chastity are excommunicated by respectable persons, for purposes of sacrifice, study¹⁶³ and wedding." Śaṅkara nowhere subsequently qualifies this assertion.

¹⁶¹
Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.IV.41 to III.IV.43.

¹⁶²
Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III.IV.41, 42.

¹⁶³
Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III.IV.43.

Thus, this instance, even more than the issue over prārabdha-karma, illustrates a suspension of the "transposition strategy." It is significant that this discussion on the fall from chastity precedes the critical verse in Śaṅkara's Sūtra-bhāṣya which refers to the muni injunction, or the need for a continual meditation (nididhyāsana)
 164 on the Self, for both discussions point to the implicit need for
 165 sādhana in Advaita. Both point to what has been designated as "the implicit strand" in Śaṅkara.

But if we apply Śaṅkara's "transposition strategy" to this problem and re-examine the question of a fall from chastity from the second level of truth the following questions emerge. These questions point to what has been designated as the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara. If mokṣa is a "pre-given", how can any act of dharma or adharma, such as a fall from chastity, ultimately affect this pre-given? Thus how can any fall from chastity affect this pre-given? If it is admitted that the Self is unaffected by such a deed, then qualifications for
 166 Brahma-vidyā, such as the discrimination (viveka) between the eternal and the transient, are on the same footing as the disqualifications for Brahma-vidyā, such as a fall from chastity, in the sense that they

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Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.IV.47. This verse will be investigated at length in Chapter Four in the Ātma-vidhi section.

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The fourth chapter will address itself to the need for sādhana in Advaita.

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Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.1 for the four qualifications for Brahma-vidyā

have an equal effect on mokṣa; that is, they have no effect: "Mokṣa being no effect of an act, no action will be of any avail to a mumukṣu,¹⁶⁷ a seeker of mokṣa." Thus when this "dharmic problem" is transferred to the second level of truth, it becomes clear that no fall from chastity can actually affect the self. The real problem is not the act itself, but the false identification (adhyāsa) of the Self with that act. The real sin (pāpa) is the false identification with it, not the sin itself. Accordingly, Śaṅkara states in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Wherefore they (the sages) rest in Brahman only. Not in the slightest can blemishes of body affect them, since they have no egotism and do not identify themselves with the aggregate of the body."¹⁶⁸ Freedom in such an action involves an act of de-personalization whereby one sees it as that action and not as my action; as that puppet-show, to use the graphic example of the Gītā¹⁶⁹ and not as my puppet-show (yantrārūḍha). Just as Śaṅkara stated, in answer to the question as to whether the guṇas bind the Self, that: "...they bind fast as it were [iva] the Kshetrājna,"¹⁷⁰ so this sin (pāpa) only binds the Self as it were (iva). This re-examination of this "dharmic problem" points to the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, whereas Śaṅkara's actual suspension of the "transposition

¹⁶⁷ /
Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, Introduction, p. 87.

¹⁶⁸ /
Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V, 19.

¹⁶⁹ /
Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 61.

¹⁷⁰ /
Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV, 5.

strategy" in his Sūtra-bhāṣya on this "dharmic problem" points to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara's treatment of this "dharmic problem" in both strands has been described so as to give a comprehensive account.

Numerous other examples could be cited as instances of the suspension of the "transposition strategy" in Śaṅkara. For example, in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara describes the injunction about Self-knowledge (Ātma-vidhi) as a restrictive injunction (niyama-vidhi).¹⁷¹ Unlike his presentation of the Ātma-vidhi in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, Śaṅkara does not subsequently argue in this bhāṣya that the Ātma-vidhi is only a pseudo-vidhi.¹⁷² That is, this dharmic problem is not re-examined from a higher standpoint in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya. Similarly, Śaṅkara argues for a real injunction with reference to meditation (dhyāna-vidhi) in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya.¹⁷³ He does not qualify this assertion later on in this bhāṣya; the assertion is nowhere re-classified as a "pseudo-vidhi" as in the Sūtra-bhāṣya. Both instances are cases where the "transposition strategy" is suspended. Their special significance lies in the fact that they point to the implicit concession to the need for sādhana in Advaita.¹⁷⁴ All such instances of a suspension

¹⁷¹ Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII, vii-i.

¹⁷² Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4

¹⁷³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya I, XI.4

¹⁷⁴ Because of the special significance of these two instances with reference to the question of sādhana in Advaita, a full investigation of them is reserved for Chapter Four.

of the "transposition strategy" point to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara.

In accordance with the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, if all these "dharmic problems" are re-examined from the standpoint of Self-knowledge (paramārthika-satya) they are revealed, in retrospect, as false (mithyā). From this standpoint, it becomes clear that the Self could only be affected "as it were" (iva) by prārabdha-karma, the guṇas, and any fall from chastity. Śaṅkara accordingly states in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Nowhere in our experience have we found anything improved or spoiled by a quality being falsely attributed to it through avidyā."¹⁷⁵ So to speak of a provisional "dharmic problem" that is later sublated is ultimately, and from the highest standpoint (paramārthika-satya), to speak in riddles. That is, speaking from the paramārthika-satya, there was never any such "dharmic problem." Gauḍapāda states this as follows: "That which is non-existent at the beginning and in the end is necessarily so (non-existent) in the middle. The objects we see are illusions; still they are regarded as-if real."¹⁷⁶

As has been argued regarding Śaṅkara's adhyāropa-apavāda strategy, it is only the "bridge" that is capable of self-annulment that can lead to the Self.¹⁷⁷ It is in this sense that dharma can

¹⁷⁵ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2, p. 322.

¹⁷⁶ Gauḍapāda, Kārikās #31, from the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad with Gauḍapāda's Kārikās and Śaṅkara's Commentary trans. Swamī Nikhitananda (Sri Ramakrishna, Ashrama, Mysore, 1968) p. 245.

¹⁷⁷ Cf., Sureśvara's statement quoted in footnote 27 of this chapter: "Through a means that is unreal, the Self which can be approached through no means whatever is realized."

lead "as it were" to Self-knowledge. That which only seemed to exist is used to disclose that which is ever existant. In the light of this, the teaching of the Sūtra-bhāṣya is ultimately only the doctrine of the Self. Śaṅkara accordingly states in this text: "And if both in the beginning and the end of the chapter, the aim of Sruti is to describe the nature of the highest Ātman, then to say that in the intermediate portion of the same, the jivātman is described is to allow the possibility of a man who has gone in the east being found in the west."¹⁷⁸

The co-existence of the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara can be demonstrated by viewing Śaṅkara's teaching from the paramārthika-satya that all "dharmic problems" are ultimately false (mithyā) together with his conservative teaching on such questions as the penalties for a fall from chastity, or whether a Sūdra is equipped for a study of the Vedas etc.¹⁷⁹ When viewed as phases of Śaṅkara's adhyāropa-apavāda strategy, these two teachings can be reconciled. That is the former teaching should be identified with the sublation phase (apavāda), while the latter teaching should be identified with the deliberate superimposition (adhyāropa) phase.

7. Śaṅkara's Use of Language to Implement His Adhyāropa-Apavāda Strategy

Language can be viewed as the most important tool Śaṅkara uses to implement adhyāropa-apavāda. It functions as that provisional ladder set up between dharma and Self-knowledge which by annulling itself

¹⁷⁸ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.III.42, Vol. I, p. 180.

¹⁷⁹ The precise nature of the co-existence between these two strands in Śaṅkara will be one of the central concerns in Chapter Four and the Conclusion.

discloses its ground (adhiṣṭhāna). Consequently, "Words, even words pertaining to Brahman are part of avidyā, yet are avidyā destroying here lies the dialectics." ¹⁸⁰ So the dynamic function of the words pertaining to Brahman causes one's consciousness to move from one level of experience, i.e., adhyāsa, to its sublation (apavāda). Strictly speaking all language even "Brahman language" shares the fundamental structure of adhyāsa, that, super-imposition of name and form upon the attribute-less Brahman. Accordingly Śaṅkara states in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya: "Anything possessed of attributes can alone be expressed in words, and anything possessed of attributes is mutable whereas Brahman is changeless, It being the source of all modifications. Hence it is inexpressible." ¹⁸¹ Though Brahman can initially only be described negatively, a process which culminates in the famous "not-this-not this" (neti neti) negation, negation does not pertain to Brahman's nature (svarūpa). Brahman should equally be described as the Full (Pūrṇa) or the plenitude of Being. The negation, therefore, does not pertain to the nature of Brahman but, rather, to the limiting structure of every ascription.

When Śaṅkara is addressing the "unenlightened man" from the phenomenal level of truth and when referring to the "secondary or penultimate" sense of the Self, figurative expressions such as "as it were" (iva), ¹⁸² "though to the ignorant", ¹⁸³ are used. On the other hand,

¹⁸⁰ Dr. J. G. Arapura, "Indian Philosophy of Language", unpublished paper.

¹⁸¹ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II, vii, i, p. 345.

¹⁸² Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, 13.

¹⁸³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V, 19.

when he is addressing the "enlightened man" and when referring to the primary or ultimate sense of the Self from the highest level of truth, non-figurative expressions such as "as a matter of fact",¹⁸⁴ and "in reality"¹⁸⁵ (vastu) are used. Although Śaṅkara does not argue for two levels of language in the sense of the sphota-vādin,¹⁸⁶ he uses language differently when addressing the enlightened or the unenlightened man, when speaking from the phenomenal or the ultimate level of truth, and when referring to the Self either in its secondary or primary sense. In this light, one can speak of Śaṅkara as using two "levels" of language. The first "level" of language in Śaṅkara can be designated as that language which reinforces adhyāsa. The second "level" of language in Śaṅkara, on the contrary, is that language which thrusts us away from adhyāsa and is thus instrumental in leading to Self-realization. It is the special immediacy of the Self in the latter that makes that effect possible. Thus it is nowhere argued by Śaṅkara that this second "level" of language can bring about this effect autonomously i.e., without the Self. In this discussion the first "level" of language in Śaṅkara shall be referred to as the "language of dharma"; the "second level" of language in Śaṅkara shall be referred to as the "language of the Self". In this section, Śaṅkara's use of these two "levels" of language in

¹⁸⁴ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, 13.

¹⁸⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 18.

¹⁸⁶ For Śaṅkara's refutation of sphota-vāda cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.3.28.

implementing his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy will be examined.

Thus the first "level" of language will be examined in its relation to "deliberate super-imposition" (adhyāropa) and in accordance with the first phase of Śaṅkara's primary strategy. The second "level" of language will be examined in its co-relative role of sublating (apavāda) such super-impositions.

The first "level" of language or the "language of dharma", as here defined, would include not only dharmic injunctions (vidhis) but also the first class of declarative statements (vedānta-vākyas) i.e. the accidental definitions of Brahman (taṭastha-lakṣaṇa), for the statements "fight, Arjuna" and "Brahman is the creator of the world" share the same structure and perform the same function which is that of deliberate super-imposition (adhyāropa). The first "level" of language would include mantras, brāhmaṇas, arthavadās (statements of eulogy).

The second "level" of language or the "language of the Self", as herein defined, includes the second class of "declarative statements" (vedānta-vākyas) i.e., the "non-relational definitions of Brahman" (187) (svarūpa-lakṣaṇa), what has been designated as non-figurative expressions, and those statements inculcating identity (mahā-vākyas). This "level" of language should be identified with the second phase of Śaṅkara's primary strategy, apavāda. This is true especially of the mahā-vākyas which by a process of self-elimination (apavāda) point to the Self.

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An example of such a "non-figurative expression" is given in IV:24 of Śaṅkara's Gita-bhāṣya: "To one who realizes that all is Brahman, there is no action." p. 141. These statements are made from the paramārthika-satya.

Statements made from this second "level" of language are capable of sublating statements made from the first "level" of language. This is best illustrated in cases of "simultaneous viewing" where a statement made from the first "level" of language is immediately cancelled by a subsequent statement made from the second "level" of language. The following excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya is such an example: "Inaction can be seen in action and action in inaction, since both inaction (nivritti) and action (pravritti) presuppose an agent. In fact all our experience of such things as action and agent is possible only in a state of avidyā, only when we have not yet attained to the Real¹⁸⁸ (vastu)." Though both "levels" of language are ultimately sublated by Self-realization, this excerpt illustrates how the first "level" of language implements the vyāvahārika-satya and, co-relatively, how¹⁸⁹ the second "level" of language implements the paramārthika-satya. But this co-relation between that language which points to the Self and the paramārthika-satya is methodological, and not doctrinal, for, strictly speaking, even the "language of the Self" cannot be located on the paramārthika-satya. Rather, it should be placed mid-way between the two levels of truth. This mid-way position will be studied shortly by a methodological examination of the mahā-vakyās which function to thrust us away from the first level of truth and direct us towards the second level of truth.

^{188/} Sāṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 18.

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This second "level" of language implements the paramārthika-satya only in the sense of directing us towards it.

7a. A Methodological Examination of the "Qualifying Phrases" Used by Śaṅkara

It is interesting to note that whereas Śaṅkara often clearly specifies the "level" of language and the corresponding level of truth from which he is speaking in the Gītā-bhāṣya, he is often intentionally ambiguous in this respect in the Sūtra-bhāṣya. Consequently, there are more instances in the Gītā-bhāṣya of "qualifying phrases", both figurative and non-figurative. Figurative expressions in the Gītā-bhāṣya such as, "only figuratively" (upacaryate),¹⁹⁰ "as it were" (iva)¹⁹¹ and "by a figure of speech" (upacārataḥ ucyate)¹⁹² indicate that the statement is being made both from the first level of truth and with reference to the first "level" of language. Co-relatively non-figurative expressions such as, "in fact" (vastu),¹⁹³ and "in reality" (paramārthataḥ)¹⁹⁴ indicate that the statement is being made both from the standpoint of the second "level" of truth¹⁹⁵ and with reference to the second "level" of language. These qualifying phrases also help to indicate what class of eligibles i.e., the "unenlightened" or the "enlightened" man, is being addressed. For example, when phrases such as "in fact" (vastu) or "in reality" (paramārthataḥ) are being used, the "enlightened man" is being addressed. But as we shall see, phrases

¹⁹⁰ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2, p. 329.

¹⁹¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 14, XIV, 5, XIII, 22.

¹⁹² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 13.

¹⁹³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 18.

¹⁹⁴ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV, 24.

¹⁹⁵ Strictly speaking, no statement can be made from the second level of truth.

such as "as it were" (iva) and "by a figure of speech" (upacāratah ucyate) play a more dialectical role in causing the "unenlightened" man to confront his own ignorance for the very act of specifying a statement as being made from the first level of truth by an expression like "as it were" (iva), thrusts one beyond that statement. Such statements should be distinguished from instances of statements where the first "level" of truth and the first "level" of language are being used, but without being specified or identified as such. The statement: "fight, Arjuna" is such an example.

As noted above, in the Sūtra-bhāṣya Śaṅkara is not as explicit as he is in his Gītā-bhāṣya in specifying the "level" of language and the "level" of truth from which the statement is posited. So in his Sūtra-bhāṣya,¹⁹⁶ in his argument against the Buddhists, Śaṅkara argues for the reality of the external world without specifying the "level" of language, the "level" of truth, or the class addressed. But this device is in accordance with his primary strategy adhyāropa-apavāda, which entails setting up a deliberate super-imposition, here identified as satkāryavāda, and then later sublatting it with the revised thesis of vivarta-vāda. But in the following excerpt from his Sūtra-bhāṣya Śaṅkara identifies the level of language and the level of truth by qualifying phrases: "...the Ātman is described to be thinking 'as if' [iva] or moving 'as if' [iva], when as a matter of fact the Ātman¹⁹⁷ neither thinks nor moves." Qualifying phrases such as "as it were"

¹⁹⁶Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.II.28.

¹⁹⁷Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.III.42, Vol. I, p. 179.

(iva) etc. are used extensively in his Īśa-bhāṣya. The following is an example: "Tat, That; atyeti, outruns - as it were; dhāvataḥ anyān, all other fast moving ones...viz the mind, speech, the senses etc., which are distinct from the Self."¹⁹⁸ His Bṛhad-bhāṣya contains many more examples of the use of such qualifying phrases, such as "It thinks as it were (iva)...The Self assumes the likeness of the latter and seems to think, just as light looks coloured."¹⁹⁹ These expressions are most numerous in his Gītā-bhāṣya, i.e., "It is only by a figure of speech (upacaryate) that the Self...is spoken of (upacaryate) as the cognizer."²⁰⁰

It was mentioned above that when expressions such as "as if", "as it were" (iva), and "by a figure of speech" (upacārataḥ ucyate) are followed by expressions such as "in fact" (vastu), and "in reality" (paramārthataḥ), they offer a clear example of what I have designated as "simultaneous viewing" whereby one moves from the first to the second level of truth. So, for example, Śaṅkara states in his Gītā-bhāṣya that, "He is spoken of as (upacaryate) the Sat or the A-sat....In reality (paramārtha-vastu), the Imperishable whom the Veda-knowers speak of, transcends the Sat and the A-sat and He is Thyself and none else."²⁰¹ In his Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas Śaṅkara often uses this device frequently as the following excerpt from his Īśa-bhāṣya illustrates: "Though in itself

¹⁹⁸Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #4, p. 10.

¹⁹⁹Śaṅkara, Bṛhad-bhāṣya IV.111.7.

²⁰⁰Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.2.

²⁰¹Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XI, 37.

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(svataḥ) It is motionless, It seems to (iva) move." This device makes it possible to view a "dharmic problem" simultaneously from the two standpoints of truth.

The dialectical role of figurative expressions such as "as it were" (iva), and "by a figure of speech" (upacārataḥ ucyate) was mentioned earlier. Let me turn now to a further consideration of that point.

These figurative expressions both specify the level from which the assertion is made i.e. the phenomenal standpoint, and initiate the step beyond it²⁰³ in that, again, the very act of specifying an assertion as being made from the phenomenal level of truth thrusts one beyond this level. This can be compared to the difference discussed above between the consciousness of adhyāsa as adhyāsa or its conscious use i.e., adhyāropa, and adhyāsa as an unconscious condition. That is an expression such as "The Self moves as it were" indicates the conscious use of adhyāsa i.e. adhyāropa. So these figurative expressions in thus

²⁰²Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #5.

²⁰³The dialectical role of these figurative expressions resembles Edmund Husserl's understanding of the role of the bracketing device called the époché. For both the époché and an expression such as "as it were" (iva), specify the level of the assertion i.e. the natural standpoint (Husserl) or the vyāvahārika-satya (Śaṅkara) and thrust one beyond it. Husserl defines the époché as follows: "Instead now of remaining at this standpoint, we propose to alter it radically... We do not abandon the thesis we have adopted, we make no change in our conviction... And yet the thesis undergoes a modification... we set it as it were 'out of action', we disconnect it, bracket it" from Edmund Husserl, Ideas, p. 96. So a phrase such as "as it were" (iva) in a statement such as "the Self moves as it were" might be said to perform a similar function to Husserl's époché. That is the claim that the Self can "move" is bracketed and specified as belonging to the phenomenal standpoint. So a provisional reality is ascribed to the assertion, but not an absolute reality.

indicating that a "dharmic problem" is being viewed from the phenomenal standpoint help to enact what I designated above as "the transposition strategy in reverse. That is, the "dharmic problem" is re-examined in the light of Self-knowledge.

The following excerpt from Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya cited earlier clearly illustrates how such a qualifying phrase helps to enact "the transposition strategy in reverse":

(Objection):--It has been said that the embodied one is not tainted (xiii.31). How then, on the contrary, is it said here that the guṇas bind him?

(Answer):--We have met this objection by adding 'as it were' (iva) they bind him 'as it were' (iva).

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In this instance the phrase: "as it were" (iva) is clearly suspending the reality of the claim that the Self is actually affected by the guṇas. It specifies that this only appears to be the case from the phenomenal standpoint. The empirical reality of the jīva-ātman i.e., as affected by the guṇas is being provisionally accepted from the phenomenal level of truth, here, in order to make sense of this passage. But the phrase "as it were" (iva) indicates that this assertion cannot be made, finally, from the second level of truth. D. Sinha comments on this aspect of Advaita as follows: "The content qua content is never denied in the Advaita view; what is denied is the character of reality as referring to a real spatio-temporal context." 205

A distinction should therefore be made between an unidentified use of the first "level" of language as in the injunction "Fight, Arjuna"

²⁰⁴ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV, 5.

²⁰⁵ Debabrata Sinha, The Idealist Standpoint (Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, 1965), p. 107.

and in its identified use as in the statement: "The Self moves as it were (iva)."²⁰⁶ Only the latter helps to enact the "transposition strategy in reverse". Such figurative expressions function like a means that can lead to its end only by self-annulment: "Though the means is mithyā or illusory, still it is true, because the end is true."²⁰⁷ (Mithyātve 'pi upāyasya upeyasatyatayā satyatvameva syāt.) Therefore their role is not so much representative as methodological. Such figurative expressions function like signposts in indicating that the statement is made only from the phenomenal standpoint. In so doing, they function as bridges or as points of transition between what has been designated as an unidentified use of the first "level" of language and the second "level" of language in Śaṅkara.

7b. The Mahā-Vākyas Viewed as a Compressed Miniature of Śaṅkara's

Primary Strategy

By examining the dynamics of the mahā-vākyas i.e., in the transition from an understanding of tat and tvam in their "secondary senses" to an understanding of them in their "primary senses", one can see Śaṅkara's adhyāropa-apavāda strategy in action.²⁰⁸ In his Chāndogya-bhāṣya²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶That is, their role is not to represent the Self as actually moving.

²⁰⁷Śaṅkara, Gīta-bhāṣya XVIII, 66, p. 514.

²⁰⁸Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI, 3, Śaṅkara, Bṛhad-bhāṣya IV, 5, 6 and I.IV.7, Sūtra-bhāṣya IV, I.1-3 and the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII for a discussion of the mechanics of understanding "Tat Tvam asi"

²⁰⁹Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya, VI, XVI, 3.

Śaṅkara expounds the process of understanding the mahā-vākya: "tat tvam asi" in detail. The Upadeśa-Sāhasrī is even more specific in this regard and devotes a whole chapter to this question.²¹⁰

The first step in the process of understanding "tat tvam asi" involves a deliberate super-imposition (adhyārōpa) whereby "tvam"²¹¹ is understood in its "secondary sense" (gaṇam) so that the individual self (jīva-ātman), with all its imperfections, is apparently identified with Brahman. This corresponds to the first phase of Śaṅkara's strategy i.e., adhyārōpa. This mis-identification would apparently entail the problem of Brahman inheriting such karmic properties of the individual self as its capacity for suffering.²¹² This mis-identification in which "tvam" is understood in its "secondary sense" (gaṇam) is cancelled²¹³ when "tvam" is understood in its "primary sense" (paramārtham).²¹⁴ This corresponds to the second phase of Śaṅkara's strategy i.e. apavāda. The Upadeśa-Sāhasrī text points out that: "This negation is not one of reality, but of a false superimposition only."²¹⁵ All the adjuncts (upādhis) of the "not-Self" which have been falsely super-imposed upon

²¹⁰Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII.

²¹¹See footnote 116 on the "secondary sense". There it is pointed out that the the "secondary sense" is ultimately and illusory notion (mithyā-pratyaya).

²¹²Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI, 3.

²¹³Is cancelled, in a manner of speaking, for ultimately only the experience of Self-realization can sublimate this mis-identification.

²¹⁴The "primary sense" of "tvam" is referred to as the implied sense (lakṣaṇa) in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #29,30.

²¹⁵Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #23.

the Self are "negated" by the words: "not this, not this" (neti neti).

As the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī points out, one can only approach the
 unqualified or "primary sense" (paramārtham)²¹⁷ of the Self by first
 negating the numerous qualifications or adjuncts (upādhis) that have
 been falsely super-imposed upon the Self. This process is referred
 to as the method of "agreement and difference" (anvaya-vyatireka):
 "Agreement and contrariety with regard to words and with regard to their
 meanings are the only means by which the meaning implied by the word
 'I' may be ascertained."²¹⁸

It is interesting to note that the emphasis is on removing the
 false super-impositions (adhyāsa) clinging to "tvam" and not those
 clinging to "tat".²¹⁹ Accordingly, Suresvara states: "If a person does
 not understand the import of the proposition 'That thou art' when it is
 imparted to him, it is because he has not grasped the meaning of
 'Thou'."²²⁰ The initial and apparent contradiction between "tat"
 and "tvam" and the subsequent disclosure of their identity is principally
 based on the transition from the use of "tvam" in its "secondary sense"
 (gaṇam)²²¹ to the use of "tvam" in its "primary sense" (paramārtham).²²²

²¹⁶ Ibid., #25 and #19.

²¹⁷ In this text the "primary sense" is referred to as the "implied sense" (lakṣaṇa) cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #101.

²¹⁸ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #96. For an examination of Suresvara's understanding of anvaya-vyatireka see Chapter Four.

²¹⁹ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #105, 106.

²²⁰ Suresvara, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi, Chapter Two, #10.

²²¹ Referred to as the prima facie sense in this text.

²²² As noted above the "primary sense" is here referred to as the lakṣaṇa sense.

Whereas the former usage of 't tvam' corresponds to the adhyāropa stage of Śaṅkara's strategy, the latter usage of 't tvam', because of its capacity to sublate the former, corresponds to the apavāda stage of Śaṅkara's strategy.

An important distinction is made in Śaṅkara's Chāndogya-bhāṣya, between a mere metaphorical identity as in the statement, "The Sun is as Brahman"²²³ and a literal identity such as "tat t tvam asi": "In such passages as 'the Sun is as Brahman'...the intervention of the term 'as' makes it impossible for it to provide the idea that 'the Sun is actually Brahman itself...while in the case of the assertion in question 'That thou art'...the 'Thou' is absolutely and entirely the same as Being, the Self."²²⁴ The function of the term "as" here is the same as the figurative expressions we have discussed above such as: "as it were" (iva), or "by a figure of speech" (upacārataḥ ucyate): it specifies the level of the assertion and in so doing thrusts one beyond that level.

In considering how Śaṅkara's strategy is implemented it is interesting to note that the phrase "tat tvam asi" is repeated thirteen times in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya. The object of this repetition is to enact the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy and take it to its culmination.²²⁵ As shall be discussed in detail below, the repetition of the mahā-vākya is important for one still beset by inner obstacles or vāsanās,²²⁶

²²³ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI, 3, p. 363.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 363.

²²⁵ Refer to the discussion on the Ātma-vidhi and the karaṇa for Self-realization in Chapter Four for a full investigation of the importance of repeating the mahā-vākya.

²²⁶ Cf., Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #342.

but not for one who is freed from their power. Accordingly Śaṅkara states in his Sūtra-bhāṣya that, "Repetition is useless for him who can realize that Brahman is the soul of all after hearing the śruti sentence 'Thou art that' once only; but we affirm that it is useful to him who cannot have this experience at once."²²⁷ In the latter instance, the sublation (apavāda) of all those adhyāsas clinging to "tvam" would involve a series of steps rather than one irreversible step as in the former instance. Accordingly Śaṅkara states in his Sūtra-bhāṣya that, "The method of realizing its real nature would be to discard one after another the parts super-imposed on it by successive acts of attention."²²⁸

7c. How the Two "Levels" of Language in Śaṅkara Participate in the Same Structure of Adhyāsa

The "language of the Self" or what was designated as the "second level" of language was provisionally spoken of as sublating the "language of dharma" or what was designated as the "first level" of language in Śaṅkara. But ultimately both "levels" of language are disclosed as sharing the same structure of sublation (apavāda); only the Ātman is left as the unsublated. Accordingly Śaṅkara states in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya that, "Though words are applied by their users even with regard to the unconditioned and non-dual Brahman, expecting to express It

²²⁷ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, IV.1.2, Vol. II, p. 319.

²²⁸ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, IV.1.2, Vol. II, p. 319. The importance of these "successive acts of attention" will be investigated fully in the Ātma-vidhi and karāṇa section of Chapter Four.

because of Its similarity with other substances still those words aprāpya, without reaching, without expressing (that Brahman); nivartante,²²⁹ turn back, become despoiled of their power." Thus even the mahā-vākya 'tat tvam asi' is, strictly speaking, a deliberate super-imposition (adhyāropa) upon the unutterable Brahman. Yet its peculiar function as a form of adhyāropa is to use adhyāsa to remove adhyāsa. Despite their different functions i.e., as reinforcing adhyāsa or as thrusting one away from adhyāsa by means of adhyāsa, these two "levels" of language in Śāṅkara should be described as continuous with respect to their common participation in adhyāsa. Thus, "Brahman talk also turns out to be māyā-talk."²³⁰ In this sense, they share a common structure.

Even this functional discontinuity between these two "levels" of language is mitigated when the first "level" of language operates together with figurative expressions such as "as it were" (iva) or "by a figure of speech" (upacārataḥ ucyate). For when the first "level" of language is used without these figurative expressions, it is closer to adhyāsa, but when it is used with these figurative expressions it implements adhyāropa. For this reason, it can function as a bridge between these two "levels" of language and between the two phases of Śāṅkara's primary strategy: adhyāropa and apavāda. Ultimately both phases of adhyāropa-apavāda, and thus both levels of language, which

²²⁹Śāṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.IX.1, p. 367.

²³⁰J. G. Arapura, "Māyā and the Discourse about Brahman" from: Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta, M. Sprung (ed.) (D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 109-21.

were each identified with one phase of adhyāropa-apavāda,²³¹ should be understood as working together.

The first "level" of language was referred to above as the "language of dharma" while the second "level" of language was referred to as the "language of the Self" or as the language which points to the Self via negativa. Ultimately both "levels" of language are disclosed as situated on the level of dharma with respect to their common participation in adhyāsa. Thus the relationship between language and the Self might be represented by this formula: dharma by a process of self-annulment leads to the Self. Accordingly Śaṅkara states in his Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya that, "The attainment of the Highest consists merely in removing²³² ignorance and nothing more."

It follows from this that only the Self is left as the unsublatable. Sureśvara refers to this as follows: "When a person understands 'I am Brahman' through the propositions like 'That thou art', his sense of 'I' and 'mine' are destroyed and he goes beyond the realm²³³ of words and mind." This leads to a problematic question: Are there one or two sublations i.e. the sublation of the first "level" of language by the second "level" of language and the sublation of the second "level" by the experience of Self-realization? Do they occur successively

²³¹As discussed above the first "level" of language was identified with the adhyāropa phase and the second "level" of language was identified with the apavāda phase of Śaṅkara's strategy.

²³²Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya I.1.5.

²³³Sureśvara, Naīṣkarmyasiddhi, Raghavachar, III, 1.

or simultaneously? This last question is a mis-question as sublation should not be understood in a temporal sense. N. K. Devaraja comments on this as follows: "Sublation, in other words, is not a temporal relation, it is simply the perception that the sublating experience is qualitatively higher than the one which is sublated. To put it more radically, bādhā or sublation is the perception that the object of the sublated experience appeared only falsely without having had a real existence."²³⁴ Thus the second "level" of language can only be provisionally described as unsublatable from the vyāvahārika-satya.²³⁵ Ultimately there is only one sublation whereby the whole of avidyā is sublated by Self-realization.

²³⁴ N. K. Devaraja, An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge (Motilal Banarasidass, 1972), p. 168. Herein after cited as: Devaraja, An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge.

²³⁵ This much we can say, if one can speak from the paramārthika-satya.

CHAPTER II

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA IN RĀMĀNUJA:

A METHODOLOGICAL EXAMINATION

Rāmānuja's understanding of the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma must be viewed with reference to the relation of "the body and that which is embodied" (śarīra-śarīrin)¹. For it is the śarīra-śarīrin that functions as the paradigm relation in Rāmānuja's system. P. N. Srinivasachari describes it as: "the central idea that serves as the fulcrum of the philosophy of Rāmānuja."² Not only is it the "central idea" in Rāmānuja's system, but its mechanics are applied to all the primary relations in this system. K. C. Varadachari writes of this application as follows: "The definition which he gives for what a body constitutes is extended to every one of the other important relations, viz. whole-part, substance-mode...Thus Rāmānuja manages to reduce all relations to one typical and unitary relation or conception of soul-body."^{2a} Also, as will be established later,³ the relation between

¹The "body" and the "embodied" are defined in terms of each other. Through the body we define the Self.

²P. N. Srinivasachari, The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita (2nd ed. Madras: Adyar Library and Research Centre), p. 225. Herein after cited as: P. N. Srinivasachari, The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

^{2a}R. C. Varadachari, The Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-Bhāṣya (Madras: Everyman's Press, 1928), p. 86. Herein after cited as The Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-Bhāṣya.

³Cf., Chapter Three.

the Self and dharma in Rāmānuja's system is functionally equivalent to the relation between the Self and its "attributive consciousness" (dharma-bhūta-jñāna), which functions like the śarīra-śarīrin.

1. The "Explicit Strand" in Rāmānuja

1a. Doctrines Implying a Continuity Between the Selves and the Lord, The Selves and Dharma

Rāmānuja usually depicts the relation between the Selves and the Lord and the Selves and dharma as a continuum. The all-inclusiveness of the Lord in both Selves (cit) and matter (acit), is the basis for his characteristic emphasis on continuity. The Lord is described as⁴ ensouling "all this" as the "Inner Controller" (Antaryāmin). Accordingly Rāmānuja states in his Vedārthasaṃgraha: "All has reality of itself in so far as it is ensouled by Brahman and not otherwise."⁵ This "ensoulment" of the Lord in "all this" is not merely metaphorical as Śaṅkara maintains.⁶ Rather, Rāmānuja maintains that this "ensoulment" involves a literal immanence of the Lord as the "Inner Controller" (Antaryāmin) in the "secret place of the heart" (daharākaśa).⁷ Matter is described as "subsequently" ensouled by the Lord by means of His⁸ prior ensouling of the Self.

⁴ Cf., Īśa Upaniṣad #1.

⁵ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #22. See also #4 and Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.13.

⁶ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.III.39. See also: Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII.1.1.

⁷ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.3.13; III.3.40.

⁸ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #17.

This all-inclusiveness of the Lord is especially emphasized in Rāmānuja's Gītā-bhāṣya.⁹ The Lord is described there as having "become everything", "acting as father, mother, creator and grandfather",¹⁰ and as the "highest support of the universe".¹¹ The Lord is identified with the two primary terms of sat and asat not in the sense of a monistic identity, but in the sense of constituting their essential nature and their ultimate denotation.¹² Because of this "ensoulment", the entire creation is described as accessory (śeṣa) to the Lord and as totally dependent (niyamya) on Him.¹³ Precisely because of this all-inclusiveness of the Lord, the journey implied in sādhana is only metaphorical as there is no place where the Lord is not. K. Seshadri states in this connection that, "The Supreme Being...sustains and supports all existence, and apart from that nothing has any value or substance. That is the origin of all creation and marks its goal and consummation as well."

Rāmānuja insists in his Śrī-bhāṣya that it is not enough to know this "all-inclusiveness" of the Lord abstractly. Rather one must know it concretely as a mode of "seeing" or "immediate presentation": "Such remembrance has been declared to be of the character of seeing and this character of seeing consists in its possessing the character

⁹Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya Introduction to VII.

¹⁰Ibid., IX.17.

¹¹Ibid., XI.38.

¹²Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI, 38.

¹³Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya X, 42.

of immediate presentation." ¹⁴ The language of encounter is most appropriate for articulating this vision. ¹⁵

The justification for this central claim of all-inclusiveness is to be found in the Self-body relation (śarīra-śarīrin) as applied to the Lord. This will be hereafter designated as the "ultimate Self-body relation" and distinguished from its everyday sense which will be designated as the "penultimate Self-body relation". Rāmānuja refers to this "ultimate Self-body relation" in this excerpt from his Śrī-bhāṣya: "Hence it is concluded that the whole totality of beings which is made up of the intelligent and the non-intelligent things is identical with the Brahman, only because of the relation of the body and soul (existing between them)." ¹⁶ The Lord is described as the cause of the universe in His essential nature (svarūpa) and as modified by that universe in His manifested nature (svabhāva). The Lord as cause (kāraṇa) is thus not essentially different from the Lord as effect (kārya); the change pertains only to the mode. Accordingly, Rāmānuja states: "Thus Brahman has the mode of being of cause when his body is constituted by prakṛti and puruṣa in their subtle phase... and Brahman has the mode of being of effect when his body is constituted

¹⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 15.

¹⁵ Such an encounter is described in Chapter Eleven of the Gītā which Rāmānuja pays especial attention to in his Gītā-bhāṣya. Arjuna is described in the Gītā as being given a "divine eye" to see this all-inclusiveness of the Lord (cf., Gītā XI, 8). Commenting on this verse from the Gītā, Rāmānuja states: "I give you a divine, that is a supernatural eye, which is the means for seeing Me." (Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI, 8).

¹⁶ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 193.

by the sum-total of spiritual and non-spiritual entities in their gross phase."¹⁷ Most important in relation to this emphasis on continuity, Rāmānuja describes the Lord as the inseparable unity (viśiṣṭa) that binds together qualities (viśeṣaṇa) and that which is qualified (viśeṣya), modes (prakāra) and that which is modified (prakārin) which respectively point to the Lord as effect (kārya) and the Lord as cause (kāraṇa). K. Seshadri refers to this viśiṣṭa as follows: "It is this 'plus' which we have called the integrating principle...What is spoken of as the 'whole' is really the integrating principle that makes the sum a whole."¹⁸

It is largely due to this inseparable unity (viśiṣṭa), this "integrating principle" that the Selves are described as "inseparable attributes" (aprthak-siddha-viśeṣaṇa) of the Lord. Rāmānuja paraphrases XIII.2 of the Gītā as: "Know that...the kshetra and the kshetrajñā by reason of their having primarily the character of My attributes, cannot exist independently of Me..."¹⁹ As will be discussed later,²⁰ this inseparability between the Selves and the Lord is best perceived a-posteriori i.e. from the standpoint of mokṣa.

¹⁷Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #74.

¹⁸K. Seshadri, "The Conception of Aṁśa in Visishtadvaita," Visishtadvaita, Philosophy and Religion (Madras: Ramanuja Research Society, 1974), p. 74.

¹⁹Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya, XIII, 2.

²⁰Cf., the conclusion of this Chapter. It is from this a-posteriori standpoint that this area of convergence between Rāmānuja and Saṅkara, i.e. their common structure of sādhana is uncovered.

The epistemological implications of this doctrine of the oneness of the Lord as cause and the Lord as effect is that by knowing the cause (kāraṇa), one can simultaneously know the effect (kārya).²¹ In figurative terms one might describe the cause as the "soul" of the effect and the effect as the "body" of the cause.²² Because of this ensoulment of the Lord in "all this", it is only ultimately possible to know "all this" within the Lord as inseparable from Him. Rāmānuja states in this regard that "The assertion that we can know all by knowing the One is only tenable in case that 'all' has reality of its own by having the One for its soul."²³ This knowledge of a category within the Lord is referred to later by Vedānta Deśika²⁴ as the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of that category.

The basis for the continuity between the Selves and dharma is the parallelism between what was designated as the "penultimate Self-body relation"²⁵ and the "ultimate Self-body relation".²⁶ Just as the two primary terms in the "penultimate Self-body relation",

²¹Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #12.

²²Cf., Īśa Upaniṣad #1.

²³Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #12.

²⁴Cf., Vedānta Deśika, Īśāvāsyopaniṣad-bhāṣya #17, trans. K. C. Varadachari (Tirupati: Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Press, 1956). Herein after cited as: Vedānta Deśika, Īśa-bhāṣya.

²⁵The "penultimate Self-body relation" as hitherto defined, is the relation between the individual Self and its body.

²⁶The "ultimate Self-body relation" as hitherto defined, is the relation between the Lord and His two "bodies": cit and acit.

i.e. sat and asat are not distinguished in terms of the Real and the false;²⁷ so also the two primary terms in the "ultimate Self-body relation" i.e. His lower and His higher "body" (prakṛti),²⁸ are not distinguished in this manner; rather, the distinction in both cases is qualitative. Thus asat is not understood as illusory, but as inferior to sat. Similarly the Lord's lower "body" (prakṛti) i.e. acit is not understood as illusory, but as inferior to the Lord's higher "body" (prakṛti) i.e. cit. In both instances, that which is inferior is not sublated,²⁹ but relegated to a lower "rung" of the ladder. This hierarchical model of the Real might be described as a common element in any theistic system. Even as the two primary terms in the "penultimate Self-body relation" are temporarily distinguished,³⁰ so the Selves and the Lord in the "ultimate Self-body relation" are distinguished in a quasi-temporal manner in terms of a never/once distinction. That is, the Lord is described as never having had any contact with karma as opposed to the Ātman who even when freed can still be characterized as once having been subject to karma. Rāmānuja states in this regard: "That which is capable of being the seat of ignorance can never acquire the character of what is naturally unfit to be the seat thereof."³¹

²⁷ Śaṅkara insists on distinguishing sat and asat in this manner. Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.16.

²⁸ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.6.

²⁹ "Sublated" that is in Śaṅkara's sense of the term, i.e. disclosed as illusory.

³⁰ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 16.

³¹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangachārya, I.1.1, p. 131.

These temporal distinctions bring a dynamism into the śarīra-śarīrin relationship. Most important, they allow for an identity-in-difference where a difference in time co-exists with a substantial identity. This is illustrated in Rāmānuja's following interpretation of the statement: "This is that Devadatta": "The declaration of the identity of a person involved in two actions, past and present, contains no contradiction, for the contradiction in his presence in two different places is solved by the difference in time."³² By means of this temporal distinction Rāmānuja explicitly avoids Śaṅkara's understanding of the "secondary sense" as involving an illusory notion (mithyāpratyaya).³³ But the parallelism in both the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" is especially constituted by the dimension of inseparability (aprthak-siddha) in both relations; that is, the śarīra and the śarīrin in both the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" are understood as inseparably united. The definition of a body (śarīra) which Rāmānuja uses to cover both instances illustrates this inseparability. His definition is as follows: "Any substance which a sentient soul is capable of completely controlling and supporting for its own purposes, and which stands to the soul in an entirely subordinate relation, is the body of that soul."³⁴ So the śarīra is grounded (ādheya), ruled (niyamyā) and accessory (śeṣa) to the śarīrin, which is ground (ādhāra), ruler (niyantr) and principal (śeṣin) to the former.

³²Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #25.

³³Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #25.

³⁴Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, II.1.9.

This parallelism between the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" is also constituted by the fact that both the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Self and the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Lord are characterized as uncontracted knowledge. Rānānuja accordingly states: "When one sees the self thus...that the self is made up of unlimited knowledge, then he attains to My state."

1b. Doctrines Implying a Contrasting Discontinuity Between the Selves and the Lord, and the Selves and Dharma

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Rāmānuja's predominant emphasis on continuity is mitigated by those doctrines that imply some discontinuity between the Selves and the Lord, and the Selves and dharma. For example, Rāmānuja maintains that the three svarūpas of cit (Selves), acit (matter) and Īśvara (Lord) retain their distinctness even when inseparably united within the Self-body relation (śarīra-śarīrin). He states this very clearly in his Vedārthasaṃgraha: "There is difference inasmuch as the non-spiritual order, the spiritual order and the Lord have categorically different proper forms and natures and are never confused." 36 Thus the inseparability (apṛthak-siddha) between the Selves and the Lord always co-exists 37 with an actual distinction, even in the liberated state (mokṣa). These two dimensions of separability and inseparability both co-exist

³⁵It is in this predominant emphasis on continuity that Rāmānuja distinguishes himself from a more conservative theistic position like Madva's which emphasizes the discontinuity between the Selves and the Lord, and the Selves and dharma much more explicitly.

³⁶Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #85.

³⁷Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.1.22, IV, IV.4.

within the śarīra-śarīrin by means of the "maxim of co-ordinate equivalence" (sāmānādhikarāṇya).

This tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability when translated into theological terms, is understood in terms of the tension between His inaccessibility and His accessibility. That is, the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Lord is often described as³⁸ inaccessible, whereas His manifested nature (svabhāva) as the "Inner Controller" (Antaryāmin) is described as most accessible, being the³⁹ essence of the Self. This tension between the inaccessibility and accessibility of the Lord is illustrated in Rāmānuja's introduction to his Gītā-bhāṣya: "(He), after having created the entire universe..., while remaining in His own form, was inaccessible through meditation, worship, and other such (devotional) acts,...being the vast ocean of boundless mercy, affability, affection and generosity, He made His own form in conformity with the nature of the configuration of each one of the several species of beings, without giving up His own essential⁴⁰ nature...."

Also, though the entire creation is described as accessory (śeṣa) to the Lord and as totally dependent on Him, yet it is also described as constituting only a "ten-thousandth part of a ten-thousandth

³⁸Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 26.

³⁹Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2. The Lord is most accessible to the devotee. Rāmānuja states in this respect: "Because this man holds Me to be the highest goal, finding it impossible to support himself without Me therefore it is not possible for Me also to maintain Myself without him. Thus he is indeed Myself." Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 18.

⁴⁰Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya, Introduction I, p. 3.

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part" of His power.

The susceptibility of the Selves to karma also introduces some discontinuity between the Selves and the Lord and the Selves and dharma. Rāmānuja states in this respect: "The natural properties of the order of bhoktr or subject, i.e., the embodied soul: that in spite of its being in essence unimpaired, uncircumscribable knowledge and bliss, it is susceptible to various degrees of contraction and expansion due to ignorance in the form of ageless karman."⁴² In his Śrī-bhāṣya⁴³ Rāmānuja makes an important distinction between "action prompted by desire" (kāmya-karma) and "desireless action" (niṣkāmya-karma). Rāmānuja explicitly identifies kāmya-karma with avidyā. Thus in interpreting the phrase "hidden by the untrue" (anṛtāpidhānaḥ) from the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, he interprets anṛta in terms of kāmya-karma and not in terms of māyā as with Śaṅkara.⁴⁴ He states that, "The word 'anrita' therefore denotes actions of a different kind, i.e. such as aim at worldly results and thus stand in the way of the soul reaching Brahman...."⁴⁵ Yet niṣkāmya-karma is understood here as one of the means removing that avidyā. Rāmānuja refers to these actions as, "...actions as aim at no worldly end, but only at the propitiation of the highest Person,

⁴¹Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya X, 42.

⁴²Vedārthasamgraha, Van Buitenen, #87.

⁴³Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 125, Thibaut.

⁴⁴Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya, VIII, iii, 2.

⁴⁵Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 125.

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and thus enable the devotee to reach him."

This susceptibility of the Selves to karma contributes to the breakdown in the parallelism between the "penultimate Self-body" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" in samsāra. For in contrast to the relation of the Self to its body, the Lord is described as relating to His "body" not in terms of karma, but in terms of mere "play" (līlā).⁴⁷

The measure of discontinuity between the Selves and dharma is caused by the capacity of karma to cause the contraction of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. Rāmānuja states that "the illumination of knowledge... is contracted by karman that takes on the form of ignorance. Owing to that contraction the identification of the soul with the proper form of its body, god, etc is brought about."⁴⁸ Dharma for Rāmānuja is essentially that process of purifying the dharma-bhūta-jñāna of this karmic influence.⁴⁹

Also the "penultimate Self-body relation" is governed by external relations as opposed to the "ultimate Self-body relation" which is governed by internal relations.⁵⁰ So the relations within the "ultimate

⁴⁶ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, pp.125-26. For further discussion of the difference between kāmya-karma and niṣkāmya-karma in Rāmānuja see Chapter Three.

⁴⁷ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya, Introduction to Chapter One.

⁴⁸ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #43.

⁴⁹ Chapter Three will largely be devoted to this question.

⁵⁰ K. V. Varadachari describes this distinction in Rāmānuja as follows: "Absolute relations that are impossible of sundering or varying are internal because immanently ground in their very nature...The variable relations are external relations between the reals." from Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-Bhāṣya, p. 65.

Self-body relation" are outside of both karma and the co-relative category of temporality; whereas the relations within the "penultimate Self-body relation" are subject to both karma and temporality. This is made possible by the bi-lateral nature of the Selves and consciousness which can function simultaneously as substances or as attributes, as Selves or as bodies.

This break-down in the parallelism between the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" is ended only in mokṣa. Then the freed Self is no longer subject to karma but rather creates its own body like the Lord according to the principle of līlā.⁵¹

1c. The Contrasting Dimensions in Rāmānuja's Explicit Methodology

The doctrinal tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability, accessibility and inaccessibility in the śarīra-śarīrin results in a corresponding tension in Rāmānuja's methodology. Thus in Rāmānuja's integrative usage of the śarīra-śarīrin devices are used to implement his predominant emphasis on continuity. On the other hand, in his dissociative usage of the śarīra-śarīrin devices are used to implement his contrasting emphasis on discontinuity. Rāmānuja's methodology, like Śaṅkara's is bi-lateral in that it explains not only his predominant emphasis on continuity, but also his contrasting emphasis on discontinuity. Because the latter is the foundation for the implicit forms of discontinuity in Rāmānuja that are parallel to Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja's methodology can be understood as pointing to both the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Rāmānuja simultaneously.

⁵¹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.14.

i. Rāmānuja's Integrative Usage of the Śarīra-Śarīrin

Corresponding to Rāmānuja's doctrinal emphasis on the all-inclusiveness of the Lord and on the continuity between the Selves and dharma there are a number of devices which specifically implement this emphasis. Rāmānuja's integrative usage of the śarīra-śarīrin, especially his integrative usage of the svarūpa ("the proper or essential form") svabhāva ("manifested nature") distinction is especially important in engineering this emphasis.

Rāmānuja often uses the svarūpa and svabhāva as respectively equivalent to his understanding of what I have designated as the "primary sense" and the "secondary sense". This is illustrated in the following excerpt from his Śrī-bhāṣya: "The word Brahman primarily denotes Him alone and in a secondary derivative sense only those things which possess some small part of the Lord's qualities." ⁵² Though different qualities are predicated of both the svarūpa and the svabhāva, yet they are by no means two categories but two modes of the same category. Thus the "manifested mode" (svabhāva) does not involve a change of essential nature from the "proper form" (svarūpa), but only a change of property. So the svarūpa and the svabhāva are described as forming an organic unit. Rāmānuja uses this integrative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction to explicitly combat Śaṅkara's model of the "secondary sense" as an "illusory notion" (mithyāpratyaya). ⁵³ For the svabhāva, here equated with the "secondary sense" for Rāmānuja, is not

⁵² Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #26.

⁵³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 66.

sublated but integrated into the svarūpa, here equated with the "primary sense". In this integrative usage, the svabhāva is understood not as illusory, but as a part (amśa) of the svarūpa. John Chethinattam, in referring to this distinction in Rāmānuja remarks: "Svabhāva also signifies the essential form, but in the process of being and
⁵⁴becoming."

This integrative emphasis is also illustrated in Rāmānuja's
⁵⁵usage of the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of a category. This "extended sense" points not only to the svarūpa of a category, but to the inherence of that svarūpa within the Lord. So the "extended sense" of a word is ultimately Brahman. Rāmānuja states in this regard: "All Vedic words denote their proper meanings but as terminating in
⁵⁶the Supreme Spirit." But this "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of a category goes further than what has been designated as the parallelism between the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation"; it suggests that the "penultimate Self-body relation" can only be understood in the context of the "ultimate Self-body
⁵⁷relation."

When Rāmānuja uses the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of a category

⁵⁴John B. Chethimattam, Consciousness and Reality (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1971), p. 63. Herein after cited as: Consciousness and Reality.

⁵⁵Cf., Vedānta Deśika, Īśa-bhāṣya, #17.

⁵⁶Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #21.

⁵⁷This has been referred to as Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's transposition strategy (cf., Introduction and Chapter Three.

as its "primary sense", instead of merely indicating the "proper form" (svarūpa) of a category, he is employing what will be later designated as a "methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's primary sense of a category".⁵⁸ This is the actual inseparability of any category within the Lord. Co-relatively any consideration of a category which ignores its actual inseparability from the Lord, or its "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) and considers that category as-if separable from its inherence within the Lord, equals "Rāmānuja's equivalent to Śaṅkara's secondary sense of a category".⁵⁹ Thus the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of a category plays somewhat of an ambiguous role as it emphasizes the all-inclusiveness and continuity of the Lord with the Selves, and yet provides the foundation for understanding the dimension of discontinuity within that same relation. In so doing it points to what has been designated as the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Rāmānuja" simultaneously. It should be noted here that Rāmānuja usually uses his "methodological equivalents to Śaṅkara's primary and secondary senses" when dealing with "dharmic problems" such as specifying how bondage is real and whether it affects the svarūpa of the Self. On the other hand, when giving a simple description of a category in these two senses, Rāmānuja simply refers to the svarūpa as its "primary sense", and to the svabhāva as its "secondary sense".

Perhaps the most important device he uses to implement this explicit emphasis on continuity is the principle of sāmānādhikarāṇya ("the co-ordination of several distinct terms"). Rāmānuja defines

⁵⁸Cf., section 2c in this chapter.

⁵⁹Cf., section 2c in this chapter.

the sāmānādhikaranyā as follows: "...the abiding of several things in a common substrate, means the reference of several terms to one thing, there being a difference of reason for the application of several words to one thing."⁶⁰ But most important with reference to his explicit emphasis on continuity, the sāmānādhikaranyā denotes cases of inseparable conjunction between two substances, as for example, the śarīra and the śarīrin. This should be distinguished from cases of separable conjunction where two substances which are independent of one another occasionally function for one another. This instance is illustrated in phrases such as "one who has the stick" or "one who wears the earring".⁶¹ For this reason, the sāmānādhikaranyā implements Rāmānuja's doctrine of inseparability (aprthak-siddha) between the Selves and the Lord. Rāmānuja states in this respect: "When a certain entity serves as a distinctive feature for a certain substance, then we can properly say, by means of a sāmānādhikaranyā construction co-ordinating that entity with that substance, that it has no function apart from that substance...."⁶²

By means of this device, Rāmānuja can simultaneously argue that nothing exists outside of the Lord and yet insure that the svarūpa

⁶⁰Vedārthasamgraha, Van Buitenen, #20.

⁶¹Cf., Vedārthasamgraha #67.

⁶²Vedārthasamgraha, Van Buitenen, #68. The term used to denote this inseparability between two such terms is prthaksiddhyanarha, (incapable of functioning independently). Cf., Vedārthasamgraha, Van Buitenen, footnote 108.

of the Lord remains immune from all "transformations" (vikāras). So it is argued that the svarūpa of the Lord is not subject to the vikāras of His svabhāva, though both denote the same object (viśiṣṭa). This is illustrated in Rāmānuja's interpretation of the mahā-vākya, Tat tvam asi: "The word tat refers to Brahman as the One who is the cause of the world, the abode of all perfections, the immaculate and untransmutable One; whereas tvam refers to that same Brahman under the aspect of inner Ruler of the individual soul...So it is said that the words tat and tvam both apply to the same Brahman but under different aspects." ⁶³ As this excerpt illustrates, the sāmānādhikarāṇya co-ordinates the svarūpa of the Lord, represented by tat and His svabhāva represented here by tvam, so as to preserve both their separability as distinct modes (vaiyadhikarāṇya) and their inseparability within the śarīra-śarīrin. In this sense it does not merely implement Rāmānuja's predominant emphasis on continuity; it also implements his contrasting emphasis on discontinuity. Thus it illustrates the already existent tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability within the śarīra-śarīrin.

Rāmānuja uses the part/whole (aṁśa-aṁśin) distinction in accordance with this integrative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva and in accordance with his explicit rejection of the "secondary sense" as implying any "illusory notion" (mithyāpratyaya). In accordance with this emphasis, Rāmānuja often describes the dharma-bhūta-jñāna as a part (aṁśa) of the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna, ⁶⁴ what will be designated as "abstract Self-

⁶³ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #20.

⁶⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1. Great Siddhānta, pp. 47-61 (Thibaut).

knowledge" as a part (⁶⁵aṃśa) of "concrete Self-knowledge", and bhakti⁶⁷ as part of prapatti.⁶⁶ But as Chapter Three will demonstrate, this is by no means the only way he handles these distinctions. Rather, his dissociative usage of these distinctions provides the foundation for three major areas of convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara.

ii. Rāmānuja's Dissociative Usage of the Śarīra-Śarīrin

In an explicit way Rāmānuja uses devices which make sense of the apparent discontinuity between the Selves and the Lord, and the Selves and dharma. This is especially the case when Rāmānuja is dealing with a specific "dharmic problem".⁶⁸ So various "safeguards" are marshalled to protect the svarūpa of the Lord from the vikāras ("transformations") of matter and Selves. Similarly "safeguards" are marshalled to protect the svarūpa of the Selves from the vikāras of matter. In these instances the dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversability in the śarīra-śarīrin become more apparent. It should be noted that these dimensions of irreversability and one-sidedness form the foundation of his implicit methodology, just as Rāmānuja's emphasis on the actual distinctness of the three svarūpas forms the doctrinal foundation of

⁶⁵Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.1.

⁶⁶Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 66, with special reference to Rāmānuja's first interpretation of this verse.

⁶⁷Chapter Three will devote itself to a full investigation of all the ways in which these categories are used. The areas of convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara will be especially noted.

⁶⁸The term "safeguard" has been used in this context to designate those devices Rāmānuja uses to protect the svarūpa from the vikāras of the svabhāva.

the "implicit Rāmānuja". For the tension between inseparability (sāmānādhikaranya) and separability (vaiyadhikaranya) begins in fact with the śarīra-śarīrin itself.

The following excerpt from Rāmānuja's Śrī-bhāṣya is an example of such a "safeguard" as applied to the Lord: "Although the Highest Brahman enters into the production of an effect, there being no transformation of His own nature, the immodifiability (of the Highest Brahman) is well established."⁶⁹ The "proper nature" (svarūpa) of the Lord is thus protected from the "transformations" (vikāras) pertaining to His "manifested nature" (svabhāva). Although the modes of the Lord are described by Rāmānuja as totally dependent (śeṣa) upon the Lord for their existence, the Lord is described as dependent on nothing for His existence. This irreversibility is illustrated in the following excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Hence all beings abide in Me; that is all beings are in Me who am the Internal Ruler....But I do not abide in them. That is, I am not, however dependent on them for My existence."⁷⁰ His dissociative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction implements this irreversibility. So it is argued that "all beings" abide in the Lord's svabhāva but not in His svarūpa. The svabhāva of the Lord is described as controlled, supported and accessory to His svarūpa which is described as immune from its transformations. Rāmānuja states in this respect: "Only that part in the Supreme Spirit - modified by prakṛti - that is constituted by prakṛti is at all subject to transformations; that part in Him that

⁶⁹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 206.

⁷⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX, 5.

is the substratum of this modification is not subject to them."

A parallel "safeguard" protects the svarūpa of the Self from the vikāras, due to karma, pertaining to its svabhāva. This "safeguard" is indispensable in enabling Rāmānuja to handle various "dharmic problems" pertaining to the Self. The following question raised in the Vedārthasaṃgraha is an example of such a "dharmic problem": Doesn't the "mis-identification of the Self as its body" (abhimāna) cause the obscuration of its proper form (svarūpa)?⁷² Rāmānuja first approaches this question by a dissociative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction as applied to the Lord. So it is argued that the svabhāva of the Lord is modified by both cit and acit but that His svarūpa is not affected by the vikāras of the latter.⁷³ This approach again suggests that the "penultimate Self-body relation" can only be finally understood within the "ultimate Self-body relation." Rāmānuja then applies the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction to the Self and argues that the contraction of knowledge in saṃsāra pertains to the dharma-bhūta-jñāna and not to the svarūpa of the Self.⁷⁴ So the ensuing vikāras that result from this contraction are described as inhering in the svabhāva and not the svarūpa of the Self. This "safeguard" protects the svarūpa of the Self from the vikāras of karma. But the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction holds together both dimensions of Rāmānuja's methodology for, as noted before, the

⁷¹Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #73.

⁷²Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #40 to 44.

⁷³Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #42.

⁷⁴Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #43.

svarūpa and svabhāva are not two different categories but two modes of the same category. Thus its integrative usage implements Rāmānuja's doctrinal emphasis on continuity; whereas, its dissociative usage implements the contrasting emphasis on discontinuity in Rāmānuja.

The value of this dissociative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction and of other "safeguards" can be illustrated with reference to the problematic question of pantheism. John Chethimattam articulates the question as follows: "Since these attributes, modes and parts are said to be eternally existent in Brahman, the accusation of pantheism or panentheism seems rather difficult to avoid."⁷⁵ In applying the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction to this question Rāmānuja can argue that these "attributes, modes and parts" are existent in the Lord's svabhāva, not His svarūpa. Secondly he can argue that these two states of the Lord should be temporally distinguished. This is illustrated in the following statement from his Vedārthasaṃgraha: "The existence of a time-differenti-⁷⁶ation shows clearly that Brahman is the cause and the world his effect." Thirdly Rāmānuja's distinction between modes and qualities allows him to predicate different qualities for the Lord than for His modes. Fourthly, his distinction between internal and external relations is perhaps the most relevant "safeguard" for this question. For he can argue that though cit and acit are governed by external and variable relations within the "penultimate Self-body relation"; yet, these same categories when operating within the "ultimate Self-body Relation" are governed by internal and invariable relations. For this reason

⁷⁵Consciousness and Reality, p. 77.

⁷⁶Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #33.

it can be argued that the problems occurring in the "penultimate Self-body relation" can only be finally resolved within the "ultimate Self-body relation."⁷⁷

The "safeguards" in Rāmānuja that have been examined perform a function similar to their counterparts in Śaṅkara,⁷⁸ they keep the essential nature of the Self, whether understood as identical with Brahman or as a "part" of the Lord, immune from the effects of karma.

This tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability, irreversability and reversability, discontinuity and continuity in the śarīra-śarīrin provides the foundation for those implicit forms of discontinuity in the "implicit Rāmānuja". The "implicit Rāmānuja" radicalizes the already existent emphasis on separability, irreversability and discontinuity. In this sense, Rāmānuja's methodology is bi-lateral in that it points to both the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Rāmānuja" simultaneously. It does not restrict itself to a simple implementation of Rāmānuja's predominant emphasis on the continuity between the Selves and the Lord, the Selves and dharma. Rather, especially when dealing with "dharmic problems", it must make sense of the dimension of discontinuity within these relations. Similarly Śaṅkara's methodology does not restrict itself to merely implementing Śaṅkara's doctrinal emphasis on discontinuity. Rather, especially when

⁷⁷This forms the foundation for what has been designated as "Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's transposition strategy". Its relevance to prapatti will be fully investigated in Chapter Three.

⁷⁸I.e. the "primary sense" versus the "secondary sense". Cf., Chapter One.

dealing with "dharmic problems", it must make sense of the apparent continuity between the Self and Brahman and the Self and dharma.

Thus the areas of possible convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara will be most clearly evident in their dealings with "dharmic problems." ⁷⁹

It should be clearly understood that Rāmānuja's methodology is not being reduced to his implicit methodology. Such a reduction would display an ignorance of the bi-lateral nature of Rāmānuja's methodology, specifically its capacity to point to both the "explicit Rāmānuja" and the "implicit Rāmānuja" simultaneously. Lengthy consideration has been given to the investigation of his implicit methodology in this chapter in order to isolate it so as to better examine its possible co-relation with Śaṅkara. In the succeeding chapter Rāmānuja's key doctrines such as his doctrine of the attributive consciousness, concrete versus abstract Self-knowledge and prapatti will be examined according to both their integrative and dissociative uses. More consideration will be given to the latter simply to better isolate any possible convergences with Śaṅkara.

2. An Examination of the Implicit Structures of Discontinuity in Rāmānuja that are Parallel to Śaṅkara

Rāmānuja's doctrinal emphasis on the distinctness and separability of the three svarūpas and on the dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversibility in the śarīra-śarīrin might be described as the seed for the

implicit structures of discontinuity in Rāmānuja that are parallel to Śaṅkara. These implicit structures of discontinuity merely radicalize the already existent emphasis on separability, irreversability and discontinuity in the śarīra-śarīrin. They are thus a development out of the tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability in the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja. This implicit discontinuity in Rāmānuja is constituted by his use of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological parallel to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and by his methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā which is the foundation for the former.

2a. The Śarīra-Śarīrin Used as a Methodological Parallel to Śaṅkara's Two Levels of Truth

In his Great Siddhānta Rāmānuja explicitly rejects Śaṅkara's "two levels of truth" (vyāvahārika-satya, paramārthika-satya) and his corresponding doctrine of māyā.⁸⁰ Van Buitenen refers to this rejection as follows: "Rāmānuja...does not allow Śaṅkara's distinction between an 'ideal' and a 'practical' reality."⁸¹ Nevertheless, Rāmānuja's two usages of the śarīra-śarīrin, that is his dissociative and integrative usages can be understood as a methodological parallel to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth; that is, Rāmānuja's dissociative use of the śarīra-śarīrin⁸² can be understood as a methodological parallel to

⁸⁰ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

⁸¹ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, Introduction, p. 57.

⁸² This refers to the emphasis on the dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversability in the śarīra-śarīrin.

Śaṅkara's phenomenal level of truth (vyāvahārika-satya). Rāmānuja's integrative use of the śarīra-śarīrin⁸³ can be understood as a methodological parallel to Śaṅkara's ultimate level of truth (paramārthika-satya). In the former the "penultimate Self-body relation" is viewed as separable from the "ultimate Self-body relation".⁸⁴ In the latter the "penultimate Self-body relation" is understood as ultimately inseparable from the "ultimate Self-body relation". The bilateral nature of consciousness and the Selves, i.e. their capacity to function both as attributes or as substances, as "bodies" in relation to the Lord or as independent "Selves" makes these two "levels" possible.

Ninian Smart discusses these two "levels" in Rāmānuja as follows: "He [Rāmānuja] evolved a (so to say) 'two-decker' self-body relationship. Just as human selves animate human bodies, so God is the self underlying these selves. In brief, selves are God's body too. They can thus be considered on two levels--as spirits in relation to bodies, as body in relation to the Lord."⁸⁵ So Selves qua śarīra, i.e. functioning as "bodies" to the Lord, can be understood as methodologically parallel to Śaṅkara's understanding of the Self from the second level of truth. On

⁸³This refers to the emphasis on the dimensions of reversability and inseparability in the śarīra-śarīrin especially between the Selves and the Lord.

⁸⁴A distinction should be made between a relative and an absolute separability. The Selves can never be separated from the Lord in the absolute sense, but only relatively. This distinction will be developed later.

⁸⁵Ninian Smart, Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy, p. 110. The word "level" here is not meant literally for Rāmānuja explicitly argued against such a distinction.

the other hand, Selves qua śarīrin i.e. functioning as "selves" in relation to their physical body (deha), can be understood as methodologically parallel to Śaṅkara's understanding of the Self from the phenomenal level of truth. Inferring from his use of the categories of the svarūpa ("proper form") and the svabhāva ("manifested nature"), one may say that Rāmānuja explicitly refers to the svarūpa of consciousness i.e. the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna ("substantive consciousness") as equal to consciousness in the "primary sense" and to the svabhāva of consciousness i.e. the dharma-bhūta-jñāna ("attributive consciousness") as equal to consciousness in the "secondary sense." The dharmi-bhūta-jñāna functions in a manner similar to Śaṅkara's understanding of consciousness from the highest level of truth i.e. svarūpa-jñāna and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna functions in a manner similar to Śaṅkara's understanding of consciousness from the lower level of truth i.e. vṛtti-jñāna. Nevertheless one can see a reversal of the roles of the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in mokṣa where all things are understood from the standpoint of the Lord. As shall be argued in Chapter Three the standpoint of the Lord in Rāmānuja's thought is methodologically parallel to Śaṅkara's highest level of truth. From the standpoint of the Lord consciousness qua śarīra i.e. the dharma-bhūta-jñāna is implicitly valued as higher than consciousness qua śarīrin i.e. the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna. As shall be also argued

the co-relation between Rāmānuja's understanding of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in mokṣa and Śaṅkara's understanding of consciousness from the highest level of truth becomes intelligible in light of the fact that the dharma-bhūta-jñāna appropriates (so to speak) the roles of the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna.⁸⁶ The parallels, here suggested are not doctrinal but methodological. They refer to a common dual use of the Self and consciousness in Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, but by no means to a doctrinal agreement.

Although the bi-lateral nature of consciousness and the Selves in Rāmānuja makes these two "levels" in Rāmānuja possible, these two "levels" are not restricted to consciousness and the Selves. Rather the penultimate denotation of any category, i.e. its operation within the "penultimate Self-body relation" is structurally similar to its function from Śaṅkara's phenomenal standpoint. On the other hand the ultimate denotation of any category or its "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) i.e. its operation within the "ultimate Self-body relation", is structurally similar to its function from Śaṅkara's ultimate standpoint. For example

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Cf., Chapter Three, section 1c.

the penultimate reference of a word is the specific object (padārtha) denoted, whereas its ultimate denotation or "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) is to the Lord as the Inner Controller (Antaryāmin) of "all this".

Rāmānuja refers to the penultimate and ultimate denotation of words in this excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya: "For, the Lord being the Self, all words find their final meaning in Him alone. In the same way in which words like 'god', 'man', 'bird', 'tree' etc., referring to bodies find their final meaning in the respective selves of these, similarly the Lord being the Self of each one of them is itself the basis for grammatical equations with the words about them." ⁸⁷ So words can be spoken of as possessing a bi-lateral nature in the sense of pointing simultaneously to specific objects (padārthas) and to the Lord. This is first argued by Rāmānuja with reference to its operation within the "penultimate Self-body relation." ⁸⁸ There a word denotes both a specific body and the owner of that body, the individual Self. A distinction is then made between the "penultimate owner" of that body i.e. the individual Self, and the "ultimate owner" of that body i.e. the Lord. In employing the mechanics of the śarīra-śarīrin to language, Rāmānuja argues that the Lord is ultimately denoted by all words: "Therefore, since all spiritual and non-spiritual entities constitute

⁸⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya X, 20.

⁸⁸ Cf., Vedārtasamgraha #17.

Brahman's body, Brahman being thus embodied and modified by all is⁸⁹ denoted by all words." Thus language illustrates Rāmānuja's "double-decker Self-body relationship".

These two "levels" in Rāmānuja can best be illustrated by observing their value in resolving "dharmic problems". The question of whether Sūdras are qualified or disqualified for Brahma-vidyā is such a "dharmic problem", for a conflict emerges between Rāmānuja's statement, in his Śrī-bhāṣya,⁹⁰ that Sūdras are disqualified for Brahma-vidyā with his statement, in his Gītā-bhāṣya,⁹¹ that all men regardless of caste are qualified for Brahma-vidyā. Such a "dharmic problem" can be sorted out by means of this dual usage of the śarīra-śarīrin. Rāmānuja's attempt to resolve this "dharmic problem" is illustrated in this excerpt from his Śrī-bhāṣya: "Although all the individual selves have the same nature through each of them being a part of the Brahman, through (each of them) being a knower etc., yet permission and prohibition (to study and to avoid the study of the Veda etc.) are based upon the relationship with pure and impure bodies which consist of (those of) the Brahmin, the Kshattriya, the Vaisya, and the Sūdra."⁹² So equality can be asserted as pertains to Selves qua śarīra, with reference to the Lord, but not with reference to Selves qua śarīrin, i.e. in reference to their specific bodies.⁹³ Rāmānuja's initial insistence that Sūdras

⁸⁹ Vedārthasaṅgraha, Van Buitenen, #19.

⁹⁰ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.II.33.

⁹¹ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX, 29.

⁹² Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, II.III.47.

⁹³ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.32.

are disqualified for Brahma-vidyā might thus be viewed as a methodological parallel, to Śaṅkara's suspension of the transposition strategy. For in this instance the "dharmic problem" is only viewed with reference to the penultimate "standpoint", not the ultimate "standpoint" i.e. from within the Lord.

Similarly, the question as to whether consciousness is changing or unchanging can be answered by distinguishing between substantive consciousness which remains unchanged in samsārā and attributive consciousness which changes in samsārā. Rāmānuja clearly implies this distinction in this excerpt from his Śrī-bhāṣya: "As the knowing Self is eternal, knowledge which is an essential quality of the Self is also eternal...Knowledge (the quality) which is in itself unlimited, is capable of contraction and expansion in the so called kshetragna-condition of the Self...."⁹⁴

It might be objected: How can a category function simultaneously as a substance and as an attribute? Such an objection is raised in the Vedārthasaṃgraha: "It is a matter of common knowledge that only class and property are modifications of a substance...So it is improper to contend that a padārtha capable of independent function is merely, an attributive 'such', a modification of the Lord."⁹⁵ Rāmānuja answers this objection by means of the mechanics of the sāmānādhikarānya. For it is the task of the sāmānādhikarānya to co-ordinate the dimensions of separability

⁹⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 63.

⁹⁵ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #67.

and inseparability, independence and dependence between the śarīra and the śarīrin. Rāmānuja says in this respect that, "When a certain entity serves as a distinctive feature for a certain substance then we can properly say, by means of a sāmānādhikarānya construction co-ordinating that entity with that substance, that it has no function apart from that substance and therefore constitutes a mode of it." ⁹⁶ Applied to language, this means that a word can denote a specific object (padārtha) and the Lord simultaneously only because the specific object denoted is an inseparable "part" of the Lord qua śarīra-śarīrin. According to the mechanics of the sāmānādhikarānya not only do all words denote the Lord, but they all denote Him differently. For example, in the mahā-vākya: tat tvam asi, "tat" refers to the svarūpa of the Lord, distinct from all Selves, while "tvam" refers to the same Lord but in His manifested state (svabhāva).

Although for Rāmānuja the penultimate denotation of a word is prior in the order of discovery, in the order of being its ultimate denotation is prior, because the Lord as the Inner Controller (Antaryāmin) is "all this". In this respect, Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara can both be understood as both using a two-level model of language. However, Śaṅkara ⁹⁷ argues that though all words refer ultimately to Brahman, they do so only negatively. That is, they point to Brahman via negativa, but they do not describe Brahman.

In Rāmānuja's understanding of analogical language a parallel

⁹⁶ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #68.

⁹⁷ This can be compared to Rāmānuja's insistence that the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of every word is the Lord.

is established between these two levels of language. Consequently, the penultimate reference of a word is described as an inseparable part (aṁśa) of its ultimate or "extended reference". Van Buitenen refers to this as follows: "All words which describe the body ultimately refer to the soul, and all words which describe the soul ultimately refer to God...The part itself implies the whole compositum of matter animated by individual souls that are internally guided by the Supreme Spirit."⁹⁸ The "penultimate Self-body relation" may be referred to as the "microcosm" and the "ultimate Self-body relation" may be referred to as the "macrocosm". Analogical language in Rāmānuja can be thus spoken of as establishing parallels between the "microcosm" and the "macrocosm". This parallelism indicates that the world, considered as the "microcosm", contains clues to the Lord's nature which is considered as the "macrocosm".

Rāmānuja makes an important distinction between a right and a wrong analogy for this parallelism.⁹⁹ The world is not a part (aṁśa) of the Lord in the sense in which the coils of a snake are a part of that snake, as the essential nature of the Lord would then be implicated in the transformations of the world. Rather, both the svarūpa of the world and the svarūpa of the Lord are co-ordinated within the sāmānādhikarāṇya without losing their actual distinctness.

In summarizing this past section, it can be concluded that the distinction between the penultimate and the ultimate designation of a

⁹⁸ Van Buitenen, Vedārthasaṃgraha, Introduction, p. 65.

⁹⁹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya III.II.26.

category in Rāmānuja though methodologically parallel to Saṅkara's two levels of truth, is not yet a methodological equivalent. When the penultimate designation of a category is described as parallel to its ultimate designation, as in the case of analogical language, the former is integrated with the latter in the manner of a part and its whole, (aṁśa-aṁśin) a subordinate and its principal (śesa-śeṣin). This illustrates Rāmānuja's integrative usage of the śarīra-śarīrin co-existing with its dissociative usage. For the forms of implicit discontinuity in Rāmānuja co-exist with his explicit and predominant emphasis on continuity. For example, the Self as the penultimate agent can be understood as accessory to the Lord as the ultimate agent.¹⁰⁰ But this integrative emphasis in Rāmānuja co-exists with his dissociative emphasis, for insofar as the Self acts as a body (śarīra) to the Lord, it can be described as controlled and accessory to Him, but, insofar, as the Self acts as an independent centre (śarīrin)¹⁰¹ in its own right, it can be described as a free agent. So the Self should be described as dependent qua śarīra, but independent relatively speaking, qua śarīrin. Rāmānuja insists that the emphasis on the Lord as the ultimate agent must be not merely understood but acted on as part of one's sādhana. So one is enjoined to: "...do all actions, secular as well as religious in such a way that the roles of being the do-er, enjoyer...and object of worship (therein) are made over to Me...Only to Me therefore, who am the supreme owner

¹⁰⁰ Cf., Vedārthasaṁgraha #89.

¹⁰¹ This independence referred to here is a relative independence only for as His eternal mode the Self can only be understood as finally dependent on the Lord.

and supreme agent, offer everything, yourself as an agent, enjoyer and worshipper...."¹⁰² This approach is radicalized in prapatti where the emphasis is not merely on the Lord as the ultimate agent but as the only agent, the only means (upāya) to mokṣa. As shall be demonstrated later¹⁰³ it is Rāmānuja's implicit emphasis on prapatti that is closest to Śaṅkara's emphasis on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. In this examination of Rāmānuja's usage of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological parallel to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth, a methodological parallel has been discovered as co-existing with a real distinction between them. This integrative emphasis, that is so common to Rāmānuja, is conspicuously lacking in Śaṅkara, especially in what has been designated as the "explicit Śaṅkara".

But when Rāmānuja uses the distinction between the penultimate and the ultimate designation of a category in a strictly dissociative manner, i.e. when he describes a real opposition between them, then a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth is disclosed and not merely a methodological parallel. The opposition is constituted by the misconception involved in understanding the "penultimate Self-body relation" as-if independent of the "ultimate Self-body relation". This as-if separability is by no means integrated into the "ultimate Self-body relation". As shall be argued, it constitutes Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā and Śaṅkara's concept of a "secondary sense".

¹⁰²Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX.2.

¹⁰³Cf., Chapter Three on prapatti.

2b. Rāmānuja and Adhyāropa-Apavāda

Before investigating Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā, it is necessary to discuss the possible source of the doctrine of avidyā in the Upaniṣads in order to lay a foundation for the discussion. It has already been established¹⁰⁴ that the strategy of adhyāropa-apavāda was not unique to Śaṅkara but had its roots in the Upaniṣads themselves. In his use of adhyāropa-apavāda Śaṅkara was thus not originating a new strategy as such but merely conforming to the tradition.¹⁰⁵ For this reason, the Upaniṣads do not constitute a systematic whole so much doctrinally as methodologically.¹⁰⁶

These two points are crucial in understanding Rāmānuja's approach to the question of adhyāropa-apavāda, for if it is accepted that adhyāropa-apavāda was a method employed in the Upaniṣads, then it would follow that Rāmānuja in his interpretation of the Upaniṣads would have to deal with it, if only to refute it. It could be argued that Rāmānuja's use of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological parallel to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth was precisely his response to this dimension in the Upaniṣads.

The doctrine of avidyā and the doctrine of māyā should be understood as the basis for this method of adhyāropa-apavāda. Although the doctrine of māyā is never explicitly formulated in the Upaniṣads, such as we find

¹⁰⁴ Cf., Chapter One, Section One.

¹⁰⁵ Cf., Chapter One, p. 49. "Tathāhi sampradāya-vidān vacanam" ("This is the saying of the knowers of tradition").

¹⁰⁶ Cf., Chapter One, p. 51.

it in Śaṅkara, it is implicitly present in the Upaniṣads. R. P. R nade argues this point: "We thus see from an examination of the various passages in the Upanishads that even though the word Māyā may not have been used for many times in the Upanishads, still the conception that underlies Māyā is already present there and even though we do not find there the full-fledged doctrine of illusion in its philosophical aspects as in Gaudapāda and later writers, still we do find in the Upanishads all the material that may have easily led Śaṅkara to elaborate a theory of Māyā out of it."¹⁰⁷

Specific reference is made to the term "māyā" in the Praśna Upaniṣad at I.16 and the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad at I.10. Images of a "net", a "veil", a "false covering," "blindness," the "knot of ignorance" and an "as if duality" all suggest the idea of māyā, though they do not refer to it as a specific doctrine. The passage from the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad, "yatra hi dvaitam-iva bhavati" ("as-if there was a duality"),¹¹⁴ should be especially noted. R. D. R nade.

¹⁰⁷ R. D. R nade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1968), p. 165. Herein after cited as: R. D. Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy.

¹⁰⁸ Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad III.1.

¹⁰⁹ Īśa Upaniṣad #15.

¹¹⁰ Chāndogya Upaniṣad VIII.5.1.

¹¹¹ Kaṭha Upaniṣad I.2.5.

¹¹² Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad II.1.10.

¹¹³ Bṛhad. Upaniṣad II.4.14.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., II.IV.14.

in commenting on this passage says: "A famous passage from the Bṛihadāraṇyaka... which speaks of 'as-if there was a duality', implying thereby that there is really no duality, signifies the identification of Māyā with a semblance, an as-it-were, an appearance."^{114a} What has been designated as "Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā" might be simply understood as Rāmānuja's response to this implicit doctrine of avidyā in the Upaniṣads.

Thus even without any reference to Śaṅkara, it is clear that Rāmānuja would have had to deal with both the method of adhyāropa-apavāda and the implicit doctrine of avidyā already present in the Upaniṣads.

2c. The Foundation for the Implicit Discontinuity in Rāmānuja's Methodological Equivalent to Śaṅkara's Concept of Avidyā

i. Preamble

As was previously pointed out, the bi-lateral nature of consciousness and the Selves i.e. their capacity to function both as attributes or as substances, makes these two "levels" in Rāmānuja possible. Consequently, this section is introduced by the following questions: When does this bi-lateral nature of consciousness and the Selves become a problem which necessitates sādhana? What is the relationship between the relative independence of the Selves qua Śarīrin and their ultimate dependence on the Lord qua Śarīra? Is the problem necessitating sādhana not caused by the false understanding of the "penultimate Self-body

^{114a} Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, pp. 165-66.

relation" as though it were independent of the "ultimate Self-body relation"? Is it not caused by a mis-apprehension of the relative separability of the Selves qua śarīrin as an absolute independence?

Though Rāmānuja argues that the Selves qua śarīrin possess a relative independence within the "penultimate Self-body relation," he never argues that this amounts to an absolute independence, for as eternal modes of the Lord, i.e. qua śarīra, the Selves can never in fact be separated from the Lord. In this respect Rāmānuja says that, "The relation of body and soul exists at all times between the intelligent thing and the non-intelligent thing (on the one hand) and the Supreme Self (on the other)."¹¹⁵

The mis-apprehension of this relative independence as an absolute independence is that problem which necessitates sādhana. This mis-apprehension shall be designated as the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord. It should not be forgotten that Rāmānuja insists on an actual distinction between the Selves and the Lord as co-existing with their inseparability, even in mokṣa. Yet this distinction between the Selves and the Lord does not constitute the problem which necessitates sādhana. Rather it is the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord which constitutes that problem. It is when the Selves falsely perceive themselves, as though absolutely separable from the Lord that the problem of avidyā begins. On the other hand, Rāmānuja argues that knowing this actual distinction between the Selves and the Lord is not a problem which necessitates sādhana, but rather part of

¹¹⁵ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2.

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the very apparatus of sādhana. In this section, the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord will be more closely examined. Most important, this "as-if separability" should not be confused with any "as-if distinction". For the actual inseparability between the Selves and the Lord always co-exists with their actual distinction.

ii. A Definition of Rāmānuja's Methodological Equivalent to Avidyā

Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā is defined here in two parts: (i) "Avidyā" for Rāmānuja is both the apparent transfer of properties involved in falsely understanding the "part" (aṁśa) as-if it were the "whole" (aṁśin), the "attribute" (viśeṣaṇa) as-if it were the "substance" (viśeṣya), and the "body" (śarīra) as-if it were the "Self" (śarīrin). (ii) More specifically, it is the presumption of an "illusory" independence involved in falsely understanding the Selves and matter as-if they were absolutely independent of the Lord or alternately expressed, the "penultimate Self-body relation" as-if it were absolutely independent of the "ultimate Self-body relation". Such a presumption involves an apparent violation of the doctrine of inseparability (aprthak-siddha) and of the maxim of "co-ordinate predication" (sāmānādhikarānya). It should be noted that the first half of this definition is closer to the "explicit Rāmānuja", whereas; the second half is closer to the "implicit Rāmānuja"; thus the second half is structurally closer to Śaṅkara. Both parts of this definition involve the implicit representation of avidyā in Rāmānuja as a "semblance" in the language of an "as it were" as an "appearance".

¹¹⁶Cf., Vedārthasamgraha #91.

This implicit representation of avidyā as a "semblance" co-exists in Rāmānuja with his explicit denunciation of Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā as neither real nor unreal (anirvacanīya), and his explicit endorsement of avidyā as a real concrete condition¹¹⁷ caused by the real "power of karma" (karma-bhāvanā). In this section I will demonstrate how Rāmānuja endorses a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā despite his explicit, doctrinal attack against such a doctrine. In so doing, an area of tension between doctrine and method in Rāmānuja will be investigated.

The first half of this definition of avidyā, though implicitly representing avidyā as a "semblance", is closer to the "explicit Rāmānuja" and thus closer to his explicit doctrine of abhimāna ("the misconception of the Self as the body")¹¹⁸. It points to the operation of avidyā within the penultimate Self-body Relation. The usual doctrinal differences between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja emerge if one compares Rāmānuja's doctrine of abhimāna with Śaṅkara's doctrine of adhyāsa. Whereas Śaṅkara's model of adhyāsa involves a relation between the Real (Sāt) and the false (mithyā), Rāmānuja's model of abhimāna involves a relation between two "reals": the "part" and the "whole" (aṁsa-aṁśin); the "attribute" and the "substance" (viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya) etc. Nevertheless, even this model of abhimāna involves an element of falsity with respect to the relation between these reals. That is, the "part" (aṁśa) only masquerades as the "whole" (aṁśin) by means of a "semblance", an "as-it

¹¹⁷Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya, Great Siddhānta, p. 145 (Thibaut).

¹¹⁸Cf., Vedārthasaṁgraha #4.

were", as ultimately the "part" (aṁśā) could never be the "whole" (aṁśin). So the first half of this definition of "avidyā" in Rāmānuja, refers to the apparent separation of the "part" (aṁśā) from the "whole" (aṁśin), the "attribute" (viśeṣaṇa) from the "substance" (viśeṣya), the "body" (śarīra) from the Self (śarīrin) in samsāra. This "as-if separability" between these three sets of terms should be contrasted with their actual inseparability. That is, the part was always inseparable from the whole, the attribute from the substance, the body from the Self.¹¹⁹

The second half of this definition of "avidyā" in Rāmānuja is structurally closer to Śaṅkara. The component of an "as-if" or a "semblance" is even more clearly disclosed and is thus closer to the "implicit Rāmānuja". It refers to what can be termed as a "parallel abhimāna" operating within the "ultimate Self-body relation". The misapprehension of the Selves as-if absolutely separable from the Lord should be contrasted with their "actual inseparability" as eternal modes of the Lord. As previously argued this "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord should not be confused with an "as-if distinction" for the svarūpas of the Self and the Lord always remain distinct. This "as-if separability" and "actual inseparability" between the Selves and the Lord in Rāmānuja is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's understanding

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Van Buitenen refers to two terms for this inseparability: prthaksthitipravṛttyanarha "incapable of subsisting and working independently" and prthaksiddhyanarha "incapable of functioning independently" and applies them to the śarīra and the śarīrin in both the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body relation". Cf., Vedārthasaṅgraha, Van Buitenen, footnote #108, pp. 195-96.

of avidyā as entailing an "as-if duality" between the Self and Brahman and contrasting with their "actual non-duality". Whereas the first half of the definition of "avidyā" involves a relation between two reals; the second half of the definition of "avidyā" involves a relation between a real condition i.e. the actual inseparability between the Selves and the Lord and an apparent or "illusory" condition i.e. the as-if separability between the Selves and the Lord. This definition is verified with reference to Rāmānuja's commentaries: The "apparent transfer of properties involved in falsely reading..., the body as-if the Self" is usually explicitly referred to by Rāmānuja as the lack of discrimination (viveka)¹²⁰ between the characteristic attributes of the Self and those of the body. The body is mis-read as the controlling (śeṣin)¹²¹, supporting (ādhāra) and ruling (niyantr̥) factor instead of the Self. An "as-if" component can be detected here when the body is mis-read as-if independent of the Self. Rāmānuja refers to this mis-conception as follows: "This attitude reveals the misconceived identification of body and soul by those who have not learnt that the soul is essentially different from the body. For the body, which as a matter of fact is a mass in which qualities such as the generic structure of man, etc., subsist, is held to be independent and they who are bound to samsāra think that the body is the 'I'."¹²²

¹²⁰Cf., Rāmānuja's four syllogisms on the differences between the body and the Self in his Gītā-bhāṣya II.18.

¹²¹Cf., definition of śarīra-śarīrin in his Śrī-bhāṣya II.1.9.

¹²²Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #143.

But though the body is actually distinct from the Self, it is simultaneously inseparable from the Self. As Rāmānuja points out in his Gītā-bhāṣya, the very usage of the "maxim of co-ordinate predication" (sāmānādhikarāṇya) in the Self-body (śarīra-śarīrin) relationship points to their inseparability: "But the cognition by a grammatical equation is explained by the body being really incapable of existing separate from him (the knower of the body)...." ¹²³ Thus in Rāmānuja, "the misconception of the body as the Self" (abhimāna) and especially the misconception of the body as-if absolutely independent of the Self involves the implicit representation of avidyā as a "semblance", an "as-it were". The misconception of the body as the Self involves only an apparent transfer of properties from the body to the Self. Rāmānuja refers to this apparent transfer as, "The embodied souls, being engrossed by Nescience in the form of good and evil works do not recognize their essential nature, which is knowledge, but view themselves as having the character of material things." ¹²⁴ By means of his dissociative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction, Rāmānuja argues that no such transfer actually takes place as the svarūpa of the Self remains unaffected. ¹²⁵

An analogous misconception of a transfer of properties occurs within the "ultimate Self-body relation". The misconception of the Self as independent of the Lord and as its own master (śeṣin is graphically portrayed in his Gītā-bhāṣya as an act of theft: "'Theft' means,

¹²³ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.1.

¹²⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 88.

¹²⁵ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha ##41-48.

indeed, the entertainment of the idea of one's own property in regard to a thing which is another's and is intended solely for the use of that other."¹²⁶ This same image of "theft" is referred to later on in his

Gītā-bhāṣya: "Fools are those who have perverted knowledge: they consider the self...as their property."¹²⁷

It is interesting to note that this "presumption of an illusory independence" in Rāmānuja's Gītā-bhāṣya, contrary to what is said in his Śrī-bhāṣya and his Vedārthasaṃgraha, is translated into theological language and equated with "sin" (pāpa). His use of such language to depict this "illusory independence" distinguishes his position from that of Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja strives first of all, to depict the Real (Satya) as an object of worship as opposed to an abstract conception of the Real achieved by cancelling the false. He strives to integrate the realm of ethics, religion and metaphysics, in opposition to Śaṅkara, especially the "explicit Śaṅkara", who pointed to the tension and discontinuity between metaphysics and ethics or religion.¹²⁸ Secondly, Rāmānuja uses theological language in this context, to stress the conative and not the cognitive side of avidyā. Therefore Rāmānuja explicitly

¹²⁶ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.12.

¹²⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.15. This can be compared to the following verse from the Mahābhārata #42;35: "He who understands differently (i.e. as independent) the soul which exists in a different way (i.e. as utterly dependent on God) what sin remains, uncommitted by that thief who steals away the soul." from Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya footnote #121, p. 85.

¹²⁸ K. C. Varadachari refers to this integrative dimension in Rāmānuja as follows: "For him the same logical Absolute, the demand of the intellect, is the moral Governor and the religious God or Personality and the Mystics Lover." from, Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-Bhāṣya.

emphasises the willful rejection of the Lord as more primary than any possible veiling caused by the Lord Himself. Rāmānuja points explicitly to the primacy of spiritual pride in bondage, not the primacy of ignorance. But though our willful rejection of the Lord caused by spiritual pride is more primary in the order of discovery, the Lord's veiling of Himself, which causes this ignorance, is more primary in the order of being. All these explicit doctrinal differences between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara co-exist with that area of structural convergence, now being investigated between the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord in Rāmānuja and the "as-if duality" between the Self and Brahman in Śaṅkara.

So in the Gītā-bhāṣya Rāmānuja employs theological language to depict this mis-conception of separability between the Selves and the Lord. He describes that man who sees the Self as-if absolutely independent of the Lord as "wicked" and "perverse": "While the agency of the individual Self requires the previous assent of the Supreme Self, he who sees in regard to it, that is in respect of work, the individual self alone and none else as the agent, that man of a wicked mind, that is of a perverse mind does not see the agent as he really is, because of his having an undisciplined understanding, that is an understanding to which the nature of things as they are has not been made known." (Evaṁ vastutaḥ paramātma-anumiti-pūrvake jīvatmanah kartrtve sati, tatra, karmani kevalam-ātmānameva kartāraṁ yaḥ paśyati, sa durmatih viparīta-matih akṛtabuddhitvāt anispanna-yathāvasthita-vastu-buddhitvāt na paśyati na yathāvasthitaṁ kartāraṁ paśyati.)¹²⁹ Precisely because of this theological

¹²⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 16. (Double lines represent heavier typescript in the edition which are Rāmānuja's words.)

language, one is liable to miss the implicit parallelism¹³⁰ between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their treatment of avidyā. For Śaṅkara does not usually employ theological language to depict the dilemma of avidyā.

What has been designated as this "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord is referred to variously by Rāmānuja as: "the wishful misconception of independence,"¹³² or "erroneous cognition".¹³³ Rāmānuja clearly specifies the locus of that misconception as the "attributive consciousness" (dharma-bhūta-jñāna).¹³⁴ Śaṅkara is somewhat more ambiguous on this question of the locus of avidyā.¹³⁵ Yet despite the obvious doctrinal differences between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the nature and locus of avidyā, both have to argue with respect to this model of avidyā being discussed, i.e. the "as-if separability" in Rāmānuja and the "as-if duality" in Śaṅkara, that avidyā is real as pertains to the

¹³⁰One is also liable to miss this parallelism because of their doctrinal differences on the question of "sin" (pāpa). Whereas Rāmānuja argued that the omission of obligatory karmas (vidhis) and the performance of forbidden karmas (niṣedha karma) was "sin" (pāpa) (cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.16), Śaṅkara insisted that the omission of obligatory karmas was not "sin" (pāpa) and that the whole question of "sin" was ultimately applicable only to the "unenlightened man" (cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III.Introduction, p. 87 and Bṛhad-bhāṣya IV.V.16). But this parallelism between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja should not be mis-read as a doctrinal co-relation but rather as a methodological and structural co-relation.

¹³²Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #143.

¹³³Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #143.

¹³⁴The locus of avidyā is clearly specified in a later Viśiṣṭādvaitic work: Yatīndramatadīpikā VII.13: "Misapprehension, error...are but particular modes of the attributive consciousness." trans. Srīnivāsadāsa

¹³⁵The ambivalence in Śaṅkara as to whether Brahman or the Atman was the locus of avidyā caused the later split in the Post-Śaṅkarites.

order of knowing, but not with reference to the order of being.¹³⁶

As shall be argued subsequently, this implicit convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the nature of avidyā is best perceived from an a-posteriori standpoint, i.e. from the standpoint of mokṣa. From this a-posteriori standpoint, Śaṅkara argues that Brahman never appeared as the world. Similarly from this a-posteriori standpoint, Rāmānuja argues that the Selves qua śarīra, were never actually separated from the Lord but¹³⁷ only apparently.

In the Vedārthasaṃgraha a practical objection is raised to this actual inseparability between the Selves and the Lord, experienced as one's absolute dependence on the Lord: "But all spiritual beings have one great wish: to be completely independent; compared with that, dependence means suffering."¹³⁸ Rāmānuja's answer to this objection is critical to his model of avidyā. He argues that whereas any subservience to anyone or anything other than the Lord constitutes avidyā and causes suffering, subservience to the Lord Himself constitutes bliss and is the Self's "proper nature" or "proper form" (svarūpa): "The proper form of the soul... is that it is subservient to Another."¹³⁹ Rāmānuja, as distinct from Śaṅkara, explicitly emphasizes the conative side of avidyā over its cognitive side. In this passage, he points to the necessity for re-centering

¹³⁶ The epistemological reality of avidyā is indicated by Śaṅkara in his reference to avidyā as: "the false apprehension of the attributes of one thing one another". (Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.1, p. 3).

¹³⁷ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #20.

¹³⁸ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #143.

¹³⁹ Ibid., #143.

one's whole life on the Lord. This involves not only a re-perception of one's life, but a voluntary, active re-organization of one's loyalties. Renouncing this false sense of separability therefore involves both a re-perception and an act of surrender to the Lord as the ultimate agent. Rāmānuja says that, "Tvāga as relating to agency is the giving up of the agency of oneself¹⁴⁰ by attributing the agency to the Lord of all." Consequently, any exclusive dependence on one's own will-power is denounced: "In the case of him whose mind is not dedicated to Me and who is engaged in controlling the senses through his own exertion, the right disposition about the pure self is never established."¹⁴¹ Those who still cling to that "as-if separability" by failing to ascribe all agency to the Lord and by failing to see the Lord as their only support (ādhāra) are categorically¹⁴² denounced as "wholly lost" and "destitute of reason."

iii. Rāmānuja's Methodological Equivalent to Śaṅkara's Secondary Sense

Rāmānuja explicitly rejects Śaṅkara's definition of the "secondary sense" as implying an "illusory notion" (mithyāpratyaya)¹⁴³ and as based¹⁴⁴ on false attribution, because Rāmānuja's explicit integrative usage of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction and the śarīra-śarīrin distinction rules out any such notion of a "secondary sense". However in Ramanuja's dissociative use of these distinctions Rāmānuja offers a methodological

¹⁴⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.4.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., II.66.

¹⁴² Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.32.

¹⁴³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 66.

¹⁴⁴ Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI, 3.

equivalent of a "secondary sense". This should be defined as the description of any category as-if it were separable from the Lord. This involves the apparent violation both of the law of inseparability (apr̥thak-siddha) and of the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of a category.

For example, the experience of the world as-if separate from the Lord equals the world in its "secondary sense" for Rāmānuja. Those who perceive the world in this manner are described by Rāmānuja as "lost souls": "They say that the universe is unreal. That is, they do not say that this universe...has the Brahman for its Self. (They say) that it is without any foundation. That is, they do not say that it has the Brahman for its foundation....Following this view, these men of lost souls...are born to bring about destruction to the world." ¹⁴⁵ So the world per se is not negated as illusory but only its false independence. Rāmānuja says in respect to this that, "the statement--'Thou alone art the only Reality, etc.'" (V.P. 1.4.38) does not also speak of the unreality of the whole (world), but (speaks only of) the unreality of that thing the existence of which is (held to be) independent of that (viz., the Brahman...." ¹⁴⁶ Similarly "matter" (prakṛti) viewed as-if independent of the Lord equals matter in its "secondary sense". This is referred to as the "deluding prakṛti" ¹⁴⁷ in his Gītā-bhāṣya. The "secondary sense" of a word is thus the ignorance of its "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) as pointing ultimately to the Lord. On this Rāmānuja says: "Laymen,

¹⁴⁵ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVI, 8. Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.7.

¹⁴⁶ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 123.

¹⁴⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX, 12.

who have not received the instruction of the Vedānta...think that the full meaning of all words is completely exhausted by the various ¹⁴⁸ padārthas they denote." Thus the penultimate denotation of a word is considered as-if independent of its ultimate denotation or its "extended sense".

So the "secondary sense" of any category for Rāmānuja involves the application of his methodological equivalent to "avidyā" whereby that category is perceived as-if separable from the Lord. Rāmānuja refers to this mis-conception as,"...the delusion which consists in looking on the sum of things--made up of the animate and inanimate, and on account of being the body of the Supreme Person, having Him for its ¹⁴⁹ self--as not having Him for its Self."

As argued previously Rāmānuja explicitly distinguishes his position from Śaṅkara's by his explicit rejection of a "secondary sense" as implying an "illusory notion" (mithyāpratyaya) and by his integrative use of the svarūpa-svabhāva distinction as equal to the primary and ¹⁵⁰ secondary senses respectively. Thus the "secondary sense", here equated with the svabhāva is not sublated, as with Śaṅkara's understanding, but integrated into the "primary sense", here equated with the svarūpa. This integration is often understood in terms of the unity of the "part" (aṁśa) and the "whole" (aṁśin). Yet even this designation of the "secondary" and "primary senses" in Rāmānuja operates in a dissociative

¹⁴⁸ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #21.

¹⁴⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.73.

¹⁵⁰ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #26.

manner, as the "transformations" (vikāras) of the svabhāva, and their susceptibility to karma and temporality is not integrated into the ¹⁵¹svarūpa.

But the "secondary sense" of the category here designated i.e. it's as-if separability from the Lord" is never integrated into its "actual inseparability from the Lord", here designated as the "primary ¹⁵²sense". The former must be not merely transcended but sublated. He argues that the negation of plurality in the nirguṇa-śruti does not pertain to the plural forms of the Lord, but, rather, to the illusion of their independent plurality, or their as-if separability from the Lord. To support this claim, Rāmānuja quotes this passage from the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad: "He who knows all things to be apart from Him, him will ¹⁵³all things abandon." As this excerpt indicates, viewing the world as-if independent of the Lord must be not merely transcended but negated in that the experience of the world in its "secondary sense", i.e. as-if independent of the Lord, constitutes suffering. On the other hand, the experience of the world in its "primary sense", i.e. as inseparable from the Lord constitutes bliss. Rāmānuja distinguishes these two senses of the world as follows: "Hence the experience of the world, as (a thing)

¹⁵¹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 206 (Thibaut).

¹⁵²This is the case despite Rāmānuja's explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's model of sublation. P. N. Srinivasachari refers to this explicit rejection as follows: "Sublation (in Rāmānuja) is a state of self-transcendence and not a process of negating negation" from P. N. Srinivasachari, The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita, p. 467.

¹⁵³Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 3, p. 366. From the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad II.4.6.

distinct from the Brahman, as being limited in happiness, and as consisting of pain, is due to karma. Consequently, to him who is freed from the ignorance (avidyā)...that same world, falling within the experience of the Brahman...becomes bliss (or happiness) altogether."¹⁵⁴ Viewing the world as-if separable from the Lord, and as inseparable from the Lord, simultaneously, is structurally parallel to Śaṅkara's "simultaneous viewing". For Rāmānuja, the experience of the world as-if separate from Brahman is not integrated with the latter, though the category of the world is so integrated. But it might be said that Śaṅkara also does not negate the category of the world per se but only its masquerading as Brahman. Even for Śaṅkara, the world as Brahman is real, though the world considered as-if different from Brahman is illusory. (cf., Śaṅkara, Bṛhad-bhāṣya I.IV.7). T. R. V. Murti refers to this realism in Śaṅkara as follows: "Brahman is not one real and the world another beside it. Brahman is the reality of the world its very essence".^{154a}

Yet, despite this implicit area of agreement Śaṅkara is usually represented as depicting the relationship between the "secondary sense" and the "primary sense" as dissociative. That is, one arrives at the "primary sense" only by the self-annulment of the "secondary sense". On the other hand, Rāmānuja is usually understood as depicting this relationship as integrative.

One arrives at the "primary sense" not by negating the "secondary sense" but by integrating it with the "primary sense". This is the case

¹⁵⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.III.7.

^{154a} T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita", p. 136; cf., Chapter Four for full investigation of the implicit realism in Śaṅkara.

when Rāmānuja is referring to the svabhāva as the "secondary sense" and to the svarūpa as the "primary sense" and especially when he uses these terms in an integrative manner. This is not the case with Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's secondary sense whereby a category is conceived as-if absolutely separable from the Lord and with his use of the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) as his methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's primary sense, whereby a category is experienced as inseparable from the Lord. No as-if separability can be integrated with an actual inseparability just as no as-if duality can be integrated with an actual non-duality. More simply, the false can never be integrated with the Real. In this sense, both treat this relationship as dissociative. This area of agreement between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara can be illustrated with reference to their interpretations of the mahā-vākya, tat tvam asi: despite the very real doctrinal differences between them in their interpretation of tat tvam asi,¹⁵⁵ there is an area of agreement methodologically. Both treat tvam first in terms of an as-if separation from tat, whether defined as an as-if duality (Śaṅkara) or as an as-if separability (Rāmānuja), and, secondly in terms of its actual non-separation from tat, whether defined as an actual non-duality (Śaṅkara) or as an actual inseparability (Rāmānuja). The former in both cases, should be designated as the "secondary sense" of tvam. The latter in both cases, should be designated as the "primary sense" of tvam. In the following excerpt

¹⁵⁵ Rāmānuja argues that tat and tvam point to two distinct but inseparables, modes of the Lord, (cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #20). Śaṅkara argues that tat and tvam point to an identity, and not merely an inseparability, between the Self and Brahman, (cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI, XVI.3).

from the Vedārthasaṃgraha, Rāmānuja presents these two senses of tvam simultaneously. This can be understood as another structural parallel to Śaṅkara's "simultaneous viewing": "You that were previously held to be no more than the operator of a certain body, are in reality a modification of the Supreme Spirit."¹⁵⁶

iv. Rāmānuja's Use of the Extended Sense As His Methodological Equivalent to Śaṅkara's Primary Sense

Before exploring the implicit area of agreement between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara in their use of the "primary sense", it is necessary to point to their doctrinal differences on this issue. Rāmānuja rejects Śaṅkara's understanding of the "primary sense" as applied to the definition of Brahman (satyam jñānam anantam brahma). Śaṅkara, in understanding this definition, argues that the adjectives "bear a predominately defining sense and not a qualifying sense."¹⁵⁷ These adjectives, according to Śaṅkara, should be described as attributive only in a secondary and negative sense i.e., as negating any specifications pertaining to Brahman that operate within thought and language. Śaṅkara states that "Brahman is indescibeable...unlike the construction of the expression, 'a blue lotus', Brahman is not to be construed as the import of any sentence."¹⁵⁸ Thus the terms "sat" "cit" and "ānanda" connote Brahman, but they do not denote Brahman. Śaṅkara can therefore be

¹⁵⁶ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #20.

¹⁵⁷ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.1.1.

¹⁵⁸ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.1.1.

understood as emphasizing "difference"¹⁵⁹ (vyāvrtti) or the differentiating function of the implied sense (lakṣaṇa).

Rāmānuja, on the other hand, emphasizes agreement and not difference or contrariety (anvaya) or what is designated as the designating function of lakṣaṇa.¹⁶⁰ Rāmānuja therefore interprets satyam jñānam anantam brahma in an attributive sense and not merely a definitive sense. He states that "Brahman's proper form is designated by knowledge as its defining attribute, but it is not mere knowledge itself."¹⁶¹ The terms "satyam", "jñānam" and "anantam" are not negated but integrated with the Lord by means of the sāmānādhikarāṇya. Even in those nirguṇa-śrutiś which emphasize "difference" (vyāvrtti), Rāmānuja does not argue for a Brahman immune from all qualities, but only a Brahman immune from all evil qualities. Rāmānuja states in this respect that, "Even when they tell that Brahman is the opposite of everything else they do not prove that Brahman is a non-differentiated entity."¹⁶² These nirguṇa-śrutiś, for Rāmānuja, do not point to an attributeless Brahman. Rather they operate as a "safeguard" in that the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Lord is therein described as immune from any transformations (vikāras). Rāmānuja insists that these nirguṇa-śrutiś, which point to the inaccessibility of the svarūpa of the Lord, can not be separated from the saguṇa-śrutiś, which point to the svabhāva of the Lord and the inseparability of matter and Selves, qua śarīra, with the Lord.

¹⁵⁹ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #96.

¹⁶⁰ Cf., Rāmānuja, Vedārthasaṃgraha #25.

¹⁶¹ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #24.

¹⁶² Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #23.

The svarūpa and the svabhāva of the Lord are not different categories,¹⁶³ but two modes of the same category. Also, by means of the sāmānādhikaraṇya, Rāmānuja can argue that the Lord is denoted by all beings as their "Inner Controller" (Antaryāmin), but that the svarūpa of the Lord remains distinct from the svarūpa of matter and Selves. Thus the nirguṇa-śrūtis are explained by Rāmānuja in terms of the mechanics of the Self-body relation, and not by any assertion of pure identity as such. Thus Rāmānuja argues, as opposed to Śaṅkara, that the "primary sense" of a category does not point to a state of undifferentiated identity with Brahman. Rather, the "primary sense" of a category for Rāmānuja refers to the inherence of its essential nature (svarūpa) within the Lord, but this inherence co-exists with an actual distinctness, for the svarūpa of that category never becomes merged with the svarūpa of the Lord.

Despite these doctrinal differences between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara regarding their definition of the "primary sense", there is an implicit area of agreement between them in their use of the "primary sense". This agreement in the midst of difference indicates yet another area of tension, between doctrine and method in both Śaṅkara¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³The inseparability of these two modes of the Lord is best disclosed in the Antaryāmin texts. Though Rāmānuja provisionally sets up the saguṇa-śrūtis as superior to the nirguṇa-śrūtis the real hierarchy pertains to the Antaryāmin texts versus the nirguṇa-śrūtis. (Cf., Rāmānuja, Gīta-bhāṣya XIII,2). For the Antaryāmin texts point to the co-ordination of the dimensions of separability and inseparability between the Selves and the Lord. Rāmānuja's emphasis of these texts illustrates his perennial concern to co-ordinate separability and inseparability, discontinuity and continuity in the śarīra-śarīrin.

¹⁶⁴The tension between Śaṅkara's doctrines and methods will be investigated in Chapter Four.

and Rāmānuja. Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja use the "primary sense" of a category to indicate its inseparable union with Brahman, whether defined in terms of an identity (Śaṅkara), or in terms of an inseparability (Rāmānuja). Both argue that this inseparable union with Brahman is only perceived a-posteriori, i.e. from the standpoint of mokṣa.¹⁶⁵

From this standpoint it becomes disclosed that the Self was only apparently separated from Brahman. Yet for Rāmānuja this inseparable union of the Selves with Brahman never entails a loss of their distinctness, for the svarūpa of the Self and the svarūpa of Brahman never become merged.¹⁶⁶

Consequently this area of agreement co-exists with a very real doctrinal difference.

When Rāmānuja is giving a simple description of a category, he simply refers to the svarūpa as its "primary sense",¹⁶⁷ but when he is dealing with "dharmic problems", he refers to its "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) as its "primary sense". It is this "extended sense" that refers to the inseparability of that category with the Lord and offers a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "primary sense". But Rāmānuja's two uses of the "primary sense" are by no means contradictory, but rather, they overlap, as the "extended sense" points to the inherence of the svarūpa of that category within the Lord. Rāmānuja refers to the "extended sense" of all words in this excerpt from the Vedārthasaṃgraha: "All words...actually denote the entire composite entity: the body, the

¹⁶⁵ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.IV.2, Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.2.

¹⁶⁶ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #85.

¹⁶⁷ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 4 (Thibaut).

individual soul represented by it, and finally the inner Ruler of that soul, the Supreme Person, in whom that entity terminates." ¹⁶⁸ Thus the "primary sense", according to this usage, refers to that relational complex or that "composite entity" of which that category is a part, according to the principle of "co-ordinate predication" (sāmānādhikarāṇya).

Rāmānuja describes the experience of the primary sense of Selves, or their actual inseparability from the Lord in religious terms. It is the experience of being unable to sustain oneself even for a moment without the Lord. He says in this respect: "On account of My being exceedingly dear to them, they are unable to find sustenance for their souls even for the atomic fraction of a moment without singing My praises, putting forth endeavours (to serve Me) and bowing (to Me) in reverence." ¹⁶⁹ This experience of helplessness is not a negative experience. Rather, it is the realization that one cannot finally see the Self except within the Lord qua Antaryāmin. ¹⁷⁰ Only this realization of one's total dependence and inseparability from the Lord can lead to that act of surrender (prapatti). ¹⁷¹ From the standpoint of this

¹⁶⁸ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #17.

¹⁶⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX.14. See also VIII, 15 and XI, 55.

¹⁷⁰ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 54. John Plott uses the term "contuition" to describe that process of seeing the Self in the Lord, as inseparable from Him and contrasts it with mere intuition which carries the connotations of a merely secondary sense of knowledge: "Bhakti is not the intuitive apprehension of God, but the contuitive comprehension within God...." (John C. Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion [Delhi: Motihal Banarsidass, 1974], p. 118.). Herein after cited as: John Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion.

¹⁷¹ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 66. In this connection Rāmānuja says: "Calamities occur in the case of the worship of the parts." (Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, II.III.55.)

realization, any separability from the Lord is disclosed to be only an apparent or as-if separability.

3. The Condition for "Avidyā" According to Rāmānuja

The condition for "avidyā" is variously identified by Rāmānuja
^{171a} as karma, ¹⁷² the "displeasure of the Lord", and as māyā, understood
¹⁷³ as "play" (līlā). Though Rāmānuja explicitly insists that māyā
¹⁷⁴ should be understood as līlā and not as an illusion, nevertheless
māyā is understood as reinforcing this "as-if-separability". In this
sense it can be understood as structurally similar to the role of
māyā in Śaṅkara, whose role it is to further a mis-apprehension of
Brahman. Rāmānuja refers to this function of māyā as follows: "Its
function is to hide the essential nature of the Lord and to create the
state of mind that its own essential nature is enjoyable. Hence, the
entire universe, deluded by the māyā (or the prakṛti) belonging to the
Lord, does not understand the Lord to be of the nature of bliss unbounded
¹⁷⁵ in excellence." Karma as māyā is described as creating an opposition
between the "penultimate Self-body relation" and the "ultimate Self-body
relation". This occurs when the Selves falsely identify with prakṛti,
because of the effect of karma, which causes the contraction of the

^{171a} Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 73.

¹⁷² Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.14.

¹⁷³ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.14.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.14.

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dharma-bhūta-jñāna. This contraction obscures the perception of
 their inseparability from the Lord which, as Rāmānuja states is:
 "apprehensible only by contemplation in a state of extremely lucid
 perception."¹⁷⁷ So bondage is explicitly described as a real and concrete
 condition caused by an equally real and concrete cause, karma. Rāmānuja
 says in this respect: "Bondage is something real, it cannot be put an
 end to by knowledge...Bondage springs from agñāna in the form of an
 eternal stream of karman...."¹⁷⁸ Rāmānuja, in accordance with his
 conative emphasis explicitly argues that this bondage is primarily
 due to man's willful disobedience. In this sense, bondage pertains
 more to the will than the intellect. Karma can thus be understood as
 co-operating with man's willful disobedience.

Rāmānuja explicitly absolves the Lord of any responsibility
 for this "avidyā" by delegating the responsibility to karma. He argues
 this by appealing to the following well-known verse from the Vedānta-
Sūtras: "There is no partiality or mercilessness (in Him), because it
 (i.e. creation) is dependent (on karma)...."¹⁷⁹ This emphasis clearly
 indicates Rāmānuja's conative emphasis and thus his intention to describe
avidyā as traceable to man's will-ful disobedience. Thus, in relation
 to the Lord, karma plays the role of a "safeguard". Karma should be
 understood as a separable part of the Lord as opposed to an inseparable

¹⁷⁶Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #5, #79. See also Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1,
 pp. 88-89 (Thibaut).

¹⁷⁷Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #77.

¹⁷⁸Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, pp. 145-47.

¹⁷⁹Vedānta-Sūtras II.1.34 quoted in Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, II.III.18.

part. It has an indispensable role in taking on the responsibility for evil, while absolving the Lord of it.

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Rāmānuja alternates between describing karma as autonomous thus absolving the Lord of any responsibility for evil, and describing karma as a power (śakti) of the Lord, as dependent on Him for its support and as acting solely through His permission. ¹⁸¹ In his Gītā-bhāṣya the Lord is described as controlling Selves, in the manner of a puppet show, by means of this power of karma: "He dwells, causing all embodied creatures, mounted on the machine...to act according to the guṇas by means of the māyā...which is His own." ¹⁸²

But it might be objected that karma has to be traced back to the Lord who is ultimately responsible for its existence. Though karma can be described as the prior 'cause' of "avidyā" in the order of discovery, the prior 'cause' in the order of being can only be the Lord. So Rāmānuja argues in his Śrī-bhāṣya that" "This power is nothing other than the displeasure of the Supreme Person." ¹⁸³ Through this displeasure of the Lord, the true nature of the Self is concealed. Ultimately the Lord becomes responsible not only for the liberation of

¹⁸⁰ Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #71.

¹⁸¹ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.14.

¹⁸² Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.61. This understanding of karma as a śakti of the Lord introduces a tension between this śakti and the Lord's svarūpa. Despite Rāmānuja's explicit rejection of the bhedābheda doctrine, this option ultimately leads to a similar approach to evil. Though Rāmānuja is explicitly criticising the bhedābheda position, in the following passage, it could be interpreted as applicable to his own position: "You say that one and the same Lord possesses all sorts of perfections in one part of Himself, and all sorts of imperfections in another part of Himself." (Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #59.)

¹⁸³ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, IV.1.13.

the Self, but also for its bondage. Rāmānuja states that "...through the resolve of the Supreme Person, the natural form of the individual self is obscured. Indeed the Supreme Person causes the concealment of the natural auspicious form of that (individual self)."¹⁸⁴ The Lord is described, by Rāmānuja, as not only giving His consent or permission to "avidya", but as actually helping it along: "He who has decidedly placed himself in a position exceedingly hostile to Him...him He disfavours and He produces in him a taste for actions which are the means of leading him to the downward path and which are hostile to His attainment."¹⁸⁵ Can we not accuse the Lord here of deceiving man by His concealment? Is the Lord's veiling of Himself not more primary than man's disobedience in this example? Rāmānuja would explicitly deny this and argue that the Lord is simply described here as rewarding the righteous and punishing the demonic in accordance with their karma. But implicitly this emphasis on the Lord as the ultimate cause of this "as-if separability" leads him to a position that is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's adhyāropa-apavāda, despite his explicit intention of doing the very opposite.

The paradox of sādhana, in Rāmānuja, can be formulated as follows: If the Lord is already all-inclusive, and inseparable from all Selves, than why is there any need for sādhana? The Lord is ultimately responsible for this "as-if separability" precisely because this all-inclusiveness of the Lord and His inseparability from all Selves is veiled in samsāra.

¹⁸⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, III.II.4.

¹⁸⁵ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, II.III.41.

It is this veil that produces the illusion of separability between the Selves and the Lord and necessitates sādhana. For as hitherto discussed the Selves, qua śarīra, can only apparently be separated from the Lord. Bondage never pertains to the svarūpa of the Self and the svarūpa of consciousness which remain unchanged even in saṁsāra.¹⁸⁶ Bondage only pertains to the svabhāva of consciousness, whose original all-expansive nature becomes contracted in saṁsāra. In this sense, then, bondage can be described as real even for Rāmānuja with reference to the order of discovery, but not with reference to the order of being, for the svarūpa of the Selves remain unchanged and inseparable from the Lord, even in saṁsāra.

The veiling of this inseparability between the Selves and the Lord constitutes the problem of sādhana. The source of this veil is the Lord Himself who is simultaneously revealed and hidden, accessible and inaccessible. Many of the references to the Antaryāmin in Rāmānuja illustrate this ambivalence, as in the following excerpt: "Men have no knowledge of Him, who having entered into themselves, as their inner soul by being their immanent Ruler remains with them."¹⁸⁷ The distinction between bondage and liberation can be described as the distinction between an unconscious abiding in the Antaryāmin, akin to sleep, and a conscious abiding in the Antaryāmin. Rāmānuja states in this respect that,

They move day after day over the dahrākāśa, which is always existent as the Internal Self (of all beings) and which forms the highest object of human pursuit... Just as those who do not know the hidden golden

¹⁸⁶Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.2.

¹⁸⁷Vedārthasaṁgraha, Van Buitenen, #76.

treasure and the place wherein it is (hidden), although they may be always moving thereon, do not yet come by it, just so (is it the case here)This very same constant movement (of the individual selves) over the (hidden) daharākāśa, which is existent as the Internal Self (of all beings)...goes to show that daharākāśa is the Highest Brahman. Accordingly...it is seen declared that the Highest Brahman who exists as the Internal Self (of all beings) is not realised by the beings who are controlled by Him and abide in Him."

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Rāmānuja describes the Lord as permeating "all this" yet without manifesting Himself: "By me, of the imperceptible form, is all this permeated. All things have their being in me and I do not have my being in them."

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The Śrī-bhāṣya describes this hiddenness of the Lord as deliberate:

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"The Lord is hidden in all beings and does not reveal Himself." So

the actual inseparability of the Selves with the Lord is not perceived by those who unconsciously abide in Him qua Antaryāmin, "...just as those who do not know the hidden golden treasure and the place wherein it is hidden, although they may be always moving thereon."

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A follower of Rāmānuja, Sri Parasara Bhattarya, in his Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bashya text, illustrates this hiddenness of the Lord with reference to the names of Viṣṇu. In his commentary on the thirty-first

¹⁸⁸ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.III.14.

¹⁸⁹ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #105.

¹⁹⁰ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.IV.1. Cf., passage quoted before Śrī-bhāṣya III.II.4, "The Lord causes the concealment of the natural auspicious form of that individual self...through His resolve...."

¹⁹¹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.III.16.

name of Viṣṇu: Sambhavaḥ he states: "He shows Himself to His devotees in His taste to embrace them, though He is ordinarily hidden like the treasure in the bowels of the earth."¹⁹² Most important the Lord is described in this commentary as deliberately concealing Himself from His non-devotees: "He spreads fully the web of Samsaara with threads of desire for sinful acts...'By my magic wand of illusion, I made them give up the way of the Vedas.'¹⁹³"

This deliberate hiddenness of the Lord, in Rāmānuja can be compared to the device in Śaṅkara of withholding the final teaching until the pupil is ready for it.

So though ḥkarma should be described as the prior cause of this "avidyā" in the order of discovery, the prior cause of this "avidyā" in the order of being can only be the Lord.

4. Conclusion: The Parallel Structure of Sādhana in Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara

Though the differences in their ontologies remain, a parallel structure of sādhana emerges in both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara; that is, the art of seeking (i.e. sādhana) and finding (i.e. mokṣa) can be described as identical, in their structure. For both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara the art of "seeking" starts with a similar problem. The problem according to Rāmānuja is: If the Lord is already all-inclusive and inseparable

¹⁹²Sri Parasara Bhattarya, Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bashya trans. Prof. L. Venkatarathnam Naidu (Tirupati: Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, 1965), p. 53. Herein after cited as: Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bashya; cf., #548 on the name: "Gahanah" ("unfathomable").

¹⁹³Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bashya #791.

from all Selves, then why is there any need for sādhana? The problem according to Śaṅkara is: If mokṣa is a pre-given, if the Self is already Brahman than why is there any need for sādhana? According to both, from the standpoint of "finding" (i.e. mokṣa), it is disclosed that the inseparable union of the Self with Brahman was somehow veiled in saṁsāra, for from the standpoint of "finding" (i.e. mokṣa) it is possible to re-perceive the nature of one's "seeking" (sādhana) as based on a "semblance", an as-if separability between oneself and Brahman.

Śaṅkara argues that we do not start existentially with a criterion of the Real and then apply it to the false. Rather, it is only as we negate the false masquerading as the Real that we perceive the Real.¹⁹⁴ Rāmānuja argues, in a similar manner, that the actual inseparability of the Selves with the Lord is only perceived a-posteriori, for it is only after the obscuration of karma has been removed that the Lord is disclosed as having been most primary, all-inclusive and ever-immediate.¹⁹⁵ Just as the body is incapable of existing without the empirical Self, so the Ātman is incapable of existing without the Lord. To separate the body from the empirical Self equals death for the former. Similarly to separate the Ātman from the Lord equals its spiritual "death".

It is from the a-posteriori standpoint, or the standpoint of mokṣa, that the area of convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara emerges most clearly. This convergence pertains to the parallel structure of sādhana; specifically to the transition from an "as-if duality" (Śaṅkara)

¹⁹⁴Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya Introduction to I.1.1.

¹⁹⁵Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.2, 3.

or "as-if separability" (Rāmānuja) to an "actual non-duality" (Śaṅkara) or "actual inseparability" (Rāmānuja). This area of convergence co-exists with very real doctrinal differences in Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. So, for instance, Rāmānuja insists, contrary to Śaṅkara, that this "actual inseparability" never amounts to an identity with Brahman for the distinctness of the Selves and Brahman persists even in mokṣa.

The following observation by John Chethimattam perhaps best concludes this chapter: "There is no doubt that Rāmānuja's metaphysics is more valuable for what it suggests than for what it actually
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states."

¹⁹⁶ Consciousness and Reality, p. 79.

CHAPTER III

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA IN RĀMĀNUJA: A DOCTRINAL INVESTIGATION

The relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma in Rāmānuja is highlighted in three problematic areas: (1) the relation between the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna; (2) the "two truths" in Rāmānuja or concrete Self-knowledge versus abstract Self-knowledge; and, (3) Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "transposition strategy" or how the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma can only be resolved within the Lord Himself. These three areas will be examined in this chapter.

1. The Relation Between the Self and the Dharma-bhūta-jñāna

1a. Rāmānuja's Explicit Intentions with Reference to These Doctrines:

The "Explicit Rāmānuja"

Rāmānuja distinguishes between two functions of the attributive consciousness (dharma-bhūta-jñāna): its function as an attribute in relation to the Self; and its function as a substantive in relation to the processes of contraction and expansion.¹ The purpose of this distinction was clearly to repudiate Śaṅkara's model of consciousness as undifferentiated, that "One without a second", identical with the Ātman. In sharp contrast, Rāmānuja argues that: "...all consciousness implies difference: all states of consciousness have for their object something that is marked by some difference...."^{1a} This dual structure of consciousness is illustrated in Rāmānuja's doctrine of "Self -luminosity" (svayaṃ jyotiḥ). Self-luminosity, for Rāmānuja, means that consciousness points simultaneously to the Self, its substrate,

¹ Cf., Srinivasadasa, Yatīndramatadīpikā Chapter VII, #8, #9.

^{1a} Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 39.

and to objects. Accordingly the subject-side of consciousness (dharmi-bhūta-jñāna) and the object-side of consciousness (dharmabhūta-jñāna)² are described, by Rāmānuja, as working together in saṃsāra, though they coalesce functionally in mokṣa. Rāmānuja defines Self-luminosity as follows: "The essential nature of consciousness...consists therein that it shines forth, or manifests itself, through its own being to its own substrate...or(to give another definition) that it is instrumental in proving its own object by its own being."³ The second half of this definition is extended in the Vedārthasaṃgraha as follows: "We say that knowledge is self-evident or self-realized by virtue of its own nature, viz. the nature of realizing or proving something else."⁴

In sharp distinction from this, Śaṅkara argues that "Pure Consciousness" (cit), which is identical with the Self, is Self-luminous in the sense that only the Self, can illuminate Itself. Śaṅkara states in this regard: "By the word 'self' is meant that light which is different from one's body and organs, and illumines them like such external lights as the sun, but is itself not illumined by anything else."⁵ Because of Śaṅkara's insistence that "Pure Consciousness" (cit) is identical with the Self, Self-luminosity consists in the fact that only the Self can illuminate Itself. On the other hand Rāmānuja insists that consciousness and the Self are not identical, consciousness is Self-luminous not in the

²Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, Great Siddhānta.

³Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 48.

⁴Vedārthasaṃgraha Van Buitenen, #28.

⁵Śaṅkara, Bṛhad-bhāṣya IV.III.6.

sense of being luminous to itself, but in the sense of being luminous to the Self as its substrate.

Consciousness, according to Rāmānuja, always points beyond itself "... by virtue of its own nature viz. the nature of realizing or proving something else."⁶ The dual structure of consciousness is illustrated by Rāmānuja's etymology of the word "jñāna": "The root jñā in the sense of 'to be conscious of' tells us that it has an object and a subject and that it is a specific action with a specific nature which distinguishes it from other actions. The affix tells us that it has gender, number etc."⁷ Śaṅkara's etymology of the word "jñāna" is in marked contrast to this, and indicates the non-relational nature of "Pure Consciousness" (cit) and its opposition to the dualistic structure of cognition which becomes subsumed under adhyāsa.⁸ He defines "jñāna" as follows: "The word jñāna conveys the abstract notion of the verb (jñā, to know); and being an attribute of Brahman along with truth and infinitude, it does not indicate the agent of knowing. If Brahman be the agent of knowing, truth and infinitude cannot justly be attributed to It. For as the agent of knowing it becomes changeful...."⁹

⁶ Vedārthasaṃgraha Van Buitenen, #28. This emphasis is structurally parallel to Edmund Husserl's insistence on the "intentionality" of consciousness which he defines as follows: "It belongs as a general feature to the essence of every actual cogito to be a consciousness of something." E. Husserl, Ideas, p. 108.

⁷ Vedārthasaṃgraha Van Buitenen, #28.

⁸ Yet though this contrast is extreme in the "explicit Śaṅkara", there is evidence for some continuity between svarūpa-jñāna and vyrtti-jñāna in the order of discovery though not in the order of being, in the "implicit Śaṅkara". Cf., Chapter Four.

⁹ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.1.1, p. 292.

Whereas Śaṅkara argues that consciousness as Cit has only an apparent relationship with the guṇas ("constituents") based on adhyāsa, Rāmānuja argues that consciousness has a real relation with the guṇas which is only suspended in mokṣa. Accordingly Śaṅkara argues that it is only by disengaging oneself from a false identification with the guṇas that one can transcend them. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, argues that this disengagement from the guṇas is only first possible by using one of the guṇas: sattva which is described as predisposing the mind towards dharma. Rāmānuja states accordingly: "The cognitive faculty is sāttvika when it knows...duty and non-duty, fear and safety, bondage and release."¹⁰ The use of sattva in Śaṅkara on the other hand is more cognitive than conative; that is, sattva is that which coincides with the function of the sakṣī ("the witness"). Sattva for Śaṅkara is thus not pure will but pure consciousness. Śaṅkara describes the relation between the Self and the guṇas as discontinuous, precisely because of his insistence on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, describes the relation between the Self and the guṇas as continuous because of his insistence on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma. This continuity between the Self and the sattva guṇa, according to Rāmānuja, is only suspended in mokṣa.¹¹ So the relation between the Self and the guṇas, even for Rāmānuja, is ultimately discontinuous. In this sense Rāmānuja can be understood as agreeing with Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja's insistence on using one of the guṇas

¹⁰Vedārthasaṃgraha Van Buitenen, #94.

¹¹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.1.14.

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(i.e. sattva) to transcend the guṇas can likewise be understood as similar to Śaṅkara's insistence that we must use a thorn to remove a thorn. Both of them are arguing that one has to use prakṛti ("matter"), whether understood as illusory (Śaṅkara) or as a modal reality (Rāmānuja) to disengage the Self from prakṛti, whether this disengagement is understood as merely apparent (Śaṅkara), or as real (Rāmānuja). A similar paradigm emerges in Rāmānuja's understanding of prapatti when one uses the will to transcend the will.^{12a} Accordingly Rāmānuja argues that the final disengagement from the guṇas is only possible within the Lord. In a similar manner he argues that the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma is only ultimately resolved within the Lord. From the standpoint of prapatti, dharma is no longer experienced as imposed from without. It is received from within. Therefore Rāmānuja argues that dharma is not so much sublated as transmuted into "service" (kaiṃkarya) to the Lord. Thus by serving the Lord, one transcends the guṇas. He states that, "...seeking refuge with the Lord is the only means for the transcendence over the gunas...."¹³

Rāmānuja's deeper purpose in this dual model of consciousness was to insist on a mode of knowing concretely and personally and not simply in the abstract. For according to Rāmānuja, Brahman is the Supreme Person, Nārāyaṇa, who must be known concretely. So the dual

¹²Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV.18.

^{12a}This structural parallel co-exists with a very real theological difference for Śaṅkara insists that Brahman is ultimately Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa.

¹³Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIV.27. See also IX, 31, XIV, 26.

structure of consciousness into its function as an attribute and as a substantive provides for this structure of encounter between the Selves and the Lord. John Chethimattan refers to this emphasis in Rāmānuja: "Thus perfect knowledge for Rāmānuja is not objectless (anubhava) as for Sankara, but the encounter between an integrated subject and the integrated field of objects, the meeting between the individual soul which properly disposes itself and concentrates all its faculties and the world of reality of which Brahman is the unifying focal point."¹⁴

However, Rāmānuja does not argue that our knowledge of the Lord is exhausted in a person to person relationship, which always implies difference: the Lord as the "Inner Controller" (Antaryāmin) is known in a supremely unitary manner, as one's very "Self".¹⁵

Rāmānuja's purpose in his doctrine of dharma should not be reduced to a merely negative one i.e., his purpose to refute Śaṅkara's model of dharma as rooted in adhyāsa and as a concern only for the "unenlightened" man. This requires that the positive intentions in his doctrine of dharma should be examined more closely. Rāmānuja's purpose in synthesizing ethics, religion and metaphysics must be taken into account. He insists that these three aspects of the Real i.e., Brahman as the "Refuge" or "Ground" (Ādhāra), Brahman as the "Ruler" (Niyantr) and Brahman as the "Lord" (Bhāgavat) and source of "Bliss" (Ānanda) are inseparably united because of the capacity of the Lord to be all three, but he also adds that they are not reducible to one

¹⁴ Consciousness and Reality, p. 59.

¹⁵ Thus Rāmānuja states: "Thus he is indeed Myself". Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 18.

another. That is, it is not the case that one aspect is normative, e.g. Brahman as Ādhāra, and that the other two aspects of Brahman are provisional understandings for the "unenlightened" man. Rather, the Lord is simultaneously the source of Being (Sat), the author and sustainer of dharma, and the "means" (upāya) to mokṣa. Accordingly, Rāmānuja describes dharma as created by the Lord,¹⁶ and as a real means of overcoming karma.¹⁷ The Lord as the "Ruler" (Niyantr) provides the ontological ground for ethics that is clearly absent in Advaita. Because the Real is understood as the "Supreme Person" (Puruṣottama) whom one must approach concretely rather than abstractly, dharma becomes transmuted into a mode of "service" (kaiṃkarya) to the Lord.

Rāmānuja refuses to separate questions of truth from questions of value. Varadachari refers to this emphasis in Rāmānuja as follows: "Value is the fire-test that truth has to stand before it can claim truth."¹⁸ Accordingly, ethics and metaphysics are not separated in Rāmānuja but positioned on a continuum. From this Rāmānuja describes the Lord as the "Supreme Value" (Param) as follows: "The sages who know the Vedas and those men who know about the Self declare the great-minded Kṛṣṇa to be the eternal dharma."¹⁹

Rāmānuja's purpose in his doctrine of the Self as a "part" (aṃśa), a "mode" (prakāra) and as an inseparable "attribute" (viśeṣaṇa)

¹⁶Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya, Introduction.

¹⁷Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.9-11.

¹⁸The Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-Bhāṣya, p. 96.

¹⁹Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya X, 13.

of the Lord is not merely to reinforce the usual theological differences between the Lord and the Selves, but it is to point to the relation of "inseparability" (aprthak-siddha) between the Selves and the Lord co-existing with their actual distinctness. Thus Rāmānuja's doctrine of the Self balances the two extremes of "inseparability" (samānādhikarāṇya) and "separability" (vaiyadhikarāṇya). Rāmānuja can argue that the Selves are simultaneously continuous and discontinuous with karma by distinguishing between the "essential nature" (svarūpa) of the Self and its "manifested nature" (svabhāva). Whereas the svarūpa of the Self can never be described as a "do-er" (kartā), the svabhāva of the Self, because of its contact with karma via the dharma-bhūta-jñāna can be described as a "do-er" (kartā).

1b. The Śarīra-Śarīrin As a Paradigm for the Relation between the Self and Dharma and the Self and the Dharma-bhūta-jñāna

The relation between the Self and dharma in Rāmānuja is functionally reducible to the relation between the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. Dharma is the means of overcoming karma and the karma that must be overcome resides in the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in the form of vikāras ("transformations"). Therefore dharma, according to Rāmānuja, is essentially the process of purifying the dharma-bhūta-jñāna of this karmic influence. Rāmānuja quotes from the following passage from the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "The mind alone is the cause of bondage and emancipation. The mind which is attached to sense-objects makes for bondage, and the mind devoid of (attachment to) sense-objects makes for emancipation."²⁰ Even in

²⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.6. Cf., Viṣṇu Purāṇa 7, 28.

karma-yoga the important element is not the act itself, but seeing the Lord as the ultimate agent.²¹ Therefore the full spectrum of dharma in Rāmanuja may be represented by the two poles of consciousness-in-bondage and consciousness-in-the-liberated state. Vedānta Deśika tends to emphasize this understanding of dharma. One Viśiṣṭādvaitin commenting on Deśika's Īśa-bhāṣya verse fifteen, makes this observation: "Here dharma means two things: the first is the ethical 'ought' or the imperative of duty of beholding Brahman; the second is the liberation of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, the functional consciousness of the individual which due to karma and desires etc., has undergone constriction and limitation.... The second meaning affirms that beholding Brahman is the natural quality of the individual's consciousness."²²

The relation between the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in both its aspects as dependent and independent is functionally reducible to the relation between the Self and its body, in that the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, in accordance with Rāmanuja's definition of a "body",²³ is used as "supported" (adheya), "ruled" (niyamyā) and "accessory" (śeṣa) to the Self. Just as Rāmanuja describes the Self and its body as inseparable yet distinct, in the same way he describes the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna as inseparable yet distinct. He uses the image of a lamp

²¹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.III.33, II.III.40. See also Rāmanuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVII.16.

²²Vedānta Deśika, Īśa-bhāṣya, footnote #1, p. 35.

²³Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.1.9: "Any substance which a sentient soul is capable of completing controlling and supporting for its own purposes, and which stands to the soul in an entirely subordinate relation, is the body of that soul," p. 424 (Thibaut).

and its luminosity to describe their relationship: "...where there is light it must belong to something, as shown by the light of a lamp. The Self thus cannot be mere consciousness."²⁴ M. Hiriyanna commenting on this image in Rāmānuja describes the dharmabhūta-jñāna: "But what it thus manifests is never for itself but always for another. That is, it can only show, but cannot know....jñāna is like a lamp which can reveal the presence of a jar (say) as well as its own, but cannot see either, its revelation of things being always for another."²⁵

The relation between the Self and the dharmabhūta-jñāna is functionally reducible to the śarīra-śarīrin because the mechanics of the śarīra-śarīrin relation are extended to all other important relations in Rāmānuja's system such as substance-attribute, cause-effect etc. The tension between the dimensions of separability and inseparability, and discontinuity and continuity in the paradigm relation of the śarīra-śarīrin are likewise transferred to these other relations.

Just as the Selves are capable of a bi-lateral existence qua śarīra and qua śarīrin, so consciousness is likewise capable of a bi-lateral existence qua śarīra and qua śarīrin. Consciousness qua śarīrin²⁶ operates as a substantive for the processes of contraction and expansion. Consciousness qua śarīra operates as the inseparable attribute of the

²⁴Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 60.

²⁵M. Hiriyanna, Indian Philosophical Studies (Mysore: Kavyalaya Pub., 1957), p. 54.

²⁶Cf., Srinivāsadāsa, Yatīndramatadīpikā, Chapter VII, #9.

Self. Because of the bi-lateral nature of consciousness and the Selves, the relation between the Self and consciousness can operate as a "two-tiered" Self-body relationship. Rāmānuja refers to these two functions of consciousness in his Śrī-bhāṣya as follows: "For to be a knower is to be the substrate of the quality of knowledge, and as the knowing Self is eternal, knowledge which is an essential quality of the Self is also eternal....Knowledge (the quality) which is in itself unlimited, is capable of contraction and expansion....In the so called kshetragna-condition of the Self, knowledge is,owing to the influence of work (karman), of a contracted nature...."^{26a} The distinction between these two functions of consciousness is made very explicit in a later Viśiṣṭādvaitic work, the Yatīndramatadīpikā: "Consciousness is of the nature of attribute, because of the characterization of the definition as 'whichever, by nature, is dependent on something, that (dependent thing) is the attribute (of a substance).' Since consciousness possesses states like contraction and expansion, it becomes also a substance....The definition of substance is thus: substance is that which is the abode of states."²⁷

Having established that the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in its two functions as an attribute and as a substantive operates in a manner similar to the Self and its body, it now becomes necessary to refer to a more basic distinction within the structure of consciousness in Rāmānuja, namely; the distinction between substantive consciousness i.e. the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna and attributive consciousness i.e.

^{26a} Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 63.

²⁷ Srīnivāsadāsa, Yatīndramatadīpikā, Chapter VII, ## 8-9.

the dharmabhūta-jñāna.^{27a} Inferring from Rāmānuja's use of the categories of the svarūpa and the svabhāva one can specify the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna as the svarūpa of consciousness and the dharmabhūta-jñāna as the svabhāva of consciousness.^{27b}

Finally, the relation between Self-knowledge and dharmabhūta-jñāna in Rāmānuja is functionally reducible to the relation between the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna acting with the dharmabhūta-jñāna. The dharmi-bhūta-jñāna is, in fact, synonymous with Self-knowledge, whereas the dharmabhūta-jñāna is what must be purified in sādhana. As shall be argued, the relationship between substantive consciousness and attributive consciousness manifests the tension already present in the śarīra-śarīrin relation between the dimensions of

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Cf., previous discussion, section 2a, Chapter Two.

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All the commentators on Rāmānuja usually focus on the two functions of the dharmabhūta-jñāna rather than the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna which they only refer to in passing. The distinction between the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna and the dharmabhūta-jñāna is not employed by them with the same amount of significance as it will be treated here. Yet this distinction is significant when one is comparing Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara on the nature of consciousness. (Cf., K. C. Varadachari, Sri Ramanuja's Theory of Knowledge, pp. 234-35; N. S. Anantharangachari, The Philosophy of Sādhana in Viśiṣṭādvaita pp. 22-23; for a discussion of this distinction.)

separability and inseparability, discontinuity and continuity, etc. Just as the Self and the body are not distinguished in metaphysically contrasting terms such as the Real and the false, but, rather, in temporal terms as what is permanent versus what is transitory,²⁸ in a similar manner these two functions of consciousness are distinguished in temporal terms. Therefore Rāmānuja argues that the svarūpa of consciousness is eternal,²⁹ whereas the svabhāva of consciousness because it includes transitory contents like joy and grief, is transitory in that sense.³⁰ Because the relationship between the Self and dharma is functionally reducible to the relation between the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, dharma is not treated as illusory, but as a real process. In this way the relation between these two functions of consciousness manifests the explicit forms of continuity present in the śarīra-śarīrin.

The relation between these two functions of consciousness also manifests the contrasting emphasis on discontinuity in the śarīra-śarīrin so that the dharma-bhūta-jñāna is protected from the vikāras of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna by a number of "safeguards".³¹ These "safeguards"

²⁸Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.16.

²⁹Rāmānuja says in this respect: "Knowledge which is an eternal quality of the Self is also eternal" (Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibault, I.1.1, p. 63).

³⁰Rāmānuja says in this respect: "...consciousness, not differing herein from joy, grief, and the like, persists for some time and then comes to an end." (Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 56).

³¹Cf., Chapter Two, "Rāmānuja's Dissociative Usage of the śarīra-śarīrin." 1c(ii).

establish a measure of irreversability and discontinuity in this relationship. This relation also manifests some of the implicit forms of discontinuity in the śarīra-śarīrin. As was argued in the previous chapter, Rāmānuja often uses these two functions of consciousness in a manner structurally parallel to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth. Such a use helps to sort out "dharmic problems". The question of whether consciousness is changing or unchanging can be sorted out by differentiating between consciousness qua śarīrin which never changes and consciousness qua śarīra which does change because of the transitory character of its contents. This relation also manifests Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to avidyā whenever consciousness is used as-if absolutely separable from the Lord. These parallels between the śarīra-śarīrin and these two functions of consciousness will be examined in greater detail in the next section.

1c. The Relation Between the Self and the Dharma-bhūta-jñāna: A Methodological Examination

Some critics have interpreted Rāmānuja's understanding of the capacity of Selves and consciousness to function both as attributes and as substances as the denial of the very idea of substance. C. Sharma states in this regard that, "The very definition of 'substance' is that it has an independent existence. Rāmānuja undermines this definition when he says that independence does not constitute the essence of substance, that a thing may be dependent and yet be a substance."³² Rāmānuja

³² C. Sharma, A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1960), p. 367.

answers this anticipated objection in his Śrī-bhāṣya by making a distinction between two substances which are independent of one another and only occasionally function for one another, and two substances which are incapable of existing independently. The relationship between oneself and an object, as in the analogy of "one who wears the earring" (kunḍalin) or in the analogy of "one who has the stick" (danḍin) illustrates the former whereas the śarīra-śarīrin relationship can only be the latter. The "body" (śarīra) cannot exist without the "Self" (śarīrin), whereas the "earring" (kunḍala) or the "stick" (danda) can exist without the Self. Substances which only occasionally function for one another are indicated by a suffix added to the root (i.e. danḍin or kunḍalin), whereas substances which are incapable of existing independently can only be indicated by grammatical equations i.e. sāmānādhikarānya. Rāmānuja states in this regard: "Such is not the case with substances which are incapable of existing in a condition in which they may be separately perceived. The attributive character of those (substances) is to be conclusively made out only by means of grammatical equations."³³ In a similar manner he states in the Vedārthasamgraha that, "When a certain entity serves as a distinctive feature for a certain substance, then we can properly say, by means of a sāmānādhikarānya construction coordinating that entity with that substance that it has no function apart from that substance and therefore constitutes a mode of it."³⁴ Therefore the bi-lateral existence of the

³³ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 196.

³⁴ Vedārthasamgraha, Van Buitenen, #68.

Selves and consciousness never entails an absolute independence from the Lord, but only a relative independence for as His eternal modes they can never be separated from the Lord, just as the body cannot be separated from the empirical Self without perishing. Therefore any perception of an absolute separability must ultimately be of the nature of a "semblance" or what has been designated as "Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to avidyā".

The bi-lateral nature of consciousness is by no means merely an extension of the bi-lateral nature of Selves; rather the former makes the latter possible. Rāmānuja says that, "With reference to this various flow of knowledge as due to the senses, it is spoken of as rising and setting and the Self possesses the quality of an agent." ³⁵ It is due to the bi-lateral nature of consciousness that the Self can be spoken of as an agent in its svabhāva, while immune from action in its svarūpa.

Most important, the bi-lateral nature of consciousness and the Selves illustrates the perennial tension in Rāmānuja's system between the emphasis on "separability" (vaiyadhikarāṇya) and "inseparability" (sāmān-ādhikarāṇya), and discontinuity and continuity. Rāmānuja divides both consciousness and the Selves into their essential nature (svarūpa and their manifested nature (svabhāva). It should not be forgotten that the svarūpa of the Self and the svarūpa of consciousness are synonymous in the sense that they both denote the same reality. Designating the svarūpa of consciousness i.e. the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna as "D₁", the svarūpa of the Self as "Sf₁", the svabhāva of consciousness i.e. the dharmā-bhūta-jñāna as "D₂" and the svabhāva of the Self as "Sf₂" their relationship can be outlined as

³⁵ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 63.

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follows: Both "Sf₁" and "D₁" point to an essential discontinuity with karma, whereas "Sf₂" and "D₂" point to a manifested continuity with karma. Because "Sf₁" and "Sf₂", "D₁" and "D₂" are not separate categories but two modes of the same category, Rāmānuja can argue for a simultaneous continuity and discontinuity of the Self with karma.³⁶ Because the relation between the Self and dharma is functionally reducible in Rāmānuja to the relation between the Self and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, i.e. "D₂" that relation can be understood as follows: "Sf₁" is essentially discontinuous with "D₂", because of its immunity from all vikāras residing in "D₂", whereas "Sf₂" is continuous with "D₂". The Self is both continuous with dharma via "Sf₂" and discontinuous with dharma via "Sf₁". Because the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma is functionally reducible to the relation between the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna (i.e. "D₁") and the dharma-bhūta-jñāna i.e. "D₂", their relation can be understood as follows: "D₁" is both discontinuous with "D₂" because of its immunity from vikāras, and continuous with "D₂" as modes of the same category. Just as the śarīra-śarīrin is handled in both an integrative and a dissociative manner, so the relation between these two functions of consciousness i.e. "D₁" and "D₂" is handled in both an integrative and a dissociative manner. The relation between "D₁" and "D₂" is handled in an integrative manner inasmuch as "D₁" and "D₂" are not two categories but two modes of the same category i.e. consciousness. Therefore

^{35a}"Sf₁" and "D₁" are synonymous in the sense that they denote the same reality even though they have different connotations. The synonymy between "Sf₁" and "D₁" is not to be understood as a case of simply tautology.

³⁶This should not be confused with the Bhedabheda position which asserts both continuity and discontinuity simultaneously and in the "primary sense". Cf., Vedārtasamgraha #58-#61.

the distinction between "D₁" and "D₂" does not involve a change of essential nature so much as a change in mode. Explicitly, "D₂" is handled as a "part" (aśa) of "D₁" as one can gather from Rāmānuja's treatment of svabhāva as the aśa of svarūpa. Yet even explicitly some irreversibility is set up between "D₁" and "D₂" because of the numerous "safeguards" used to protect "D₁" from the effects of karma. This enables Rāmānuja to argue that "D₁" is eternal, whereas "D₂" is transitory, in the sense that its contents are transitory.³⁷ "D₁" is immune from karma, whereas "D₂" is susceptible to karma.³⁸

However, implicitly, as argued earlier, the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma, i.e. "D₁" acting with "D₂", is handled like a "two-tiered" Self-body relationship that is structurally parallel to Śaṅkara's model of consciousness from the two levels of truth. According to this usage, "D₁" is structurally parallel to consciousness from the "highest level of truth" i.e. svarūpa-jñāna in Śaṅkara, and "D₂" is structurally parallel to consciousness from the "lower level of truth" i.e. vṛtti-jñāna in Śaṅkara.^{38a} This dual usage of consciousness in Rāmānuja helps to sort out "dharmic problems", such as the question of whether mokṣa is a pre-given or an acquisition. Even for Rāmānuja, mokṣa is a pre-given, in the sense that "D₁" and "Sf₁" do not change in samsāra. Mokṣa merely manifests their existent condition,³⁹ and yet mokṣa is an acquisition in that it entails

³⁷Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 63.

³⁸Cf., Vedārthasaṅgraha #43.

^{38a}Refer to Chapter Four for a full investigation of vṛtti-jñāna and svarūpa-jñāna in Śaṅkara.

³⁹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.2.

an actual purification of "D₂".

This is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's insistence that svarūpa-jñāna never undergoes any change. Only vr̥tti-jñāna undergoes a real purification in samsāra. Vr̥tti-jñāna must be purified to reflect svarūpa-jñāna. In a similar manner Rāmānuja argues that "D₂" must be purified to "reflect" "D₁". Bondage pertains to manifested consciousness, i.e. the vr̥tti-jñāna (Śaṅkara) or the dharmabhūta-jñāna ("D₂", Rāmānuja) but never to the essence of consciousness, i.e. the svarūpa-jñāna (Śaṅkara) or the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna ("D₁", Rāmānuja).

Yet this structural parallel, co-exists with very real doctrinal differences. So, for instance, Śaṅkara argues that vr̥tti-jñāna can only reflect svarūpa-jñāna; it can never have any actual relationship with svarūpa-jñāna but only an apparent relationship. On the contrary Rāmānuja argues in effect that the dharmabhūta-jñāna (i.e. "D₂") not only reflects the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna (i.e. "D₁"); but also constitutes that self-same category in another mode. For this reason Śaṅkara argues that the vr̥tti-jñāna is sublated in mokṣa, which is for him equal to svarūpa-jñāna, whereas Rāmānuja explicitly argues that the dharmabhūta-jñāna i.e. "D₂" is not sublated in mokṣa but is changed from a contracted condition to an all-expansive condition. Because even the reflection of svarūpa-jñāna in vr̥tti-jñāna is not real but only apparent, according to Śaṅkara, one cannot speak of any "real" purification of consciousness in Śaṅkara such as is found in Rāmānuja, for vr̥tti-jñāna according to Śaṅkara is ultimately only an upādhi, falsely super-imposed upon svarūpa-jñāna.⁴⁰ In this sense bondage is real both with reference to

⁴⁰Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.32.

the order of discovery and with reference to the order of being for Rāmānuja, but real only with reference to the order of discovery for Śaṅkara.⁴¹

The contraction of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, "D₂" obscures⁴² the svarūpa of the Self, "Sf₁", but this obscuration never entails any change in "Sf₁". One's perception of "Sf₁" changes in samsāra, but "Sf₁" itself does not change. Similarly the contraction of "D₂" obscures "D₁" but never changes its nature. Rāmānuja says, "...as the knowing Self is eternal, knowledge which is an essential quality⁴³ of the Self is also eternal."

Because Rāmānuja argues that "D₁" and "D₂" are not separate categories but two modes of the same category, the dual dimensions of separability and inseparability in the śarīra-śarīrin are simultaneously maintained in this relationship. The real question is: when does this separation of consciousness into "D₁" and "D₂" become a problem which necessitates sādhana? It is because of the contraction of "D₂" that

⁴¹ Cf., Chapter Two, section 4.

⁴² Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #43.

⁴³ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 63.

abhimāna ("the misconception of the Self as the body") occurs. Rāmānuja says in this respect that, "Owing to that contraction the identification of the soul with the proper form of its body, god etc., is brought about."⁴⁴ Varadachari attributes "avidyā" in Rāmānuja to a lack of communication between "D₁" and "D₂", especially to the mis-perception of "D₁" as "D₂" and vice-versa, thus involving an apparent transfer of properties. He says,

Thus we find that the true source of the illusion called ātma-deha-bhrama consists not in the veiling by primeval adhyāsa, or ignorance, not yet a beginningless karma, but in the two-fold limitation of the soul; (i) the privateness and exclusiveness and self-enjoying nature of the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna, which does not even apprehend its aṇutva, or kartṛtva attributes but only its pratyaktva, selfness, and ekatva, oneness, and anukūlatva, which makes it impossible for it to know that these attributes are exclusively its own rather than of the body it tenants, and (ii) the dharma-bhūta-jñāna which due to limitation due to beginningless karma and its consequent avidyā, does not apprehend this specific exclusiveness of these attributes pratyaktva, ekatva and anukūlatva and jñātṛtva and others of the self, and thus causes the delusion or illusion that the body is the self or soul.⁴⁵

Therefore a lack of communication between "D₁" and "D₂" causes the mis-perception (abhimāna) of the Self as the body, and the mis-perception of the Self as absolutely independent of the Lord.

"D₂" plays a somewhat ambiguous role in Rāmānuja's thought as

⁴⁴ Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #43.

⁴⁵ K. C. Varadachari, Sri Ramanuja's Theory of Knowledge (Tirupati: Tirupati Devasthanams Press, 1956), p. 235. Herein after cited as: Sri Ramanuja's Theory of Knowledge.

it both reinforces "avidyā" and helps to remove "avidyā". Śaṅkara argues, in a similar manner, that bondage and liberation refer to the vr̥tti-jñāna and not to the Self.⁴⁶ Likewise Rāmānuja argues that "D₁" is unable to know itself in relation to other Selves and the Lord without the reflexive action of "D₂". Varadachari says in this regard: "Thus it is that dharma-bhūta-jñāna helps not only the understanding of the objects outside the individual, the perception of the body and its states, but finally it acts reflexively in so far as it reveals to the soul its own qualities as specially related to it."⁴⁷ Without "D₂" "D₁" can only know itself in isolation and not in relation to other Selves and the Lord. Rāmānuja refers to "D₁" as, "...the shining forth or being manifest by its own existence merely to its own substrate."⁴⁸ Though all Selves, according to Rāmānuja, are equal because of "D₁", this fact is only known via "D₂". Similarly, Śaṅkara argues that svārūpa-jñāna 'needs' vr̥tti-jñāna to know itself as svārūpa-jñāna.⁴⁹ Rāmānuja refers to this equality of all Selves by virtue of "D₁" in many places in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "...between you and other beings there is equality when dissociated from the prakṛiti, on account of (your self and all other selves) being solely of the form of knowledge."⁵⁰ This "knowledge" refers here

⁴⁶ Cf., Chapter Four for a full discussion of this point in Śaṅkara.

⁴⁷ Sri Ramanuja's Theory of Knowledge, p. 234-35.

⁴⁸ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 55.

⁴⁹ Cf., Chapter Four on jñāna-yoga.

⁵⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.35.

to "D₁" as it is later specified in his Gītā-bhāṣya as "being solely of the form of uncontracted knowledge....,"⁵¹ and as being free from karma.⁵² But the perception of this equality can only occur via "D₂" when it has regained its natural all-expansive condition. "D₂" in the mokṣa state is referred to as, "the divine eye": "...omniscience is affirmed with reference to the released soul: 'Indeed, this above-mentioned person perceiving with his mind, namely, the divine eye (or attributive intelligence), enjoys all the qualities which are in the world which is the Brahman.'" ⁵³

Though they function together,⁵⁴ one can distinguish between the roles of "D₁" and "D₂" in samsāra. "D₁" in samsāra refers to Self-knowledge in isolation from a knowledge of other Selves and the Lord or abstract Self-knowledge. "D₁" becomes obscured in samsāra but does not alter its nature. "D₂" in samsāra refers to Self-knowledge that is continuous with a knowledge of other Selves and the Lord or relational Self-knowledge that becomes contracted because of the influence of karma. This separation of roles leads to a lack of communication between "D₁" and "D₂" in samsāra. Perhaps this separation of roles even constitutes samsāra for Rāmānuja and the restoration of their unity constitutes mokṣa.

⁵¹ Ibid., VI, 31.

⁵² Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.34.

⁵³ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, IV.IV.16, I.III.18. See also Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI.8.

⁵⁴ Consciousness reveals its substrate and objects simultaneously.

Rāmānuja explicitly argues that the contraction of "D₂" in samsāra causes the obscuration of "D₁".⁵⁵ But the separation of the roles of "D₁" and "D₂" in samsāra makes this claim problematic. Shri Shastri articulates this problematic in his Śatabhūṣaṇī: "Since contraction of dharmabhūta-jñāna cannot bring about a corresponding contraction of the dharmibhūta-jñāna, something else besides karma has got to be accepted with a view to explaining the obscuration of the dharmibhūta-jñāna."⁵⁶ But this "other cause" is precisely the self-concealment of the Lord which is ultimately responsible for the obscuration of "D₁". For as hitherto pointed out,^{56a} karma can be described as the prior cause of avidyā in the order of discovery, but the prior cause of avidyā in the order of being can only be the Lord. Accordingly Rāmānuja states: "Indeed, the Supreme Person causes the concealment of the natural auspicious form of that(individual self)...through His resolve."⁵⁷ Yet in the order of discovery Rāmānuja emphasizes a conative explanation for avidyā; that is, man's 'disobedience' or his willful separation from the Lord is emphasized in explaining avidyā.⁵⁸ On the contrary, Śaṅkara emphasizes a cognitive explanation for avidyā.

Though the roles of "D₁" and "D₂" are separated in samsāra, they converge functionally in mokṣa wherein "D₂" appropriates the natural

⁵⁵ Vedārthasamgraha Van Buitenen, #43. "Owing to that contraction the identification of the soul with the proper form of its body, god etc., is brought about."

⁵⁶ Anima Sen Gupta, A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Ramanuja (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office), p. 123. Shri Shastri is here quoted by A. S. Gupta.

^{56a} Cf., Chapter Two, section c.

⁵⁷ Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya III.II.4.

⁵⁸ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.53.

purity of "D₁" and goes further than "D₁" in that it perceives itself relationally and not in isolation. In this sense "D₂" becomes responsible, functionally speaking, for the Self-knowledge in mokṣa which is presented as relational Self-knowledge rather than Self-knowledge in isolation. In mokṣa the Self is only known in its "primary sense" as inseparable from the Lord. Rāmānuja here refers to this Self-knowledge in mokṣa: "The consciousness of the released soul therefore expresses itself in the following form: 'I am Brahman, without any division'."⁵⁹ Rāmānuja does not interpret mokṣa as identity as with Śaṅkara, but rather as a form of lived inseparability. Therefore the bi-lateral existence of Selves i.e. their capacity to function both as substances and as attributes, ceases in mokṣa when they function only as attributes inseparable from the Lord yet without being identical with the Lord.

Though Rāmānuja refers to "D₁" as consciousness in the "primary sense" and "D₂" as consciousness in the "secondary sense" in saṃsāra,⁶⁰ (as one can infer from his usage of svarūpa and svabhāva) their roles are reversed in mokṣa wherein "D₂" becomes equated with consciousness in the "primary sense" and "D₁" becomes equal with consciousness in the "secondary sense".⁶¹ Although in the former instance the "primary sense" and "secondary sense" of consciousness simply refer to the svarūpa and svabhāva of consciousness, in the latter instance the "primary sense" and "secondary sense" refer to the

⁵⁹ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, IV.IV.4.

⁶⁰ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 72 (Thibaut). As Rāmānuja is not dealing with any "dharmic problem" here he simply refers to the svarūpa of consciousness i.e. "D₁" as its "primary sense" and the svabhāva of consciousness i.e. "D₂" as its "secondary sense".

⁶¹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.16 and I.III.18.

"extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of consciousness as inseparable from the Lord versus the as-if separability of consciousness from the Lord. The latter use of the "primary and secondary sense" equals Rāmānuja's methodological equivalents to Śaṅkara's "primary" and "secondary senses".⁶² "D₁" which is the abstract knowledge of the Self becomes co-related with Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" i.e. as-if separable from the Lord. "D₂" which is relational Self-knowledge becomes co-related with Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" i.e. as inseparable from the Lord. This change in the significance of the roles of "D₁" and "D₂" in mokṣa entails the implicit evaluation of "D₂" over "D₁" which reverses the explicit evaluation of "D₁" over "D₂" in saṃsāra. The immunity of "D₁" from the effects of karma and temporality is the basis for the evaluation of "D₁" over "D₂" in saṃsāra. The implicit co-relation of "D₂" with Self-knowledge in its "extended sense" as inseparable from the Lord and continuous with all Selves is the basis for the evaluation of "D₂" over "D₁" in mokṣa. This is so because abstract Self-knowledge, which is here implicitly identified with "D₁", no longer operates in mokṣa, but only relational Self-knowledge. In this sense "D₂" may be described as appropriating the functions of "D₁" in mokṣa. For these reasons Rāmānuja refers to "D₂" in mokṣa as the "divine eye": "...that same (self), when he has shaken off the body and the senses, which are dependent upon karma, enjoys all desires through the divine, i.e., the spiritually natural knowledge denoted by the word, mind...."⁶³

⁶²Cf., Chapter Two, section 2 (iii and iv).

⁶³Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya, I.III.18. Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI.8 and Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.16.

From this it may be said that " D_2 " is theologically and epistemologically more significant than " D_1 " for Rāmānuja. It is epistemologically more significant than " D_1 ", which establishes the equality of all Selves with the Lord, for that equality can only be perceived via " D_2 ". " D_1 " without " D_2 " is not even able to perceive its own unique qualities. It is theologically more significant because it holds together both ends of the spectrum of sādhana in Rāmānuja i.e. the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord and their "actual inseparability." That is, it is because of " D_2 ", specifically because of its contraction, that the false sense of separability in saṁsāra occurs. Yet it is also because of " D_2 ", specifically when it regains its natural expansiveness, that this mis-perception is overcome in mokṣa and the Self perceives its actual inseparability from the Lord. Therefore, in this sense, " D_2 " can be understood as reinforcing both the mis-perception of an "as-if separability" in saṁsāra and the perception of the "actual inseparability" between the Selves and the Lord in mokṣa. Therefore all illusions are referred to it, yet it is implicitly described as more important than " D_1 " in mokṣa.

This capacity of " D_2 " to reinforce both the mis-perception of an "as-if separability" in saṁsāra and the perception of the "actual inseparability" between the Selves and the Lord in mokṣa is functionally parallel to the role of avidyā in Śāṅkara. That is avidyā can be understood as reinforcing both the mis-perception of the "as-if duality" in saṁsāra, and the perception of the "actual non-duality" between the Self and Brahman in mokṣa: just as avidyā is described as projecting that false sense of duality in saṁsāra, so it is also described as a means

for leading one beyond it in his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. It might be said that Rāmānuja used "D₂" to perform the functions that avidyā played in Advaita: "For the opponents had not only to refute the avidyā doctrine; they also had to solve the theoretical problems which the Advaitins solved by means of that doctrine."⁶⁴

But as hitherto pointed out, the implicit convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the question of Self-knowledge emerges most clearly from the a-posteriori standpoint i.e. from the standpoint of mokṣa. From this standpoint, it is disclosed that both the svarūpa of the Self, "Sf₁", and the svarūpa of consciousness, "D₁", do not change in saṁsāra; rather their self-same condition which was obscured in saṁsāra is manifested in mokṣa. Rāmānuja states in this regard: "That special condition into which the soul passes on having,...approached the highest light is a manifestation of its own true nature, not an origination of a new character."⁶⁵ Most important, it is disclosed from this standpoint that the svabhāva of consciousness, "D₂", does not so much acquire a new condition of all-expansiveness in mokṣa as regain its original all-expansiveness. Although in the order of discovery one first encounters a contracted "D₂" in saṁsāra it is later disclosed in mokṣa as being naturally all-expansive in the order of being.⁶⁶

⁶⁴J. M. Cashore, "Rāmānuja's Objections to the Māyā-Vāda" (unpublished paper).

⁶⁵Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, IV.IV.1.

⁶⁶Cf., footnote 1, p. 35 from Vedānta Deśika's Īśa-bhāṣya: "...beholding Brahman is the natural quality of the individual's consciousness."

This is structurally parallel to Śaṅkara who argues that though mokṣa is a pre-given, one first encounters adhyāsa in the order of discovery. The following excerpt from Rāmānuja suggests that because the Self is essentially consciousness, the original all-expansiveness of "D₂" in mokṣa is a matter of manifestation rather than acquisition: "When therefore at the moment of release those essential qualities assert themselves, the case is one of manifestation of what already exists, not one of origination."⁶⁷

In this sense, both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara argue that mokṣa does not entail the acquisition of a new nature but the manifestation of one's original nature. Thus even for Rāmānuja the language of "accomplishment" cannot apply to mokṣa: "That essential nature no doubt is something eternally accomplished, but as in the Samsāra state it is obscured by Nescience in the form of Karman; the text refers to the cessation of such obscuration as 'accomplishment'."⁶⁸

Most important, liberated consciousness means consciousness inhering in the Lord as inseparable from Him and from the point of view of the Lord there is no distinction between samsāra and mokṣa. This distinction only emerges from our point of view when we view ourselves as-if separate from the Lord.

Thus despite the very real doctrinal differences between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara on the nature of Self-knowledge, an area of convergence emerges between them on this question. According to both Rāmānuja

⁶⁷ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, IV.IV.3.

⁶⁸ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, IV.IV.2.

and Śaṅkara, the essential nature of consciousness i.e. svarūpa-jñāna for Śaṅkara or the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna "D₁", for Rāmānuja does not change in saṁsāra: only the manifested nature of consciousness, i.e. vṛtti-jñāna for Śaṅkara, or the dharmā-bhūta-jñāna "D₂", for Rāmānuja changes in saṁsāra. But whereas for Rāmānuja the manifested nature of consciousness is integral to the essential nature of consciousness the manifested nature of consciousness for Śaṅkara is ultimately only a false super-imposition projected upon the essential nature of consciousness which alone remains unsublated in mokṣa.

2. The "Two Truths" in Rāmānuja: Concrete Self-Knowledge Versus Abstract Self-knowledge

Preamble

The implicit evaluation of "D₂" over "D₁" that has been investigated in the previous section, was largely based on the corresponding evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge. This distinction between concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge is Rāmānuja's equivalent to the "two truths" enumerated in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad I.1.4. Rāmānuja refers to these "two truths" as follows:

"'Two sciences have to be known' by him who is desirous of attaining the Brahman. The meaning is that there are two accepted kinds of knowledge which relate to the Brahman, and may respectively be characterized as direct and indirect. Of these, the indirect form(of knowledge) is obtained by means of the scriptures; the direct form (of knowledge) is obtained by means of the process of mental concentration known as yoga."⁶⁹ Rāmānuja

⁶⁹ Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya, I.II.23.

is here caricaturizing the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, represented by Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school, where it is argued that śravaṇa ("hearing" i.e. of śruti) was the only karaṇa ("catalyst") capable of eliciting Self-realization.⁷⁰ But in the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, represented by the Bhāmatī school, an analogous distinction is made between a direct knowledge of the Self versus an indirect or general knowledge of the Self.⁷¹

This distinction is Rāmānuja between an indirect or abstract Self-knowledge and a direct or concrete Self-knowledge is ultimately related to the distinction between Self-knowledge in the "secondary sense" i.e. as-if separable from the Lord and Self-knowledge in the "primary sense" i.e. as inseparable from the Lord.

John Plott uses the terms "contuition" and "intuition" to describe this distinction in Rāmānuja: "Bhakti is not the intuitive apprehension of God, but the contuitive comprehension within God (as Love Himself)."⁷² One might reduce these "two truths" in Rāmānuja to the difference between two prepositions - "of" and "within".

According to Rāmānuja concrete Self-knowledge is intuitive, not merely intellectual knowledge. Rāmānuja says that, "Such remembrance is of the same character (form) as seeing (intuition)...."⁷³ For this reason

⁷⁰Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.12.

⁷¹Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III.41. For a full discussion of these two positions in Śaṅkara on this issue, see Chapter Four, 3b.

⁷²John C. Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion, p. 118.

⁷³Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, pp. 14-15.

Rāmānuja argues against jñāna-yoga as a self-sufficient path and advocates the combination of jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga.⁷⁴ This combination (i.e. viśama-samuccaya of jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga must mature into bhakti ("devotion"), for according to Rāmānuja, bhakti is that form of concrete Self-knowledge enjoined to eradicate "avidyā". He says, "...the means of attaining Brahman is a superior bhakti in the form of memorization staggered to a state of extremely lucid perception."⁷⁵ As shall be demonstrated later, the highest form of concrete Self-knowledge is perhaps prapatti ("surrender"), for in the act of surrender to the Lord one discovers who one is.

Whether or not these "two truths" in Rāmānuja should be understood as continuous or as discontinuous will be the special concern of this section.

2a. Rāmānuja's Explicit Intentions in Evaluating Concrete Self-knowledge Over Abstract Self-knowledge

Rāmānuja argues that it is only through an encounter with the Lord, and not through any abstract knowledge of Him, that we come to know ourselves because the Supreme Person (Puruṣottama) must be known concretely, not abstractly.

Rāmānuja's explicit intention in this evaluation of concrete

⁷⁴Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III, 26, IV.24. By the term "combination", samuccaya in the usual sense of sama-samuccaya is not meant. But Rāmānuja argues for a mitigated form of samuccaya i.e. viśama-samuccaya in his insistence that karma though not an equal to jñāna can function as its auxiliary.

⁷⁵Vedārthasamgraha Van Buitenen, #141. See also Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge was to emphasize the importance of the will. In contrast to Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja concentrates on the conative aspect of both avidyā, i.e. in man's willful autonomy,⁷⁶ and its removal, i.e. in man's capacity to control the senses and the mind by the will. In regard to the latter Rāmānuja states that, "He....who controls the mind by the will, that is who makes the mind fit for meditation by making it turn away from the objects of the senses....he experiences the self as it is in reality."⁷⁷ Therefore Rāmānuja insists⁷⁸ that because bondage is concrete, it can only be removed by a concrete cause, i.e. concrete Self-knowledge: "...as bondage is something real, it cannot be put an end to by knowledge."⁷⁹ Rāmānuja is here attacking the claim⁸⁰ that mokṣa can be attained by śabda-jñāna alone. P. N. Srinivasachari in interpreting this conative emphasis in Rāmānuja remarks: "He who has specialized in the philosophy of action, the krtsnavit, knows that jñāna or akarma is an activity and that karma presupposes jñāna. Conation is rationalised and Reason is conative."⁸¹ This conative

⁷⁶Cf., Vedārtasamgraha #143. Rāmānuja there refers to avidyā as "the wishful misconception of independence...."

⁷⁷Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 53.

⁷⁸Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya, Great Siddhānta, objection seven.

⁷⁹Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 145.

⁸⁰This claim is evident in the "explicit strand" of Śaṅkara, represented by Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school. See, Chapter Four for a full discussion of śabda-jñāna in Śaṅkara and the Post-Śaṅkarites.

⁸¹P. N. Srinivasachari, The Ethical Philosophy of the Gītā (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math., 1971), p. 64.

emphasis leads Rāmānuja to argue that Self-knowledge cum dharma is greater than mere abstract Self-knowledge. Unlike Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja insists on treating the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma as continuous. Therefore a knowledge of the distinction between the Self and the prakṛti (viveka-jñāna) is regarded as the basis and ground for dharma. Rāmānuja says accordingly: "...the talk about what is righteous and what is unrighteous...is the result of a knowledge of the self as distinct from the body."⁸² Co-relatively dharma is regarded as the means for Self-realization.⁸³

Whereas Śaṅkara describes the will as an adjunct (upādhi) superimposed upon pure consciousness (cit), Rāmānuja describes the will as part of the svabhāva though not the svarūpa of the Self. Yet unlike Sāṃkhya where it is argued that the will is simply part of prakṛti ("matter") and opposed to the nature of the puruṣa ("spirit"), the will functions in Rāmānuja's system like the "body" for the svarūpa of the Self. In this manner the strict dualism of Sāṃkhya is mitigated by the śarīra-śarīrin.^{83a} Because of the śarīra-śarīrin between the Selves and the Lord, the will is finally understood as a mode of the Lord. This is the metaphysical basis in Rāmānuja for arguing that man's own will is ultimately impotent in affecting mokṣa. Therefore it is only when the natural will functions as inseparable from the divine will that freedom can be realized. Rāmānuja does not cater to the common sense

⁸² Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.11.

⁸³ Cf., Vedārtasamgraha #3.

^{83a} Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.II.9.

view that freedom means being subject only to oneself. Rather he argues that freedom consists in being "subservient to Another."⁸⁴ Whereas being coerced in subservience to another constitutes bondage, to surrender to the Lord constitutes Bliss. For this reason the Self-realization conferred by the Lord is implicitly evaluated above any Self-realization attained through one's own efforts.⁸⁵

This evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge can be also understood in terms of Rāmānuja's explicit intention to treat ontology and ethics as inseparable. K. C. Varadachari observes that, "Value is the corrective to Truth...the fire-test that truth has to stand before it can claim truth."⁸⁶

Rāmānuja's evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge never entails the abandonment of the upaniṣadic dictum that only Brahma-vidyā confers mokṣa. Rather, Rāmānuja like Śaṅkara insists that only Brahma-vidyā confers mokṣa, but they differ in their conception of that Brahma-vidyā. Rāmānuja says, "We admit that release consists only in the cessation of Nescience, and that this cessation results entirely from the knowledge of Brahman. But a distinction has here to be made regarding the nature of this knowledge...."⁸⁷ Rāmānuja insists that only that concrete knowledge of Brahman which culminates in bhakti (bhakti-rupā-pannam jñānam) can eradicate avidyā.

⁸⁴Vedārthasaṃgraha Van Buitenen, #143.

⁸⁵Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.9.

⁸⁶Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī-bhāṣya, pp. 95-96.

⁸⁷Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 11.

Though Rāmānuja argues that only Brahma-vidyā confers mokṣa, karma-yoga is accepted as an auxiliary to Brahma-vidyā. Vedānta Deśika refers to this mitigated form of samuccaya ("combination", i.e. of jñāna and karma) in Rāmānuja as "...the organic relation between action and knowledge as subsidiary and main, (and) the crossing over death through knowledge alone."⁸⁸

Rāmānuja insists that whereas kāmya-karma (action performed with desire) reinforces avidyā, niṣkāmya-karma (action performed without desire) is continuous with the process of removing that avidyā. Rāmānuja says that, "...enjoying the rita (Ka. Up. III, 1) - denotes such actions as aim at no worldly end, but only at the propitiation of the highest Person, and thus enable the devotee to reach him. The word 'anrita' therefore denotes actions of a different kind, i.e. such as aim at worldly results and thus stand in the way of the soul reaching Brahman...."⁸⁹ Therefore the evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge never entails the glorification of mere karma as such, i.e. kāmya-karma.

2b. The Relationship Between These "Two Truths" and their Corresponding Mokṣa States

Whereas the Northern and Southern school of Viśiṣṭādvaita located the problematic discussed above in the friction between the two

⁸⁸ Vedānta Deśika, Īśa-bhāṣya #11. Rāmānuja therefore does not argue that karma and jñāna are equally efficacious in leading to mokṣa i.e. sama-samuccaya-vada but rather that karma is a useful auxiliary to jñāna i.e. viśama-samuccaya-vada.

⁸⁹ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 125.

mokṣa states kaivalya⁹⁰ ("the isolated state of the Self") or Self-realization and sayūjya ("co-union with the Lord"), or God-realization, Rāmānuja himself located the problematic more in the means to those mokṣa states, i.e. in abstract Self-knowledge or concrete Self-knowledge. Therefore the opposition in Rāmānuja is not in the form of sayūjya versus kaivalya per se, but it is in the form of a friction between two senses of kaivalya, i.e. kaivalya understood as a relational form of Self-knowledge continuous with a knowledge of other Selves and the Lord⁹¹ versus kaivalya understood as a non-relational form of Self-knowledge.⁹² Whereas the former sense of kaivalya, like the brahma-bhūta ("become Brahman") state,⁹³ is a natural part (aṁśa) and means to sayūjya, the latter sense of kaivalya as an isolated state of the Self is not continuous with sayūjya but to a large extent opposed to it. Co-relatively the former sense of kaivalya is closer to what has been designated in Rāmānuja as "Self-knowledge in the primary sense," i.e. as inseparable from the Lord, whereas the latter sense of kaivalya is closer to what has been designated as "Self-knowledge in the secondary sense," i.e. as-if separable from the Lord. The Northern school of Viśiṣṭādvaita emphasizes the former, relational sense of kaivalya and thus describe it as an accessory to sayūjya. In this regard Vedānta Deśika observes that, "...the realization of the self without any separate results of its

⁹⁰Though whether kaivalya is a mokṣa state or its preparation is another issue that will be discussed below.

⁹¹Cr., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.13.

⁹²Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.II.12.

⁹³Cf., Bhagavad-Gītā VI, 27.

own makes it an essential pre-requisite of God-realization."⁹⁴ The Southern school of Viśiṣṭādvaita favour the latter non-relational sense of kaivalya, and, thus describe it as both discontinuous and opposed to sayūjya.⁹⁵ John Plott in representing the Southern school on this issue, goes so far as to interpret it as, "...a 'dead end'...like Dante's limbo - a place for 'philosophers' who never suffer, but who never experience glory either."⁹⁶

It might be said that Rāmānuja's use of kaivalya in these two senses, i.e. as both relational⁹⁷ and as non-relational as that "state of pure isolation",⁹⁸ justifies the subsequent controversy between the two schools on the status of kaivalya. Like the Northern school Rāmānuja often refers to kaivalya and sayūjya, especially in his Gītā-bhāṣya, according to a means/end schema. The following excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya is such an example: "He who has realized the state of the brahman, that is, he to whom the essential nature of the self has become manifest as consisting of infinite knowledge and as having the sole character of being

⁹⁴ Vedānta Deśika, Tātparyachandrikā from Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III, footnote #99.

⁹⁵ The Southern school argue that kaivalya acts as an obstacle towards obtaining sayūjya: "Being a soul-state rising to Divine planes or God-state is shut off." (point eighteen) from "The Astādāśa-bhedas or the Eighteen Points of Doctrinal Differences between the Tēngalais (Southerners) and the Vadagalais (Northerners) of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vaisnava School, South India", in Asiatic Society of Great Britain (July 1910), p. 1103, by Govindacarya M.R.A.S. Herein after cited as: The Astādāśa-bhedas.

⁹⁶ A Philosophy of Devotion, pp. 267-68.

⁹⁷ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.28.

⁹⁸ Srī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.II.12, p. 271.

absolutely dependent on and subservient to Me....he attains eminent devotion for Me."⁹⁹ Kaivalya is understood above as a preparation for sayūjya. Yet like the Southern school Rāmānuja also treats kaivalya and mokṣa as discontinuous, especially in the Śrī-bhāṣya.¹⁰⁰ As pointed out above, Rāmānuja argues that there is no abstract Self-knowledge in mokṣa because the svarūpa of the Self can only be perceived relationally in mokṣa via the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. For this reason Rāmānuja argues that the non-relational sense of kaivalya i.e. as "a state of pure isolation" is opposed to sayūjya.^{100a}

This ambiguity in Rāmānuja is also illustrated in his use of the term "mokṣa". In the Śrī-bhāṣya the term refers only to sayūjya and not to kaivalya,¹⁰¹ whereas in his Gītā-bhāṣya the term refers to both sayūjya and kaivalya.¹⁰² This ambiguity in Rāmānuja as to whether kaivalya is a mokṣa state or its preparation led to the subsequent discussion between the Northern and Southern schools on whether kaivalya is destructible or indestructible.

Yet, as mentioned above, Rāmānuja located the problematic more in the means to these mokṣa states than in kaivalya and sayūjya per se. The real friction is between a kaivalya attained

⁹⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 54. See also VIII, 13.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Śrī-bhāṣya I.II.12.

^{100a} Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.II.12.

¹⁰² Cf. Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.22. Yet Vedānta Deśika, emphasizing the Northern school, argues that kaivalya is "...here called mokṣa by courtesy"; cf., footnote 271, Chapter VI from Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya.

through one's efforts alone via an exclusive path of jñāna-yoga or abstract Self-knowledge and a kaivalya attained ultimately through the Lord's grace via a bhakti-yoga prefaced by jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga or concrete Self-knowledge. Though Rāmānuja admits the former as a possibility,¹⁰³ he clearly advises against it. In fact he refers to the "tragic fate" of those attempting kaivalya through their own efforts alone: "In the case of him whose mind is not dedicated to Me and who is engaged in controlling the senses through his own exertion, the right disposition about the pure self is never established."¹⁰⁴ But Rāmānuja emphasizes a kaivalya attained via concrete Self-knowledge. He says that, "...for those who long merely for the state of self-sufficient isolation (kaivalya) of the self, the discipline of devotion (bhakti-yoga) is the means...."¹⁰⁵ Consequently, Rāmānuja points to the supreme kaivalya as bestowed by the Lord Himself: "The Supreme Person pleased by sacrifices and such other works bestows on him the undisturbed vision of the self."¹⁰⁶ According to the dual strands in Rāmānuja's methodology these "two truths" are used both in an integrative manner, according to a means/end schema and in a dissociative manner in which concrete Self-knowledge is described as opposed to abstract Self-knowledge.

¹⁰³Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.1.

¹⁰⁴Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.66.

¹⁰⁵Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, Introduction, p. 353.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., III.9.

2c. The Relationship Between the "Two Truths" According to a Means/End

Schema

Though Rāmānuja argues that the abstract knowledge of the sacred texts cannot remove the concrete condition of bondage,¹⁰⁷ he does acknowledge that an abstract knowledge of the texts is a necessary pre-requisite for concrete Self-knowledge. Accordingly he says, "And what is required for the acquisition of that (loving devotion) is knowledge born of the scriptures...."¹⁰⁸ Co-relatively though Rāmānuja repeatedly advises against the practice of jñāna-yoga as a self-sufficient path,¹⁰⁹ he does admit that kaivalya can be attained by this arduous route if it is preceded by karma-yoga.¹¹⁰ Rāmānuja enacts a curious Advaitic device in reverse by arguing that jñāna-yoga is provisionally efficacious for the "unenlightened man" until the emergence of bhakti-yoga. He says that, "...the discipline intended for the realisation of the self is good for one who is incapable of the practice of loving devotion (to the Lord)."¹¹¹

In his Gītā-bhāṣya Rāmānuja usually treats kaivalya as a relational form of Self-knowledge continuous with a knowledge of other Selves and the Lord. Because of this he usually refers to kaivalya as the means to sayūjya, its part (amśa), and subsidiary (śeṣa) to sayūjya. He states

¹⁰⁷ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, Great Siddhānta.

¹⁰⁸ Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya, I.II.23. See also Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.38,39.

¹⁰⁹ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.25, IV.24.

¹¹⁰ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya II.72.

¹¹¹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.12.

that the "...knowledge of the individual soul is laid down as essential by (the words), 'through knowledge derived from yogic self-concentration', on account of (its) being accessory to the knowledge of the Supreme Brahman enjoined in (the words), 'after knowing God'." ¹¹² This means/end schema between kaivalya and sayūjya is even more apparent when kaivalya is described as bestowed by the Lord as in the following: "To them who wish to be constantly united (to Me) and who worship Me, I give with love that particular mental condition by which they attain to Me." ¹¹³ Vedānta Deśika is even more explicit in arguing for a means/end schema between kaivalya and sayūjya. He says that, "...the realization of the self without any separate results of its own makes it an essential pre-requisite of God-realization." ¹¹⁴

This means/end schema between the "two truths" already implies a measure of discontinuity for they are not admitted as equal alternatives. Rather abstract Self-knowledge and the corresponding mokṣa state of kaivalya is clearly subordinated (śeṣa) to concrete Self-knowledge and the corresponding mokṣa state of sayūjya. This subordination is clearly illustrated in Rāmānuja's interpretation of the dahara-vidyā described in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. There he argues that Prajāpati's teaching on the Self should be clearly subordinated to the teaching on the dahara-vidyā, for the Self-knowledge included in devotion to the Lord is

¹¹² Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III, Introduction.

¹¹³ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.14.

¹¹⁴ Vedānta Deśika, Tātparyachandrika quoted in Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III, footnote #99.

evaluated as higher than any mere abstract Self-knowledge.¹¹⁵ S. S. Raghavachar, in his commentary on this passage in Rāmānuja, makes this observation: "Self-attainment is not an autonomous process; it occurs as a part of the experience of the Supreme. Self-liberation is precipitated, as it were, in the vision of God."¹¹⁶ Rāmānuja argues in many places in his Gītā-bhāṣya that a kaivalya bestowed by the Lord is higher than any kaivalya attained through one's own efforts. He says: "Unable to put up with his separation (from Myself), I Myself want him. The meaning is that I Myself give him that progress in his worship which is required for attaining Me, the destruction of all obstacles thereto and the condition of My being extremely dear to him etc."¹¹⁷ The Self-knowledge bestowed by the Lord is closer to what has been designated in Rāmānuja as "Self-knowledge in the primary sense" i.e. as inseparable from the Lord. As the next section will argue the full implication of this co-relation of concrete Self-knowledge with "Self-knowledge in the primary sense" is the implicit co-relation of abstract Self-knowledge with "Self-knowledge in the secondary sense", i.e. as-if separable from the Lord.

2d. The Relationship Between the "Two Truths" as Manifesting an Implicit Discontinuity

The problematic considered here is located more in the friction

¹¹⁵Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.19.

¹¹⁶S. S. Raghavachar, Srī Rāmānuja on the Upanishads (Madras: Rangacharya Memorial Trust, 1972), p. 60.

¹¹⁷Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.14. See also III.9 and X.10.

between concrete Self-knowledge and abstract Self-knowledge considered by Rāmānuja as means to the states of kaivalya and sayūjya themselves. So the term "kaivalya" in Rāmānuja does not have the pejorative connotation that it acquires in the Southern school. O. Lacombe says in this respect: "On remarque que le texte de Cri Nivasa comporte a l'endroit de la deliverance par isolement une nuance prejorative dont Ramanoudja semble se garder."¹¹⁸ The pejorative connotation in Rāmānuja becomes linked with the means of abstract Self-knowledge or the exercise of jñāna-yoga in isolation. Accordingly Rāmānuja says that, "...one who undertakes jñāna-yoga in any other way (i.e. without doing karma-yoga) is a hypocrite."¹¹⁹ When the natural will fails to surrender to the Lord's will, with which it is essentially "one", it only increases that false sense of separability. Rāmānuja observes that "In the case of him...who is engaged in controlling the sense through his own exertion, the right disposition about the pure self is never established".¹²⁰ This failure to surrender to the Lord's will reflects a false sense of the Self as one's own "property". Rāmānuja says that such ones are accordingly "Fools ...who have perverted knowledge; they consider the self which,...finds its sole delight in dependence on the Lord...as their property."¹²¹ The perils of a mere abstract knowledge of the Lord are denounced in this

¹¹⁸ Olivier Lacombe, L'Absolu Selon Le Vedānta (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1966), footnote #1, p. 372.

¹¹⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.5.

¹²⁰ Ibid., II.66.

¹²¹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.15.

passage: "The worst of men are those who are incapable of being devoted to Me, although my essential nature is known in general terms to them".¹²²

In the above passage Rāmānuja has gone beyond his customary use of abstract knowledge as a subsidiary part of concrete knowledge and has implicitly identified it with that which interferes with a concrete knowledge of the Lord. The practice of jñāna-yoga in isolation often favours a non-relational form of Self-knowledge which can further a false sense of separability from the Lord; whereas that jñāna which grows into upāsana ("meditation") and then into bhakti ("devotion") favours a relational form of Self-knowledge which ultimately matures into a direct vision of the Lord and of the Self as inseparable from Him. Rāmānuja says that, "Such remembrance has been declared to be of the character of 'seeing', and this character of seeing consists in its possessing the character of immediate presentation (pratyakshatā)".¹²³ Rāmānuja's predecessor, Yāmuna, is categorical in his assertion that, "...the only means of knowing and attaining Him is devotion."¹²⁴ Abstract knowledge of the Lord is not presented in the above passage as integrated with a concrete knowledge of the Lord. Co-relatively abstract Self-knowledge is not integrated with concrete Self-knowledge in mokṣa. The former, according to Rāmānuja, is absent in mokṣa. The Self only knows itself from within the Lord, as inseparable from Him in mokṣa, i.e. according to "Self-knowledge in the primary sense." Rāmānuja describes

¹²²Ibid., VII.15.

¹²³Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 15.

¹²⁴Yāmuna, Gītārthasaṅgraha #5, quoted from Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya, p. 540.

this Self-knowledge in mokṣa as follows: "...their condition as such (i.e., as belonging to the self's essential nature) is dependent upon the Supreme Person; and that it (i.e., the essential nature of the self as manifest in the state of final release) continues eternally is dependent upon Him."¹²⁵ As pointed out above this is largely because of the appropriation of the functions of "D₁" i.e. non-relational Self-knowledge by "D₂" i.e. relational Self-knowledge, in mokṣa. The highest devotees are described as those who cannot see the Self except in the Lord. Therefore Rāmānuja says, "Because this man holds Me to be the highest goal, finding it impossible to support himself without Me, therefore it is not possible for Me also to maintain Myself without him. Thus he is indeed Myself."¹²⁶ It follows from this that the highest knowledge for Rāmānuja must consist in seeing all things within the Lord and as inseparable from Him. To use John Plott's terminology, the Self must be "contuited" within the Lord. This higher form of bhakti is often interpreted as the end itself i.e. paramābhakti, ("bhakti as the end") rather than the means to it i.e. parabhakti ("bhakti as a means"). John Plott argues that it can be described as higher than the mokṣa state itself.¹²⁷ This understanding of paramābhakti leads to an understanding of mokṣa not as a resting place but as the journey itself.

As mentioned above, whereas the Northern and Southern schools of Viśiṣṭādvaita located the problematic in the two mokṣa states of

¹²⁵ Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya, IV.IV.20.

¹²⁶ Cf., Ramanuja, Saranāgati Gadya #2.

¹²⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.18.

kaivalya and sayūjya, Rāmānuja located the problematic in the form of a friction between the two senses of kaivalya i.e. as a relational form of Self-knowledge or a non-relational form of Self-knowledge. Therefore kaivalya acquires a pejorative connotation in Rāmānuja only when it is understood as a non-relational form of Self-knowledge. The doctrinal differences between the two schools on the status of kaivalya should be understood in terms of these two senses of kaivalya in Rāmānuja. Accordingly, Dasgupta in his summary of "the eighteen points of doctrinal difference" (aṣṭadāśa-bhedas) between the two schools argues that kaivalya, because of its non-relational nature, is not yet a complete form of Self-knowledge: "...he who has merely this Self-apperception (i.e. kaivalya) cannot attain immortality through that means only; for this self-apperception does not necessarily mean a true revelation of his nature with reference to God."¹²⁸ For the Self, according to Rāmānuja, must be perceived within the Lord, or "contuited" with Him.¹²⁹

Both the Northern and the Southern schools co-relate kaivalya with some form of avidyā. The Southern school co-relate kaivalya and spiritual pride or relying on one's own efforts rather than the Lord. Accordingly, kaivalya is described by them as "... eternal by its own making."¹³⁰ Precisely because of this reliance on one's own efforts the following penalty is imposed: "Rising to Divine-planes or God-state is shut off."¹³¹

¹²⁸S. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III (Cambridge: University Press, 1968), p. 93. Herein after cited as S. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III.

¹²⁹Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.11.

¹³⁰Aṣṭadāśa-bhedas #18.

¹³¹Ibid.

Lokachārya refers to kaivalya even more categorically as "the great evil". He says that, "He saves (one) completely from the great evil, (i.e., that state of emancipation known as kaivalya mukti in which the soul is satisfied with the enjoyment of its bliss without caring for God-realisation)...."¹³² The Northern school co-relate kaivalya with avidyā because avidyā contains some elements of karma which must be removed before the vision of the Lord becomes possible. Dasgupta describes their position on this issue: "It has to be admitted that in the state of kaivalya there is an association of materiality (acit-saṃsarga), since the karma in its entirety is not destroyed in this case; for to know one's proper essence is to know oneself as a part of God and so long as this state is not attained one is under the influence of māyā."¹³³ Thus they depict kaivalya as an incomplete mode of Self-realization.

The Northern and Southern schools merely radicalize the latent discontinuity in Rāmānuja between these "two truths" and shift the emphasis from the means, i.e. concrete Self-knowledge versus abstract Self-knowledge to the mokṣa states of kaivalya and sayūjya. The latent discontinuity in Rāmānuja between these "two truths" becomes even more evident in the bhakti-prapatti controversy which shall now be examined.

3. Rāmānuja's Methodological Equivalent to Sāṅkara's

"Transposition Strategy"

Preamble

The relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma in Rāmānuja

¹³²Lokachārya, Mumukshupadi (Madras: The Educational Publishing Co., 1962), #289. Herein after cited as: Lokachārya, Mumukshupadi.

¹³³S. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. III (Cambridge: University Press, 1968), p. 383.

can only be resolved ultimately within the Lord Himself. This equals Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's "transposition strategy." This must not be mis-read as a doctrinal equivalent but as a methodological equivalent.

Just as Śaṅkara first examines a particular "dharmic problem" from the first level of truth and then re-examines it by transferring it to the second level of truth, so Rāmānuja first examines a particular "dharmic problem" from the "level" of the "penultimate Self-body relation" and then transfers it to the "ultimate Self-body relation". Accordingly, the "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja might be defined as the transference of any relation first understood from the "level" of the "penultimate Self-body relation" to the "level" of the Lord or the "ultimate Self-body relation." The implication of this device for Rāmānuja is that the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma is only finally resolved within the Lord. In the act of prapatti ("surrender") the Lord is disclosed as "the means" (upāya) and "the end" (upeya) of sādhana,¹³⁴ and in fact equivalent with dharma itself.¹³⁵ Co-relatively this "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja means that the yoga practiced by the Self is ultimately the Lord's. Rāmānuja refers to this as, "...having Me for support, depending solely on Me: practising My yoga...."¹³⁶ Whereas the distinction between bondage and liberation is real from the "level" of the Self, it is no longer applicable from

¹³⁴ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya III.2.34.

¹³⁵ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.7.

¹³⁶ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.1.

the "level" of the Lord, as there was never a time when the Self qua śārīra was not His.¹³⁷ For whereas the śārīra and the śārīrin in the "penultimate Self-body relation" are governed by external relations, when they are operating within the "ultimate Self-body relation" they are governed by internal, invariable relations.¹³⁸ Therefore the "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja often involves an inversion of the values operating within the "penultimate Self-body relation". Accordingly Lokāchārya argues that from the "level" of the "ultimate Self-body relation" one's sins no longer function as obstacles to moksa but as "... objects of enjoyment"¹³⁹ to the Lord.

The seeds for this "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja can be found in the resolutions to the first two problematics considered in this chapter i.e. (1) in his implicit evaluation of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna over the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna in moksa and (2) in his implicit evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge. Both resolutions point to the necessity for transcending what has been designated as "Self-knowledge in the secondary sense", i.e., as-if separable from the Lord, and they point to the necessity for what has been designated as "Self-knowledge in the primary sense", i.e. as inseparable from the Lord. The "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja is also anticipated by the transition from the penultimate to the ultimate sense of a category, from the "secondary sense" of a category, i.e. as-if separable from the Lord, to the "primary sense" of a category, i.e. as inseparable from the Lord; and from the

¹³⁷ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.2.

¹³⁸ Cf., K. C. Varadachari, Metaphysics of Śrī Rāmānuja's Śrī Bhāṣya, p. 66.

¹³⁹ Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #216.

"penultimate Self-body relation" to the "ultimate Self-body relation". It is also anticipated by his use of the śārīra-śārīrin as a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and also in his insistence that the Selves qua śārīra can never in fact be separated from the Lord, only apparently. Therefore the seeds of the "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja emerge as a general conclusion from the issues considered in the last two chapters of this work. As prapatti will be considered as an individual instance of this "transposition strategy", it will not be presented as a mere isolated issue in Rāmānuja.

The discussion to follow is organized in three subsections:

(3a) Consideration will be given to various examples of the "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja's primary texts. (3b) Prapatti will then be considered as an individual instance of the "transposition strategy". Vedānta Deśika's position on prapatti in which prapatti is understood as a branch of bhakti or its pre-requisite will be examined in order to bring out the full implications of the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja. (3c) Lokāchārya's position on prapatti will be examined in order to bring out the full implications of the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja and to outline the ensuing area of convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara.

3a. Instances of the "Transposition Strategy" in Rāmānuja

What was designated as the "penultimate Self-body relation" can only be finally understood within the "ultimate Self-body relation". Co-relatively, any "dharmic problem" encountered within the former can only be finally resolved within the latter because the Lord, qua Antāryamin, is not only the essence of cit and acit as their "extended

sense" (upalakṣaṇa), but also the essence of the transformations (vikāras) occurring within them. Accordingly, Rāmānuja says that, "...the Lord is also the soul of the transformations of both prakṛti and puruṣa."¹⁴⁰ For this reason the relation between the Self and dharma is finally reduced to the relation between the "Lord as cause" (kāraṇa Brahman) and the "Lord as effect" (kārya-Brahman).¹⁴¹ Although karma is relegated to a separable as opposed to an inseparable part of the Lord, dharma is finally identified with the Lord Himself. Rāmānuja says in this regard that, "...it is appropriate for the Supreme Person, who is the object of attainment, to be Himself the means of attaining Him."¹⁴² That act of taking refuge with the Lord translates this truth into action. Therefore, for example, release from the guṇas ("constituents") is only possible by resorting to the Lord. Rāmānuja says that, "...release of the above soul from the saṃsāra in the form of its natural conjunction with prakṛti, which is due to karman and consists in various guṇas, is impossible without resorting to the Lord."¹⁴³ Co-relatively, the obscuration which produces the mis-perception of an "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord can only be removed by the act of taking refuge with the Lord.¹⁴⁴ The famous carama-śloka in his Gītā-bhāṣya is perhaps the best example of this and it is best known for its

¹⁴⁰Vedārtasamgraha Van Buitenen, #73.

¹⁴¹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.III.18.

¹⁴²Śrī-bhāṣya Rangacharya, III.II.34.

¹⁴³Vedārtasamgraha Van Buitenen, #81.

¹⁴⁴Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.2. Rāmānuja says: "...this obscuration can be removed by taking refuge with the Lord...."

implicit reference to prapatti ("surrender").¹⁴⁵ There are many such references to the need for taking refuge with the Lord in his Gītā-bhāṣya.¹⁴⁶ Co-relatively there are many references especially in his Gītā-bhāṣya to the grace of the Lord as alone conferring success in one's sādhana, i.e. "Man attains perfection which consists in the attainment of Myself through my grace."¹⁴⁷ The Lord is described as electing those whom He wishes to save in the "election-vakya" of the Katha Upaniṣad and the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad which are quoted by Rāmānuja in his Śrī-bhāṣya.¹⁴⁸

For the reasons stated above the Lord is depicted as the bestower of bhakti-yoga as in the following terms: "To those who are constantly united (with Me)...I give with love that same mental condition (of bhakti)...by which they attain to Me."¹⁴⁹ It is stated in the Sarāṇāgati-Gadya that all dharmic means are bestowed by the Lord as follows: "...you will also by My Grace obtain Para Bhakti, Para Gnana, and Parama Bhakti and be favoured with the direct vision of Me...."¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, any kaivalya attained by one's own efforts is considered very inferior

¹⁴⁵ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.66.

¹⁴⁶ "Those who take refuge with Me alone...cross over this māyā of Mine" (Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.14). See also Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.16, XV, 4 & 5; see also XV.5: "For those who take refuge with Me, all activities become easy to do and culminate in success exclusively through My grace."

¹⁴⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.46.

¹⁴⁸ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya III.II.34.

¹⁴⁹ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.9.

¹⁵⁰ Sarāṇāgati-Gadya trans. S. S. Acharya (Madras: Visishtadvaita Pracharini Sabha, 1970), #16.

to a kaivalya bestowed by the Lord.¹⁵¹

For the reasons stated above any "dharmic problem" although first encountered within the "penultimate Self-body relation" is only finally resolved within the "ultimate Self-body relation". For instance, the lack of communication between the two functions of consciousness in saṁsāra is only finally resolved within the Lord when consciousness operates as inseparable from Him. Rāmānuja says that, "...the darkness concealing his innermost self is dispelled by the grace of the Supreme Person...."¹⁵² So the Lord is described as responsible for any success in yoga,¹⁵³ which then becomes known as the Lord's Yoga.¹⁵⁴

3b. Prapatti Viewed as an Individual Instance of This "Transposition Strategy"

Prapatti might be defined as that cognition of one's helplessness and total dependence on the Lord which leads to the act of total resignation and surrender to the Lord. It can also be equated with the act of "seeking refuge" (saraṇāgati) with the Lord.^{154a} Prapatti can be viewed as an individual instance of this "transposition strategy". The realization that the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma is only ultimately resolved within the Lord is here translated into the

¹⁵¹Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya III.9. This de-emphasis on the value of man's efforts in sādhana is radicalized in Lokāchārya; cf., section 3c.

¹⁵²Vedārthasamgraha Van Buitenen, #91.

¹⁵³Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.39.

¹⁵⁴Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.1.

^{154a}Cf., previous references to saraṇāgati in Rāmānuja's Gītā-bhāṣya.

act of seeking refuge with the Lord. Srinivāsachāri describes prapatti as the "religious conclusion" of the śarīra-śarīrin: "...prapatti is the religious conclusion of the philosophy of the sarīra-sarīrī relation and it affirms that the sarīrin is Himself the upeya and the upāya."¹⁵⁵ To truly realize that one is grounded (adheya) ruled (niyamyā) and accessory (śeṣa) to the Lord one must totally surrender to Him.

Rāmānuja most clearly alludes to prapatti in his interpretation of the well known carama-śloka of the Gītā: "sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja: aham tvā sarvapāṇebhyo mokṣayisyāmi mā sucaḥ" ("Completing renouncing all dharmas, seek Me alone as refuge. I will release you from all sins. Do not grieve."^{155a} The "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja are both represented in his two varying explanations of this carama-śloka. In accordance with the "explicit strand" Rāmānuja first of all argues that "sarvadharmān" should not be literally understood as the renunciation of dharmas themselves, but, rather, as the threefold renunciation of the sense of agency, possessiveness and the desire for fruits. This explanation favours the view of sādhana as a continuum, an organic whole which is in agreement with Vedānta Deśika's interpretation of the carama-śloka. But the emphasis on the ultimate efficacy of the Lord's grace, which is so stressed by Lokāchārya, is also stressed in his first interpretation in the following lines: "I will release you from all sins which stand

¹⁵⁵As quoted in John C. Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion, p. 211.

^{155a}Cf., Bhagavad-Gītā XVIII.66.

in the way of the attainment of Myself."¹⁵⁶

Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the carama-śloka is closer to the "implicit strand" and, therefore, closer to Lokāchārya's understanding of sādhana as a discontinuity involving a sudden leap and a break with the "mechanics" of sādhana. Therefore Rāmānuja here argues that "sarvadharmān" should be understood literally as the renunciation of the dharmas themselves. Unlike Lokāchārya's interpretation, prapatti is understood not as eliminating the need for bhakti but as completing it. So Arjuna is enjoined to surrender "...in order to succeed in starting bhakti-yoga...."¹⁵⁷ Yet the fact that this teaching on prapatti is identified in the next verse¹⁵⁸ as an esoteric teaching favours Lokāchārya's interpretation. For it suggests a possible explanation of Rāmānuja's reserved treatment of prapatti in the carama-śloka.

According to this explanation Rāmānuja can be understood as reserving his full teaching on prapatti as an exclusive path eliminating bhakti for those esoteric texts such as the Saranāgati-Gadya and the Gadya-Trayam which were addressed to the "enlightened man". K. Seshadri concludes on this issue that, "The sastras prescribe bhakti almost as a concession to human weakness. Their aim is to make man see that ultimately the Lord Himself is the best sadhana."¹⁵⁹ The Yatīndramatadīpikā

¹⁵⁶ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.66.

¹⁵⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.66.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., XVIII.67: "This most secret sāstra has been taught to you by Me."

¹⁵⁹ K. Seshadri, "The Substance of Rāmānuja's Sri-Bhāṣyam," Allahabad: Journal of Indian History, Vol. XXVII. Herein after cited as: "The Substance of Rāmānuja's Sri Bhāṣyam."

text specifies prapatti as an esoteric teaching: "This (doctrine of) prapatti has to be known from the mouth of the preceptor and esoteric works in the traditional manner; hence this theme of discourse is closed without further elucidation as this work is written for the enlightenment of the beginners."¹⁶⁰ Rāmānuja can thus be understood as reserving his full treatment of prapatti in works such as the Saraṇāgati-Gadya and the Gadya-Trayam¹⁶¹ and giving us a reserved treatment of prapatti in his Śrī-bhāṣya and his Gītā-bhāṣya because of the nature of his audience.¹⁶² As has been observed, the Gītā text itself tapers its teaching according to the spiritual "level" of the pupil. Thus the allusion to prapatti in the carama-śloka of the Gītā comes rightly at the end of that text. Just as Śaṅkara tapers his teaching according to whether he is addressing the "unenlightened man" or the "enlightened man" so Rāmānuja can be thus understood as tapering his teaching according to the nature of his audience. This is a methodological parallel not a doctrinal parallel for whereas Śaṅkara insisted on jñāna-yoga for the "enlightened man", Rāmānuja, according to this interpretation, alluded to prapatti for the "enlightened man".

Just as prapatti is here understood as an individual instance of a more general tendency in Rāmānuja, i.e. the "transposition strategy",

¹⁶⁰ Yatīndramatadīpikā Chapter VII, #23.

¹⁶¹ There is some controversy as to whether these two texts were actually written by Rāmānuja or not. But I see no reason to disbelieve the tradition on this issue and see these texts as written by Rāmānuja.

¹⁶² Cf., A Philosophy of Devotion: "...the initiation into prapatti remained with him a secret doctrine, not to be divulged to all-and-sundry," pp. 206-207.

so the carama-śloka should be understood as reinforcing the implicit references to prapatti already present elsewhere in his Gītā-bhāṣya and in his Śrī-bhāṣya. The references to the need for "taking refuge" with the Lord (saranāgati)¹⁶³ being elected by Him¹⁶⁴ and the ultimate efficacy of His grace¹⁶⁵ implicitly point to prapatti. But there are two key passages in the Śrī-bhāṣya: III.2.34 and III.2.37 which can be understood as equally important as the carama-śloka for the question of prapatti. Rāmānuja describes the Lord as both the "means" and the "end" (upāya-upeya) of sādhana in III.2.34 as follows: "...it is appropriate for the Supreme Person, who is the object of attainment, to be Himself the means of attaining Him."¹⁶⁶ The implication is clearly that all self-initiated means are ultimately powerless. Rāmānuja therefore says in the same verse that, "...none else can be the means of attaining Him than He Himself."¹⁶⁷ He argues in III.2.37 that mokṣa is ultimately a gift of the Lord and not the result of our own efforts: He says, "...the result known as salvation which consists in attaining Him - is given by that same Supreme Person."¹⁶⁸ K. Seshadri links these two passages in Rāmānuja with the realization of the actual inseparability between the Self and the Lord. Prapatti is thus understood

¹⁶³Cf., Footnote #143 to 146.

¹⁶⁴Cf., Footnote #148.

¹⁶⁵Cf., Footnote #147

¹⁶⁶Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, III.2.34.

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

¹⁶⁸Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, III.2.37.

as the practical expression of the "ultimate Self-body relation".

Seshadri says that, "The body does not take any initiative or make any attempts of its own to realize an end. Even so, the jivatman being the sareera of the Paramatman ought to do nothing but look up to the Lord Himself as the best means."¹⁶⁹ In this sense prapatti is not an act, strictly speaking, but simply the recognition that we are already the Lord's.

Yāmunā, Rāmānuja's predecessor, says in a similar manner: "How can I give myself to you as my Lord who own me and whatever is reputed as mine?"¹⁷⁰

The Saranāgati-Gadya and the Gadya-Trayam give substantial evidence for understanding prapatti as an exclusive path. An antithesis is set up between the "mechanics" of sādhana and prapatti in verse twelve of the Saranāgati-Gadya in that one is enjoined to give up not only desires and wealth but the very state of kaivalya: "Renouncing my father, mother, wife, children, relatives, friends, even my Teacher, precious stones, wealth and goods,...all desires, and actions relating to them, as well as Kaivalya, I prostrate at Thine feet...."¹⁷¹ As pointed out above Lokāchārya identifies kaivalya as "the great evil".¹⁷² Thus prapatti points to an antithesis between what can be achieved

¹⁶⁹K. Seshadri, "The Substance of Rāmānuja's Sri Bhashyam," p. 1640.

¹⁷⁰Yāmunā, Stotra-Ratna, quoted in: John Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion, p. 155.

¹⁷¹Rāmānuja, Saranaagati-Gadya trans. Sri Srutaprakaasika Acharya (Madras: Visishtadvaita Pracharini Sabha, 1970), #12.

¹⁷²Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #289.

through self-effort and what can only be received through the grace of the Lord.

There is evidence for understanding prapatti as an exclusive path not only in these specific textual references from Rāmānuja but also in what was designated as the "transposition strategy" in Rāmānuja of which prapatti is an individual instance.

3c. The Bhakti-Prapatti Contraversy

This controversy between the Northern and Southern schools on the question of prapatti is best summed up in the question: In what sense is prapatti an act? A distinction should first be made between physical or gross acts performed by the body such as eating, sleeping etc., and mental acts performed by faculties other than the body. Conative and cognitive acts are both mental acts but they are not equivalent. Both Vedānta Deśika and Lokāchārya define prapatti as a "mental act" which may include a physical expression, such as the act of prostrating oneself before an image of the Lord, but it is not a necessary item. Whereas Vedānta Deśika insists that prapatti is not merely a cognitive act but also a conative act, Lokāchārya insists that it is essentially a cognitive act. Vedānta Deśika, here radicalizing the "explicit strand", in Rāmānuja, insinuates that Lokāchārya's cognitive emphasis leads one to the Advaitic stance that mokṣa can be attained by an act of cognition alone. He says: "They ask 'When this is so, is there an action (besides the thought of the relationship) enjoined called ātmanśamarpanam'. This question does not deserve any consideration, just like the dictum (of the Advaitins) that, by the

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mere knowledge of the text of the sruti, mokṣa can be attained."

This conative emphasis leads Desika to argue that the Lord's grace is not independent, but, rather, dependent on the merit of the devotee. Therefore in a certain sense the devotee is depicted as "earning" mokṣa.

Lokāchārya argues in sharp contrast that prapatti is essentially a cognitive act. He says: "When this knowledge (of dependence,... on the Lord) springs up, the individual soul has done all duties. When it does not spring up, all sins have been committed. In this thought lie all virtuous actions." Lokāchārya is here radicalizing the fullest implications of the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja, specifically the implicit discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, and in so doing he outlines an area of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. The statement by Lokāchārya emphasizes the recognition of the "primary sense" of the Self as inseparable from the Lord and the ensuing recognition that saṃsārā involves only an "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord, never an actual separability. This statement of Lokāchārya has nevertheless been anticipated in the parallel structure of sādhana in Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja whereby saṃsārā is understood as based on a "semblance"; an as-if separability between oneself and Brahman.

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Whether or not the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma

¹⁷³Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara (Kumbakonam: Literary Press, Salem, 1956), p. 267. Herein after cited as: Srimad Rahasyatrayasara.

¹⁷⁴Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #94.

^{174a}Cf., Chapter Two, conclusion.

in Rāmānuja is understood as a continuity or as a discontinuity depends largely on whether one emphasizes the Northern school or the Southern school of interpretation. Whereas the Northern school represents sādhana as accumulative and continuous, the Southern school represents sādhana as a sudden irreversible leap. The latter is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's view of sādhana, whereas the former is structurally dissimilar to Śaṅkara.

Vedānta Deśika, the foremost proponent of the Northern school, radicalizes the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja. He therefore understands sādhana as a continuity, an organic whole, which is accumulative and dynamic. Accordingly, prapatti is not described as breaking up the continuum of sādhana but as reinforcing it. It is not described as opposed to bhakti but as its limb (aṅga) or its pre-requisite, or completion.¹⁷⁵ Prapatti is classified as a means (upāya), requiring the active exertion of the devotee. Vedānta Deśika says in this respect: "...in order to secure His help, we have yet to accomplish or adopt a means (sādhya upāya), which is self-surrender (sarapāgati) to the Lord."¹⁷⁶ This is in sharp contrast to Lokāchārya's position who insists¹⁷⁷ that not prapatti but the Lord is the only means. Even though Deśika argues that the Lord is ultimately responsible for conferring mokṣa, he argues that this grace is dependent on the merit of the devotee. He says that, "Iswara however, makes up His mind to protect

¹⁷⁵Cf., Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter 8.

¹⁷⁶Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, p. 27.

¹⁷⁷Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #219.

the jīva only after making him adopt some means or upāya for winning
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 His protection...." So unlike Lokāchārya's interpretation where an
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 antithesis is set up between man's efforts and the Lord's grace,
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 Desika insists that the Lord's grace is co-operative and thus operates
 in conjunction with the devotees merit. Co-relatively the act of
prapatti does not allow one to totally transcend dharmic imperatives
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 as with Lokāchārya. Deśika insists that the prapanna like the bhakti-
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yogin should continue to perform the prescribed rites and duties.
 Desika also argues that prapatti is not necessarily done once only as
 Lokāchārya maintains; rather he argues that it must be performed again
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 in the instance of any offence. Deśika maintains that prapatti
 should not be defined merely as the cognition of one's inseparability
 from the Lord, as Lokāchārya argues. Rather, it should also be defined as
 an act of will, specifically, that total resignation of one's will to
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 the Lord. He says in this regard "...the surrender of one's self...
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 is declared as a vidhi or injunction." Whereas perceiving that the

178 Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, p. 30.

179 Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #207.

180 Cf., Aṣṭadāśa-bheda #1.

181 Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #221.

182 Cf., Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter 15.

183 Cf., Aṣṭadāśa-bheda #14.

184 Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #94.

185 Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, p. 264.

Lord is the only upāya alone qualifies one for prapatti according to Lokāchārya, Deśika argues that one becomes qualified for prapatti 186 negatively i.e. by a sense of one's inability to perform other upāyas. But prapatti does not involve a transcendence of dharma and certainly 187 not its elimination as suggested by Lokāchārya. From this it follows that the mechanics of the "transposition strategy" do not operate in Desika to the degree which they operate in Lokāchārya. Therefore the values defined within the "penultimate Self-body relation" are not inverted within the "ultimate Self-body relation" as with Lokāchārya's 188 interpretation, so that a-dharma can function as dharma. Deśika argues that if this were true one's very sins would become pre-requisites 189 of prapatti.

Whereas Deśika radicalizes the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja, Lokāchārya radicalizes the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja. Lokāchārya interprets sādhana as a discontinuity, as involving a sudden irreversible leap away from the "mechanics" of dharma. This understanding of sādhana is structurally equivalent to Śaṅkara's understanding and therefore, reveals the implicit convergence between prapatti and jñāna-yoga.

Lokāchārya's interpretation of the carama-śloka of the Gītā is closest to Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the same. Lokāchārya interprets "sarva-dharmān" literally as the renunciation of the dharmas

¹⁸⁶Cf., Aṣṭadāśa-bhedas #10.

¹⁸⁷Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #207.

¹⁸⁸Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #216.

¹⁸⁹Cf., Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter 25.

¹⁹⁰
 themselves i.e. karma-yoga, jñāna-yoga and bhakti-yoga instead of the
 figurative sense chosen by Deśika as the renunciation of the sense of
 agency, possessiveness, and a yearning for fruits. ¹⁹¹ Accordingly,
 Lokāchārya sets up a radical discontinuity between the "mechanics"
 of sādhana and prapatti "the means of no means". In fact, dharmas are
 described as detrimental to that acceptance of the Lord as the only means.
 He says that, "They are not merely not the means, but they also stand
 in the way(of realisation)...." ¹⁹² This emphasis is structurally
 similar to Śaṅkara's explicit insistence on the discontinuity between
 Self-knowledge and such dharmas. ¹⁹³ According to Lokāchārya, prapatti
 transcends the means/end schema of sādhana altogether in that it
 cannot be described as a means (upāya), as the Lord is accepted as the
 only means. For this reason Lokāchārya describes prapatti as essentially
 a cognitive act; specifically, the realization that the Lord is the only
 means. Thus Lokāchārya says, "When this knowledge (of dependence...
 on the Lord) springs up, the individual soul has done all duties.
 When it does not spring up, all sins have been committed. In this thought
 lie all virtuous actions." ¹⁹⁴ The relation between Self-knowledge and
dharma according to Lokāchārya is resolved only when one cognizes the
 Lord as equivalent with dharma and as inseparable from us. He says:

¹⁹⁰ Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #199.

¹⁹¹ Cf., Srimad Rahasyatrayasara Chapter 25.

¹⁹² Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #207.

¹⁹³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya I.2, and Gītā-bhāṣya II.10.

¹⁹⁴ Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #94.

"What is meant is that He Himself is the direct dharma....The other means are means done with one's own efforts....They are themselves non-sentient, powerless....But the means (stated above, namely the Lord) does not need any external help, because it stands opposed to all these other means."¹⁹⁵ The "mechanics" of dharma is not only powerless

in realizing mokṣa, but, according to Lokāchārya it is actually detrimental. As has been shown, Lokāchārya uses two sense of "dharma":

(1) "dharma" in the sense of man's efforts i.e. dharmas; and (2) "dharma" as equal to the Lord. This can be compared to Śaṅkara's two senses of "dharma" as ritual injunction and jñāna-yoga.¹⁹⁶ The former sense of "dharma" in both cases is discontinuous with Self-knowledge, whereas the latter sense of "dharma" in both cases is continuous with Self-knowledge. True Self-knowledge according to Lokāchārya occurs when we consent to the Lord as the "eternally established means" (siddhopāya).

Although in this case prapatti is doctrinally dissimilar to jñāna-yoga in Śaṅkara, it does have a structural similarity. The same inversion of values occurs on the "second level" whether described as standing within the Lord or as speaking from the "second level" of truth according to Śaṅkara. The "transposition strategy" is thus fully enacted in Lokāchārya. Lokāchārya describes one's sins from this "level" as "objects of enjoyment"¹⁹⁷ to the Lord. Deśika objected that this would encourage the practice of such sins. Lokāchārya's answer to this objection

¹⁹⁵ Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #218; #221.

¹⁹⁶ Cf., Chapter One.

¹⁹⁷ Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #216.

is that this realization should not encourage sins so much as discourage spiritual pride. Sampatkuman refers to this argument in Lokāchārya as follows: "It is not intended to encourage transgressions. It does not call on men to sin so that they may qualify for being saved. On the other hand, it encourages humility."¹⁹⁸ Mokṣa, according to both Lokāchārya and Śaṅkara, involves a change in the order of discovery and not a change in the order of being. In both cases mokṣa is not the result of man's efforts but whereas Śaṅkara describes it as identical with the real nature of the Self, Lokāchārya describes it as a gift received through consenting to the Lord as the "eternally established means" (siddhopāya). According to Lokāchārya we are already the Lord's and prapatti is but the cognitive realization of this fact.

In his radicalization of the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja Lokāchārya helps to crystallize the areas of structural convergence between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara, especially the structural convergence between prapatti and jñāna-yoga. The parallel structure of sādhana in Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara that was discussed in Chapter Two can now be even more sharply delineated.

¹⁹⁸ M. R. Sampatkumaran, "Lokāchārya on Prapatti", unpublished article.

CHAPTER IV

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DHARMA IN ŚAṆKARA: A DOCTRINAL INVESTIGATION

Preamble

In this chapter the two strands in Śaṅkara i.e., the "explicit strand", which emphasizes the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, and the "implicit strand" which emphasizes the apparent continuity, will be examined more closely. Special attention will be given to their relationship in Śaṅkara's understanding of sādhana. Chapter One provided the methodological foundation for this examination of the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara's doctrines will now be examined so as to isolate the problematic areas where the relation between these two strands is concentrated. The following doctrines in Śaṅkara will therefore be investigated: mokṣa ("liberation"); Ātma-jñāna ("Self-knowledge"); the Ātma-vidhi ("the injunction pertaining to the Self"); the kaṛaṇa ("catalyst") for Self-realization; bhakti ("devotion"); and māyā-vāda ("the doctrine of falsity"). These doctrines will be discussed under the general topic of sādhana in Advaita Vedānta. The major purpose of this chapter will be to establish a co-relation between the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara and the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja. This co-relation will not disregard the real doctrinal differences between the two as in Śaṅkara's insistence, contrary to Rāmānuja, that Brahman is Nirguṇa ("attributeless") and not Saguṇa ("with attributes") and in his insistence that the world is ultimately mithyā ("false"). It will however, indicate the areas of

convergence that exist in the middle of such doctrinal differences.

Two major areas in Śaṅkara's thought provide the foundation for these areas of convergence: (1) the mitigation of his doctrine of Nirguṇa Brahman in his insistence that although Brahman is Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa, this fact can only be known via Saguṇa Brahman; and, (2) the possible mitigation of his doctrine of māyā in his insistence that the world as Brahman although not the world as nāma-rūpa ("name and form"), is real. Both areas indicate that the implicit continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara pertains to the order of discovery and not to the order of being.

¹As hitherto pointed out, the two most important "intermediary concepts" used by Śaṅkara to explain this apparent continuity are the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge as vr̥tti-jñāna² and the "primary sense" of dharma as jñāna-yoga.³ The discontinuity however remains in the order of being as the "primary sense" of Self-knowledge as svarūpa-jñāna has no relationship with the "secondary sense" of dharma as ritual injunction. Accordingly this chapter will focus on the key role of these two "intermediary concepts" in explaining the apparent continuity in the order of knowing but without losing sight of the discontinuity in the order of being.

¹Cf., Chapter One, 5c.

²Cf., Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.4.

³Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IX.2, 3; XIV, 27.

1. The Paradox of Sādhana in Advaita Vedānta

Before examining the emphasis on the apparent continuity in sādhana between Self-knowledge and dharma in the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, it is necessary to preface this discussion by an examination of sādhana in the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara. In the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara sādhana might be described as that process of "becoming" what we are, or, alternately expressed, the process involved in invoking that fact, specifically, that we are already liberated. Śaṅkara defines liberation (mokṣa) as identical with the Ātman itself and not as something acquired through purification, effort etc. He says: "To consider mokṣa as a thing to be produced like a jar, or brought into being by a modification in the original condition like curds from milk, or reached as if it is a place of journey, is to consider it as short-lived and as dependent on some action of body, mind or speech. Mokṣa is nothing but Brahman or the Ātman, which is already present in all".⁴ Śaṅkara argues that just as heat is the nature of fire, so mokṣa is the nature of the Self. Just as no action can make fire cold, so no action can affect the Self.⁵ This is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī as follows: "Liberation becomes artificial and therefore transitory according to the philosopher who holds that it is a change of one state into another....But the Self, one's own real nature, is never destroyed. For it is uncaused and cannot be accepted or rejected by oneself (or by others) while other things (e.g., states etc.)

⁴Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, I.1.4, p. 24.

⁵Cf., Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.6, p. 721.

are caused".⁶

Śaṅkara therefore never describes dharma as "producing" or "causing" mokṣa which is forever unaffected by moral progress. He says that, "...neither is the Self in its real nature, as defined, a thing to be created, transformed, achieved, or purified...."⁷ Yet although dharma is incapable of altering our nature, which is identical with mokṣa, it is important in making that nature known.

It might be asked, however, if we are in fact already liberated than why is there any need for sādhana?⁸ If the Self cannot slay or be slain does this imply merely a transcendence of ethics or a rejection of ethics? In reply it might be said that Śaṅkara's insistence on the need for sādhana was a concession to that implicit strand of continuity in his system. Because of this concession a dialogue between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja becomes possible. Śaṅkara argues that despite the fact that we are already liberated, sādhana is necessary to evoke that fact and make it fully known. Śaṅkara illustrates the role of sādhana by the following parable.⁹ A prince is abandoned by his parents and brought up by fowlers. As a consequence he believes himself to be a fowler until one day he meets a stranger who discloses his true identity to him. Just as in this parable the prince undergoes no change in his

⁶Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Part Two, Chapter XVI, #39 to 41, p. 169.

⁷Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya Introduction, p. 3.

⁸A similar problem emerges in Rāmānuja though it is expressed differently as follows: If the Lord is already all-inclusive and inseparable from us then why is there any need for sādhana? Cf., Chapter Two, section four.

⁹Cf., Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya II.1.20, p. 304.

actual identity but only an awakening to that fact, so sādhana is precisely the awakening to our true nature. This parable illustrates the role of the Guru, here represented by the stranger who confronts us with this "news". According to Śaṅkara, therefore, the distinction between saṁsāra and moksa pertains to the order of knowing and not to the order of being. Gaudapā, Śaṅkara's predecessor, states this categorically as follows: "There is no dissolution, no birth, none in bondage, none aspiring for wisdom, no seeker of liberation and none liberated. This is the absolute truth."¹⁰ This paradox is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī text as follows: "The ideas such as bondage, liberation etc. are likewise superimposed on the Self."¹¹

Śaṅkara does not describe the Self as possessing freedom but as being equivalent with freedom itself. His argument is that, ultimately, liberation is only possible if one is already liberated for if bondage is a real condition and part of our nature, liberation will never be possible. He says that, "A thing becomes pure by getting rid of the impurities that are connected with it, as in the case of a mirror etc., but it can never divest itself of its natural property."¹² Śaṅkara argues that sādhana involves the purification of the buddhi though never of the Self. Such a purification allows for the clearest reflection of the Self in the buddhi. This is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī: "When the mind becomes purified like a mirror, knowledge is revealed in

¹⁰Gaudapāda, Kārikās II.32, trans. Swami Nikhilānanda (Mysoren: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, 1968), p. 117. Herein after cited as: Gaudāpa, Kārikās.

¹¹Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Chapter XV, 49, p. 156.

¹²Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.III.7, p. 628.

it. Care should, therefore be taken to purify the mind by Yama, Niyama, sacrifices and religious austerities."¹³ Śaṅkara therefore argues that if bondage pertains to the buddhi and not to the Self, liberation is possible as no one can part with his own nature. For the buddhi is not ultimately "part" of that nature i.e. the Self for it is sublateable and subsequently disclosed as an adjunct (upādhi) falsely super-imposed upon the Self.¹⁴ The very distinction between samsāra and mokṣa pertains to the buddhi and not to the Self, as expressed in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī: "All men misconceive themselves to be ignorant or pure according as they identify themselves with the mental modification, 'I am ignorant' or 'I am pure'. It is for this reason that they continue to be in transmigratory existence." The non-attainment" of the Self, according to Śaṅkara, is simply its ignorance.

This is structurally similar to Rāmānuja's insistence that bondage pertains to the buddhi i.e. the dharma-bhūta-jñāna but never to the "essential nature" (svarūpa) of the Self. According to both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja the buddhi must be purified so as to better reflect the svarūpa of the Self which remains changeless. Similarly, mokṣa is understood by both as the recovery of that svarūpa of the Self which had never been lost, but simply "forgotten".¹⁵ This is declared in the Ātma-bodha: "When that (nescience) is destroyed, it becomes

¹³ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Chapter XVII, #22, p. 186. Cf., Viveka-cūdāmaṇi #571 and Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, 7.

¹⁴ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.32.

¹⁵ The structure of ignorance and the structure of forgetting are here the same.

manifest, as if attained, like the ornament round one's neck."¹⁶

Rāmānuja describes that recovery as a "...form of memorization staggered to a state of extremely lucid perception."¹⁷

Śaṅkara argues that the Self cannot be subjected to changes of state such as bondage and liberation and still be eternal in that whatever is "...non-existent at the beginning and in the end is necessarily so in the middle."¹⁸ Such changes of state are not real states of the Self but only ascriptions for they can be neither simultaneous nor successive.¹⁹ Śaṅkara concludes that "...samsara is only based on avidya and exists only for the ignorant man who sees the world as it appears to him."²⁰

It might be objected how then can one make sense of renunciation? Doesn't renunciation imply that something other than the Self must exist to renounce? Śaṅkara argues, contrary to this, that renunciation is the abandonment of the very idea that anything but the Self exists. Since only the Self exists there is nothing to covet and consequently nothing to renounce. In commenting on the verse from the Īśa-Upaniṣad:
 "Do not covet, for whose is wealth",²¹ Śaṅkara says: "All this has

¹⁶-Ātma-bodha trans. T. M. P. Mahadevan (Madras: Akhila Bharata Sankara Seva Samiti, 1964), #44. Herein after cited as: Ātma-bodha.

¹⁷Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #141, p. 296.

¹⁸Gaudapā, Kārikās II.6.

¹⁹Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.2.

²⁰Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 2, p. 328.

²¹Cf., Īśa Upaniṣad #1.

been renounced through this thought of the 'Lord', 'All this is but the Self', so that all this belongs to the Self, and the Self is all.

Therefore do not have any hankering for things that are unreal."²²

One must therefore ultimately give up giving up. In this regard

Śaṅkara quotes the following passage in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "Having given up both truth and un-truth, give up that by which you give them

up."²³ This is also clearly stated in the Aparokshānubutī as follows:

"The abandonment of the illusory universe by realizing it all as the all conscious Ātman is the real renunciation."²⁴

This sense of renunciation was earlier identified²⁵ as saṁnyāsa in its "primary sense" which involves the abandonment of the very adhyāsa of agency, but Śaṅkara also refers to renunciation i.e.

saṁnyāsa in its "secondary sense" as the abandonment of the fruits of

action. Whereas saṁnyāsa in its "secondary sense" is appropriate only

for the "unenlightened man", saṁnyāsa in its "primary sense" is

appropriate only for the "enlightened man".²⁸ It might be said therefore that saṁnyāsa in its "primary sense", as the renunciation of the very

²² Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #1, pp. 5-6.

²³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III, Introduction, p. 86.

²⁴ Aparokshānubutī, trans. Swami Vimuktananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1966), #106.

²⁵ Cf., Chapter One, 5c.

²⁶ Śaṅkara refers to these two senses of renunciation in several places in his Gītā-bhāṣya: in the introduction to chapter three and five, and in the eighteenth chapter. (Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.12).

²⁷ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, Introduction, Chapter 5.

²⁸ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya, Introduction, Chapter 3.

adhyāsa of agency, is not an "act" at all but the realization that there is nothing to covet and nothing to renounce because the Self is "all this".

In accordance with his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy however, Śaṅkara enjoins the "secondary sense" of saṃnyāsa i.e. the renunciation of the fruits of action, for the "unenlightened man". One can perhaps infer from this that the world must be given a provisional status in order to justify the ethic of renouncing it. K. C. Bhattacharya states this paradox as follows: "The object has thus to be accepted in order to be effectively denied. One has to be a realist to outgrow realism...accepting the conditions of the spiritual game in order to get beyond them."²⁹ Sādhana in Advaita can therefore be understood as a practical application of adhyāropa-apavāda, i.e. using the false³⁰ to remove the false. Using the imagery from the Buddhist text: The Lotus of the True Law it can be said that all spiritual means are³¹ ultimately "toys" to lure us from the "burning-house" i.e. saṃsāra.

Sādhana in Śaṅkara should therefore be understood as an application of māyā-vāda to practical life. In this regard Hiriyanna states that, "The conception of māyā thus forms the pivotal point of Advaita, on its theoretical as well as on its practical side."³² Sādhana deals with

²⁹ K.C. Bhattacharya, "The Advaita and its Spiritual Significance" from The Cultural Heritage of India Vol. III (2nd ed.; Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission, Institute of Culture, 1969), p. 251.

³⁰ Section #39 will demonstrate how jñāna-yoga in Śaṅkara can be understood as a form of adhyāropa-apavāda.

³¹ Cf., Chapter One, footnote #31.

³² M. Hiriyanna, "The Ethics of Advaita" from Popular Essays in Indian Philosophy (Mysore: Kavyalaya Pub., 1952), p. 85.

the individual aspects of māyā as registered in the manas ("mind") or antaḥ-karana ("ego-sense") which project the illusion of the personality. Śaṅkara states in his Māṇḍūkya-bhāṣya that, "...the imagination of Jīva (the Jīva-idea) is the source of all (other) imaginations (ideas)."³³ The personality according to this bhāṣya, is ultimately a product of the Lord's imagination.

One could object: Why purify the personality if the personality ultimately does not exist? Śaṅkara makes sense of this paradox: purification does not consist in perfecting the adjuncts of the personality but in de-identifying with them. No perfection is possible on the level of the personality which sets up false divisions between itself and others. Rather, perfection according to Śaṅkara, consists in seeing that we have never been separated from Brahman, here equivalent with perfection. This is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī: "As one cannot become another one should not consider Brahman to be different from oneself. For if one becomes another one is sure to be destroyed."³⁴ According to Śaṅkara perfection does not consist in changing our nature but in uncovering it.³⁵ Thus Śaṅkara argues in his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya that liberation is possible because death has never been a part of man's nature.

Strictly speaking this implies that the Self is equally beyond both a-dharma and dharma. The familiar image of the Gītā indicates that the Self can never be the slayer or the slain.³⁶ Śaṅkara echoes this

³³ Śaṅkara, Māṇḍūkya-bhāṣya II.17 from Gauḍapāda, Kārikās, p. 104.

³⁴ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Chapter XV, #1.

³⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya IV.III.15.

³⁶ Cf., Bhagavad-Gītā II.19.

thought in his Brhad.-bhāṣya where he says: "Not only is the man beyond his relation to his good actions, but he is also untouched by his terribly evil actions."³⁷ In a similar manner he states in his Kaṭha-bhāṣya: "Therefore the worldly existence, consisting of virtue and vice relates merely to the ignorant man, it does not belong to the knower of Brahman, because for him virtue and vice are inappropriate both according to the Vedic authority and logic."³⁸

One might ask: does this imply merely a transcendence of ethics or a rejection of ethics? Is sādhana thereby rendered superfluous and applicable only to the "unenlightened man"? In answering such questions it is helpful to refer to what was referred to previously as the dual classification in Śaṅkara which specifies the class addressed, i.e. the "unenlightened man" or the "enlightened man" and the corresponding standpoint from which a statement is made, i.e. the phenomenal standpoint and the ultimate standpoint.³⁹ Śaṅkara clearly indicates that this transcendence of ethics is not applicable to the "unenlightened man", but only to the "enlightened man". He states therefore in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya that, "These two - omission of the good and commission of the bad - do not torment this one, as they do the ignorant man."⁴⁰ In a similar manner he states in his Gīta-bhāṣya that, "He whose

³⁷ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.III.22, p. 667.

³⁸ Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.II.9 from Eight Upaniṣads Vol. I, with the commentary of Śaṅkara, trans. Swami Gambhirānanda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), pp. 144-45. Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya. See also Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4.

³⁹ Cf., Chapter One, section three.

⁴⁰ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.IX.1.

antahkarana (buddhi), which is an upadhi of the Self, is not tainted, does not repent thus: 'I have done this: thereby I shall go to naraka (hell)'. He is wise: he sees rightly: though he kills all these living creatures, he commits no act of killing, nor is he bound by the fruit of a-dharma...."⁴¹ In answer to a subsequent objection, Śaṅkara argues that such a statement can only be mis-interpreted from the phenomenal level of truth and not from the ultimate level of truth. He states that,⁴² "This objection cannot stand; for the statement can be explained by distinguishing the two standpoints of worldly conception and absolute truth." This excerpt illustrates Śaṅkara's use of the devices of teaching whereby one modifies one's teaching in accordance with the spiritual level of the pupil. According to Śaṅkara the possibility of mis-interpretation occurs when one ignores the warning of the Gītā:⁴³ "Let not a wise man split the soul of witless men attached to work," and when the teaching reserved for the "enlightened man" is transmitted to the "unenlightened man". Whereas a jīvan-mukta ("liberated soul") is incapable of misapplying such a teaching, an ignorant man is most capable of mis-applying it.

In answer to the previous question it should be said that Śaṅkara is insistent that a transcendence of ethics does not imply their rejection in the sense of advocating immoral behaviour. He maintains that, "The expression, 'Howsoever he may behave', is intended for a tribute to

⁴¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 17.

⁴² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, 17.

⁴³ Bhagavad-Gītā III.26.

this state of a knower of Brahman, and does not mean reckless behaviour."

He states even more explicitly in the Sūtra-bhāṣya: "Can we now suppose that a man who has realized the Ātman may behave in any way he likes, without the sense of obligation? No, we cannot...how can one who has realized the Ātman and is absolutely free from the sense of egoism or attachment to the body and sense be said to behave under the influence of likes and dislikes."⁴⁵ Śaṅkara argues co-relatively that though one cannot make any distinction between a teacher and a pupil in mokṣa, prior to that realization teaching is necessary. He says: "When the transcendent Brahman is realized as the only existence, there is neither instruction nor the instructor nor the result of receiving the instruction and therefore the Upaniṣads are useless - it is a position we readily admit. But if you urge that (even before Brahman is realized) instruction is useless...we reply, no, for it will contradict the assumption of all believers in the self."⁴⁶ This excerpt indicates how mis-interpretation occurs whenever one mis-applies criteria appropriate only for the "enlightened man" to the "unenlightened man". Yet a mis-interpretation and consequently a mis-application of this transcendence of ethics is possible in both Śaṅkara's and Rāmānuja's understanding of the "enlightened man", whether understood as the jñāna-yogin (Śaṅkara) or as the prapanna (Rāmānuja). Parallel abuses can therefore be discovered in the transcendence of ethics implied in prapatti, especially as understood by Lokachārya,

⁴⁴ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya III.V.1, p. 491.

⁴⁵ Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, II.III.48.

⁴⁶ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya II.1.20, p. 318.

and in jñāna-yoga. For example, the prapanna can be mis-interpreted by the Northern school as someone who has disregarded his dharma. Whereas Lokāchārya argues that the transcendence of ethics implied in prapatti and the resulting shift to the "level" of the Lord means that one's sins are no longer obstacles but nectar to the Lord,⁴⁷ Deśika mis-reads this as implying that the "...prapanna should necessarily commit sin."⁴⁸ This issue between Lokāchārya and Deśika can be resolved by distinguishing between criteria applicable only to the "enlightened man" and criteria applicable to the "unenlightened man". Lokāchārya's teaching to the prapanna is addressed to the "enlightened man"⁴⁹ and is intended not to encourage immorality but to initiate a total surrender to the Lord as the only means (upāya). Similarly Śaṅkara's teaching about mokṣa as a pre-given, which is equally beyond dharma and a-dharma is not intended to encourage immorality as indicated in the excerpts from his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya and the Sūtra-bhāṣya cited earlier.^{49a}

As indicated previously,⁵⁰ a structural convergence emerges between this "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, which stresses the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, and the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja, as radicalized in Lokāchārya, which stresses the discontinuity between prapatti and the "machinery" of dharma. As also indicated previously it

⁴⁷ Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #216.

⁴⁸ Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara Chapter 25, p. 319.

⁴⁹ Here the term "enlightened man" refers to the candidate who is ready for prapatti.

^{49a} Cf., infra footnotes #44, #45.

⁵⁰ Chapter Three, section 3.

is a convergence that exists in the midst of sharp doctrinal differences. The subsequent sections of this chapter will examine the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara which emphasizes the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana. The ultimate purpose of this examination will be to uncover possible areas of convergence between the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara and the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja. Because Deśika radicalizes this "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja, the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is structurally closer to Deśika than to Lokāchārya. So for example one point to be argued in this chapter is that Śaṅkara's implicit concession to the reality of the Ātma-vidhi ("the injunction pertaining to the Self") is structurally closer to Deśika's insistence on the reality of the Ātma-vidhi than to Lokāchārya's apparent omission of any such emphasis.

Although this chapter will focus on an examination of the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara in order to uncover any possible areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, Śaṅkara's system will never be reduced to this "implicit strand". Rather, the areas of structural convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja will be disclosed as co-existing within very sharp doctrinal differences between the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara and the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja.

2. The Foundation for the Implicit Continuity in Śaṅkara's System

2a. The Purification of the Mind

Śaṅkara mitigates his explicit emphasis on the radical discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma by his insistence that dharma is provisionally efficacious in leading to the origination of Self-knowledge, although not to its fruit. He says: "...knowledge (of the Self)

when once it is generated, needs nothing whatsoever, for the attainment of its fruit (i.e. Final Release), but so far as its own generation is concerned, it does so need (the performance of religious actions).⁵¹
(utpannā hi vidyā phalasiddhiṁ prati na kiṁcidanyadapekṣate utpattiṁ prati tvapekṣate)

Śaṅkara argues that dharma is an accessory means to Self-realization in the sense that it leads to the "purification of the mind" (sattva-suddhi) which must precede Self-realization. Śaṅkara therefore sets up a means/end schema "once-removed" between dharmic means and Self-realization but, Śaṅkara never means by this that dharmic means ever "produce" mokṣa as such which can only be the "fruit", as-it were, of Brahma-vidyā.⁵² According to Śaṅkara, the Self remains forever unaffected by the changes of the buddhi which alone can be affected by these dharmic means. The Upadeśa-Sāhasrī text in describing the Self and the buddhi states that, "I, [i.e. the Self] therefore, have neither distraction nor a profound concentration. Both of them belong to the mind which is subject to change."⁵³ Rāmānuja argues in a similar manner that the svarūpa of the Self never changes in saṁsāra; only the dharma-bhūta-jñāna undergoes change.⁵⁴ In his Chāndogya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara uses the same image of the buddhi as the "divine eye" that has been

⁵¹ Sūtra-bhāṣya Apte, III.IV.26.

⁵² Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, III.IV.27, p. 292.

⁵³ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī XIII, #14.

⁵⁴ Cf., Chapter Three, section 1c.

already encountered in Rāmānuja's Gītā-bhāṣya.⁵⁵ Śaṅkara there states:
 "The mind is the divine eye of the Self - 'divine' i.e. not ordinary,
 that which is entirely different in character from all other organs...."⁵⁶
 Just as Rāmānuja argues that though the svarūpa of the Self never changes,
 that fact can only be known via a purified, all-expansive buddhi,
 Śaṅkara argues that the purified buddhi is instrumental in the reflection
 of the unchanging Self.⁵⁷ Conversely both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue
 that the Self is not reflected in a buddhi which is full of impurities.⁵⁸

In his Chāndogya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara describes this causal sequence
 "once-removed" between dharmic means and Self-realization as follows:
 "When this 'purity of the objection cognition' has come about, there
 follows purity of the inner nature, i.e. freedom of impurities...when
 this purity of the inner nature has come about, the Memory of the Self,
 the Infinite, becomes strong - uninterrupted...On the Strengthening of
Memory, - ...follows freedom from all ties...."⁵⁹ Śaṅkara's description
 helps to explain the possibility of "progressive liberation" (krama-
mukti)⁶⁰ and gradual illumination even within Śaṅkara's explicit insistence

⁵⁵ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI.8 and Śrī-bhāṣya IV.IV.16; cf., Chapter Three, 1c.

⁵⁶ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII.Xii.5, p. 483.

⁵⁷ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, Chapter 2, #8.

⁵⁸ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 63 (Thibaut); Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.6; Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.III.12; and Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.69.

⁵⁹ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VII, xxvi, 2; cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V.26, V.12.

⁶⁰ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.III.10.

that mokṣa is a pre-given. But this concession to an implicit continuity is only provisional and refers to the order of discovery and not to the order of being. Śaṅkara argues that krama-mukti is only mokṣa "as-it-were" as mokṣa can only be equivalent with the Self and can never be the result of any actual process as such.

Although both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja describe bondage as applicable to the buddhi and not to the essential nature (svarūpa) of the Self, they conceive of the buddhi differently. Whereas Śaṅkara describes the buddhi as an upādhi which is ultimately sublated in Self-realization, Rāmānuja only describes the vikāras of the buddhi as sublated in mokṣa. The buddhi itself is not sublated. So this structural parallel co-exists with sharp doctrinal differences.

Another structural parallel between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja emerges when Śaṅkara describes the Lord, here experienced as the Guru as responsible for the purification of the mind. Śaṅkara says: "Out of mere compassion: out of mercy, anxious as to how they may attain bliss. I dwell in their antah-karana...and destroy the darkness of ignorance...."⁶¹ He argues that śruti cannot initiate Self-realization without the mediation of the Guru. He says in this respect that, "The knowledge of Brahman... is not possible without some other effort consisting in approaching the teacher and so on, as well as detachment."⁶² This is structurally similar to Rāmānuja's insistence that only the Lord ultimately removes our impurities,⁶³

⁶¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya X, #11, p. 265.

⁶² Śaṅkara, Mundaka-bhāṣya I.1.5. Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, Chapter one and Gurvastakam.

⁶³ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XV.5.

but whereas Rāmānuja emphasizes the Lord as the Antaryāmin ("Inner Controller")⁶⁴ Śaṅkara emphasizes the Lord as the Sākṣī ("The Witness Consciousness").

Śaṅkara makes an important differentiation within this causal sequence "once removed" between "external means" such as ritual action and "internal means" such as moral qualities and the practice of śravaṇa ⁶⁵ manana and nididhyāsana. Śaṅkara gives priority to the "internal causes" although he describes the "external causes" as helpful in removing any obstacles that may stand in the way of the purification of the mind (sattva-suddhi), but this is so only if they are performed as niṣkāmya-karma ("desireless action") and not as kāmya-karma ("action prompted by desire"). He says that, "...Yogins are those who are devoted to works, free from egotism in all their acts, without attachment for their results. They act only for the purification of the mind ⁶⁶ (sattva)."

2b. The Question of Samuccaya

The critical question that follows from the above discussion is whether or not this causal sequence "once removed" between dharmic means and Self-realization entails samuccaya i.e. the "combination of karma and

⁶⁴Whereas the Sākṣī can be described as an impartial witness, the Antaryāmin is not impartial in this sense, for it can be described, as controlling the Self from within. Also because of Rāmānuja's model of Brahman as Saguna, the Antaryāmin is assimilated under the category of Brahman, whereas because of Śaṅkara's model of Brahman as Nirguna, the Sākṣī is not assimilated under the category of Brahman but ranged mid-way between the jīva and Īśvara. This identification of the Lord with the Sākṣī is most explicit in Sureśvara.

⁶⁵Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.IV.27, IV.1.18.

⁶⁶Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V.11. Cf., Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya IV.V.15, p. 793: "The injunctions about rites are operative only until one is confronted with those about Self-knowledge."

jñāna." With respect to this question, Śaṅkara argues that the following forms of karma are provisionally efficacious prior to the awakenning of Self-knowledge: "...works combined with knowledge will bring about mokṣa....This is true however with reference to the works which precede the origination of knowledge, and not with reference to those which follow the realization of Brahman...."⁶⁷ According to Śaṅkara this provisional efficacy of karma never entails that Ātma-jñāna as svarūpa-jñāna can ever be dependent on anything but itself. He says: "...it is not reasonable that the knowledge of Brahman which repels all ideas of distinction of deeds, doers, and results, should have dependence on any attributive constituent, or any relation with any helpful accessory...."⁶⁸

It might yet be asked, if karma and jñāna cannot be combined simultaneously can they be combined successively? Śaṅkara argues in his Gītā-bhāṣya and Īśa-bhāṣya that jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga cannot be combined in one and the same person at the same time. He argues that that same person can combine these two paths successively when he is illuminated by the Lord.⁶⁹ Sureśvara refers to this as krama-samuccaya ("sequential combination") but Sureśvara never infers from this that Ātma-jñāna as svarūpa-jñāna can ever be combined with karma. Rather, he devotes most of his Sambandha-Vārtika to refuting the three classical options of samuccaya vāda: i.e. the samuccaya where jñāna is principal and karma is subsidiary; the samuccaya where karma is principal and jñāna is subsidiary; and the samuccaya

⁶⁷Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, IV.1.16.

⁶⁸Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya IV.7.

⁶⁹Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.10, pp. 24-25 and Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #2.

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where both are equal. Sureśvara argues that admitting any one of the above forms of samuccaya would imply that statements about Brahman could be subsidiary to dharmic injunctions.

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Yet Maṇḍana Miśra, who might be said to belong to the same "family" of Advaita as Śaṅkara, specifically admits to a form of samuccaya-vāda: that karma can combine with Self-knowledge in the "secondary sense" as dhyāna-abhyāsa ("the habit of meditation") and help speed up the origination of Self-knowledge. He never concludes, however, that statements about Brahman are thereby rendered subsidiary to dharmic injunctions. He therefore states at the conclusion of his Brahma-Siddhi: "...(le moyen de connaissance) est un auxiliaire d'une activité de cette sorte, car, une fois le Brahman connu de façon droite par la Parole, on désire agir pour

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se le rendre directement présent." Vacāspati Miśra argues for the same kind of samuccaya in his Bhāmatī text. He says that, "...rites are remote auxiliaries in respect of the generation of knowledge, through the

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Cf., Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #356b - #357a; 365b - 366a.

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Though Maṇḍana Miśra and Śaṅkara do not strictly speaking belong to the same line of development within the tradition of Advaita they both may be said to belong to the same "family of Advaita. Maṇḍana is here being considered because he radicalizes the "implicit strand" in Advaita which is later developed and modified by Vacāspati Miśra. Because of the phenomenological method employed in this thesis, historical variables, such as the question of whether Maṇḍana preceded Śaṅkara or was his contemporary will be bracketed and any possible structural connections between the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara and Maṇḍana and Vacāspati Miśra will be focussed on.

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Maṇḍana Miśra, Brahma-Siddhi trans. into French. M. Biarreau (Paris: Publications de L'École Française D'Extreme Orient, Vol. LXXVI, 1969), p. 343. Herein after cited as: Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi.

purification of sattva, i.e., the intellect." ⁷³ S. S. Sastri concludes from this, in accordance with the general stance of the Gītā, that sādhana should not involve the complete renunciation of karma but a ⁷⁴renunciation in karma, but in his introduction to the Brahma-Siddhi K. Sastri argues that this form of samuccaya is true of Maṇḍana but not of Śaṅkara. He says: "...it may be safely said that both Śaṅkara and Sureśvara are definitely against the type of jñānakarmasamuccaya ⁷⁵which Maṇḍana advocates." Yet it might be said that a close examination of the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara should lead one to qualify the above assertion. For instance, the so called "actions" of the jīvan-mukta never entail that Ātma-jñāna is subsidiary to them i.e., they are never necessary actions, yet even conceding to their existence from the first ⁷⁶level of truth raises the question of samuccaya. Although Śaṅkara explicitly rejects the three classical options of samuccaya mentioned earlier, whereas Maṇḍana explicitly affirms the samuccaya where jñāna is principal and karma is subsidiary, implicitly Śaṅkara admits to what may be termed a samuccaya "once-removed" by his acceptance of krama-samuccaya which might be described as a "provisional" viśama-samuccaya.

Like Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja explicitly rejects the classical

⁷³ Vācaspati Miśra, Bhāmātī: Catuṣṣūtrī trans. S. S. Sastri (Madras Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1933), p. 85. Herein after cited as: Vācaspati, Bhāmātī.

⁷⁴ Cf., S. S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri (Madras: University of Madras Publications, 1961), p. 291. Herein after cited as: Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri.

⁷⁵ K. Sastri, Introduction, Brahma-Siddhi (Madras: Government Press, 1937), p. XXXV. Herein after cited as: K. Sastri, Introduction, Brahma-Siddhi.

⁷⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.19, IV.24, V.7.

form of samuccaya advocated by Maṇḍana and Vacāspati Miśra whereby karma is accepted as an auxiliary to jñāna. The acceptance of viśama-samuccaya, however, does not alter the claim made by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja that only Brahma-vidyā can yield mokṣa.

Therefore it can be demonstrated that a parallelism exists between this implicit emphasis in Śaṅkara on krama-samuccaya or what was termed a "provisional viśama-samuccaya" and Rāmānuja's acceptance of viśama-samuccaya that is made most explicit in Deśika's position.

Because the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is structurally parallel to the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja, the acceptance of viśama-samuccaya in the thought of Maṇḍana and Vacāspati Miśra, who radicalize this "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is structurally equal to Deśika's position which is a radicalization of the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja.

Furthermore, if meditation on the Self i.e. dhyāna-abhyāsa ("the habit of meditation") is accepted as a form of "karma" then Śaṅkara should be understood especially in the "implicit strand" as arguing that this "karma" is an accessory to Ātma-jñāna in the sense of being instrumental in its reflection. Maṇḍana, who is here understood as radicalizing this "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, concludes that without such a samuccaya Self-knowledge could not arise in fact. He says in this respect: "Pour ceux qui croient que le rite et la connaissance sont sans aucune relation parce qu'ils sont mutuellement contradictoires, du fait que le rite a pour domaine la dualité et la connaissance la non-dualité, il sensuit que pour eux la connaissance du non-duel ne peut même pas surgir, puisqu'il y aurait contradiction entre la division en moyen de connaissance, (connaissance et objet de connaissance) et l'accès

au non-duel. Mais en fait il n'y a pas contradiction, car le moyen et le but ne sont pas simultanés: toute division disparaît précisément⁸² dans l'accès au non-duel." It is precisely Rāmānuja's contention, as is especially evident in the "explicit strand" of his thought, that without dhyāna-abhyāsa no knowledge of the Self or of the Lord is possible. This understanding of dhyāna-abhyāsa as a form of "karma"⁸³ shall be considered in greater detail in a subsequent section.

In his Gītā-bhāṣya Śaṅkara may be said to suggest the later synthetic view of the Bhāmati school which is referred to by S. S. Sastri as: "...the attitude of synthesis exalting neither karma nor its renunciation but seeking a via media."⁸⁴ The following excerpt from Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya suggests this synthetic view. He says: "For, performance of action is a means of attaining freedom from action."⁸⁵ (naiskarmya-upāyatvāt karmārambhasya).

2c. The Ambiguous Role of the Buddhi

Just as Rāmānuja argues that the buddhi is responsible both for the false sense of separability between the Self and the Lord and for the perception of the actual inseparability between the Self and the Lord, so Śaṅkara argues that bondage and liberation refer to the buddhi⁸⁶ and not to the Self. In his introduction to the Sūtra-bhāṣya he

⁸²Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi pp. 181-82.

⁸³Cf., Chapter Four, section 3a.

⁸⁴S. S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri, p. 291.

⁸⁵Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III.4.

⁸⁶Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21.

states co-relatively that adhyāsa is only possible because of the reflection of the Self in the buddhi. Therefore, according to Śaṅkara, the Self only appears as a do-er because of the super-imposition of the buddhi upon the Self.⁸⁷

The buddhi in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja holds both ends of the spectrum of sādhana together i.e. it is the cause both of the mis-perception of an "as-if duality" (Śaṅkara) or as-if separability (Rāmānuja) and of the perception of the "actual nonduality" (Śaṅkara) or the "actual inseparability" (Rāmānuja) between the Self and Brahman. Despite Rāmānuja's conative emphasis he quotes from this critical passage from the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "The mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberation."⁸⁸ The following statement from the Viveka-cūdāmaṇi mirrors it exactly: "Man's bondage is caused by the mind,⁸⁹ and liberation too is caused by that alone."

Despite the insistence of the Vivaraṇa school that the last cognition preceding Self-realization is not really a vr̥tti⁹⁰ ("a mental psychosis"), there is much evidence in Śaṅkara to support the claim of the Bhāmatī school⁹¹ that the last cognition is in fact a vr̥tti. Śaṅkara says that, "...the Self is imagined to be enlightened, merely because of avidya associating Him with that intellectual perception - which is

⁸⁷Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.40.

⁸⁸Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.6.

⁸⁹Viveka-cūdāmaṇi #172.

⁹⁰Cf., Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha I.II.

⁹¹Cf., Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 78.

unreal - which takes the form of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self, while in reality the Self has undergone no change whatever."⁹²

The following passage from the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi supports this view:

"That kind of mental function which cognizes only the identity of the Self and Brahman, purified of all adjuncts, which is free from duality...⁹³

is called illumination." This is stated even more explicitly in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī text: "It is to the intellect and not to the Self which is immutable, that the knowledge, 'I am Brahman' belongs."⁹⁴

Because it is argued in the Bhāmāti school that the last cognition preceding Self-realization is a vṛtti, it is therefore concluded that the karāṇa ("catalyst") for Self-realization is in fact the purified buddhi. Śaṅkara supports this conclusion in his Gītā-bhāṣya where he says that, "The mind, refined by Sama and Dama - i.e. by the subjugation of the body, the mind and the senses - and equipped with the teachings of the Scripture and the teacher, constitutes the sense by which the Self may be seen."⁹⁵ The process leading to the purification of the mind (sattva-suddhi) is disclosed as the very pivot of sādhana in Advaita for the Self never becomes purified in sādhana. Sādhana purifies only the buddhi as stated in the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi: "Bondage and Liberation are attributes of the buddhi which ignorant people falsely superimpose on the Reality, as the covering of the eyes by a cloud

⁹² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21.

⁹³ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #427.

⁹⁴ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part II, XVIII, #159.

⁹⁵ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21, p. 46.

is transferred to the sun."⁹⁶ Similarly, as has been previously noted, Rāmānuja argues that bondage and liberation refer to the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, either as contracted or as all-expansive, and not to the svarūpa of the Self which never undergoes any change.

3. The Mitigation of Nirguṇa Brahman in Śaṅkara's Thought

Preamble

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In the following two principal sections the "implicit strand" of continuity in Śaṅkara will be examined in order to uncover any possible areas of convergence with the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja, as radicalized in Deśika's position. As pointed out previously these areas of structural convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja co-exist with sharp doctrinal differences, the two most prominent of which are Śaṅkara's insistence that Brahman is Nirguṇa versus Rāmānuja's insistence that Brahman is Saguṇa, and Śaṅkara's māyā-vāda versus Rāmānuja's insistence that the world is real. It must be noted that Śaṅkara's emphasis on Nirguṇa Brahman is mitigated somewhat by his argument that though Brahman is Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa, this can only be known by resorting to Saguṇa Brahman. The following three areas will be investigated under section three wherein the mitigation of his emphasis on Brahman as Nirguṇa occurs: jñāna-yoga considered as adhyāropa-apavāda; the Ātma-vidhi and the karana for Self-realization; and, the implicit theism in Śaṅkara. Also Śaṅkara's doctrine of māyā will be disclosed in section four as mitigated somewhat by his realistic

⁹⁶Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #571.

⁹⁷Cf., section 3 and section 4.

epistemology and his insistence against the Buddhists that Nirguṇa Brahman should not entail any endorsement of śūnyatā-vāda. The considerations in sections three and four are intended to verify not only the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara but also the areas of structural convergence between this "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara and the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja.

3a. Jñāna-Yoga as Adhyāropa-Apavāda

3a (i). Dhyāna-Abhyāsa and Viveka-jñāna

The critical issue in this "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara is whether Self-knowledge can be said to involve a mental action and therefore, whether it is in any sense a process. This question presupposes the distinction referred to earlier in Śaṅkara between the "primary sense" of Self-knowledge as svarūpa-jñāna and the "secondary sense" of Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna.⁹⁸ Whereas Self-knowledge as svarūpa-jñāna can only be described as identical with mokṣa itself, Self-knowledge as vṛtti-jñāna is that process which is instrumental in leading to the reflection of svarūpa-jñāna. S. S. Sastri distinguishes between svarūpa-jñāna and vṛtti-jñāna as follows: "Jñāna in the sense of svarūpa-jñāna, the consciousness that is Brahman is identical with release; it is not a means to release, being indeed the substrate of avidyā. What is claimed to be instrumental is vṛtti-jñāna, a particular cognitive psychosis intuiting the impartite and arrived at by study of the Vedānta, reflection and profound contemplation. It is a function of the internal organ."⁹⁹

⁹⁸Cf., Introduction, footnote #84, Chapter One, 5c.

⁹⁹S.S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S.S. Sastri, p. 239. For a full description of this distinction in the Post-Śaṅkarites cf., Vedāntaparibhāṣā Chapter One, ##3-22.

Although this distinction between svārūpa-jñāna and vr̥tti-jñāna is common to both the Bhāmāti and the Vivaraṇa schools of Advaita, their use of this distinction differs. So for instance, the Vivaraṇa school makes a qualitative distinction within vr̥tti-jñāna between dhyāna and viveka-jñāna that is absent in the Bhāmāti school. Correlatively the Vivaraṇa school argues that a discontinuity exists between viveka-jñāna which is described as objective and referring to what is, and ritual action which is described as referring to what is about to come into being and is thus dependent on the will of the agent. S. S. Sastri criticizes the qualitative distinction between dhyāna and viveka-jñāna referred to by the Vivaraṇa school, as follows:

"The distinction is by no means absolute, being only one of degree. This is masked by the assumption that contemplation can be of the unreal, while cognition cannot be".¹⁰⁰ S. S. Sastri seems to imply by this quote that the Vivaraṇa school only tacitly admitted that viveka-jñāna was a form of vr̥tti-jñāna, but to the contrary Śaṅkara¹⁰¹ insists in his Gītā-bhāṣya that the very act of viveka is a vr̥tti. Similarly, one can only see that one is not the five sheaths (kośas) from the standpoint of one of the five sheaths, namely, the "intellectual sheath"¹⁰² (viññānamayaakośa). Also the Vivaraṇa school refuse to accept the Akhanda-vr̥tti ("the last vr̥tti preceding Self-realization") as a vr̥tti, unlike the Bhāmāti school, because they argue no vr̥tti can

¹⁰⁰S. S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri, p. 239.

¹⁰¹Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21, p. 44.

¹⁰²Cf., Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #210, Ātma-bodha #16, 17.

sublate avidyā. The Vivaraṇa school is however forced in effect to subdivide svārūpa-jñāna into two categories: svārūpa-jñāna as the ¹⁰³Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti and svārūpa-jñāna as mokṣa itself. S. S. Sastri, in representing the Bhāmāti position, criticizes the Vivaraṇa school on their dual usage of svārūpa-jñāna and insists that svārūpa-jñāna ¹⁰⁴can only be identical with mokṣa itself.

The viability of this distinction between vṛtti-jñāna and svārūpa-jñāna in Śaṅkara's own thinking will now be examined. Śaṅkara's understanding of jñāna-yoga and Ātma-jñāna will then be examined in the light of this distinction. Śaṅkara's implicit concession to Ātma-jñāna as a mental process, i.e. as a form of vṛtti-jñāna in his understanding of Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" (gauṇam) will be closely examined in order to uncover any possible areas of structural convergence with Rāmānuja.

¹⁰⁵Śaṅkara argues in his Kena-bhāṣya that if Ātma-jñāna is restricted to its "primary sense" (paramārtham) as equal with mokṣa itself, Ātma-jñāna would then be reduced to an impossibility. Just as fire cannot burn itself, so Ātma-jñāna as svārūpa-jñāna would never know itself as svārūpa-jñāna without vṛtti-jñāna. This impasse is described in the following passage from the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī: "The intellect has no consciousness and the Self no action. The word

¹⁰³Cf., Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha I.ii. Cf., subsection (ii) in this section on the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti.

¹⁰⁴Cf., S.S. Sastri, Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri, p. 239.

¹⁰⁵Cf., Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya I.3.

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'knows' can therefore reasonably be applied to neither of them."

A similar paradox is expressed in Śaṅkara's Kena-bhāṣya as follows:

"Brahman is in fact unknown to vi-jānatām, to the people who know - that is to say, to those who have fully realised. Brahman is vi-jñātam, known; avi-jānatam, to those who do not know, to those who have not got full realisation...."¹⁰⁷ Śaṅkara's solution amounts to this: the way out of this impasse is to distinguish between the action of knowing i.e. vyrtti-jñāna and knowledge itself i.e. svarūpa-jñāna. The Upadeśa-Sāhasrī differentiates between these two senses of knowledge. Knowledge as vyrtti-jñāna is identified in this text as follows: "The word, 'knowledge', in the sense of the instrument of the action of knowing, is applied to the intellect...."¹⁰⁸ Knowledge as svarūpa-jñāna is identified as follows: "Being eternal, Knowledge which is of the nature of the Self...is never created by the intellect by Itself or by anything else."¹⁰⁹ The following objection is raised in this text: "How then is knowledge a result?"¹¹⁰ The answer given in this text is crucial for this distinction between vyrtti-jñāna and svarūpa-jñāna: "(It is a result in a secondary sense:) though changeless and eternal, It is noticed in the presence of mental modifications called sense-perception etc. as they are instrumental in making it manifest."¹¹¹ Therefore

¹⁰⁶ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #54.

¹⁰⁷ Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.5.

¹⁰⁸ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #56.

¹⁰⁹ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #66.

¹¹⁰ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, #108.

¹¹¹ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, #108.

vṛtti-jñāna is instrumental to svarūpa-jñāna in the sense of leading to its reflection, although this never entails any actual samuccaya between the two. Śaṅkara says that, "...the Self is indicated by the cognitions themselves, in the midst of cognitions, as non-different from them.

There is no other door to Its awareness."¹¹² Therefore the purification of Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" as vṛtti-jñāna functions as a means to the reflection of Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna. Śaṅkara describes the vṛtti-jñāna in his Aitareya-bhāṣya as

"...bearing witness to the witnessing Brahman."¹¹³ Accordingly Śaṅkara understands the phrase from the Gītā, "...you yourself know your Self through the self",¹¹⁴ in terms of this key epistemic function of the vṛtti-jñāna. He says: "...the Self is truly known when it is known along with each state of consciousness."¹¹⁵

Just as Brahman "needs" Īśvara to know Himself as Brahman, so svarūpa-jñāna "needs" vṛtti-jñāna to know itself as svarūpa-jñāna. Vṛtti-jñāna functions as an "intermediary category" to bridge the impasse between Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna and dharma. It allows Śaṅkara to simultaneously argue for an actual discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in the order of being and an apparent continuity between them in the order of discovery. While the vṛtti-jñāna

¹¹² Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.4, p. 63.

¹¹³ Śaṅkara, Aitareya-bhāṣya from Eight Upaniṣads Vol. II, trans. Swami Gambhirānanda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973), p. 69. Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Aitareya-bhāṣya.

¹¹⁴ Gītā X.15 referred to in: Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.4.

¹¹⁵ Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.4.

plays an indispensable epistemic role in reflecting the svarūpa-jñāna, it is ultimately sublated in Self-realization.

Because the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is structurally parallel to the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja as radicalized in Deśika's position, Śaṅkara's implicit emphasis on Self knowledge as a mental process is closer to Vedānta Deśika's conception of Self-knowledge¹¹⁶ than to Lokāchārya's conception. Yet this structural parallel co-exists with a real doctrinal difference for Śaṅkara argues, unlike Rāmānuja that Self-knowledge considered as a mental process, i.e. vr̥tti-jñāna, is ultimately sublated in Self-realization. Śaṅkara argues therefore that the Self was never, in fact, related to the buddhi. The relationship is apparent. The reflection of the Self in the buddhi is consequently disclosed to be illusory. This is argued in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī where it is stated that, "The unreality of the reflection is¹¹⁷ known from the scriptures and reasoning."

Śaṅkara's insistence on the unreality of this reflection lays the basis for a consideration of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda.

¹¹⁶ Judging from his emphasis on prapatti Lokāchārya would argue that the highest form of Self-knowledge emanating from prapatti is not an act and therefore strictly speaking prapatti is not an upāya. He says: "Even the prapatti that is done out of mental confusion with the idea that it is the means, is equivalent with sin." (cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #262). Vedānta Deśika on the contrary insists that Self-knowledge involves a mental process, specifically; nididhyāsana as continual upāsana which must be practiced unceasingly until darśana. Whereas Lokāchārya would argue that the Self-knowledge emerging out of prapatti transcends the possibility of an injunction, Deśika insists as shall be demonstrated later, on an Ātma-vidhi which he applies not only to nididhyāsana as continual upāsana but also to darśana. (Cf., Srinivasa, Charī Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita [Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961], Chapter 8.

¹¹⁷ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #43.

Jñāna-yoga can be accordingly described as the "means of no means" whereby cognition is used to transcend cognition. This is structurally parallel to Rāmānuja's description of prapatti whereby the will is used to transcend the will. According to both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja mokṣa is not the result of man's will or the effect of any dharmic means. Thus A. G. Warriier says that, "Grace is just this experience of the ¹¹⁸uncaused or eternal variety of Self-realization."

Adhyāropa-apavāda ("super-imposition-negation") has first been ¹¹⁹encountered as Śaṅkara's primary strategy. It is here being applied ¹²⁰to sādhana, specifically to jñāna-yoga. As pointed out previously a radical discontinuity exists between karma-niṣṭhā ("the devotion of ¹²¹works") and jñāna-niṣṭhā ("the devotion of knowledge"), according to Śaṅkara, but some continuity exists between karma-yoga ("the path of ¹²²works") and jñāna-yoga ("the path of knowledge"). For both karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga according to Śaṅkara participate in the structure of adhyāropa-apavāda. Śaṅkara identifies jñāna-yoga understood here as dhyāna-abhyāsa, with adhyāropa in the following passage from his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya: "The scriptures enjoin meditation on the name etc. as Brahman for one who clearly knows that these things are different from ¹²³Brahman." The most striking passage supporting this view occurs in

¹¹⁸ A. G. Krishna Warriier, Concept of Mukti in Advaita Vedānta (Madras: University of Madras Pub., 1961), p. 467.

¹¹⁹ Cf., Chapter One.

¹²⁰ Cf., Chapter One, section 3.

¹²¹ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.10, p. 24.

¹²² Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III.4, p. 94.

¹²³ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.iii.1, p. 46.

his Aitareya-bhāṣya where Śaṅkara re-interprets the passage from the Īśa Upaniṣad: "Crossing over death through avidyā, one attains im-
mortality through vidyā",¹²⁴ in accordance with this conception of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda. Śaṅkara states: "From such Vedic texts as, 'Crave to know Brahman through concentration' (Tai. III.ii), it follows that concentration etc. that are conducive to the rise of knowledge, as well as activities like service of the teacher, are called avidyā (nescience), since they are the products of nescience.

Producing vidyā (knowledge) through them, one transcends death that is the same as desire.... In order to reveal this idea the (Īśa) Upaniṣad says, 'Crossing over death through avidyā, one attains immortality through vidyā'."¹²⁵ The following excerpt from his Gītā-bhāṣya suggests that perhaps the whole of sādhana partakes of adhyāropa-apavāda:

"Though the means is mithya or illusory, still it is true, because the end is true...."¹²⁶ This coincides with Śaṅkara's insistence in his

Gītā-bhāṣya that even viveka-jñāna is ultimately mithyā. He says there that, "...the Self is imagined to be enlightened, merely because of avidya associating Him with that intellectual perception - which is unreal - which takes the form of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self, while in reality the Self has undergone no change whatever."¹²⁷

This conception of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda indicates the point

¹²⁴ Īśa Upaniṣad #11.

¹²⁵ Śaṅkara, Aitareya-bhāṣya Part One, Chapter 1, Introduction, p. 19.

¹²⁶ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, #66.

¹²⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21, p. 44.

made earlier, that any "bridge" between Ātma-jñāna as svarūpa-jñāna and dharma refers to the order of discovery and not to the order of being.

Thus Suresvara states in his Naiṣkarmyasiddhi that, "Through a means that is unreal, the Self which can be approached through no means whatever is realized."¹²⁸

The Ātma-bodha employs the following image of the cleaning nut to describe jñāna-yoga understood here as dhyāna-abhyāsa, as adhyāropa-apavāda: "The soul rendered dirty by ignorance, knowledge purifies through the practice of knowledge and itself subsides like the powder of the cleaning-nut (precipitating itself after precipitating other impurities suspended in water)."¹²⁹ Further on in the same text meditation is compared to the fire-sticks that must themselves be consumed in order to start the fire.¹³⁰ These images are most appropriate in describing the function of the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti which leads to mokṣa by annulling itself. As shall be demonstrated, the conception of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda is best verified by the role of this vṛtti.¹³¹

Maṇḍana uses the same image of the cleaning-nut encountered in the Ātma-bodha to illustrate this conception of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda.¹³¹ He uses two other images to illustrate the same point. The most graphic of these is the image of the poison that neutralizes another poison by neutralizing itself. He says: "Il est bien évident

¹²⁸ Sureśvara, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi III, 104.

¹²⁹ Ātma-bodha #5, p. 10.

¹³⁰ Cf., Ātma-bodha #42.

¹³¹ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #12, p. 156.

que les efforts répétés d'audition, de méditation et de concentration relatifs au Brahman qui est au-delà des différences s'opposent à la croyance à la différence, quoiqu'ils relèvent de l'inconnaissance, tout comme le lait fait digérer le lait en même temps qu'il est digéré par lui-même, ou comme un poison neutralise un autre poison tout en se neutralisant lui-même."¹³²

He then interprets the eleventh verse of the Īśa Upaniṣad in terms of this conception of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda. Like Śaṅkara, Maṇḍana insists that it is impossible to make access to svarūpa-jñāna without the intermediary of vṛtti-jñāna. He says: "...car on ne peut connaître la non-différence sans (faire appel à) la différence: l'accès à la connaissance de la (non-différence) en effect aurait pour moyen les différences."¹³³

Maṇḍana makes an explicit distinction, however, that is only implicitly present in Śaṅkara between two kinds of avidyā: non-apprehension (agrahaṇa) and mis-apprehension (anyathāgrahaṇa)¹³⁴ in order to argue for jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda. He therefore argues that the first form of avidyā manifested in jñāna-yoga is responsible for subverting the second form of avidyā and for transforming a mediate knowledge of the Self derived from śravaṇa into immediate knowledge. He says: "...cet effort répété de concentration sur l'ātman...qui s'oppose à la croyance aux différences et qui la fait cesser; en faisant disparaître cette croyance aux différences dans sa généralité, il disparaît aussi

¹³² Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #13, pp. 156-57.

¹³³ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter Two, #41, p. 195.

¹³⁴ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter Three, #171, p. 330.

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de lui-même." Maṇḍana also uses the example of the imaginary snake-bite which though unreal can lead to a real effect namely, death by fright, to explain how one form of avidyā can sublate another form of avidyā.¹³⁶
 Vimuktāman also argues in the last chapter of his Iṣṭasiddhi¹³⁷ that that which sublates avidyā must also be avidyā. D. C. Bhattacharya in his article on the Post-Śāṅkarites summarizes Vimuktāman's argument in the last chapter of the Iṣṭasiddhi as follows: "The destruction of the false entity must also be false. Everything other than Brahman is false and indeterminate."¹³⁸

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 Vācaspati Miśra argues like Maṇḍana that Ātma-jñāna can only "arise" via adhyāropa-apavāda. He says in his Bhāmatī text that, "... true knowledge is seen to arise from means of knowledge which are empirically though not absolutely valid."¹⁴⁰ This argument is in agreement with

135 Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #12, p. 156. The phrase: "cet effort répété de concentration sur l'ātman" which can be translated as: "this repeated effort of concentration on the Self" is somewhat of a misleading translation for it suggests that manana rather than nididhyāsana is being referred to here. But the Sanskrit phrase used here "dhyāna-abhyāsa" indicates that Maṇḍana is referring to nididhyāsana and not to manana.

136 Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #7.

137 Vimuktāman is the celebrated author of the Iṣṭasiddhi. He is a Post-Śāṅkarite who also radicalizes many of the points in the "implicit strand" in Śāṅkara. For his views on Ānanda cf., section 3c.

138 D. C. Bhattacharya, "Post-Śāṅkara Advaita" in Cultural Heritage of India Vol. III, ed. H. Bhattacharya (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission, 1969), p. 269.

139 Vācaspati Miśra is the celebrated author of the Bhāmatī text. He carried on many of Maṇḍana's views, such as the two kinds of avidyā but rejected any of Maṇḍana's views that were too close to the Mīmāṃsaka standpoint such as Maṇḍana's acceptance of a real dhyāna-vidhi.

140 Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, pp. 8-9.

Śaṅkara's insistence that "external means" such as rituals and "internal means" such as the practice of meditation, are efficacious up to the origination of Ātma-jñāna and not afterwards.¹⁴¹

Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna is incapable of generating this origination so it must resort to Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" as vṛtti-jñāna. T. R. V. Murti refers to this aspect of svarūpa-jñāna in pointing out that, "Spirit never generates anything nor is itself generated."¹⁴² Vācaspati argues in a similar manner when he says: "Nor can the immutable, eternal, intelligent Self, which is incapable of transformation, be active of itself."¹⁴³ Therefore svarūpa-jñāna should never be misrepresented as an effect, though its reflection, namely the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti can be understood as an effect.

This emphasis on jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda is, as has been shown most prominent in the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara as radicalized in the Bhāmati school which views jñāna-yoga more in terms of dhyāna-abhyāsa ("the habit of meditation") than in terms of viveka-jñāna ("the knowledge of discrimination"). As shall be demonstrated, however, even the conception of jñāna-yoga as viveka-jñāna that is prominent in the "explicit strand" of Śaṅkara and therefore radicalized in the Vivaraṇa school, can be understood in terms of adhyāropa-apavāda.

To argue that jñāna-yoga is adhyāropa-apavāda is simply to apply Śaṅkara's insistence that any "bridge" between Ātma-jñāna as svarūpa-jñāna

¹⁴¹ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.16.

¹⁴² T. R. V. Murti, Ajñāna (London: Luzac and Co., 1933), p. 164. Herein after cited as: T. R. V. Murti, Ajñāna.

¹⁴³ Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 48.

and dharma refers to the order of discovery and not to the order of being. Such an understanding of jñāna-yoga is true to Śaṅkara's explicit insistence on the actual discontinuity between Ātma-jñāna and dharma, while providing an explanation for their apparent continuity in the order of discovery. Conceiving of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda therefore does justice to both the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara simultaneously. The apparent continuity between Ātma-jñāna and dharma is explained but it is not misrepresented as a real continuity in the order of being. The vr̥tti-jñāna, as has been demonstrated, plays an indispensable role as an "intermediary category" in explaining this continuity in the order of discovery for it is the vr̥tti-jñāna that must be purified in sādhana so as to better reflect the svarūpa-jñāna which remains unaltered. But although the vr̥tti-jñāna has a provisional function in leading to the origination of that final intuition preceding Self-realization, it is ultimately sublated in the latter. From this a-posteriori standpoint the Self is disclosed as having had only an apparent and not a real relationship with the buddhi. Co-relatively from this standpoint, any "bridge" between Ātma-jñāna and dharma is disclosed as having functioned only via the merit of adhyāropa-apavāda, thereby leaving only the Self as the unsublated.

In radicalizing the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara, the Vivaraṇa school represent jñāna-yoga as viveka-jñāna ("the knowledge of discrimination") rather than dhyāna-abhyāsa ("the habit of meditation") which is the predominant emphasis of the Bhāmatī school. Instead of representing jñāna-yoga as either viveka-jñāna or as dhyāna-abhyāsa in accordance with either the Vivaraṇa or the Bhāmatī emphasis respectively, a more constructive approach might be to perceive them as two distinct but

inseparable phases of adhyāropa-apavāda. Jñāna-yoga as dhyāna-abhyāsa would then point to the adhyāropa phase and jñāna-yoga as viveka-jñāna would then point to the apavāda phase. Śaṅkara refers to dhyāna-abhyāsa as a super-imposition upon the attributeless Brahman in the following passage from his Brhad.-bhāṣya: "All Vedic means consisting of meditation and rites, which depend on several factors such as the agent and culminate in identity with Hiraṇyagarbha, a result achieved through effort, are but co-extensive with this manifested relative universe."¹⁴⁴

Therefore the very act of meditating upon the Self implies the super-imposition of the buddhi upon the Self, but it is a super-imposition with a soteriological value, as has been demonstrated, as the purified buddhi is able to reflect the unchanging Self. Because of this unique epistemic role, the purified buddhi functions as one of the karaṇas ("catalysts") for Self-realization. In his Sūtra-bhāṣya Śaṅkara describes viveka-jñāna as that process of un-covering the Self via the progressive elimination of false selves: "Just as the very small star of Arundhati is shown last of all, after having first shown the bigger ones in the neighbourhood as aids to the eyesight, even so the un-ātman made up of food, prāṇa etc. are shown in succession in order that people of ordinary intelligence may gradually eliminate the false ātmans, and posit the innermost Ātman consisting of ānanda as the only reality."¹⁴⁵

This passage indicates how viveka-jñāna can be understood as implementing the apavāda phase of adhyāropa-apavāda. As adhyāropa

¹⁴⁴ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, p. 110.

¹⁴⁵ Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, I.1.12.

must precede apavāda so dhyāna-abhyāsa and viveka-jñāna should be understood as functioning successively yet inseparably. Together they are capable of leading to that final intuition, the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti which culminates in mokṣa.

The discipline of viveka-jñāna illustrates how the Self can best be approached via negativa i.e., by a successive process of elimination. Śaṅkara says in this respect that, "The method of realizing its real nature would be to discard one after another the parts, super-imposed on it, by successive acts of attention."¹⁴⁶ The process of elimination referred to above, should not be understood in the literal sense but rather in the figurative sense i.e. one "negates" the adjuncts of the Self by no longer identifying with them. For example the body is no longer perceived as my body but as that body. The spiritual use of this discipline is enumerated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī.¹⁴⁷ In the Aparokṣānubhūti text continual meditation (dhyāna-abhyāsa) on the Self is described as the means that is capable of producing that viveka-jñāna.¹⁴⁸ Whereas saguṇa-dhyāna ("meditation on the conditioned" i.e. saguṇa Brahman) could not produce this discrimination (viveka) between the Self and the not-Self, nirguṇa-dhyāna ("meditation on the unconditioned" i.e. nirguṇa Brahman) is capable of producing this effect. Accordingly viveka-jñāna and nirguṇa-dhyāna are described as inseparably united in

¹⁴⁶ Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, IV.1.2, p. 319. See also Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VII.1.5, p. 570.

¹⁴⁷ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, Chapter One, #10 to #18. See also the Vakyavṛtti #12 to #18.

¹⁴⁸ Cf., Aparokṣānubhūti #100.

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the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi. Yet even saguṇa-dhyāna though incapable of "producing" viveka-jñāna as such can be related to viveka-jñāna as adhyāropa is related to apavāda i.e. as the two phases of Śaṅkara's primary strategy. Accordingly Śaṅkara insists on connecting viveka-jñāna with the antecedent projections upon the Self in his Brhad.-bhāṣya in terms of adhyāropa-apavāda. He says: "It is to bring home this purport [i.e. that the Self is Brahman] that the ideas of projection, maintenance, dissolution etc., as well as those of action and its factors and results were superimposed on the Self. Again by their negation - by the elimination of the super-imposed attributes through a process of 'Not this, not this' - the truth has been known." 150

Dhyāna and viveka should be therefore understood as two phases of the same strategy so that in the words of Śaṅkara one will be made to "...understand by degrees." 151

3a (ii). The Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti: Its Different Interpretations

The Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti according to the Bhāmati school, is that category which best enacts the adhyāropa-apavāda strategy. Vācaspati argues that the sublation of avidyā cannot be effected by svarūpa-jñāna but only by vṛtti-jñāna. He says that, "The cessation of Nescience etc., however, should be known to come from the effect of contemplation, viz., intuition,

¹⁴⁹ Cf., Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #280 to #288. The Vivaraṇa insistence on the opposition between dhyāna and viveka-jñāna (cf., Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha II.XXV) is because they usually use dhyāna in its "secondary sense" i.e. as saguṇa-dhyāna and not in its "primary sense" i.e. as nirguṇa-dhyāna

¹⁵⁰ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.25. See also Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.13.

¹⁵¹ Śaṅkara, Aitareya-bhāṣya II.1.1, p. 54.

which is a variety of psychosis of the internal organ."¹⁵² Further on in the same text he describes the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti as subsuming avidyā by subsuming itself: "...the intuition of Brahman is a particular psychosis of the internal organ, generated in the mind as aided by the impressions produced by hearing, reflection etc.,....And this, while rooting out the perception of the stupendous magical presentation of the entire universe, roots itself out as well, not being distinct from that universe...."¹⁵³ As noted before Maṇḍana compares this action of the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti to the poison that neutralizes another poison by neutralizing itself.¹⁵⁴ Svarūpa-jñāna being inactive cannot generate the intuition of Brahman. It can do so only by uniting itself with the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti as an adjunct.¹⁵⁵ As Maṇḍana stated in his Brahma-Siddhi:¹⁵⁶ "...la connaissance ne se produit pas sans l'inconnaissance."¹⁵⁷ A vṛtti though ultimately illusory, can lead to a real effect, just as an imaginary snake-bite can lead to death through fear.¹⁵⁷ Vācaspati employs his doctrine of the two kinds of avidyā to clarify the role of the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti when he argues that avidyā as non-apprehension

¹⁵²Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 108.

¹⁵³Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, pp. 231-32.

¹⁵⁴Cf., Footnote 132.

¹⁵⁵"...(if it were not united to intelligence as an adjunct), of the psychosis of the internal organ, itself non-intelligent, self-illumination would be unintelligible, in the absence of the reflection of intelligence, and hence it could not intuit." (Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, pp. 78-79.)

¹⁵⁶Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #13.

¹⁵⁷Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #7.

(agrahāṇa) is capable of sublating avidyā as mis-apprehension (anyathāgrahāṇa).

S. S. Sastri in summarizing their positions on this says: "...a delusion
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may be dispelled by a delusion but not by any delusion." Therefore
the Bhāmati school employ an implicit value-distinction between the
Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti and other vṛttis because the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti unlike other
vṛttis is an irreversible vṛtti and has Brahman for its content. Yet
unlike the Vivaraṇa school they never classify the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti
as svārūpa-jñāna, rather in the words of S. S. Sastri they hold that,
"...even the final cognition is other than the knowledge which is the
self; it only helps to reveal the latter, through removing the obscuration
caused by Nescience; hence that cognition may be spoken of as 'knowledge'
160
only derivatively or secondarily." The Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti removes this
"obscuration" via its own self-annulment, like the fire-sticks that
161
must be burned to start the fire. As S. S. Sastri states: "...it
has yet the capacity to destroy its generatrix and itself at the same
162
time."

The Vivaraṇa school on the contrary reject this understanding of
the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti as enacting adhyāropa-apavāda. Their argument is
that only vidyā can sublimate avidyā; avidyā is incapable of sublating

¹⁵⁸ The Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti, according to the Bhāmati school participates
in avidyā as non-apprehension in so far as it partakes of the form of
difference. Cf., footnote 134.

¹⁵⁹ S. S. Sastri, "On the Nature of Sublation" in Collected
Papers of S. S. Sastri, P. 193.

¹⁶⁰ S. S. Sastri, Footnote 47 in Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 260.

¹⁶¹ Cf., Ātma-bodha #42.

¹⁶² S. S. Sastri, Footnote 139 in Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, pp. 296-97.

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 itself. This is stated in the Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha: "Sublation
 is the removal of nescience, together with its own product present
 or past by true knowledge...." 164 They justify this position by arguing
 that the sublatter must be of a higher order of reality than the sublated.
 For this reason they classify the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti under svarūpa-jñāna,
 rather than under vṛtti-jñāna as in the Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha:
 "The manifestation of intelligence which occurs on that (occasion),
 which is self-established and beneficent, that alone is Brahman-
 knowledge; that alone is the destroyer of nescience." 165 They therefore
 argue that the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti is a vṛtti in name only.

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 But, as noted previously, in order to argue this point the
 Vivaraṇa school is forced in effect to subdivide svarūpa-jñāna into
 two categories: svarūpa-jñāna as the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti, and svarūpa-jñāna
 as mokṣa itself. The former use of svarūpa-jñāna is methodologically
 parallel to the Bhāmāti use of vṛtti-jñāna as an "intermediary category".
 While insisting on the explicit discontinuity between svarūpa-jñāna and
dharma, the Vivaraṇa school must find an "intermediary category" to
 provisionally bridge the gap between the two in order to make sense of
 the apparent continuity in sādhana. This mediating function is performed
 by the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti. Although the Vivaraṇa school does not classify the

163 Cf., Suresvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika #18, p. 10.

164 Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha trans. S. S. Sastri (Madras: Sri
 Vidya Press, 1941) #LXVII, p. 83. Herein after cited as: Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha

165 Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha. T. R. V. Murti quotes Anandabodhācārya
 as follows: "'The cessation of the world-illusion brought about by the
Akhaṇḍa Vṛtti is identical with Brahmanhood, is indistinguishable from it
 (Brahma svarūpa).'" T.R.V. Murti, Ajñāna, p. 224.

166 Cf., section 3a (i).

Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti under vṛtti-jñāna, they describe it as the direct effect of the śravaṇa-vidhi ("the injunction pertaining to hearing").¹⁶⁷ This use of the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti enables the Vivaraṇa school to make sense of the apparent continuity between Ātma-jñāna and dharma in sādhana, while insisting on their explicit discontinuity in the order of being. It also enables them to argue that svarūpa-jñāna as the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti is originated through śravaṇa, yet svarūpa-jñāna as mokṣa itself can never be originated. It is because of this dual use of svarūpa-jñāna that the Vivaraṇa school rejects the idea of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda.¹⁶⁸ Accordingly Suresvara insists that only Ātma-jñāna can sublimate avidyā. He says in his Saṁbandha-Vārtika that, "Knowledge of the true nature of the inner self alone is the destroyer of the ignorance regarding the inner self. And it requires nothing other than its own generation to destroy the darkness (of ignorance)."¹⁶⁹

In response to their dual use of svarūpa-jñāna it might however, be objected: How can svarūpa-jñāna be described as an effect and still be svarūpa-jñāna? The Bhāmati school criticize the ambiguous use of svarūpa-jñāna by the Vivaraṇa school in this instance and insist that svarūpa-jñāna can only be equivalent with mokṣa and not with any mental state as such, however pure. Such states should be classified under vṛtti-jñāna. As Maṇḍana and Vācaspati point out any "generation"

¹⁶⁷Cf., Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha First Varṇaka, #IV.

¹⁶⁸Cf., Suresvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika #247, #248, #895.

¹⁶⁹Suresvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika trans. T. M. P. Mahadevan (Madras: University of Madras, 1972) #18, p. 10. Herein after cited as: Suresvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika.

of Ātma-jñāna as such refers to vṛtti-jñāna and not to svārūpa-jñāna.

In the words of Maṇḍana: "La connaissance ne se produit pas sans l'incon-
¹⁷⁰
naissance." This is in accordance with Śaṅkara's insistence that the

state of illumination belongs to the buddhi and not to the Self which
 has never been in bondage and never becomes enlightened as such. To
 quote again that critical passage from his Gītā-bhāṣya: "...the Self
 is imagined to be enlightened merely because of avidya associating
 Him with that intellectual perception-which is unreal - which takes the
 form of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self, while in reality
¹⁷¹
 the Self has undergone no change whatever." This passage supports
 the contention of the Bhāmati school that the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti should be
 classified under vṛtti-jñāna and not svārūpa-jñāna.

Understanding jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda does justice to
 both the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara simul-
 taneously; that is it explains the apparent continuity between Ātma-jñāna
 and dharma in the order of discovery while maintaining their discontinuity
 in the order of being. It is with reference to the former that the area
 of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on jñāna-yoga emerges but
 not with reference to the latter. This is so because Rāmānuja insists
 contrary to Śaṅkara that Ātma-jñāna and dharma have a real relationship
 in the order of being.

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Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #13, p. 157.

171,

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.2, p. 44.

3b. The Ātma-vidhi and the Karaṇa for Self-Realization

3b (i) Śaṅkara's Implicit Evaluation of Concrete Self-Knowledge over Abstract Self-Knowledge

The basis for this discussion on the Ātma-vidhi ("the injunction pertaining to the Self") and the karaṇa ("catalyst") for Self-realization in Śaṅkara's thought is to be found in his implicit evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge. Śaṅkara makes a distinction that is analogous to Rāmānuja's distinction between a concrete Self-knowledge versus an abstract Self-knowledge although he does not restrict his understanding of this distinction to the technical issue on the priority of bhakti or jñāna as the karaṇa for Self-realization.¹⁷²

He widens this distinction between concrete Self-knowledge and abstract Self-knowledge so as to include the general distinction between a direct and specific Self-knowledge and an indirect and general Self-knowledge, and the even more fundamental distinction between knowledge and experience.

Rāmānuja often represents Śaṅkara as arguing that only śravaṇa i.e. without manana and nididhyāsana, can bring release. This knowledge is then referred to by Rāmānuja as "...merely the knowledge of the sense of sentences...."¹⁷³ As shall be demonstrated, however, this is a caricature of Śaṅkara's total position and evident only in the "explicit strand" and not in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara. For Śaṅkara argues against a mere abstract Self-knowledge especially in his Gītā-bhāṣya

¹⁷² Rāmānuja, especially in the "explicit strand", understands this distinction between concrete Self-knowledge and abstract Self-knowledge in terms of the priority of bhakti over jñāna. Cf., Chapter Three, section 2.

¹⁷³ Śrī-bhāṣya Thibaut, I.1.1, p. 12.

and Upanisad-bhāṣyas. In his Taittirīya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara says that,
 "...there is such a thing as meditation which is different from what
 is acquired by merely hearing the Vedas....And this meditation has
 emancipation as its result and is well known as different from mere study."¹⁷⁴
 This evaluation of concrete Self-knowledge over abstract Self-knowledge
 is made even more explicitly in this passage from the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi:
 "Reflection should be considered a hundred times superior to hearing,
 and meditation a hundred thousand times superior even to reflection...."¹⁷⁵
 The denunciation of abstract Self-knowledge in the sense often used by
 Rāmānuja himself i.e. as śravaṇa alone, is made in the following passage
 from the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī: "No one is seen freed from the distress
 (of this transmigratory existence) simply by understanding the meaning
 of the sentence."¹⁷⁶

In his Sūtra-bhāṣya Śaṅkara employs the wider sense of this distinction
 referred to previously as the distinction between a direct and specific
 Self-knowledge over an indirect and general Self-knowledge. There,
 in a critical discussion on the Ātma-vidhi Śaṅkara says that, "...what
 is required here is not the general but the specific knowledge of Brahman
 which alone can remove ignorance."¹⁷⁷ The most important reference
 to this distinction in the Sūtra-bhāṣya is the following verse, referred
 to often by the Bhāmati school: "It is not that the Scriptures alone

¹⁷⁴ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya I.xi.4.

¹⁷⁵ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #364. See also #270.

¹⁷⁶ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #15.

¹⁷⁷ Sūtra-bhāṣya Date, IV.1.2, p. 317.

are the means of the right knowledge of Brahma, as is the case about the right knowledge of religious duty, but the Scriptures, as also intuitional experience, so far as is possible, constitute the authoritative or valid means of right knowledge, because the knowledge of Brahma culminates¹⁷⁸ in the realization of Brahma...." In commenting on this verse in his Bhāmatī Vācaspati remarks: "Not bare knowledge is desired; rather it is the knowledge, which as bringing about realisation or intuition¹⁷⁹ culminates in realisation...." The above excerpts indicate that the direct experience of the Self (anubhava) though not a pramāṇa ("means to knowledge") is the goal of the pramāṇas. Devaraja makes this point when he says that, "The work of the pramāṇas is done as soon as they have brought about a direct self-vision on the part of the embodied soul. The pramāṇas fulfill themselves by generating a knowledge which involves¹⁸⁰ their negation or annulment." This emphasis on anubhava highlights the experiential basis of Śaṅkara's Vedānta and implies the condemnation of a mere abstract, Self knowledge.

Śaṅkara employs this distinction between a direct Self-knowledge and an indirect Self-knowledge in his Gītā-bhāṣya as in the following excerpt: "Jnana is the knowledge of the Self and other things acquired from the sastra (scripture) and from a teacher (acharya). Vi-jnana¹⁸¹ is the personal experience of the things so taught." This distinction

¹⁷⁸ Sūtra-bhāṣya Apte, I.1.2, p. 11.

¹⁷⁹ Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 107.

¹⁸⁰ Devaraja, An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge, p. 67.

¹⁸¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya III.41.

between a direct and an indirect Self-knowledge is also understood in this bhāṣya, in terms of the distinction between knowledge and yoga. Śaṅkara refers to this latter distinction as follows: "Knowledge consists in understanding the nature of things, such as the Self, as taught in the Scripture (sastra) and by the Teacher (Acharya). Yoga consists in making what has been thus learnt an object of one's own direct perception, by concentration (one-pointedness) through the subjugation of the senses."¹⁸² This emphasis on yogic Self-knowledge over a mere abstract Self-knowledge can also be found in his Kaṭha-¹⁸³ bhāṣya and Kena-bhāṣya.¹⁸⁴ Śaṅkara expresses this distinction in his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya in terms of the difference between an intuitive Self-¹⁸⁵ knowledge and a merely intellectual Self-knowledge. In fact he justifies his consideration of the Ātma-vidhi as a niyama-vidhi ("restrictive injunction") in this bhāṣya by using this very distinction between an intuitive Self-knowledge and a merely intellectual Self-knowledge. In commenting on I.IV.7 of the Bṛhad Upaniṣad Śaṅkara says that, "(The aspirant after Brahman) knowing about this alone should attain intuitive knowledge', convey the necessity of meditation in addition to knowing the meaning of the Vedic dicta. It is true, but they do not constitute an original injunction. Since meditation on the Self is already known as a possible alternative, they can only be

¹⁸² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVI, 1.

¹⁸³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.ii.12, I.ii.23, I.ii.24.

¹⁸⁴ Cf., Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya IV.8. See also Sūtra-bhāṣya I.IV.5.

¹⁸⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Bṛhad-bhāṣya I.IV.7, pp. 134-35; IV.IV.21.

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restrictive."

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree that saṃsāra does not alter the proper nature (svarūpa) of the Self and they both employ the same upaniṣadic image¹⁸⁷ of the "buried treasure" to describe how this fact is nevertheless hidden from the "unenlightened man." Rāmānuja states in this respect that, "Just as those, who do not know the hidden golden treasure and the place wherein it is (hidden), although they may be always moving thereon, do not yet come by it, just so (is it the case here)."^{187a} Śaṅkara employs this image in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya.¹⁸⁸

But most important with reference to the issue being discussed, the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi employs this image to argue for the necessity of a concrete Self-knowledge. It states: "As a treasure hidden underground requires (for its extraction) competent instruction, excavation...and (finally) grasping, but never comes out by being (merely) called out by name, so the transparent Truth of the Self, which is hidden by Māyā and its effects, is to be attained through the instructions of a knower of Brahman, followed by reflection, meditation and so forth, but not through perverted arguments."¹⁸⁹ This passage indicates that only concrete Self-knowledge can "excavate" and evoke this "buried treasure".

Śaṅkara does not restrict himself to an understanding of this

¹⁸⁶ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, pp. 134-35.

¹⁸⁷ Cf., Chāndogya Upaniṣad VIII.iii.3.

^{187a} Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.III.14, p. 130.

¹⁸⁸ Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII.iii.3.

¹⁸⁹ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #65.

distinction between concrete Self-knowledge and abstract Self-knowledge solely in terms of the priority of bhakti or jñāna; rather he widens this distinction to include the more general difference between a direct and an indirect Self-knowledge. Even if one limits this investigation to the former, more restricted understanding of this distinction, areas of agreement still emerge between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

Accordingly, areas of agreement can be un-covered between their understanding of the experience of bhakti and the experience of jñāna, understood here as dhyāna-abhyāsa, despite their doctrinal differences on the nature of bhakti and jñāna.¹⁹⁰ A distinction should first be made between Śaṅkara's understanding of bhakti and dhyāna in their "secondary sense" i.e. as saguṇa-bhakti and saguṇa-dhyāna, and his understanding of bhakti and dhyāna in their "primary sense" i.e. as nirguṇa-bhakti and nirguṇa-dhyāna. Śaṅkara most often uses bhakti and dhyāna in their "secondary sense", i.e. as saguṇa-bhakti and saguṇa-dhyāna,¹⁹¹ in his Sūtra-bhāṣya. Moreover it is in his Sūtra-bhāṣya¹⁹² that he links saguṇa-bhakti and saguṇa-dhyāna with bhāvanā ('make believe'). Such a co-relation implies that bhakti and dhyāna participate in an "as-if" structure as illustrated for example in the phrase: Meditate on Brahman as-if fire. Certainly no co-relation exists between Śaṅkara's

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An example of such a doctrinal difference would be Śaṅkara's insistence that the focus of bhakti is ultimately nirguṇa contrasted with Rāmānuja's insistence that the focus of bhakti is saguṇa.

¹⁹¹Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.III.1 to 65, IV.1.3.

¹⁹²Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4, p. 22 (Date). Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.xvi.3. "In such passages as 'the Sun is as Brahman' (should be looked or meditated upon as Brahman) the intervention of the term as makes it impossible for it to provide the idea that the Sun is actually Brahman itself....", p. 363.

understanding of saguṇa-bhakti and saguṇa-dhyāna as implying bhāvanā¹⁹³ and Rāmānuja's understanding of bhakti.¹⁹⁴ Accordingly Rāmānuja never enjoins one to meditate on the Lord as-if the Antaryāmin, for he argues that vāsanās ("innate impressions") can never be removed by such a hypothetical knowledge.¹⁹⁴ Yet when Śaṅkara uses bhakti and dhyāna without implying bhāvanā,¹⁹⁵ the possibility of a co-relation emerges between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this issue. This is especially the case when Śaṅkara uses bhakti and dhyāna in their "primary sense" i.e. as nirguṇa-bhakti and nirguṇa-dhyāna.¹⁹⁶ As shall be demonstrated¹⁹⁷ despite their obvious doctrinal differences on the nature of the Focus i.e. whether nirguṇa (Śaṅkara) or saguṇa (Rāmānuja),¹⁹⁸ the process of nirguṇa-bhakti in Śaṅkara and para-bhakti in Rāmānuja might be described as phenomenologically the same.

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja emphasize the necessity for a repetition

¹⁹³ In Rangacharya's translation of the Śrī-bhāṣya bhāvanā is referred to as that "hostile mental conception". Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 15.

¹⁹⁴ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, pp. 14-15 (Rangacharya).

¹⁹⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.3.4. The emphasis on bhāvanā in his Sūtra-bhāṣya is often absent in his Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas. See for example: Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.ii.24, Taittirīya-bhāṣya I.x.1. Bhāvanā is not emphasized in his Gītā-bhāṣya even in his presentation of saguṇa-dhyāna and saguṇa-bhakti. Cf., Gītā-bhāṣya VII.1, XII.2.

¹⁹⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.17, IX.22.

¹⁹⁷ Cf., section 3c: "The Implicit Theism in Advaita Vedānta".

¹⁹⁸ Yet even this doctrinal difference admits of an implicit parallel as Rāmānuja enjoins one to meditate upon the Antaryāmin not as different from oneself but as the essence of oneself. Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya IV.1.3. This point will be developed in the next section.

of dhyāna or bhakti in the sense of nididhyāsana ("steady meditation")
 199
 for the "enlightened man". Only a concrete Self-knowledge in the
 form of continual dhyāna or continual bhakti can "excavate" that "hidden
 200
 treasure".

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja employ the image of flowing oil to
 convey this continual, unbroken attention (i.e. nididhyāsana). Rāmānuja
 says in this respect: "...dhyāna (or meditation) is of the form of a
 succession of memories (or remembrances), which is unbroken like a
 stream of oil."
 201
 Śaṅkara refers to dhyāna in a similar manner in
 his Gītā-bhāṣya. He says: "Dhyana is a continuous and unbroken thought
 202
 like a line of flowing oil." He refers to upāsana ("contemplation")
 in this text by means of the same image as in the following excerpt:
 "Contemplation (Upasana) consists in approaching the object of worship
 by way of meditating it according to the Teaching (sastra) and dwelling
 for a long time steadily in the current of the same thought (continuous)
 203
 like a thread of descending oil." In this text the sthita-prajñā
 is specified as that man who engages in an unceasing attention to the
 204
 Self. Although Śaṅkara usually uses dhyāna as implying bhāvanā
 in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, when he uses dhyāna in its "primary sense" i.e.

¹⁹⁹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, IV.1.8 and Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.2.

²⁰⁰ Cf., previous discussion on this image in Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

²⁰¹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya I.1.1, p. 17. As pointed out in
 Chapter Three bhakti is often used by Rāmānuja as a synonym for dhyāna
 or upāsana all of which denote this continual, unbroken attention.

²⁰² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII.24.

²⁰³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.3. See also XVIII.52.

²⁰⁴ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II, 54-55.

as nirguna-dhyāna or nididhyāsana, the area of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this issue becomes clearer.²⁰⁵ Śaṅkara refers to dhyāna as follows: "...the word 'dhyāna' also indicates like the word 'upāsanā' the unbroken stream of the consciousness of an object, we say of a woman that she is thinking of her husband who has gone on a journey, with a fixity of attention, or of a crane that it is looking for its prey with a steady look, unbroken attention and without moving its limbs."²⁰⁶ This unwavering attention to the Self is compared to the "...unflickering flame of a lamp in a windless place" in his Praśna-bhāṣya²⁰⁷ and to the "...continuous flow of only one kind of thought" in the Aparokshānubhūti.²⁰⁸

All these images convey the necessity for a continual attention to the Self which Śaṅkara specifies in his Gītā-bhāṣya as "...the proximate means to right knowledge."²⁰⁹ Only this concrete Self-knowledge can remove the effect of past vāsanās. Śaṅkara refers to these vāsanās as the very root of samsāra, here depicted as a tree with its roots upwards in his Gītā-bhāṣya.²¹⁰ Accordingly both Maṇḍana and

²⁰⁵ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.3.

²⁰⁶ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, IV.1.8. The same images are used in the Sivānandalaharī text to denote this constant attention. Cf., #61 and #77.

²⁰⁷ Śaṅkara, Praśna-bhāṣya VI.1 from Eight Upaniṣads Vol. II, trans. Swāmi Gambhīrānanda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973). Herein after cited as: Śaṅkara, Praśna-bhāṣya.

²⁰⁸ Aparokshānubhūti trans. Swami Vimuktananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1966) #105. Herein after cited as: Aparokshānubhūti.

²⁰⁹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI. Introduction, p. 179.

²¹⁰ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XV.2. See also Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.3, p. 709. Śaṅkara implicitly refers to these vāsanās in his Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.2. The Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi refers to them more explicitly in verses #274, 275 and 342. Maṇḍana and Vācaspati Miśra, in radicalizing this "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara explicitly refer to these vāsanās.

Vācaspati Miśra justify the necessity for a concrete Self-knowledge over a merely abstract Self-knowledge because of its capacity to remove these vāsanās. Maṇḍana states: "...même quand une vision de la réalité s'est produite grâce à un moyen de connaissance droite, on est d'avis qu'une répétition de cette vision de la réalité sert à surmonter ou détruire la disposition plus ferme produite par la répétition de vues fausses depuis toute éternité."²¹¹ Vācaspati Miśra argues that only concrete Self-knowledge in the form of an immediate experience of the Self can remove these vāsanās. He says: "Error, which is of the nature of immediate experience, can be removed only by true knowledge of the nature of immediate experience, not by a mediate presentation...."²¹²

Rāmānuja, like Maṇḍana and Vācaspati Miśra, insisted that only a concrete Self-knowledge could remove these vāsanās.²¹³ This insistence was the root of his rejection of bhāvanā in I.1.1 of his Śrī-bhāṣya. Rāmānuja is there attacking the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara radicalized in the Vivaraṇa school in which dhyāna and bhakti are co-related with bhāvanā. But as has been demonstrated an area of agreement exists between the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this issue.

This emphasis on concrete Self-knowledge though accented in the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is not absent in the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara which is radicalized in the Vivaraṇa school.

²¹¹Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #35. Maṇḍana argues that though a general knowledge of the Self comes from śravaṇa its certainty comes only from the vision of the Self produced by this concrete Self-knowledge. Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter Three, #4, #5, p. 244.

²¹²Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, p. 77. See also p. 45 and p. 82.

²¹³Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 15 (Rangacharya).

Both Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school point to the necessity for an "immediate knowledge of the Self" (anubhava). Unlike Maṇḍana and Vācaspati Miśra, however, they do not argue that śravaṇa gives only mediate knowledge, and co-relatively that dhyāna-abhyāsa is necessary to transform this mediate knowledge into immediate knowledge.

Instead of emphasizing dhyāna-abhyāsa as leading to this direct experience of the Self i.e. anubhava, Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school emphasize anvaya-vyatireka ("the method of agreement and difference") by which the lakṣaṇa ("implied") sense of śabda is elicited as leading to this experience.²¹⁵ Sureśvara says in this respect in his Sambandha-Vārtika that, "When thus the word-senses have been known from the words through the empirical means of knowledge, who can prevent the super-sensuous sentence-sense from the sentence in the Veda?"²¹⁶ What is referred to in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī²¹⁷ as the "implied sense" (lakṣaṇa) of "tat" and "tvam", elicited through anvaya-vyatireka is described as responsible for the direct sense of śabda rather than dhyāna-abhyāsa.

Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school also employ the category of the Sākṣī ("Witness-Self") as an "intermediary category" in a manner similar to the Bhāmati use of dhyāna-abhyāsa to perform this mediating function between śravaṇa and anubhava. Sureśvara refers to the Sākṣī as incapable of giving us a merely mediate knowledge. He says: "The

²¹⁴ Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #845 to #847.

²¹⁵ Cf., Sureśvara, Naīṣkarmya-Siddhi II.10, III.65 and III.78. (Anvaya-vyatireka is explicitly referred to in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #96.)

²¹⁶ Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #863.

²¹⁷ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part Two, Chapter XVIII, #101.

witness-self, the reality, by which even the mediate (objects) are made to appear as if immediate and as-if the self - in respect of that how can there be mediate knowledge?"²¹⁸ Sureśvara is implying in this passage that a direct experience of the Self is already available via the Sākṣī; there is thus no need to appeal to dhyāna-abhyāsa for this direct experience.

Despite their explicit insistence on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school still have to make sense of their apparent continuity in sādhana. As has been demonstrated, they make sense of this continuity in sādhana by appealing to the function of the anvaya-vyatireka method in eliciting the lakṣaṇa sense of śabda and the mediating function of the Sakṣī and the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti. The need for a direct experience of the Self is emphasized by both the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa; the difference pertains only to their understanding of what "causes" this direct experience of the Self, i.e. whether dhyāna-abhyāsa or anvaya-vyatireka.

3b (ii) The Ātma-Vidhi

The Ātma-vidhi ("the injunction pertaining to the Self") addresses itself to the myriad interpretations of the following verse from the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad: "The Self, my dear Maitreyi, should be realized, should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon."²¹⁹ The dispute between Śaṅkara and the Mīmāṃsakas concerning the status of the Ātma-vidhi is centered around the following questions: Does this passage from the

²¹⁸Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vartika #793. See also #796.

²¹⁹Bṛhad. Upaniṣad II.IV.V.

Brhad. Upaniṣad point to a real vidhi ("injunction") or a "pseudo-vidhi"; if it is a real vidhi should it be classified as an originaive injunction (apūrva-vidhi), a restrictive injunction (niyama-vidhi) or an exclusive injunction (parisaṁkhyā-vidhi); would this vidhi imply samuccaya; and is the purport of the Vedas such a vidhi, especially a dhyāna-vidhi?

The question of the karāṇa ("catalyst") for Self-realization pertains to the relationship between the actual components of the Ātma-vidhi i.e. śravaṇa ("hearing" i.e. of śabda) manana ("reflection"), and nididhyāsana ("steady meditation"). The Post-Śāṅkarites debated this issue in terms of the following questions: Should śravaṇa manana and nididhyāsana be understood according to a hierachy; would such a hierachy imply that only one of the three is enjoined and that the other two are mere auxiliaries; or is this hierachy misleading - are they not inseparably united and enjoined together; should nididhyāsana be understood as dhyāna or as viveka-jñāna?

Using these questions as guidelines I will first deal with the doctrine of the Ātma-vidhi and then with the doctrine of the karāṇa for Self-realization in order to clarify the relationship between Śāṅkara and the Mīmāṃsakas and Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja on these issues.

Before presenting Śāṅkara's position on these issues it is necessary to outline the position of his main opponents: the Pūrva-²²⁰Mīmāṃsakas and the niyoga-vādins. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsakas argued that

²²⁰The category Uttara-Mīmāṃsā includes both Vedānta and the niyoga-vādins as its alternate interpretations. To avoid ambiguity the niyoga-vādins will not be referred to as Uttara-Mīmāṃsā but simply as the "niyoga-vādins".

the only purport of the Vedas was to incalcate ritual injunctions thereby reducing all statements about Brahman to the status of mere arthavādas ("explanatory devices").²²¹ The niyoga-vādins,²²² on the other hand, argued that the purport of the Vedas was not a ritual injunction but an injunction to meditate (dhyāna-vidhi) upon Brahman.²²³ Though Maṇḍana accepts a dhyāna-vidhi,²²⁴ he should not be classified as a niyoga-vādin because he does not conclude that the purport of the Vedas is such a dhyāna-vidhi to which all statements about Brahman²²⁵ must be subsidiary.

Rāmānuja accepts a dhyāna-vidhi,²²⁶ but he does not argue, in the manner of the niyoga-vādin,²²⁷ that statements about Brahman are subsidiary to it, rather, he insists that only Brahman can be the purport

²²¹ Cf., Kumārila, Shlokavārtika II, 7.

²²² Brahmādatta, the precursor of Maṇḍana should be included in this category. Rāṅgachārya in his translation of the Śrī-bhāṣya refers to them as the "Dhyānaniyogavādins!" Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya Rāṅgachārya, Vol I p. 261, footnote 314.

²²³ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.4.

²²⁴ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #12, #23, #33.

²²⁵ Ibid., Chapter Three, #83, #154.

²²⁶ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

²²⁷ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.4; Vedārthasaṃgraha #120. Van Buitenen suggests that Rāmānuja did not however, exclude this possibility. In referring to this implicit emphasis in Rāmānuja he says: "He does not exclude the view that after all, these arthavādas may find their significance and purpose in vidhi, but he is obliged to refute the extreme views of the Prabhākaraś who are not less radical in upholding the autonomy of the Pūrvamīmāṃsā as Śaṅkara is in maintaining the Self-sufficiency of Uttaramīmāṃsā." (Śrī-bhāṣya Van Buitenen, Introduction, p. 55.) This implicit emphasis is suggested in Rāmānuja's analysis of language in the Vedārthasaṃgraha.

of the Vedas not a vidhi. He states in this respect: "...Brahman, who is the highest object of human pursuit and whose very nature is unsurpassed bliss, forms the purport (of the scriptures) by constituting the thing that is to be denoted (by them)...."²²⁸ Yet Rāmānuja suggests that all ritual injunctions are subsidiary to the injunction to meditate upon Brahman, in the sense that all vidhis must culminate in the worship of Brahman.²²⁹ Rāmānuja does not conclude that the Ātma-vidhi is a "pseudo-vidhi"; but at the same time he doesn't reduce it to the status of a ritual injunction. Ultimately it stands in a class all by itself. Accordingly he does not classify the Ātma-vidhi under the following three categories of injunctions argued by the Purva-Mīmāṃsakas: as an apūrva-vidhi ("originative injunction"); a niyama-vidhi ("restrictive injunction") or as a parisamkhyā-vidhi ("exclusive injunction"). To avoid the pitfalls of arguing that the Self is subsidiary to an injunction,²³⁰ Rāmānuja does not apply the dhyāna-vidhi to the svarūpa of the Self, which remains unchanged, but, rather, to the buddhi which becomes free of vikāras ("transformations") by means of this vidhi. Rāmānuja states that, "...the mind becomes pure by means of the injunction relating to meditation and...the mind (so) purified gives rise to the direct knowledge of the Brahman."²³¹

Vedānta Deśika, in radicalizing the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja

²²⁸ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.4, p. 289.

²²⁹ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

²³⁰ These pitfalls are examined by Maṇḍana in his Brahma-Siddhi in Chapter Three, §§ 74-83.

²³¹ Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.4, p. 274.

insists on a real Ātma-vidhi and applies the Ātma-vidhi specifically to nididhyāsana understood as dhyāna-abhyāsa. Manana and śravaṇa are thereby reduced to mere re-statements (anuvāda). Srinivasa Chari summarizes Deśika's position as follows: "Śravaṇa is not the content of an injunction because it springs up from one's own natural pragmatic desire....Whatever is thus heard about is to be kept in mind without confusion of ideas; for this purpose he proceeds to reflect on it. This too like śravaṇa springs up from one's own desire and hence it need not be enjoined. Thus both śravaṇa and manana are mere restatements (anuvāda) and they only subserve contemplation. As for nididhyāsana,²³² it is to be enjoined as it is not already accomplished." The Yatīndramatadīpikā text collaborates the above interpretation of the Ātma-vidhi in the following verse: "Since 'hearing' is thus established, it becomes the anuvāda (i.e. reference to what is already mentioned or known. (Likewise) 'reflection is also an anuvāda, since it confirms what one has heard. Therefore all the Vedānta texts) enjoin 'meditation' only...."²³³ As shall be demonstrated, Śaṅkara's implicit insistence on the reality of the Ātma-vidhi, which is applicable to vyrtti-jñāna though never to svarūpa-jñāna, is structurally parallel to the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja as radicalized in Deśika's position. Yet Śaṅkara's²³⁴ explicit insistence that the Ātma-vidhi is only a pseudo-vidhi is

²³² S.M. Srinivasa Chari, Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961), p. 166. Herein after cited as Srinivasa Chari, Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita.

²³³ Srīnivāsadāsa, Yatīndramatadīpikā Chapter VII, #26.

²³⁴ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4.

structurally parallel to the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja as radicalized in Lokāchārya's position. Lokāchārya, judging from his emphasis on prapatti, does not stress any Ātma-vidhi.

I will first present the Ātma-vidhi as it is understood in the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara before examining the same issue in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara explicitly reduces the Ātma-vidhi to the status of a "pseudo-vidhi" after initially describing it as a niyama-vidhi in accordance with his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy.

The following excerpt from his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya makes this clear: "'The Self alone is to be meditated upon' - this is not an original injunction (but a restrictive one), for meditation on the Self is known as a possible alternative. In fact, neither injunction is necessary on this point, for this meditation is inevitable...."²³⁵ Śaṅkara argues that "this meditation is inevitable" because of the Self-luminosity (svayaṃ-jyotis) of the Ātman, which functions as the a-priori for all our knowledge. He says that, "...the vision that belongs to the self is like the heat and light of fire; being the very essence of the witness, it has neither beginning nor end."²³⁶ Secondly, in his Sūtra-bhāṣya he argues that the Ātman cannot be connected with any vidhi as such, for the Ātman is not so much acquired or rejected as realized like the forgotten necklace around one's neck. He says that, "The various imperative statements such as 'The Ātman should be seen, meditated upon etc.' become as inoperative as the edge of a razor when

²³⁵ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, p. 125.

²³⁶ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya III.IV.2, p. 470.

it is applied to a stone, because the Brahman...is not something which
 can be acquired or rejected."²³⁷ Furthermore, he argues that just as
 no injunction can make fire cold, so no injunction can alter our nature
 which is already synonymous with mokṣa.²³⁸ If our nature were subject
 to an injunction liberation would never be possible.²³⁹ Śaṅkara states
 in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "There is indeed no need of an injunction impelling
 one to devote oneself to one's Atman, for the very reason that Atman
 is one's own very Self."²⁴⁰ Appayya Dīkṣita²⁴¹ concurs with this under-
 standing of the Ātma-vidhi, for he argues that it is not an apūrva-vidhi,²⁴²
 a niyama-vidhi or a parisaṁkhyā-vidhi, but only an "apparent" vidhi.

The above passages seem to exclude any possibility of understanding
 the Ātma-vidhi as a real vidhi in any sense. Yet a more detailed
 examination of all of Śaṅkara's texts on this question uncovers a quali-
 fication of this radical position and a suggestion that the Ātma-vidhi
 is a vidhi in some sense; possibly a niyama-vidhi. This qualification
 never entails, however, the niyoga-vādin argument that statements about
 Brahman are subsidiary to an injunction; rather, Śaṅkara emphatically
 rejects this argument as illustrated in the following excerpt from his

²³⁷ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.4, p. 25.

²³⁸ Cf., Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.iii.7, p. 628.

²³⁹ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Chapter XVI, #39-#41.

²⁴⁰ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.69.

²⁴¹ Appayya Dīkṣita is a Post-Śaṅkarite affiliated with the
 Bhāmati school. His text Siddhāntaleśa-saṅgraha is a compendium of all
 the different interpretations of Śaṅkara amongst his followers.

²⁴² Cf., Appayya Dīkṣita, Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha Chapter One, #15.

Sūtra-bhāṣya: "...the objection that Brahman does not constitute an independent topic of inquiry but a subsidiary one to Dharma-jñāna is not true....Had Brahman been subservient to the process of meditation, it would have been incorporated in Purva-Mimamsā alone."²⁴³

In accordance with his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy, Śaṅkara's predominant tactic is to provisionally establish the Ātma-vidhi as a niyama-vidhi from the first level of truth but subsequently to argue, by transposing the question to the second level, that it is in fact only a pseudo-vidhi. Yet there are a number of instances where this "transposition strategy" does not take place; that is, where Śaṅkara describes the Ātma-vidhi as a niyama-vidhi without any subsequent qualification. Such an instance is found in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya where he identifies the Ātma-vidhi as a niyama-vidhi: "The two expressions 'should be sought to be known' and 'should be sought to be understood' contain restrictive, - not originaive injunctions; the sense being that 'It is to be sought to be known, - and sought to be understood, - in this particular manner....'"²⁴⁴ His Taittirīya-bhāṣya contains another such instance. There he argues for a dhyāna-vidhi and justifies this argument by appealing to the need for a concrete Self-knowledge and not merely an abstract Self-knowledge. He states that, "...there is such a thing as meditation which is different from what is acquired by merely hearing the Vedas. For one becomes competent to undertake karmas from a mere knowledge got through hearing, and he need not have to

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Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.4, p. 31.

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Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII,vii,1.

wait for meditation; whereas meditation is enjoined apart from such Vedic study. And this meditation has emancipation as its result and is well known as different (from mere study). Moreover, after having said, '(The Self) is to be heard of', other efforts are enjoined by saying, 'It is to be thought of and meditated on' (Br. II.IV.5); and deliberation and meditation are well known (in life) to be different from the knowledge acquired through hearing."²⁴⁵ In this bhāṣya Śaṅkara does not subsequently reduce this dhyāna-vidhi to a provisional thesis only.

One might ask: Are the instances cited above simply an example of a "slip-up" in Śaṅkara's application of adhyāropa-apavāda or do they have a deeper significance? In response to such a question, it can be argued that these instances both verify and illustrate Śaṅkara's implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi in the "implicit strand" of his thought.

There are also instance in Śaṅkara's texts where he first argues that the Ātma-vidhi is only a pseudo-vidhi, but then qualifies this radical position by subsequently describing it as niyama-vidhi. If he had reversed the order it would simply be an application of his adhyāropa-apavāda strategy, but, in this particular sequence it suggests another variation of the suspension of the "transposition strategy." The most striking instance of the above can be found in his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya. In I.4.7 of this bhāṣya he initially describes the Ātma-vidhi as a pseudo-vidhi, yet further on in the same verse he identifies it as a niyama-vidhi. He says: "'(The aspirant after Brahman) knowing about

²⁴⁵ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya I.xi.4. See also III.ii.i where concentration on Brahman is enjoined as the "best discipline".

this alone should attain intuitive knowledge,' convey the necessity of meditation in addition to knowing the meaning of the Vedic dicta. It is true, but they do not constitute an original injunction. Since meditation on the Self is already known as a possible alternative, they can only be restrictive."²⁴⁶ This instance suggests that whereas no Ātma-vidhi can ever apply to Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" i.e. svarūpa-jñāna, it can apply to Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" i.e. vṛtti-jñāna. The critical factor is therefore where the vidhi is applied.

Maṇḍana makes a significant contribution on this point. He differentiates between three means of access to Brahman: śruti itself; śruti followed by manana and dhyāna; and the direct experience of Brahman i.e. anubhava.²⁴⁷ He explicitly applies the Ātma-vidhi to the second means of access, especially to dhyāna and not to the first and third means of access. He says: "...on rejette l'injonction qui s'applique au troisième (stade) d'accès à la connaissance, du fait qu'il est relié' (au premier) en tant qu'il a pour domaine l'éveil à la connaissance de la réalité." En effet, (l'injonction) qui a pour domaine le second (stade) d'accès à la connaissance n'a pas pour domaine l'éveil à la connaissance de la réalité' mais elle a plutôt pour domaine²⁴⁸ la répétition (de la connaissance acquise par la parole)." Maṇḍana therefore argues that anubhava is not enjoined, but the process which is

²⁴⁶ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, pp. 134-35.

²⁴⁷ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter Three, #74.

²⁴⁸ Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter Three, #100, p. 292.

instrumental to its arising i.e. dhyāna-abhyāsa is so enjoined.

Maṇḍana's designation of these three means of access to Brahman and his insistence that the Ātma-vidhi applies only to the second means of access helps to clarify some of the issues concerning the Ātma-vidhi.

In a similar manner, Śaṅkara argues in his Sūtra-bhāṣya that the arising of anubhava is dependent on other factors, but not anubhava, itself. He says: "...once knowledge has emerged, it does not depend on any other factor for producing its (own) result (viz liberation);²⁴⁹

but it does depend on others for its own emergence." The following excerpt from his Sūtra-bhāṣya should be understood in light of the above distinction, for the injunction to cultivate the state of a muni does not apply to anubhava but to the modus operandi leading to anubhava, especially to manana and dhyāna: "There is an injunction with regard to some other thing which is an auxiliary (in the acquisition of knowledge) ...the state of a Muni as characterized by a preponderance of knowledge is enjoined here, as the third thing, with reference to (the other two states of) strength (which comes from) knowledge and 'scholarship'.²⁵⁰"

Accordingly, in his Gītā-bhāṣya Śaṅkara describes a muni as "...one who is given to contemplation (manana)."²⁵¹ This mauna injunction constitutes yet more valuable evidence for the reality of the Ātma-vidhi in the "implicit Śaṅkara", and because it occurs in the Sūtra-bhāṣya it is especially important. It is cited by Appayya Dīkṣita in his

²⁴⁹ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Gambhirananda, III.IV.26, p. 783.

²⁵⁰ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Apte, III.IV.27, pp. 767-68.

²⁵¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V.28.

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Siddhāntaleśasāṅgraha as evidence for a possible apūrva-vidhi.

The necessity for manana and dhyāna is again referred to in IV.1.2 of Śaṅkara's Sūtra-bhāṣya where repetition of the mahā-vākya is prescribed for one who cannot realize Brahman through śravaṇa alone because of the influence of past karma.

Although Sureśvara interprets Śaṅkara as arguing that only śravaṇa

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is enjoined, there are many instances in Śaṅkara's texts where he insists that śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana are all enjoined, not just śravaṇa. In his Brhad.-bhāṣya Śaṅkara says in this respect: "Thus only is It realised - when these means, viz. hearing, reflection and meditation, have been gone through. When these three are combined, then only true realisation of the unity of Brahman is accomplished, not otherwise -

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by hearing alone." P. C. Divanji argues that Sureśvara's extreme view that only śravaṇa is competent in ensuring realization, is not shared by any other Post-Śaṅkarite.

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It might be asked: If the Ātma-vidhi is a "pseudo-vidhi" than why is it associated with a real vidhi to renounce the world? Śaṅkara refers to this vidhi in the following passage from his Brhad.-bhāṣya: "As part of this knowledge of Brahman, the sruti wishes to

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Cf., Appayya Dīkṣita, Siddhāntaleśasāṅgraha Chapter One, #121. S. S. Sastri comments on the above citation as follows: "Mauna is taken to be enjoined, in spite of the absence of an injunctive word, because it is novel and non-established otherwise.", footnote #9, Siddhāntaleśasāṅgraha.

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Cf., Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #805.

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Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.5. See also II.V.Introduction.

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Cf., P. C. Divanji, "The Practical Side of the Advaita Doctrine" in Review of Philosophy and Religion 5.2 (1934), pp. 162-72.

enjoin renunciation." ²⁵⁶ He insists that this vidhi to renounce the world should not be understood as a mere eulogy (arthavāda) but, rather, it should be taken literally. He says that, "As the study of the Vedas and other such acts, which have been enjoined as means to the Realisation of the Self are to be taken literally, and not as eulogies, so also the renunciation of home, which has been mentionned along with them as a means to the attainment of the world of the Self, cannot be a eulogy." ²⁵⁷ The Vivaraṇa school classify this vidhi as a niyama-vidhi. ²⁵⁸

²⁵⁹ As Maṇḍana pointed out, the Ātma-vidhi should never be applied to Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" i.e. to svarūpa-jñāna, but only to Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" i.e. to vr̥tti-jñāna. Therefore it can be mis-read as a "pseudo-vidhi" if it is understood as applying to svarūpa-jñāna, but, not if it is understood as applying to vr̥tti-jñāna. The above distinction helps to clarify what is often termed the "directive import" of the Ātma-vidhi. Śaṅkara refers to this "directive import" in the following excerpt from his Sūtra-bhāṣya: "The only purpose served by these imperative statements is that they enable us to turn our back against our common objects of like and dislike, as also against our activity which is directed in achieving them and to enable us to direct our eye on the Ātman itself." ²⁶⁰ The Ātma-vidhi is aimed at

²⁵⁶ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.1. See also II.IV.5.

²⁵⁷ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.22, p. 760. See also III.IV.1.

²⁵⁸ Cf., V. P. Upadhyaya, Lights on Vedānta (Varanasi: Chawkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1959), p. 208.

²⁵⁹ Cf., previous discussion on Maṇḍana; Brahma-Siddhi Chapter 3, #114.

²⁶⁰ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.4, 25-26.

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purifying the buddhi, not the Self, and in reversing its tendency for objectification. Therefore it is a call to turn inwards and, like the tortoise, to withdraw our senses from the external world. Śaṅkara compares this withdrawal to "...reversing the current of a river...." ²⁶²

He says in his Kaṭha-bhāṣya: "For it is not possible for the same person to be engaged in the thought of sense-objects and to have the vision of the Self as well....the natural tendency to perceive outwardly the things that are not the Self is the cause of the obstruction of the vision of the Self...." ²⁶³ This passage indicates that the Ātma-vidhi is not an exhortation to act or to acquire what is not acquired; but, to desist ²⁶⁴ from objectification which is the very root of adhyāsa.

This "directive" import, this call inwards is co-related in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya with the insistence that the Ātma-vidhi is a niyama-vidhi. That is, it is a call to perceive the Self in one way i.e., as the indwelling Witness (pratyagātman) and not in another way i.e., as identified with any of the five sheaths, superimposed upon the Self. Śaṅkara says: "The two expressions 'should be sought to be known' and 'should be sought to be understood' contain restrictive, - not originative -

²⁶¹ This is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī as follows: I therefore have neither distraction nor a profound concentration. Both of them belong to the mind which is subject to change." Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Chapter XIII, #14.

²⁶² Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya II.1.1.

²⁶³ Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya II.i.1 to II.i.2, pp. 171-72.

²⁶⁴ This process of withdrawal is described in great detail in his Gītā-bhāṣya especially in chapters six and eight. Consequently nididhyāsana considered as dhyāna should be combined with the Ātmasaṁnyama-Yoga of the Gītā though not with the Yoga of Patañjali.

injunctions; the sense being that 'It is to be sought to be known, - and sought to be understood, - in this particular manner'....When hitherto the Self has been known through the qualities of the Body, the sense-organs etc., - if and when its own real form causes to be understood, - it leads to the perceptible result in the form of the disappearance of the preceding wrong notion; for this reason the injunction in question should be taken to be a restrictive one..."²⁶⁵

The Ātma-vidhi should ultimately be classified sui generis, for the three kinds of vidhis enumerated by the Purva-Mīmāṃsakas are more appropriate for "actions" in the conventional sense of the term. The Ātma-vidhi should be classified as "action" not in the conventional sense but in the paradoxical sense of spiritual action which consists in the removal of any sense of not having realized freedom (mokṣa).

The above understanding of the Ātma-vidhi is structurally similar to Rāmānuja's understanding of prapatti as a mode of negative willing, or, alternately expressed using the will to transcend the will. Just as no injunction can make fire cold, Śaṅkara argues that no injunction can alter our nature which is already synonymous with mokṣa. Yet an injunction can invoke that fact and draw our attention to it. Consequently, such an injunction should be applied to the buddhi and not to the Self. Similarly, Rāmānuja agrees that no vidhi can be applied to the svarūpa of the Self but only to the buddhi as the dharma-bhūta-jñāna. Rāmānuja also describes the Ātma-vidhi as sui generis, though in a different sense as leading to the worship of the Supreme Person.

²⁶⁵ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VIII, vii.2.

There is also much evidence amongst the Post-Śaṅkarites for a consideration of the Ātma-vidhi as a vidhi in some sense.

Sureśvara insists that the Ātma-vidhi can never be classified as an apūrva-vidhi; but, if it is classified as a vidhi, he argues that it can only be a parisaṁkhyā-vidhi. He says that, "The injunction of exclusive specification between two alternatives or choice among many alternatives may be the case here. We meditate upon the higher Self by the exclusion of the perception of the non-Self."²⁶⁶ Sureśvara²⁶⁷ applies the injunction to śravaṇa, not to manana and nididhyāsana, and yet he classifies the vidhi to renounce the world as a "proximate auxiliary"²⁶⁸ to the Ātma-vidhi.

The Vivaraṇa school is more explicit in specifying the relationship between śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana. A hierarchy is established whereby śravaṇa is specified as the principal means and manana and nididhyāsana are specified as remote auxiliaries to the former. This is stated in the Vivaraṇa-prameyasāṅgraha as follows: "...there is enjoined...'hearing' as the principal (means), along with its subsidiaries, reflection and meditation, which are auxiliaries in achieving the fruit."²⁶⁹ Furthermore, śravaṇa as the study of "...one's own section of the Veda",²⁷⁰ is enjoined as a niyama-vidhi.

²⁶⁶ Sureśvara, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi, Raghavachar, I.88.

²⁶⁷ Cf., Sureśvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika #805.

²⁶⁸ Cf., Sureśvara, Saṁbandha-Vārtika #214.

²⁶⁹ Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha I, #1.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., I, #1.

Maṇḍana's understanding of the Ātma-vidhi is very similar to Rāmānuja's understanding, for he explicitly applies the vidhi to nididhyāsana which is understood as dhyāna-abhyāsa and not as viveka-jñāna. He says that, "...ce qui est enjoint, ce n'est pas la réflexion sur la réalité de l'ātman qui est au-delà de toutes les particularités et dont le fruit est l'identification à lui, mais plutôt, c'est la concentration répétée sur (l'ātman) fait de pensée extrinsèquement délimitée par les noms et les formes et dont les souffles sont le corps, etc., (concentration), qui a pour fruit la souveraineté puis progressivement la vision directe."²⁷¹ Both Maṇḍana and Rāmānuja²⁷² apply the vidhi to nididhyāsana and not to śravaṇa and manana.²⁷³ Rāmānuja says: "Therefore, it is dhyāna alone that is enjoined."²⁷⁴ Neither Maṇḍana nor Rāmānuja conclude in the manner of the niyoga-vādin that this dhyāna-vidhi is the only purport of the Veda thereby rendering all statements about Brahman subsidiary to it.²⁷⁵ Maṇḍana never applies the vidhi to the direct vision of the Self (darśana), but only to the

²⁷¹Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chpater Three, #154. See infra footnote #135 and Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, ##11, 12, 23, 33, 36; Chapter Three, ##74, 75, 76, 136, 154. As I noted earlier (cf., footnote #135) the French translation of this passage might suggest that manana and not nididhyāsana is being referred to. But the Sanskrit phrase: dhyāna-abhyāsa indicates that nididhyāsana and not manana is enjoined.

²⁷²Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi I.33, III.74, 154; Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, I.1.4.

²⁷³Śrī-bhāṣya, Rangacharya, I.1.1, p. 16.

²⁷⁴Cf., infra footnote #227.

²⁷⁵Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi III.74, pp. 241-43 and III, #83, p. 253.

means producing that vision.²⁷⁶ Both Maṇḍana and Rāmānuja also insist on the necessity for a concrete Self-knowledge over a merely abstract Self-knowledge.²⁷⁷

The question of the status of the Ātma-vidhi in Lokāchārya is a problematic one, as there is no direct mention of it in Lokāchārya's texts. Yet judging from his understanding of prapatti as breaking with the "machinery" of dharma, it would appear as if Lokāchārya would reduce the Ātma-vidhi to a "pseudo-vidhi", in a manner similar to the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara.

Vedānta Deśika's position however, is structurally closer to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara as radicalized in Maṇḍana and Vācaspati Miśra. Deśika applies the vidhi to nididhyāsana, understood as dhyāna, and śravaṇa and manana are thereby reduced to mere re-statements (apavāda). To cite again S. M. Srinivasa Chari : "...both śravaṇa and manana are mere restatements (anuvāda) and they only subserve contemplation. As for nididhyāsana, it is to be enjoined as it is not already accomplished."²⁷⁸ Whereas Maṇḍana argues that the vidhi can never be applied to darśana but only to the means leading to its arising, Deśika argues that darśana itself is enjoined, though he understands darśana as a "...specific form of dhyāna characterized by vividness."²⁷⁹ On this issue the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara is nevertheless closer

²⁷⁶ Cf., Maṇḍana, *Brahma-Siddhi* III, 154.

²⁷⁷ Cf., section 3b(i).

²⁷⁸ S. M. Srinivasa Chari , *Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita*, p. 167.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

to Vācaspati Misra than to Maṇḍana, for Vācaspati Miśra, like Śaṅkara, explicitly rejects a dhyāna-vidhi yet specifies dhyāna-abhyāsa as the karana ("catalyst") for Self-realization. He says that, "...contemplation ...being established, through observation of co-presence and co-absence, to be the cause of excellence in knowledge, cannot be the object of an injunction...."²⁸⁰ Yet Vācaspati Miśra argues for a śravaṇa-vidhi²⁸¹ that of learning one's own section of the Vedas.

Like Vācaspati Miśra,²⁸² Śaṅkara does not explicitly argue for a dhyāna-vidhi, except for a few isolated instances as in his Taittiriya-bhāṣya, but he does argue, especially in his Gītā-bhāṣya that dhyāna is the karana for Self-realization. He accordingly refers to dhyāna-abhyāsa in his Gītā-bhāṣya as "...the proximate means to right knowledge...."²⁸³ As shall be demonstrated in the section on karana, although the Ātma-vidhi and the karana are different doctrinal issues, methodologically they perform similar functions. Dhyāna is in both cases argued as indispensable in effecting Self-realization.

3b (iii) The Karana for Self-Realization

Śaṅkara argues especially in his Gītā-bhāṣya,²⁸⁴ that dhyāna-

²⁸⁰ Vācaspati Misra, Bhāmatī, p. 93. See also pp. 172, 200, 203, 204, 231.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 91

²⁸² Vācaspati rejected a dhyāna-vidhi because of its perilous affinity with the niyoga-vādin. He also like Śaṅkara, rejected sphoṭa-vāda which was explicitly affirmed by Maṇḍana.

²⁸³ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V, 26.

²⁸⁴ Cf., footnote #283.

abhyāsa which must follow śravaṇa, is the karaṇa for Self-realization.

This implicit emphasis in Śaṅkara is shared by both Maṇḍana and Vācaspati

Miśra. In his Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya Śaṅkara compares this dhyāna-abhyāsa

to an arrow. He says: "...with the mind absorbed in the bhāva or

bhāvanā, thought of that Brahman; viddhi hit...that very target that is

the Immutable...." ²⁸⁵ Even more explicitly, the Aparokshānubhūti

identifies the karaṇa as dhyāna-abhyāsa as in the following verse:

"Remaining independent of everything as a result of the unassailable

thought, 'I am verily Brahman,' is well known by the word Dhyāna

(meditation), and is productive of supreme bliss." ²⁸⁶ Yet Śaṅkara

never argues that dhyāna-abhyāsa can function as the karaṇa independently

of śravaṇa; for no break-away from samsāra is possible without śravaṇa.

The Bhāmati school identify the karaṇa even more specifically

as the purified manas aided by dhyāna-abhyāsa, ²⁸⁷ and there is much evidence

for this view in Śaṅkara's commentaries such as the following excerpt

from Śaṅkara's Bṛhad.-bhāṣya, "The means of the realisation of that

Brahman is being described. Through the mind alone, purified by the

knowledge of the supreme Truth, and in accordance with the instructions

of the teacher, (It) is to be realized." ²⁸⁸ This decisive passage

from his Gītā-bhāṣya also reinforces this point: ²⁸⁹ "The mind, refined

²⁸⁵ Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya II.ii.3.

²⁸⁶ Aparokshānubhūti #123.

²⁸⁷ Cf., Vācaspati Miśra, Bhāmātī, pp. 95, 97; Appayya Dīkṣita, Siddhāntaleśasāṅgraha, Chapter Three, #4.2, p. 363.

²⁸⁸ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.19.

²⁸⁹ Cf., footnote #95.

by Sama and Dama - i.e., by the subjugation of the body, the mind and the senses - and equipped with the teachings of the Scripture and the teacher, constitutes the sense by which the Self may be seen."²⁹⁰

Śaṅkara presents the buddhi as responsible for the possibility of both bondage and liberation. Also there is much evidence, especially in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara for the argument that only a concrete Self-knowledge as opposed to an abstract Self-knowledge can function as the karana for Self-realization.²⁹²

Although, in a few instances,²⁹³ Śaṅkara suggests that śravaṇa alone is the karana, he usually emphasizes the inseparability of śravaṇa,²⁹⁴ manana, and nididhyāsana all of which function together as the karana.²⁹⁵ Once again, the critical passage from his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya makes this point: "Thus only is It realised - when these means, viz. hearing, reflection and meditation, have been gone through. When these three are combined, then only true realisation of the unity of Brahman is accomplished not otherwise - by hearing alone."²⁹⁶ Accordingly, in his Sūtra-bhāṣya,²⁹⁷ Śaṅkara emphasizes the necessity for a repetition of

²⁹⁰ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21, p. 46.

²⁹¹ Cf., section #2c: The Ambiguous Role of the Buddhi.

²⁹² Cf., section 3b (i): Śaṅkara's Implicit Evaluation of Concrete Self-knowledge Over Abstract Self-knowledge.

²⁹³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, #12; Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, pp. 130-31; Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.1.1, p. 289.

²⁹⁴ By "together" I do not mean simultaneously.

²⁹⁵ Cf., footnote #254.

²⁹⁶ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.5.

²⁹⁷ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya IV.1.1 to IV.1.5.

śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana, not just śravaṇa alone, for the man still affected by past karma. Śāṅkara therefore does not emphasize the hierarchy, evident in the Post-Śāṅkarites, between śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana. Co-relatively, that he tends to stress a plurality of causes is evident in this excerpt from his Taittirīya-bhāṣya: "There is surely no such rule that knowledge arises from the mere elimination of the obstructions alone, and not from the grace of God or the practice of austerity, meditation etc., for non-injury, celibacy, etc., are aids to enlightenment; and hearing, thinking and meditating are the direct causes of it."²⁹⁸

Because of the dual strands in Śāṅkara, there is evidence for understanding nididhyāsana both as viveka-jñāna and as dhyāna-abhyāsa; yet when its repetition is incalculated nididhyāsana is usually understood as dhyāna-abhyāsa.²⁹⁹ In his Gītā-bhāṣya Śāṅkara explicitly indicates dhyāna-abhyāsa as the "...proximate means to right knowledge."³⁰⁰ Instead of viewing nididhyāsana either as viveka-jñāna or as dhyāna-abhyāsa a more constructive approach is to perceive their inseparability as two phases of Śāṅkara's primary strategy, adhyāropa-apavāda.³⁰¹ Dhyāna-abhyāsa should then be identified with the adhyāropa phase and viveka-jñāna with the apavāda phase.

Much of the debate amongst the Post-Śāṅkarites on the karana,

²⁹⁸ Śāṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya I.xi.4.

²⁹⁹ Cf., infra footnote ##202, 203, 204, 205, 206.

³⁰⁰ Śāṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, Introduction.

³⁰¹ Cf., section 3a(i).

is concerned with the question of whether or not the karāṇa must be a pramāṇa. Accordingly, Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school justify their choice of śravaṇa as the karāṇa by insisting that only a pramāṇa can initiate Self-realization.³⁰² Sureśvara says in this respect that, "Other than the texts which clearly expound the true nature of reality as the one Self, what pramāṇa can accomplish that task?"³⁰³

Yet Maṇḍana and Vācaspati represent dhyāna-abhyāsa not as a pramāṇa;³⁰⁴ but, rather, as a "means of realisation" following śabda-pramāṇa which is necessary in rendering that knowledge immediate and direct.³⁰⁵ That is precisely Rāmānuja's position. Like Maṇḍana and Vācaspati, Rāmānuja argues that only such a "means of realisation" can overcome the effect of past vāsanās.³⁰⁶

Whereas Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school argue that the Self is ultimately its own karāṇa,³⁰⁷ Maṇḍana and the Bhāmati school argue that the karāṇa cannot be absolutely Real because it pertains to vṛtti-jñāna.³⁰⁸ As Maṇḍana stated so succinctly: "La connaissance ne se produit pas

³⁰²Cf., Vivaraṇaprameyasāṅgraha #xxxii.c, p. 37 and XXXV, p. 42.

³⁰³Sureśvara, Samibandha-Vārtika #720.

³⁰⁴Sureśvara's criticism of their position gives one that impression. Cf., Sureśvara, Samibandha-Vārtika #712.

³⁰⁵Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, ##34,35; Chapter Three, #76, 116; and Chapter Four; Vācaspati, Bhāmatī, pp. 108, 239.

³⁰⁶Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, pp. 15-17 (Rangacharya).

³⁰⁷Cf., Sureśvara, Samibandha-Vārtika ##247-248.

³⁰⁸Yet Brahman is admitted as its substrate.

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sans l'inconnaissance." Yet though Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school argue that the Self is ultimately its own karāṇa, they still have to make sense of the experience of illumination. To do so, they argue that the experience of illumination is occasioned by śruti but not dependent on it; that is, after its arising Ātma-jñāna no longer depends on śruti. Any dependency between Ātma-jñāna and śruti is penultimate and not ultimate.

Because of the dual strands in Rāmānuja, radicalized in the Northern and Southern schools of Viśiṣṭādvaita, one can isolate two positions in Rāmānuja on the karāṇa issue. In the "explicit strand" of Rāmānuja, as radicalized in Desika's position, the karāṇa is clearly identified as bhakti ("devotion"), which according to Rāmānuja is synonymous with upāsana ("meditation") and vedana ("knowledge").³¹⁰ This emphasis is structurally parallel to the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara in which dhyāna or upāsana following śravaṇa is identified as the karāṇa.³¹¹ In the "implicit strand" of Rāmānuja, however, where prapatti is emphasized,³¹² the Lord is identified as the ultimate karāṇa, the siddhopāya ("eternally established means"), and from this perspective dharmic means are disclosed as only provisionally efficacious. In his Mumukshupadi, Lokāchārya argues that from this perspective, dharmic

³⁰⁹ Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #13. Cf., previous discussion on the distinction between vṛtti-jñāna and svarūpa-jñāna section 3a(i)

³¹⁰ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1.

³¹¹ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI, Introduction. Cf., previous discussion on this issue in section 5b(ii).

³¹² Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII.66; Śrī-bhāṣya III.2.34 and III.2.37; cf., Chapter Three, section 3b.

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means are not merely provisional but illusory, and stand in the way of realization. This emphasis on the Lord as the ultimate karana is structurally parallel to the "explicit strand" of Śaṅkara, as radicalized in the Vivaraṇa school, where the Self is identified as its own karana. Unlike Lokāchārya, though, the Vivaraṇa school argues that the experience of illumination is occasioned by śruti, but not dependent on it. They do not conclude that śruti is illusory but merely provisionally efficacious.

Because of the dual strands in Śaṅkara, there is evidence both for considering śravaṇa alone as the karana and for considering nididhyāsana as dhyāna-abhyāsa following śravaṇa as the karana.

It is this latter emphasis that is closest to Rāmānuja. To complete this investigation of the implicit co-relation between dhyāna-abhyāsa in Śaṅkara and bhakti in Rāmānuja, it will be necessary in the next section to fully explore the question of bhakti in Śaṅkara. Special attention will be given to the equivalence between nirguṇa-dhyāna and nirguṇa-bhakti in Śaṅkara.

3c. The Implicit Theism in Advaita Vedānta

The implicit co-relation between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara in their common use of dhyāna-abhyāsa as that concrete and not merely abstract Self-knowledge will now be expanded and applied to the question of bhakti.

³¹³Cf., Lokāchārya, Mumukshupadi #207. Cf., Chapter Three, section 3b.

³¹⁴Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, #12; Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, pp. 130-31; Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.1.1.

³¹⁵Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI.Introduction.

³¹⁶Cf., infra, section 3b(i).

Before examining the possible areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the question of bhakti, it is necessary to delineate their doctrinal differences which co-exist with these very areas of convergence with reference to bhakti.

As indicated previously,³¹⁷ Śaṅkara's co-relation of saguṇa-bhakti and saguṇa-dhyāna with bhāvanā ("make believe") is directly opposed to Rāmānuja's understanding of bhakti which excludes any such "as-if"³¹⁸ element. The co-relation of saguṇa-bhakti with bhāvanā in Śaṅkara is based on his insistence that Brahman is ultimately Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa. Accordingly, one is enjoined to meditate on Brahman only "as-if" it were Saguṇa. This is illustrated in the following excerpt from his Sūtra-bhāṣya where he says: "To speak of Brahman as if it occupies a particular region like heaven is useful for meditation. Though truly speaking, there are no regions in Brahman, yet on account of upādhis and for the purpose of devotion, one is advised to meditate on it, as if it exists only in the sun, the eye and the heart."³¹⁹ This passage indicates that all the ṣaguṇa-vidyās described in III.III.1 to III.III.66 of his Sūtra-bhāṣya imply some element of bhāvanā. In his Chāndogya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara sharply distinguishes the meditation on the mahā-vākya, "tat tvam asi" from any saguṇa-vidyās which imply only a figurative and not literal identity. He says that, "...this assertion [i.e. tat tvam asi] is entirely different in character of those relating to the Sun and other

³¹⁷Cf., infra on the distinction between saguṇa-bhakti and nirguṇa-bhakti and the co-relation of saguṇa-bhakti with bhāvanā in Śaṅkara section 3b(i).

³¹⁸Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 15 (Rangacharya). See infra footnote #193.

³¹⁹Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.25.

things. In such passages as 'the Sun is as Brahman', the intervention of the term 'as' makes it impossible for it to provide the idea that 'the Sun is actually Brahman itself'...."³²⁰

Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school emphasize bhakti and dhyāna in their "secondary sense" (gauṇam) as entailing bhāvanā, and de-emphasize bhakti and dhyāna in their "primary sense" (paramārtham) as nirguṇa-bhakti and nirguṇa-dhyāna. Accordingly they interpret nididhyāsana more as viveka-jñāna than as dhyāna-abhyāsa.^{320a}

Maṇḍana and the Bhāmati school, on the other hand, emphasize bhakti and dhyāna in their "primary sense" and de-emphasize bhakti and dhyāna in their "secondary sense" as entailing bhāvanā. Accordingly Maṇḍana insists that the injunction pertaining to the repetition of dhyāna does not reduce the Ātman-Brahman equation to a figurative equation. He says: "Quand on répète en effect, cela donne plus d'importance à l'objet comme par exemple si l'on dit 'Ah!elle est à voir, ah! elle est à voir'; cela ne l'affaiblit pas, loin de le rendre métaphorique."³²¹ Similarly, he insists that this repetition of dhyāna as nididhyāsana does not constitute an attachment.³²²

Because of Rāmānuja's decisive rejection of any bhakti that entails bhāvanā,³²³ any possible convergence between Śaṅkara and

³²⁰ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.xvi.3.

^{320a} Cf., Sureśvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #438b-#439a.

³²¹ Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #6.

³²² Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #3, p. 144.

³²³ Cf., infra, footnote #193.

Rāmānuja on the question of bhakti becomes apparent only when examining Śāṅkara's understanding of bhakti in its "primary sense" or nirguṇa-bhakti which excludes any such bhāvanā. An area of convergence exists between Śāṅkara's understanding of nirguṇa-bhakti and Rāmānuja's understanding of para-bhakti ("supreme devotion") or that constant remembrance of the Lord. This convergence exists despite their doctrinal differences pertaining to the Focus of bhakti i.e. whether Saguṇa (Rāmānuja) or Nirguṇa (Śāṅkara), and pertaining to the way in which unity with the Focus is expressed i.e. whether as identity (Śāṅkara) or as a lived inseparability (Rāmānuja). As shall be demonstrated, the experience of nirguṇa-bhakti and the experience of para-bhakti is phenomenologically the same.

An implicit convergence exists even within these doctrinal differences on the basis of the fact that Rāmānuja stresses the need for a continual bhakti which focusses on the Lord qua Antaryāmin not as different from oneself but as inseparable from oneself, and equal to the "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) of the Self. He says in his Śrī-bhāṣya that "Brahman is rather to be meditated upon as being the Self of the meditating Devotee. As the meditating individual is the Self of its own body, so the highest Brahman is the Self of the individual soul - this is the proper form of meditation. - Why? - Because the great Devotees of olden times acknowledged this to be the true nature of meditation; compare the text 'Then I am indeed thou, holy divinity, and thou art me.'³²⁴ (tvam vā-ahamasmi bhāgavo devate; ahaṁ vai tvamasī).

³²⁴ Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, IV.1.3, p. 717.

Certainly Rāmānuja's never enjoins one to meditate on the Antaryāmin³²⁵
as-if He were oneself, i.e. as entailing bhāvanā.

As indicated previously,³²⁶ dhyāna-abhyāsa is phenomenologically
the same in both Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja. Its repetition as a continuous
flow of attention is compared in both to the flow of oil³²⁷ and co-related
in both to a concrete Self-knowledge as opposed to a merely abstract
Self-knowledge. It will now be argued that this dhyāna-abhyāsa is
phenomenologically equal to Śāṅkara's nirguṇa-bhakti and Rāmānuja's
para-bhakti.

Rāmānuja's para-bhakti will first be examined in relation to
dhyāna-abhyāsa. In his Śrī-bhāṣya Rāmānuja uses the term "bhakti"
("devotion") as synonymous with the terms "upāsana" ("meditation"),
"vedana" ("knowledge"), and "dhyāna" ("meditation").³²⁸ All these terms
when understood as referring to a continuous, uninterrupted process
denote Rāmānuja's understanding of nididhyāsana as dhyāna-abhyāsa.
Thus Rāmānuja states in his Vedārthasaṃgraha: "The word bhakti has the
sense of a kind of love, and this love again that of a certain kind of
knowledge."³²⁹ It is significant that he concludes the Vedārthasaṃgraha
with the words: "Bhakti therefore is only a special form of knowledge."³³⁰

³²⁵ Rāmānuja still maintains that the distinction between the svarūpa of the Lord and the svarūpa of the devotee co-exists with their inseparability.

³²⁶

Cf., section 3b(i).

³²⁷

Cf., infra footnotes ##201, 202, 203.

³²⁸

Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, pp. 11-15 (Thibaut). The terms "upāsana" and "dhyāna" both denote meditation.

³²⁹

Vedārthasaṃgraha, Van Buitenen, #141.

³³⁰

Vedārthasaṃgraha, Raghavachar, #252.

(bhaktiśca jñāna-viśeṣa eva-iti sarvam-upapannam), for it indicates his insistence that bhakti is by no means exhausted by its affective dimension.³³¹ Accordingly, the Yatīndramatadīpikā text refers to both bhakti and prapatti as "...particular modes of consciousness".³³²

In radicalizing the "explicit strand" in Rāmānuja, Vedānta Deśika distinguishes between sāmānya-bhakti or that general form of bhakti which is the pre-requisite for sādhana, and para-bhakti or that unceasing exclusive attention to the Lord.³³³ Deśika insists that it is only the latter that can function as the karaṇa for Self-realization. He says: "Bhakti-yoga which has been thus prescribed as the means of obtaining moksha has been called para-bhakti."³³⁴ Rāmānuja states in a similar manner in his Gītā-bhāṣya that, "But through exclusive devotion, it is possible to know Me accurately by means of the śāstras, to see Me directly according to the truth and to enter into Me fully."³³⁵ The man of "exclusive devotion" is designated by Rāmānuja³³⁶

³³¹J. Sinha in his book The Philosophy of Rāmānuja (Calcutta: Sinha Pub. House, 1972) accuses Rāmānuja here of confusing cognitions and feelings which he argues should remain distinct categories. (Cf., Philosophy of Rāmānuja, p. 210). But what Sinha described as a weak point in Rāmānuja is precisely his strong point. For bhakti is both a cognition and a feeling.

³³²Srīnivāsadāsa, Yatīndramatadīpikā, Chapter VII, #16.

³³³Cf., Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter Nine. For more discussion on this distinction cf., N. S. Anantharangachar, The Philosophy of Sādhana in Viśiṣṭādvaita, p. 188; John Plott, A Philosophy of Devotion, p. 584-86, 605; Prof. M. Rangacharya, The Hindu Philosophy of Conduct (Madras: Educational Pub. Co., 1966), Vol. III, p. 335 and Saraṇāgati Gadya, #15.

³³⁴Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter Nine, p. 107.

³³⁵Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XI, 54. See Saraṇāgati-Gadya #15 for an explicit reference to para-bhakti.

³³⁶Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 16.

as the fourth kind of bhakta ("devotee") and distinguished from the other three kinds of bhaktas: "the man in affliction"; "the man who wishes to procure knowledge"; and "the man who is desirous of acquiring wealth", all of which should be classified under sāmānya-bhakti.

Whereas the first three kinds of bhaktas, mentioned above, perceive the Lord as in some sense separable from them, the para-bhakta perceives the Lord as inseparable from himself which is experienced as the incapacity to sustain himself without the Lord. Rāmānuja says: "Because, possessing knowledge of My nature as it really is; unable to obtain sustenance and support for themselves without Me on account of My being excessively dear to them....these great souls...attain Me as the highest object of attainment."³³⁷ Therefore only para-bhakti and not sāmānya-bhakti can function as the karaṇa for Self-realization.

Vedānta Deśika's understanding of para-bhakti is structurally similar to the understanding of nirguṇa-bhakti in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara for para-bhakti and nirguṇa-bhakti are designated in both cases as that mental process, that karaṇa which is enjoined to be performed unceasingly until mokṣa is realized.³³⁸ Deśika, in marked contrast to Lokāchārya, describes prapatti as a real upāya and as enjoined.³³⁹

Lokāchārya, who is structurally closer to the "explicit strand" in

³³⁷ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VIII.15.

³³⁸ Cf., Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara, Chapter Eight, pp. 107-108; Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XVIII, #52; Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #12.

³³⁹ Cf., Vedānta Deśika, Srimad Rahasyatrayasara Chapter Twenty-Four, p. 264.

Śaṅkara, does not focus on para-bhakti as the enjoined karana but rather, on prapatti. Lokāchārya, unlike Deśika, never describes prapatti as a real upāya or as enjoined; rather, he describes prapatti as the acceptance of the Lord as the only upāya.³⁴⁰

The special concern of this chapter, however, is the co-relation between the "explicit strand" of Rāmānuja, as radicalized in Deśika's position and the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara as radicalized in Maṇḍana and the Bhāmati school. It is within this "explicit strand" of Rāmānuja that the area of convergence between para-bhakti and nirguṇa-bhakti in Śaṅkara becomes apparent. Having demonstrated that dhyāna-abhyāsa is phenomenologically equal to para-bhakti in this "explicit strand" of Rāmānuja, it will now be demonstrated that this para-bhakti is phenomenologically equal to nirguṇa-bhakti in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara.

Just as Rāmānuja sets up a hierarchy of different levels of bhakti³⁴¹ so Śaṅkara sets up a co-relative hierarchy of different kinds of bhakti based on the basic division between saguṇa-bhakti and nirguṇa-bhakti. The Hymn to Lord Śiva (Śivānandalaharī) sets up a hierarchy even within saguṇa-bhakti. Its understanding of bhakti is especially important in relation to Rāmānuja because saguṇa-bhakti is not described

³⁴⁰

Cf., Chapter Three.

³⁴¹

Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 16, 17.

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as necessarily entailing bhāvanā.

Yet Śaṅkara usually identifies nididhyāsana with nirguṇa-bhakti and not saguṇa-bhakti because of his insistence that Brahman is ultimately Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa. He also usually represents saguṇa-bhakti, especially in his Sūtra-bhāṣya, as entailing some bhāvanā. For both of these reasons the area of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the nature of bhakti must be located between Rāmānuja's para-bhakti and Śaṅkara's nirguṇa-bhakti and not between Rāmānuja's para-bhakti and Śaṅkara's saguṇa-bhakti, despite their respective doctrinal differences on the nature of the Focus.

The nirguṇa-bhakta ("the devotee to the Self") is identified in Śaṅkara's Gītā-bhāṣya as that fourth devotee, that "wise man", who is dear to the Lord precisely because he perceives his own identity with Him. Śaṅkara says that, "The wise man strives to reach Me, firm in the faith that he himself is the Lord Vasudeva and is no other

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than He." The nirguṇa-bhakta is further identified in his Gītā-bhāṣya

³⁴²The five types of saguṇa-bhakti described in the Śivānandalahari range from that bhakti prompted by need alone to that form of bhakti where the devotee fully experiences his inseparability from the Lord in the sayujya-mokṣa state. The last three types of saguṇa-bhakti described, therein, are close to Rāmānuja's para-bhakti because bhakti is understood like dhyāna-abhyāsa as a continual uninterrupted process, as illustrated in the following verse: "Like a woman separated from her husband, the mind that is attached to the lotus-feet constantly remembers, in order to grow firm...." (Śivānandalaharī, trans. T.M.P. Mahadevan, Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1970, #77). In the fourth type of saguṇa-bhakti the devotee is represented as preferring death to any separation from the Lord (Ibid., #61). In the fifth type of saguṇa-bhakti the very separateness of the bhakta and the Bhāgavan is removed by the sayujya-mokṣa state. Cf., Sri Vidya Sankara Bharati Swami, "Saṅkara on Bhakti", Vedanta Kesari, June 1958, pp. 93-96.

³⁴³

Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.18. See VII.16 to VII.18.

with the man possessing sthitaprajñā ("steady knowledge").³⁴⁴ He is described as "...resorting to the highest devotion which consists in the knowledge of the Supreme Reality."³⁴⁵ The nirguṇa-bhakta and the man of "steady knowledge" (sthitaprajñā) are then identified with those munis ("sages") who are constantly contemplating the Self.³⁴⁶ These equations indicate that nirguṇa-bhakti is essentially nididhyāsana or that uninterrupted continual process of contemplating the Self. Accordingly, Śaṅkara says in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "...the wise man...is ever steadfast, and devoted to the One, [i.e. the Self] finding no other object of worship."³⁴⁷

The Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi refers to nirguṇa-bhakti as "The seeking after one's real nature...."³⁴⁸ and co-relatively as "...the inquiry into the truth of one's own Self...."³⁴⁹ It is identified, in this text, with concrete Self-knowledge which is opposed to a merely abstract Self-knowledge.³⁵⁰ It is argued in this text that it is not enough to know the Self abstractly, one must be devoted to the Self. This is illustrated in the following excerpt: "The man who is attached to the

³⁴⁴ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.54, II.55 and IX.22 and XII.14.

³⁴⁵ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XII.20.

³⁴⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya V,28. For a further discussion of these munis cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya III.IV.47.

³⁴⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.17. See also XVIII, 52, 55.

³⁴⁸ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #31.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., #32.

³⁵⁰ Cf., Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #361, #62, #65; cf., footnote #175, section 3b(i).

Real becomes Real, through his one-pointed devotion." ³⁵¹ It is argued that though we are already the Self, this fact, must be "excavated" and invoked through this "one-pointed devotion", ³⁵² which is compared to the refining process involved in the making of gold. ³⁵³ Only this process which is variously termed nirguṇa-bhakti, jñāna-bhakti or nididhyāsana-bhakti by the Post-Śaṅkarites, ³⁵⁴ can function as the karana for Self-realization; it is phenomenologically equal to Rāmānuja's ³⁵⁵ para-bhakti. The yearning for the Self, which Śaṅkara specifies in his Sūtra-bhāṣya as one of the four pre-requisites for Brahma-vidyā, ³⁵⁶ must mature into a yearning so intense that it can only be compared to the yearning of a man for water when his clothes are aflame. ³⁵⁷

The following objections might be raised to this position: Isn't nirguṇa-bhakti a contradiction in terms; doesn't bhakti pre-suppose the duality of the worshipper and the worshipped? It can be said in reply that nirguṇa-bhakti is not a contradiction in terms but the highest form of bhakti, for duality ultimately constitutes a source of fear and not of devotion. This is indicated in the following excerpt from the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad: "Assuredly it is from a second that

³⁵¹ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #358.

³⁵² Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #65.

³⁵³ Ibid., #361.

³⁵⁴ Cf., A. P. Misra, The Development and Place of Bhakti in Śaṅkara Vedānta, Allahabad, University of Allahabad, 1967.

³⁵⁵ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, 10, XVIII, 55.

³⁵⁶ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.1; See also Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.ii.6.

³⁵⁷ Cf., Vedānta-Sāra-Saṅgraha #26.

358 fear arises". It might then be asked: Can the highest form of bhakti co-exist with fear? Śaṅkara argues that though the lower forms of bhakti co-exist with fear, the highest form of bhakti cannot
 359 so co-exist with fear. Even Rāmānuja argues that true bhakti does not begin in fear, but, rather, in love; in the awareness that one is totally dependent on the Lord who is qua Antaryāmin the very being of oneself. He says: "On account of My being exceedingly dear to them, they are unable to find sustenance for their souls even for the atomic
 360 fraction of a second without singing My praises...." According to Rāmānuja, therefore, the highest form of bhakti can only occur, when one perceives oneself as inseparable from the Lord, not when one perceives
 361 oneself as separate from the Lord. Śaṅkara argues that the highest form of bhakti begins with the realization that one is not only inseparable
 362 from the Lord, but identical with Him. Despite their doctrinal differences on the nature of the focus i.e. whether Saguṇa (Rāmānuja) or Nirguṇa (Śaṅkara), and on the nature of one's relation with the focus i.e. whether a lived inseparability (Rāmānuja) or an identity (Śaṅkara) - both of them agree that the highest bhakti can never co-exist with fear
 363 or with any sense of separability between oneself and the Lord.

³⁵⁸ Brhad. Upaniṣad I.4.2.

³⁵⁹ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.16-18.

³⁶⁰ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX.14.

³⁶¹ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.16, 17.

³⁶² Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VII, 17, 18.

³⁶³ It is argued in the Bhakti-Sutras of Nārada that the highest bhakti erases the very distinction between the Lord and the devotee. Verse forty-one states: "Because there is no distinction between Him and His man." (Nārada, Bhakti-Sutras trans. N. Sinha, Delhi: Oriental Pub.) #41.

The justification for Śaṅkara's understanding of nirguṇa-bhakti is found in this verse from the Bṛhad. Upaniṣad: "Verily, not for the sake of the gods are the gods dear but the gods are dear for the sake of the Self. Verily, not for the sake of the beings are the beings dear but the beings are dear for the sake of the Self. Verily not for the sake of all is all dear but all is dear for the sake of the Self"³⁶⁴

Śaṅkara comments on this verse as follows: "Therefore our love for other objects is secondary, since they contribute to the pleasure of the self; and our love for the self alone is primary"³⁶⁵. In Śaṅkara's thought, nirguṇa-bhakti and not sagūṇa-bhakti is primary whereas the reverse is the case in Rāmānuja's thought. Accordingly, in his interpretation of this verse, Rāmānuja argues that "all beings" are dear only in relation to the Lord.³⁶⁶

Śaṅkara's argument that one's love for the Self alone is primary because it is identical with Bliss (Ānanda) itself is supported by this verse from the Pancadāśī text: "This ever-abiding consciousness is the Self (Atman). It is the object of greatest love. It is therefore of the nature of bliss."³⁶⁷ Maṇḍana develops this argument at length in his Brahma-Siddhi. He says, "L'ātman à la beatitude pour nature pour

³⁶⁴ Bṛhad. Upaniṣad II.4.5.

³⁶⁵ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya II.4.5, p. 357. The Upadeśa-Sāhasrī presents a similar argument: "One desirous of attaining Truth should withdraw into the Self the Love that he has for external persons or things. For this love, secondary to that for the Self is evanescent and entails pain" (cf., Chapter XVII, #51).

³⁶⁶ Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII, Introduction; Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.4, III.4.46.

³⁶⁷ Vidyāraṇya Pañchadāśī trans. H. P. Shastri (London: Shanti Sadan, 1956), I.8.

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cette autre raison encore qu'il est l'objet de l'amour supreme".

He argues that desire should be in agreement with what is inherently desirable, not with what causes pain; the Self being identical with Bliss itself is therefore the most appropriate "object" of desire. Maṇḍana insists that this desire or yearning for the Self never constitutes another attachment, just as the fear produced by the vision of saṃsāra never constitutes a real aversion. ³⁶⁹ As Śaṅkara points out repeatedly, Bliss can never co-exist with fear, caused by the thought of a "second", because Bliss can only be identical with fearlessness. Śaṅkara says: "For if the man of enlightenment sees nothing as different from his own Self, then the statement, 'He gets established in that state of fearlessness', becomes appropriate, since (for him) nothing exists as a separate entity which can cause fear." ³⁷⁰

Śaṅkara argues that precisely because there is no "second" to fear, there is co-relatively no "second" to desire. Therefore the "object" of devotion in nirguṇa-bhakti can only be identical with what one is: the non-dual Self. It might then be asked: Does this imply the renunciation of other joys or their fulfillment; does the Ātman

³⁶⁸Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #5.

³⁶⁹Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi Chapter One, #3.

³⁷⁰Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.VIII.5. Śaṅkara comments on II.VII.1 of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad as follows: "(When the aspirant gets this fearless stability in Brahman) atha, then: since he does not see then diversity that is the creation of ignorance and is the cause of fear, therefore, saḥ, he; abhayaṃ gataḥ bhavati, becomes established in fearlessness. When he becomes established in his true nature, then he does not see anything else, does not hear anything else, does not know anything else. Someone gets afraid of someone else, but it is not logical that the Self should be afraid of the Self." (Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.vii.1, p. 345.)

as Ānanda imply a discontinuity or a continuity with other joys? Using these questions as guidelines the topic of Ānanda will now be examined in Śaṅkara's thought. This will be followed by an examination of Ānanda and Ānandamaya in Rāmānuja in order to delineate their doctrinal differences on this topic and uncover any possible areas of convergence.

Śaṅkara suggests a form of continuity between ordinary forms of joy and Ānanda in his Taittiriya-bhāṣya where Ānanda is described as causing ordinary joys as their very ground (adhiṣṭhāna). He says that, "People's happiness is caused by that very entity for whose purpose there are such activities of the body and senses as exhaling etc.,...this one - this Supreme Self - ...enlivens - people, in accordance with their merit. The idea is this: That very Self, which is Bliss by nature, is thought of as limited and diversified by people because of their ignorance."³⁷¹ Śaṅkara insists on the immanence of Ānanda in all our experiences of joy. He says: "...this ānanda permeates them all. Ānanda is supreme Brahman; for it is Brahman which manifests Itself in various mental modifications, evoked by past good deeds...."³⁷² Śaṅkara nevertheless acknowledges a hierarchy of different kinds of joy centered around the distinction in the Kaṭha-Upaniṣad³⁷³ between the preferable (śreyah) and the merely pleasing (preyah): this hierarchy therefore implies the affirmation of the preferable (śreyah) over the merely pleasing (preyah). The preferable (śreyah) is described in the Gītā as that which, "...at first seems like poison

³⁷¹ Śaṅkara, Taittiriya-bhāṣya II.VII.1, p. 344.

³⁷² Śaṅkara, Taittiriya-bhāṣya II.V.1, p. 323.

³⁷³ Cf., Kaṭha-Upaniṣad I.II.1.

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but in time transmutes itself into what seems to be ambrosia...."

and the merely pleasing (preyaḥ) is described as that which:"...at first

seems like ambrosia arising when the senses meet the objects of sense,

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but in time transmutes itself into what seems to be poison...."

It might be asked: Is the distinction between śreyaḥ and preyaḥ

according to Śaṅkara a distinction in the order of being or only in

the order of discovery; can there in fact be two "orders" of joy? It

can be argued in response that because the Self alone is, being identical

with Joy Itself, i.e. Ānanda, than the very thought of a "second" to

desire or to renounce can only constitute ignorance. True renunciation

according to Śaṅkara is giving up the very idea that anything other than

the Self exists. Śaṅkara accordingly states in his Brhad.-bhāṣya:

"For a thing that is known as other than oneself may become an object

of desire. But such a thing does not exist for the knower of Brahman,

the objects of whose desire have all been attained. He to whom all

objects of desire, being but the Self, are already attained, is alone

free from desires, is without desires, and does not desire any more;

hence he attains liberation. For he to whom everything is the Self,

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has nothing else to desire." This passage indicates that the distinction

between the pleasing (preyaḥ) and the preferable (śreyaḥ) in Śaṅkara's

thought ultimately refers to the order of discovery and not to the order

of being, as there cannot be two "orders" of joy. In the experience of

³⁷⁴ Bhagavad-Gītā Chapter 18, #37.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., Chapter 18, #38.

³⁷⁶ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.IV.6, p. 719.

joy two "ingredients" as such can be isolated: the joy that is identical with Brahman; and the fugitive, transitory quality in the experience.

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It is the latter that must be renounced, not the former. Yet the transitory quality in the experience of joy is due to the presence of the upādhis which are falsely super-imposed upon Ānanda. Empirical joys therefore are not ultimately different from Ānanda in the order of being; the difference pertains only to the order of discovery.

This means that Ānanda is known together with the upādhis in the former but without the upādhis in the latter. P. K. Sundaram states this as follows: "As distinctions like birth and death, smallness and greatness, purity and impurity, knowledge and error are super-imposed on what is essentially one Pure Consciousness...even so the degrees of pleasure are imagined in one changeless eternal joy....Things of the world possess value, not in their own right, but because they are dear to the Self. Even the ardours and ecstasies of physical love have their ultimate reference in Ātman. No Joy belongs to the empirical 'me'.

It is to delude oneself to think that pleasure is derived from an external source by an external means and is experienced by the mind. The Self is all-Knowledge and all-Bliss and their externality is an illusion.

There are therefore, no two orders of joy, the transcendental and the

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empirical."

In the order of discovery, however, empirical joys and the experience of Blissfullness play an important epistemic role for,

³⁷⁷ One can only renounce what masquerades as Ānanda, never Ānanda Itself.

³⁷⁸ P. K. Sundaram, "Reality is Joy: Vimuktatman's Conception", Journal of Madras University Vol. 27, 1955, pp. 48-49.

although Brahman is ultimately Ānanda and not Ānandamaya, this fact
 can only be known via Ānandamaya. Co-relatively, as argued earlier,³⁷⁹
 although Brahman is svarūpa-jñāna and not ṛtti-jñāna, this fact can
 only be known via ṛtti-jñāna. Therefore Śaṅkara argues that Bliss
 (Ānanda) only knows Itself as Bliss via the experience of Bliss-fullness
 (Ānandamaya). He says in his Taittirīya-bhāṣya: "...through the
 comprehension of the blissful self which acts as a pointer(to the Bliss
 Brahman), one has to realise, within this very cavity of the heart,
 that Self as the culmination of the growth of bliss, which is Brahman
 (conceived of) as the stabilising tail (of the blissful self), which is
 the support of all modifications and which is devoid of all modifications."³⁸⁰
 Further on in the same bhāṣya he states this point even more clearly:
 "The bliss, thus attained, is being instanced here as an approach to
 the Bliss that is Brahman; for through this familiar bliss can be approached
 the Bliss that is comprehended by an intellect, free from objective
 thought. Even worldly bliss is a particle of the Bliss that is Brahman
"³⁸¹ This does not mean that Ānanda is cognised; rather, Ānanda
 is reflected in Ānandamaya and indicated alongside it, in the same manner
 as svarūpa-jñāna is indicated and intuited alongside ṛtti-jñāna.
 Śaṅkara says in this respect: "...the Self is truly known when It is
 known along with each state of consciousness."³⁸² More precisely, as

³⁷⁹ Cf., section 3a(i).

³⁸⁰ Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya II.VI.1, p. 337.

³⁸¹ Ibid., II.viii.1-4, pp. 350-51.

³⁸² Śaṅkara, Kena-bhāṣya II.4, p. 66.

the excerpts from his Taittirīya-bhāṣya indicate, Ānandamaya "indicates" Ānanda via adhyāropa-apavāda.

Contrary to Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja argues that the Lord is both ³⁸³
Ānanda and Ānandamaya: Ānanda in His svarūpa; and Ānandamaya
³⁸⁴ in His svabhāva. Rāmānuja interprets Ānandamaya not as a modification ³⁸⁵
of Ānanda, as with Śaṅkara's interpretation, ³⁸⁶ but as its abundance.
Because Rāmānuja argues that the svarūpa and the svabhāva are inseparably
related as two modes of the same substance, Ānanda and Ānandamaya
are understood as inseparably united. Śaṅkara, on the contrary, argued
that Brahman is ultimately Ānanda and not Ānandamaya. Despite these
doctrinal differences, an area of convergence between them is disclosed
by Śaṅkara's acknowledgement of the importance of Ānandamaya in the
order of discovery, for though Brahman is ultimately Ānanda and not
Ānandamaya, this fact can only be known via Ānandamaya. In the order of
discovery, the experience of Ānandamaya is indispensable according to both
Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara in pointing to Ānanda. Even Rāmānuja argues that
the svarūpa of the Lord as Ānanda is ultimately unknown. He says in his
Gītā-bhāṣya: "I [i.e. the Lord] know , that is, I understand all
beings - those that have passed away, those that are in existence at
present and those that will come into existence in future. But Me,

³⁸³Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya III.III.13; Vedārthasaṁgraha #84.

³⁸⁴Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.14.

³⁸⁵Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.19.

³⁸⁶Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.14.

no one knows."³⁸⁷ Contrary to Rāmānuja, Śaṅkara argues that the experience of Bliss can only be the experience of one's identity with that Bliss for, in that experience there cannot be even a "second" as such who experiences the Bliss, but only Bliss itself. He says in this respect: "'That in which one sees something, ... knows something, is puny, ' mortal, secondary joy. But this is the opposite of that; hence 'this is its supreme bliss'."³⁸⁸ Rāmānuja, on the contrary, argues that Ānanda³⁸⁹ is not identical with the Self but pertains to the Lord alone. Despite these doctrinal differences a possible convergence emerges when one examines Rāmānuja's description of the dahara-vidyā,³⁹⁰ where the devotee is therein enjoined to meditate not on his separability from the Lord's Bliss, but on His inseparability from that Bliss. Such Bliss is described as that "hidden treasure" immanent in the "secret place of the heart".³⁹¹ Rāmānuja states that, "Brahman is rather to be meditated upon as being the Self of the meditating Devotee. As the meditating individual soul is the Self of its own body, so the highest Brahman is the Self of the individual soul....'Then I am indeed thou,³⁹² holy divinity, and thou art me.'" The para-bhakta is described accordingly

³⁸⁷Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya VII.26. It might be said that Rāmānuja's emphasis on the svarūpa of the Lord as ultimately unknowable is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's emphasis on Brahman as Nirguṇa.

³⁸⁸Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya IV.iii.33.

³⁸⁹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.13.

³⁹⁰Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.14.

³⁹¹Ibid.

³⁹²Śrī-bhāṣya, Thibaut, IV.1, 3.

in his Gītā-bhāṣya as incapable of sustaining himself without that Bliss.³⁹³ Although everyone is totally dependent on that Bliss, only the para-bhakta perceives that fact. In this sense Rāmānuja can be understood as agreeing with Śaṅkara that the Bliss of Brahman does not so much entail a renunciation of desires as their fulfillment: true asceticism, according to Rāmānuja, is being deprived of the Lord, not sense-pleasures. Therefore both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree that only the preferable (śreyah) is ultimately pleasing (preyah).

These areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja indicate that the total spectrum of bhakti in Śaṅkara's thought can not be reduced to something that is only provisionally efficacious for the "unenlightened man" and from the first level of truth. Rather, the highest bhakti i.e. nirguṇa-bhakti, is identified in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara with the process of nididhyāsana or dhyāna-abhyāsa which is specified in his Gītā-bhāṣya as the karana for Self-realization,³⁹⁴ and as the "objective content" of the Ātma-vidhi.³⁹⁵ Śaṅkara co-relatively identifies the highest devotee i.e. nirguṇa-bhakta with that man possessing steady knowledge (sthitaprajñā)³⁹⁶ and those munis who are constantly contemplating the Self. All this goes further than any merely provisional concession to bhakti as applicable only to the "unenlightened man". That process of constantly contemplating the Self which is

³⁹³Cf., Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya IX, #14, X, #34.

³⁹⁴Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya VI. Introduction.

³⁹⁵Cf., section 5b(ii).

³⁹⁶Cf., footnotes 344-346.

appropriate only for the "enlightenned man" can be equally termed nirguṇa-bhakti or jñāna-niṣṭhā.

As these equations indicate, the implicit theism in Śaṅkara is justified because of its indispensable epistemic role in the order of discovery. Although Brahman is Ānanda and not Ānandamaya, that fact can only be known via Ānandamaya. Although Brahman is ultimately Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa, that fact can only be un-veiled via Saguṇa Brahman, for it is only the Lord who can reveal what one truly is. Co-relatively the acceptance of sādhana as adhyāropa-apavāda in Advaita should not entail any devaluation of the Lord; rather adhyāropa-apavāda is not a mechanical process but an organic process which is supervised by the Lord. Śaṅkara, accordingly describes māyā as "...belonging to and being under the control of the Isvara... Maya does not exist or act independently of Brahman, the Isvara."³⁹⁷ Śaṅkara also describes the Lord as dwelling in the mind of the devotee and leading him to purity of mind (sattva-suddhi).³⁹⁸ Most important, only the Lord as the Guru ("teacher")³⁹⁹ can disclose the meaning of the mahā-vākya: tat tvam asi. Śaṅkara accordingly states in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya: "...it is only knowledge learnt from the Teacher that becomes best, - acquires its highest character...."⁴⁰⁰ He states even more decisively in his Gītā-bhāṣya that, "...knowledge alone which is imparted by those who have realised

³⁹⁷ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya Introduction, pp. 3-4.

³⁹⁸ Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya X.11.

³⁹⁹ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, Chapter One, #3-6.

⁴⁰⁰ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya IV.IX.3.

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the truth - and no other knowledge - can prove effective." Prapatti

is implicitly referred to here as one is enjoined to "...humbly prostrate

thysself before them." ⁴⁰² Śaṅkara argues that it is only the man who has

surrendered to the Lord, as the Guru, who can hope to be released, or,

more precisely, discover that he has always been released. The role of

the Guru is described in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya ⁴⁰³ according to the following

parable: A man is carried away from his country by robbers. He is

left in a desolate forest with his eyes bound so that he has no sense of

direction. He is later helped by a stranger who removes his bandages

and gives him instructions for returning home. In this parable the

stranger represents the Guru and the robbers represent the forces of

karma which tear a man away from his real home, the Self. Śaṅkara

concludes this parable by citing this critical sentence from the above

verse: "That person knows who has a teacher". It is accordingly

suggested in the first chapter of the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī that the Lord as

the Guru is the ultimate kaṛaṇa for Self-realization. ⁴⁰⁴ In this

connection, it is significant that the necessity for a surrender to the

Lord as the Guru is discussed in the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi just after the

discussion on nirguṇa-bhakti: one might infer from this that nirguṇa-

bhakti only becomes possible by first surrendering to the Lord as the

Guru. ⁴⁰⁵ Accordingly the man seeking nirguṇa-bhakti is therein enjoined

⁴⁰¹ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.34. Cf., Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya I.ii.8 and the Hymn to Guru: Gurvaṣṭakam.

⁴⁰² Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya IV.34.

⁴⁰³ Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.xiv.2.

⁴⁰⁴ Cf., Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Chapter One, #3.

⁴⁰⁵ Cf., Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #34-39.

to "...approach a wise preceptor, who confers emancipation from bondage."

In this sense, i.e. as devotion to the Guru, Śaṅkara can be understood as arguing that saguna-bhakti can lead to nirguna-bhakti. Śaṅkara however, might be said to offer a more universal model of bhakti than Rāmānuja who tends to emphasize the Vaiṣṇavite model of the Lord. T. M. P. Mahadevan expresses this universal appeal in Śaṅkara's understanding of bhakti as follows: "Advaita teaches not only the non-duality of Brahman (Brahmadvaita) but also the non-duality of the Deity (Devata-'dvaita). A devotee is free to choose whatever form of the Deity that pleases him."

4. A Possible Mitigation of Māyā-Vāda or Its Realistic Perspective

Preamble:

The last three subsections have examined the three areas where Śaṅkara's emphasis on Brahman as Nirguna has been somewhat mitigated; namely, (1) in his understanding of jñāna-yoga as adhyāropa-apavāda, (2) in his implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi and in his co-relative admission that dhyāna-abhyāsa is the kaṛaṇa for Self-realization and (3) in his implicit theism. As this chapter has uncovered these areas in the "implicit Śaṅkara, it has also revealed areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. The last section of this chapter will examine the possible mitigation or the realistic interpretation of Śaṅkara's second major doctrine of māyā-vāda. In order to achieve this objective, the explicit and

⁴⁰⁶ Viveka-cūdāmaṇi, #32.

⁴⁰⁷ T. M. P. Mahadevan, "Eka-Bhakti" unpublished paper.

⁴⁰⁸ It is important to distinguish between a realistic interpretation of māyā-vāda and an actual mitigation of māyā-vāda.

implicit forms of realism in Śaṅkara's thought will be examined. The purpose of such an examination is to explore one more critical dimension of the "implicit Śaṅkara", namely his implicit realism, in order to un-cover any more possible areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

Before investigating the implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology it is necessary to delineate the explicit realism in Śaṅkara's epistemology in that the latter may be described as the foundation for the former. Therefore section 4a will examine the explicit realism in Śaṅkara's epistemology which is most evident in the "explicit strand" of Śaṅkara. Section 4b will examine the implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology in his understanding of sādhana which is most evident in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara.

4a. The Explicit Realism in Śaṅkara's Epistemology

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja can be described as realists in that they both argue against the idealistic stance of the Yogacāra Buddhists who maintain that consciousness creates the object known.⁴⁰⁹ Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue to the contrary, that consciousness never creates the object known, which exists independent of the knower, but only reveals it. They nevertheless both argue for the importance of the purification of consciousness, for a consciousness obscured by desires and past

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Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.II.28; Śrī-bhāṣya II.II.27. The realism in Śaṅkara's epistemology is the foundation for the implicit realism in his ontology for Śaṅkara argues in his Sūtra-bhāṣya II.II.28 that the external world should not be reduced to an illusion in the Buddhist sense of śūnyatā ("emptiness") for Brahman is the Ground (adhiṣṭhāna) of the external world. Cf., section 4b.

saṃskāras cannot clearly reveal the object known. Śaṅkara accordingly, argues that the purification of the buddhi effected through dhyāna-abhyāsa finally leads to the Akhaṇḍa-vṛtti,⁴¹⁰ and that the very distinction between bondage and liberation pertains to that process and not to the Self as such.⁴¹¹ As argued earlier⁴¹² Rāmānuja clearly insists on the importance of this mental purification in removing the vikārās of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna, but, unlike Śaṅkara, he tends to view this purification process as pertaining more to the will than to the intellect. Though Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue for the importance of this mental purification, they do not conclude in the manner of the niyoga-vādin that the purport of the Vedas is such a mental purification. They both argue that only Brahman is the purport of the Vedas, who **can** never be dependent on any action, even a mental action.⁴¹³

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue co-relatively that the essential nature of the Self and the essential nature of Self-knowledge, whether understood as without attributes (Śaṅkara) or as with attributes (Rāmānuja), is not created by such a mental purification, but reflected in it. Śaṅkara says in his Sūtra-bhāṣya: "Knowledge is not dependent on the mind of man or the Vedic instructions. It depends on the thing itself and is made available by pramāṇas."⁴¹⁴ In Śaṅkara, however, the

⁴¹⁰Cf., sections 3a(i) and 3a(ii).

⁴¹¹Cf., Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya II.21.

⁴¹²Cf., section 2a.

⁴¹³Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.14; Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.4.

⁴¹⁴Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.4, p. 25. Śaṅkara says earlier in his Sūtra-bhāṣya: "...the knowledge of Brahman depends entirely on Brahman alone, inasmuch as it is already an accomplished fact." (Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, I.1.3, p. 13)

distinction between Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" i.e. svarūpa-jñāna, and Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" i.e. vṛtti-jñāna, is crucial here for whereas svarūpa-jñāna can only be identical with mokṣa, and is thus beyond all relations, vṛtti-jñāna is what must be purified in saṃsāra.⁴¹⁵ This independence of svarūpa-jñāna from the knowing process in Śaṅkara's thought has been compared by scholars⁴¹⁶ to the independence of the object known from the knowing process. A. K. Chatterjee says in this respect that, "The real is what is independent of the knowing act. Knowledge does not create or in any way distort its content. Its function is just to reveal the object existing in its own right. The content known asserts its own existence irrespective of the fact of its being known."⁴¹⁷ This analogy, however, though helpful, can also be misleading as svarūpa-jñāna can only be the Pure Subject and never an object of knowledge as such.⁴¹⁸ Sureśvara and the Vivaraṇa school focus on this independence of svarūpa-jñāna from the knowing process to combat the kind of emphasis on dhyāna-abhyāsa and on any volitional effort such as one finds in the Bhāmati school. Sureśvara states in his Sambandha-Vārtika: "Nor is the perception of the real brought about anywhere by resolution; for even where there

⁴¹⁵ For a discussion on the distinction between svarūpa-jñāna and vṛtti-jñāna in Śaṅkara, cf., footnote #84, Introduction, Chapter One, section 5c, Chapter Four section 3a(i).

⁴¹⁶ Cf., T.R.V. Murti, The Central Philosophy of Buddhism (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1960), p. 315. Herein after cited as: T.R.V. Murti, The Central Philosophy of Buddhism and cf., A.K. Chatterji, The Yogācāra Idealism (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1963), p. 243. Herein after cited as: A.K. Chatterji, The Yogācāra Idealism.

⁴¹⁷ A. K. Chatterjee, The Yogācāra Idealism, p. 243.

⁴¹⁸ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya I.1.4, I.1.5.

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is absence (of resolution) there is perception...." Further on in the same text he states in a similar manner: "Nor is knowledge of the one self dependent on practice (abhyāsa); nor is it expectant of meditation (bhāvanā)...."⁴²⁰

Yet Maṇḍana and the Bhāmāti school never infer that svarūpa-jñāna is dependent upon ṛtti-jñāna, but only that svarūpa-jñāna is reflected in ṛtti-jñāna,⁴²¹ after it has attained a state of purity, i.e. sattva-suddhi. This emphasis is merely a radicalization of the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara for Śaṅkara argues in many of his Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas and in his Gītā-bhāṣya that svarūpa-jñāna cannot know itself as svarūpa-jñāna without ṛtti-jñāna.⁴²²

In a similar manner Rāmānuja argues that the essential nature of Self-knowledge, i.e. the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna, cannot know itself without the dharmā-bhūta-jñāna, which must undergo a purification in order to reflect the former. Whereas Śaṅkara argues that ṛtti-jñāna is ultimately a false super-imposition upon svarūpa-jñāna, Rāmānuja argues that the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna and the dharmā-bhūta-jñāna are inseparable as two modes of the self-same category.⁴²³ Despite these doctrinal differences, however, an area of convergence between them on

⁴¹⁹ Suresvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #385b.

⁴²⁰ Suresvara, Sambandha-Vārtika #438b., cf., Ibid., #828.

⁴²¹ For a discussion of the different uses of svarūpa-jñāna and ṛtti-jñāna in the Bhāmāti and Vivaraṇa schools, cf., section 3a(i).

⁴²² Cf., previous discussion on svarūpa-jñāna and ṛtti-jñāna in Śaṅkara in section 3a(i).

⁴²³ Cf., previous discussion, Chapter Three, section 1c.

this issue can be uncovered. Both of them argue that the essential nature of Self-knowledge and Self-knowledge considered as a process are ultimately united, but whereas Śaṅkara conceives of their unity in terms of identity and an absence of difference, Rāmānuja conceives of their unity in terms of inseparability. Rāmānuja accordingly argues against any undifferentiated consciousness and insists that there is no consciousness devoid of

⁴²⁴ objects. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, argues that the ultimate unity between svarūpa-jñāna and vṛtti-jñāna does not admit of any difference for svarūpa-jñāna and vṛtti-jñāna should not be understood as two different realities as such; rather, svarūpa-jñāna is the reality or the ground (adhiṣṭhāna) of vṛtti-jñāna which is its appearance. This is stated in the Upadeśa-Sāhasrī as follows: "The knowledge produced by an evidence does not differ in its essential nature whether one calls it transitory or eternal. Knowledge (though) produced by an evidence is nothing but knowledge."⁴²⁵ Similarly, as the next section will argue, māyā is not one more reality besides Brahman, Brahman is the reality of māyā.

4b. The Implicit Realism in Śaṅkara's Ontology

Śaṅkara argues that the Self is disclosed by a turn inwards via the discipline of dhyāna-abhyāsa, and also by a subsequent turn outwards when the Self is seen as "all this".⁴²⁶ As argued earlier,⁴²⁷

⁴²⁴ Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.1.1, p. 52 (Thibaut).

⁴²⁵ Upadeśa-Sāhasrī Part One, Chapter Two, #103.

⁴²⁶ Cf., Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7; Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #1.

⁴²⁷ Cf., section 3a(i).

dhyāna-abhyāsa and viveka-jñāna should not be represented as exclusive alternatives, but, rather, as two phases of the same process. Similarly, the Self must not only be discovered as the reality of the jīva, but also as the reality of the world. D. M. Datta states this as follows:

"The inward search for the reality in man and the inner realization are therefore logically incomplete without the outward search and realization that the same Brahman is the Ātman, the Reality underlying the inner and the outer."⁴²⁸ Śaṅkara never understands the world as a separate reality from the Self; rather, the world is understood as the manifestation of the Self which is its very Ground (adhiṣṭhāna). Datta accordingly reduces any exclusive emphasis on a "turn inwards" at the expense of a "turn outwards" to a mere "... intellectual sport ... a kind of solipsism tending to grant a moral holiday and encouraging a premature quietism".⁴²⁹

He argues that this re-perception of the world as grounded in Brahman in Śaṅkara's thought should result in a deeper social commitment.

It might be objected that this social dimension of sādhana is emphasized more by Rāmānuja⁴³⁰ than by Śaṅkara. The ultimate justification for this is that the implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology never amounted to an acceptance of creation such as one finds in Rāmānuja's

⁴²⁸ D. M. Datta, "Inward and Outward Advaita Vedanta" Philosophical Quarterly (Vol. 30, 1957), p. 168.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., p. 171.

⁴³⁰ K. Seshadri refers to the realism in Rāmānuja: "...which recognizes the ultimacy and intrinsic worth of moral values, providing for a concrete and humanistic approach to moral problems...." (K. Seshadri, "Ritual, Ethics and Mysticism in Visishtadvaita" Visishtadvaita, Philosophy and Religion (Madras: Ramanuja Research Society, 1974), p. 143.)

modified pariṇāma-vāda ("the doctrine that the effect is an actual transformation of the cause").⁴³¹ Śaṅkara nevertheless, clearly rejects the idealism of the Yogācāra school of Buddhism and argues that the world as Brahman is real.⁴³²

The implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology can be described as an application of the explicit realism in his epistemology. N. K. Devaraja says in this respect that, "The upshot of Śaṅkara's analysis of experience or knowledge is that it invariably has an objective reference."⁴³³ Therefore this section and the previous section are inseparably related.

Śaṅkara avoids the two extremes of the materialists, who argue that the world as it appears is real, and the Yogācāra idealists, who reduce the world to a mere product of consciousness and therefore to the status of śūnyatā ("emptiness").⁴³⁴

Śaṅkara offers two correctives for the above positions: māyā-vāda for the materialists and the doctrine of Brahman as Ānanda for the śūnyatā doctrine of the Yogācārins. It might be asked: What is the relationship between the doctrine of Brahman as Ānanda and māyā-vāda? It can be said in reply that Śaṅkara's emphasis on Brahman

⁴³¹ Kokileswar Sastri might be criticized in this regard as he misinterprets the implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology as actually entailing an implicit pariṇāma-vāda. Cf., K. Sastri, "Māyā in Śaṅkara-Vedānta: Its Objectivity" Poona Oriental Series 37, 1939: II, 327-42.

⁴³² Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.II.28.

⁴³³ N. K. Devaraja, An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge, p. 105.

⁴³⁴ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.II.28 to II.II.32. For the concept of śūnyatā, cf., A.K. Chatterjee, The Yogācāra Idealism, p. 29.

as Ānanda⁴³⁵ prevents one from mis-reading his māyā-vāda as equal to śūnyatā-vāda, and that his māyā-vāda prevents one from mis-reading Ānanda as a mere quality or as something to be attained as such. Co-relatively his emphasis on Brahman as Ānanda implies that his doctrine of Nirguṇa Brahman is not equal to śūnyatā-vāda. Śaṅkara says in this respect that, "...the denial of something unreal is possible only with reference to something real. It is with reference to a real rope that the unreal snake on it is denied. This means that after eliminating that which is unreal there remains something which is real. But if we deny both Brahman and its two forms, there will be a total void; and in the absence of any entity left as real the very possibility of denying even an unreal thing will not be there."⁴³⁶ It is with reference to Brahman as the Ground (adhiṣṭhāna)⁴³⁷ that the world as it appears is denied, but not the world as Brahman. The negation implicit in the "neti-neti" ascription lies not in Brahman's nature, which should be described as the Full (Pūrṇa) and Supreme Bliss (Ānanda), but rather in the limiting structure of every ascription. Viewing Brahman as Ānanda and co-relatively viewing the world as Brahman and not as nāma-rūpa, therefore, helps to prevent any mis-interpretation of Nirguṇa Brahman as equal to śūnyatā. Śaṅkara accordingly states in his Gītā-bhāṣya that, "When it is said that Brahman the Knowable is not accessible to the word or thought of 'sat' (existent),

⁴³⁵ This mis-interpretation led to the controversial claim that Śaṅkara was a "crypto-Buddhist". For a discussion of this claim cf., Ninian Smart, Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy, p. 99.

⁴³⁶ Sūtra-bhāṣya, Date, III.II.22, p. 145.

⁴³⁷ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.6.

one may perhaps suppose It to be 'asat' or none-existent. To prevent this supposition the Lord proceeds to declare Its existence as, manifested through the upadhis, through the sense of all living beings....Brahman exists as the Inner Self (Pratyak), as the source of all activity of the senses...as Isvara or the Lord of the universe."

Maṇḍana devotes much argument in his Brahma-Siddhi to refuting any misinterpretation of Nirguṇa Brahman as śūnyatā. He begins this work with the insistence that mokṣa should not be understood merely negatively as the cessation of pain, but positively as Ānanda. He says: "...'la beatitude'...n'est pas seulement la cessation de la douleur." Co-relatively, Maṇḍana insists, contra the Buddhists, that the intense longing for release does not constitute another attachment.

This implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology implies a realistic interpretation of māyā-vāda. J. G. Arapura says: "Strange as it may sound, māyāvāda implies a very strong affirmation of the reality of the world. In this respect it goes exactly as far as empiricism would want to go. No empiricism ever ascribes absolute reality to the world in any case." Śaṅkara insists that Brahman and the world are not two opposing realities; rather, Brahman is the reality of the world. He says in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya: "In fact, all modifications - Name and Form

⁴³⁸ Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya XIII, #12, pp. 347-48.

⁴³⁹ Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, #1. The French translation: "le plaisir" for Ānanda is somewhat misleading here for Ānanda should never be confused with sense-pleasures as such.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf., Maṇḍana, Brahma-Siddhi, Chapter One, ##3,4.

⁴⁴¹ J. G. Arapura, "Māyā and the Discourse about Brahman" from Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta, M. Sprung (ed.) (Dordrecht: Reidel Pub. Co., 1973), p. III.

are real in so far as they are of the nature of 'Being', - in themselves,
⁴⁴²
 they are all unreal...." He therefore argues in his Brhad.-bhāṣya
 that the world as undifferentiated is equal to the Self. He says:
 "...the Supreme Self was meant as being identical with the undifferentiated
⁴⁴³
 universe."

According to Śaṅkara, without this equation of the "undifferentiated
 universe" and the Self, knowledge would not be possible. In his
Īśa-bhāṣya he argues that because the Self is "all this", when the Self
 is known, "all this" becomes known. He states in a similar manner in
 his Chāndogya-bhāṣya that, "You think that the knowledge of one thing
 cannot make another thing known. This would be quite true, if the product
 (effect) were something entirely different from the cause. As a matter
 of fact, however, the effect is not entirely different from its cause."
⁴⁴⁴
 He argues in this bhāṣya that just as all modifications of clay are in
 reality nothing but clay, so "all this" is ultimately equal to Brahman.

In Śaṅkara the implication of this equation for the question of
 renunciation is decisive: because the Self is "all this", renunciation is
 ultimately the abandonment of the very idea that anything other than the
 Self exists.
⁴⁴⁵
 Śaṅkara says in his Īśa-bhāṣya: "'All this is but
 the Self', so that all this belongs to the Self, and the Self is all.
⁴⁴⁶
 Therefore do not have any hankering for things that are unreal."

⁴⁴² Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.iii.3.

⁴⁴³ Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7, p. 112.

⁴⁴⁴ Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.i.6.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf., section 1, 3c.

⁴⁴⁶ Śaṅkara, Īśa-bhāṣya #1.

Śaṅkara is arguing, in effect, that the world is but another way of knowing Brahman; that is, knowing Brahman via the upādhis. In this sense Brahman can be referred to as dual in the order of knowing, but as non-dual in the order of being. Therefore the statement "the world, ⁴⁴⁷as Brahman (brahmatvena satyam) is Real" can be understood as "the world when known as Brahman is Real."

An area of convergence exists between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in their conception of the inseparability of the world from Brahman, but the convergence co-exists with very real doctrinal differences. Rāmānuja argues that the inseparability of the world and Brahman co-exists with a real distinctness for, their svarūpas are never confused. ⁴⁴⁸He does not describe the world as illusory, but as a real mode of the Lord, as a part of His ⁴⁴⁹svabhāva. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, can not allow for an actual distinctness between the world and Brahman for such an admission would threaten his central premise, i.e. that Brahman is the only Real. He explicitly argues that the world as nāma-rūpa ("name and form") is illusory (mithyā) yet identical with Brahman as its appearance. In this way, both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue that the world is inseparable from Brahman but, whereas Rāmānuja conceives of this unity as a lived inseparability co-existing with difference, Śaṅkara conceives of this unity as an identity, without

⁴⁴⁷Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.6.

⁴⁴⁸Cf., Vedārthasaṅgraha #85.

⁴⁴⁹Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya II.III.18.

450 difference. As argued earlier, according to Rāmānuja "the primary
 sense" of the world or its "extended sense" (upalakṣaṇa) is its
 inherence within the Lord, its inseparability from Him, whereas its
 "secondary sense" involves any "as-if separability" between the world
 and Brahman. Whereas Śāṅkara argues that the world in its "secondary
 sense" involves an illusory notion (mithyāpratyaya) caused by avidyā,
 Rāmānuja insists that the experience of the world in its "secondary
 sense" is "caused" by karma. Both nevertheless agree that the world is
 occasioned by something extraneous and that an inequality exists
 between these two inseparable terms i.e. the world and Brahman.
 According to both Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja the relation between the world
 and Brahman is irreversible and one-sided for Brahman must not inherit
 the defects of the world. T. R. V. Murti refers to this inequality
 between the world and Brahman in Śāṅkara's thought as follows: "One
 term, the higher, is not exhausted in the relationship, it has a trans-
 cendent or non-implicatory existence which is its intrinsic nature.
 The other term however, is entirely exhausted within the relation and
 has no non-relative existence."⁴⁵²

Although Rāmānuja articulates this false perception of separability
 between these two terms differently from Śāṅkara, i.e. in terms of an
 "as-if separability" rather than in terms of an "as-if duality", both
 agree that the world per se cannot be actually separated from Brahman.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf., Sūtra-bhāṣya II.III.6; Śāṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya I.IV.7.

⁴⁵¹ Cf., Chapter Two, section #2c.

⁴⁵² T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita".

Such a separation is only apparent. Rāmānuja states in his Gītā-bhāṣya: "(They say that the universe is) unreal. That is, they do not say that this universe, by reason of its being the effect of the Brahman... has the Brahman for its Self. (They say) that it is without any foundation. That is, they do not say that it has the Brahman for its foundation."⁴⁵³ According to Rāmānuja, the distinctness of the world from Brahman is never what constitutes the problem necessitating sādhana, but perceiving it as-if it were separable from the Lord as His mode and acting willfully in accordance with that misperception. Even though Rāmānuja explicitly denies māyā-vāda, his doctrine of apṛthaksiddha ("inseparability") between the Lord and His modes implies that any perception of an absolute separability between the Lord and the world as His mode can have no ontological status.

There is much evidence, especially in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara, for understanding Śaṅkara's insistence on the non-duality between the world and Brahman in terms that would be structurally parallel to Rāmānuja's conception of this relation, i.e. in terms of their inseparability. Co-relatively there is much evidence in this "implicit strand" for understanding Śaṅkara's doctrine of māyā-vāda in terms that would be structurally parallel to Rāmānuja, i.e. in terms of an as-if separability between the world and Brahman.

The former contention, i.e. that the actual non-duality between the world and Brahman can be understood as their inseparability will now be verified with reference to Śaṅkara's commentaries. Rāmānuja's

⁴⁵³ Rāmānuja, Gītā-bhāṣya XVI, #8; cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.7; cf., Chapter Two, 2c(iii).

assertion that the world is inseparable from Brahman qua the Antaryāmin⁴⁵⁴
 who ensouls "all this" as its Inner Controller, and ultimately as⁴⁵⁵
 its inmost essence, is mirrored in the following passage from Śaṅkara's
Gītā-bhāṣya: "There is no being without Me; for anything into which I
 have not entered would be without Self and would be void. Wherefore,⁴⁵⁶
 everything is of My nature, i.e., I am the essence of everything."
 Similarly as Rāmānuja argues that the world cannot exist apart from the
 Lord,⁴⁵⁷ so Śaṅkara argues that the world is non-existent apart from
 Brahman. He says in his Brhad.-bhāṣya that, "Just as bubbles, foam,
 etc. are non-existent apart from water, so name, form and action,
 which are the effects of Pure Intelligence and dissolve in It are
 non-existent apart from It."⁴⁵⁸ Similarly, in his Chāndogya-bhāṣya
 Śaṅkara describes all beings as rooted in Brahman, as residing in Him⁴⁵⁹
 and as finally resting in Him. Yet Śaṅkara never implies that this
 reduces Brahman to the manifoldness of nāma-rūpa; rather, he argues that
 the world as Brahman is Real but not the world as nāma-rūpa. K. Sastri
 articulates this emphasis in Śaṅkara as follows: "The world is a
 self-expression of Brahman and is therefore non-different from it, has

⁴⁵⁴Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha ##4, 6, 17.

⁴⁵⁵Cf., Vedārthasaṃgraha #77.

⁴⁵⁶Śaṅkara, Gītā-bhāṣya X, #39.

⁴⁵⁷Cf., Śrī-bhāṣya I.III.7.

⁴⁵⁸Śaṅkara, Brhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.11, p. 364.

⁴⁵⁹Cf., Śaṅkara, Chāndogya-bhāṣya VI.viii.4, p. 334; cf.,
 Śaṅkara, Kaṭha-bhāṣya II.III.12.

no real existence apart from Brahman".⁴⁶⁰ Śaṅkara's insistence on the inseparability between the world and Brahman is not only argued within Śaṅkara's provisional thesis of satkāryavāda ("the doctrine that the effect pre-exists cause") but also within his subsequent thesis of vivarta-vāda ("the doctrine that the effect is a mere appearance"). The area of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this issue, therefore does not confine itself to Śaṅkara's provisional concession to the reality of the world from the first level of truth;⁴⁶¹ rather the implicit realism in Śaṅkara's ontology co-exists with his māyā-vāda. It is precisely this realistic strand in māyā-vāda that prevents one from mis-interpreting it as śūnyatā.

The contention referred to earlier, i.e. that Śaṅkara's conception of the as-if duality between the world and Brahman can be understood in terms parallel to Rāmānuja's conception of an as-if separability, will now be verified. Accordingly, in this passage from his Taittirīya-bhāṣya Śaṅkara describes the world as incapable of existing apart from Brahman: "...it exists because of Brahman...it is reduced to a non-entity apart from Brahman...."⁴⁶² He states in a similar manner in his Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya: "There is no such thing as the universe apart from Puruṣa."⁴⁶³ Later on in the same bhāṣya he says: "That which

⁴⁶⁰Kokileswar Sastri, "A Contradiction Reconciled in Samkara-Vedānta", Calcutta Oriental Journal Volume 3, 1936, p. 85. Herein after cited as: K. Sastri, "A Contradiction Reconciled in Samkara-Vedānta".

⁴⁶¹Such a convergence would be rather trivial and predictable.

⁴⁶²Śaṅkara, Taittirīya-bhāṣya III.X.5-6.

⁴⁶³Śaṅkara, Muṇḍaka-bhāṣya II.i.10.

comprises the sat and the asat is what has become your Self; for the sat, formed, gross, and the asat, formless, subtle, do not exist apart from It." ⁴⁶⁴ This as-if separability between the world and Brahman is referred to most clearly in the Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi: "Therefore the universe does not exist apart from the Supreme Self; and the perception of its separateness is false like the qualities (of blueness etc. in the sky)." ⁴⁶⁵ K. Sastri goes so far as to equate māyā-vāda with this as-if separability when he states that, "...the world appears as something separate and independent....Such a view must be unreal, false, according to Śaṅkara. It is only in this sense alone that Śaṅkara has called the world of the plurality unreal, false...what is denied is not the existence of the plurality as finite mode of the infinite, but their existence apart from, and independently of Brahman." ⁴⁶⁶ Such an equation is more evident in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara than in the "explicit strand". Śaṅkara explicitly rejects any variation of pariṇāma-vāda, such as one finds in Rāmānuja, and, co-relatively, any belief in an actual distinction between the world and Brahman. They both argue nevertheless that the world can never exist apart from Brahman. Rāmānuja's insistence on the reality of the world does not imply its separate reality but, only its reality as a mode of the Lord. This is structurally similar to Śaṅkara's insistence that the world by itself is illusory, but real as Brahman.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., II.ii.i. Cf., also Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.12 where the jīva is described as incapable of existing apart from Brahman.

⁴⁶⁵ Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi #235.

⁴⁶⁶ K. Sastri, "A Contradiction Reconciled in Samkara-Vedānta", p. 87.

It might then be asked: does sublation negate the world in toto or only the world as undifferentiated? S. S. Sastri, in representing the "implicit strand" in Śaṅkara, argues for the latter alternative. He says: "Māyā is sublatale by Brahman only because it is of the very nature of Brahman."⁴⁶⁷ He interprets sublation not as the negation of the category in toto, but as the negation of its as-if separability from Brahman. He says that, "Once again we see but the whole exercising its ascendancy over and transforming the part."⁴⁶⁸ This view of sublation is very close to Rāmānuja's conception which P. N. Srinivasachari summarizes as follows: "Sublation is a state of self-transcendence and not a process of negating negation."⁴⁶⁹ Śaṅkara speaks of the sublation of the world in a similar sense in his Bṛhad.-bhāṣya: the world as differentiated is sublated but not the world as undifferentiated. He says: "When that separate existence has entered and been merged in its cause, in other words, when the differences created by ignorance are gone, the universe becomes one without a second, 'the great Reality.'"⁴⁷⁰ Therefore Śaṅkara does not reduce the world to an illusion in the sense of śūnyatā; rather, the world as undifferentiated is disclosed as equal to Brahman. The implicit realism in Śaṅkara amounts to a realistic interpretation of māyā-vāda in the "explicit strand" of Śaṅkara and to a possible mitigation of māyā-vāda in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara.

⁴⁶⁷ S. S. Sastri, "On the Nature of Sublation", Collected Papers of S. S. Sastri, p. 196.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 192.

⁴⁶⁹ P. N. Srinivasachari, The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita, P. 467.

⁴⁷⁰ Śaṅkara, Bṛhad.-bhāṣya II.IV.12, p. 369.

Most important it discloses an area of convergence with Rāmānuja.

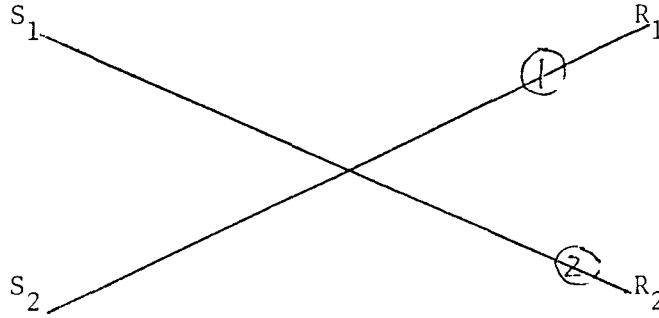
Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree that the world can only be apparently but not actually separated from Brahman.

As this chapter has illustrated, because sādhana in Advaita is really the practical application of māyā-vāda, a realistic interpretation of māyā-vāda results in a corresponding realism in sādhana. This was illustrated, for example, in the implicit emphasis in Śaṅkara on dhyāna-abhyāsa as the kaṛaṇa for Self-realization, in his implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi and in his implicit theism. The areas that have been investigated in this chapter pertaining to the "implicit Śaṅkara" uncovered several areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. It should not be forgotten, however, that these areas of convergence investigated in this chapter between the "implicit Śaṅkara" and the "explicit Rāmānuja" co-exist with very real doctrinal differences.

Conclusion

(i) General Conclusions

The best way to outline the conclusions of this work is by the following diagram.



" S_1 " here represents the "explicit Śaṅkara", " S_2 " the "implicit Śaṅkara", " R_1 " the "explicit Rāmānuja" and " R_2 " the "implicit Rāmānuja".¹ This diagram indicates that a structural convergence was disclosed between " S_2 " and " R_1 ", designated as "1" in this diagram, and between " S_1 " and " R_2 ", designated as "2" in this diagram. Yet a structural convergence is not equal to a doctrinal convergence for though " S_2 " is parallel to " R_1 ", and " S_1 " is parallel to " R_2 ", " S_2 " is not equal to " R_1 " and " S_1 " is not equal to " R_2 ".

Chapter One provided the methodological foundation for " S_2 " and in so doing prepared the way for the convergence between " S_2 " and " R_1 ", designated as "1" in this diagram. The methodological foundation for " S_2 " was constituted by all those devices in Śaṅkara which explained the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma such as his use of "intermediary categories" as for example his concept of jñāna-yoga as equal to the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma and his

¹Cf. Introduction for a definition and explanation of these terms.

concept of the "secondary sense" (gaṇam) of Ātma-jñāna as vr̥tti-jñāna.

Chapter Two provided the methodological foundation for the convergence between "R₂" and "S₁" or "2". It was there argued that the dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversability in the śarīra-śarīrin provide the seed for Rāmānuja's dissociative use of the śarīra-śarīrin which was disclosed as being methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's two levels of truth. Co-relatively the mis-perception of the Self, qua śarīra, as independent of the Lord was disclosed as being a methodological equivalent to Śaṅkara's concept of avidyā.

Chapter Three examined the key doctrines in Rāmānuja pertaining to the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma and uncovered the following areas of structural convergence with Śaṅkara:

- i) the parallel between the role of the dharma-bhūta-jñāna in Rāmānuja and the role of the vr̥tti-jñāna in Śaṅkara;
- ii) the discontinuity between the "two truths" in Rāmānuja i.e., concrete Self-knowledge versus abstract Self-knowledge as a parallel in reverse to the "two truths" in Śaṅkara, and
- iii) the structural convergence between prapatti in Rāmānuja and jñāna-yoga in Śaṅkara. These three areas of structural convergence are designated as "2" in this diagram.

Chapter Four focussed on the two main areas in Śaṅkara's thought where the convergence between "S₂" and "R₁" becomes clearer; specifically, in the mitigation of his doctrine of Nirguna Brahman and in the possible mitigation or realistic understanding of māyā-vāda. The former was provided by Śaṅkara's implicit understanding of jñāna-yoga as a mental process, by his implicit concession to an Ātma-vidhi, and by his implicit theism. When describing jñāna-yoga Śaṅkara, unlike Rāmānuja, describes

the buddhi as sublateable, but they both refer to the ambiguous role of the buddhi in providing the possibility both for bondage and for liberation. Rāmānuja therefore argues that the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna, i.e., "D₁", is already inseparable from the Lord, but that that fact can only be known via the dharma-bhūta-jñāna i.e., "D₂"; similarly, Śaṅkara argues that the svarūpa-jñāna is already equal to mokṣa, but that that fact can only be known via the vr̥tti-jñāna. In the examination of the Ātma-vidhi an area of convergence was disclosed between Śaṅkara's understanding of nirguṇa-dhyāna as nididhyāsana and Rāmānuja's understanding of dhyāna or upāsana as nididhyāsana: the process is phenomenologically the same in both, only the focus of this process is explicitly different, i.e., Saguna for Rāmānuja or Nirguṇa for Śaṅkara. Both nirguṇa-dhyāna and upāsana refer to a concrete Self-knowledge as opposed to an abstract Self-knowledge which is classified as a karana for Self-realization. The above convergence laid the basis for the implicit theism in Śaṅkara and for the ensuing area of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the nature of bhakti. The following area of agreement was disclosed with reference to the possible mitigation of māyā-vāda in Śaṅkara. Just as Ramanuja argued that the world as inseparable from the Lord was real but not in itself when considered separate from the Lord, so Śaṅkara argued that the world as Brahman was real, but not the world as nāma-rūpa.

The fact that Post-Śaṅkarites were preoccupied with a refutation of difference (bheda nirākarana) and not with qualified non-dualism (Viśiṣṭādvaita) is significant for it suggests that these areas of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja were acknowledged by them.

Perhaps this is the reason that they did not engage in a dialectical refutation of Rāmānuja. Did they perceive Rāmānuja, then, as already having "one foot in the door"? These areas of convergence between /
Sāṅkara and Rāmānuja were more evident in their Gītā-bhāṣyas than in their Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣyas for the problem of sādhana was addressed more specifically in the former. Although their ontologies remain distinct and irreducible, their structures of sādhana display a remarkable similarity.

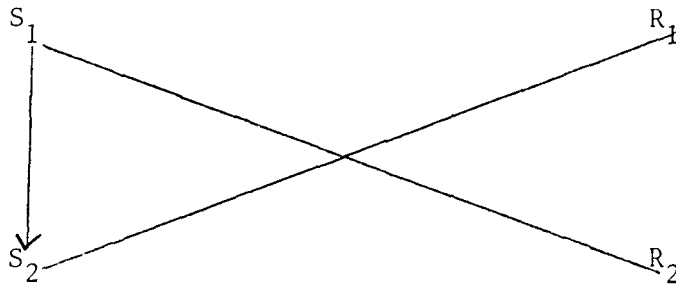
The question of sādhana for both /
Sāṅkara and Rāmānuja begins with a problem. The problem of sādhana for Rāmānuja can perhaps be summed up by this question: If the Lord is already all-inclusive and inseparable with all Selves, then why is there any need for sādhana? Rāmānuja argues that because the all-inclusiveness of the Lord is veiled from us in saṁsāra due to the Lord's Self concealment and to our willful disobedience, sādhana is necessary to remove this veil. The problem of sādhana for /
Sāṅkara can perhaps be summed up by this question: If mokṣa is a pre-given, than why is there any need for sādhana? /
Sāṅkara argues that sādhana is necessary to evoke that fact and make it known so that the pre-given reality also becomes a lived truth. The seeking in sādhana for both /
Sāṅkara and Rāmānuja involves the purification of the buddhi and not the acquisition of anything new in the state of being. Even Rāmānuja argues that the svarūpa of the Self and the svarūpa of consciousness remain unchanged in saṁsāra; mokṣa simply discloses their pre-existent condition.

The greatest similarity between /
Sāṅkara and Rāmānuja emerges from the a-posteriori perspective, i.e., from the standpoint of mokṣa. It is from this perspective that the Self realizes, even in Rāmānuja's

understanding, that it was never in fact separated from Brahman, only apparently. Samsāra for both involves therefore a semblance of disunity with Brahman, described as an "as-if separability" in Rāmānuja and an "as-if duality" in Śaṅkara; mokṣa for both involves the removal of that semblance of disunity and the disclosure of one's unity with Brahman, described as "their actual inseparability" in Rāmānuja and their "actual non-duality" in Śaṅkara.

(ii) A Critical Examination of These Conclusions

a. How "S₂" Illumines "S₁"



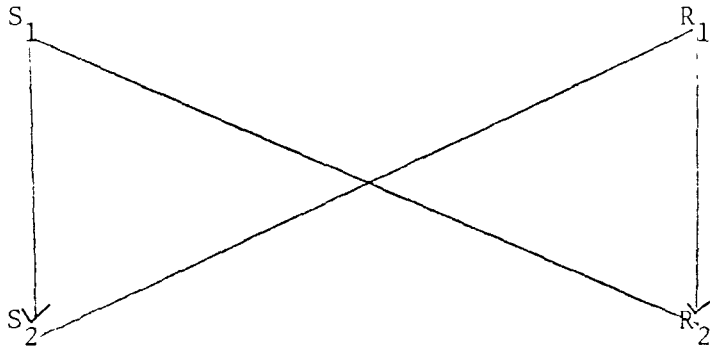
This diagram indicates that the "implicit Śaṅkara" i.e., "S₂", originates out of the "explicit" Śaṅkara i.e., "S₁". The transition from "S₁" to "S₂" is provided most of all by Śaṅkara's methodology which points simultaneously to both "S₁" and "S₂". His two levels of truth, his "transposition strategy" and his "simultaneous viewing" not only explain his explicit emphasis on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, but also explains their apparent continuity. Also, specific devices such as his "intermediary categories" refer more to "S₂" than "S₁". The transition from "S₁" to "S₂" doctrinally is provided by Śaṅkara's understanding of jñāna-yoga as equal to the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma, by his specification of nirguṇa-bhakti or dhyāna-abhyāsa as the karana for Self-realization,

and by his implicit concession to the Ātma-vidhi. It should be asked: How then does "S₂" i.e., the implicit Śaṅkara, throw light on "S₁" i.e., the "explicit Śaṅkara" specifically on Śaṅkara's explicit emphasis on Brahman as Nirguṇa and on his māyā-vāda?

The implicit realism examined in "S₂" prevents one from misreading māyā-vāda as equal to the theory of śūnyātā. Śaṅkara argues in this implicit strand that the world as Brahman is real although not as nāma-rūpa. "S₂" points to the application of māyā-vāda to sādhana and shows that the whole of sādhana can be considered a form of adhyāropa-apavāda. Viewing sādhana in this manner does justice to Śaṅkara's explicit emphasis on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma and, therefore, points to "S₁" and "S₂" simultaneously. "S₂" also uncovers the three areas where the emphasis on Brahman as Nirguṇa is mitigated. While describing jñāna-yoga in this implicit strand, Śaṅkara argues that though Brahman is Nirguṇa and not Saguṇa, it is necessary to resort to Brahman as Saguṇa to know this fact. He argues correlatively that though Brahman is Ānanda, and not Ānandamaya, one can only know this fact via Ānandamaya. These two points indicate that the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in Śaṅkara refers to the order of discovery and not to the order of being. While describing the Ātma-vidhi in this implicit strand, Śaṅkara argues that although no injunction can be applied to Ātma-jñāna in the "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna, an injunction can be applied to Ātma-jñāna in the "secondary sense" as vṛtti-jñāna for vṛtti-jñāna purified by dhyāna-abhyāsa is capable of "reflecting" svarūpa-jñāna. Such a vidhi does not affect Nirguṇa Brahman but only one's knowledge of Nirguṇa Brahman. The vidhi, therefore, is

not applied to the Self as such but only to the buddhi. The implicit theism examined in "S₂" indicates that though the focus of Śāṅkara's concept of nirguṇa-bhakti is explicitly different from the focus of Rāmānuja's concept of dhyaṇa or upāsana, the process referred to in both is phenomenologically the same.

(b) How "R₂" Illumines "R₁"



This diagram indicates that the "implicit Ramanuja" i.e., "R₂", originates out of the "explicit Ramanuja" i.e., "R₁".

The transition from "R₁" to "R₂" is provided most of all by Rāmānuja's methodology which explains not only his explicit emphasis on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma but also his contrasting emphasis on their discontinuity. His methodology is bilateral, like Śāṅkara's, and points simultaneously to "R₁" and "R₂".

The transition from "R₁" to "R₂" doctrinally is provided by Rāmānuja's insistence on the distinctness of the three svarūpas of the Lord, the Selves and matter even within mokṣa. A tension is thus introduced between the emphasis on inseparability and the emphasis on separability within the śarīra-śarīrin. Even the more interpretative elements of "R₂" such as Rāmānuja's methodological equivalent to Śāṅkara's concept of avidyā

originate from this original tension between inseparability and separability in the śarīra-śarīrin.

The examination of dharma in "R₂" throws light on the relationship between Rāmānuja's initial definition of dharma as "ritual injunction" and his "extended sense" of dharma as worship. It emphasizes the friction between the emphasis on the Lord as the ultimate Agent and the emphasis on man as the penultimate agent. This friction culminates in prapatti where the Lord is disclosed as the "eternal means" (siddhopāya) and man's self-efforts, in isolation, are viewed as obstructions to this "eternal means". From the perspective of prapatti, the initial definition of dharma is disclosed as containing an element of avidyā; specifically, the notion that man and not the Lord is the do-er. Prapatti illustrates that the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma can only be finally resolved within the Lord Himself.

The examination of the "as-if separability" between the Selves and the Lord in "R₂" also illumines the doctrine of aprthaksiddha ("inseparability") in "R₁", especially in its application to sādhana. It might then be asked: Does saṁsāra ever constitute an actual separability between the Selves qua śarīra and the Lord; does it therefore constitute a modification of aprthaksiddha? The reply can only be in the negative for the Selves as eternal modes of the Lord can never be separated from the Lord, and any separability must therefore be only apparent. As the examination in "R₂" indicates, the inseparability between the Selves and the Lord is best disclosed from an a-posteriori standpoint, i.e. from the standpoint of mokṣa, where any separability is disclosed as only apparent. This implicit strand in Rāmānuja also illumines the doctrinal tension between his doctrine of aprthaksiddha and his emphasis on the actual distinctness of the three

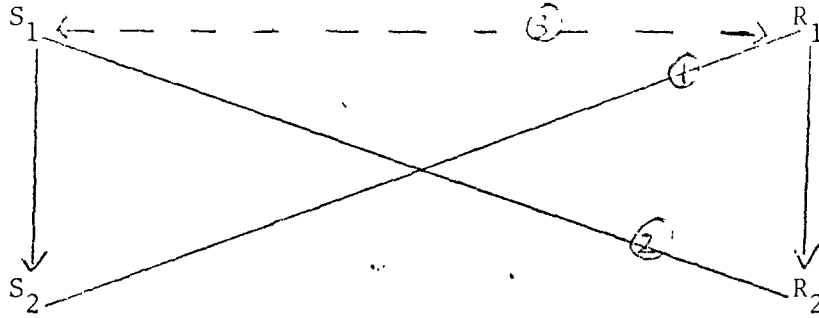
svarūpas. It indicates that the distinctness of the three svarūpas should not be misread as entailing any absolute separability between the Selves and the Lord. Therefore "R₂" un-packs the full implications of the initial tension in "R₁" between the dimensions of separability and inseparability of the śarīra-śarīrin.

The methodological examination of the categories of the dharmabhūta-jñāna, "D₂", and the dharmi-bhūta-jñāna, "D₁", in "R₂" points out that the "nerve" of the relation between Self-knowledge and dharmā is contained in the relation between "D₁" and "D₂". It is only when one understands how Rāmānuja handles the relation between "D₁" and "D₂" that one can understand how he handles the relation between Self-knowledge and dharmā. It constitutes an over-simplification to describe Rāmānuja's explicit emphasis on the relation between Self-knowledge and dharmā as only a continuity, as the examination in "R₂" indicates for, even explicitly, Rāmānuja points to a contrasting emphasis on discontinuity in his insistence on the distinctness of the three svarūpas. The dimensions of one-sidedness and irreversibility of the śarīra-śarīrin also contribute to this discontinuity. By examining this implicit strand in Rāmānuja, many of the problem-areas in Rāmānuja's methodology were disclosed, especially the areas of friction between his methodology and his doctrines. For instance, a friction was uncovered between his explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and his dissociative use of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological equivalent. A similar friction was uncovered between his explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's "secondary sense" and his use of a methodological equivalent. Rāmānuja was not reduced to this implicit strand, but, rather, this implicit strand was isolated simply in order to facilitate any comparisons with Śaṅkara and to better represent the full spectrum of Rāmānuja's position.

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(ii)(c) How the Areas of Implicit Convergence Between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja Illumine Their Explicit Areas of Agreement



The common model of Self-knowledge and dharma shared explicitly by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja² in opposition to the Mimāṃsakas is here referred to as their explicit areas of agreement. It is designated by "3" in this diagram.

Whereas these explicit areas of agreement pointed to a minimal agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, i.e., to what they share as Vedāntins in contrast with the Mimāṃsakas, the areas of implicit convergence pointed to the internal similarities between the two thinkers. It was discovered that the parallel between "S₂" and "R₁" developed the fullest implications of their common model of Self-knowledge. Co-relatively, it was discovered that the parallel between "S₁" and "R₂" developed the fullest implications of their common model of dharma.

²Cf. Introduction: "A Common Model of Self-knowledge for Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja" and, "A Common Model of Dharma for Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja", for a detailed account of these explicit areas of agreement.

(ii)(c₁) How the Parallel Between "S₁" and "R₂" Illumines Their Common Model of Dharma

The point that dharma can only be "known" from the standpoint of Brahman which is common to both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja was developed in its fullest implications in this parallel between "S₁" and "R₂" where the structural similarity between prapatti and jñāna-yoga was examined. The examination of prapatti in this implicit strand in Rāmānuja disclosed that dharma can only be "known" and resolved from the standpoint of the Lord. From this standpoint, man's own efforts in isolation are revealed as ultimately impotent and the Lord is disclosed as the "eternally established means (siddhopāva). The parallel between "S₁" and "R₂" indicated that there is a shift in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja from the "level" of dharma, which symbolizes man's own efforts, to the "level" of Brahman, understood either as the Lord (Rāmānuja) or as the non-dual Self (Śaṅkara). This shift was translated into methodological terms in that a "transposition strategy" is enacted by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja whereby dharmic concerns are transposed to the level of Brahman. This "transposition strategy" can be understood as an application of a point shared by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja which is that dharma can only be "known" from the standpoint of Brahman. What is specific in Śaṅkara's formulation of this point is his insistence that dharma can only be "known" from the standpoint of its sublation. Rāmānuja's version of this point is that dharma can only be known within the Lord. The ultimate justification for this "transposition strategy" is their common belief as Vedāntins that only Brahma-vidyā, and not dharma, can ultimately result in mokṣa. Dharmic action accordingly plays a dialectical role for both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja like in the analogy of using a thorn to

remove a thorn. Rāmānuja, for example, refers to the need for using the will to transcend the will; similarly, Śaṅkara refers to the need for using cognition to transcend cognition.

(ii)(c₂) How the Parallel Between "S₂" and "R₁" Illumines Their Common Model of Self-knowledge

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja both argue that the Self in its essential nature is not a do-er, cognizer etc., but that it remains unchanged by the effects of samsāra. This point of agreement was investigated in the parallel between "S₂" and "R₁" where according to both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja the buddhi and not the Self in its fundamental nature is described as undergoing change. It is through the mis-identification of the Self as the buddhi that the mis-apprehension of the Self as a doer, cognizer etc. occurs. The distinction between samsāra and mokṣa refers to the buddhi and not to the Self: even the experience of illumination refers only to the buddhi and not to the Self which remains unchanged in its fundamental nature.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja both argue that knowledge in its essential nature is not separate from the Self. This point of agreement between them was also developed in this parallel between "S₂" and "R₁". It was there pointed out that knowledge understood as part of the Self in its fundamental nature is never separate from the Self and never in fact changes. This sense of knowledge as unchanging is represented by the category of the dharmi-bhuta-jñāna in Rāmānuja and by the category of svarūpa-jñāna in Śaṅkara.

The second sense of knowledge as a mental process, represented by the category of the dharmā-bhuta-jñāna in Rāmānuja and by the category of

the vṛtti-jñāna in Śaṅkara, is understood by both as instrumental in the "reflection" of the essential nature of knowledge and of the Self. Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja argue that though the essential nature of knowledge and of the Self remain unchanged in samsāra, that fact can only be known via knowledge as a mental process. Furthermore, both argue that this mental process must refer to a concrete Self-knowledge and not merely an abstract Self-knowledge in order to function as a karana for Self-realization. This concrete Self-knowledge is represented by dhyāna or upāsana in Rāmānuja and by nirguṇa-bhakti in Śaṅkara. Despite their doctrinal differences on the nature of the focus, the process can be understood as phenomenologically the same. Yet Śaṅkara, unlike Rāmānuja, argues that this sense of knowledge as a mental process is ultimately sublateable.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja both argue that the Self can only be known from the standpoint of Brahman. This point of agreement was also developed within this parallel between " S_2 " and " R_1 ". The role of the Lord in revealing the true nature of the Self was highlighted within this area of convergence between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja argues that the highest bhakti, para-bhakti, cannot arise if one perceives the Self as separable from the Lord; rather, it can only arise if one perceives the Lord, qua Antaryāmin, as the essence of the Self. In a similar manner, Śaṅkara argues that the highest bhakti, nirguṇa-bhakti, can only arise if one perceives the Self as identical with the Lord. Despite their doctrinal differences on the nature of that union with Brahman, i.e., whether understood as a lived inseparability (Rāmānuja) or as identity (Śaṅkara), both agree that the highest bhakti cannot proceed from any perception of separability

between the Self and the Lord.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja both argue contrary to the Mīmāṃsakas, that mokṣa is not a negative but a positive condition; it points not to the absence of Bliss and knowledge but to their presence. This point of agreement was likewise developed within this parallel between "S₂" and "R₁". Accordingly it was argued in the "implicit strand" of Śaṅkara that this sense of mokṣa as Bliss is immanent in all empirical joys as their cause (adhithāna). It was argued that empirical joys though differing from Bliss in the order of discovery are not different from Bliss in the order of being. There are therefore not two "orders" of joy as such. From this it may be said that mokṣa does not entail the renunciation of empirical joys in their essence: what is renounced is only the fugitive, transitory quality in the experience which is due to the presence of the upādhis.

It is similarly argued in the "explicit strand" of Rāmānuja that the union of the Self with the Lord's Bliss in mokṣa should not be understood as a negative but as a positive condition for true asceticism is being deprived of the Lord not of sense-pleasures. The highest devotee is accordingly described as incapable of sustaining himself without the Lord's Bliss. Although everyone is totally dependent on that Bliss, only the highest devotee perceives that fact.

(iii) Answers to The General Questions Raised in the Introduction

The major question in this work was: "Is the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma real or illusory?"³ This same question can be alternately expressed as follows: Is dharma a mere appendage to Self-knowledge or an organic part of it? Or, is there an ontological ground

³Cf. Introduction: "The Problematic of This Work".

for dharma in Vedānta? Because of the dual strands in Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja, (i.e. "S₁" and "S₂", "R₁" and "R₂") this question is handled somewhat differently in each respective strand. When outlining Śāṅkara's and Rāmānuja's positions on this question, I will accordingly first consider it as it is argued within their "explicit strands" and then re-consider it within their "implicit strands".

Śāṅkara takes an uncompromising position on this question in the "explicit strand". It is argued there that dharma is not only an appendage to Self-knowledge which is justifiable only for the "unenlightened man" from the first level of truth, but that it is ultimately illusory. Śāṅkara justifies this position by arguing that dharma is an offshoot of avidyā; specifically, it is the false super-imposition of agency and change upon the non-dual, non-relational Self. Because the false can have no organic relation with the Real (Sat) but only an illusory relation, dharma can only have an illusory relation with Self-knowledge. From this it can be argued that Self-knowledge in its ultimate sense is forever unaffected by moral progress. Śāṅkara asks in effect: Why purify the personality if the personality ultimately does not exist? He argues, however, that this should not be misread as a rejection of dharma but as the transcendence of dharma.

Śāṅkara argues in the "implicit strand" that although there is no continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in the order of being, there is a continuity between them in the order of discovery. This continuity in the order of discovery is explained by means of two "intermediary categories"; namely, Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" as vṛtti-jñāna,

and dharma in its "primary sense" as jñāna-yoga. Dharma as jñāna-yoga is an organic part of Self-knowledge as ṛtti-jñāna although not of Self-knowledge as svarūpa-jñāna. Dharma as jñāna-yoga is nevertheless instrumental in the "reflection"⁴ of svarūpa-jñāna. In this sense Śāṅkara can argue for an ontological ground for dharma. Furthermore, Śāṅkara concedes that even the initial sense of dharma as ritual injunction is provisionally efficacious in leading to the purification of the mind (sattva-suddhi).

The problematic of sādhana in Śāṅkara is fully explored in this "implicit strand". This problematic is perhaps best articulated by the following question: If mokṣa is a pre-given, why is there any need for sādhana? In reply it can be said, sādhana is necessary in order to evoke that pre-given state and make it fully known.

Rāmānuja insists on a real relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma especially in the "explicit strand". It was argued there that dharma is an organic part of Self-knowledge and not merely an appendage to it. Dharma is described accordingly as based on Self-knowledge; specifically, the knowledge of the Self as different from the body, the mind etc., (viveka-jñāna), and Self-realization is described as a goal of dharma. Most important, the "extended sense" of dharma as worship is almost synonymous with Self-knowledge, according to Rāmānuja, for one cannot know the Self without knowing it as inseparable from the Lord qua Antaryāmin. Therefore the ontological ground for dharma in Rāmānuja is ultimately provided by the Lord as the Antaryāmin who abides in the Self and controls it as the ultimate agent. Rāmānuja's insistence on the organic relation

⁴The reflection of svarūpa-jñāna in ṛtti-jñāna is ultimately disclosed as illusory and is sublated in Self-realization.

between dharma and Self-knowledge is manifested in his contention that Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā form one continuous discipline.

Nevertheless a measure of discontinuity was introduced into this relation between Self-knowledge and dharma in the "implicit strand" of Rāmānuja. Specifically, the perspective of prapatti pointed to a tension between dharma understood as man's own isolated efforts or upāyas, and Self-knowledge understood as knowing the Self as inseparable from the Lord. It was argued there that true Self-knowledge comes from renouncing man's own upāyas and submitting to the Lord as the only upāya i.e. as the siddhopāya. True Self-knowledge arises from Self-surrender and not from Self-effort. This sense of dharma as man's upāyas was implicitly correlated with some sense of avidyā as the false sense that man is an independent agent. It is described as actually interfering with the realization of the Lord as the only upāya. Accordingly the Lord as the ultimate agent, as the means (upāya) and end (upeya) of sādhana is described as seeking the Self even more than the Self is seeking Him.

Although a discontinuity between dharma, understood as man's upāyas, and Self-knowledge was disclosed in this "implicit strand", a continuity was disclosed between dharma, understood as the Lord, who is the means and end of sādhana, the siddhopāya, and Self-knowledge. According to Rāmānuja true Self-knowledge only arises when one perceives the Lord as the ultimate agent.

The other general question that was raised in this work,⁵ "What doctrines and methods do Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja use to explain the shift from the "level" of Self-knowledge to dharma and back again", was examined at

⁵Cf., Introduction: "The Problematic of This Work".

great length. Chapters One and Two focussed on the methods used respectively by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja to explain this "shift" while Chapter Three and Chapter Four focussed on the doctrines used respectively by Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara to explain this "shift".

(iv) Answers to Specific Questions Raised In The Introduction

A number of specific questions regarding the nature of the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma in Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja were raised in the Introduction⁶. Although these questions were answered in detail in the four chapters of this work it might be helpful to the reader to summarize these answers.

With reference to the question of the possible tension between doctrines and methods, it was discovered that the methodologies of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja did not simply implement their doctrinal a-priori's as expounded in their "explicit strand". Rather, the methodology of both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja was disclosed as bi-lateral, i.e., it was disclosed as pointing simultaneously to the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand". For instance, Rāmānuja's methodology did not simply explain his predominant emphasis on the continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, it also explained his contrasting emphasis on their discontinuity. Similarly, Śaṅkara's methodology did not simply explain his predominant emphasis on the discontinuity between Self-knowledge and dharma, it also explained his contrasting emphasis on their apparent continuity in sādhana. It was also discovered that the application of their methodologies to the "implicit strand" was most evident when they

⁶ Ibid.

were dealing with "dharmic problems" as, for example, in the problem of whether the svarūpa inherits the defects of the svabhāva in the śarīra-śarīrin? So, for instance, when Rāmānuja is giving a simple description of a category, in accordance with his explicit methodology, he refers to its svarūpa as its "primary sense", and to its svabhāva as its "secondary sense".

When, however, he is dealing with "dharmic problems", such as specifying how bondage is real and whether it affects the svarūpa of the Self, he usually uses his methodological equivalents to Śaṅkara's "primary and secondary senses" which is in accordance with his implicit methodology. Similarly, when dealing with the problematic question of why sādhana is necessary despite the fact that mokṣa is a pre-given, Śaṅkara resorts to those devices in his implicit methodology which make sense of the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana. Two such devices are his "intermediary categories", especially the "primary sense" (paramārtham) of dharma as jñāna-yoga and the "secondary sense" (gaunam) of Self-knowledge as vyrtti-jñāna, and his successive use of the two standpoints of truth.

For all of these reasons a tension was introduced between their doctrines and methods. The most striking example of such a tension between doctrine and method pertains to Rāmānuja's explicit rejection of Śaṅkara's two levels of truth and his dissociative use of the śarīra-śarīrin as a methodological equivalent. Co-relatively, Rāmānuja's explicit rejection of the doctrine of avidyā and his use of a methodological equivalent provide an adequate example of such a tension between doctrine and method. Similarly, a tension between doctrine and method is illustrated

by Śaṅkara's explicit rejection of any continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma and his use of "intermediary categories" to explain their apparent continuity in sādhana.

It was also discovered that the problem areas in this relation between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja could be best uncovered by a methodological examination of the key doctrines used by both for this relation. For instance, a methodological examination of the categories of the dharmi-bhuta-jñāna and the dharma-bhuta-jñāna in Rāmānuja uncovered the "nerve" of the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma in Rāmānuja;⁷ in fact, the latter is methodologically equal to the former. When one knows how Rāmānuja handles this relation, then one knows how he handles the relation between Self-knowledge and dharma. A methodological analysis of prapatti pointed to the most important area of convergence between the "implicit strand" in Rāmānuja and the "explicit strand" in Śaṅkara; that between the structure of prapatti in Rāmānuja and the structure of jñāna-yoga in Śaṅkara. A similar dialectical structure was observed in both prapatti and jñāna-yoga. While prapatti points to the negative use of the will to transcend the will, jñāna-yoga points to the negative use of cognition to transcend cognition. The argument follows the same structure in both cases: one must use a thorn to remove a thorn.

A methodological analysis of the doctrines used by Śaṅkara to explain the apparent continuity between Self-knowledge and dharma in sādhana was helpful in uncovering the significance of his "intermediary categories", especially the following two such "intermediary categories": jñāna-yoga as equal to the "primary sense" of dharma, and

⁷Cf., Conclusion: "How "R₂" Illumines "R₁".

vr̥tti-jñāna as equal to Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense".

Whereas a radical discontinuity exists between dharma as ritual injunction and Self-knowledge in its "primary sense" as svarūpa-jñāna, a continuity exists between dharma as jñāna-yoga and Self-knowledge in its "secondary sense" as vr̥tti-jñāna. Both of these "intermediary categories" played a key role in sorting out "dharmic problems" in Śaṅkara. A methodological analysis of his doctrine of nirguṇa-bhakti uncovered a structural convergence with Rāmānuja's doctrine of para-bhakti, despite their doctrinal differences on the nature of the focus.

It has already been demonstrated how "R₂" illumines "R₁",⁷ how "S₂" illumines "S₁" and how the convergences between "R₁" and "S₂" and "R₂" and "S₁" illumine the explicit, minimal areas of agreement between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. It is concluded that Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara can not simply be reduced to their "explicit strands" i.e., "R₁" and "S₁". Such a reduction constitutes an over-simplification, and in some senses a distortion, of both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. The "implicit strands" i.e., "R₂" and "S₂", are necessary to avoid this over-simplification and possible distortion so as to better represent the full spectrum of both Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. For purposes of comparison between them, it is also necessary to refer to the "explicit strand" and the "implicit strand" in both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

To fully represent Rāmānuja's and Śaṅkara's position on the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma it is not sufficient to

⁸Cf., Section (ii) Conclusion.

simply focus on their Brahma-Sutra-bhāṣyas. It is necessary for one to stand within the full corpus of their writings, especially when the relationship between Self-knowledge and dharma is applied to the question of sādhana.

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