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NAME OF AUTHOR/NOM DE L'AUTEUR Bithika Mukerji

TITLE OF THESIS/TITRE DE LA THÈSE Toward an Understanding of the Ontology of Bliss
in the Context of Modernity

UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ McMaster

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/
GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE Ph.D.

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE DEGRÉ 1981

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TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ONTOLOGY OF BLISS

IN THE

CONTEXT OF MODERNITY

By



Bithika Mukerji

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy.

McMaster University

June, 1981.

THE ONTOLOGY OF BLISS

IN VEDANTA

IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERNITY

0

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY .
(Religious Studies)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario.

TITLE: "Toward an Understanding of the Ontology of Bliss
in the Context of Modernity.

AUTHOR: Bithika Mukerji

SUPERVISORS: DR. K. SIVARAMAN.
Dr. J. G. Arapura,
Dr. B. P. Grant.

NUMBER OF PAGES: xxiii, 336.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The central concept of the Vedanta philosophy is an understanding of Bliss as Being. This thesis is a study of the ontology of Bliss in the light of the trends in Neo-Vedanta as the emerging philosophy of contemporary India. A study is made of the understanding of the factor of modernity in the West, since its effects on Indian thought is profound. An attempt has been made to show that the impact of Westernization on Indian thought has resulted in an obscuration of the concept of Bliss leading to severe radicalization and a consequent distorting of the Vedanta philosophy. In demonstration, an interpretative analysis of the crucial text (The Taittirīyopaniṣad) in the light of the gloss of Saṅkarācārya, is given in the last two chapters.

In further support of the point that a reversal of fundamental concepts have taken place, a fourteenth century text on Vedanta is translated and analysed here for the first time, and added to the thesis as Appendix.

ABSTRACT

The thesis begins with the question of modernity and its implications for the Western world. An attempt is made to show that modernity pertains to the mechanised West, rather than to India which, as yet, is only trying to imitate the progress-oriented culture of the West believing that she can be technisized with no loss to her tradition of Vedanta philosophy which speaks only in terms of Freedom as Self-realization.

Contemporary orientation in India in re-interpreting the Vedanta philosophy in the light of the demands of 'modernity' are studied in some detail with a view to establishing the thesis that the crucial teachings of the tradition have been glossed over, with the result that a discontinuity with it must be accepted together with the process of Westernization.

To demonstrate this alienation, an interpretative analysis of a major text is given which brings out the fact that the trans-natural concerns of the tradition, is integral to it, and any philosophical understanding which makes it irrelevant to the issue of our way of being in the world, falls far short of contemplating the heart of the matter.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As College students we were reared on Neo-Vedanta and the Indian brand of Neo-Kantianism. Kant was the most important philosopher of the West for us because he seemed to have stated clearly the limitations of reason, vis-a-vis the region of the transcendent. The Indian philosophical heritage being preoccupied with the effort toward delimiting the scope of rationality in the sphere of ontology, Kant was hailed as a kindred spirit. We were not to know that Kant was one of the most important turning points in the history of Western philosophy and that he in fact, was perhaps, nowhere near to the thoughts the Indians ascribed to him.

A. C. Mukerji, a leading exponent of the critical philosophy of his time, was my teacher and guide. His lectures on Vedanta were extremely popular. We could not and would not entertain the thought that his rendering of the Western tradition as paralleling the quest for the 'unmediated knower' was anything but true to the facts. To him the only worthwhile question (with which he sought to inspire every generation of students) in philosophy worth meditating was "how to know the Self or the 'unmediated knower?'"

The understanding of philosophy as a ground on which all people seized with similar concerns may meet and help each other was undermined for me, when I came to Geneva in 1972 for one year, to lead a seminar on Hinduism and Christianity. For the first time I was made aware of the

many dimensions which go to the making of the West. The students were from many countries and from many denominations and all of them very well trained in theology. It was an exacting task for me to understand their problems and deal with them meaningfully. A philosophical discourse on 'The One Reality' seemed out of place because the problem haunting the Graduate School at Bossey from the beginning was how to reconcile their sense of mission with an yearning for dialogue with 'the other'. I write all this because this was an occasion for me to live and work together with people of dedication, who made me feel very welcome, although my presence called into question, for many of them, much of what they stood for.

I learnt much more about the Western tradition from Dr. Grant at McMaster during the years 1973-77. Whatever is right and perceptive about the West, in this thesis, I have gathered from him and what is partial or wrong is my own interpretation of it.

It is a strange fact but I have come to a greater understanding of the Advaita philosophy also at McMaster. I cannot say enough about the dedicated work being done by Dr. J. G. Arapura which is inspiring for all students of Indian philosophy. My understanding of the ontology of Bliss owes very much to all his writings on the subject of maya and gnosis.

The difficult subject of the thesis was made interesting and a worthwhile proposition for me by Dr. K. Sivaraman. Without the many discussions we have had on the topic I would not have been able to develop

the them at all. The problem that I have chosen for my thesis, is therefore, my way of acknowledging all that I have had the opportunity of learning at McMaster.

I have great pleasure in recording my appreciation of the sustained encouragement extended to me by Dr. Peter George, during my absence from McMaster and also Dr. Chauncy Wood, who made it possible for me to return and submit the thesis.

My thanks are due to my fellow student, Dr. Ivan Kocmarek, who has helped me in marking the Sanskrit texts of the thesis. My most grateful thanks go to Grace Gordon for typing the thesis in the shortest possible time. More importantly for being a source of unfailing encouragement and help.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ait.	Aitereyopaniṣad
Ait. Up. bh.	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Aitereyopaniṣad
Br.	Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
Br. Up. bh.	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
Chh.	Chhāndogyopaniṣad
Chh. Up. bh.	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Chhāndogyopaniṣad.
Gaud.	Gaudapāḍakārikā on Māndūkyopaniṣad
Gita bh.	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the Gītā.
Isa	Īsopaniṣad
Katha	Kaṭhopaniṣad
Kena	Kenopaniṣad
Mand.	Māndūkyopaniṣad
Mund.	Mundakopaniṣad
Mund. Up. bh	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Mundakopaniṣad
Nriṣ	Nṛsiṃhottaratāpani Upaniṣad
Prasna	Praśnopaniṣad
Prasha. Up. bh.	Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Praśhopaniṣad
Sayana	Sāyaṇabhāṣya on Tattirīya Āraṇyaka, Chapters (prapāṭhaka) 7, 8 and 9.
Suresvara Vartikam	Taittirīyopaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtikam by Śri Suresvarācārya
Svetas	Śvetāśvataropaniṣad

Tait.

V.S.

V. S. bh.

Taittirīyopaniṣad

Vedānta Sūtra

Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Vedānta Sūtra.

Dedication

In memory of my teacher
and guide in philosophy

Anukul Chandra Mukhopadhyaya

(A. C. Mukerji)

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

It is said very often that the Advaita philosophy reflects the general mood of the Indian people. Even when they do not intellectually subscribe to this school of thought, they are drawn into using its terminology as most expressive of their cherished beliefs. This is so because the basis of all understanding regarding life in the world is formulated in the light of a dichotomy obtaining between what is merely pleasing (preyas) and what is good (śreyas).

This separation runs through all modes of thought, such as monistic, monotheistic or dualistic. In this form of a distinction between 'what is agreeable' and 'what should be preferred', it pervades the ethos of India and perhaps can be recognized immediately as the mood of detachment withdrawal or renunciation, which characterises it. It can be readily understood that a demand for discrimination comes with the built-in implication that one sphere is to be given up in order to appropriate the other.

The ideal of renunciation as a form of knowledge, has been thematized only in the Advaita philosophy of Sankaracarya, the well-known ascetic thinker and writer of the 8th/9th century A.D. All other schools of thought subscribe to it as a high ideal but it is not integral to their philosophy. Sankaracarya, on the other hand, has placed it in the heart of his writings on the unity of the Self (atman) and the Ultimate Reality (Brahman). The sphere of the world, together with its knowing subject, the I-consciousness, are as if superimposed on this unity and they both need to be 'cancelled' before Brahman as Bliss may be realised as such.

This supreme discrimination between that which is the area of the not-self and that which leads toward Self-realization, is called renunciation. It should not be misunderstood as an act of physical withdrawal from the world, which perhaps is not the best mode of denying the world. The demand of the world to be considered real and final is called maya in Advaita philosophy; this dimension of non-reality can be offset only by an equally powerful process of metaphysical cancellation, a renouncing of layers of false identifications, so that the veil may be set at naught. The inspiration for this trans-natural way of understanding the human condition comes from the Upanisads which speak in the language of poetry to recall man's attention dispersed in the world in search of happiness and focus it on the quest for the very Source of Bliss itself. This is how Samkaracarya has developed his exegeses on the Upanisads and his major work, the Commentary on the Vedānta-Sūtra.¹

In Neo-Vedanta, that is, contemporary interpretations of Samkaracarya's thought, we meet with a very different understanding regarding 'māyā' as well as the grounding of philosophy in the revealed texts of the Upanisads. It will not be perhaps out of place, if Samkaracarya's theory of māyā is explained a little here, since I am going to develop the idea that this very concept has undergone almost a total transform-

¹A collection of aphorisms beginning with 'Now commences the enquiry into Brahman'. This work is variously known as Bādarāyana Sūtra, Brahma Sūtra or Sārīraka Sūtra.

ation in the writings of modern thinkers.²

The most famous (or notorious, as the case may be) theory of māyā is presented by Samkaracarya in a short Preamble to the Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtra. Samkaracarya begins by delineating clearly the two disparate spheres, consciousness and the object of consciousness. It is well-known, he writes, that the knower and the known which have for their spheres or contents the notions of 'I' and what is given to it from without, so to speak as 'you', respectively, are totally opposed to each other, as light is to darkness. Yet in ordinary usage they are being constantly fused together, as for example, in the statements, 'It is I' or 'It is mine'. That this coupling together is intelligible at all is due to the (unconscious) operation of a kind of superimposition of one on the other which obliterates, phenomenally speaking, the discontinuity altogether. To take another example; a piece of rope is mistaken as a snake, evoking fear in the heart of the observer. This illusion, which will be known as such only upon its cancellation, is a case of superimposition of one thing on another. To the question, 'how is this

²Sankara's theory of māyā has been subject to severe philosophical criticism at the hands of Ramanuja, the eleventh century theologian of Vedānta and in contemporary times at the hands of thinkers like Sri Aurobindo; but one may say that, in relation to the interpretation of the theory at the hands of Neo-Vedantins who accepting it transform its meaning, they have the merit of not misunderstanding the theory. These interpretative questions, however, do not belong with this thesis which is devoted to the understanding of Neo-Vedānta.

error possible', Samkārācārya has this to say:

The cognition into something of something
else which is of the nature of memory of
something seen elsewhere.

In other words, the real object is 'falsely' cognised in terms of something previously seen; this cognition is subsequently cancelled when recognition takes place of the real object. The nature of this error then is indeterminable because it can be called neither real (because of the possibility of cancellation) nor unreal (because something certainly is cognised as such). Samkārācārya at this point of his writing, makes a passing reference to other explanations of error, as inadequate. The reason for grouping together very divergent theories regarding the nature of error is that the admission of this distinction itself is sufficient for stating that error is indeterminable. The aim of the author has been to underscore the presence of two levels within the cognitive structure, one real and the other unreal: this is sufficient for the argument in favour of a process of superimposition. The author suggests that it is almost natural for the nature of the real to remain hidden because the unreal, as it were, makes it determinable in its own form of unreality. This figurative ascription (in the form of 'as if') is māyā which simultaneously hides the real and projects the unreal.

Samkārācārya's intention here is to give an explanation for the experience of a diverse world since the Vedānta Sūtra is going to propound the Brahman as the One and only Reality. On Brahman is superimposed the dimension of the unreal world which appears as a reality by itself. On the cognitive scale, Brahman as the ever abiding Witness-

Self remains hidden because the I-consciousness is superimposed on it. The relevance of this entire discussion regarding the cognitive structure may be questioned by an opponent by saying 'If the Witness-Self is aloof from the entire range of the categories of thought (which belong to the non-self world) then how can it be superimposed upon; or if you say it is self-evident then where is the possibility of confounding it with something else?

Samkaracarya's resolution of this problem brings him to the heart of the Preamble. He writes, "But, the Witness-Self (Ātman) is not entirely a non-object. It is the object of consciousness, but as its ground, and it is as such given in immediate apprehension. The nature of superimposition or māyā, the stuff of which it is so to speak, made, therefore is ignorance. Due to ignorance a veiling takes place. The way to knowledge is by way of removing this veil of ignorance which is called avidyā.³

We can now see the implication of the doctrine of superimposition. It is a prelude to the First Aphorism. (Now commences the enquiry into Brahman.) Superimposition is coeval with being-in-the-world, as natural and unquestioned as the statement 'it is I', which lies at the core of life-in-the-world. It is completely simultaneous with it, yet it is not of

³For purposes of general exposition of the intention of Samkaracharya attempted here, the subtle distinctions that are made by later Vedānta between māyā and avidyā or between avidyā or ajñāna and mithyājñāna are glossed over.

the nature of a natural obstruction which then would so inhere in experience as not to be given to removal. It is a metaphysical predicament, which in fact can be overcome. So the characteristic of superimposition is that it is natural but amenable to 'cancellation'.

According to Samkaracarya, then, the Self or ātman is foundational as opposed to the relational categories such as knowing, enjoying, etc. Superimposition is the false attribution of the relational categories which are applicable only in the sphere of the not-self, to the realm of Self. Nescience or avidyā is primarily this principle of relational categories which upholds the superstructure of superimposition created by māyā. Brahman, the non-relational ground of all relations exists revealed only when the relational structure ceases to be operative. Thus there is a close connection between a metaphysical withdrawal on the part of the I-consciousness and the discovery of its ontological ground in immediate apprehension. This explains the Upanisadic statement that Brahman is to be known through 'knowledge' only, because knowledge reveals but that which is already there as Reality, by simply cancelling the veil as veil. Renunciation, then, is only a form of knowledge. The far-reaching implication of the Preamble emerges with the realization that Samkaracarya has set the stage for demonstrating the non-reality of anything other than Brahman.

The world --- being of value in itself---was not unknown to the Indians in their metaphysical theorisings but teachings about it came to Indian philosophers with special urgency, in the garb of secular,

Western education. The world to them previously was by a consensus, so to speak, a necessary sphere of action which needed to be overcome for a higher ideal.⁴ It was now presented to them as the only worthwhile ideal to be followed for ethical reasons deriving from a 'theology' of divine purpose fulfilling itself in history. Even on non-theological grounds it was pointed out that neglect of worldly concerns was totally unjustified when it lay within the power of man to bring about changes which could ameliorate the condition of human existence everywhere. Indian scholars were convinced that a reviewing of their own philosophic heritage was in order at this time.

The 'modernisation' of Indian thought lies in its being presented in terms of Western philosophy. The process of such Westernisation has been going on since India first came in touch with the British system of education. Many Indian scholars undertook to redefine the Advaita philosophy in such language and conceptualisation as could be rendered intelligible from the perspective of the Western world. The most popular method for this was the writing of comparative philosophy. The idea behind this order of writing seems to be that a familiarity with one dimension in thought would open up possibilities of understanding problems inhering in other modes of thinking.

⁴Pace. those belonging to the thorough-going school of Materialism, all the Indian philosophers, the non-orthodox and the orthodox, the theist and the absolutist, the karma-yogin and the samnyāsin, the ritualist-activist and the contemplative all alike will subscribe to the formula that the 'world' as the natural sphere of action needed to be 'overcome' in favour of a higher ideal.

The point of this thesis is that the acceptance of comparative philosophy as a mode of valid methodology is based on a disregard of the crucial and irreducible difference between two traditions, or rather the traditions as shaped by philosophers. There is another aspect which is more crucial to this issue of understanding an ancient philosophic tradition such as the Advaita. Indian scholars in seeking to make their heritage commensurable with the Western outlook on life were already placed in a position of losing hold over it, because they had not first examined the grounds on which such transformations could take place, if at all.

This thesis will be devoted to the problem of the Westernisation of Advaita which as Neo-Vedanta prevails in India as the philosophy of our own times. Neo-Vedanta seeks to give a realistic interpretation to Advaita and also to make it self-sufficient as a philosophy, without recourse to Scriptural texts. According to contemporary Indian thinkers, modernity can be appropriated easily to the universalism of Advaita. Without jettisoning the hard core of the tradition, Advaita could very well be stated in terms of modern demands for active participation in the on-going concerns of the world.

Without calling into question the right of any philosopher to interpret Advaita according to his own understanding of it, this thesis would seek to establish that this process of Westernization has obscured the core of this school of thought. The basic correlation of renunciation and bliss has been lost sight of in the attempts to underscore the cognitive structure and the realistic structure which according to

Samkaracarya would both belong to and indeed constitute the realm of māyā.

An analysis of the process of this obscuration forms the subject matter of this thesis. The First Chapter will be devoted to the study of modernism as it is understood in the West, bringing out the fact that it is not understood as such by Indian thinkers who seek to revitalize their heritage in the light of 'modernity'. Consequently, all attempts at approximating the West are riddled by this basic confounding of fundamental values. We can see this very clearly in the circumstance that the concept of renunciation plays no part in the writings of Neo-Vedantins; and also there is no awareness of the advent of secularity as an inevitable corollary to the movement of thought from Kant to Nietzsche in the West. The Neo-Vedantins have emphasized the concepts of Brahman as Real (sat) and Brahman as Consciousness (cit), but not Brahman as Bliss (ānanda) although the three terms together form the common definition of Brahman, that is Sat-cit-ānanda. The Second Chapter is devoted to the detailing of the consequences of the impact of the West on Indian thought.

For the purpose of this thesis, the writings of two eminent scholars will be taken up for detailed study to substantiate the point regarding emphasis on Reality and Consciousness to the exclusion of Bliss. Both men, A. C. Mukerji and Kokilesvar Bhattacharya (Sastri) were recognised in their own time as accredited spokesmen for Advaita. Both were well-versed in Western Philosophy as teachers of it in the Universities of Allahabad and Calcutta respectively. Both follow in general the guidelines of traditional exegesis but develop their own particular points of

view individually. A. C. Mukerji favoured a rationalistic approach to Advaita and Kokilesvar Bhattacharya (Sastri) a 'realistic' approach. Their relevance for this thesis lies in the fact of their own understanding of Advaita as being quite commensurable with concepts arising out of Western thought. It is not that they thematised their exegeses as such but they did ~~attempt~~ to relate the Advaita ontology to modern thought.

The point I wish to develop in this thesis is that the entire movement of thought was a process of alienation rather than a recovery of the ancient heritage for contemporary thought. The Fifth Chapter will take up the study of this process of transformation toward an integration with all the new values of our times. 'Renunciation' is now understood by Indian scholars to mean a physical withdrawal from the world, a turning away from involvement and thus leading to moral apathy. This in no way can be distinguished from similar charges levelled against Indian thought by the Indologists of the nineteenth century.

To demonstrate the point of total reversal, I have undertaken the study of the Taittiriya Upaniṣad in the last two chapters of the thesis. In this Text, we meet with an understanding of man and his world; the text also brings out the uniqueness of man in being open to the question of the trans-natural region of Bliss. We have followed the Commentary of Samkaracarya on this text and thus we are able to see clearly how the Neo-Vedantins have traversed a different path altogether in staying away from the central teaching about Advaita

which is to hold together the 'renunciation of the world' and the Bliss of Brahman.

I have sought to reinforce the point of my thesis by adding, as an appendix the translation of a small text on Advaita written in the fourteenth century by a well-known author in this area of writing. I have given an Introduction and commentary on this work, which so far has not been translated or commented upon in English or any of the Indian languages. This text called the Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah, is a commentary on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad the work which is taken up for notice in the last two chapters of the thesis. A study of the Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah reveals the fact that till the author's time, the main stream of exegeses was continuing to uphold the tradition as enunciated by Samkaracarya. This may be seen to be in direct contrast to the modern interpreters of Vedānta, who seem to have welcomed uncritically, as we hope to show, the possibility of revitalising their tradition by incorporating new ideas in order to be in tune with the demands of time.

PART ONE

MODERNITY AND VEDANTA

On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again

by John Keats (1818)

O Golden-tongued Romance with serene lute!
Fair plumed Syren! Queen of far away!
Leave melod ying on this wintry day,
Shut up thine golden pages, and be mute.
Adieu! for once again the fierce dispute,
Betwixt damnation and impassioned clay
Must I burn through; once more humbly assay
The bitter-sweet of this Shakespearean fruit.
Chief Poet! and ye clouds of Albion,
Begetters of our deep eternal theme,
When through the old oak forest I am gone,
Let me not wander in a barren dream,
But when I am consumed in the fire
Give me new Phoenix wings to fly at my desire.

CHAPTER I

THE RELEVANCE OF MODERNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF VEDANTA

A. Modernisation and Westernisation

In Eastern countries and especially in India, the term 'modernity' is used very often to denote the progress-oriented ethos of our times. 'Modernisation' is accepted as integral to life at present and a matter of coming to terms with Western modes of thinking and living in the fast changing world of scientific and technological innovations. 'Modernisation', therefore, is almost a synonym for Westernisation. The West is admired for its air of success in all aspects of human endeavour and its ideal of constant striving toward better achievements. The marvellous inventions of science evoke nothing but a strong spirit of emulation and the desire to bring about such changes in the existing structures of living, as would make it possible for all viable transformations to take place. In contrast to the very tangible ills which plague the lives of people elsewhere, the progressive affluence of the West appears nothing but a good in itself. To a people who are fighting for sheer survival, or freedom, or human rights, the West could symbolise Utopia. 'Modernisation', thus

simply means the free exercise of an option toward greater mechanisation for the sake of economic development. Its main sphere of influence, which admittedly is secular, is seen to lie only in the region of praxis, no anxiety being felt regarding a possible radicalization of such theories as sustain our tradition.

To the outsider to Western Civilization, therefore, the following question would sound rhetorical only:

Why, in our time have societies well endowed with industrial plenty and scientific genius turned uglier with totalitarian violence than any barbarous people? Why do nihilism and neuroses brood over what we please to call the 'developed' societies, taking as great a toll of human happiness as gross physical privation in the third world? 1

No such misgivings, regarding our own future in following the West is in evidence in the writings of Indian thinkers. No doubts regarding the encounter with science from within the tradition has been voiced since its advent on Indian soil. Rather to the contrary; science and religion are accepted as "complementary disciplines," which can be "combined harmoniously (for) an all-round expression of human genius and total fulfilment."²

¹ Theodore Roszak, Where the Waste Land Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Post Industrial Society (London: Faber & Faber, 1973), p. xxviii.

² Swami Ranganathananda, Science and Religion (Calcutta: Advaita Ashram, 1978), p. 3. (Inaugural Address for the Lecture Series on "Science, Society and the Scientific Attitude," University of Bangalore, August 5, 1976).

The two terms 'Modernization' and 'Westernization', are used interchangeably in India, but the difference in meaning is so crucial that any slurring over could lead only to meaninglessness. At this point in time, Westernization is a global event, but Modernization so far is a Western experience. In order to understand what Modernity means to people who are obliged to be modern, it is necessary to understand the paradox of a life of affluence overcast by the shadow of 'nothingness'.

It would seem to the East that the rapidly proliferating advances of modern sciences are so many steps in the right direction. The technological discoveries which are the marvels of our day, are surely of great benefit to human society. It is true that some hazards are created by the growing techniques, but then, the technicians are never at a loss for adequate solutions to the problems. When such is our present situation, how should we understand a passage like this:

People everywhere trace, and record the decay, the destruction, the imminent annihilation of the world The world, men find, is not just out of joint but tumbling away into the nothingness of absurdity. Nietzsche, who from his supreme peak saw far ahead of it all, as early as the eighteenth-eighties had for it the simple because thoughtful words: 'The Wasteland grows' ³

There are many brilliant writers in the West who have, in varied measure, made the theme of 'nothingness' their central concern.

³Martin Heidegger, What is Called Thinking, tr. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 29.

The poignant words of Nietzsche have been echoing and re-echoing in such writings as these:

.... there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express 4

or,

The greatest mystery is not that we have been flung at random between the profusion of matter and of the stars, but that within this prison we can draw from ourselves images powerful enough to deny our nothingness. 5

The question arises why should a progressive civilization find itself facing 'nothingness' in the present age. This question becomes supremely significant for all such societies who are eagerly following in the footsteps of the West. The East would reject the idea outright that it is trying to inherit 'a growing wasteland', but Western contemporary literature is clearly held in a tension between an awareness of crisis which is overtaking their civilization and a fearful sense of responsibility that its last and sweeping technological conquest of the world will be final and irrevocable. They can only watch helplessly, the eager march toward the same

⁴Samuel Beckett, in Twentieth Century Views, ed. M. Esslin, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1965), p. 17.

⁵André Malraux, Anti-Memoirs (New York: The Modern Library), p. 21.

existential nausea⁶ on the part of the East from which the West is beginning to suffer now.

The important question with regard to modernity, therefore, is the kind of awareness it awakens in man by which he understands himself in relation to his world. The term implies an evaluation of the situation in which Western man finds himself today. The primary demand of modernity, then, is to provide meaning to living in the age of technology; meaning that is hard to come by in an age which has destroyed the region of transcendence that had sustained man over the centuries. To a lot of people this contingency may sound immensely preferable to any kind of historicism (whether theological, philosophical or humanistic) as it seems to grant freedom for bringing about such conditions as are needed for the well-being of society and also for building the future of our dreams. The thinkers who are aware of the implications of modernity, however, understand that

⁶ 'Existential nausea has always worried the rich; democracy has now put it within the reach of all'. Dennis Gabor, 'Fighting Existential Nausea', Technology and Human Values (California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), p. 13.

John Wilkinson, in his introduction to the same book writes that in justice to American Students it must be pointed out that 'the progressive assimilation to the machine of human values (and even of religion in the sense of a deus in machina) is a function of a decisive, unforeseen and unforeseeable turn of Western Culture in its successive passage through mercantilism, industrialism, automation, and cybernation, and that as these mutations take place elsewhere in the world the same pathology of value is manifested'. Ibid., p. 3.

this prospect is likely to be an ever-receding horizon unless one is dreaming of a totally man-made world replacing the given natural one of today. The very nature of technology creates its own autonomous sphere of action. Decisions are necessarily a-moral in a situation where techniques and expertise have to be given preference. Modernity accepts the fact that a new state of affairs has come into being with technology, because "the moral discourse of 'values' and 'freedom' is not independent of the will to technology, but a language fashioned in the same forge together with the will to technology. To try to think them separately is to move more deeply into their common origin."⁷

This would seem to mean that our future will be determined by technology which cannot but be indifferent to those qualities which we knew so far to the peculiarly 'human'. Philosophy as a mode of questioning the beliefs which guide our life, requires a separation of man from his environment. Modernity spells out the end of philosophy because technology now is closing this crucial gap. Modernity is self-conscious about moving into this region of unification from whence no questioning may arise. Heidegger writes clearly:

Philosophy is ending in the present age. It has found its place in the scientific attitude of socially active humanity. But the fundamental characteristic of this scientific attitude is its cybernetic, that is its technological character. The need to ask about technology

⁷George Grant, Technology and Empire (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969), p. 32.

is presumably dying out to the same extent that technology more definitely characterizes and regulates the appearance of the totality of the world and the position of man in it. ⁸

Modernity then means an awareness of technology as a mode of knowing which seems to be replacing familiar moulds of thought. These problems are not present in the East, because so far it has not progressed beyond asking first-order questions, regarding methodology and scientific procedure. We therefore, cannot understand what it is to be modern; or to be obliged to face the possibility of the annihilation of man. We are at the stage of common-sense understanding of technology as the latest development in the process of scientific discoveries and the occasional opposition it evokes is dismissed as nothing but the natural tendency toward conservatism in us. Outcry against innovations is nothing new; the timid are always wary of radical changes, always convinced that nothing but disaster can result from total transformations. As, against this negative attitude one hears the enthusiastic approval of those who hail every new breakthrough in technology as another landmark in human achievement. The question for us is not whether to be cautioned by the first group or reassured by the second, but to realize that to enter this debate at all is already not to understand the nature of technology.

⁸Martin Heidegger, On Time and Being, tr. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 58.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to enter into the concerns of Western philosophers who seek to bring home to us the implication of being obliged to live in the age of technology. In order to do so, we need to familiarise ourselves with the formative influences of the Western tradition, which has culminated in the age of technology; only thus can we hope to realize what it means to be modern, or what René Guénon means when he writes:

.... however affield the state of mind which has been specifically designated as "Modern" may have spread, especially in recent years, and however strong may be the hold which it has taken and which it exercises ever more completely at least externally, over the whole world, this state of mind remains nevertheless purely Western in origin: in the West it had its birth, and the West was for a long time its exclusive domain: in the East its influence will never be any thing but a Westernization. ⁹

It is necessary for us to understand the western tradition in order to begin to see how integral is science and technology to its culture, and may be to understand the reasons why the East remained untouched by this form of the quest for knowledge. The survey of the Western tradition is necessarily brief and therefore very partial. The simplified nature of the presentation however, it is hoped highlights the points of departure which may be studied carefully by thinkers in the East, who are interested in the area of comparative studies.

⁹ René Guénon, tr. and ed. by Lord Northbourne (London: Luzac and Company, Ltd., 1953), p. 15.

B. The Framework for Modernity: The Western Tradition

The cradle of Western tradition is ancient Greece¹⁰ which brought forth great men of noble deeds and brilliant thought. The self-understanding of this ancient society cannot be recorded as history of the times.¹¹ Antiquity had its own way of understanding the occurrences which commanded attention, as events of great significance in the lives of heroic men. Their achievements were landmarks which served to inspire and encourage other men toward emulation. Celebration of those deeds by recapitulation in poetry and drama made them moral imponderables; imponderable, because nobility was closely allied to tragedy. The mystique of man's relationship with nature's inscrutable ways was perpetuated in the recounting of tales of antiquity. This 'history' is almost a reliving of the past and a continuation of the order of nature in human affairs. Nature, according to tradition was good and man, even as the measure of all things, was a natural event, albeit the most exalted one.¹²

¹⁰ Frederick S.J. Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol. I, Part I (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962), p. 29.

¹¹ Karl Lowith, Meaning in History (The University Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 4-5.

¹² The inheritors of the Greek heritage are agreed that, "Through and through, the ideal is unity. To make the individual at one with the state, the real with the ideal, the inner with the outer, art with moral, finally to bring all phases of life under the empire of a single idea, which, with Goethe, we may call, an we will, the good, the beautiful, or the whole--this was the aim, and, to a great extent, the achievement of their genius." G. Lowes Dickinson, The Greek View of Life (New York: Collier Books, 1961), p. 155.

The West has experienced many exhilarating moments of emancipations from its past, not the least among which is the overcoming of the religious mythology which had combined nature and man in a harmonious whole. Nature, as we now understand the word was 'discovered' by philosophers in ancient Greece. Nature was found not to be full of spirits and thus mysterious and inscrutable, but rather, obedient to knowable and predictable laws.¹³ This was the beginning of that separation of man and nature which subsequently divided them completely into the two orders of the knower and the known and later of the maker and the made.

The spirit of scientific inquiry did not develop unimpeded; the quest for the ever-fading region of transcendence sometimes eclipsed it. The Platonic separation of the regions of appearance and reality, inaugurated a new line of enquiry which continues to parallel the tradition of questioning nature to its furthest limits. In other words, Plato's line of separation was drawn differently from that of the natural cosmogonists preceding him. Man, for Plato, was possessed of that reason which could lead him to the vision of the Real and the Good. Nature, therefore, was not exhausted in discovering

¹³The phrase 'discovery of Nature' was used by F.M. Cornford, who explains it thus: "The Ionian cosmogonists assume that the whole universe is natural, and potentially within the reach of knowledge as ordinary and rational as our knowledge that fire burns and water drowns. That is what I meant by the discovery of Nature The supernatural, as fashioned by mythology, simply disappears; all that really exists is natural. Before and After Socrates (Cambridge: The University Press, 1964), p. 15.

causes for events, it remained grounded in the eternal order of Forms. The soul of man was activated by the same principle which activated nature. Nature was not merely a neutral object of enquiry but necessarily related to the well-being of man. By focussing on the unchanging ground behind the changing order of existence, the Platonic tradition had acted as a break on the process of alienation between man and nature.¹⁴

The other source of Western civilization is held to be Hebraism, specifically in the form of Christianity. According to Mathew Arnold, in some ways Hellenism and Hebraism were rival forces, 'dividing the empire of the world between them.' He writes that 'between these two points of influence moves our world.'¹⁵ They remained rivals because reason and faith were never quite reconciled in the history of succeeding generations. The advent of Christianity in the West changed the understanding of nature in relation to man. The dimension of historical consciousness replaced the idea of the manifestation

¹⁴ Benjamin Jowett writes: "Nature in the aspect which she presented to a Greek philosopher of the fourth century before Christ is not easily reproduced to modern eyes. The associations of mythology and poetry have to be added and the unconscious influence of science has to be subtracted, before we can behold the heavens or the earth as they appeared to the Greek." Introduction: Timaeus, The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. III (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 380.

¹⁵ Mathew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, ed. J. Doyer Wilson (Cambridge: The University Press, 1935), p. 21.

of the natural order in recurring cycles. The 'Christian reversal' as Hannah Arendt calls it, introduced a new quality of self-centredness.

.... in Christianity neither the world nor the recurring cycle of life is immortal, only the single living individual. It is the world which will pass away; men will live forever. 16

Inevitably, perhaps the eschatological dimension of life, minimised the importance of nature. The emphasis was now on man, not, as the measure of all things but as one to whom in effect, is given the world to enjoy and also to inherit the Kingdom of God.¹⁷ The fast rise and spread of Western powers strengthened the sense of destiny and an unquestioning faith in the goodness of Providence. This new quality of self-centredness introduced by Christianity created a suitable atmosphere for the questionings into the workings of nature. Answers could be wrested from nature for the betterment of mankind. Quite paradoxically, therefore, it was Christianity which created a milieu for the conquest of nature although apparently it was opposed to the scientific spirit of inquiry into the workings of nature. The ancient philosophers who had asked the first questions

¹⁶Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 52.

¹⁷E. Troeltsh, Protestantism and Progress (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp. 160-163.

and who had remained eclipsed by the Platonic tradition, now stood vindicated. It can be said further that the opposition between science and religion was resolved in a strange way by philosophy. It will be a simplification but not entirely farfetched to say that the two great philosophers, Kant and Hegel, mediated between science and religion in a fashion which has definitively affected the course of Western thought since their time.

The first major step in the coming of the Age of Reason could be called the destruction of the Proofs of God by Kant and the establishment of the supremacy of the moral law as the only object of reverence. According to Kant, man alone amongst all other creatures, prescribes for himself a law of conduct which is good, not only because it is obeyed out of reverence for the law itself, but because it is the one law which can be a safeguard against evil propensities inherent in the nature of man. If man were devoid of reason, he would not be in conflict regarding the "ought". If on the other hand, he were purely a rational being, then the "ought" would resolve into the "must" of natural laws. Virtue lies in becoming so attuned to the command of the moral law that obedience becomes akin to an upholding of the law in one's behaviour. In other words man's disposition is to be changed by the moral law. This alone can make men worthy of happiness. This law, it is true, commands without promise of reward, but it is unthinkable, indeed irrational, to suppose that virtue will not bring about a state of happiness. The

union of virtue and happiness is the highest good envisaged by reason and the demand for this comes from the moral law itself. Nature being indifferent to this concomitance, the sole source of this award of happiness is God.. In the words of Kant "... It is morally necessary to assume the existence of God."¹⁸

Kant has here reversed the traditional relation between morality and religion. The result of this re-orientation of the argument for God's existence has been far reaching in the Western tradition.¹⁹ E.L. Fackenheim writes that the peaceful co-existence of reason and Revelation was upset by Kant's revolutionary theory. The moral autonomy is bought at a price. "The same act which appropriates the God-given moral law reduces its God-giveness to irrelevance."²⁰ In other words, in a world made vulnerable for secularity by scientific discoveries, Kant provided the clue to moral independence. By granting him a self-legislating will, he made

¹⁸The Critique of Practical Reason, Book II, Chapter II, tr. by L. Beck (The Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), p. 130.

¹⁹After Kant "the proud name of an ontology which presumed to give in a systematic doctrine synthetic knowledge a priori of things in general, must give place to the modest name of a mere analysis of pure understanding." Ernst Cassirer, Rousseau, Kant and Goethe (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), p. 95.

²⁰E.L. Fackenheim, "The Revealed Morality of Judaism and Modern Thought: A Confrontation with Kant. Quest for Past and Future (London and Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 215.

possible the phenomenon of man, master of his own destiny and standing alone at the crossroads of history.

Kant may have upset the balance between reason and Revelation, but Hegel by combining them, in an unprecedented way finally ushered in that age of secularity, which has come to stay with the Western tradition. In the supreme architectonic of the Hegelian philosophy, the eschatological fulfilment of Christianity is transformed into the dialectical movement of the world spirit, moving inevitably toward self-realization in the future. History itself is divinised and led up to the situation in which Hegel found himself, and which, to him was the peak of cultural advancement.²¹ "In this last stage of the history of the European spirit, pure free will, is finally produced, which itself both wills and knows what it wills," writes Karl Löwith.²²

Hegel's understanding of history is of the greatest importance because for almost one century it was he who set the tone for European philosophy either through his followers or his critics. In him was completed the substitution of Christianity by an overriding faith in the historical destiny of European man. History, therefore, was not entirely what had happened but what could be made to happen.

²¹Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, tr. David E. Green (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 32-33.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 32.

This secularization of the religious vision of salvation, brought into vogue the many philosophies of history which supplanted Biblical faith. Western civilization for centuries had been sustained by faith in the past; the message of charity toward all fellow men, as we hope for mercy from God; and a hopeful future in which was promised salvation. For religion to be meaningful, a teleological setting was necessary. By conferring fluidity to the dimension of truth,²³ Hegel guaranteed that a quality of religiousity would pervade all theories of progress which became current since his time.²⁴

The nineteenth century saw the dislodgement of religion from its pivotal role in human life, and an upsurge of confidence in progressive involvement in the life of the world. Man, for the first time knew himself to be the creator and maker of the future. The material well-being made possible by scientific discoveries and actualised by the Industrial Revolution was not unwelcome to the men of the age of expanding horizons. This manner of good life could

²³H.H. Berger, Progressive and Conservative Man (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1971), p. 34.

²⁴Quoting Prof. Bury, Carl Becker writes: '... however formulated with whatever apparatus of philosophic or scientific terminology defended, the doctrine (of progress) was in essence an emotional conviction, a species of religion -- a religion which according to prof. Bury, served as a substitute for the declining faith in the Christian doctrine of Salvation.' Progress and Power (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 7.

be easily aligned to a life of obedience to the divine will because they saw themselves as the chosen liberators of the entire world. According to Carl Becker:

The long treasured vision of a Golden Age once identified with the creation of the world by capricious, inscrutable gods, and then transferred to the beatific life after death in the Heavenly City, is at last identified with the progressive amelioration of man's earthly state by the application of his intelligence to the mastery of the outer world of things and to the conscious and rational direction of social activities.²⁵

The nineteenth century, it is said, went by on the wings of great enthusiasm for the new discoveries in the various fields of human enterprise. It is recognized as the age of progress,²⁶ as the age when Utopia was felt to be within grasp;²⁷ as the age

²⁵ Carl Becker, The Heavenly City (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 85.

²⁶ "The idea of progress, first explicitly stated by Condorcet in the eighteenth century, viewed material well-being as essential to individual liberty and peace. In the course of the nineteenth century, when men could see about them concrete evidence of advance in liberty and material goods, the idea of progress became an accepted part of our value system."

Melvin Kranzberg, "Technology and Human Values," Virginia Quarterly Review, XL, No. 4, 1964, p. 589.

²⁷ Herbert J. Mueller writes: "In our civilization the idea of progress led to a novel utopianism, the conviction that the ideal society was positively going to be established on earth."

The Children of Frankenstein (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 369.

of reason which set men free from the tyranny of religious dogma; and as the age of humanism, when for the first time man knew himself to be the measure of all things, not because he was given this position by nature or God but because he had discovered it for himself and had accepted the full responsibility for such an exalted state.

The dissipation of this self-reliance marks the advent of the present century. The crucial fact of the contemporary Western world is a loss of faith in the ideals which had guided previous generations. Christopher Dawson writes:

Of all the changes that the twentieth century has brought, none goes deeper than the disappearance of that unquestioning faith in the future and the absolute value of our civilization which was the dominant note of the nineteenth century.²⁸

Those who seek to understand Nietzsche are not puzzled by the quick dissipation of the euphoric optimism of the nineteenth century. The inherent contradiction in holding together a belief in God as the supreme dispenser of Grace and an over-riding confidence in one's will to conquer, had been foreseen clearly by Nietzsche. He knew that in due course the will to create and make will replace a 'waiting upon'; that the divinising of history as the progressive destiny of mankind will lead to the jettisoning of God

²⁸ Christopher Dawson, The Dynamics of World History (London: Sheed and Ward, 1957), p. 54.

as irrelevant to this process. Just as the spreading wasteland swallows up definitive paths, so must the human will overcome that region of knowing which forms a part of receiving from the 'Other'. The philosopher who had given this power to the human will, was of course, Immanuel Kant.²⁹ His importance has become clear now because it is seen that the heir to 'the wasteland' was created by him.³⁰

The question which demands attention here is why should living in the twentieth century be an experience of alienation for Western man when, paradoxically, he has all the means for increasing affluence and power as well as a strongly institutionalized religion which can act as a unifying force for the entire Christian World. One answer seems to be that the crucial factor which separates this

²⁹ Contrasting the placid outward life of Kant with "his world destroying thought", the poet Heine wrote: "Of a truth, if the citizens of Königsberg had had any inkling of the meaning of that thought, they would have shuddered before him as before an executioner."

Quoted by E.W.F. Tomlin, The Western Philosophers (London: Hutchinson & Co., (Publishers) Ltd., 1968), p. 202.

³⁰ How recognizable, how familiar to us, is the man so beautifully portrayed in the Grundlegung, who confronted even with Christ turns away to consider the judgement of his own conscience and to hear the voice of his own reason ... this man is with us still, free, independent, lonely, powerful, rational, responsible, brave; the hero of so many novels and books of moral philosophy.' Iris Murdoch. The Sovereignty of Good (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 80.

century from the previous one, is the failure of history. During the years when science was bringing in more and more mechanisations, man knew himself to be alienated from nature. After the two world wars man felt alienated from history as well.

The failure of history in the West is to be understood as an experience of the greatest moment. It is to be borne in mind that a belief in history meant the possibility of sustenance from a region which is beyond human fallibility. It ensured the continuity of moral values and added to the meaningfulness of striving for the goal of establishing perfect justice on earth. The two world-wars, in their total irrationality, destroyed, in a most dramatic fashion, all expectations which had been built up over the centuries. The expression of this post-war mood can be seen in the following lines:

Our Godhead, History has tilled a tomb for
us, from which there is no resurrection.³¹

The dissolution of this dimension of transcendence which had sustained man after he had separated from nature and alienated himself from religion, is described as "the overcoming of chance" by Leo Strauss. He identifies this quality of independence from the future as well as the past, with the reality of modernity. Modernity is commonly understood as the secularization of the Christian eschatology, which according to Strauss was accomplished

³¹Ingeborg Bachmann, "Message" tr. M.L. Mandelson, Modern European Poetry (New York: Bantam Books, 1966), p. 175.

in three stages, which he calls the three waves of modernity. In classical thought justice is compliance with the natural order. Later the element of chance is provided for in the benign inscrutability of Providence. The complete overcoming of chance came with Machiavelli, Hobbes and Kant. The fallibility of the human order could be transformed by (i) judicious manipulations, (ii) exercise of the rights for self-preservation, and (iii) complete obedience to the moral law. The dependence on divine grace is totally suspended as unnecessary; man's creativity supercedes inspiration; nature is conquered by science and human efforts are enough to bring about perfectability:

... eventually we arrive at the view that universal affluence and peace is the necessary and sufficient condition of perfect justice. ³²

Perfectability of man and the establishment of peace and justice on earth continued to suffice as ideals (as they still do) for those humanists of the twentieth century who had not reckoned with the means for the attainment of this end. A new factor was introduced by the advent of science which started to create an 'unnatural' order of existence. There is, therefore, in the West now a vein of literature devoted to the problem of the means of felicity becoming sufficient ends in themselves. This brings us to another

³²Leo Strauss, "The Three Waves of Modernity", Political Philosophy, ed. Hilail Gildin (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1975), pp. 88-89.

possible answer to the problem of anxiety in the present century in the West. The modern era is the subject for many kinds of analyses but all may agree to the importance of technology as the most commanding influence at work for all societies. Although we are familiar with the phenomenon of technology, it is not always understood in its full significance. Jacques Ellul writes:

No social, human or spiritual fact is so important as the fact of technique in the modern world. And yet no subject is so little understood. 33

Ellul's judgement is only too true, because, the subject of technology is so complex and vast that the comprehensive understanding of its ramifications would be a formidable task. A brief account is undertaken here only with a view to highlighting certain notions which are important for this thesis.

It is a general impression that technology is the newest development in the process of scientific knowledge. It is only the tendency toward conservatism which makes us look askance at the sudden spate of new inventions. This reactionary attitude is common both to the East as well as to the West and E.G. Mesthene describes it very clearly in these terms:

Why not stop it all? Stop automation: Stop tampering with life and heredity: Stop the senseless race into space: The cry is an old

³³ Jacque Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Knopf, 1964), p. 3.

one. It was heard no doubt when the wheel was invented. The technologies of the bomb, the automobile, the spinning jenny, gunpowder, printing, all provoked social dislocation accompanied by similar cries of 'Stop!'.... 34

Mesthene cites the phrase, 'the failure of nerve,' used by Gilbert Murray with regard to the Hellenistic civilization, in order to warn the twentieth century against becoming open to the same charge.³⁵ He thinks, we are now given the same choice of either proceeding with the quest for greater knowledge or to stop midway from a want of courage to face the unknown.

We are convinced again, for the first time since the Greeks of the essential intelligibility of the universe: there is nothing in it that in principle is unknowable.³⁶

Mesthene voices the opinion of many who think that with proper control and good management toward beneficial ends, technology may be used for the betterment of society; that it is a amoral neutral power, which can be used to good purpose by a moral

³⁴E.G. Mesthene, "Technology and Wisdom," in Philosophy and Technology, ed. C. Mitcham and R. Mackey (New York: The Free Press, 1972), p. 113.

³⁵Gilbert Murray, The Five Stages of Greek Religion (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1951), pp. 119-165.

³⁶E.G. Mesthene, "Technology and Wisdom," in Philosophy and Technology, op cit., p. 114.

and responsible government.³⁷

With collective responsibility, therefore, technology may be used in the best interests of mankind. Most people in the West and nearly all in the East would be convinced by Mesthene's arguments against undue fear of changes, and would easily identify with the idea that the answer to the problem of the technological take-over does not lie in crying halt to it but in getting better control of the world as a technological system.³⁸ This attitude easily aligns technology on the side of progress and does not consider that man's autonomy is threatened by it. This point of view finds ready support with the majority of people because we are used to the idea of bettering ourselves in every possible way. As a matter of fact the need for a defense of technology itself would not have arisen had it not "created a battered landscape of eroded soil, broken bottles and automobile tires (which) tells another story

³⁷According to Bertrand de Jouvenal, membership in a technologically advanced and advancing society is a privilege. It is characteristic of all privileges that they may be put to good use or bad use.

Jouvenal Bertrand de, "Some Musings," Technology and Human Values (California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), p. 23.

³⁸M.W. Thring writes: "We are well aware, now, that ... the wider development of the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution, has been a bolting horse out of control, and that we are all on its back. We know that we must find a way to grasp the reins and control the steed, and make it trot, rather than gallop, in the direction we need to go."

Man, Machines and Tomorrow (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 117-18.

of technology from that dream of a thriving industrial world set within a barely tamed wilderness that spurred on our ancestors,"³⁹

The problem of waste, pollution and devastation which come as an aftermath to technological proliferations provides no doubt some urgency to the pleas and suggestions for greater control over new inventions, but there is here a core of optimism in direct continuation with the nineteenth century belief in progress. Those who have been so far "sustained by a profound belief in the doctrine of progress,"⁴⁰ extend it to encompass technology as well. The idea of continuous innovation is so familiar, writes Demczynske, that we can hardly imagine life in a static society. We try to make every thing better, whether it is our industrial wares, standards of living or social institutions.⁴¹ It is true that twentieth century optimism is very tempered as compared to that of the earlier century,

³⁹William Kuhns, The Post-Industrial Prophets (New York: Weybright and Tulley, 1971), p. 2.

⁴⁰Carl Becker, Progress and Power (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 6.

⁴¹S. Demczynske, Automation and the Future of Man (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), p. 162.

This rush toward betterment is described by Theodore Roszak from another perspective: We have a name for the sort of human activity that absorbs people in the orderly pursuit of arbitrary -- usually competitive -- goals according to arbitrary rules. We call it a "game". Why must an economy grow, why must profit be maximized, why must every beaurocracy expand and concentrate control, why must scientific truth and organizational efficiency and industrial productivity be ceaselessly elaborated? Roszak writes that these questions have no rational explanation just as there are no logical reasons about the rules of games which must be accepted as ultimate in case the game is going to be played. "Forbidden Games", Technology and Human Values. (California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966) p. 26.

yet it remains a force to be reckoned with, because it is a force which provides sustenance to developing countries and feeds the opinion regarding the neutrality of technology.⁴² Since the time that Prometheus stole fire from the gods, the act of daring for greater knowledge and power has acquired an aura of nobility in the West. In this context one may appreciate Mesthene's urgings against a failure of nerve at this time.

The question to be considered here is whether this common prevailing opinion regarding technology should be seen in the light of a different perspective altogether or not. In a way it is a reassuring theory that technology brings about radical changes and so demands greater accountability from society in order that this tremendous force may be harnessed for the good of mankind. Yet this theory has been countered very pressingly by thinkers, who do not subscribe to the view that technology is just the practical aspect of science. Sociologists for one, have pointed out that man was a technician before he was a scientist.⁴³ Man was aware of, and could work with techniques before he discovered the universal laws which governed

⁴²A typical opinion would be: the transferred technology is forcing changes in the social and economic structure of countries everywhere. This has been so in the past, and it will continue to be true in the future. The problem is one of coming to terms with the new technology and of better organizing the world as a technological system.

Spencer, Daniel L. Technology Gap in Perspective: Strategy of International Technology Transfer (New York: Spartan Books, 1970), p. 162.

⁴³Lewis Mumford, "Technics and the Nature of Man," Philosophy and Technology, op cit., pp. 77-79.

them. In the fashioning of crude stone implements lay the seed of future technology; but this manipulative behaviour belonged to the category of a natural struggle for existence, not radically different from the use of claws and tooth on the part of an animal. Lewis Mumford distinguishes between the crude means of self-preservation from sophisticated techniques which aim at greater comfort and are production-oriented rather than life-oriented:

At its point of origin, then, technics was related to the whole nature of man. Primitive technics was life-centred, not narrowly work-centred, still less productive-centred.⁴⁴

Science came later and supplied greater power to the already existing technological pattern of man's manipulative behaviour.

Feibleman goes further to say that the preoccupation with technology has done a lot of harm to the development of science, because more often science has to engage itself with matters arising out of the uses of machines. According to him the role of science has been to improve instruments and techniques and vastly accelerate efficiency, thus helping technology to become a branch of applied science; but this rapidly growing branch is hardly conducive to the progress of pure science.⁴⁵

The argument regarding the relation of science to technology is of interest, because, not only is a wedge being driven here between

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 81

⁴⁵ J.K. Feibleman, "Pure Science, Applied Science and Technology," Philosophy & Technology, op cit., pp. 36-39.

what is considered worthwhile in itself and what is of practical use only, but it is being felt as an ever-widening gulf which is developing a dynamics of its own. Pure science now seems as wary of technology as are the humanities. The reasons are not far to seek. The scientist looks upon himself as an enquirer of truth. His methodology is distinct but according to a few scientists, not very different from the speculative, contemplative, or even insightful ways of the humanities and essentially it is an extension of the same desire for knowledge which started the first philosophers on the path of metaphysics.

Andrew G. Van Melsen writes:

... knowing and making lie in the same line; both mean man's self-realization, one in an imminent way and the other in a transient fashion. Both go out to the world but both also revert to man. For in knowledge man appropriates the world to himself immanently as an enrichment of his spirit; in technological making he appropriates the same world to himself to humanise it, and at the same time he learns to know himself in a new way....⁴⁶

To take into consideration another view which says that "knowing and making" lie in the same line, we may cite from the writings of Friedrich Desseauer. According to Dessauer, the inventor mediates between two realms, one of man's intellectual structures and conceptualities arising out of his needs and the other of the mysterious world of natural laws. The essence of invention lies in finding that which was not manifest before in the

⁴⁶ Andrew G. Van Melsen, Science and Technology (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1961), p. 319.

world of actuality, just like a poem or a picture created by a poet or an artist.

The inventor does not view what has been gained from his creation (though not from it alone) with the feeling "I have made you" -- but, rather, with an "I have found you ..." 47

There are also some scientists, who would like to see a closer relation between science and philosophy than seems possible at the moment. P.N. Bridgman, in an off-printed article⁴⁸ rejects the view that there is a radical difference between science and the humanities, even going to the extent of maintaining that although values are not definitive for science, concern for values is as important to the scientist as to any philosopher. Bridgman thinks that science can save the humanities much dissipation of energy in speculating about regions which clearly lie beyond the thinking powers of man.⁴⁹ It is time we learn to look to the future rather than try to effect any "return" to the insights of the past, because,

The insight that there is any problem here at all is devastatingly new in human history. The sciences and the humanities find themselves facing the problem together; it is too difficult and too pressing to permit the luxury of a division of forces. 50

⁴⁷ Friedrich Dessauer, "Technology in the Proper Sphere," Philosophy and Technology, op cit., p. 323.

⁴⁸ P.W. Bridgman, "Quo Vadis," Science and Ideas, ed. A.B. Arons and A. M. Bork (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964). Also in Science and the Modern Mind, ed. G. Holton (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1977), p. 323.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 277.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 278.

The exegetical value of following this line of thought lies in understanding that in spite of such statements as noted above, the totally dissimilar nature of the various disciplines cannot be slurred over. Sciences are not only creating new dimensions of awareness of our world, but they are adding to it, thus transforming existing structures of meaning by which life in the world is sustained. This element of radicalization does not belong with the creative arts of music and painting. They do not change what they seek to understand. A piece of brilliant music, or a masterpiece may be copied a hundred times without effecting the pristine purity of the original. Repetition, here is only celebration of the uniqueness of the first vision. With inventions, we can proceed only by way of discarding the obsolete. The former conquers time, the latter is defeated by time. The future is still possible with the humanities, whereas for the sciences it is already nothing, because any thematization of problems here opens the way to discovery and in doing so it carries the future with it. The indicators to discovery are nothing in themselves. Thus the shadow of "nothingness" which haunts the philosophical writings of the day cannot be lifted by any degree of collaboration with science.

The call for closing of ranks against technology, moreover, hardly means a new dimension of understanding because sciences would like to change many of the beliefs of the humanities before they could be useful for modern students. Max Black considers such presuppositions as 'man has an essential nature', or that 'this human essence is good', outdated and others in need of substantial revision. He goes on to say that new perspectives have to be created before the two languages

of science and humanities can become commensurable, because 'the personal equation',⁵⁰ which is crucial to the one is sought to be neutralized by the other.⁵¹ Further, for science, as Van Melsen pointed out, knowing and making lie in the same line, and this would seem to be the crucial point of departure for philosophy.

Science which has made technology possible, cannot perhaps contemplate fruitfully its own effectiveness. The point here is that the sciences being the study of the real and the natural are felt to be closer to the humanities than to technology which sets its sights on creating the artificial. Our increasingly man-made environment-- which is 'the devastatingly new' situation facing man--demands a new orientation toward it because the familiar attitude of doing one's utmost and hoping for the best, becomes irrelevant in a situation where all factors can be controlled and no element of uncertainty left to *chance*; *We thus* seem to have no option but to go forward in discovering greater powers for creating the artificial, that is, for automation, the central core of technology.

Let us now consider the nature of automation. Speaking on the subject, John Diebold said:

⁵⁰"Knowledge is an integral entity and cannot be definitely divided without finally becoming meaningless and useless ... The balance between science and humanities must be maintained throughout." S. Demczynski, Automation and the Future of Man (London: George, Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), pp. 207-209.

⁵¹Max Black, "Some Tasks for 'the Humanities,'" Technology as Institutionally Related to Human Values, ed. Philip C. Rotterkush (Washington, D.C. : Acropolis Books, Ltd., 1974), pp. 84-85.

If automation means anything at all it means something more than a mere extension of mechanization ... It implies a basic change in our attitude toward the manner of performing work ... through the systematic application of the principle called feed back, machines can be built which control their own operations, so that productive processes do not have to be designed to take into account the human limitations of a human worker.⁵²

From these reports it is for the lay person to understand that the new element of automation is far from being a neutral force for the use of man, and that in its essence it is different from the humanities. Automation is not an extension to human powers but a medium of replacement of the human element. A great step was taken when electricity was introduced to bring about instantaneous changes in communications overcoming the obstacles of mass, time and space. In the West this is being called the Cybernetic Revolution which in its effect of total transformation exercises greater power than the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century. J. Rose writes:

While mechanical power of the First Industrial Revolution formed an extension of man's muscles -- hence its description as the Age of Mechanisation -- the computer is an extension of his mind and is the 'brain' of the automatic system, hence the Cybernetic Revolution is also known as the Age of Automation. ⁵³

⁵²Statement of John Diebold before the Joint Economic Committee, Sub-Committee, on Automation and Energy Resources, 86th Congress and Session, reported in The New Technology and Human Values, ed. John G. Burke (California: Wadsworth Publishing Co. Inc., 1966), pp. 109-110.

⁵³J. Rose, The Cybernetic Revolution (London: Elek Science, 1974), p. 16.

To understand the nature of Cybernetics is to comprehend the grounds of apprehension regarding the end of the age of man. Machines had added to the power of man for bringing about changes in his environment. Cybernetics is capable of changing man himself and put him in the same electrical circuit as his surroundings.⁵⁴ Technology is not a power which is handled by man but the very medium in which he lives.⁵⁵ By medium is meant that by which and in which we have our existence. Nature is now in the process of being completely made over into man-made environment, which in turn can be seen as an extension to the central nervous system of human beings. Man has truly identified himself with his world and achieved a startling unity.

The technological era is therefore qualitatively different from the previous mechanical age. The discovery of mass being changed into energy was a lesser radicalization of our understanding of the world than the present total transformation into the region of electronics where all barriers of time, space and mass disappear. This situation can only be a-moral as all standards of living and behaviour must remain fluid; it is also ambivalent, since all technological projects create their own problems which need solutions. In this way a society comes into being which is governed by technology and not by a value-system or an ideology. Its inner dynamics creates its own

⁵⁴Norbert Wiener writes: "This is an idea with which I have toyed before -- that it is conceptually possible for a human being to be sent over a telegraph line." God and Golem, Inc. (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, Inc. 1964), p. 36.

⁵⁵Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Knopf, 1964), p. 6. Also Marshal McLuhan's definitive work, Understanding Media (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

particular level of existence which can be called a state of computerized automation. Just as the human nervous system has the sensory-motor nerves at one end and the brain at the other, so also automation is the feed back extremity of a continuum beginning with a computer.⁵⁶ By hooking this on to other computers, a near-infinity of possibilities is obtained. It becomes a self-sustaining process almost like nature, but with no precise end in view. In this frame of reference, according to Ellul, the question 'can man control his own techniques?' is meaningless, as the autonomous character of technique denies such an option. Here, that which was supposed to be instrumental is seen to be the master. It is an irreversible process but not an inevitable choice for human beings. Ellul refers to the ancient Greeks who did refuse for a time to start on the road to conquer nature and which choice was condemned by Gilbert Murray as a 'failure of nerve'.

We have come now to the heart of the reason for the pessimistic writings coming out of the West. Norbert Wiener, the father of Cybernetics, has called it, in effect, the wand of magic which is capable of granting any wish but does not tell what to wish for or whether the granting of the wish will be agreeable to the receiver.

⁵⁶ Donald N. Michael, Cybernation: The Silent Conquest (California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1962) pp. 5-6.

Humanity now is in the position of the sailor with the 'monkey's paw',⁵⁷ because it is now within the bounds of conceptual possibility that a machine may be set to 'generate' another machine or 'learn' to play an 'intelligent' game of chess.⁵⁸ What we may understand from this is that the power of technical programming is virtually limitless and the mystique of the barrier between life and matter is in the process of being exploded.⁵⁹ This technological future which seems inescapable to the West, is proving to be the ultimate catalyst precipitating all meaning from life and the ideals

⁵⁷An old soldier returned from India to visit a friend. He has with him a talisman that he says has the ability to grant three wishes to each of three people. The first owner of the talisman had taken the first set of three wishes, two unknown to the soldier, but the third one for death. That is how the soldier has become owner. The soldier took the second set of wishes for himself, but declines to talk about them. His experiences were too terrible. One set of wishes remain. With considerable reluctance the soldier yields to his friend's request for the talisman. The friend's first wish is for £ 200, and an official of the company where his son is employed comes in to tell him that his son has been crushed in the machinery. As a solatium, but without any admission of responsibility, the company has granted the father £ 200. The next wish is that the boy be back, and his mutilated ghost comes knocking the door and the last wish is that the ghost go away. W.W. Jacob's well known story retold by Norbert Wiener, "The Monkey's Paw", The New Technology and Human Values. ed. John G. Burke (California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1966) p. 132.

⁵⁸Norbert Wiener, God & Golem, Inc. (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1964), pp. 21 & 36.

⁵⁹Dennis Gabor, Inaugural Lecture (Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, March 3, 1959), p. 47.

of hope and justice which were integral to it so far. Michael Harrington writes:

... (the) conscious revolutionists of the past proposed visions which outstripped reality, the unconscious revolutionists of the present create realities which outstrip their vision. In the first case, it is history that is sad, in the second man.⁶⁰

If we may restate the arguments we may say that the failure of history, not only alienated man from his past, but has suddenly catapulted him into the future totally neutralizing the quest for justice.⁶¹ The future which by definition should be unknown to the present, has lost this quality for modern man. Technology now brings the entire range of possibilities, in principle, within the range of actuality. The process of the overcoming of chance is well on its way to completion. It is true that there are as yet many unknown spheres of investigations which could engage the attention of scientists for years to come. The point about technology is that it is able to make its own solutions to questions; it brings into being

⁶⁰Michael Harrington, The Accidental Century (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969), p. 16.

⁶¹Marshall McLuhan describes the difference between the previous mechanical age and our electric age as being that of exercising greater emphasis on process and transformation, rather than on the material that changes. Electricity is a single field of experience which is capable of co-ordinating every kind of diversity and multiplicity. This process takes place by remote control. The fact of speeded up change effects time barriers also. The past can be conserved and the present encapsulated. This requires new ways of thinking of the past, the present and the future. The Futurists, ed. with an introduction by Alvin Toffler (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 62-63.

that which was not in nature before and thereby transforms totally the ways of human adjustments in life. The new creation plays a definitive role by making it possible and therefore inevitable for other related techniques to come into existence which in their turn add to the proliferating process. Thus, it is said that, in principle, the future is already here, because technology is a process of mechanical development, a growth which follows its own self-regulative compulsions. To look to the future in any form that is theological, philosophical or even humanistic would mean an acknowledgement of the possibility of reciprocity between the natural process and human activity.⁶² At present the future lies at hand as programmed into machines and the past is dissociated because it has no formative role to play in this act. In modern terminology, therefore, the word 'progress' loses its definitive meaning. Instead of 'progress', it is now suggested that we understand changes in terms of the Principle of Acceleration which is non-dialectical and non-evaluative. In substantiation of his point, the author of the idea cites the example of an African student studying the most advanced courses in Western Universities. The gap between the African bush and the modern city can be closed speedily with adequate facilities and proper methodology.⁶³

⁶² John Baillie makes this distinction between development and progress. The Belief in Progress (The Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 122-132.

⁶³ Folke Døving, "The Principle of Acceleration: A non-dialectical theory of progress," Comparative Studies in Society and History (England: The Cambridge University Press, 1969); Vol. II, p. 95.

The paradox of affluence and despair is precisely this fact, that given the future, man does not know how to relate himself to it. Just like the African student who, uprooted from the bush and not accepted by the West which teaches him to differentiate himself from his background, Western man, at present experiences the same alienation from his past and faces the same silence of indifference from the world which he has created and chosen for himself. He cannot see at present what exactly can save him from the swiftly growing phenomenon of technology becoming the last court of appeal in every sphere of life. There are no moral imponderables now to contemplate; one is only to keep abreast of the newest level of technical expertise in all matters requiring decisions.

That this prospect of self-annihilation is very much within the bounds of possibility has entered the consciousness of Western thinkers. Arthur C. Clarke writes ironically that the machine-animals which are being created today may even be an improvement on the race of man because they would be devoid of such crudities and hostilities as men are heir to. Consequently they would lead a more civilized and peaceful life. Then he writes almost an epitaph for man:

No individual exists forever, why should we expect our species to be immortal. Man, said Nietzsche, is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman -- a rope across the abyss -- That will be a noble purpose to have served. 64

⁶⁴ Arthur C. Clarke, Profiles of the Future: An Inquiry Into the Limits of the Possible (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 229.

Modernity for the Western man, thus means an awareness that he stands well within the shadow of the fulfilment of Nietzsche's thoughtful words: "the wasteland grows."

In sum, the paradox of affluence and despair comes into being because man in this technological post-industrial society finds himself transformed into so much material for bringing about a state of total automation. Technology geared to production demands increasingly higher and wider degrees of automation. This process can neither be slowed, stopped or reversed; it has been the inevitable outcome of a seeking to conquer nature for the betterment of mankind. Hans Jonas writes:

In any case, the idea of making over Man is no longer fantastic, nor interdicted by an inviolable taboo. If and when that technological revolution occurs, reflection on what is humanly desirable and what should determine the choice -- on "the image of man," in short -- becomes an imperative more urgent than any ever inflicted on the understanding of mortal man. Philosophy, it must be confessed, is sadly unprepared for this, its first cosmic task. 65

The inadequacy of philosophy belongs with the will toward the changing atmosphere of automation. Philosophical thinking can be irrelevant only, where cognition is deployed totally into channels of expeditious manouverability. This is to say that mechanization, which is an autonomous force, has become with us a mode of know-ability. We delegate all responsibility of decision making to the

⁶⁵Hans Jonas, "The Scientific and Technological Society," Philosophy Today, Issue on Toward a Philosophy of Technology, Vol. XV, No. 2/4, Summer 1971, p. 98.

men in power, and who are in their turn guided by technical experts in every sphere of human-life. This is a paradox peculiar to the scientific West. Reason has been the guiding star of the Western genius for very long. It has been *its* pride and *its* prerogative. In following the dictates of reason, *it* has discarded other ideals as of lesser importance, but this has resulted in a paradoxical situation:

... the experience of the twentieth century showed that an alliance could exist between science and irrationality. This indeed was something new. The general assumption had been that a scientist was a rational man.... 66

The "terrifying alliance"⁶⁷ in the name of the supreme felicity for mankind calls for that philosophical understanding which was despaired of by Hans Jonas. In other words, modernity understands that the tradition of the identity of knowability with mechanization, propounded so forcefully by Bacon, has found its fruition in our age. Paolo Rossi writes:

What radically and primarily distinguishes every "modern" ideal of knowledge is precisely the renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation... knowledge, according to Bacon, is not the product of the intuitions of solitaries, but the fruit of a thorough and radical reform respecting man's mode of thinking and speaking and which concerns the very structures of his societal co-existence. 68

⁶⁶The Environment of Change, ed. A.W. Warner (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 9.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁸Paolo Rossi, Philosophy, Technology and the Arts in the Early Modern Era (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 181.

With the renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation, modern man understands that we do not live in a mechanical age because of technology; we live in a technological society because we are being thrust towards greater mechanization and automation everyday. Critics as well as technologists are agreed today, that in effect,

... automation (i.e., self correcting machines that feed back information and adjust themselves) and cybernation (i.e., making the automated machine capable of responding to a near infinity of contingencies, by hooking them up to computers) possess the scientific capacity to accomplish the ancient myth (of Daedalus).⁶⁹

The reference is to Homer's story of Daedalus, who of his own motion entered the conclave of gods on Olympus, which is rejected outright by Aristotle who writes dismissingly: as if "the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre without a hand to guide them..."⁷⁰ It seems Homer was right and Aristotle was wrong.

The above brief account of the place of technology in modern society has necessarily been a summary of some of the vital issues. Moreover, it has been a recapitulation of ideas, familiar to the West but which are not so well known in India or at least not appreciated as problems which could affect our plannings

⁶⁹Michael Harrington, The Accidental Century, op cit., p. 241.

⁷⁰Politica, 1253 b. 35. tr. by Benjamin Jowett.

for the future. Eminent thinkers are still looking for the grounds of dialogue between religion and science.⁷¹

C. Modernity and Vedanta

In India any thematization of concerns regarding our past, present or future is necessarily done in Western terms at present. This era of developing economy makes us look at ourselves as belonging to the third world. The technological milieu is not an outcome of our own tradition; it is a foreign element in our midst. Any degree of appropriation or interiorization will make us westernized and not modern. According to some Indian thinkers, this is an advantage we have over the West. India is in a position to take the technical know-how and make use of it in its own way, without falling a prey to the evils which have stalked its advance in the West. We can learn from their mistakes and not commit them.⁷² To take this attitude is to subscribe to the view that technology is a neutral factor and means nothing more than a viable option for the poorer countries. Its main sphere of influence is the

⁷¹Vedanta and Modern Science: Correspondence between Sir Julian Huxley and Swami Ranganathananda on 'The Message of the Upanishads' (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1971).

⁷²M.S. Iyengar, "Can We Transform into a Post-Industrial Society?" The Futurists, ed. with an Introduction by Alvin Toffler (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 190-192.

(Mr. Iyengar at that time was Director, Regional Research Lab. Jorhat, India Incharge of Developing Micro-Technology for Village-Scale Industrialization.)

sphere of practical projects and that its encroachment on other aspects of human life can be contained if such is desired. It is a means towards an end and need not dictate what values are to be cherished as far as our moral and religious behaviour is concerned. That modernization in India is another name for Westernization is made clear by such statements as these:

Modernization consists of a composite set of processes each entwined with a variety of contextual meanings in which elements of history, cultural structures, and existential factors each assume boundary maintaining functions The autonomy of moral values over the instrumental values (Modernity) can, therefore, be logically postulated at all stages of modernization in all societies.⁷³

From this definition of modernization it can be assumed that we in India are not yet open to the real significance of technology as it is being debated in the West. At a seminar on The Concept of Progress, the consensus of opinion veered round to the point that with proper checks on the forces of secularization, technology could be made useful for Indian conditions. It was left for a Westerner living in India to see with clear eyes the ambiguity latent in the idea which tries to hold together the concepts of 'progress' and the non-secular dimension of reverence. Arthur Osborne said that in Nineteenth-century Europe, man became homo-centric rather than theocentric, and this was the age of progress for him. He added:

⁷³Yogendra Sing, "Historicity of Modernization," Tradition and Modernization, ed. S.K. Srivastava (Allahabad, India: Indian International Publications, 1976), pp. 54, 67.

The same process is now taking place in the East and the same results will follow It will be strange indeed if the time comes when the mechanized materialistic East begins to talk about the mystic West!⁷⁴

The question that is being raised in the thesis is whether the technological inadequacy of India is only a matter of time-lag, or there is something of fundamental difference here; whether the technological gap between the East and the West will lessen as time goes on, and if so will the present thrust toward scientific advancement in the East meet with the same fate as it has done in the West. The writings coming out of contemporary India show no apprehension regarding the overpowering role of technology. The underlying thought seems to be that the tradition which has withstood many other conquests is eminently suited to the task of appropriating modernity and thereby transcending it. The main thrust here will be to examine this understanding on the part of Indian thinkers who seek thus to interpret the bases of the tradition in Western terminology. There is, in these writings no awareness of an inner conflict between modernity and the religious consciousness of India. An attempt is made in this thesis, first to bring the quality of this unawareness into focus, so that it may be seen in the light of Upanisadic thought which has its own

⁷⁴ Arthur Osborne, "The Concept of Progress," Indian Philosophical Annual, Vol. III (University of Madras, 1967), p. 13. (Arthur Osborne is the Editor of Mountain Path.)

dimension of involvement in the world. To be Westernized is not to be 'modern'. A modern man is a man made aware of his predicament in a society which provides him with no clue for the understanding of his own state of existence in the world. This itself is precisely the category of thought which relates him to his environment.

The term 'modernity' then, as it is being used in this thesis, would mean the awareness of precisely this movement of thought since the days that mechanization entered the world of philosophy as a category of cognition. The question which should thrust itself upon the consciousness of people belonging to other traditions, at this point in time, is whether they fully understand the mode of this grasp on the world, and whether it is consonant with their own tradition, which, so far, has not known "the renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation." Knowledge in India has been nothing but the "product of the intuitions of solitaries" who have thought not only of man's "societal co-existence" but also of the very essence of his being. In order to bring out the nature of the difference between the two modes of thinking, a brief account of the Indian tradition is given below.

The separation between the changing world-order and that which remains hidden and unchanging, is very crucial to Indian thought. Everything which changes is a presentation of that which does not change. The whole range of Indian thought, it may be said, is an

accounting for the unchanging which underlies the given changing order of existence. This idea of 'separation' pervades the ethos of India and can be recognized immediately as the mood of detachment, withdrawal or renunciation. It can be readily understood that a demand for discrimination between that which is of the nature of transience and its opposite is implied in this separation; and that one is urged to strive toward a progressive disengagement from involvements which are pleasing but ultimately unsatisfying in order that attention may focus on the veil of truth.

The unavoidable usage of negative terms in this context, unfortunately creates a wrong impression, but the reference here is to ontology and it is a legitimate way of calling attention to that essential discontinuity which precisely is the mode of relating to the ground of all existence. In the Upanisads, renunciation and the Bliss of fulfilment are held together in an unique unity.⁷⁵

It is usual to say that the main thrust of Upanisadic thought is toward establishing the unity of Brahman as the one ontological ground of all that there is. It would be appropriate to say that together with this an equally major effort can be detected toward engaging man's attention to the enquiry into the reality of this unitive ground.

⁷⁵ Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam yatkiñca jagatyām jagat, tena tyaktena bhunjītha māṅṛdhah kasyasviddhanam. (Īśā.1).

(Know that) all this, whatever moves in this moving world, is enveloped by God. Therefore find enjoyment by renunciation. Do not covet what belongs to others.

The sacred texts are considered indispensable to the enquiry; they are to awaken the questioning spirit. The enquiry into the ground of our being does not follow naturally from man's given status in the world. We, in general, remain in thrall to what is given in experience. Without the texts, there would be no indication of knowledge of any thing other than our experience in the world. The texts, therefore, are the sole indicators toward an enquiry into a region which is said to be of supreme significance for man.

The tradition does not primarily speak of the reality of the world and all that it means for a successful adjustment therein, because, this involvement is inescapable. The world is our only known sphere of activity, and there is here no need to underscore the obvious. It is man's nature to take delight in the world and to feel all the emotions which keep him involved with his fellow men. The environment of nature is an extension to his field of concerns. In the tradition, the forest is as important as the city, but life in the city is a preparation for life in the forest.

Indian thought has seen no separation of religious mythology and questionings into the factual nature of things. It has been pre-occupied with keeping the possibility open for a more crucial discrimination. It is, therefore, not an accident that science did not arise in India. Science needs that focussing on the material world which was of limited use only for traditional thought. In India thinking was kept mobilized toward understanding the human

condition within the parameters of rationality and mortality. It is to be remembered here that time belongs with the world and therefore the viability of the quest for truth may always remain a living issue for man. That is to say that the tradition is not perpetuation of meaningless reiteration of aging principles. The tradition seeks to preserve the purity of the indicators toward a life which while being lived in this world may become capable of that blessedness which is the receiving of truth.

At this point in time of our world-history, we do not have much choice in the matter of industrialization, but this is not to say that India can be technicised with no loss to her tradition; the very nature of technology precludes such an eventuality. If culture is the means by which is preserved a people's grasp of the essence of the meaning of life then to try and hold together technology and Indian thought is to do less than justice to either the tradition or to technology.

The impact of the Western tradition was felt by India through the medium of education in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The well wishers of India, native-born, as well as foreigners worked toward bringing about an age of enlightenment, to dispel the darkness of ages. Those who wished not to bring about changes in their tradition, did not know how to deal with the overwhelming forces of radicalizations of the time; they took refuge in an aggressive form of fundamentalism, which was not effective in stemming the tide.

The attempts at re-interpreting the Upanisadic tradition in the light of modern Western thought has not resulted in any major contribution toward meaningful living in our contemporary world. In the following pages an assessment of these attempts is given with a view to clarifying the process of 'modernization' of Indian thought. The study of these exegeses makes us realize that the emerging scene is of Westernized thought rather than either modern or Indian.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RISE OF NEO-VEDANTA AS A PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA

"If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian Philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the Schoolman, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences...."¹

Letter written by Raja Rammohun Roy, to Lord Amherst in 1823, protesting against the decision to set up the Sanskrit College, in Calcutta.

¹S. D. Collet, The Life and Letters of Raj Rammohun Roy, eds. D. K. Biswas and P. C. Ganguly, (Calcutta, 1962), Appendix II, pp. 457-458.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RISE OF NEO-VENDANTA AS A PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA

A. The Impact of Western Philosophy on Indian Scholars:

Early in the nineteenth century, the philosophic thought of India found a world audience through the series of Essays on Hindu Philosophy published in the proceedings of the Royal Asiatic Society of England and Ireland, by H. T. Colebrooke during the years 1824-32.² Other Indologists did pioneer work in translating and editing of Sanskrit texts into European languages.³ It was said that the nineteenth century saw the "flowering of Oriental Scholarship".⁴ The century proved to be a period of widening horizons, not only for the West, but the East as well. Many Colleges for imparting Western education to Indian students were established in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The three Universities at these places came into existence in 1857 with an avowed policy of pro-

² Hegel in his Lectures on Indian Philosophy referred to these essays as his main source of information. Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, tr. E. S. Haldane, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1892), vol. I, pp. 125-147.

³ The Text of the R̥k Veda became available to scholars with the publication of the Sacred Books of the East series by Max Mueller from Oxford (1849-1875).

The Bibliotheca Indica series was started by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1847. The Society had been established on January 1, 1784, under the Presidentship of William Jones (1746-1794), generally regarded as the founder of European Indology.

⁴ J. N. Farquhar, Modern Religious Movements in India. The Hartford Lamson Lectures of 1913, (published by Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1967), p. 2.

fessing secular learning only, as a change from the previous frankly evangelical mode of teaching.⁵

These Colleges and Universities became the gateway to the wider world of Western civilization for Indian students. The teachers who came from Scotland and England were greatly admired for their learning, simplicity and piety. Generations of young academicians cherished grateful memories of their pupilage with these kindly men who sought to inspire their students with their own ideals of education.⁶ Many students at this time were able to go to England and came in direct contact with eminent scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, such as, McTaggart, J. Webb,

⁵Macaulay, the chief architect of the educational policy in India, wrote to his father, 'It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence; and this will be effected without efforts to proselytise, without the smallest interference with religious liberty merely by the material operation of knowledge and reflection.' Quoted by K. M. Panikkar, Hinduism and the West, (Chandigarh, Punjab University Publication Bureau, 1964), p. 24.

⁶'...The greatest academic influence on me,' writes Haridas Bhattacharya, 'came from the saintly Professor Henry Stephen who taught three generations of young men in Bengal successively in the Duff College, the Scottish Churches College and the Calcutta University.' Contemporary Indian Philosophy, eds., S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., (1936), 3rd impression 1958), p. 68.

Many other contributors to the volume, express similar sentiments: A. K. Wadia mentions Fr. Devine of the St. Xavier's High School and J. R. Cuthbert at Wilson College ; V. Subrahmanya Iyer, who was taught at the Madras Christian College, writes, 'I commenced my studies under Dr. Charles Cooper...who kindled in me a passionate love for metaphysics.' Ibid., p. 593.

Pringle Pattison, Joachim, Bradley and Ward.⁷

The British Universities in the last years of the previous century, had come under the influence of Idealism imported from Germany. The flowering of German philosophy on the insular soil of England was more of an enigma than its subsequent invasion of Indian Universities. It cannot be said that it was more congenial to the English mind than the utilitarianism it supplanted;⁸ neither had there been any opportunities for pursuing the studies of Kant and Hegel directly, previous to

⁷In Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit., G. C. Chatterji (p. 129), S. N. Dasgupta (p. 252), A. R. Wadia (p. 624), etc. Nearly all of them at one time or another came under the influence of neo-Hegelianism. Hiralal Halidar writes in the same collection under 'Realistic Idealism' (p. 216), "The philosophical movement known as Neo-Hegelianism was in my student days gathering strength in Great Britain and I was one of the very few, not improbably the only one, who then felt its power in India". As a sample of assimilation of Neo-Hegelian thought toward interpretation of Vedanta as 'Realistic Idealism' the following quote from the same essay may be given (p. 232), "Self-realisation is not possible in isolation, only in fellowship and cooperation with one another can human beings move forward towards the goal of life....The Divine Spirit manifested in the community of men and the community of men rooted in the Divine Spirit, God in man and man in God -- this whole is the Absolute Spirit."

⁸One of the Oxford-trained Principal Miller lecturer at the University of Madras in 1937 writes in an auto-biographical vein revealing the ambiguous response of the British philosophers to idealism. "In so far as I had any pronounced views in the early days, they were fashioned under the influence of James and Schiller; the Advaitin's Brahman and the Bradlean Absolute were alike anathema. Even when at a later date knowledge of Absolutism took the place of ignorance and prejudice, my conscientious tutor, Emeritus Professor Joachim was so insistent on putting up the opposite view that my conversion to Absolute Idealism was neither quick nor easy." Collected Papers of Professor Suryanarayan Sastri, (University of Madras, 1961), p. 143.

this age. In fact, one historian of philosophic thought writes that it was surprising how 'without adequate training in Kant, England acquired such a firm grasp of the new problems', because, 'it is not a matter of a few isolated thinkers, but a whole host' and further, this movement was not imitative but 'stamped unmistakably with the seal of the English intellect'.⁹

Anglo-Hegelianism was frankly eschatological in nature. Max Mueller, a new comer to Oxford expresses his great astonishment at the theological atmosphere prevailing in England at a time when Germany and

⁹A. Ruggiero, *Modern Philosophy*, (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.; 1920), p. 261. Rudolf Metz highlights four contributing factors which may have brought about this renaissance of Idealism in England:

1. The prevalence of romantic literature pioneered by Coleridge and Carlyle.
2. A few isolated works by individual philosophers created the right atmosphere for bringing about a change, such as Hamilton's and Ferrier's.
3. The theological interests were influenced by Hegel's divinization of history at a time when evolutionists were to be contended with at home.
4. Benjamin Jowett's (1817-93) careful husbanding of classical literature and his translations of Plato which brought the Greek heritage within the grasp of all English-speaking centres of learning.

Rudolf Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, (London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.), p. 249.

France were preoccupied with the historical approach to all textual questions.¹⁰

The British Universities at this time, were engaged in holding together the demands of the new sciences and the philosophic thoughts arising out of them, and their own heritage of an institutionalized religion. Moreover, the sceptical spirit of David Hume still brooded over the philosophical world of the Universities.¹¹ Kant, to a certain extent had dispelled this intellectual despair. The coming of Hegel opened up a new dimension in the understanding of the fast changing world of the nineteenth century. Hegel was presented to them in a language which brought theology and naturalism together. Anglo-Hegelianism continued to be a movement toward such a synthesis. Nearly half a century spans the following two statements:

¹⁰ He writes, "I had been at a German University and the historical study of Christianity was to me as familiar as the study of Roman history. Professors whom I had looked up to as great authorities, implicitly to be trusted, such as Lotze and Weisse at Leipsic, Schelling and Michelet at Berlin,....left me with the firm conviction that the Old and New Testament were historical books, and to be treated according to the critical principles as any other ancient book, particularly the Sacred Books of the East of which so little was then known....a belief that these books had been verbally communicated by the deity or that what seemed miraculous in them was to be accepted as historically real, simply because it was recorded in these sacred books, was to me a stand point long left behind." My Autobiography, (Delhi, Hind Pocket Books (P) Ltd., 1976), pp. 164-165.

¹¹ "Hume is our Politics, Hume is our Trade, Hume is our Philosophy, Hume is our Religion, -- it wants little but that Hume were even our Taste." J. H. Stirling, The Secret of Hegel, (London, 1898), Vol. I, p. lxii (first published, 1865).

Hegel's views conciliate themselves admirably with the revelation of the New Testament.¹²

And

I have never disguised it from myself that when I speak of the 'Absolute' I mean by the word precisely that simple absolutely transcendent, source of all things which the great Christian scholastics call God.¹³

Hegel convinced a generation of scholars that the Absolute synthesized within it Thought and Being, Logos and Metaphysics, that the unthinkable is a contradiction in terms. The identification of causal evolution with the deductive processes of logic created a scene of inexorable development which pulled together science, philosophy and religion. It was perhaps inevitable that his triadic eschatology in which were reconciled thought and reality, history and evolution determinism and the freedom of the world-spirit reaching full self-awareness in the Absolute Idea, should carry within it the seeds of dissolution. The exclusive choices of Marx and Kierkegaard, writes Karl Löwith, "Separates precisely what Hegel had unified".¹⁴ For Marx the choice

¹²J. H. Stirling, The Secret of Hegel, op. cit., p. 100.

¹³A. E. Taylor, Elements of Metaphysics, (7th ed., Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1924), p. xiii.

¹⁴Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche, tr., David E. Green, (New York, Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1967), p. 135.

to revolution was necessary for the making of history and for Kierkegaard the choice to existential despair which alone could lead to authentic living. Yet another note of dissension came from a new generation of philologists who attempted to divest history of its epic aspect, making it much less mysterious and much more similar to the present."¹⁵ They believed that philology also had a crucial role to play in the understanding of the world process.

England, due perhaps to its theological orientation, remained rather untouched by these reactions overtaking Hegelianism on the Continent. The English scholars concerned themselves with the concrete 'other' of thought and thus influenced many scholars in India. T. H. Green (1836-82) attempted a recovery of the Kantian synthetic unity of apperception from the ideal totality where it had become one with its 'other'. Green accepted the Hegelian position that the highest knowledge was mediated knowledge but did not in effect give up the Kantian thesis of the final unity of apperception as constitutive of nature, and as eternal consciousness which remains impersonal; in other words, the world is statable in terms of the mind only because in Green's well-known phrase, "the objects are mere congeries of relations."¹⁶ His chief effort went toward over-

¹⁵Emile Brehier, Contemporary Philosophy, The History of Philosophy, vol. VII, tr. Wade Bashin. (The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 5.

¹⁶Thomas Hill Green, The Works of Thomas Hill Green, ed., R. L. Nettleship, 3 vols. (London, 1885-88), vol. I, p. 487.

coming the dualism inherent in Kant by positing a universal metaphysical principle which, however, is said to remain indistinguishable from an universalised version of Kant's synthetic unity of apperception. T. H. Green, F. H. Bradley, H. Joachim and others became familiar names in Indian Universities.

F. H. Bradley's ontological differentiation of appearance and reality was studied eagerly and appreciated as an improvement upon Green's idealistic position. In Bradley's absolutism anti-intellectualism had reached its zenith. Hegel's position seemed to have been totally reversed. The unthinkable is a contradiction according to Hegel. Bradley states that reality is unapproachable by thought or rather that thought is transmuted in entering the whole of reality. Every particular is an integral part of the whole. Knowledge, according to Bradley, is an immediate experience of the coherent whole. The fragmentation of this concrete universal in individual experience is the inescapable outcome of our discursive reason. This uneasy partnership of coherence and immediacy was not a stable position and did not endure beyond the originator himself, but Bradley was hailed as a philosopher who could envisage the possibility of superceding a cognitive approach to the question of reality.

It is acknowledged that the movement of thought from Kant to Hegel was of primary importance in England and that Kant was approached through Hegelian spectacles.¹⁷ Oxford and Cambridge imparted to Hegelianism a religious aura and made it peculiarly their own. The wholeness

¹⁷R. Metz, A Hundred Years of British Philosophy, op. cit., p. 253.

of the Universal was centrally quartered by the horizontal line of terrestrial existence and the vertical line of divine intervention.

Within the circle of the Absolute, it is "the dove descending"....that by its vertical descent into and intersection with the linear order of times establishes the cross as at the centre of all absoluteness.¹⁸

All this was of great interest to Indian scholars. It goes without saying that much of Kant and Hegel remained alien to Indians. The secularity inherent in the Hegelian system remained hidden in its British version and, therefore, was not understood by its Indian inheritors who gave it a metaphysical colouring which could not and did not endure. For these reasons perhaps the Hegelianism prevailing in Europe remained, as Karl Loewith rightly observed, totally uninfluenced by its British counterpart just as one may say the latter remained untouched by Indian Hegelianism. The situation prevailing in Indian Universities was radically different from that of British Universities. Indian Universities were innocent of any theological need to come to terms with theories of evolutions. For this reason, although Western philosophy came to India in the garb of neo-Hegelianism, it was assimilated in a manner which was peculiarly Indian. It can be said that the major difference between Anglo-Hegelianism and Indian Hegelianism lay in the importance given to Kant in the movement of thought from Kant to Hegel as against Hegel.

¹⁸Anne C. Bolgan, "The Philosophy of Bradley and the Mind and Art of Eliot".

Modern scholarship tends to deprecate the flowering of neo-Hegelianism, on Indian soil, especially as Hegel had nothing but abuse and contempt for Indian philosophy,¹⁹ and historically it remains a fact that Indian scholarship did not influence or add to the pool of English works on Kant and Hegel.

In order to understand the foundations of contemporary neo-Vedantism, it is necessary to enter into the philosophic mood of India at the beginning of the century. At this point in time it should be possible to gain a perspective on the situation obtaining at the universities and formulate an explanation of this strange phenomenon.

¹⁹It is needless to document Hegel's abuses which are well-known but the following are positive words on Indian philosophy, worth citing:

'Intellectual substantiality is in India the end, while in Philosophy it is in general the true commencement: to philosophise the idealism of making thought, in its own right, the principle of truth. Intellectual substantiality is the opposite of the reflection, understanding, and the subjective individuality of the European. With us it is of importance that I will, know, believe, think this particular thing according to the grounds that I have for so doing, and in accordance with my own free will; and upon this an infinite value is set. Intellectual substantiality is the other extreme from this; it is that in which all the subjectivity of the "I" is lost; for it everything objective has become vanity, there is for it no objective truth, duty or right, and thus subjective vanity is the only thing left.' Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, tr. E. S. Haldane (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1892, vol. I, "Indian Philosophy", pp. 125-147), p. 145.

B. The Academic Atmosphere in India at the Turn of the Century.

The outstanding students who were selected for higher studies at that time, mostly came from cultured families where they had enjoyed an adequate grounding in their own tradition. Many of them had the good fortune to study with eminent Pundits who were active in their own sphere of sanskritic learning.²⁰ Due to this background in traditional philosophy which in effect was their religion as well, they were not moved to excitement by Christian theology, the first concern of missionary schools which imparted the basics of Western education to Indian students.²¹

²⁰The following names of Sanskrit scholars can be considered as exercising formative influence on the future teachers at Indian Universities. Mahamahopadhyaya Vamacharan Bhattacharya, MM. Ananta Krishna Shastri (Varanasi), MM. Kalivar Vedantavagisha (Calcutta, who edited and published the Brahma Sutra with Bhamati in 1887); MM. Lakshman Shastri Dravid, (who initiated a generation of dedicated scholars notably Jogendra N. Bagchi), MM Panchanan Tarkaratna (Varanasi), MM. Chandrakanta Tarkalankar ((Calcutta, who delivered the Ist Sree Gopal Basu Mullick Lectures), also Jagadguru Sri Shankaracharya of Sringeri. From the biographical notes given in Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit.

²¹It is true that the Western influence had triggered off what has been called the Indian Reformation Movement and the Age of Renaissance. (D. S. Sarma: Hinduism Through the Ages, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1956, p. 64).

The Reformists sought to jettison the Pauranic tradition as a category of exegesis of the Vedic literature and the fundamentalists, adhered to it strictly, in the face of bewildering changes. Both consequences were perhaps historically inevitable. A few scholars only, continued to maintain the tradition of interpretative exegeses which was all the more remarkable because they were now doing it in an alien language which did not readily lend itself to the translation of Sanskrit terms.

Their interest, however, was quickened by Kant and Hegel. Christianity held no special appeal for the scholarly Indian who shied away from even a trace of exclusive claim to truth which to him was contrary to the spirit of philosophy; whereas they felt that they could easily enter into the metaphysical and epistemological concerns of like-minded men. Epistemology had always played a crucial role in the formulations of Indian philosophic thought. The opponent's view was important in the development of one's own thesis. A high standard was maintained in the tradition regarding the fair apprehension and presentation of the critic's point of view.²² They could, in the same strain, welcome a confrontation with a philosophic position which at once challenged the presuppositions of their tradition and yet as it seemed to them, fell far short of the many insights which highlighted their own approach.

For Indian Philosophy, if one may generalize, the crux of the matter always had been to know the transcendent from within the dimension of the world; to grasp the unrelational through that which is relational; to thematise that which reveals itself as transcendent as well as immanent; in other words to make possible the intelligibility of Pure Being, 'beyond all duality and difference'.

Hegel, therefore, was soon perceived as a challenge, but Kant's transcendental deduction of categories seemed at once close and yet

²²See the Preface to Sarva Darsana Samgraha: Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy, E. B. Cowell and A. E. Gough (Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1976).

removed from the heart of the problem. Nearly all of them attempted the task of breaking apart the transcendental deduction into its apriori and aposteriori elements. The limit set upon the categories by Kant was acceptable but not the unknowability of noumenon because the problem of the unmediated knower precisely had been debated long in the Indian tradition. Thus they could not but welcome the Kantian critiques as the meeting ground for a common enterprise. Pre-Kantian and post-Hegelian theology had never acquired relevancy in the Indian context; but Kant and Hegel were greeted as metaphysicians, one as a kindred spirit and the other as a challenge, and treated as such. It was felt that an exchange of thoughts on this level was possible. K. C. Bhattacharyya's crucial article "The Concept of Philosophy" brings this out very clearly. He writes:

With regard to the knowability of the self as a metaphysical entity Kant holds that the self is a necessity of thought and is the object of moral faith, but is not in-itself knowable. My position is, on the one hand, that the self is unthinkable and on the other that while actually it is not known....we have to admit the possibility of knowing it without thinking....²³

Other eminent scholars continued to write, pulling together such terms as seemed commensurable to them:

²³K. C. Bhattacharyya: "The Concept of Philosophy" (in Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit.), pp. 105-125.

Vedantism sets its face against all forms of ontological argument, the Rationalist's device of deriving existence from a specific concept -- Perfect Being (Descartes & others), or from a system of concepts -- Reason (Hegel). Existence is not conceivable; we can only intuit it. If Hegel's is a logic of ideas or concepts, the Vedanta's is a logic of existence. ²⁴

We thus see how Kant and Hegel were situated in the scheme of philosophical speculations of India. Other thinkers continued to compare and contrast both systems of thought, while developing their own thinking with regard to their own tradition.

C. The Beginning of Comparative Studies.

The first outcome of this intellectual encounter, therefore, took the form of a series of comparative studies.²⁵ Swami Abhedananda, one of

²⁴T. R. V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita", (K. C. Bhattacharyya Memorial Volume; Amalner, Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1958), pp. 135-150.

²⁵Hiralal Halidar. Neo Hegelianism, Heath Cranston, 1927.

D. M. Datta. The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy (European, American and Indian), Calcutta, Art Press, n.d.

R. W. Das. The Philosophy of Whitehead, James Clarke & Co., 1937.

U. C. Bhattacharya. "Space, Time and Brahman", Jha Commemorative Volume, Poona Oriental Book Agency, 1937.

Haridas Bhattacharyya inaugurated at the Calcutta University, the Prestigious Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lectures in Comparative Religion in 1933-34. (Published by the Calcutta University in 1938 entitled Foundations of Living Faiths).

the first Indians to interpret Vedanta Philosophy to the West, writes that he was impressed by the Lectures on Hindu Philosophy delivered by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkacudamani in 1883 at the Albert Hall, in which he dealt with the ancient Greek Philosophers as well as modern theories of evolution.²⁶ Studies in comparative philosophy continued to be the main concern of academicians for the greater part of the present century. Probably the first public acknowledgement of the demands of the time is exemplified in the inauguration of the Sreegopal Basu-Mallick Lectures on Vedanta Philosophy by the Calcutta University in 1898. The aim was to state the relevance of Vedanta Philosophy in the quick changing world of the nineteenth century. The first speaker was the highly respected MM. Chandrakanta Tarkalankar who devoted himself to this undertaking for five years, 1898-1905. Other speakers who addressed themselves to the task were variously required to indicate the place of Vedanta in the economy of Modern Western thought and to "estimate its value"²⁷ or to speak on "the place occupied by the Vedanta in the philosophical systems

²⁶ Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

²⁷ Pramatha Nath Mukhopadhyaya. Introduction to Vedanta Philosophy. (Lecture of 1927, published by the Book Co. Ltd., Calcutta, 1928).

of the civilized world and of its merits as compared with Western Schools of Thought".²⁸

At about this time some Journals were founded with the same ideals in mind. The Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner (1916) became a centre for study and research in Vedanta Philosophy and a place where many eminent scholars developed their own philosophies.²⁹

From the writings of this period, it can be seen clearly that Indian Philosophers saw themselves undertaking a double task: along with the appropriation of the best thoughts of the West they had engaged in the

²⁸S. K. Belvalkar. Vedanta Philosophy (Lecture of 1925, published by Bilvakunja Publishing House, Poona, 1929).

Other speakers in the Series are:

N. K. Datta. The Vedanta: Its Place as a System of Metaphysics (Lecture of 1926, Calcutta University, 1931).

R. D. Ranade. Vedanta, the Culmination of Indian Thought (Lecture of 1928).

S. K. Das. A Study of the Vedanta, (Lecture of 1929, Calcutta University, 1937).

Kokileshvar Sastri. Sreegopal Basu Mullick Lectures on the Vedanta (Lectures of 1930-31).

²⁹The Indian Philosophical Review was published from Baroda in July, 1917 under the joint editorship of A. G. Widgery and R. D. Ranade. This journal was discontinued after about four years. It was resuscitated again as the Journal of the Academy of Philosophy and Religion, an Institution founded by Ranade in 1924, under the name of Review of Philosophy and Religion.

Vedanta Kesari was published in 1913 from Madras.

The Journal of the Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner was inaugurated in January, 1918.

The Philosophic Quarterly was published from Calcutta in April, 1925.

Kalyan Kalpataru in 1934 from Gorakhpur.

task of retrieving the paramountcy of the Upanishadic heritage for the contemporary scene. They learnt to look at their own tradition with objectivity and thematise it in the language of Western metaphysics. Parallels were drawn and similarities emphasized with a view to establishing a common platform of philosophic debates. The pre-war writings abound in such passages as these:

....We might note the great resemblance between the ancient metaphysical systems of India and the present metaphysical systems of the West. The Absolute of Bradley has numerous points of contact with the Advaitism of Samkaracharya. Both suppose that the Absolute is the only ultimate real. With both, God is different from the Absolute....³⁰

Or

According to the Vedanta, Brahma is not only the first but also the highest reality. According to Alexander, the first and ultimate reality is Space-Time, out of which eventually the quality of deity will emerge. For the Vedanta, Brahma is the beginning and the end of the world -- its Alpha and its Omega. But according to Alexander, Brahma, if that one could stand for the highest reality, would only be the unattained end of the world -- its Omega, but not its beginning which was only Space-Time.³¹

It remains a historical fact that the comparative method being advocated by the Indian philosophers found no echo in the Western world

³⁰R. D. Ranade, quoted by the author from an earlier paper, Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 545. Ranade goes on to compare Ramanuja and James Ward, and McTaggart's non-theistic idealism with the Samkhya nirīśvaravāda.

³¹U. C. Bhattacharya, "Space, Time and Brahma", Jha Commemorative Volume, (Poona, Oriental Book Agency, 1937), p. 83.

which at best remained indifferent to the entire issue.³² No academic interest of a sustained nature in Indian thought was evinced by the thinkers of other countries.³³ On looking back at the first encounter of two disparate traditions we seem to find them talking greatly at cross-purposes. Individual scholars expressed their admiration on either side perhaps, but there was no confluence of philosophic thought, making for the greater understanding of either system.

D. The Lack of Mutuality between Indian Thought and Western Philosophy.

In trying to understand the abysmal lack in communication between Eastern thought and Western philosophy, a few factors reveal themselves as possible conditions contributing to the failure. The phenomenon must be approached from both sides so that we may appreciate the attitudes toward their own tradition on the part of the twentieth century philosophers in India.

The severest encounter, it must be acknowledged, was with regard to eschatology. It can be said that the central theme of the Western tradition, after the advent of Christianity, is time. Time is the arena

³²The more recent phenomenon of 'East-centricism' of the West operates at a level of and in answer to a quest for a trans-western universalism. See Infra, Ch. V, p. 166.

³³There were rare exceptions like B. Faddegon's The Vaisesika System, (Amsterdam: 1918) wherein he had maintained that there was no difference between Eastern and Western systems of thought for the purposes of comparative studies.

of God's providential action and what is required for understanding is to reconcile it with the conception of time as history made by man. The present is because how the beginning was, and the future will be as the present is modified to be, or rather, that which was not before, could be made to happen in the future. A high sense of responsibility for the processes in time characterises every mode of philosophic thought from that which is severely pragmatic and utilitarian to the seeming opposite idealistic end. For them the language of will expressed some of the loftiest thoughts regarding the great future of humanity and 'humanity' was the watch-word of the nineteenth century. Throughout Europe, the freedom of man from being in bondage to institutionalised religion or to oppressive political control was the main theme engaging the attention of philosophers. Since religion was inextricably bound up with the history of Europe, they could not readily appreciate a separation of the two in another tradition. For them, philosophical statements emptied of all historical content were limited in cognitive value. Their objection was that logos seemed still embedded in mythos in India.³⁴

European scholars were thus fascinated as well as repelled by the heterogeneous conglomeration (as it looked to them) of ideas which

³⁴"No where in ancient Near Eastern thought do we find the emancipation of the logos from the mythos which characterises the development in Greece."

Joachim Wach. Types of Religious Experience, (The University of Chicago Press, 1951, 5th Impression, 1972), p. 70.

was made available to them by Indian Pundits as well as conscientious Indologists. Situated in their own tradition, the Western scholars who were trying at that time to unravel the tangled skeins of Indian thought, could not appreciate the philosophic significance of the concept of time studiedly situated in abeyance with regard to metaphysical questions. A religion which had no eschatology could only be primitively animistic or anthropomorphic, or at best pantheistic, and pantheism in the West was not a viable philosophic position.³⁵

E. Western Criticism of Indian Thought.

The severest criticism from the West centred around the trivialization of the world as a sphere of human endeavour for its betterment for the future of mankind. The ever-recurring theme of world-negation, in the texts created the indelible impression in the Western mind that Indian thought was pessimistic in the extreme. Describing dissolution of karma and final deliverance, Barth writes:

The practical consequences of such a doctrine, as this can be only a morality of renunciation, and to underrate, if not to scorn, every established culture. There is consequently very little mention of positive duties in the Upanishads. The essential matter is to stifle desire, and the ideal of the devout life is that led by the Sannyasin....³⁶

³⁵Marvin Farber, Basic Issues of Philosophy (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1968), p. 179f. (For standard criticism of 'pantheistic' position of Vedanta, see Kirtikar, Studies in Vedanta (Bombay: 1924) Ch. ii.).

³⁶A. Barth, The Religions of India, tr. Rev. J. Wood (Varanasi), (The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Vol. XXX, 1963, first published, 1921), p. 79.

The Western scholar, even of the kind otherwise predisposed to a positive estimation of the 'one' of their philosophy, very soon found reasons for this attitude of "complete quiescence" in an inferior type of heredity, and the hot climate which indisposed "the organisation for active exertion", and predisposed it toward contemplative life.³⁷

The tragedy of nineteenth century Indology lay in the fact that sympathetic European scholars were embarrassed by the very concept which the Indian tradition put forward as its highest achievement in the philosophic understanding of the texts. In monism was seen the failure of thought to rise to the concept of one God as creator and redeemer of mankind. The Theistic West which gives high regard to ethical considerations could admire only "a clear summit"³⁸ rising uncompromisingly above many cloudy pinnacles. Where everything is possible, it felt, nothing can be predicated, and this position can only lead to the worst kind of relativising of good and evil. A few grieved over the fact of a kind of arrested

³⁷A. E. Gough, The Philosophy of the Upanishads and Ancient Indian Metaphysics (London: 1882), p. 6.

³⁸"Hinduism as religion will remain theistic, with the tendency persisting to view all theories and forms as aspects of one eternal truth and substance, even though Hindu religion has never yet disclosed within itself a cloudless summit to which its many paths may lead...." The author concludes optimistically that Hinduism may still achieve this in the future! John C. Archer (Yale), "Hinduism". The Great Religions of the Modern World, ed., E. J. Jurji (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 89.

development in the Vedic literature. They surmised that had the mythology of Varuna been pursued to its logical end, Hinduism could have purged itself of its idolatry.

....From these comparisons we see, how near Varuna came to being a Rgvedic Yahweh, "full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy" (Exodus XXXIV-6). The great catastrophe of the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.) alone cured Israel of polytheism and idolatry....³⁹

The theistic West could not be expected to be patient with a tradition which countenanced an open ended dialogue between Theism and the Vedanta for centuries. From the perspective of the tradition itself, such debate was necessary to the understanding of the central theme of the Upanishads. The best opinion, therefore, regarding Indian thought in the West was that the sanskritic tradition had at times reached sublime heights of spirituality, as had other classical or pagan cultures, but that it had essentially remained untouched by the dimension of charity and thus unaware that "the Grace of God is still available to our undeserving."⁴⁰

On the Indian side, because of their own traditional background, the scholars were lead to read such trends of thought into neo-Hegelianism or rather neo-Kantianism, which could not be sustained for long. The

³⁹The authors regret that the promising start made in the Vedas came to nothing as Varuna subsequently dwindled into oblivion. The Religious Quest of India, eds. J. N. Farquhar and H. D. Griswold (Oxford University Press, 1923), pp. 350-355.

⁴⁰Charles Morgan, "The Word 'Serenity'", The Writer and His World (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 44.

secularism inherent in German idealism was congenial neither to British theologians nor to Indian thinkers; yet the former attempted a compromise and the latter sought to build upon it as a means of communication in the realm of philosophical inquiry. The region of the sacred had proved to be divisive and so much recalcitrant material for the philosophers to work on. Metaphysical speculations, on the other hand, were opening up undreamt of horizons, so that every thinker could share in the same perspective and speak in a communicable language, or so they thought.

The term 'metaphysics' is used here in the sense in which Kant was understood to have used it, that is to say, the region of the a priori which lies beyond the pale of any kind of constitutionality of human understanding.⁴¹ The Critique of Pure Reason was understood in India as a defeat of scepticism and not of metaphysics. The Noumenon was the antithesis of the phenomenal series and could not be brought into the series. It remains the unknown which spurs the intellect to greater efforts. Kant had said that the ideas of reason were regulative and therefore the quest for the Unknown (but not the Unknowable) was not closed. The efforts toward circumventing Kant's agnosticism (which British idealism had re-affirmed) seemed legitimate occupation for philosophers. Kant had confined contradiction to the antinomies of reason. This was congenial to Indian thought. Hegel, on the other hand, needed to be denied because he broke open the antinomies and posited the

⁴¹I. Kant. Critique of Pure Reason, tr. by Norman Kemp-Smith. Preface to Second Edition B XXX,ff.

the contradiction within the heart of reality itself.

What the Indian thinkers failed to see, in which they were by no means alone, was the overcoming of metaphysics which lay concealed in the core of German idealism. Once Kant had transferred ontology to the region of will from the realm of knowability, the beginning of the end of metaphysics was stated. The famous restriction of reason, in order that faith may prevail, only created a gap which was filled by will making faith superfluous. The results of the tremendous supremacy given to human will was assessed in the Kantian studies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the West. The West in a way, lived out the full explication of all that lay implicit in the critical philosophy and knew Kant to be the father of modern liberalism.⁴² As the Kantian studies began to draw their own logical conclusions, Indian scholars came to a parting of the ways because the destruction of metaphysics had neither been foreseen nor could be appropriated by them. Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and also Existentialism and Phenomenology which followed in the wake of Kant and Hegel, were faithfully included in courses of studies, but cannot be said to have acquired relevance in the Indian context.

F. Neo-Vedanta as a Dimension of Apologetics.

It may be seen that a parting of the ways came about in more ways than one. The utter lack of understanding evinced in the West of the best

⁴²From my lecture-notes on Kant, a course given by George Grant at McMaster University in 1973-74.

thoughts of India, awakened the awareness of a closer connection between tradition and philosophy (than was allowed by Indian scholars), which at this stage should have given rise to a new dimension in the understanding of their own texts not in the context of Western metaphysics but in the context of Westernization which was taking place. It cannot be said that this happened in India. What instead took place was a sort of second phase in comparative studies brought about by the realization that Indian philosophy was being misinterpreted by its Western exponents. S. Radhakrishnan pioneered the attitude of polemical defense which had the merit of bringing Eastern thought to the notice of Western Universities in an unprecedented manner.⁴³ His vigorous self-analysis also commended itself to the younger generation of Indian scholars who without leaving the anchorage of the tradition wished to move with the times. Writing in the History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western, sponsored by Radhakrishnan as the Vice-President of India, P. T. Raju and K. A. Hakim maintain,

India now is not merely reviving but reflecting upon and re-interpreting its past, its religion, its philosophy, its social and ethical forms; some of which it is discarding, some it is explaining away, and the rest it is reshaping. It is thus showing its great potentialities for progress, which is ultimately due to the plastic nature of its spiritual culture capable of change and adaptation. This is what Macnicol calls the 'omnivorous capacity' of Hinduism, which has eluded the grasp of most of its

⁴³C. E. M. Joad. Counter Attack from the East, A Philosophy of Radhakrishnan (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1938). In this book the author described the immense popularity of Radhakrishnan's lecturers in England and how the halls would be crowded to overflowing.

Western critics, who try to identify it with some of its external and accidental forms, without understanding its essential spirituality which has assumed divergent external forms to suit changing circumstances. Many writers, both historians and philosophers wonder how Indian culture could have survived impacts, attacks, conflicts and convulsions of more than four thousand years. The reason lies in the adaptable nature of its essentially plastic spiritual basis.⁴⁴

The quotation given at length above is fairly representative of what has come to stay as the philosophic mood of the era. A will to cut away the deadwood of the tree of tradition and allow it to flourish again in the changed milieu of modern India is evident from the writings which professed a hard core of spiritual grounding together with an on-going concern for the needs of the time.⁴⁵

From the vantage point of the decades of the sixties and seventies, it can be seen clearly that although Indians did not consciously tread on the path of the West's experience of the anguish and alienation foretold for them by Nietzsche, in effect she did in comparison begin to take note of her own spiritual heritage and sought to incorporate it in her understanding of the increasingly secular times. Many books putting

⁴⁴History of Philosophy, Eastern & Western, eds. S. Radhakrishnan, et al., (1952), 1967, pp. 526-545, p. 526.

⁴⁵The Proceedings of the All-Indian Philosophical Congresses reflect this will toward a re-orientation. Almost every speech and every paper situates itself in the framework of Western thought, the rare exceptions are of course, headed by K. C. Bhattacharyya. Presidential Address to the Ninth Congress, "Concept of the Absolute and its Alternative Forms", 1933-34, pp. 1-27.

forward "The Contemporary Thought of India", included such figures as Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindra Natha Tagore, etc., who had not previously affected the academic life of the Universities.⁴⁶ This could only be a response to the need in the West for a new spiritual dimension which would fulfil the gap created by the sudden failure of religion. We come across the phenomenon of a more broad-based enunciation of what is philosophy in India synchronising with the loss of faith in their own tradition in the West.

India's conscious emulation of the British tradition on the other hand remained unbroken in the universities. Without a Moore and a Russell to lend meaning to the overthrow of idealism, Indian Universities loyally followed the trends set by them and engaged in the questions of linguistic analysis and logical positivism. In England, a logical sequence can be seen in the progression of thought from neo-Hegelianism, through Bradley to Moore and Russell, Wittgenstein and Ayer; but with Indian scholars it

⁴⁶P. Nagaraja Rao. Contemporary Indian Philosophy (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1970). (The author writes about Raja Rammohun Roy, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, B. G. Tilak, R. Tagore, J. Nehru, S. Radhakrishnan, Vinoba Bhave and The Gita.)

Benoy Gopal Ray's Contemporary Indian Philosophers (Allahabad, Kitabistan, 1947), mentions Raja Rammohun Roy, D. Tagore, K. C. Sen, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda, R. Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo.

S. Radhakrishnan's Great Indians (New Delhi: Kalyani Paperbacks, 1973) includes Maharishi Raman, Sri Paramhansa, Mahatma Gandhi, and Rabindranath Tagore

was more a matter of taste and opportunity to study the subjects, thus isolating them in a coterie which must subsist on itself without affecting the mainstream of philosophic enterprise either at home or abroad. This is so, not because of any serious lack in the quality of Indian scholarship but because even linguistic problems must be rooted in the language which is the voice of the tradition and thus are subject to the same difficulties regarding commensurability of creative thinking in the field.⁴⁷

So it will not be grossly mistaken to generalise of the twentieth century in India as a period marked by a singular lack of authentic philosophic enterprise. This is admitted regretfully by various thinkers, notably a group of eminent scholars, who wrote on the occasion of the beginning of a new Journal; acknowledging that "our contributions to

⁴⁷ See Current Trends in Indian Philosophy, ed., K. Satchidananda Murty and K. Ramakrishna Rao. (Waltair: Andhra University Press, 1971). (The editors offer this book as the sequel to the Contemporary Indian Philosophy published in 1936 by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead.) The articles in this volume are on Structuralism, Phenomenology Scientific Humanism, Axionotics and other current topics in philosophy. The single article on Advaita Vedanta is by N. V. Banerji, who writes:

"In a way it (the Advaita Vedanta) dismisses the world of nature; and, as already indicated, it admits the expansion of the ghost in the machine to the extent of infinity in the name of reaching absolute Truth (Brahman). In consequence science is lost to its antithesis nescience, and man with all his problems disappears into a state where he is a stranger to name and form (nāma-rupa) and indeed non-human. p. 35. ("Foundation of Advaita Vedanta", pp. 23-36).

Philosophy in recent times, barring a very few exceptions, had not at all been very significant".⁴⁸ The philosophic scene of modern India despite such avowals continues to be in disarray to say the least. The rich tradition of hermeneutical exegeses remains with the Sanskrit scholars without finding a significant place in the intellectual life of the people still being trained by a secularised system of education, kept studiously secular for political reasons. No appropriate methodology has been evolved for understanding the ancient heritage. The historical or philological methods that are being used are employed with no clear methodological circumspection yielding the same type of results as were obtained by European Indologists a century ago. The tragic overtone of this misadventure in self-understanding lies in the fact that in effect Indian scholars are to this day trying to answer the condemnation of Indologists which was summarised by Radhakrishnan in the masterly phrase:

⁴⁸ Editorial, *Jijnasa: The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philology* (Calcutta: July 1961), vol. I, no. 1, p. 1. ed. by N. V. Banerji, Kalidas Bhattacharya, J. N. Chubb, R. Das, T. M. P. Mahadevan, T. R. V. Murti and N. A. Nikam. (The Academy was in existence for about seven years. It was started in order to fulfill the need of contributing to the contemporary world of philosophical thinking. There is a preponderance of articles on Nyaya, Logic, The Meaning of Meaning (vol. II, 1963) and critical expositions of the philosophies of the West, e.g., de Chardin, Spinoza, Rousseau, Husserl and Wittgenstein. (vol. IV & V, 1966, 1967). The fact of its discontinuity is self-explanatory).

It (Hinduism) is intellectually incoherent and ethically unsound.⁴⁹

The charge of intellectual incoherence arose largely out of unfamiliarity with the methodology of the treatises in Sanskrit and the meeting of it was a matter of making available to the English speaking world the details of the philosophic literature in its breadth and depth. Such a necessity for highlighting the epistemological core of Vedantic thought was felt keenly and many scholars, notably A. C. Mukerji of the Allahabad University, made it their life's work to state it in a language not lacking in cognitive value for the understanding of those not belonging to the tradition. A. C. Mukerji and other like minded men, coming across the writings of the Western philosophers, saw no reason to fear that their rendering of their own thoughts would be considered less than adequate in Western Universities. It was his conviction that the epistemological base of Advaita philosophy would make it comprehensible to philosophers belonging to different traditions of other languages.

The second charge, viz., ethical unsoundness, although frivolous, was based upon a basic problem. Any philosophy extolling a separation of 'appearance' and 'reality' must necessarily lead to a trivializing of the world and thus a lessening of the sense of involvement in it. The West could not but hold in abhorrence an ideal of renunciation in which they

⁴⁹"The Spirit of Man", Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 475. Recent publications from Indian Universities on subjects of philosophy and religion generally reflect this trend and a scrutiny of doctoral dissertations specifically from the Departments of Sanskrit and Philosophy in recent decades will support the critique made here.

saw a syndrome of apathy, moral ineptitude and defeatism. Indian scholars with one voice contested this interpretation by illustrating that the world was not negated in Vedanta philosophy but only denied ontological priority. Kokileshvar Bhattacharya, of the Calcutta University, was one of the first neo-Vedantins who made a systematic attempt to give a realistic interpretation to Advaita philosophy to contain such criticisms against the Vedanta Philosophy. This reversal of the classical theory of maya made a great impact on other scholars, notably S. Radhakrishnan.

Thus we see that Neo-Vedanta came into existence almost as an apology for and a defense of classical Vedanta. Nowhere is to be found a voice asking for a disengagement of issues at this stage. All eminent scholars of the time set themselves to the task of interpreting Vedanta in Western terminology. A. C. Mukerji writes,

By Neo-Vedantism we mean here to characterize an important tendency in Indian thought which has arisen for the attempt to re-interpret Sankara's absolute monism in the light of modern idealistic or absolutist thought. It consists essentially in so interpreting Sankara's thought as to make it less obnoxious to the charge that Sankara's absolutism is vitiated by the fallacy of bare identity.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ A. C. Mukerji. STR 1388

G. To recapitulate:

In the nineteenth century, India was brought very close to the Western world through the medium of English education which was welcomed by the leaders of society. Indian scholars were much influenced by the metaphysical speculations of the West, especially by Kant who seemed close to the philosophic position of Vedanta regarding the Noumenon which lay beyond the categories of thought.

A second phase in comparative studies was brought about by the necessity of defending their own convictions against the attacks of Indologists who were interpreting Indian thought to the West. The two major charges were that Indian philosophy was akin to mysticism and that it was devoid of an ethical foundation. The best minds of the time became preoccupied by the task of setting aside these criticisms. It is apparent that they felt the need for a reevaluation of Vedanta in the light of the demands of reason and morality as stated by the West.⁵¹

Chapters Three and Four will be devoted to detailed analyses of Neo-Vedantic presentations by A. C. Mukerji and Kokileshvar Bhattacharya. The former was reputed to have given a cogent rationalistic basis to Vedanta and the latter a very plausible realistic one. As we shall see what emerges very clearly, is that the freedom (mokṣa)-oriented philosophy of Advaita was eclipsed under a vein of apologetics which added nothing to

⁵¹ See Chapter Five, pp. 149 ff.

the traditional mode of understanding of this school of thought. The classical description of Brahman as Sat (Reality), Cit (Consciousness) and Ananda (Bliss) was fragmented here. There were other such exegeses on Consciousness and Reality but no attempt to bring in Bliss as rounding off the soteriology of Vedanta. We shall see that this step in self-forgetfulness was never retraced by Indian scholars.

PART II

NEO-VEDANTA AS MODERN EXEGESIS OF SAMKARACHARYA

"If there is to be philosophy its proper business is to satisfy the intellect, and the other sides of our nature have, if so, no right to speak directly. They must make their appeal not only to, but also through, the intelligence. In life it is otherwise, but there is a difference between philosophy and life. And in philosophy my need for beauty and for practical goodness may have a voice, but, for all that, they have not a vote"

F.H. Bradley

(Essays on Truth and Reality,
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914,
p. 221).

CHAPTER THREE

INTUITION AS A CATEGORY OF THOUGHT IN VEDANTA: A.C. MUKERJI

A. The Mood of Urgency for Comparative Studies

A.C. Mukerji's sensitivity to what was taking place in the academic field in India, is very apparent in his writings. Like

¹The following abbreviations are used in this chapter for citing from the writings of A.C. Mukerji:

- BI "British Idealism", History of Philosophy, Eastern & Western, Vol. II, ed. S. Radhakrishnan et al. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1953), pp. 299-316.
- CM "The Crux of Monism," The Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1965, pp. 1-14.
- HP "Human Personality," Presidential Address: The Twenty-Sixth Indian Philosophical Congress, Poona, 1951.
- Idealistic Trends, "Idealistic Trends of Contemporary India," The Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 2, 1960, pp. 111-12.
- N of S The Nature of Self, (Allahabad: The Indian Press, 1938), 1943.
- Some Aspects. "Some Aspects of the Absolutism of Shankaracharya (a comparison between Shankara and Hegel)", The University of Allahabad Studies, Vol. IV, 1928, pp. 375-429.
- S's Theory, "Shankara's Theory of Consciousness," The University of Allahabad Studies, Vol. XIII, 1937, pp. 43-59.
- STR Self, Thought and Reality (Allahabad: The Juvenile Press, 1933), 1957.
- The U & PN. "The Unconditioned and Pure Nothing," The University of Allahabad Studies, Vol. XXVII, 1951, pp. 1-21.

many other men of his time and position, he was vulnerable to the numerous unthinking evaluations of Indian thought and yet he did not allow this to affect his openness to the philosophical insights of men of other countries.² He had a very deep appreciation of his own tradition which he sought to express in the contemporary language of academic philosophy. His main interest centred round the problem of the Self. He wrote:

In India specially where life and philosophy were never separated from each other, the attainment of the ultimate Purpose of Existence was made conditional on a right solution of this supreme problem, while all other philosophical discussions owed their value to the light they could throw on the nature of self and the method of self-knowledge.³

A.C. Mukerji believed further that a critical appraisal of Vedanta philosophy was required for the modern age rather than a continuation of the tradition of exegeses.⁴ He was impatient of

²"I am fully aware of the general attitude of scorn and contempt, of distrust and discouragement, that has brought discredit upon the contemporary Indian thinkers from within and outside India...." HP. p. 1.

³N of S., p. 5.

⁴"... Indian philosophy has only succeeded in rousing antiquarian interest, and, even when admired, the admiration is almost like what is excited by the mummies in a museum. Yet, like most of the Indian systems, Samkara's analysis of experience if approached in the critical rather than the exegetic spirit, would throw a flood of light on some of the perennial issues of epistemology and metaphysics" N of S. p. viii (Preface to the 2nd edition, 1943).

the "so called lovers of" the ancient indigenous wisdom of the forest sages" who deplored modern rendering of this wisdom" and thought that "(they) should be made aware of the similar insights of others outside their country."⁵

It was his conviction that inspiration could be drawn from all such thinkers of the past, who had grappled with the problem of the Self. A modern reconstruction of the problem, as far as he was concerned, could not fail to take into account the contributions of past thinkers, Eastern, as well as Western. "I am not one of those" he wrote, "who believes that Indian Philosophy contains wisdom which is unsurpassed and unsurpassable."⁶

On account of this independent approach to Advaita philosophy, it becomes rather difficult to define A.C. Mukerji's philosophical standpoint because, firstly, although he did not object to the term 'idealist',⁷ his critique of idealistic trends, Eastern as well as Western, remained very sustained over a period of more than forty years. Secondly, his most distinguishing contribution to the philosophy of contemporary India can be said to be

⁵The U & PN, p. 8.

⁶CM. p. 1.

⁷"Now idealism, as we understand it and shall try to defend here, is the belief or doctrine according to which thought is the medium of the self-expression of Reality; or, to put it from the other side, Reality is such as must necessarily express itself through the ideal or ideals that are organic to the knowers intellectual equipment which may be called thought or reason." STR. p. 35.

his vindication of intuition as indispensable to knowledge. It is therefore, perhaps better to say that he followed a rather solitary course, going neither with the traditionalists, nor with those Neo-Vedantins, who sought to give the kind of new image to Advaita philosophy which would be more in keeping with the realistic trends of the time.⁸

A.C. Mukerji's distinctly polemical style of writing is without doubt the outcome of the demands of his age. He was caught up between two different types of contemporary interpretation of the Vedanta, and neither was acceptable to him. He could not agree with those, who following the lead of Paul Deussen understood Vedanta in the light of neo-Kantianism;⁹ and he was totally out of sympathy with such Indian scholars who attempted what, to him, amounted to reconciliations with unjustified criticisms.¹⁰

⁸STR p. 371.

⁹"The advaita Absolute, it is generally believed, is something unknowable and inconceivable, and falls entirely beyond the ambit of ordinary experience; and so far it is supposed to be analogous to the 'thing-in-itself' of Kant. This agnostic interpretation of Samkara was started by no less an authority than Paul Deussen who did so much for the spread and appreciation of the advaita speculations, and whose works on the Upanisads and the advaita Vedānta are justly regarded as pioneer works in the field of Indian philosophy Dr. S.N. Dasgupta unhesitatingly accepts Deussen's interpretation and remarks that 'If we look at Greek philosophy in Parmenides and Plato, or at modern philosophy in Kant, we find the same tendency towards glorifying one unspeakable entity as the Reality or the Essence.' "... N of S. pp. 370-371, Quoted from S.N. Dasgupta, History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 42.

¹⁰A.C. Mukerji refers to Radhakrishnan's early views regarding maya in Advaita. Some Aspects, pp. 420-423. Also to Kokileshvar Bhattacharya's realistic interpretation of Vedanta. S T R., p. 371.

B. The Aim and Method of A.C. Mukerji's Philosophy:

The thing that he desired most was the development of a common platform where philosophical problems could be discussed with understanding and mutual benefit. At the beginning of his career, he wrote with some optimism:

The days have certainly gone when a country could profitably limit itself within its geographical frontiers even in the matter of philosophical speculations. We have all to realize that the intellectual atmosphere has now cut across the physical boundaries and welded the nations into one concrete whole in which every culture has made and is still capable of making valuable contributions.¹¹

This initial optimism, however, gradually gave way in the face of the total indifference to Indian thought he met with in his professional career. He came to feel almost a despair regarding philosophical understanding amongst reasonable men of disparate cultures. He has given expression to this awareness of isolation as far as Indian philosophy is concerned in one of his later papers. "The Crux of Monism".¹²

He had also come to realize that he was pleading the cause of philosophic thought in a world which was fast becoming responsive only to anti-intellectualisms. He kept in touch with European thought and kept

¹¹Idealistic Trends, p. 11.

¹²"The Crux of Monism," Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1965, pp. 1-14.

his mind open to the new trends of Existentialism and Phenomenology.¹³ This is reflected in his later writings which show an increasing awareness of the impossibility of the task he had set himself, namely, the establishment of a common pool of philosophical knowledge for the East and the West. It must be understood very clearly, however, that he had not at any time advocated the comparative method in Philosophy. He was always very conscious of the dangers of facile comparisons between Eastern thought and Western philosophy. He wrote as early as in 1928:

If we want to profit by thinking modern problems of European philosophy in Indian terms, without misrepresentation of either and yet with a considerable clarification of both methods of thought, we must give up the practice of finding Kant and Hegel, for instance, in the Upaniṣads; these are misrepresentations which do not clarify but confound problems The problems of epistemology and the methods of proof which came to prominence with Kant and Hegel, was evolved under the pressure of circumstances radically different from any that could exist in India.¹⁴

This opinion remained unchanged throughout his career and he continued to express his doubts regarding attempts at comparative studies.¹⁵ It may seem surprising that A.C. Mukerji should have

¹³"Universality, Genuine Versus Suppositious", The Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 38, No. 4, 1966. And
¹⁴"The Empirical Legacy of British Idealism," The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy, Vol. V, 1966.

¹⁴Some Aspects, p. 379.

¹⁵Idealistic Trends, pp. 113-114 (His criticisms of P.N. Srivastava and P.T. Raju).

depreciated the comparative method, when he was himself constantly drawing parallels from the writings of Kant, Bradley, T.H. Green, and others, to illustrate various points of his own rendering of monistic thought. This seeming inconsistency, one may observe, is not quite un-amenable to an explanation. He thought he detected in the history of Western philosophy--which had reached its high water mark, according to him, in the philosophy of Kant--the same quest for a knowledge of the Self (albeit not consciously) which was the activating principle for Indian philosophy.¹⁶ What he attempted to do was to look at the history of Western metaphysics from the perspective peculiar to Vedānta philosophy, which obviously was not how Western philosophy understood itself. It was his conviction that many thinkers of the West in pursuing the demand of coherent thought had come close to the awareness of the non-relational Self; but this position, according to him, had never come to be stabilized, as it were, due to an initial distrust of the "Unknown" which was supposed to be identical with "Unknowable", and Hegel's insistence that all meaning is mediated. It was his modest ambition to make explicit this implication obtaining in Western thought. In T.H. Green's "unconditioned conscious principle" he saw the shadowing of the concept of Self as described in Indian texts.¹⁷ Similarly

¹⁶N of S. p. 328.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 323.

Caird by admitting that the correlativity of the object and subject is a correlativity for the subject, points to the over-reaching Self beyond this duality.¹⁸ He interpreted the thoughts of Haldane also in this manner.¹⁹ It must not be supposed however that A.C. Mukerji was arguing for parallelism or a convergence of the two trends of thought. He was careful to point out the divergences inherent in either system. He wrote:

Problems of philosophy, it is important to realize, are intimately connected with the spirit of the age and the intellectual tradition of a nation. 20

He also would not have subscribed to the claims of a Perennial Philosophy which according to him would have belonged more naturally to the region of mysticism. So he used the comparative method (with the above proviso in mind) because he did believe in "the essential identity of dialectical processes in different worlds of thought."²¹ He did not doubt the unitary character of our contemporary world and on the Indian side pleaded for the recognition of the epistemology of Vedanta as epistemology in its own right. He took great pains to establish that it was neither a brand of agnosticism nor mysticism²² but that it was perfectly in accord

¹⁸N of S. p. 323.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 326.

²⁰Some Aspects, p. 376.

²¹Ibid., p. 376.

²²Ibid., p. 377.

with the demands of coherent thinking which would repay the study of contemplative minds. He did not doubt that a knowledge of Vedanta philosophy could enrich the intellectual life of the West, just as Western metaphysics had stimulated the thinking of the East. He was aiming at reciprocity and mutual understanding, which he felt was justified under the circumstances. He wrote.

The object of comparative study in philosophy, we believe, is to discover the dialectic movements of universal thought; but this will remain a far-off dream or a mere pious wish till the different interpretations are dragged out of their subjective seclusion in the enjoyment of an oracular prestige* into the region of objective criticism,... what is wanted is a spirit of co-operation²³

His task, as understood by himself, therefore, was double-fold: firstly to creatively interpret the history of Western metaphysics as developing toward an uncovering of the Self as the ultimate knower and secondly, to interpret the methodology of the Vedanta in accordance with the demands of rational thought alone. He envisaged his enterprise as the laying bare of what lay implicit in Western as well as Eastern thought. The self as ultimate knower lay concealed in Western philosophical thought; similarly the crucial role of reason in Indian speculations was overlaid by constant references to the sacred texts. The thematising of both possibilities, A.C. Mukerji felt could not but create a commensurable language adequate for an exchange of philosophical thought.

²³Some Aspects, p. 375.

* A reference, no doubt, to Hegel.

When his task is thus understood the parallelisms with which his writings abound and which are disconcerting in their range and profusion²⁴ begin to acquire a meaningfulness not otherwise detected.

His aim is to acquaint the Western reader with concepts in Eastern thought. He is in effect trying to follow a methodology which proceeds from the familiar to the less familiar. He did not wish to minimize the historical context of any of the thinkers, but only to highlight the insights of great philosophic minds so that a greater light may be thrown on the problem of Self-knowledge. If the aim of philosophy is to establish the ultimate, with the help of relational knowledge, then all efforts toward it he felt cannot but be mutually profitable.

In the following pages, I shall attempt an account of his basic position regarding the laying of a secure epistemological foundation for a theory of the Self.²⁵ Firstly, I shall summarize his evaluation of the Kantian position and then state his understanding of the Advaita philosophy.

²⁴William James and the Mādhyamikā philosophers N of S., pp. 121 ft.

Rāmānuja and Pringle-Pattison. Ibid., p. 148.

Samkara, Kant, Green and Sureśvara on Memory. Ibid., p. 209, etc.

²⁵S T R, p. 6.

C. A.C. Mukerji's Understanding of the Critical Philosophy

A.C. Mukerji attached the greatest importance to the history of Western philosophy, especially the movement of thought from Hume to Kant. This epitomised for him a definitive answer to every kind of inductive procedure which seeks to objectify the Self in order to explain the knowledge-situation. Hume's critique of scepticism and Kant's resolution of it, in his opinion, establishes the irrepressible character of the Self as knower.²⁶ The naturalistic, empirical, psychological or other realistic revivals of his day, he considered to be pale imitations of Hume who had touched the nadir of the matter, as it were, by reducing the Self to a series of impressions and causation to belief in the conjunction of events. It was his opinion that Hume in the West, had brought to a head the implications of all such theories which did not subscribe to the a priori nature of consciousness. Hume had developed to the full the methodology, according to him of arbitrary abstraction which did not do justice to the unitary character of our knowing process. A.C. Mukerji writes:

His [Hume's] method is everywhere the same. He picks out the momentary aspects of the concrete reality, considers them apart from each other, and emphasizes them in their abstract character to such an extent as to reduce their relation and unity into mere illusion or words without meaning. Hence his injunction that if in philosophy a word is used without meaning, the best course to expose it is to

²⁶S T R, p. 20.

ask for the impression from which the idea has been derived. Nominalism, solipsism, individualism, and scepticism, which are so characteristic of Hume's works are but the natural results of this original abstraction. 27

According to Mukerji, all contemporary anti-idealistic tendencies derived their original inspiration (consciously or not) from Hume. All forms of presentationism which decentralized the knowing Self are variations of the basic Humean position. He maintained that nothing new is being said which is not to be found directly or by implication in Hume.²⁸ To him it seemed amazing that, with the Critique of Pure Reason, staring them in the face, as it were, contemporary writers could hark back to imitations of Hume at best, because nobody in the West in his opinion could improve upon Hume as a realist and a sceptic. He writes:

The general impression that Hume's was a sensationalistic philosophy and that Kant laid bare the fallacy of the philosophy of abstract feeling has had its disastrous consequences. Unconscious of the deeper foundation of empiricism, and interpreting Kant's criticism as a mere intellectual retort to sensationalistic exaggeration, contemporary thinkers have fallen victim to the same realistic dogma which Hume thought it beyond his power to abandon and which Kant found it beyond his power to accept.²⁹

²⁷S-T R, pp. 16-22 Quoting Hume from Treatise, Sec. V. p. 222.

²⁸"The semblance of advance which they are generally supposed to have made is due to our not realizing the exact nature of Kant's answer to Hume, the consequence being a repetition of the Humean fallacy." S T R, p. 13.

²⁹S T R, p. 15.

Kant had pointed out that connections obtaining between atomic existences entered into their intrinsic nature and were not external to them; "that each existence possessed a being not in its Self-seclusion or unrelatedness but in its Self-transcendence or relatedness to existences beyond itself."³⁰

Kant had clearly distinguished the subject-object relation from all inter-objective relations. The subject is the ultimate presupposition of every object of knowledge. The spontaneity of Self-consciousness is established as a unity by the multiplicity of objects which otherwise would be just chaos. The data of experience is sufficient to establish the a priori givenness of the Self as the knowing subject. The late appearance of Self-consciousness in a knowledge situation cannot take away from its logical priority. Self-consciousness is not a matter of temporal relation between one stage of development and another.³¹ The truth is that no description can be made intelligible except in terms of these necessary principles of thought, i.e. categories. What he wishes to stress here is (as Kant had pointed out) that there can be no comprehensible, recognizable or acceptable account of the presentations of facts of conscious knowledge without presupposing an extra-sensuous "unity of apperception". Following Kant he agrees that there can be no knowledge without conceptual constructs, no matter how indefinite or obscure.

³⁰S T R, p. 25.

³¹N of S, p. 56.

Kant's account of the transcendental conditions of experience, must form, according to A.C. Mukerji, the only necessary conclusion of any theory of knowledge which begins with the separation of a subject and an object of knowledge. All genetic theories regarding the concepts of knowledge, therefore, should be considered refuted by Kant's famous transcendental deduction of the categories. He totally endorses the view that the categories are those constitutive principles of experience which necessarily make-up the frame work of human knowledge.³²

It must be made clear that A.C. Mukerji continued to believe in the ultimately rational nature of man, despite all psychological, realistic and existential denouncements (of his day) to the contrary. He did not seek to avoid these challenges but devoted many pages to detailed analyses in refutation of all theories which sought thus to "decentralize" the Self from its position of the inescapable ultimate knower in any knowledge situation. His appreciation of the trends of his age are reflected in these words:

Our age, inspite of its love of catholicism and humanitarianism is in many respects essentially individualistic In politics, it leads to the theory of 'natural right', which essentially undermines the foundation of political obligation; in ethics, it leads to individualistic hedonism which ultimately dissolves morality into selfish pursuit of pleasure; in religion it leads to pietism which spurns all creeds and insists on a non-ecclesiastical or private form of religion; and

³²Some Aspects, p. 398.

finally, in philosophy, it leads to scepticism and distrust of reason, thus over-throwing the ultimate principles of knowledge and experience. 33

He was also very conscious that these tendencies would not remain peculiar to the West for long. To him, the overthrow of coherence in thinking spelt a disaster which could not be maximized because it would ultimately affect the concept of human freedom.

He wrote:

The only difference between the disaster which is awaiting us in the near future and that of an earlier age appears to be this that while the latter affected Europe alone, the effects of the present 'Aufklarung' are likely to be co-extensive with the world. 34

A.C. Mukerji, therefore quite openly subscribed to the so-called 'Ego-centric Paradox' writing that ego-centricity is inescapable for men who must think their way through all that might befall them.³⁵ His arguments against all experimental and inductive theories regarding the Self can be summarized in these words: All such theories must bring the Self forward as an object of study and interpretation. The self must be substantiated in order to be studied. In other words the genesis of self-consciousness is post-experiential.

³³S T R, p. 11.

³⁴S T R, p. 10.

³⁵"Though man has, like every other thing of the world, a particular origin and history of his own, yet there is a sense in which all the barriers of time and space break down for him in so far as he is connected cognitively with the world as a whole which evidently includes and goes beyond the limited period and history of his earthly existence. In this sense, though historical through and through, he is the possessor of all eternity and of all reality." N. of S., p. 6.

Experience discloses a subject and object and the awareness of the self as subject constitutes self-consciousness. What is missed here is the fact, in his opinion, that self-consciousness is also a unity of thought, without which nothing would become intelligible. He writes:

When, for instance, knowledge is reduced to a peculiar characteristic of the total process from stimulus to reaction, or when the self is described as the causal nexus among a series of events, it is entirely forgotten that the stimulus, the reaction or the events are intelligible only in so far as his own relation to them is not reducible to any of the relations that may obtain between the stimulus and the reaction, and in so far as he himself is not the causal nexus of events. 36

A.C. Mukerji till the last remained convinced that a fair analysis of the knowledge-situation could not leave any reasonable man under any doubts as to the "presence in man of an unconditioned conscious principle that militates against the basic assumptions of naturalistic explanations." The inescapable priority of thought, according to him, rendered futile all anti-intellectual trends which were beginning to gain currency in his time. Thought, at the very least, must satisfy the condition of conceivability. For this all inter-objective relations must be viewed as different from the objective-subject relationship. A series of particulars cannot be resolved into knowledge of and about something which is known to a knower.

³⁶N. of S., p. 13.

So far according to A.C. Mukerji, one may easily employ the critical philosophy in refuting subjectivistic analyses of the self but thereafter a question may be raised whether the unity of apperception is conscious of its own identity or not; in other words, self-consciousness must presuppose a consciousness which is foundational and which can never be objectified. Kant, however, did not raise this point and so post-Kantian philosophy veered away in different directions, which according to A.C. Mukerji did not quite do justice to his thought in this matter. The problem can be stated in these words as understood by A.C. Mukerji: If the unity of apperception is to remain irrevocably correlated to the objects of knowledge then nothing beyond an irreducible polarity has been established; if it is said that Self-identity is beyond all categories then the first step toward agnosticism at best or infinite regress at worst is taken. Either consequence--that is, self-consciousness as a mediated unity, or as an unmediated thing-in-itself--according to A.C. Mukerji is gratuitous and need not follow from the Kantian position.

A.C. Mukerji interprets Kant's statement that unity of consciousness is not the category of unity to mean that he was here indicating the presence of a foundational awareness not exhausted in the self-consciousness of "I think."³⁷ It is of course a matter

³⁷Idealistic Trends, p. 117.

of common knowledge that Kant did not do more than state the unity as a possibility. A.C. Mukerji chose to see it, as the pre-supposition of a ground for self-identity. It was his endeavour to show that this region of possibility in Kant is the point of greatest convergence as well as divergence from Vedanta philosophy. It is also the only point of such convergence, because no other philosopher in the West, according to him, had so clearly come close to the positing of the transcendental Self which is beyond the categories of thought. As interpreted by A.C. Mukerji, Kant's greatest contribution lay in the establishment of the possibility of the unconditioned. Kant's successor's, according to him, instead of developing this aspect of the critical philosophy proceeded in directions which set at naught the real insight of the philosopher. He pin-points the problem of Self-identity in this way: the problem would seem to arise from the attempt to hold together the knowability of the ultimate knower and also the inapplicability here of all categories, otherwise the supreme subject would at once become objectified, abandoning its foundational character.

The main reason for the transformation of the Kantian position, as is well known, lay in the Hegelian criticism of abstract identity. In the opinion of A.C. Mukerji, therefore, Hegel stood as the greatest contrast³⁸ from the Indian position

³⁸In this respect A. C. Mukerji differed from other Indian scholars who were influenced by the Hegelian philosophy in their enunciation of the Vedanta philosophy. See also B1 in this connection.

of 'knowing' the unmediated ground of all knowing.³⁹ According to Hegel, he writes, pure being is "the isolation of an abstraction which results from Being and Nothing being placed out of touch with each other and to speak of a thing which is essentially inconceivable, is for him an indirect admission that it is not within the universe of reality."⁴⁰

It will not be perhaps quite improper to say that Hegel's legacy to the history of metaphysics is the dictum that "the essentially inconceivable is absolutely non-existent, for that which cannot stand as the subject of a significant proposition is a mere naught or void, and so when we indulge in the agnostic's talks about the Real, we only amuse ourselves with empty words."⁴¹

In order to clarify A.C. Mukerji's position, it may be said that he agreed with Kant that the ultimate Knower was beyond all relational categories but disagreed with what became a logical corollary to the Kantian position that such a Knower could only be a thing-in-itself and therefore an agnostic's enigma at best. Agnosticism, according to A.C. Mukerji, is, as such, unacceptable as a philosophically viable position because it sets limits to

³⁹"The relation between Hegel and Shankara in respect of their philosophical views, it has been our endeavour to make clear, is one of unreconcilable opposition." *Some Aspects*, p. 420.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 412.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 413. It was the aim of A.C. Mukerji to highlight Hegel's total rejection of an unmediated pure being in order to suggest to his colleagues that any attempts at reconciliations as, for example, the theory of a restored unity, would be futile. Ibid., pp. 420-23.

thought and leaves open every kind of possibility for mysticism.⁴²
 A.C. Mukerji is very emphatic in his rejection of agnosticism and the mysticism which may follow in its wake. He writes: "... a complete discontinuity between the knowable and the unknowable, the thinkable and the unthinkable, is an impossible and unprofitable contrivance"⁴³

D. "The Role of Reasoning in Advaita Philosophy"⁴⁴

In view of the fact that agnosticism and mysticism are more naturally associated with Indian thought, A.C. Mukerji's main aim was precisely to prepare the ground for an exposition of the place of reason in Advaita philosophy.

According to A.C. Mukerji, the most significant contribution of Indian epistemology was to the effect that "the unmediated is not in every case, an abstraction",⁴⁵ or rather, in one unique case, it is the ultimate reality. For him, the peculiarity of Upanisadic thought consisted in its offer of a "reasoned solution of an irrational problem".⁴⁶ He saw reasoned understanding as the

⁴²C.M., p. 3.

⁴³U & P N; p. 5.

⁴⁴This is the title of a paper contributed to The Allahabad University Studies, Vol. XII, 1936, pp. 117-129.

⁴⁵C M, p. 8.

⁴⁶C.M., p. 2.

inescapable propaedeutic toward the final vision of Self-realization. He formulates the problem of Upanisadic thought in these words:

The problem of the Upanisads is ... of establishing by means of reasoning that which is yet taken to be beyond the processes of reasoning. How can there be reasoned knowledge of the supra-rational principle? How is philosophy of the unconditioned possible? The answer to this apparently paradoxical question constitutes the Upanisadic contribution to the philosophy of the world.⁴⁷

A.C. Mukerji saw the problem of epistemology as an attempt at establishing the ground of the possibility of all knowledge without polarising it into a subject-object relationship; to envisage a pure consciousness which is beyond self-consciousness. His understanding of the cognitive situation is mainly derived from an interpretative analysis of the following Upanisadic text:⁴⁸

Yenedam sarvam vijānāti-tam kena vijāniyāt;
Vijñātāram are kena vijāniyāt.

Br. II. 4-14; III. 8. 11.

(Who can know that, by which everything is known;
My dear, how should the Knower be known?)

This text, he holds to be the crux of the matter. The role of epistemology is to establish the cogency of the all-knowing, unknowable Self, a unity by which diversity is repelled and yet is

⁴⁷C.M., p. 2.

⁴⁸N. of S., p. 24.

made possible. The entire thrust of the Advaita epistemology, according to A. C. Mukerji, is directed toward establishing the foundational character of consciousness which is indirectly envisaged by the metaphysical 'I' or subject. The Self, therefore, occupies a pivotal place "in as much as all objects owe their meaning and significance to the relations in which they stand to the Self that essentially is consciousness".⁴⁹ Further, "the Self is consciousness and not a substance possessing consciousness,"⁵⁰ so that the question of the bifurcation of Self-consciousness does not arise. The self is indefinable and yet undeniable⁵¹ because it is the ultimate pre-supposition of all knowable objects.⁵² A. C. Mukerji quoting from Samkaracarya's commentary on Chhāndogya Upaniṣad VIII, 12.5., writes: "The Self ... is not an agent of the activity of knowledge; on the contrary, it is essentially knowledge, knowledge, that is, is its very essence."⁵³ He continues:

This whole passage, when literally translated, would run as follows: The self's agency of knowledge is its mere existence, and not its activity; just as the Sun's agency of revelation is its mere existence, and not a function. 54

⁴⁹N. of S., p. 120.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 271.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 270.

⁵²Ibid., p. 271.

⁵³Ibid. p. 232.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 232.

A.C. Mukerji emphasizes the centrality of consciousness as the most important point of Advaita epistemology. Consciousness is the prius of reality in as much as there can be no object of knowledge which remains unrelated to it. Quoting from the commentary of Samkaracarya on Prasnopanisad VI. 2., he writes that changes in the objects do not preclude the fact of an unchanging consciousness and even, that something is not known cannot be proved in the absence of knowledge. He cites the following passages: 'None can prove something that is not known, and the attempt to prove it would be as absurd as to maintain that there is no eye though form is apprehended.' Further, 'Even when something is supposed to be non-existent, this very non-existence cannot be proved in the absence of knowledge.'⁵⁵

The presence of an all-encompassing consciousness must, therefore, be carefully distinguished from the order of the known. The crux of monism is to hold together the centrality of consciousness together with its totally unobjectifiable nature. Referring to Samkaracarya's commentary on Kenopanisad 12, A.C. Mukerji brings the two characteristics together and emphasizes that they must always remain so. He writes:

It is from this stand-point that the Self is also described as the Sāksi which witnesses all objects

⁵⁵S's Theory, pp. 44-45.

and all changes in the objects, it is sarva pratya-
yadarśi and citsaksisvarupamātra This is
excellently expressed by Sureśvara (Naiṣkarmyasiddhi
Iv. 3) when he remarks that the self and the not-
self are established in the world through perception
and other means of knowledge but the not-self is in
every case established only on the presupposition
of the existence of the self.⁵⁶

A.C. Mukerji follows the lead of Samkaracarya in order to establish the cogency of the unobjectifiable Self, the supreme reality which is the ground of all knowledge. For him thinking is inseparable from reality. There is a continuity between coherent thought and its presupposition which is not an "other" but the very heart of the matter. The foundational fact, therefore, inseparable from thinking which flows from it, cannot be appended at the other end of explanation. That which makes all explanations possible, that itself cannot be made the object of explanation. He writes:

A Reality literally beyond all thought and speech, as the critics of agnosticism have repeatedly urged, may be anything you please, and therefore, nothing at all It is not through bifurcating the world into the rational and superrational or the intellectual and the ultra-intellectual that a philosophy of the unconditioned can find a secure basis for its construction⁵⁷

The ground of all knowledge is not related to the order of the known, as the objects are related to each other,⁵⁸ and therefore

⁵⁶S's Theory, p. 46.

⁵⁷The U & PN, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁸'The unity of the whole is not dissipated or destructed through its manifestation in the parts, on the contrary, their plurality or internal difference is preserved through and on account of the unity of the whole.' The U & PN, p. 12.

cannot be brought under the jurisdiction of discursive thought (buddhi) which according to Samkaracarya is the category hiding the tripartite division of 'knower, known and knowledge'.

Knowledge is not a matter of compresense between two entities, it is rather the unity within which inter-objective relations become meaningful.

Now the question which naturally arises here is how may discursive thinking ever reach itself to disclose the ground on which it stands. A.C. Mukerji follows Samkaracarya's commentary on Brahma Sūtra 1.1.12 and Chhāndogya Upaniṣad VII. 1.3.⁵⁹ to elucidate the method of adhyāropāpavāda of Vedānta literature.⁶⁰ He writes:

This method of aiding the discursive understanding to form a tolerably clear idea of the unconditioned principle is known in the Advaita literature as the method of adhyāropāpavāda or that of figurative superimposition; followed by subsequent negation.⁶¹

Samkaracarya gives the example of a King's invisible presence, indicated by his visible insignia; so may be indicated the presence of the Self by attributing functions to it as 'knowing' etc. only in the sense of 'as if'.⁶²

⁵⁹N. of S., pp. 337-38.

⁶⁰See Infra p. for Vidyanarāya's reference to the method in the world of the generally of the tradition and as a strategy for reconciling 'conflicting' statements of the scripture about the nature of Brahman.

⁶¹N. of S. p. 338.

⁶²Ibid., p. 338.

A.C. Mukerji saw a common problem arising out of all knowledge situations. If the object of thought is completely external to it then no knowledge of it is possible; if on the other hand, it is already a part of the process or if thought is constitutive of reality, then any inquiry regarding reality becomes gratuitous.⁶³ To say that contemplative thinking is a process of progressive clarification of the vague prefigurations given to us, is only to push the problem one step back, because "philosophy does not represent a passage from ignorance to knowledge, nor does it stultify itself by aiming at what is already an accomplished fact."⁶⁴

A.C. Mukerji identifies and accepts this paradox, enunciated in this manner, as the almost intractable problem of revelation and reason, or, alternately, as being the initial step toward agnosticism leading the way to mysticism, because the unknowable of the agnostic stands self-revealed in mystical experience.⁶⁵ According to A.C. Mukerji, the Upanisadic formulation of man's desire for knowledge and his eligibility for it, precisely, falls outside this polarity of reason and mystical intuition.⁶⁶

Reality, therefore, as understood by A.C. Mukerji, is neither anti-rational nor altogether beyond reason. Yet rational

⁶³Reality & Ideality, p. 216.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵C.M., p. 3.

⁶⁶C.M., p. 3.

analysis of experience is indispensable to an enquiry regarding our knowledge situation. A.C. Mukerji tends to use the words "reason", "consciousness" and "thought" almost interchangeably. He uses these words as corresponding to the Sanskrit word 'buddhi',⁶⁷ and as signifying a mode of direct apprehension of the object (of knowledge) carrying with it the inescapable possibility of an indirect envisagement of the foundation which makes all knowledge possible.

Reason possesses the power of a kind of introspective visualization which as universal support of the definable entities, cannot be discursively apprehended in the same way in which a particular entity is known, by distinguishing it from that by which it is limited. 68

With the distinction between direct apprehension and indirect envisagement, we come to A.C. Mukerji's own slant of understanding of Upanisadic thought. The quest for Truth demands that human thinking be transcended. In order to envisage the region of this transcendence, reason must see to the breaking off of links between words and meanings by which our ordinary thinking is ordained. The mind must cut loose from the memory of this chain of terminology which is our anchorage to the world. This is what the

⁶⁷C.M., p. 4.; N. of S., p. 310.

⁶⁸C.M., p. 3.

Yoga tradition calls the process of Śabdasaṅketasmṛtipariśuddhi,⁶⁹ i.e., which means literally cleansing of memory of the impurity of linguistic conventionality.

This inner demand of thought takes the form of citing the Scriptures as an indication for opening up an extra-logical dimension of the search for Truth. This special dimension of anti-intellectualism, he agrees, is integral to Advaita thought, (which may not be different from all modes of Western thinking) and he insists that this "is nothing short of an extra-philosophical criterion"⁷⁰ of Knowledge. It is a kind of envisagement, intuition, extraordinary experience, direct apprehension and so on, that is, a mode of understanding where meaning and experience are one. Neither sense nor reason (each by itself) can reproduce the content of this extraordinary experience.⁷¹ The identity of the Self and Brahman, the goal of Vedanta philosophy, cannot be established by perception or reason, because these are inalienably subject-object oriented. Thus we are inevitably and inescapably led toward that intuitive experience of immediacy spoken of by the texts. A.C. Mukerji thinks: "This intuition is then the ultimate criterion, of which reasoning, even when it is supported by the sacred texts,

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

⁷⁰ Some Aspects, p. 383.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 388.

is a subordinate auxiliary."⁷²

Thought, for Samkaracharya, according to A.C. Mukerji, is not an organ of Truth but is the indispensable and necessary generative condition of the ultimate intuition and consequently indispensable as a discipline which sets limits to itself.⁷³

It will not be out of place here to cite somewhat at length A. C. Mukerji's own words as to what he considered to be the real core of the difference between Western philosophy and Upaniṣadic thought:

The conclusion then appears to be inevitable that the real strength of the orthodox systems of philosophy in general and that of Vedantism in particular lies in certain types of intuitional experiences which furnish the actual foundation of knowledge and belief. And here we come upon the most deep-lying contrast between Indian philosophy and that aspect of Western speculation which, inaugurated by the anti-scholastic respect for reason as the Supreme court of appeal in matters of knowledge crystallized into the epistemological doctrine of Kant, and Hegel and all other subsequent philosophers of the West. Judged from this standpoint, we must candidly admit that the appeal to the Vedas does involve a reference, to an extra-philosophical standard. Of course, every man is free to define philosophy in his own way, and we should not be denied the right of so conceiving philosophy as to place intuitional experiences in the very centre of our metaphysical adventures. But then we must be careful not to impair the centrality of these experiences by the desire to find for them a place in a rational scheme of the universe. ⁷⁴

⁷²Some Aspects, p. 389.

⁷³S T R., p. 364.

⁷⁴Some Aspects, pp. 393-94.

These words, in effect, summarize his own philosophical position. He was not attempting a rational justification of Advaita thought. He was trying to establish a continuity of thought between reason and intuition, and here he saw the possibility of mutual help deriving from Eastern and Western traditions. The West has a long history of the emergence of the Noumenon as the unknowable category of thought culminating in Kant. The East according to him began with the givenness of the Unknown but not unknowable Noumenon, which it subsequently seeks to appropriate by reasoned understanding and contemplative intuition. He believed that the passage from self-consciousness to Consciousness, (which as he understood the matter, in the West is broken by agnosticism or blocked by phenomenology) is kept open in the Indian tradition by the Vedantic position of monism or complete identity of knowledge and experience. He demonstrated in detail, in his various writings that this position could be defended against criticism from the points of view which advocated some form of identity-in-difference. Briefly, he saw Samkaracharya's position as a reasoned justification of intuition as a necessary and unavoidable step toward Self-Knowledge. He believed that the epistemological foundation of idealistic thought in the West could open the way to a greater understanding of the Upanisadic heritage as a system of thought and not as an absolute piece of mythological literature.

E. Assessment of A.C. Mukerji's Rendering of Vedanta

It is rather difficult to make a fair assessment of A.C. Mukerji's contribution to the philosophy of Advaita, because firstly he has not deviated from the classical exegeses⁷⁵ regarding Samkaracarya's thoughts on intuition and secondly his understanding of the bare essentials of the Kantian epistemology also seems legitimate. What may be questioned here is the soundness of the juxtaposition of the two.

In raising reason to the plane of mediating between experience and that by which all meaning is made possible, he has given it a new rôle which is quite different to the one it previously enjoyed. The place of reason in Vedanta philosophy was always considered to be indispensable but not a sufficient condition for the unveiling of Truth contained in the text. The aim of the traditional mode of exegesis was to hold together in a coherent unity, revelation, reason and experience.⁷⁶ Revelation is unique to the Texts but to be appropriated by reason and realized by direct experience. All philosophies must start and end with experience. The direct experience of the world can be another 'direct experience' or realization of Truth. The role of reason, therefore, is interpretative and never constitutive of values. Reason, as a matter of fact, in its inferential mode,

⁷⁵Which is not the case with the author we are going to examine in the next Chapter.

⁷⁶This account is based upon the following essay by M. Hiriyanna. "The Place of Reason in Advaita", Review of Philosophy and Religion, Vol. 12, 1943, pp. 13-18.

is restricted by many systems because being experience-based, it cannot speak for the extra-mundane dimension which forms the subject matter of religious philosophy. Vedānta rejects analogy as well, as a method of demonstrating that which lies beyond worldly experience. The leap of intuitive reason, necessary for validating the argument can obtain only between similar objects, belonging to the same dimension of experience. Analogy, by virtue of this leap, can yield a very high degree of probability but must always remain short of certainty. Reason, therefore is called "yukti" or 'tarka', that is, of no independent logical value but as ancillary to scriptural testimony' (V.S. II. i.ii)".⁷⁷ It may be added that the texts also are sources of mediate knowledge (for the ordinary person)⁷⁸ and like reason, necessary but not sufficient condition for the dawn of Knowledge. The task, in front of the interpreter, therefore, is to press reason to the service of understanding the mystery of experience in the world, so that one may become desirous of "experiencing" that ultimate felicity which texts indicate to be the supreme goal of human life.

In the Vedānta system, we find experience forming the parameters of the scale of knowability in the world. Reason

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

⁷⁸ An exception is always made for those seekers who may 'receive' enlightenment, not because they have qualified themselves but because the dimension of grace (kṛpā) is non-causal (ahetuka).

seeks to make clear the enigmatic continuity, which obtains between everyday experience and the 'experience' which forms the subject matter of Śruti Texts. Thus, reason is not given the role of unravelling the mystique of revelation; but to awaken the yearning, the initial movement toward Self-realization, or rather to help in understanding this movement as the stirrings of discrimination between what the scriptures talk about and experience in the world. Thus, revelation, reason and experience held in a close unity seek to preclude dogma on the one hand and mysticism on the other.

It is possible to say that reason is even superfluous where Truth is self-revealed; but in the 'absence' of this grace (ahetukakṛpā), reason makes plausible the utterly unexampled, non-paralleled message of the texts. Reason, therefore, in this view, would seem to be indispensable, but not instrumental in revealing truth.⁷⁹

If the core of the tradition is understood in this fashion, then such attempts as A.C. Mukerji's to bring the Kantian "What can I know?" alongside the Vedantic first premise, "Why should I know Brahman?"- seem less than fruitful. Western idealism aimed at establishing the epistemic priority of reason. In the Indian context the focus had been on distinguishing between not

⁷⁹ Naṣṭakarmya Siddhi, III, Ślokas 5 & 53.

the knower and the known (drastr and drśya) but between knowledge and the known, (drk and drśya), that is the Self and the not-self.

A.C. Mukerji and other such scholars who wanted to emphasize the rational element in Vedanta philosophy, did not allow for the crucial fact that epistemology in the West had developed as a retreat from ontology. In trying to compare reason in its triadic setting of revelation-reason-experience, with reason as an independent arbiter of meaning, they leant themselves to a blurring of issues. They did not realize that the West had long since broken with its Greek tradition and the Upanisadic "Know Thyself" had no parrallel in the idealistic systems they were interested in. This is apparent in the use of the words "soul" and "self" almost interchangeably by many and especially by A.C. Mukerji.⁸⁰

This slurring over of the difference is basic to the understanding of Neo-Vedantic thought. If we understand 'soul' to mean 'creatureliness' than the counterpart of this concept could be connoted by the term 'jīva' of Indian philosophy. In Western thought it was the human dimension of being created by God and the soul's destiny in fulfilling the divine promise of salvation, which was at stake. The epistemological inquiry centering around

⁸⁰"The Nature of Soul", The Cultural Heritage of India, 2nd ed. Calcutta. The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Calcutta; 2nd ed., pp. 475-493. The word used by him for 'soul' is atman, in this essay.

the Kantian position was primarily concerned not with containing reason (as declared by Kant) but with legitimising its constitutionality so that a scientific grounding may be provided to our experience in the world and to the goodness of the moral will. If Kant had not proceeded beyond stating the unity of apperception, it was because this "beyond" did not arise from within the setting of his philosophic understanding. What appears 'svayam-prakāśa', 'svayamsiddha' (self-luminous, self-evident) to A.C. Mukerji, does so by virtue of the long heritage of Vedantic thought. Further, this self-evident self is the sole 'unspoken' but eminently 'speaking' topic of total concern for Vedanta. In appending it at the end of the scale of the cogitational framework, it becomes a pedagogical device only for overcoming agnosticism. Kant, being the great philosopher that he was could hardly have leant himself to it. For Indian thinkers to take up the question at this stage, in order to indicate the possibility of an ontology could only indicate a certain lack of appreciation of the task that Kant had set himself. Having entered the stream, they could only be carried forward on the waves of the idealistic-realistic debate, as can be seen from the present day studies in Departments of Philosophy.

A.C. Mukerji's justification of Upaniṣadic thought as a system of philosophy, then, can be called, a step toward its Westernization because with the raising of epistemology to the primary position, a major transition towards the 'secularisation' of these studies

was effected. By seeking to meet the charge of "intellectual incoherence", he, in effect conceded the point, because the criterion for defence used by him (i.e. the thematisation of the 'unknown' but the 'knowable'), had already provided the bases for condemnation.

In pursuing the details of A.C. Mukerji's philosophical thought, we hope to discover for ourselves the spirit of the times in which these scholars lived and worked. The question at issue here, as elsewhere, is one of the adequacy of the method of estimating Vedanta in ways other than the given mode of its own explication. Traditional exegeses held together the triad of revelation, reason and experience. By emphasizing reason in its epistemological setting, a shift in perspective was effected which was perhaps not seen in its full implication by the author. Together with the demand for "intellectual coherence", went the need to assert the reality of the world as the only sphere of morally responsible action. Before we come to an assessment of these trends (in Chapter V) we must examine in some detail one important realistic interpretation of Vedanta in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORLD AS REAL IN VEDANTA: KOKILESHVAR SASTRI*

"Your interpretation has shown that Advaita is not simply a philosophy of asceticism but a gospel of life that can form the basis of dynamic activism.... Advaita, as interpreted by you, can again become a living force in our national life, and form not only a matter for the intellectual satisfaction of Pandits; but a gospel of life that can inspire and sustain the youth of the land in various fields of life that are open to them."

From a letter written to the author by the editors of Vedanta Kesari, Madras. (Quoted by the author, Sreegopal Basu Mallick Fellowship Lectures, Calcutta, 1931, p. vii).

*Kokileshvar Bhattacharya signed himself, 'Sastri' instead of Bhattacharya, so this academic title is being used for this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORLD AS REAL IN VEDANTA

A. Re-interpreting Samkara *

Kokileshvar Sastri came to the study of Vedanta through Sanskrit. He belonged to an earlier generation of scholars and was one of those who felt called upon to face squarely the challenge to his own tradition. He sets forth the aim of his works in the clearest words:

Most of the writers on Samkara-Vedānta have dwelt almost exclusively upon the traditional illusory aspect and have tended to relegate its realistic aspect to the background. I have found it necessary to refuse to accept the traditional ascetic interpretation alone

* It is to be noted that this author uses the shortened 'Samkara' rather than Samkaracarya. Since this name is used very often, I have used it in this variation for this Chapter to avoid confusion.

Some of the works of Sastri have been abbreviated as follows:

An Intro.	<u>An Introduction to Vedanta Philosophy</u> (Calcutta: n.d.)
Divine Purpose.	'Divine Purpose in Samkara-Vedanta', (Calcutta <u>Oriental Journal</u> , Vol. II, no. 9, 1935) pp. 205-214.
Interpretation.	'An Interpretation of Samkara's Doctrine of Maya', K. B. Pathak <u>Commemoration Volume</u> (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1934) pp. 159-165.
MSV	'Maya in Samkara-Vedanta, its objectivity', <u>Poona Oriental Society Journal</u> , no. 37, 1939. pp. 336-342
SBL	Sreegopal Basu Mallick Lectures (1930-31) (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1932).
Vidya	'Vidya and Avidya', <u>Calcutta Oriental Journal</u> , Vol. I no. 12, 1934, pp. 351-358.
WSP	'Was Samkara a Pantheist?' <u>Review of Philosophy and Religion</u> , Vol. III, no. 1, 1932, pp. 1-12.

to the entire neglect and inexcusable exclusion of the realistic; because it seems to me that the realistic side was very prominent in Samkara's own mind and I have conceived it to be my duty to try to present a concise account of his philosophy in its realistic and objective truthfulness with constant reference to the original sources.¹

Sastri states that his aim is to refute the charge that in the Advaita system, the world is treated as illusory, as mere appearance;² that Brahma(n) is a 'difference-less pantheistic empty void'; that it has nothing to contribute toward conduct of life in human society.³ Elsewhere in this context he refers to Paul Deussen's opinion that Samkara's exegesis of the following well-known text led to the theory of illusionism. 'Just as, my dear, by one clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, the modifications being only a name arising from speech while the truth is that it is just clay.' (Chh. VI.1.4). He writes:

This at least is Deussen's interpretation and he sees here in this celebrated passage the germ of illusion-theory which has become the basis through its adoption by Samkara, of the orthodox Vedanta system.⁴

¹SBL, p. 5.

²An Intro., p. 86.

³Ibid., p. 127.

⁴Interpretation, p. 159.

Sastri agrees with Deussen in this opinion but seeks to show that Samkara's writings on this Text as well as other like passages can be construed differently thereby doing greater justice to his philosophy. According to him the reason for inaccuracy in modern interpretations of the great māyā-vāda, both in India as well as in Europe, lies in imperfect knowledge of the writings of Samkara.⁵

He writes:

It has also been held by some that the Māyā-Vāda as is found in the Samkara System was the creation of his own fertile brain and it has no sanction and support in the most ancient Upanisads and in the Brahma-Sutra.⁶

It is the aim of Sastri to establish the fact that although it is true that the idea of the ideality of the world could be derived from Samkara's writings, careful scrutiny would reveal it not to be his intended meaning -- "It is most erroneous to suppose as has been done by many," he says, "that in order to retain the unity of Brahman, Samkara has abolished the world as false".⁷ It would be equally unfair to ascribe pantheism to his philosophy as has been done by many critics.⁸ He quotes

⁵SBL, p. 7.

⁶Ibid., p. 3.

⁷Ibid., p. 198ff.

⁸WSP, pp. 2-4. (The quotations are not documented by the author.)

Dr. Galloway:

Even the distinction of worshipper and worshipped dwindles and fades, till the Hindu thinker recognised that he was one with All, with Brahman. The very appearance of difference is explained away, it is the product of illusion. The Vedanta is a strict Pantheism.

Also, Dr. Flint,

Along with the affirmation of an impersonal God, there is the negation of the reality of the worlds -- both of sense and consciousness. In other words, the issue of this kind of Pantheism is a-cosmism. But Pantheism is just as likely to issue in theism.

It becomes clear from reading such introductory remarks to his writings that his interpretation of Vedanta took shape out of the need to answer these criticisms. All exegeses being written in his time, it may be said, were, in fact answers to the charges of pantheism on the one hand and world-negation on the other. It is interesting to note in this context, Indian authors seemed to have accepted the criticisms as valid, since they chose to defend Vedanta. There is, for example, no attempt at understanding the implications of Vedanta in the light of these criticisms which perhaps could have yielded more fruitful results.

B. Brahman as ultimate reality.

The supreme reality of the Vedanta philosophy, writes Sastri, is Brahman which is the essence of all conscious and unconscious phenomena and "it abides independently of and transcends, the relation of subject and object. (Br. Up. Bh. 5.5.2).⁹

⁹SBL, p. 9.

Although the ground of these manifestations, it remains unchanged and unaffected by the change. The technical term employed for Brahman by Vedantins is 'nirguna'. Nirguna, according to Sastri (lit. quality-less) does not mean an abstraction from which naturally there could be no passage to the actual world of many.¹⁰ "Nirguna means that anything phenomenal does not constitutively belong to Brahma(n)". (Gita Bh. 13.2).¹¹

Sastri writes that Brahman, far from being an abstraction has a nature (svarūpa) which is Being-Consciousness-Bliss (Saccidānanda). These are not attributes but in their inseparable identity they are Brahman itself. Being of Brahman is presupposed in all forms of existence and we ourselves are witnesses to existence which is conscious and hence Being is identical with consciousness. (Mun. Bh. 2.2.10).¹² According to Samkara, "consciousness which has no existence cannot be admitted". (V. S. Bh. 3.2.21).¹³ Bliss is inseparable from consciousness and Existence and eternally belongs with them (Br. Up. Bh. 4.4.6); the three together constitute the nature or svabhāva of Brahman.¹⁴ Brahman is also stated to be the highest good (kalyāṇatama) in its positive aspect.¹⁵

¹⁰Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹Ibid., p. 9

¹²Ibid., pp.9-10.

¹³Ibid., p. 10

¹⁴Ibid., p. 12 (emphasis in text).

¹⁵Vidya, p. 356.

The world, then, according to Sastri, is the manifestation of this nature of Brahman. Brahman as Being, Consciousness and Bliss is present continuously through all transformations of names and forms in the world. According to Samkara, writes Sastri:

The ether and the like are accompanied by the being of Brahma(n) which is its characteristic nature; and

brahmano'pi sattālakṣaṇaḥ svabhāvah ākāśādisu anuvartamāno drśyate (V. S. Bh. 2.1.6)

as knowledge is an accompaniment of all objects everywhere, everything has knowledge as its Swarupa (nature); further

cinmātrānugamat sarvatra citsvarupatā gamyate (Br. Up. Bh. 2.4.7)

the Bliss Divine is present behind all the joys connected with the mutually exclusive objects of the world.

ānandena vyāvṛtta viśayabuddhigamya ānandah anugantum śakyate, (Samkarabhasya on Tait. II.7.).¹⁶

The world is not logically deduced from Brahman, writes Sastri, but it is taken as it is. (yathāprāpta, Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.20). Brahman, in order to realise its own nature creates the world which is moving from the lowest to the highest stages. He quotes the following passage to illustrate his point:

Already in existence as the Self is before creation, it causes itself to undergo modifications, as the Self of the modification.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 13.

pūrvasiddho 'pihi sannatmā viśeṣena
vikāratmanā parināmayamāsa ātmānam
 (V. S. Bh. 1.4.26).¹⁷

He writes further that this movement has become possible for the world because behind each stage, the eternal principle (pūrvasiddhah ātmā) is present, which is gradually expressing itself in and through these stages or changes. Brahman is not remote to the world but the very ground on which it stands. Creation moreover, is continuous. It is perpetually going on since its goal of diversification to this day is not exhausted. (nādyāpi bahubhavanam prayojanam nivṛttam, Chh. Bh. VI. 3.2.)¹⁸

Brahman, according to him, therefore, is the material as well as efficient cause of the world. (V. S. Bh. 1-4. 23-26).¹⁹ It cannot be separated from its manifestation, that is, the world. It will be seen at once that a realistic diversification of Brahman may not be distinguishable from pantheism. Sastri is aware of this possibility and refers to Samkara's own refutation of the philosophy of one Vṛttikāra mentioned by him in his commentaries, and who seems to have advocated a pantheistic position. The unity that Samkara maintains is not affected by the multiplicity or it does not become a composite in creation. The relation is not that of extension in space or succession in time. The

¹⁷An Intro., p. 123.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 4-5.

essential nature of Brahman as One only does not change with its manifestations of the world. Sastri quotes from the following sources in support of this contention: "The one Brahman cannot be support of many qualities." (Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.14); "The One Reality cannot become diversified." (Sankarabhasya on Tait. Bh. I.12), etc.

Sastri concludes, therefore, that the absurdity of holding together unity and multiplicity cannot arise.²⁰ The One remains self-sufficient, independent and ever retains its own uniform nature. It takes upon itself the various forms of nāma-rūpa (name and form) to reveal the inexhaustible treasure which is its nature.²¹ Quoting from Br. Bh. 2.1.20 in support of his statement, Sastri writes:

His unity does not become composite by the production of nāma-rūpa. Like a tree composed of its branches, flowers, etc., and a cloth dyed with vareigated colours. Then Brahman would not have been described as of uniform nature.²²

The unique character of this relationship is brought out by Sastri in his writings on vital energy (prāṇa) as the world-seed of creation. Brahman, in its undifferentiated stage is called unmanifest (avyakta) wherein resides the primordial energy in its latent form as the seed of vital energy (Prāṇa-bīja) and in this form it is also called māyā. He writes:

²⁰WSP, p. 7.

²¹Ibid., p. 4. The author quotes the gloss of Anandagiri, 'na hi sṛṣṭam sṛasturārthāntaram: tasyaiva tena tēna rūpeṇa māyāvivat avasthānam.' Br.Up.Bh. 1.3.5. (There is no difference between the creation and the creator: (the creator) abides like a magician assuming other forms..)

²²Ibid., p. 9.

Samkara informs us that the prāṇabīja exists in pralaya, dissolution of this world, and also in susupti deep slumber of finite self, in undeveloped or avyākṛta condition.... (Pr. U. Bh. VI.1.)²³

The vital energy (prāṇa-śakti) in the unmanifest form is synonymous with māyā. Brahman is the substrate for māyā which cannot be explained without reference to the "Being of Brahman whose energy it is." (V. S. Bh. 1.4.3).²⁴ The seed as vital energy remains undifferentiated but distinct in Brahman; it distributes itself gradually, at the time of creation, into three forms, the gross, the subtle and the causal. He quotes from Upadeśa Sāhasrī in corroboration of this statement:

That one seed, called Māyā, is evolved into the three states which come one after another again and again. The Self, the Substratum of Māyā, though one only and immutable, appears to be many like reflections of the sun in water. (XVII.27)²⁵

There is thus, according to Sastri, a relation of identity between latent vital energy (avyākṛta-prāṇa) and Brahman; the former is submerged in the latter, but not obliterated.²⁶ In all its successive forms, the vital energy (prāṇa) works not apart from but in identity with Brahman.²⁷

²³SBL, p. 766

²⁴Ibid., p. 71.

²⁵Tr. by Swami Jagadananda (Madras:Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1973).

²⁶SBL, p. 73.

²⁷Ibid., p. 73

Prāna in its manifest form is called the sūtra (thread), because "it passes through all, it sustains all, as a piece of thread passes through and contains in it, all the flowers of a garland."²⁸ Prāna, then may be understood as the creative energy of Brahman. It has no distinct nature of its own and therefore cannot be likened to the pradhāna or material principle of the Sāṃkhya philosophy.²⁹ All creative differentiations begin with the vibrations initiated in this vital energy:

It is the vibration of Prāna which is contained in the Cosmic Fire etc., and in the Psychic Speech etc. (Br. Up. Bh. I.5.23)³⁰

The creation of the world, therefore, is a fulfilment of the purpose of Brahman itself. According to Sastri, Samkara has stressed the fact that the created world -- the emerging changes -- always carry with them the idea of a purpose as yet unrealised. (V. S. Bh. 4.3.14). The creation, therefore, has a final purpose which is to realise the purpose of Brahman (V. S. Bh. 1.1.1).³¹ Sastri writes, citing from the Gītā-Bhāṣya 13.17 as well.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 75. The Text quoted is from Br. Up. Bh. 5.5.1.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 81.

³¹ An Intro., p. 41.

'Jñeyameva jñātaṁ sat jñānaphalamiti jñānagamyamucyate.' Brahman is the phala, i.e., the final End. Hence it is that in Vedānta, it is called as paryantam, i.e., the last or final End. 'avagati paryantam jñānam, nātaḥparam kimcit jñātavyamasti'. When this end is realised, there remains no further end for realisation and our desires and aspirations get their fulfilment. (V. S. Bh. 1.1.1).³²

Sastri goes on to maintain that according to Samkara the entire creation is a graded dispersion of the creative force of Brahman, which always remains as the substrate for it. All individuals are interwoven in the Infinite Self which is Brahman. In the lower grades, the Infinite is realised unconsciously. "It is only in man that the Infinite is present and is being realised unconsciously."³³

C. The Supreme Objective of Human Life.

Sastri then undertakes to explain what is meant by the Supreme End of human life. This, he maintains, is to realise the Divine Purpose of Brahman. It is to be noted that in this context, Sastri uses the term God for Brahman. He writes:

³²Ibid., p. 41, footnote 1.

³³Ibid., p. 42-43.

The manifested nama-rupas are to be taken as a means for the realisation of the purposes (Sankalpas) of God....These Samkalpas are but Divine Ideas existing as potential powers in Brahman -- but they realize themselves in the particular individual objects which they evolve and sustain. The phenomenal objects are the expressions in time of the Ideas which are not in time and the ideas can express themselves freely in time. (Br. Up. Bh. 2.4.10).³⁴

Also,

On the production of the particulars, the universal akrtis or Ideas are constantly present. (Br. Up. Bh. 1-3.28).³⁵

Every individual thing, writes Sastri, therefore, in this system has a dual aspect, one Divine or Infinite and the other finite. In so far as the conscious finite self can bring itself in tune with the Divine Purpose, it may transcend its limiting aspects. On the plane of the mundane, perfection remains an ideal only, and therefore the goal of human life is ever toward transcendence of the state of imperfection. Sastri goes on to say that the purpose which activates the manifested world has been called 'good' by Samkara:

The word 'good' signifying the cause extends to the effects in the shape of the world just as clay does to its modifications -- jar and the rest. Just as wherever we have a notion of the jar, it is always accompanied by the notion of clay, so in the same manner,

³⁴Divine Purpose, p. 206.

³⁵Ibid., p. 207.

the notion of the world is always accompanied by the notion of the 'Good'. (Chh. Bh. 2.2.1).³⁶

Since 'good' permeates the world, it is actually attainable in the life of man. According to Sastri, this exactly is the teaching of the Gītā, wherein God asks man to engage in good works for the greater stability of 'dharma' and the eradication of evil. "We must identify ourselves with the Good Purpose (sādhvartham) operating within the world as well as in us."³⁷

After emphasizing the indispensable role of good action in the world, Sastri takes up for consideration the more familiar repudiation of karma as means of knowledge, known to have been enunciated by Samkara. This question is raised by Sastri himself. He writes that the prevalent opinion about Samkara's system is that he has left no place for action in it. He says "To our mind, this is an idea which cannot be accepted and which must be condemned as erroneous, with all the emphasis which we can command."³⁸ Sastri adduces many arguments to substantiate his

³⁶ Sādhuśabdavācya'rtho' brahma vā sarvathāpi lokādikārye anugataṃ; yathā ghatādirstīrmdādirstīyānygataiva...sādhvārthasya lokādikāryeṣu kāranasya anugatatvāt, mrdādivat ghatādivikāreṣu.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 213.

³⁸ An Intro., p. 147.

point that Samkara made a gradation of the types of work which are necessary for the purification of the mind and as such are indispensable to self-realization. Samkara, as is evident from his commentary on the Gītā, rejected) only the works performed with a view to selfish ends. He advocated the performance of nitya-karmas and all such actions which may lead to the spiritual regeneration of the mind.

Works are meant for the purification of the mind. Selfish desires and passions are impediments to self-realisation. Unselfish prescribed duties when not done, with self-seeking motives remove these impediments, effect purification of the mind, and thus help the final realisation.³⁹

Sastri then makes the point that action being enjoined for the spiritual uplift of man it cannot be said that there is no place for moral striving in the Vedanta system. Man's place is in society and he cannot escape his obligations toward his fellow human beings. Moreover, it is not also a case of blind obedience to rituals that is advocated by Samkara, who writes:

Man chooses his end according to his own light. The Sastras only present before him the lower and higher lines of conduct, but do not compel him to select a particular course of action. (Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.20).⁴⁰

In this way the sphere of moral endeavour is given due importance and cannot be said to have been neglected by the older Vedanta, least of

³⁹Ibid., p. 140.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 158.

all by Samkara. Sastri interprets Samkara's statements about action and knowledge, as referring to separate achievements; to mean a gradation of higher and lower ends. Karma must be "superceded and included"⁴¹ in the final aim of life which is knowledge of the Self. "All works" he maintains, "are organic to this one central purpose."⁴²

Pulling together all the threads of his arguments, we may see that Sastri combined various statements from different books in order to present his case of a realistic interpretation of Samkara-Vedanta. His view can be summarised as follows: Brahman transcends the world but does not exclude the world. The Supreme aim of human life is to achieve an attunement to the good which is immanent in the world, fulfilling thereby the Divine Purpose of Realization.

D. Sastri's Refutation of the Traditional Mode of Understanding Vedanta.

According to Sastri, māyā, instead of being the principle of non-reality is the creative energy of Brahman, radiating into the diversities of forms and names but never leaving the anchorage of its groundedness in the ultimate Reality. This dispersion of the power of Brahman cannot be called false and Samkara is misunderstood when he is charged with saying so. The question then arises as to what does Samkara mean when he says, for example:

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 150.

⁴² Ibid., p. 159.

The objects perceived to exist in the waking state are unreal for this reason also, that they do not really exist either at the beginning or at the end. Such objects (of experience) as mirage, etc., do not really exist either at the beginning or at the end. Therefore they do not (really) exist in the middle either. This is the decided opinion of the world. The several objects perceived to exist really in the waking state are also of the same nature. Though they (the objects of experience) are of the same nature as illusory objects, such as mirage, etc., on account of their non-existence at the beginning and at the end, still they are regarded as real by the ignorant, that is, the persons that do not know 'Atman'.⁴³

According to Sastri such passages have lent colour to the theory of illusionness which he is in effect trying to set aside. For his interpretation of māyā, he boldly goes to the most crucial definition given by Samkara in this regard in his opening statement for the commentary on the Vedānta Sūtra. To bring out the point of Sastri's interpretation he may be quoted at length.

In the famous introduction appended to the "Brahma-Sūtras", Samkara has, at the very commencement of his immortal work, discussed and given us the sense in which he will use the term avidyā throughout his system;.... The Introduction clearly points out that in whatever connection Samkara would use the word Avidyā, he would always mean this that -- under the influence of Avidya, the people forget or ignore the Svarupa or the distinct nature of the Self or the causal reality, and it is entirely resolved into or identified with

⁴³Samkara's commentary on Māndūkyā-Kārikā, II.6 (tr. by Swami Nikhilananda).

its emerging effects or states. And the states or effects are erroneously looked upon as the 'nature' or Svarūpa of the Self.⁴⁴

Working with this interpretation, Sastri writes that falsity may obtain in Samkara in two senses: firstly, if Brahman or Atman is considered resolved entirely into its manifestations which would be a kind of pantheism; and secondly, if the diversification of the world is separated from its ground and looked upon as self-sufficient. This is to say that neither should the prior causal reality be made to lose its unity in the multiplicity of the world nor should the multiplicity be given independent status,

Samkara calls such a world (i.e., separated from Brahman) unreal, false, asatya. Everywhere he has held the world and the changes, vikāras to be unreal and false in this sense only.⁴⁵

Sastri himself carefully adduces certain reasons for the prevalent mode of understanding the Vedānta of Samkara. He writes that Samkara's frequent use of the terms 'rabbit-horns' (Śaśa-viṣāṇa), 'barren woman's son' (bandhyā-putra), 'sky-flower' (akāśa-kusuma), etc., have created the impression that such is our world also.

...the critics...from the mere mention of the terms in the Bhasyas, like Śaśa-Viṣāṇa (rabbit-horn) marīcikā (mirage) etc., etc., jumped at once at the conclusion that the world is false in the Vedānta.⁴⁶

⁴⁴An Intro., p. 108. See Introduction p. viiff.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 103-104. (Emphasis in text.)

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 93.

Another reason according to him, for adducing a mirage-like quality to the world, is Samkara's usage of dream imagery, mainly in the context of the discourse between Ajātaśatru and Bālāki occurring in the Bṛihadāranyaka Upaniṣad (II.1.15-18). It is his contention that Samkara's comparison of the waking and dreaming states need not lead to "the idea of the falsity of our world-experiences".⁴⁷ In substantiation of his interpretation, Sastri, firstly gives his own rendering of Samkara's commentaries on such crucial texts as 'All this verily is Brahman' (Sarvam Khalvidam brahma),⁴⁸ 'All this is Atman alone' (ātmaivedam Sarvam),⁴⁹ 'There is no vestige of diversity' here (neha nānā'sti kimcana).⁵⁰ Secondly, he comments upon the methodology involved in the 'not this, not this' (neti neti) texts.⁵¹ Thirdly, the author gives his own explanation of Samkara's total rejection of action (karma) as means for Self-realization. In his view Samkara neither repudiated the active life nor did he advocate a withdrawal

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 96.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 105-106.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 111.

⁵¹MSVP, p. 337.

from the world.⁵² He emphasizes that nowhere has Samkara negated or abolished the world and its changing forms.⁵³ The world is always to be known as grounded in Brahman and not existing by itself in which case alone, it will be false. Similarly, in the context of the Self, it is declared to be false only, when it is resolved entirely into its experiencing states, when these are taken to be of the nature of the Self.⁵⁴

With this criterion of falsity, Sastri construes the meanings of the texts mentioned above, such as 'All this verily is Brahman' (sarvam khalvidam brahma) and 'there is no vestige of diversity here' (neha nānā'sti kimcana), to mean that Brahman is not to be totally reduced to its manifestations. Wherever the Upanisads deny the actuality of the world process, the meaning, according to Sastri is that Brahman is stated to be a unity which remains unaffected by its diversification.

The negative Texts also, deny independent status to the name-form structure of the world. They point to the fact that it is Brahman, which has dispersed itself into the manifestations, and therefore they are not real in themselves but in Brahman only.⁵⁵

It is the same sense in which Samkara has denied the ultimate supremacy of action. If the individual expends himself totally in action, then he is working with a falsehood. When action is subsumed to a life of religious endeavour, it becomes moral and uplifting and becomes capable of raising man to the highest pinnacle of Self-realization.

⁵²SBL, p. 145.

⁵³An Intro., p. 103-104.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 97-98.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 101-102.

E. Assessment of Sastri's Interpretation of Samkara.

By following Sastri along the path of realistic interpretation it can be seen clearly that he has not given due importance to the structure of veiling, which forms the central core of Samkara's exegesis. Samkara has raised the question of the necessity of the principle of unreality as basic to the understanding of the human condition. The predicament is precisely this, that the world is never questioned by us. Given the experience of this world, from whence can come the thought of its cancellation unless the possibility of it is made reasonable by analogical examples from experience itself. The "illusion" that Samkara is propounding, does not obtain it is true, in respect simply of the world, but as to the meaning of the world. Sastri has maintained that this meaning derives from the Ground. The world is real because the Base is real. The manifestations are, admittedly, not real-in-themselves.

The traditional Advaita point of view has been that the meaning given to the world is of pragmatic value only and must stand cancelled by the knowledge of the One Reality. Just as the directions of East, West, North and South do not obtain anywhere but in the realm of praxis, and as such they are intelligible as experiences inescapably vulnerable to cancellation; similarly the world is a necessary presence for us. Samkara, therefore, propounds the reason for this mystery in experiencing the unreal as the real just as one may seek to explain why the limitless horizon should be quartered off as East, West, South and North.

It would seem that Sastri has confined himself to the description

of Brahman as causal-seed without stating the further crucial Advaitic position that the causal manifestation itself is also at once eminently a case of concealment. In other words it belongs in the realm of māyā. Māyā is the principle because of which Brahman appears as the cause of the world.

Māyā is the principle of holding together the revelation of Truth as One only, and our experiences to the contrary. Sastri evidently does not wish to join with the theistic criticism of Samkara and speak in the language of religion which understands Brahman as creator and the world as created by him. He seeks only to condition the reality of the world. Samkara, in fact, does not demand any further concession than an acknowledgement of this conditional reality of the world because his aim is to establish atman as the sole, unconditional reality.⁵⁶

Disregarding Samkara's clear lead in this matter, Neo-Vedantins have relied heavily on the second aphorism of the Vedanta-Sutras and as we saw with Sastri on such passages in the Upanisads, which speak of Brahman as being the material cause of the world.⁵⁷ Kokileshvar Sastri has repeatedly pointed out that since Brahman is real, the world is also real. It is only 'unreal' to the extent that we think it to be self-sufficient and not deriving from Brahman. There is progressive development in the world and this is still in the process of being fulfilled.

⁵⁶ parayojanaṁ cāsyā brahma vidyāyā avidyānāvittistata atyantikah samsārābhavaḥ. Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. Up. Bh. 2.1.1.

⁵⁷ Chh. 6.1.4. Br. 1.1.7.

The Divine purpose is working itself out in creation, sustaining it till the time it will reabsorb it in itself.

It may be said here that there could be no clearer example of the entry of time as history in Indian thought other than this realistic interpretation of Samkara's Vedanta as a philosophy which propounds creation. The question must arise as to the necessity or legitimacy of this interpretation. In other words, we have to see why Samkara did not construe the 2nd aphorism along the lines of a causal argument.

The 2nd aphorism⁵⁸ states that Brahman is cause of the world. It, therefore, seems to endorse a theory of "creation in time" but an expansion of its meaning brings out the basic tenet of Vedanta which is to affirm not only the reality of Brahman, but also Brahman as the One Reality.

Samkara points out that the Vedanta aphorisms are not to be treated as the premises of an argument, but that they are like the co-ordinating thread which strings different blooms together into a garland of flowers.⁵⁹ The flowers are the Śruti Texts and by tradition the Text for the Second (janmādi) aphorism is stated to be from the Taittiriya Upanisad, II.1.1.

Crave to know that from which all these
beings take birth, that by which they live after
being born, that towards which they move and
into which they merge. That is Brahman.
(Tait. Up. III.1.1. Tr. by Swami Gambhirananda).⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Janmādyasya Yatah, V. S. I.I.2. (Brahman is that) from which the origin, etc., (i.e., the origin, subsistence, and dissolution) of this (world proceed.)

⁵⁹ Vedāntavākyakusumgrathanārthatvātsūtrānām. (Samkara-bhashya. V. S. 1.1.2)

⁶⁰ yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yatprayanti abhisamviśanti tad vijijñāsasva; tad brahma. (Tait. 3.1.)

Brahman, then is that from which the world proceeds, in which it lives, by which it is sustained and into which it dissolves. By gathering to-gether the different aspects of the coming into being of the world, the Text is understood to have stated the ultimacy of Brahman; in saying Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world, all dualities are in effect denied. The world cannot be said to have an independent material existence or it cannot be said to have been brought into existence by a creator. The causality that seems imputed to Brahman, therefore, is of the nature of an appearance only. It seems as if the world proceeds from Brahman. This interpretation is borne out by the usage of present participles in the Text: take birth (jāyante), life (jivanti), move (prayanti) and merge (abhisamvísanti). The crucial point to be taken cognisance of in the passage is, therefore, the absence of a positivistic separation of the 'cause' of creation from the activity of creation. This inseparability of the world from Brahman, thus expounded in the Text by means of these concepts of continuity, namely, coming into existence living in it, finding sustenance from it and going back to it in dissolution, is confirmed by the concluding phrases: "enquire into that; that is Brahman" (tad vijijñāsaḥ; tad brahma).⁶¹

The term 'enquiry' pertains to that which is close at hand, as distinguished from the injunctions to seek, or to meditate upon, or even to aspire after realization. Enquiry leads to the removal of the veil

⁶¹This interpretation is based mainly upon The Discourses on Brahma Sutra by Swami Akhanananda Saraswati; (Bombay: Satsahitya Prakasan Trust, 1976), Vol. II (in Hindi), pp. 203-327.

which prevents discovery. In other words vijijñāśasva is to be construed to mean 'atmābhedeṇa vijānihi iti vijijñāśasva', that is, 'know Brahman to be not other than the Self,' or 'Know Brahman to be the Self itself.'

In order to demonstrate further that no causal arguments are being resorted to here, the reference to the Text from the Taittirīya Upaniṣad is concluded by citing the passage describing the discovery of the nature of Brahman: "He knew Bliss as Brahman; for from Bliss, indeed, all these beings originate; having been born, they are sustained by Bliss; they move towards and merge in Bliss." (Tait. III.6.1.)

According to the tradition of Samkara's exposition of these passages, Brahman, therefore, may be described firstly as if it is the material and efficient cause of the world. This description is to be subjected to enquiry because as it stands it cannot be a final description since these categories belong naturally with the world rather than with Brahman. Brahman being the One and Only Reality, is, as if the material and efficient cause of the world; in reality it is of the nature of Bliss and only as such should be discovered in order to know its identity with the Self. Both the sūtra and the Text from the Upaniṣad are suggestive of Brahman, the first is in the nature of a quality which appears to belong to it, and the latter as indicative of the very nature of Brahman. There is not the semblance of duality here.

If Samkara had in principle allowed for the existence of any reality other than Brahman, then he would not stand in opposition to philosophies professing categories of dependent realities such as

Viśiṣṭādvaita⁶² or the Madhva system of Vedānta. The neo-Vedāntins, however, seek to find in Saṃkara a reversal of his own position by adducing a real status to the world. Saṃkara did not aim at destroying the world which exactly is the sphere of māyā. One may, and is most likely to continue to dwell in the realm of māya for all time to come. The 'unreality' or 'falsity' that he talks about pertains to the semblances of reality which are actualities for us. Falsity resides in experiencing many when there is one Reality only; in experiencing matter where no material principle obtains; in ascribing transience to the Eternal; in missing the Unity behind the fragmentations and in being unaware of the Self hidden by the not Self. The truth is that māyā is not illusion but it is "the cosmic condition", which makes illusion appear as inescapable reality.⁶³

F. Recapitulation and Transition to Next Chapter.

We have seen that Indian scholars made sustained efforts at giving rationalistic and realistic interpretations to the Vedānta philosophy. The question which is indispensable here, seems to me is whether these points of view uncovered such meanings as were hidden in the philosophy

⁶²Literally, Advaita qualified (as theism) under which title Ramanuja's system of Vedānta expounded by him through a revised exegesis of Brahma Sūtras, Gīta and the Upaniṣads (vedārtha saṃgraha) came to be known to posterity.

⁶³J. G. Arapura, "Maya and the Discourse about Brahman", The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta, ed. Mervyn Sprung (Boston U.S.A.: Reidel Publishing Company, 1973), pp. 109-121.

or did they move away from the main sense of its inspiration? With A. C. Mukerji, it may be recalled, the bringing together of Kant and the Vedanta seemed not to have enhanced the significance of either. The realistic interpretation of Sastri, on the other hand, is a different proposition because it tends by its exaggeration of the de facto reality of the world in Samkara, to distort the total vision or picture of Vedanta. The constructions that he has put on some of the texts are farfetched and cannot, indeed, be justified in the light of the well-known intention of the entire body of literature on this point. The 'non-reality' of the world obtains nowhere else in the corpus of Vedanta literature but in the Vedanta of Samkaracarya.⁶⁴ To say ~~to the contrary~~ is not to state Samkaracarya's point of view but one's own regarding Vedanta.

We are now in a position to assess the merits of Neo-Vedantic contributions to Advaita philosophy in general. Two points seem to emerge in this context, which draw our attention to their importance. Firstly,

⁶⁴ The originality of the concept of mithyā in Samkaracharya's formulation of Advaita Vedanta is in contradistinction to rival interpretations of Vedanta that preceded and succeeded him in the history of Vedanta tradition as such. It is, of course, well-known that Samkaracharya himself was not uninfluenced in arriving at the conceptualisation (e.g., Gaudapada, Mahāyāna Schools of Buddhism) though he freely reconstructs it as the supreme implication of the upaniṣadic understanding of Reality as 'non-dual'.

in the quest for rehabilitating Vedānta, as it were, its main thesis of renunciation of the involvements of the I-consciousness is forgotten completely; secondly, and arising out of the first point, we see that the quest for Self-Realization also has lost its primary place from within the scheme of things. The Upanisadic texts teach how to appropriate bliss by renouncing activity for the world. The contemporary attempts at arriving at what is living and dynamic in the tradition seem nothing but a reversal of the original position. In the next chapter, the factors of this process of reversal will be stated so that we may examine the long road which has been traversed by Indian scholars in their attempts to hold together Vedānta and the forces of Westernization.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBSCURATION OF BLISS IN NEO-VEDANTA

'How shall I know that supreme unspeakable
Bliss which they realize directly as "This"?
Is it self-effulgent -- or is It seen to be
shining distinctly?'

Katha II. 2-14

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBSCURATION OF BLISS IN NEO-VEDANTA

A. The Need for Neo-Vedanta

It is generally accepted that neo-Vedanta indicates that class of academic writing which sought to interpret Samkaracarya's thought in the language of Western philosophy. This body of literature, as we have seen in the last three chapters, arose out of the need of the times. As one author writes:

The main battle which the Vedanta had to fight was against the forces released by the secular English education sponsored by "orthodox" Hindus. ¹

It is clear that the scholars of early twentieth century in India felt called upon to defend and justify their ancient philosophical heritage. What is not so clear is the fact that half a century of such preoccupation shows no signs of yielding place to any other form of philosophic writing. Although dearth of creative writing is sometimes noted in India,² by far the most

¹Niranjan Dhar, Vedanta and the Bengal Renaissance (Calcutta: Minerva Associates, 1977), p. 169.

²Ibid., p. 167.

usual form of research is still grounded in apologetics as worthwhile academic work.³ The point at issue for this thesis is that this phenomenon hides the ground on which this particular type of literature took its stand. In order to discover the reason for this continuing trend in defensive writing we may take up with profit the study of contemporary Neo-Vedanta as a whole as background for the two typical points of view we considered in the last two chapters.

A very pertinent question may be raised here as to why should Neo-Vedanta choose to situate itself within the framework of apologetics? Indian philosophy, has for long developed on the lines of critical appraisals and clarifications. All systems of Indian philosophy are required to answer penetrating questionings raised from within as

³The following two books have been written more than 50 years apart but they refute almost the same charges: V.J. Kirtikar, in his Studies in Vedanta (Bombay, 1924) answers the following criticisms against Vedanta: that it is revolting to common sense, and blasphemous; that it assumes the self; that it is pantheistic; that it does violence to Christian ethics; that it is mystic and quietistic etc. etc. R.G. Garg, Upanisadic Challenge to Science, (Delhi: 1978), pp. 241-280, covers almost the same ground in his eight-fold classification of the charges:

1. pessimism (Urquhart: Upanisads and Life, Calcutta, 1916, pp. 69-70).
2. abstractionism (A.E. Gough, Philosophy of the Upanisads, London, 1882, p. 268, which Hegel called a "region of unbridled madness").
3. Blasphemy (John Caird: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion, pp. 74-75).
4. fictitiousness of the Individual Soul (Hertel's Introduction to Kenopanisad, Schweitzer Indian Thought, London, 1956, p. 47).
5. Pantheism (Monier-Williams, Indian Wisdom, 1963, p. 38, A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God, p. 219).
6. a-Moralism (Farquhar Hibbert Journal, Oct. 1921, p. 24, Upton, Hibbert Lectures for 1893, pp. 241-42).
7. asceticism, escapism, inactivism (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 12, p. 548).
8. mysticism (Urquhart, Indian Thought, p. 43).

well as outside the tradition. Theories are, as is well known, propounded with a view to meeting the possible objections which may be raised against what is being stated. Such being the case, the conditions which precluded a continuation of this tradition of dialogic exegeses acquire some importance in the understanding of contemporary Indian philosophy.

The first point which strikes one very forcibly is that the Indian scholars did not distinguish between refutation and rejection of the very ground on which controversy can thrive. Vedanta in the twentieth century did not have to contend with refutations, regarding the nature of ultimate truth, as previously from the Buddhistic or dualistic points of view; or meet the challenge of searching questions from within the system, or the charge of doctrinal radicality from the orthodox system of pūrva-mīmāṃsā⁴. It has to contend only against an external critique in terms of an overall appraisal as inferior to a superiorly developed culture. The Indian scholars seem to have accepted the judgment that Indian philosophy was suffering from arrested "growth" and dynamism, where the West had progressed beyond to an age of enlightenment. That the West is superior in all aspects of human life is a conviction we meet with pulsating through the writings of the early neo-Vedantins. The language of constant approximation of ideas to Western concepts, leaves one in no doubt of the tacit acceptance of its criteria as ultimate. That the Western world had forged ahead, because of their dynamic religion

⁴All Histories of Indian Philosophy have documented the arguments and counter-arguments between various schools of thought down the centuries.

and India had been left behind because of its non-worldly orientation was accepted by those who were educated by Western scholars. A genuine dissatisfaction with their own tradition is apparent in the chain reaction set off by the introduction of the Western mode of intellectual appraisal of all past heritages. The 'educated' could find no answers from within at this time because the historical, philological and psychological methodologies applied to the body of textual literature, had found the guardians of this lore almost totally at a loss. The Pundits learned in Sanskrit could do no better than take up a fundamentalist position which further alienated those who wished to forge ahead. The air of a rational emancipation from the trammels of dogma, therefore, was all the more pleasing to Indian scholars at this time.⁵ Unless due importance is given to this historical background, one fails to appreciate the overthrow (in effect) of the traditional mode of exegeses at this time and its replacement by Westernized criteria of hermeneutics.

From the perspective of the last quarter of the twentieth century, it becomes possible to delineate the almost imperceptible pathways of this transition. The body of literature under consideration, however, seems to lend itself naturally to a four-fold

⁵By the beginning of the nineteenth century the works of Voltaire, Hume, Locke, Tom Paine etc. began to be imported to Calcutta. Advertisements of these books appeared in the Calcutta Gazette, Post, Calcutta Chronicle and other magazines. Of these, the most popular were Tom Paine's Age of Reason and Rights of Man.

Nemai Sadhan Bose: The Indian Awakening and Bengal (Calcutta: Firma K.K. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969), p. 65.

scheme by which it sought to span the bridge between India's ancient heritage and Western education. A convenient way of understanding this movement of thought, therefore, will be to follow the thoughts on rationality, empirical reality, ethics and universality.

B. The New Role of Reason in Indian Philosophy

Indian thought, over the centuries had built up a careful distinction between the rational and that which seems 'irrational' but maybe presented as reasonable. This distinction is necessary, irreplaceable and of supreme importance if one were to seek to understand the message of the Upanisads.

The Upanisads address themselves not to the rational principle in man but toward his power of appreciation of that which maybe admitted as cogent, reasonable, worthy of further investigation etc. Admittedly it is man who must seek Self-realization but how is he to be brought to the awareness of the desirability of this goal of human life? Man knows only the world in which he lives and the mode of this knowing is inescapably rational. To whatever limit this knowing may be pushed it will unavoidably carry the world along with it.

The Upanisads teach that it is possible to put a wedge in this mould of rationality not from outside but by an inwardisation of the same faculties which give the world to us.⁶ The Upanisads.

⁶The Kathopanishad (I. 3.2-10) asks one to imagine the body to be a Chariot driven by the intellect as to Charioteer, the mind as reins and the senses as so many powerful steeds. The Master (the Self or Atman) sits quietly watching the Charioteer driving skillfully and purposefully, or wildly and erratically as the case may be. He could be seen if the Charioteer were to turn around, otherwise the driver may continue to feel that it is he who is the Master.

are neither substitutes for rational thought, nor are they a contrast to it. Their authority lies in engendering conviction before any form of reference can be applied. This authority is a hidden authority because it may speak only to an openness for it.

It may be said, in other words, that the Vedanta, without its function as soteriology,⁷ must lose much of its relevance for the inquirer. The need felt for grounding soteriology in an answer to an epistemological question inverts the order of priorities and distorts the meaning of epistemology and of the quest for Freedom as autonomous issues. At any rate the new role of reason created in response to such needs, by the Indian scholars at this time did not yield any results which could be said to have deepened our understanding of Vedanta. Even if it can be said that a rationalist like A.C. Mukerji did no great violence to Vedantic thought in isolating its epistemology from its moksa-oriented thought, the point of the whole enterprise remains open to question because, on the one hand Vedanta does not gain anything by the idealistic epistemology and on the other, Western Idealism cannot appropriate the Witness-Consciousness (sākṣi-caitanya) without radicalizing itself out of recognition.

⁷The problem of soteriology verbalized in the language of the Upanisads as vividisā (see infra p.243) creates the Vedanta question and gives directions to the answer that is sought to be embodied in Vedanta as a 'system'.

The significance of the Vedantic intuition depends on the circularity of the Revelation-reason-experience (Śruti-yukti-anubhava) scheme; Kant's metaphysics could not impart to it a scientific grounding without also creating room for the superfluity of religions quest. It did not lie within the power of Indian scholars at this time to gauge the devastating influence of the critical philosophy as heralding the era of secular thought. Therefore the attempt at placing the religious category of intuition within the rubric of metaphysical arguments has, one may say, a quality of the tragic about it.

C. The Reality of the World and the Place of Ethics in Vedanta

The shift in perspective toward Westernization becomes more pronounced with the Indian defense calculated to establish the reality of the world from within the philosophy of Vedanta itself. They were moved to criticise the concept of māyā as unrealistic and opposed to a useful way of life in the world. Thus the principle of negation was interpreted by Neo-Vedantins as delimiting the value of the world for human beings. It can be seen easily that here a tacit appropriation of the ultimate desirability of the progress-oriented ethos of the West took place. To think that moral values are at stake in Vedanta and must need be grounded in the 'reality' of the world to ensure the supreme importance of ethical behaviour is to agree that the discriminatory 'cancellation'

is a denial of the world's actual existence for man.⁸ It is not only true but a truism to state that man and the world belong together. Human existence is obviously and necessarily in and of the the world and nothing is gained by trivializing it. Samkaracarya was too astute a philosopher to have attempted any such absurdity. In fact he repeatedly disengages himself from entering into discourses on the subject of the world and man's engagements therein, on the plea that such matters fall under the scope and sphere of the literature pertaining to good conduct and so are not under dispute at all.⁹

Māyā as the principle which veils the real Brahman and projects in lieu of it the world as reality would be superfluous to any system which accepts the given world as ultimate i.e. ontologically real. In Vedanta the world is not diffused of its importance as the only known sphere of human activity but in its fullness it is regarded as a veil to be penetrated. Māyā in fact symbolizes this very demand on the part of the world to be considered the only reality for man. Samsāra (the world) remains very much as it is

⁸It is interesting to note that this mistake is not made by Paul Deussen, who wrote: "And so the Vedanta, in its pure and unfalsified form, is the strongest support for pure morality". Outlines of Indian Philosophy (New Delhi: 1976), p. 65.

⁹For understanding the issues pertaining to life in the world the Vedanta accepts the Verdicts of the Mimāṃsā realism. Vyavahāra Bhāṭṭa nayā is the maxim that underlies the Vedanta acceptance of the epistemological and logical findings of Bhatta school of Mimāṃsā. See Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 11.

until it is cancelled as the veil and discovery of Brahman takes place.¹⁰ A man who feels fear on perceiving a 'snake' in his path, can be rid of it only on perceiving the rope and in no other way; there is, therefore, no need to emphasize the world of praxis in Vedanta. This is exactly the human condition to which it is addressing itself.

It is therefore, not clear, what the realists would like to achieve by bringing into focus the reality of the world, which in a way, is the premise on which Vedanta bases its concept of māyā. Ethical questions, therefore, fall outside the scope of Vedanta, since it is not calling into question a life of obedience to moral laws in the world.

Samkaracarya, beyond affirming totally the obligatoriness of enjoined duties on man by the scriptures, does not enter into questions of ethical import as such.¹¹ Wherever such discussions are demanded by the nature of the Textual matter, he follows the lead of the accepted code of moral behaviour as can be seen from the various precepts he quotes from the Smrtis and the traditional illustrations that he uses. The authority of the different manuals of the good life are endorsed and used by him in his discourses on the Vedanta. Since he is speaking specifically to men who are engaged in worldly activities, he does not need to enter into

¹⁰na tu saṁsāradasāyām bādhaḥ: (Br. UP. Bh. IV. 5-15):

¹¹'..Nothing enjoined by the scripture can be unworthy of performance' Sankarabhāṣya on Īsopanisad 8.

disputes regarding the legitimacy or cogency of their behaviour. The world comes with its own demands for involvements for human beings; it cannot be denied or refused attention. Samkaracarya addresses himself to the question of the possibility of cancellation of this sphere of engagement in its entirety, that is the ego-consciousness as well as the world it engages in, both according to Vedanta belonging to the sphere of the not-self.

Such being the case, the rationalistic questions regarding the priority of the subject as knower, or realistic problems regarding the status of the world being the real region where men may participate in Divine purpose and so on, become slightly out of focus, because these matters are not being contested here. The soteriology being expounded by Samkaracarya is grounded in the central theme of the Upanisads which is to indicate the non-dual nature of Ultimate Reality. His aim is to make the promise of Supreme Joy ¹² contained in the Texts, a question of palpable significance for men living an ordinary everyday life in the world.

The Neo-Vedantins did not choose to stay with an evaluation of human life which gives it importance only to the extent that man alone may qualify in answer to an yearning that he as man feels for enquiring into the nature of Ultimate Reality. In the sphere of ethical concerns, we come across the greatest step in veering

¹²brahmavit āpnoti param, Tait. Up. II. 1.

round to the assimilation of Western influences. The individual had gained importance in the West in the nineteenth century. The status of man in the world, his duties toward social institutions, the legitimacy of his personal experiences, were topics of debate in Western thought. Although the question of salvation remained with religion, the Christian values and virtues so permeated life in the West that they found expression in philosophical systems as ethical questions. One of the primary questions for Western philosophy continues to be, "How to be a good man in an increasingly man-made world?"

In the Indian context ethical questions never came to the central position in debates because the good way of life was always a matter of upholding, by way of appropriation, the eternal laws of dharma. Ethical conduct is one of conformity to dharma, exhorting the natural man in self-seeking pursuit of pleasure and material well-being to understand himself less in terms of his role as a self-defining subject but more as exemplifying in his behaviour as an integral part of an ordered nature which is 'good' or just. Justice already obtains in the world autonomously (so to speak) and impersonally. It is not left to man's will to impart it. To recover it from the obscuring effects of the ego-motives of the human individual is the function of ethical life which avowedly aims at 'purifying' the mind so that it truly comes to self-presence in relation to the cosmic order.

The experience of alienation from nature or man's own philosophic heritage gives real edge to the 'ethical' question of modern man. In antiquity there was no such experience and consequently there is no posing of the modern man's question like 'what can I know, what can I do, or what may I hope for'. When neo-Vedantins sought uncritically to raise and answer those very questions vis-a-vis Vedanta they were in effect doing little more than to align themselves along thought-processes of the moderns and have nothing to say about Vedanta. Indian philosophy has nothing to add significantly to what it would imitate or parallel.

The unique nature of the philosophy enunciated by Samkaracarya lies in his denying efficacy metaphysically to action as means of the highest attainment. One of the longest expositions regarding this is given in the first section of the Taittiriya Upanishad. It is to be noted that Sastri in his commentary on this Upanishad remarks:

Since this chapter is unsuited to the requirements of the present age, it is omitted here. 13

That morality is world-oriented was learnt from the modernized West; to identify good behaviour with greater involvements along the same line that one already is involved in his natural life cannot be sustained by the Vedanta philosophy which identifies good with the attainment of the Ultimate Joy in mokṣa. It is a moot

¹³ Upanishader Upadesa, Vol. III (in Bengali)(Calcutta, 1910), p. 202.

question whether a quality of detachment may not be found to be a sounder base for moral behaviour rather than a thirst for active reorganization of the world, especially when the future aimed at brings with it greater ills than could be imagined. This question, however, does not belong with Vedanta, which without denying the peremptory nature of the world seeks to isolate the dynamics of it. This perspective is brought out clearly by one of the eminent Pundits in Vedanta of this century, who writes in Bengali:

I was asked by Rameshchandra Mitra, 'Sir, tell me why was Samkaracarya exercised about establishing the Vedanta? Of what possible use is it? You will talk of moksa or things metaphysical. That is not my question. My question is, does it have any visible benefits to confer on us?'

To this question I replied as follows:

It must be said that it is of no benefit to those who seek to appear learned in it, or those who study it out of curiosity or seek entertainment from it; but for all those who engage in its study in order to follow its precepts are no doubt benefitted (as to their way of life in the world)... Other ethical systems teach how society may be organized; but these moral lessons teach man how to live (not only in the society, but) in his own body and the world in which he finds himself and through which he sojourns.... 14

¹⁴ Kalivara Vedantavagisa, Samkaracarya and Sakyamuni (Calcutta, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika Monograph, 1307, 1893), pp. 14-15.

D. Toward Universalism

On examining the emerging patterns of Neo-Vedanta as enunciated by scholars like K. Sastri, A.C. Mukerji, and others, one is drawn to the conclusion that they were all concerned with bringing the world into primary focus for man and updating the ancient heritage in the light of this new understanding of human values. The confrontation with Christian Theology, awoke a pride in the non-dogmatic character of their own philosophy which could be expounded to all men of understanding without demanding that they give up their own religion in order to understand the message of the Upanisads. The final form that Neo-Vedanta has assumed in our own time is that of an universal spiritualism; it is believed that Vedanta, instead of being in conflict with modern times, provides the only clue toward a healthy balancing of the forces of secularism and a sense of the religious.

The question must be raised if Samkaracarya can be so translated without a number of stipulations safeguarding his position. This is not to deny the right of any philosopher to radicalize the position of Samkaracarya, but the present-day interpreters render his thought without this hermeneutical awareness. They think that they are truly uncovering his original intention. It is interesting to note that with the exception of a few only,¹⁵ nearly all modern expositors refer to Samkaracarya's

¹⁵See Infra, p.

renderings of the Textual material as clinching the inner meaning of Vedanta. In answer to the charges levelled against it as 'intellectually incoherent' and 'ethically unsound', it becomes, therefore, relevant ^{to} ask whether Samkaracarya can be approached apart from or aside of the centrality of the soteriological intentions that lie at the basis of his thinking. That he is purporting to expound Vedanta as mokṣasāstra without the slightest equivocation cannot be seriously doubted by any reader of his works. This aspect of his thought however, seems in complete abeyance in recent expositions of his philosophy obviously because modern man is not interested in the question of mokṣa.

Samkaracarya himself, in his commentaries, is repeatedly questioned regarding his separation of worldly pursuits and the state of renunciation he is advocating for those who would know Brahman. In one such passage the objection in effect is as follows

Performance of duties as well as, to aim at the knowledge of the Self are enjoined by the Scriptures. Why do you deny the former for those who seek the latter?¹⁶

Samkaracarya's answer consists in explaining that the passages are contradictory and therefore cannot be said to apply to the same situation, as opposing qualities cannot belong to the same object. Action in the world obtains only in those who are not yet enlightened. After enlightenment, there are no duties

¹⁶Sankara-bhāṣya, Preface to Aitareya Upaniṣad.

to be performed. In a lighter vein, he remarks:

Not that any question can be raised as to why a person, who was (once) enveloped in darkness, does not fall into a pit, swamp, or brambles after the dawn of light.¹⁷

In spite of such uncompromising statements the second verse of the Īsopaniṣad is often cited by those who wish to emphasize the role of karma in Upanisadic thought, which is as follows:

By doing karma, indeed, should one wish to live here for a hundred years. For a man, such as you (who wants to live thus), there is no way other than this, whereby karma may not cling to you.

Saṅkarācārya in his commentary on the verse, accepts it as descriptive of the way of karma for those who are thus engaged in the world. He continues, saying that of the two paths of karma and of renunciation, the latter is the more excellent, for, this leads to knowledge. He says emphatically 'Do you not remember what was pointed out that the anti-thesis between knowledge and karma is irremovable like a mountain?'¹⁸

He is equally clear on the subject of karma in his commentary on the opening verse of the Taittirīya Upanisad. "Now" he says, "is commenced the knowledge of Brahman with a view to

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Sankarabhāṣya on Īsopaniṣad 2.

eschewing the causes that lead to the performance of karma." In other numerous similar passages he has emphasized the discontinuity between the way of karma and the way of knowledge.

Admittedly, it is a difficult point to grasp; for, we are used to living with thoughts to the contrary. Even Anandagiri, the most excellent of commentators writing supporting glosses, fails at times to remain with Samkaracarya's uncompromising attitude toward renunciation. Anandagiri points out that renunciation cannot be a requirement because the Vedas mention the god Indra, the emperor Janaka and the woman Gargi as knowers of Brahman.¹⁹

Samkaracarya, however, should not be understood to have been refuted by this example of Janaka and other such Brahmaid propounders of Vidyā (knowledge). The renunciation that he is talking about is a necessary and inevitable condition of knowledge but not sufficient reason for it. Renunciation does not bring about knowledge but the state of 'Knowing' must be indicated by the relinquishing of the entire dimension of the 'as if'. In other words renunciation is the symbol (līṅga) of knowledge²⁰, not its substance.

¹⁹Anandagiri's Gloss on Mund Up. Bhāṣya, III. 2-4.

²⁰Sankarabhāṣya on Mund. III. 2-4.

Just as it becomes clear that the separation of worldly activity from the state of enlightenment lies at the heart of Samkaracarya's exposition of the Upanisads, so also it becomes clear that this separation is not thus presented by the neo-Vedantins. The jettisoning of the main thesis of Vedanta lied in this shift in emphasis from the other-worldly stance to this worldly attitude effected by contemporary thinkers of the Vedanta philosophy.

E. The Shift Toward Spiritualism

It is true that the twentieth century has been a flowering of Eastern-centricism in the West which is unprecedented.²¹ It is said that we are today entering an era of newfound understanding between the East and the West, that in the region of perennial philosophy²² the horizons of East and West have met and become one.

²¹"It appears that today a universal connection is being initiated in the spiritual sense in a new confrontation of the East and the West, such as never perhaps occurred in history." E. Frauwallner, History of Indian Philosophy (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), p. XXXIX.

²²Aldous Huxley writes: "Philosophia perennis -- the phrases was coined by Leibnitz but the thing -- the metaphysic that recognises a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to or even identical with divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being -- the thing is immemorial, and universal." The Perennial Philosophy (London: Chatto and Windus, 1947), p. 1.

A new type of literature is coming into existence which heralds the coming of the integral consciousness which will not know the confines of regional boundaries. One author writes:

It is to be assumed that Asia and the West will mutually assist one another in order to help awaken this new consciousness.²³

The question may be raised if this is what was aimed at when Indian scholars eagerly tried to participate in the thought-life of the West. It is quite conceivable that they were on the other hand rather appalled to see the transformation of the Indian concept of Monism into the universalism of a perennial philosophy. It is to be noted that it remains more of a Western enterprise than Indian. Spiritualism is the philosophy of a secular society and India of alive to the spirit of its heritage can hardly acclaim it as a description of its claims. The swelling tide of the East-West confluence on the level of spiritual consciousness follows, therefore, a course of its own without adding to the metaphysical thinking necessary for the understanding of the Indian tradition.

It is also true that many East-West conferences are taking

²³P.J. Saher, Eastern Wisdom and Western Thought, The Psycho-Cybernetics of Comparative Ideas in Religion and Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), p. 12.

place where it is hoped that a new awakening will take place.²⁴

The acceptance of the philosophy of Vedanta at the level of World Conferences, however, seems a very remote possibility when it is not accepted as such by those who apparently advocate its thoughts. To say this, is not to deny the universal character of Vedanta. Samkaracarya is without doubt speaking to all who would care to engage in a dialogue with him. Painstakingly, he takes his interlocuters along the path of renunciation which they are as wary of travelling as any modern man. To loosen the familiar ties with which we are bound to the world is neither easy nor a natural process; moreover it does not seem to lead to any end which could appear as immediately meaningful and worthwhile. Under these circumstances, the author's task is rendered difficult a doublefold. The hold of the world on man is not less gripping in our time than in Samkaracarya's. The objections that he faces are numerous and covering in effect the same ground that any modern critics may level against him. That he was saying something which could not appeal to just everyone, is a judgement of old standing. It is

²⁴The proceedings of the four conferences held in 1939, 1949, 1959, and 1964 have been published as follows:

(i) Philosophy -- East and West (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944).

(ii) Essays in East-West Philosophy (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1951).

(iii) Philosophy and Culture -- East and West (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1962).

(iv) Status of the Individual: East and West (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967).

merely repeated in such opinions as these: That Gaudapada and Samkaracarya are alien inroads in orthodox thinking, that they were influenced by Samkhya and Buddhism and introduced foreign elements in the stream of Upanisadic thought.²⁵

S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri writes:

The observance of Karma need not be merely a preliminary discipline, as held by Samkaracarya and his strict adherents, disappearing with the onset of knowledge, like clouds when the rainy season is over; that discipline, when perfected, may itself be the self-transcendence known as Brahman-realization; it may, in the alternative be a useful aid to knowledge²⁶

The fact that Samkaracarya is quite aware of the enormity of the task he has set himself, is made apparent by him in his inimitable style of expressing the gravest ideas in the lightest of veils:

At this point someone may say: 'If this be so, I am afraid of liberation, consisting in becoming the self of all (that is losing my individuality). Let my worldly existence itself continue ...' (The answer is) Do not entertain such a fear, for the enjoyment of all the desirable things falls within the range of relative existence ... (For the man of knowledge) there exists nothing separately of which he can be afraid. Hence there is nothing to be afraid of in liberation.²⁷

²⁵S.G. Mudgal, Advaita of Sankara: A Reappraisal (Motilal Banarasidass, 1975), p. 61.

²⁶Sankaracharya, Madras, C.A. Natesan & Co., n.d. p. 73.

²⁷Sankarabhāṣya on Tait. III. 10, 5-6.

Samkaracarya, therefore, must be understood to have set himself the difficult task of explaining to his audience, why they should look beyond the world for that supreme happiness which is only foreshadowed in the pleasures of everyday life; why this semblance of that joy must be given up for the enjoyment of its real plenitude. As a matter of fact the universality which obtains in Samkaracarya's philosophy is at a deeper level than is maintained by his recent interpreters.

Samkaracarya's task is difficult because the realisation of the limitations of the human condition itself, does not lead to the transcendence of it. He, therefore, does not speak to the element of tragedy in man's life as something to be overcome. In answer to the question, in what does the pre-eminence of man reside, he says:

In his competence for karma and knowledge. For man alone is qualified for rites and duties as also for knowledge, by virtue of his ability, craving (for results), and non-indifference (to results) The intention here (the Text), is to make that very human being enter into the innermost Brahman through knowledge.²⁸

The man of work is pre-eminently qualified for entering upon the enquiry about Brahman -- but not, and this is the crucial point, through or by the mode of greater activity in the world.

²⁸ Sankarabhāṣya on Tait. II. 1.1.

Man is always faced with a choice. His candidature for enjoyment of the world is the natural corollary to his existence in the world; his way is also open toward the acquiring of knowledge by moksa-sastra. The most important point, therefore, for Vedanta is to render help toward the awakening of the desire to know Brahman; or in other words to answer the question, "Why should I know Brahman?"

S. Radhakrishnan's forceful enunciation of the philosophy of Samkaracarya, attracted to it not only educated Indians but also drew the attention of the world to it. Yet to understand Samkaracarya's philosophy as the grounding for a dynamic outlook toward life and its myriad problems, is perhaps to trivialize his finely tenuous arguments for the loosening of the ties of the world. He has nowhere professed his competence to speak toward the problems of the world of praxis. Vedanta, therefore, does not primarily concern itself with adding more power to the mode of living in the world. According to Samkaracarya, the dynamics of activity itself will work toward greater usefulness and competence in the world. It is necessary on the other hand to open up the possibility of the desire to know Brahman. The sustenance of this 'unnatural' movement in thought, is the region of competence for the Vedantist.

This exclusivity, by virtue of being common to the human condition itself, could be the concern of all who would care to

engage in the talk about Brahman. Thus Sāṅkarācārya's philosophy is universal and also relevant to all modes of living, ancient or modern; yet it must be emphasized that he is uniformly and exclusively addressing himself toward the unravelling of "that knot of the heart"²⁹ which remains so unequivocally obdurate to all worldly measures.

In following the paths which neo-Vedanta followed, one can conclude without being unduly harsh that it has not opened up any new avenues of understanding with regard to our heritage, since the modes of interpretations employed relate it exclusively to the demands of Westernization. The problem delineated at the start of the thesis pertained to the emergence of neo-Vedanta as a contemporary way of understanding the tradition of Upanisadic thought. It is understandable that at the first encounter of disparate cultures a veiling of crucial issues would take place. The Indian scholars, considered 'the age of man' to be a desirable end to be endorsed for their own country. The veiling, however, persists in the implied new self-understanding of Vedantic thought as entailing a discontinuity with tradition.

The discontinuity with tradition perhaps lies not so much in extolling the values of humanity but in thinking that these lay at variance with Vedantic thought. Hence was felt the need for

²⁹Mundaka Upanisad, II. 2.8. (See *Infra*, p.).

the construction of neo-Vedanta. The exclusive region of Vedanta however stands in no conflict with worldly concerns, and it was a tragic mistake to think that this was so. The phrase used by Gilbert Murray in a different context, seems apt to the Indian situation. There was here "a failure of nerve" on the part of thinkers to keep to the teaching of renunciation in the face of the rising tides of secularism. Neo-Vedanta, therefore, developed as a mode of compromise, where there was no need for such attempts.

According to the point of view taken up here, it is possible to construe the tradition as being of uniform significance throughout the ages because it is based on a view of man which is not that of the age of modernity. To the question whether we have the choice to stay clear of the forces of modernity, the answer would seem to be that it is both necessary and desirable to exercise the choice of freedom that is characteristic of thought and 'think' the tradition on its own terms. This very effort toward recovering an understanding of tradition in thought in terms of its own premisses may be viewed as a step one may take in the direction of loosening the stranglehold of modernity as an ideology.

F. To Recapitulate

It is a very nice conceit on the part of man in our contemporary world, to think that the world needs to be underscored as the region of human fulfilment. As a matter of fact the grip of the world was felt as strongly by man in the time of Saṅkarācārya as at any other time before or since; otherwise he would not have felt called upon to as referred to before³⁰ reassure his pupils regarding liberation. So we see that there is no special line of demarcation for distinguishing between ancient and contemporary preoccupation with 'Let us belong to the world' (astu saṁsāra eva).

We who are inescapably Westernized, may engage in an academic pursuit of Vedantic knowledge only in the mode of what the ancient called the logic of 'the lamp at the threshold' (dehali-deepa-nyāya). The lamp if placed at the threshold, illuminates the room as well as the courtyard; and as such leaves open the choice to 'astu saṁsāra eva' (let us belong to the world) or toward the unknown and therefore fearful path to 'moksa'. And this after all, is where all students of the Upanisads have always stood and must always stand in the future as well.

The questions which are thematised in the Upanisads belong with the Textual statements presented for appropriation by enquiry

³⁰Sankarabhasya on III. 10, 5-6 (See Supra p.).

and meditation. Without an inquiry there is no answer; in preserving this methodology the Upanisads have touched the innermost chord in all human hearts. In this alone perhaps can be found the secret of that universalism which is generally sought to be propagated at a different level altogether.

This chapter, therefore, aims at clarifying some of the issues which seem involved here. The Vedanta of Samkaracarya is profoundly moksa-oriented as can be seen from the study of any of his commentaries to any of the Upanisads that he has taken up for explication. No Indian philosopher of course has said anything to the contrary, but affirming this they have however sought to consider Samkaracarya bracketing his acknowledgement and avowal of moksa orientation. This separation, therefore, would seem to lie at the root of the unfruitful nature of these interpretational enterprises.

To grasp the meaning of Samkaracarya, one must see him as holding up the lamp which illuminates the threshold. He is addressing these who would venture out into the shadowy world which can be glimpsed from where they are but not known. The world including time, plays no important part here because the human condition is precisely this predicament of being in the world, where man finds himself, and where he may choose to be, but from whence he may also start on a quest which would transform his entire way of understanding the world.

The point of the chapter could be stated differently: the epistemological and ethical framework of Western philosophy could have been studied and appreciated as a contrast to the traditional mode of thinking about the statements of the Upanisads. It is possible that this line of approach to the encounter would have resulted in a deepening of understanding of both systems of thought. As it is, the deeper hermeneutical dimension of the exegetical literature is almost lost to the world of academics. The hermeneutical task before Samkaracarya was one of uncovering the one ultimate question which the Upanisads answer. By the very nature of the case it could not be of the nature of open ended questions which would depend upon experiences in the world for their resolution. In order to enter into the stream of Upanisadic tradition a task which exegesis intends to facilitate, we must bring ourselves to see the profound significance of the following question, or even to ask it.

I ask you of that Being who is to be known only from the Upanisads, who definitely projects those (all) beings and withdraws them into Himself, and who is at the same time transcendent.³¹

The third part of the thesis will be devoted to the study of the Taittirīyopanisad which unquestionably holds together the ideal of renunciation with the concept of a plentitude of bliss. An attempt is made to stay in line with the tradition of classical exegeses which has accorded the highest distinguishing notice to this Text.³² The third part of the thesis, therefore, is a necessary corollary to what has been stated in the first two parts. We shall try to show that Samkaracarya's exegesis remains true to the teaching of the Upanisad.

The need for continuity of the study of the Upanisads is a modern academia as part of modern studies is not questioned here. What is questioned is in the stretching of it on the Procrustean bed of modernity, without adequate self-awareness. The point is, that as long as a break with tradition remains absent from Indian experience, all attempts at reconstituting the indigeneous philosophy are bound to fail. It is therefore not surprising that they failed to take roots in the soil of the country.

³²In the tradition of Samkaracarya, belongs the famous Vārtika (commentary on bhāṣya) by Suresvara which is a lengthy work on the Taittirīyopanisadbhāṣya. Anandagiri wrote glosses on both the bhāṣya as well as the Vārtika. we have other famous commentaries on the Taittirīya, such as the Sankarānanda-dīpikā, the Vanamala and more recently the Bhāṣyārthavimarśinī, the Maniprabhā and also the Vyākhyā by Śrī Upanisadbrahmayogin.

The crux of the matter is that, the unity of the Self and Brahman is revealed in and only in the Upanisads.³³ If one wishes to be led toward the understanding of this teaching, one must follow the guideline provided by the understanding of the tradition united in its concern to underscore the heart and essence of Upanisadic revelation. By this teaching a transformation of the very structure of man's being in the world was sought to be effected. The attempts at seeking to place it in a different setting bespeaking a different orientation of spirit cannot be considered a continuation of the tradition. These attempts, however, must be regarded as an important chapter in the history of Indian philosophy as reflecting the polarisation of values which was a living experience for these authors.

It is clearly to be seen that in the last seventy years or so, few attempts have been made to describe Brahman as ānanda as central to the teachings of the Upanisads.³⁴ This is not surprising because in the context of ānanda must be stated the ideal of renunciation. The contemporary writers who seek to interpret Vedanta for the modern world, have emphasized sat (reality) and cit (consciousness) but not ānanda (bliss) and have thus taken apart

³³ na Khalu advaitamātmatattvam vedāntāvyatirekena kenacit pramānena labhyate. Sāyana (Tait. I. 1. Introduction).. (The fact of the non-difference of the Self)(from Brahman) is not to be acquired from any source of knowledge other than the Upanisads.)

³⁴ N.A. Nikam's The Delight of Being, is one of the recent attempts addressed to the task.

the integrated unity of Brahman as Satcit-ānanda. We may even say that a veiling of Brahman as ānanda, is exemplified in the writings of neo-Vedantins. Instead of the plenitude of bliss promised by the Upanisad, they chose to stay with the infinite simal part of this Bliss which sustains the entire world:

... this is its (Brahman's) Supreme bliss.
On a particle of this very bliss other beings
live. 35



³⁵ Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad IV. iii. 32. (Tr. by Swami Gambhirananda).

PART III

THE ONTOLOGY OF ĀNANDA (BLISS)

In the Upanisads, philosophy arises as a question and lives as a dialogue....There is no inquiry if there is no question. A dialogue arises not because a question is asked and is answered but because a question is questioned. And the dialogue is between one who "knows" and one who "inquires"....A teacher belongs to a galaxy, and falls in line with others who preceded him. But the line is not completed. The line is the tradition of teachers who guard the tradition that produces them....

The Upanisads are a demonstration of the fact that man can bring about a revolution in his nature through dialogue. The Upanisads are, therefore, dialogues of the civilization of man.

N. A. Nikam

Ten Principal Upanishads

(Bombay, 1974, pp. 1-5)

CHAPTER SIX

MAN AS THE ASPIRANT FOR BLISS

The following rendering of the Taittirīya Upanisad has been schematised into such topics as could be related easily to what has already been stated in the earlier chapters. Firstly, the Text is introduced and its contents are described; secondly, an account of disciplines propounded for the students are summarised with a view to bringing out the Upanisadic understanding of the nature of man to see what may be expected of him in and away from the world. Thirdly, the dimension of this transition is described: a transformation which is of the nature of a finding or realization only. This chapter concludes with the question of the desirability as well as the necessity for renunciation.

A. The Text:

The Taittirīya Upanisad is regarded by tradition as one of the major texts, containing not only the 'essential' definition of Brahman but also by implication what may be described as an analysis of the nature of man. It sets forth the mode of proceeding on the way to Brahman-knowledge and then culminates in describing the ecstasy of the aspirant who has realised Brahman. An unity of subject-matter character-

ises this small Text which belongs to the Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda. It comprises of three chapters called vallīs (entwining creepers) which are divided into twelve, nine and ten sections, respectively, called anuvākas (lessons). Thus the entire Upaniṣad contains thirty-one short passages only.¹

The Taittirīya has many claims toward distinction even amongst the major Upaniṣads. It is one of the few Upaniṣads which has merited the commentary of the famous Vedic annotator Sāyanācārya (Sāyana). Sāyana has confined himself to the earlier three sections of the Vedas and has not proceeded to the fourth section which in general comprises of the Upaniṣads. The three chapters of the Taittirīyopaniṣad, the Śikṣā-vallī, the Ānanda-vallī and the Bhṛgu-vallī, actually form the seventh, eighth and the ninth chapters of the Āraṇyaka (3rd section) of the Kṛṣṇa-yajur-veda, and as such are treated by Sāyana in his Vedic commentary.

According to Sāyana, the first chapter of the Taittirīya can be called an Upaniṣad in its own right. His classification, therefore, is as follows: the Śikṣā-vallī is called sāmhītī-upaniṣad; the Ānanda-vallī and the Bhṛgu-vallī are together called the Vārūni-upaniṣad. Sāyana writes that the latter is more significant than the former, because it

¹Some sections are further divided into verses, but different editions have different numbers for these verses. I have followed the numbering given in the Gita Press edition. In the Anandāśrama edition, the second and third vallīs are divided into khandas and not anuvākas. (Sanskrit Granthāvalī, no. 12).

contains the main teaching of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. The first chapter, called Sāmhiti, discoursing on rituals and other disciplines related to Vedic study, is also important as no student may hope to come to the central teaching without qualifying himself by the study of the first vallī.²

The first vallī propounding the disciplines to be followed by students, has not been separated by any of the commentators from the main body of the Text.³ It is so integral to the structure of the Aranyaka that Sayana actually has raised it to the status of an Upaniṣad. Its importance lies in creating the groundwork for the imparting of knowledge contained in the next two chapters. Without a study of the Śikṣā-vallī, the message of the Ānanda and Bṛgu vallīs could not be understood in any appreciable measure.

The naming of the Upaniṣads or their sections, in general, are done by reference to the Teacher (as for example, Māndūkya, Kaṭha, Kauṣītaki and Śvetāśvatara) or even by the first word of the Text, (Īśa, Kena) or the name is merely descriptive (Praśna, Chhāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Mundaka, Aitereya and Kaivalya). Of all the major Upaniṣads,⁴ the Taittirīya alone

²"Tasyāmadhikārasiddhaye sāmhityāḥ prathamam paṭhitavātvāt."
Sāyana, p. 4 (Taittirīya Aranyaka, prapāṭhaka 7, anuvāka 1).

³In this connection the modern attitude of considering it irrelevant to the issue becomes self-revealing as a departure from the traditional way of understanding the Upaniṣad. Supra. Chap. V. p.160.

⁴Traditionally 13 Upaniṣads are considered major works in Vedānta; the eleven commented upon by Samkaracarya and two from which he has quoted in his writings. Out of the names given above, the Kauṣītaki and the Kaivalya do not have Samkara Bhāṣya on them. Did he follow an older tradition in his selection of the Upaniṣads, remains an open question. See for discussion Paul Deussen's The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads (Dover Paperback, 1966), p. 27ff.

has also a symbolic meaning given to its name. The legend perpetuated regarding its name states:

It is said that Saint Vaiśāmpāyana got annoyed with a prominent disciple of his, Yājñavalkya, and the guru ordered the disciple to return back all the knowledge so far taught to him. Yājñavalkya 'vomitted' the entire knowledge acquired, seeing which Vaiśāmpāyana ordered his other disciples to take the form of partridges⁵ (Tittiri birds) and consume the learnings.

The Taittirīya comes to us, therefore, shrouded in the mystery of a mythical legend yet it foreshadows the main thrust of the Text in one respect at least. The great sage Yājñavalkya, who is the knower of Brahman (Brahmavit), in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, here in the legend, on being debarred from this knowledge, goes away and by proper austerities and meditation again acquires the knowledge by his own efforts and the grace of the great god Savitā.⁶ We see a repetition of this motif in Bṛgu's anxiety for knowledge, his efforts toward it and his final success in acquiring it, in the vicinity of the Teacher as it were, but not actually 'taught' by him. The mystery of Brahman-knowledge, therefore, cannot become a subject for discourse or a part of a teaching regimen; it is a 'seeing' for those who seek and who make supreme efforts toward it and the worthwhileness alone of such efforts may be learnt from the Teacher.

⁵Discourses on Taittirīya Upanishad by Swami Chinmaya (Madras: 1955), p. 71.

⁶Viṣṇupurāna, III.5.

The most distinguishing feature of the Taittirīyopaniṣad is its opening hymn which rather unexpectedly is taken from the Rg Veda (I. 90. 9). The Taittirīya, belonging to the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda, should have been prefaced by the hymn: Sah nau avatu, etc.; instead this hymn is appended at the end of the hymn from the Rg Veda.⁷ The hymn is:

May Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman, Indra,
Brhaspati and Viṣṇu of wide strides
be propitious to us and grant us welfare
and bliss. I salute Brahman in loving
reverence. O Vāyu, I bow down to thee
in adoration. Thou verily art Brahman
perceptible. I shall declare: Thou art
the right; Thou art the true and the good.
May that Universal Being entitled Vayu
preserve me. May He preserve the teacher.
Me, may Brahman protect; my teacher, may He
protect. Om, peace, Peace, Peace.

With this opening verse of the Text we indeed come to the subject matter of the Upaniṣad, because again most unusually the peace chant itself forms the first lesson (anuvāka) of the first chapter (vallī). Samkaracarya's commentary on the chant marks it out as indicative of the subject of the Upaniṣad.

⁷In the Muktikopaniṣad is to be found the classification of the 108 Upaniṣads according to their opening peace chants. As far as the major Upaniṣads are concerned the list is as follows:

- Aitareya, Kauṣītaki beginning with 'Vanme manasi', etc., belonging to Rgveda;
- Īśa, Brhadāranyaka, beginning with 'pūrnamadah', etc., belonging to Sukla-yajurveda;
- Kātha, Tittiri, Kaivalya, Śvetaśvatara, beginning with 'Sahanavavatu', etc., belonging to Kṛṣṇa-yajur-veda.
- Kena, Chhāndogya, beginning with 'apyavantu', etc., belonging to Sāmaveda;
- Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya beginning with 'bhadram karṇebhih', etc., belonging to Atharvaveda.

⁸Taittirīyopaniṣad, Invocation verse.

Sāyana, in his Bhāṣya writes⁹ that it is meet that the gods like Mitra, Varuṇa, etc., should be propitiated by man because by seeking to acquire Brahman-knowledge he is preparing to forsake the region of the influence of the gods. Just as responsible shepherds guard their flock against night marauders like tigers, etc., so do the gods seek to preserve human beings against the possibility of the transcendence of the human condition. Gods are sustained by human beings and therefore men are zealously guarded by their spiritual protectors. Thus, unless the gods become kind and remove such obstacles as may impede the progress of the scholar, he cannot hope to strike out for freedom. By this invocatory chant, therefore, the Upaniṣad indicates that the main thrust of the Text is toward imparting brahman-knowledge alone, by which man is to proceed on a path unknown to and unchartered by worldly wisdom.

B. The Four-fold Scheme of Interpretative Analysis:

Following the classical mode of exegesis, Sāyana brings the entire textual material under the four-fold scheme of interpretative analysis known as the anubandha catuṣṭaya. The contents of a book under consideration is sought to be understood with reference to these four questions, namely, i) What is the subject of the work in question, ii) how is the work proposing to deal with the subject or how is it related

⁹Sāyana, pp. 2-8.

to its subject; iii) what can be the outcome of the work; and lastly, iv) for whom is the work meant?¹⁰

Sāyana's definition of subject is, 'the material which is not available anywhere else' (ananyalabhyo viṣaya itihi viṣayasya lakṣaṇam).¹¹ The uniqueness of the content of this Text according to him is indicated by the opening verse and hence its peculiar relevance in combining invocation with presaging the subject matter of the following sections.

To approach the question in a different way: all Upaniṣads propound the knowledge of the unity of the Self and Brahman, which is called brahmavidyā. Brahmavidyā is that supreme knowledge, "on knowing which everything else may be known". (Kasminnu bhagavo vijñāte sarvaṁ idaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati? Mund. I.1.3), This is the crucial question sought to be answered by all Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads are discourses about that 'Person' who may not be known from any other source of knowledge. It is stated in the Texts that this supreme knowledge may not be acquired through sense-experience, or by the mind by meditation, or speech by discourse.¹²

¹⁰Viṣayah kah phalam kim kah sambandhah ko'dhikārayah ityākāṁkṣanivṛtyartham catuṣṭayamudiyate. Sāyana, Introduction, p. 2.

¹¹Sāyana, Introduction, p. 2.

¹²The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know (Brahman to be such and such), hence we are not aware of any method of teaching it. (Kena 1.3.) Also,

...failing to reach that (Brahman), words, along with the mind, turnback. (Tait. II. 3. 1.)

The Upaniṣads must, therefore, play a double role. The knowing of the scriptural knowledge is the necessary penultimate step toward qualifying oneself toward the acquiring of the transcendent (parā vidyā) illumination by which all else is lighted up. Any ground which gives rise to a knowledge of the good must also yield to a knowledge of its absence as evil. Therefore, scriptural knowledge which brings about a sense of the duties to be performed in the world, the virtues to be inculcated, the obligations to be discharged the rights to be enjoyed, etc., must also indicate the way out of this discursiveness toward the unity which being realised all fragmentations stand dissolved. To talk about this fulfilment and man's eligibility for it is the subject matter for all Upaniṣads and especially so for the Taittirīyopaniṣad. In the Taittirīya is given the details of both aspects of Brahman-knowledge and this is indicated by the opening verse, which is, therefore, crucial in its impart.

The question of subject-matter, thus, must be understood to have been settled by the analysis of the opening verse itself. This is also the reason why the commentators have treated it as the first lesson of the first chapter of the Text. The peace-chant of the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda which opens all other Texts is also given which confirms the interpretation that the verse from Rgveda is to be understood especially with reference to the gods who guard the affairs of earthly beings.

The second question regarding the fruit of the study of the Upaniṣad must now be considered. The Text does not promise an enhancement of worldly

goods, or success in human affairs. It is, in fact, pointing away from the usual preoccupations which hold the attention of human beings. It is not reasonable to expect anyone to forsake the concrete world of pleasure and some pain no doubt, for the sake of a nebulous region of uncertainty. Sāyana here refers to the very beautiful śloka from Muṇḍakopaniṣad which has been a favourite quote for commentators down the centuries, as indicating the fruit to be achieved:¹³ "The knot of the heart is penetrated, all doubts are resolved, all bondages are destroyed, on seeing Him who is here and beyond."¹⁴

The word 'knot' suggests recalcitrance; a problem which stays and is not amenable to the methodology of whence and wherefore. In general, if a problem can be traced to its cause, even if the removal of the cause is not possible, a lessening of its power for unhappiness is experience. A knot, however, does not denote any concrete problem as such, but a tightening of the chords of the heart in hurt which is unreasoning and inarticulate but nevertheless, real. This knot of the heart is surrounded by doubts which feed and sustain it. How is this knot to be overcome -- not by slow unravelling but by the piercing of it to the core so that it stands annulled. On seeing Brahman, all doubts disperse, just as the shining sun puts to rout the rain clouds by which the sky was overcast.

¹³ Sāyana, p. 9.

¹⁴ bhidyate hṛdayagranthiścchidyante sarvasaṁśayah kṣīyante
casya karmani tasmindrste parāvare. Muṇḍakopaniṣad II.2.8.

It is to be noted here that the Text chosen by commentators does not say that everything will vanish as māyā. Then comes the consideration of the third point regarding the structure of a book under study, namely, how does the work propose to bring about the fruit promised to the reader. In other words, how is the book related to the subject matter in hand. To take the definition of this requirement (anubandha) also from Sāyana: "The relation between knowledge and action is that of the end and the means thereof." ¹⁵

The subject of the Upanisad being Brahma-knowledge or the knowledge of the unity of the self with Brahman, the yearning for this knowledge can be awakened by actions performed in accordance with scriptural injunctions. The Vedantic tradition of Samkaracarya maintains clearly that the continuity between action in the world and knowledge of Brahman lies in the former, creating a situation where the wish to know Brahman may awaken. Paradoxically therefore, the relation is non-existent because the condition must become nothing after the effect is in evidence, and this is how it is brought out by the Upanisad under consideration here, according to Samkaracarya's rendering of the Text.

Samkaracarya very clearly classifies the possible points of view which may be put forward by the interrogator as to the sufficiency of action, for acquiring ultimate felicity. It may be said that (i) karma alone may bring about this ultimate state, or (ii) karma aided by jñāna knowledge, or (iii) that karma and jñāna (knowledge) together may do so,

¹⁵ Jñānakāndasya karmakāndena saha sādhyasādhanabhāvalakṣaṇaḥ sambandhaḥ. Sāyana, p. 18.

or even (iv) knowledge aided by karma or (v) lastly by jñāna alone.¹⁶

In summation of Samkaracarya's arguments, which are stated in other Upaniṣad-bhāṣyas also in great detail and in painstaking meeting of every point raised by the pupil, it may be said:¹⁷ Liberation is beginningless and endless and all inclusive. It is not a state to be brought about at the cessation of a process. The Self is eternally liberated. It does not know that this is so; therefore, knowledge alone sets him free from his ignorance. The 'Real' can be known only and not brought into existence in the form of a new accomplishment. Liberation, therefore, does not answer to any aspect of karma (action) because by karma we mean precisely what is capable of bringing about changes, namely, beginnings, modifications, transformations and destructions. Liberation is ever beyond these modes of process; even a touch of karma, therefore, cannot be allowed to remain in the dimension of yearning which is directed toward knowledge of the Self. Action cannot bring about something which is already there; on the contrary, it can actually facilitate its non-revelation by drawing attention away from it.

What, then, is the role of moral disciplines in life, which the first chapter of Taittirīyopaniṣad sets forth in great detail for the pupil and which is conscientiously and insightfully annotated upon by Samkaracarya?

¹⁶Samkarabhasya on Tait. I.11.4.

¹⁷Kena Up. Bh., Introduction and IV.1., and Īsopaniṣadbhāṣya Introduction.

The place of dutiful action in the world is of supreme importance. This can be seen from the fact that all aspects of such an education are incorporated in the scriptures. Whatever concerns human life is not extraneous to Vedic literature; therefore, the pupils are to be taught properly in the ways of conduct that will be demanded of them by the world in which they will be required to live.

The first chapter of Taittirīyopaniṣad is called Śikṣā-vallī, that is, the chapter in which are treated such matters as must be learnt by the pupil for an adequate education, namely, the rules of correct pronunciation, without which the real meanings of words may not be appreciated; the categories of relationships which obtain in the physical world; then the supreme principle 'Om' which symbolises all reality. Through these teachings the pupil is instructed in the ways of acquiring all enjoyments from progeny to the highest heavens and all qualities of the head and heart conducive to a good and prosperous living in the world (I, 1-IV).

Thereupon the meditation on Brahman are taught. (I.V.VII) Brahman is described in many ways as subject of meditation and also the symbol Om (I.VIII). All these lessons are in the form of aphorisms; it can be understood easily that here the guidance of a knowledgeable teacher is indispensable. The ninth lesson talks about the over-riding concerns which must impel the student: as, for example, righteousness (ṛtam), learning (svādhyāya), truth (satyam), austerity (tapas), control of inner and outer organs, duties in the world, entertainment of the stranger as guest, social good conduct, family life to be propagated,

and its sustenance till the birth of a grandson (i.e., ensuring the continuity of family life).

The tenth lesson describing the ecstasy of a man of realization is in the form of a mantra to be borne in mind, so that the world can be kept in its proper perspective. In the eleventh lesson the sphere of activity is described in the detailing of duties to the student who is about to leave the academy of the teacher and take up his position in the world. This is one of the longer lessons and is spoken to the student on the eve of his departure by the teacher. The very first injunction is that truth is to be spoken and practiced, no deviation from truth must take place; righteousness must be cultivated. He must discharge his obligations to his teacher (before entering the world) and also to his family by getting married. Carelessness in anything is not allowable; without being cruel to others, he must observe the right of self-protection; he must discharge all duties to the house-holder; be specially respectful toward his mother, his father and his teacher; the guest is to be honoured; all actions which are praiseworthy are to be resorted to but not others and so on.

The lesson then lays down what can be called a remarkable criterion for ethical judgements: it says that when in doubt, look about yourself and see how good men of the highest integrity of character, the highly respected brahmans "who are not cruel", behave, and take your cue from them. The keynote of this lesson in good conduct is, therefore, a kindness toward all and the inculcation of a spirit of rendering service to those to whom it is due. Even for "accused people" the same rule holds good.

It does not speak of meeting out justice to wrongdoers, but again the criterion is to be guided by the judgement of those who are well versed in such matters and who are good and righteous and not cruel and are desirous of acquiring merit for their actions (deliberations in this case). Morality, therefore, seems squarely based upon precept rather than one's own evaluations of a situation.

It conjures up a picture of a well-ordered society, a society which is free to follow in the pursuit of all the agreeable aims of life and also to devote itself to the acquiring of learning and wisdom. Even so, there is the unmistakable refrain or an exhortation toward a higher life. The śikṣā-vallī concludes with the opening peace chant as its twelfth lesson. If we are to be guided by Samkaracarya, and the tradition of exegesis he started, we must follow him in saying that the world which is taught in this vallī is to be taken as a halting place, a caravansara', and not the ultimate sphere of human achievement. We cannot escape this conclusion because to the commentary on the eleventh anuvāka itself he attaches his most devastating arguments against the possibility of action leading to the knowledge of Brahman. Action can accomplish and achieve every kind of happiness from the satisfaction of the senses to the felicity of the highest heavens; but this entire range of values still belongs to the realm of ignorance, because the Self as Brahman is not known. Unity cannot be polarised into any kind of duality, doer and the done by knower and the known, enjoyer and the enjoyed or the experiencer and the experienced. To rid the Self of these falsities

which give rise to doubts, sorrows and fear of deprivations, knowledge itself must prevail, knowledge which is real and which is of the nature of Bliss and on the occurrence of which, nothing else remains to be done, known, acquired or feared. And hence the fact of the first chapter concluding with the opening chant as its twelfth lesson. As we see, this bracketting of the teaching regarding the world by the invocation for Brahman-knowledge, separates karma from jñāna as a means thereof but establishes the sphere of action as the take-off point for that trans-natural dimension which is only thus tenuously related to it. The book then aims at dealing with the subject-matter by establishing this crucial discontinuity.

The last question to be answered is, for whom is the work made available? Sāyana following Samkara says: the seeker of knowledge is addressed here and not the man who is engaged in activity.¹⁸ The candidate for liberation is one who realises that he must be seized with the yearning for freedom to the exclusion of all else which determines his behaviour. Since, ordinarily nobody is thus seized, or alternately, everybody although entertaining reservations is open to conviction, it may be said that in principle, the Upaniṣad is meant for all who care to follow its lessons toward Self-realization.

The tradition of Vedanta, maintains that a man possessed of 1) the power of discrimination (to distinguish between the real and the

¹⁸Sayana, p. 26.

transient), 2) detachment, 3) the 6 treasures of good conduct, (quietude, restraint, aloofness, fortitude, reverence and certitude) and 4) the yearning for liberation, is qualified to enter into an enquiry toward Brahman-knowledge. The natural theatre of activity for man is thus the preparing ground for bringing about the state of yearning; as such all are equally qualified (or not qualified, as the case may be) for asking the crucial question regarding the message of the Upanisad. The exclusivity demanded here, pertains to human nature as such; to choose the trans-natural, forsaking the security of the natural is to be very peculiar indeed; but this 'peculiarity' is sought to be made a desirable option for those who wish to travel toward the realisation of the ultimate aim of human life.

Summing up the four-fold scheme (anubandha catuṣṭaya) it may be said that the unity of Self and Brahman which is expounded in the Upanisad, is done so by showing up the utter disassociation of the Self from the determinations of its worldly experiences; the result of this discrimination is supreme happiness which man is ever in search of and this being so the Upanisad is addressed to all who may choose to attend to its message.

C. The discourse on the nature of man.

The Ānanda-valli opens with the statement: 'brahma vid āpnoti param' (the knower of Brahman attains the supreme) and goes on to define 'param' as 'satyam' (real) 'jñānam' (consciousness and 'anantam' (infinite).

The teacher in his exegesis here, is held up by the first crucial question, namely, how can the infinite Brahman be attained by man who is definitely finite. To this question is addressed the description of man as nothing but the eternal Self hidden (self) by the many layers of functional identifications with which he is ordinarily preoccupied. The Self is nothing but Brahman itself and by the word 'attainment' is meant Self-realisation.

The Text in five lessons (anuvākas) describes the nature of man in the imagery of a bird.¹⁹ A bird always signifies a creature who is able to bring together earth and heaven by its flight; a creature of the world, yet which is not bound totally to it. It seems, therefore, almost natural for man to be described in the structural likeness of a bird. The description is from the most gross elements in man's make-up to its most subtle elements, but all are of equal importance because it is Brahman who is manifest in all names and forms which make-up the world of our experience. The Text states:

From that Brahman, which is the Self,
was produced space. From space emerged air.
From air was born fire. From fire was
created water. From water sprang up earth.
From earth were born herbs. From the herbs
was produced food. From food was born man.
That man, such as he is, is a product of the
essence of food; Of him this, indeed, is the
head; this is the southern side; this is the
northern side; this is the Self; this is the
supporting tail.²⁰

¹⁹See also *Infra*, p. 267 ff.

²⁰Tait. II.1,1.

Describing the gross form of flesh and blood, the Text proceeds, in the same manner to describe the subtle forms of the vital air which is found to be breathing in the body (II.ii); the mind which gives sentience to the entire body (II.iii); knowledge (vijñāna) which permeates the mind of man (II.iv) and lastly the innermost sheath of pleasure which man knows as joyousness, enjoyments, felicity, ecstasy and bliss (II.v) which is the ultimate condition rendering it possible to live, to think and to know.²¹

These are the five sheaths which hide the self from knowing itself as Brahman. It identifies itself with its body which is sustained by the food it ingests and food in turn consumes the body it has created. The gross body sustains the body of the vital airs which again supports the mental body. Without the mind the knowing faculties could not function and in the knowledge structure resides the subtlest of the requirements which go toward creating the conditions which are peculiar to human life. To strive for joy and to seek to avoid pain makes the human being belong to the world of all creatures and also sets him apart from his fellow beings, because he alone is capable of actualising the promise of joy, a future in joyousness or the possibility of a pure joy, unalloyed by sorrow. This, then is the supreme incentive (pravartaka) toward the trans-natural region of Textual discourses.²²

²¹Who indeed could live, (and) who indeed could breathe, were there no delight in (this vast and spreading) sky? Tait. II.7.1.

²²Sureśvara Vārtikam, II.31.

The self is to be taught discrimination between Itself and the not-self. The Self is so identified with the body, breath, mind and consciousness that it understands the entire world as given to experiences of the I or ego-consciousness. The 'I' knows itself to be short or tall, black or fair, etc., as living and willing, as feeling various emotions and as knowing and striving in the world for fruits of actions. Just as the logic of the "moon on the bough" is used for indicating the presence of an all but invisible moon, the five sheaths of the Self are pointed out in order to reveal the presence of the self-evident Self by a progressive disassociation from the false identities.²³

Paradoxically, the five sheaths which effectively keep the self, as it were, preoccupied on these planes, are also the conditions which give man his precedence over other living beings. By engaging in karma, he is able to acquire that state of mental attitude which propels him toward the yearning for knowledge.²⁴ His experience of happiness in the world sets him on the path to a greater and greater happiness. No other fruit can work as sufficient incentive for man for this purpose.

²³Śuresvara Vārtikam, II.232. The attention is first drawn to the object which is clearly visible, a branch of a tree and it is said "look carefully, the new moon is just above the branch". Needless to say that there is no connection between the moon and the tree.

²⁴Samkarabhāṣya, Tait. II, 1,1.
Samkaracharya cites the Aitareya Āraṇyaka text (II.iii,2,5) 'In man alone is the self most manifest. He speaks what he knows; he sees what he knows; he knows what will happen tomorrow; he knows the higher and lower worlds; he aspires to achieve immortality through mortal things. He is thus endowed (with discrimination) while other beings have consciousness of hunger and thirst only'. (Swami Gambirananda's translation Eight Upanisads, Vol. 1, p. 3 4.

Samkaracarya's exegesis of these Textual lessons follows a pattern which leads on to a demarcation of the first chapter of the Upaniṣad from the other two. In the first chapter, the text has with great clarity defined man's duties in the world, given him guidelines on good conduct and described to him the innermost structures of his nature which draws him apart from the realm of other beings and sets him in a class by himself as the being who may inquire into the nature of the highest truth, namely Brahman. It is true that man seeks happiness; Brahman being of the nature of bliss, is the natural quest for man's ultimate fulfilment. The question which must be answered here, is why should this quest for Brahman-knowledge, require man to engage in the process of cancellation of the five planes of existence before he can realize the self-evident Self.

D. Renunciation as the pre-condition of Realization.

In other words one may ask, why should Bliss be related to renunciation and not simply to a deepening of the experience of ānanda which is already at the core of human experience. Samkaracarya, however, is clear on this point:

The Upaniṣads are teaching the highest aim in life for man; the teaching is about knowledge of Brahman. They aim at freeing man from bondage to the world....
(Tait. I.11).

Śureśvara writes more uncompromisingly:

The renunciation of all action is the only means for liberation. Brahman is known

only by those who have renounced all.
For the renunciate alone is the
realisation of the highest.²⁵

The greatest opposition to this statement comes from within the tradition itself which may be supposed to be drawing its support from the first chapter of the Taittirīyopaniṣad. The five-sheath (pañca-kośa) analysis of the human condition, seems to support the injunctions laid on man for the living of a fruitful and useful life in the world. If Brahman is itself manifest in the succeeding planes of gross to subtle material, then it can certainly be realised as the highest God (Paramātmān) pervading all creation. In fact how is it at all possible to depart the realm of Brahman? In the language of the traditionalists, which is summarised by Anandagiri in his gloss on this section of the Vārtika, it is said in effect: Injunctions about action is stated in the earlier part of the Vedas and so are injunctions given for pursuing the path of knowledge in the later portions (Vedānta). From this a transition alone is called for and not a cancellation for the sake of liberation which may be attained by the man of knowledge following the precepts of the Vedas.²⁶

With the question we come to the heart of the matter. Indian philosophy is not identical with Samkaracarya's philosophy; Samkaracarya is not acceptable to Mimāṃsakas (those who stay with the injunctions regarding (ritual) action in the world in the Vedas), on the one hand and

²⁵Śureśvara Vārtikam, II.10. tyāg eva hi sarveṣāṃ mokṣasādhanaṃ uttamam
tyagataiva hi tatjñeyam tyaktuh pratyakparam,

²⁶Anandagiri on Śureśvara Vārtikam, II.10-16.

dvaitavādins (those who would stay with the crucial difference between God and creation allowing it to determine all attitudes) on the other. In Samkaracarya himself one cannot detect any deviation from the position of absolute cancellation of action. Śureśvara brings out this position in Samkaracarya very clearly when he states:

No vedic injunctions are to be treated as dogma; they are for the removal of ignorance only regarding the means of attainments of the aims of human life. That heaven and other such felicities are to be aspired for one already knows, the means thereof only are pointed out in the scriptures, because without such knowledge, man would not know, how to achieve heaven. Similarly in the Vedānta portion of the Veda, the identity of Brahman and Atman is pointed out, which cannot be known by any other source of knowledge. The Text saying 'Try to know that Brahman' (Tait. II.1) is an incentive toward the acquiring of that knowledge and not an injunction which must be obeyed.²⁷

When we come to the second chapter of the Upanisad, we are to see clearly, according to this tradition, that the five sheaths are the different planes of activity which make up the world of experience for man. Every human being identifies himself with his body and behaves accordingly; so is he identified with life, without which the body is nothing; both body and life are made meaningful only by the mind's activity. All three are within the scope of vijñāna or the agent-sheath. The innermost sheath of bliss is the enjoyer sheath. The ego which feels, knows wills and enjoys moves from plane to plane; this succession is the 'cave'²⁸

²⁷ Śureśvara Vārtikam. II,16-17.

²⁸ The Pañcadaśī, by Vidyāraṇya. III.1 & 2.

which hides the 'ātman' (Self) effectively in Self-forgetfulness amidst all these ego activities.

By naming all possible fields of experience, attention is directed toward that underlying principle which remains aloof from all these diversifications. As stated earlier, by the logic of 'moon on the bough' the presence of atman is indicated as that to which all these activities refer. Nobody experiences or knows of anything beyond the bliss of deep sleep; yet, asks, the Pañcadaśī "who can deny that by which these are experienced?"²⁹ The ātman is unknown, not because it does not exist but precisely because of its self-luminous nature. How should that by which everything else is known, be known itself? Only the total abeyance of the not-self would leave ātman shining by its own light. The entire region of 'you' (yusmat) covered by the five sheaths is totally other to the 'I' (aśmat) and as such only by complete dissipation of itself is capable of revealing the presence of ātman as the one without a second.³⁰

The five sheaths are the region, therefore, of ignorance. The Self wrongly thinks itself as the doer, enjoyer, etc. The Upanisad by stating that 'the knower of Brahman attains the highest' inculcates a desire to know.³¹ It is nothing more than an indicator toward a search for the ultimate reality. It is a pointer to the fact of the finitude

²⁹The Pañcadaśī, op. cit., III.12.

³⁰Sureśvara Vārtikam. II. 234-235.

³¹Ibid., II.27-31.

of the I-consciousness. The ego-consciousness in juxtaposition with the promise of Infinitude, must face the fact of its ignorance and a doubt about the real nature of its own experience of the world. The possibility of transcendence is meaningful to those only who are desirous of liberation. To desire liberation means; an awareness of the state of bondage and ignorance. To awaken this awareness is the aim of the Text, so that the seeker may start on the path of enquiry. Without the Upaniṣads, how should man know that he is in bondage and must learn to see through the five veils of ignorance in order to achieve liberation.

The crucial point of the discourse regarding the five sheaths lies in the fact of its including bliss as one of the veils. Infinity repels any kind of fragmentation; the highest achievements within the realm of finitude will be a pale shadow of the 'experience of the fulness of Brahman'. In other words, the five-veil analysis would be pointless, if it is not taken to signify a concealment of Reality. According to Samkaracarya the concealing itself could not be known without the Upanisadic statement regarding the ultimate nature of Brahman. If the Infinite is to be attained by the Self, then the Self itself is nothing but the Infinite in ignorant forgetfulness of its true nature. The rest of the discourse on the definition of Brahman and the mode of approaching the question of its realisation is in order with the explication of man being in ignorance of his true nature. The separation, therefore, of the spheres of action and knowledge is by virtue of this very nature of man. The I-consciousness is the doer and enjoyer and knower; as such it is aware of its own limitation. In paying heed to the message of the Upaniṣads, he is made aware of the possibility of transcendence. Since

'an experiencing' (direct knowledge) of Brahman, will bring about the dissolution of limitations, this is what he wills, when he accepts the desirability of aspiring for bliss. The language of will in this context has a limited use only. Since the ego-consciousness knows itself as the doer, it must know itself as the renouncer as well. The world of praxis gives meaning to both extremes in the range of human activity. A loosening of the ties of the world, therefore, must characterise the aspirant for bliss. The question, here, is not about the world, or even whether to renounce it or not. This is a meaningless question to raise in this context. The world actually cannot be renounced; it can only lose its significance for the aspirant for bliss. Renunciation is only in the nature of a waiting upon the possibility of an 'experience', on the occurrence of which, nothing else will remain to be attained.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BEING AS BLISS

The Self that is subtler than the subtle and greater than the great is lodged in the heart of (every) creature. A desireless man sees that glory of the Self by the grace of the Ultimate One and thereby he becomes free from all sorrow.

Taittirīya-āraṇyaka 10.10

(Sāyana-bhāṣya)

CHAPTER SEVEN

BEING AS BLISS

A. What Can be Known About Brahman?

This is a crucial question, because many important statements regarding Brahman, in the Upaniṣads seem carefully emptied of cognitive value. As a matter of fact, a plethora of paradoxes can be culled from the Texts regarding the nature of Brahman:

Remaining Stationary, It outruns all other runners.

Īsopaniṣad 4.

That moves, That does not move; That is far off,

That is very near; That is inside all, and

That is outside. Īsopaniṣad 5.

It is known to him to whom It is unknown; he does not know to whom It is known. It is unknown to those who know well, and known to those who do not know.

Kathopaniṣad II.3.

While-sitting, It travels far away; while sleeping,

It goes everywhere. Kathopaniṣad I. 2-21.

If we work with the idea that these paradoxes are not aimed at creating confusion but only to break the mould of rational thought

with which we are familiar, then we begin to understand the significance of this pattern of writing. The language of paradox seems to give a wider horizon to the region of discourse than is possible by other linguistic structures. The individual is required to stretch his imagination to the utmost limit, and yet at the end he finds himself in confrontation with a mystery only. Under the rubric of this usage of language, which is for a veiling rather than a revealing, may be classed all those passages which speak of the unknowability of Brahman by any scale of human reckoning:

Failing to reach (Brahman) words, along with mind
turn back --- Tait. II. 4.1.

This self is not attained through study, nor through
the intellect, nor through much hearing.

Mund. III. 2.34.

The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind.

Kena I.3.

It may be supposed that those Texts help to tighten the veil of impenetrability bruited by the paradoxical statements; but it is also possible to consider these difficult passages as annotations to the paradoxes. Their relevance should not be seen to lie in annihilating thought but in providing it with a challenge toward a different kind of effort. The language of a 'beyond', however negatively stated, does indicate a way; it affirms a continuity with one's measure of understanding. These passages hold together,

the hiddenness of Brahman together with its 'speakability'. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that all Upanisadic discourses, in general, seem aimed at falling short of penetrating the veil of mystery which surrounds the subject of the conversation.

The necessity for an insistence on the factor of veiling arises because man does not know that he does not know. How should a man, who is sleeping, know that he is asleep? We know ourselves as agents in the world, as knowers and as enjoyers as well; we do not know that these are layers of not-self of that Self which in its true state of being is one with Brahman;¹ that is to say, a state of realization of unity with Brahman would be a state of liberation. Short of that, ignorance is all encompassing; it stretches across the entire spectrum of human understanding. It pervades the entire sphere of human activity and endeavour. In order to create an opening in this all-enveloping state of ignorance, the Upanisads use the strange language of paradoxes and 'unknowability'. This language, naturally, could not be used for any discussion pertaining to the world. Its aim is to loosen the meaning from words and dislodge their hold on our minds; it raises the dialogue to a trans-natural sphere, whence a questioning into the nature of the aupāṇiṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ (The Being spoken of in the Upanisads alone) could arise.

It becomes clear that with the veiling of the subject of Brahman, we also come to the awareness of the irrelevance of the

¹Svayam cātma param brahmetyuktam. Samkarabhasya Tait. I. 1.1.

world's sphere of activities. The Upanisadic language aims at creating the requisite attitude for a relinquishing of the familiar structures of support with which we hold on to the world. To ask a question regarding the nature of Brahman, is already to renounce the world a little; or, in other words, distancing from the world alone qualifies a seeker of truth to engage in any dialogue concerning Brahman.

B. The Desire for Knowledge

The meaning of renunciation, then, is burning desire for knowledge which cannot be quenched by anything short of that realization, and on the occurrence of which nothing else remains to be achieved anymore. This desire is positive, it is not a negative disillusionment with the world; it is evoked by a glimmering of an idea that perhaps something more needs to be understood of the Self than is seen by its activities in the world. This desire to know, this yearning to overcome the state of ignorance, cannot be compared to an intellectual curiosity about the nature of things, because the latter does not demand a renunciation of all other props to human existence. Moreover, no specific pattern of behaviour or station in life, no age, or sex, or state of learning is especially related to the awakening of the yearning for knowledge nor is it held as a bar to knowledge. The world, in short, must be set at naught by the person who would unlock the door to the mystery of the dialogue between Teacher and pupil. Nārada², the celestial being, the old

²Chh. VII. 1.1-5.

king Brhadṛatha³, the young boy Naciketā⁴ the six ascetic pupils of the sage Pippalada⁵ and Maitreyi⁶ the beloved wife of the sage Yājñavalkya, amongst others, have figured in the Upaniṣads as interlocuters, whose questions have brought forth the much treasured and closely guarded teaching about Brahman.

From this perspective we see that the role of the desire for knowledge is crucial in the context of the Upaniṣads. It may be said that an incipient awareness of the veil, brought to the forefront of the enquiring mind becomes an yearning for true knowledge. In this context alone we may appreciate the unusual linguistic structures of Upaniṣadic statements which are not mere pedagogical devices for awakening ordinary curiosity. The questioning, the Upaniṣads seek to awake, has to do with the deepest yearning of the Self which is required to be in evidence before any conversation regarding the Ultimate Reality can be initiated. The paradox, and the 'unknowable' Texts, by helping to stir the hidden yearning for knowledge in man, become indicative of the dimension of grace (prasāda) without which not even a minimal sense of separation from the not-self can take place:

³Maitreyi Upaniṣad, I. 1-15.

⁴Kaṭha. I. 3 ff.

⁵Prasna Upaniṣad Iff.

⁶Br. II. IV. 1-14.

He is to be attained only by the one whom the (Self) chooses. To such a one the Self reveals his own nature. 6

The main point which emerges clearly from a reading of the Texts is that Brahman-knowledge is a response to a seeking, a seeking, a seeking which transcends the demands of the world. This can be seen from the initial reluctance on the part of the Teachers to impart their knowledge unless convinced of the pupil's dissassociation with the world. In some cases the pupils are held off by promises of earthly riches,⁷ and only those who persistently return again and again to the posing of the crucial question regarding ātman and Brahman, do in the end qualify themselves for enlightenment.⁸

The world, then, is not antagonistic but only irrelevant to the issue. Liberation cannot be 'brought about', 'modified', changed or 'destroyed' etc. It can be realized as truth only. There are differences in the qualitative and quantitative evaluations of actions because such gradations obtain in the feelings of joys and sorrows which are related to these actions. No questions regarding willing, knowing or feeling can arise where a measureless plenum of joyous reality is being posited by the Śrutis. Put in different words, it may be said, that two different orders of separation can be

⁶Yamevaiṣa vṛnute, tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛnute tanūm svām. Kaṭha. I. 2.23.

⁷Naciketā in Kathopanīṣad, I. 1 ff.

⁸The story of six ascetics is related in the Prāśnopanīṣad I. 1. ff, who are required to abide in the forest retreat for lengths of time before the Teacher undertook to answer the questions put by them.

distinguished: One is to regard the world as trivial and discard it; the other is to see through it as the not-self and thus experience an inwardness of the erstwhile outgoing faculties. This 'trans-natural' movement, is the beginning of that yearning for knowledge which takes its form in a mind denuded of other desires. Liberation cannot be brought about by the mind, but to the sphere of willing belongs the purification of the mind. The movement which is called yearning for knowledge, stirs in an unclouded and uncluttered mind alone. Action in the world can only prolong the world; it cannot suddenly reveal Brahman in the world because the world is precisely what veils Brahman. Knowledge alone must rise to the challenge of the mystery so carefully delineated and preserved by the Upaniṣads. It may be said, that the main aim of the Upaniṣadic paradox and other difficult passages, therefore, is not to give information regarding Brahman but to bring home to man the realization of his own state of living within the shadow of the veil. 'Ignorance' after all has no other legitimacy than as the awareness of a veiling which needs to be removed.

C. The Mode of Imparting Knowledge of Brahman

If it is accepted that the first stage in the acquiring of Brahman-knowledge is an enquiry which is capable of evoking a response from a Teacher, then the next question is, how is the Teacher to impart a knowledge which is stated to be almost beyond human

intelligibility. A variety of procedures are to be found in the Upanisads. Every Teacher has his own way of imparting instruction. It can even be seen that those who are not alert enough to persist after, perhaps, the first lesson, are not prevented from resuming their previous positions in life, well satisfied with the little knowledge that they had acquired. In this mutuality of the Teacher and the taught, the fact which emerges clearly is the spirit of freedom which permeates the dialogues. Unless the relevance of the knowledge sought to be imparted is acceptable to the pupil as such, he does not qualify as a pupil.

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad epitomises in its small compact form all that has been said so far. As we have seen, it begins by describing the range of activities, worthy of a good man wishing to lead a prosperous life in the world. The point of the Text is that there is a second chapter as well as a third, and so also it is with man's life. Men desire, all along, happiness but this is so fragmented in the world as frequently not to be worthwhile at all. It is to be seen easily that the best of worlds is not enough for the satiety of man's desires which are legion. This is so because the desires themselves are seeds which give rise to other desires. How then to contain these waves of ceaseless activity which could prove to be ultimately defeating in sheer boredom, if nothing else.

To this man of unending desire for happiness the Upanisad promises an all-encompassing joy which being attained, he will be

in possession in its entirety of all that there is; and thus alone can be free from the possibility of any break in the continuous state of happiness which he desires (The knower of Brahman attains the supreme).⁹ The question here is, how should the plausibility of this 'promise' be made clear to the pupil? Samkaracarya writes that to be established in one's own very nature (Self) is after all supreme felicity, and this is easily accepted by everyone. Recovery of one's own Self is Self-realization, since the Self itself is Brahman which is to be known.¹⁰ The enquiry into Brahman-knowledge, then, belongs closer to the heart of the seeker than was perhaps realized earlier.

Since the nature of one's own Self is to be understood, first the Upanisad engages the attention of the pupil toward the hiddenness of this Self under sheaths of extraneous coverings. The veiling of the Self consists in its identifying itself with the gross and fine functions which reflect the light from within. The ego-consciousness thinks, it has a body, a life, a mind, an intellect and that it enjoys things of the world. This identification is the life of ignorance which needs to be penetrated one by one,

⁹Tait. II. 1-1.

¹⁰svātmanyavasthānam paraprāptih -- Samkarabhāsyā Tait. I. 1.1.

because the Self in reality lies beyond the reach of the five sheaths.¹¹

The graded description of the nature of man shows up his range of activities in the world. While he is actively employed in the world, his spiritual aspirations are in abeyance, and the Self lies hidden in the innermost recesses of the heart, designated for that reason as a 'cave' (guhā). The Self is the ultimate referent for all activities, physical, mental or intellectual, undertaken by man. To the extent it is disengaged, the mind reflects its peace and tranquility. We can see a daily example of this in the condition of deep sleep from which a man awakes refreshed and happy. In deep sleep, the Self shines in its own light just like the lamp in the banquet hall when the party is over and it is emptied of all participants.¹²

¹¹Tait. II. 2-7. It is generally acknowledged that the major theme of the entire Śruti literature is to state the unity of ātman (Self) and brahman. This is considered exemplified in the four Great Statements (mahāvākyas) occurring in the four Vedas. These are the key concepts which irradiate the meaning of the Upanisads in which they are located. In the dialogues where these statements occur, the 'thou' of the pupil (or alternately the 'I' of the seeker) is sought to be unified with the 'That' of all discourses, namely with brahman, which is named as such in three of the statements. It may be said that, the analysis of the five sheaths (kośas) in the Taittirīya Upanisad is a thematization of the 'tvam' principle of the Text That Thou Art (tattvamasi). *Chh. 17.10.3*

¹²The Pañcadaśī, X. 11.

To the pupil must be conveyed the idea of the constant presence of the Self, although it is not obviously known as such to him. Sheath-analysis (kośa) was initiated with a view to drawing his attention away from the gross toward the subtle. He is familiarised with the idea of a separation of the Self from its planes of activities. Where, then, does the Self reside? To this question the Text says: In the cave of the great sky (Tait. II. 1-1.)

According to Samkaracarya, the word 'cave' (guhā) indicates a hiding of diversifications;¹³ it denotes therefore the intellect which hides the triad of knower-known-knowledge or alternately, the two disparate aims of human life, namely, enjoyment and liberation. It is the intellect which is the subtlest covering which hides effectively the Self from the egoity of man. This 'cave' is situated in the great sky of the heart, so the Self may be said to reside in the innermost recesses of ones being itself.

The imagery of the cave is frequently used in the Upanisads. The word evokes an image of hiddenness; of not being available to superficial perceptions. This idea is utilized where the Self is being especially described. We find the following passage in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad:

That great birthless Self which identified with the intellect and is in the midst of the organs, lies in the space that is within the heart. It is the controller of all, the lord of all, the ruler of all. It does not grow better through good work

¹³Samkarabhasya on Tait. II. 1.1.

nor worse through bad work.¹⁴

Samkaracarya, commenting on this passage, writes that the space within the lotus of the heart is the seat of the intellect. The Self is said to be residing in the intellect, that is the space within the heart. The usage of the term 'space' opens up before the mind the idea of the Self as boundless and etheral and all-pervading, which is not realized as such because the intellect imposes its own limitations on it. Just as the space within the pot is identical with the space outside it and is one with it in its pervasiveness of the entire world, so the Self hidden in the 'cave' of the heart is one with Brahman, the one Reality which excludes nothing at all.

Another well-known passage makes this idea quite clear:

That which is (designated) brahman, even that is this ākāśa outside the body. That which is the ākāśa inside the body, even that is this ākāśa within the (lotus of the) heart. This brahman is all-filling and unchanging. He who knows (brahman) this, gets all filling and unchanging prosperity.¹⁵

In these, and such other statements,¹⁶ we may see that the heart is given a crucial meaning; it is in the nature of a threshold,

¹⁴Br. IV. iv. 22.

¹⁵Chh. Up. III.12.9.

¹⁶"The Self is surely in the heart", Praśna Upaniṣad III. 6. "Prajna is in the space within the heart", Māndūkya-Karika, I. 2. Also in Kaṭha Upaniṣad I. 2.12.

which allows one to enter, or it may also mark the limit which precludes entry. Following Samkaracarya in his commentaries on these various passages, the imagery of the heart as the Self of the Supreme may be construed in this manner:

D. The Last Barrier to Knowledge:

It is not at all remarkable that man should identify himself with his physical body and the principle of life which animates it. Without life the body would be an inert mass of matter. It is also possible to see that the mind controls or indulges the impulses arising out of the fact of this life pulsating through our body. Further, the intellect can contemplate the graded levels of this unity which is called a human being and which we know as ourselves. The body arises out of the gross elements of nature and the vital functions are their subtle forms. The intellect is the most subtle and in being able to reflect the light coming from within, is seen to be functioning independently. Just as we ascribe the glow to the moon which actually comes from the Sun, we mistakenly think of the 'I' as an entity by itself. Beyond these four levels of existence lies the plane of the heart which enjoys happiness and also has to suffer sorrows. This condition especially makes us vulnerably human; it is our weakness as well as our strength. It can be presumed that gods and other celestial beings do not suffer or enjoy as we do. The heart then

is the gateway to the sphere of sorrows and enjoyments, accomplishments and disappointments and all other polarities which make up the universe of our living in the world. Yet it is also the threshold to the other dimension of life, because it is intolerant of sorrow and is forever searching for happiness. It is stated in the scriptures that Brahman is of the nature of delight itself:

That is of the flavour of delight alone, a taste of which makes a man happy; it is that delight which radiates happiness through everyone. ¹⁷

The heart in search of happiness creates the last barrier as it were, to the glimpsing of the Self which resides hidden within it. It is a barrier because for the sake of the fragmented enjoyments of the world the plenum of joy which is almost within reach is not looked for or appreciated as such; therefore, the most recalcitrant veiling is the veiling of the heart. Yet, by virtue of this very thirst for happiness, it can transform itself into a 'bridge' (setu) to the realization of the Self within. ¹⁸

The imagery of the heart emphasizes the importance of the inwardisation of attention which is dispensed in the outside world.

¹⁷Tait. II. 7.1.

¹⁸Mund. II. 2.5. "Know that Self alone that is one without a second, on which are strung heaven, the earth, and the interspace, the mind and the vital forces together with all the other organs; and give up all other talks. This is the bridge leading to immortality."

The pupil has been brought to a point which is crucial because it is here that a transformation should be effected. From this point of view, we may appreciate the fact that greater interiorization is said to lie in the region of awareness, rather than intellection: We see that the sheath of bliss (ānandamaya kośa) is more inner than the sheath of the intellect (vijñānamaya kośa).

The demand for a transition comes from the fact that the sheath of bliss (ānandamaya kośa) is also a veil for brahman. How, then, should one go beyond these coverings which hides the reality of Brahman, or in other words how should one know that Brahman is known? The Text states clearly:

He who realizes Brahman attains the highest.
With reference to that very fact it has been
declared: 'Brahman is Reality, Consciousness,
Infinitude; he who realizes Him treasured in
the cave, in the highest space, even as Brahman
the omniscient, fulfills all wants at once. 19

The above passage is justly famous for comprising in its pithy saying the entire teaching of the Advaita philosophy. This is the text which defines Brahman as Reality, Consciousness and Infinity. Leaving this definition aside for the time being, we may consider the last phrase which says that on knowing Brahman every want is fulfilled, not as they are fulfilled, one by one in the world but all together and all at once.²⁰ That is, on knowing

¹⁹Tait. II. 1.1.

²⁰Samkarabhasya on Tait. II. 1.1.

Brahman, everything is achieved and nothing at all remains undone or unknown, and, therefore it is a state of joyous tranquility.

According to Samkaracarya, the purport of the entire second chapter of the Upaniṣad is to guide the pupil to the awareness of Brahman by knowledge alone. How is a man to become aware of the innermost truth lodged in his heart, a truth which is quite unlike anything he is familiar with in the world? How can he be guided to this notion of freedom, after a suspension as it were of all supportive ideas which are aids to his thinking. The Text, like a mother guiding the tottering steps of her child, takes the seeker of knowledge by hand and slowly moves him on from one plane to another till he reaches the limit of the joyful state of the enjoyer. The I-consciousness which knows itself as knower, agent and enjoyer is capable of making the leap in thought by which it may envisage the possibility of arriving at the unity of Self and Brahman, a superlative gain, on the acquisition of which everything else is automatically obtained at the same time. The desire for happiness finds its supreme fulfillment in the acquiring of Brahman-knowledge. The Self which stands by complication in the relation of the ultimate referent for all activities of the body, mind and intellect is to be seen as the Witness-consciousness by whom everything is illuminated. The supreme truth to be realized is the identity of the Witness-Self with Brahman.

The question to be considered now is, what is the nature of this Brahman? The Text cannot take recourse to paradoxes here because the seeker is already awakened to the fact of the desirability of this Supreme Knowledge. The Sruti therefore gives a positive definition of Brahman, or that is what it looks like at first glance:

brahman is of the nature of Reality,
Consciousness, Infinite. (Tait. II, 1.)

Samkaracarya points out that no definition as such is possible of Brahman because it is the One Reality which can have neither a higher genus nor a distinguishing quality which would differentiate it from other items of like nature, as for example the term 'a blue lotus' identifies the object as lotus and distinguishes it from other pink or yellow coloured lotusses. The above Text, therefore, should not be construed as a definition but as indicative of characteristics.

E. The Difference Between Definition and Characterisation:

The line of tradition started by Samkaracarya has given great thought to this question of the characteristics of Brahman. Brahman being ultimate reality no definition is possible and on this account it is called as beyond speech etc. There is however an oblique way of referring to this foundational reality. This is to give it such characteristics (lakṣaṇa) as would differentiate it from all else, but not subsume it under another; neither should

the characteristics determine the nature of Brahman as is done by the qualities (guna) which qualify objects, as for example, 'a blue lotus', where blueness is seen to inhere in the object 'lotus'.

The characteristics are of descriptive value only; these descriptions are further divided into two groups. Some descriptions touch the periphery of the matter alone, whereas some characteristics refer to the essence of the thing itself. As regards Brahman, the Vedanta tradition considers such characteristics as 'cause of the world' etc. as a secondary characteristic (tatastha) and 'Reality, Consciousness, Infinity' as primary or essential characteristics (svarūpa lakṣaṇa).

Reality

Samkaracarya defines reality as that which does not change in its essential determinations, (satyamīti yadrūpeṇa yanniśchitam tadrūpam na vyabhicarati tatsatyam). If an object were to undergo changes, then these changes could not be essential to its nature. By the word Reality, the Upanisad seeks to establish the utter changelessness of Brahman. It may be said that the transformations are unreal but the substate is real, as for example, gold remains uniformly the same object, even when it assumes different shapes as ornaments. According to Samkaracarya, if we use this analogy here then Brahman would stand in the relation of material cause to the world, but this is untenable because

Brahman is neither material nor cause of the world. In order to off-set the possibility of so understanding Brahman, the Śruti adds the word Consciousness to Reality.

Consciousness

Brahman is real and it is of the nature of consciousness, itself. The Text does not say 'Knower' but Consciousness or jñānam. If Brahman were to be knower, then the first word would qualify the second. In this phrase the three words together with Brahman have the same case ending, which makes it clear that they should be individually employed with Brahman, as, for example, Reality is Brahman, (satyam brahma), Consciousness is Brahman (jñānam brahma), and Infinity is Brahman (anantam brahma). Moreover, Brahman cannot be designated as knower because the knower is one of a triad, that is, knower-known-knowledge. This diversification will take away from its changeless character of Reality on the one hand, and also from Infinity on the other. Brahman then is of the homogeneous nature of Consciousness which negates all possibilities of it being mistaken as the material ground of the world. The word Reality (satyam) used first ensures the 'beingness' of Brahman. It is not an ideality and it is not a material ground.

Infinity

The word Infinity signifies the unending nature of Reality and the non-intermittent character of Consciousness. Without the

concept of Infinity the other two words would not repel the meanings which in general are given to them in ordinary discourse.

In the words of Samkaracarva:

To say Knowledge (is) brahman, is to give rise to the possibility of its being within limitations, because knowledge is thus experienced in the world; to negate this possibility the word Infinity is added.²¹

All the three terms are independent of each other and yet they are related in the manner stated above. They enhance the meaning of each by negating the possibility of the opposite meaning being ascribed to them. These characteristics aimed at describing Brahman are to be understood as precluding the least trace of duality in the Ultimate Reality. In a way, then, these terms have a negative force rather than positive. It is, therefore, in accordance with the Text which states "from where speech turns back with the mind, being unsuccessful."²²

A question may arise here, if Samkaracarya is well within his rights to construe the above 'definition' of Brahman to signify a complete cessation of dualities. In the Upanisad itself there are further Texts which do not seem to accord with Samkaracarya's

²¹Samkarabharya on Tait. II. 1.1.

²²Tait. II. iv.

exegeses of these passages. In the 6th passage of the second chapter, the Text says regarding creation:

'I shall become many; He practised austerities;
Thereupon wherever in here He created.
After creating He entered into it.²³

It seems that the Text ascribes not only function of creation to Brahman but the desire for creation; further, a contemplation . the function to be undertaken and lastly his own immanence in the world he had created. This seems to set aside the non-dual nature of Brahman. There is a separation here of the creator and the created, also in the creator himself is a duality, because he experiences a desire for creation, contemplates the action to be performed, engages in the action itself and participates in the work accomplished in the mode of being immanent in it.

Samkaracarya in one of his most telling pieces of writing, in his usual and inimitable style of pleasant but profound (prasanna-gambhīra) prose, gives his own rendering of the above Text. The context of the above Text, he points out, is the persistent doubt in the mind of man regarding the actuality of Brahman. The Text is addressed to that state of doubt; it reminds man that the whole range of diversification must be the manifestation of something which underlies it and that this is Brahman. The 'desire' for

²³Tait. II. 6. bahu syām prajāyeyeti, sa tapo'tapyata.
Sa tapastaptvā idam sarvaṁsrjat yadidamkimca. tatsrstvā tadevan'pra
visāt.

creation, the 'contemplation' undertaken toward creation and 'creation', itself, are to be understood as the arising of manifestations; the dispersal of the appearances of Brahman. The freedom of the being-without-a-second cannot be gain^{said} by any desires or actions etc. as such. This is more evident when we consider the Text: 'He entered into the creation'.

Samkaracarya reminds us that this passage comes at the end of the analysis of the five sheaths. The Self is said to reside in the inner-most sanctum of the heart. This Text may said to have concretised for the seeker the presence of Brahman within the texture of his being. It propounds the proximity and the accessibility of Brahman to every individual. The two phrases 'the knower of brahma attains the Supreme' (brahmavidāpnoti param) and 'in that, he entered' (tadevānuprāviṣat) are to be understood in juxtaposition to each other. After all how can the individual soul 'attain' the Supreme? The word 'attain', therefore, means a realization of identity rather than an achievement of possession. Similarly the word 'enters' (anuprāviṣat) signifies a presence within the grasp of human understanding. If the first is a point of rapprochement from the side of the Self (tvam) then the other is the descent of Brahman (tat) toward the same focal identity. In effect these are not two movements but just the one moment of realization. Samkaracarya refers to the story of the ten men,²⁴ (daśamastu) to clarify his point about

²⁴Infra, p.

the coming together of the Self and Brahman in the same act of realization. Any language creating the impression of movement, or achievement etc. is inappropriate here. It is approximated most in the language of a recovery, a sudden realization of something which was already accomplished but somehow not experienced as reality. It is like the realization of the tenth man who was puzzled a moment ago and now everything is clear in flash as it were. There is nothing new achieved here. He has not become the tenth man, he was already that, only he did not know that he was so. When the Teacher pronounces the identity of You (tvam) and That (tat) it is possible that such realization may take place and great joy be experienced.

Ānanda

Ānanda is the language of realization. In ananda, there is neither Self nor Brahman but it is one homogeneous, unbroken, undiversified joyousness (akāṇḍaikaśāh) which in its all-pervasiveness touches everyone. Every life is enriched to the extent it appropriates this delight of being.²⁵ The truth of this statement is the experience of every individual. Rather than sorrow, a delight in living is the fact of life. Sorrow is an aberration, a negation of the true form of life. Sorrow comes from the other, whereas delight is self-located. In the anxiety for the other, (also expectations from the other, hopes for the other, disappointments,

²⁵Tait. II. 7.

bereavements, etc.) lies the fear which constantly haunts the natural surge of joy which is the nature of man. In this he is identical with Brahman the great reality and thus he in turn is in touch with the entirety of the world. Who can be an 'other' to him, who belongs everywhere because no one is without a spark of the delight of Brahman. To the expansive heart which can welcome the entire world and take delight in it, there can be no question of sorrow.

The question of ānanda touches the real knot in the heart of man. One is not in doubt about the actuality of his own existence, and thus is able to imagine Brahman as sat. He is also conscious of himself and can understand the idea of cit; but ānanda is so fragmented, so diffuse, so tenuous an experience in life that it is difficult to hold it together with the concept of the supreme Brahman. For this reason, the tradition develops the view that sat and cit are revelatory of Brahman but ananda is the veil of concealment, but the veil is not any the less indicative of the presence of Brahman.

The term ananda is used as a synonym for ananta (infinity) of the definition, because that which is finite cannot be of the nature of bliss. Only the Infinite, where there is no trace of or shadow of the 'other' can be identified with supreme delight. The Upanisad says:

It is of the nature of flavour, on enjoying which (man) becomes supremely ecstatic.²⁶

To the pupil, then, is explained that in himself lies the actuality of that supreme happiness which in its intermittent and complex form is already experienced by him. He is required only to follow the Teacher in his enunciation of the nature of Brahman and his teaching that this Brahman in the form of the Witness -- Consciousness lies hidden in the cave of his own heart. On the direct confrontation with this 'Man in the heart' who is the same as the 'Man in the Sun', everything is attained at once;²⁷ there is the utter tranquility of complete fulfillment, and the experience of Supreme Bliss of being Oneself.²⁸

F. The Mode of Teaching by Example

The Upanisad does not propound any course of action to the student for the appropriation of the answers given at the end of the discourse. What is given is an example of an actual quest and subsequent fulfilment in Brahma-realization. This methodology, if it may be so called is common to the other Upanisads also. In the Upanisadic literature, myths and ancient legends are dimensions

²⁶Tait. II. 8.1.

²⁷Ch. I. 7 5.

²⁸Tait. III. 9.1.

in the demonstration of the truth, which although necessarily arising out of this world, seek to go beyond it. This final teaching forms the subject matter of the last chapter and is called Bhrguvallī because it relates the quest and attainment of Bhṛgu for Brahman-knowledge. The Teacher is his father the Lord of the Seas, Varuṇa. To Bhṛgu in answer to his question is given the famous Text regarding Brahman:

That from which everything emerges, by which they live and are sustained and into which they are dissolved know that to be Brahman. 29

The pupil is asked to contemplate this Text and discover its truth for himself. Bhṛgu then in his efforts to know Brahman goes through the five sheaths of ignorance successively. First he identifies Brahman with food. Surely, he meditates; it is food out of which everything comes, by which they live and are sustained and into which again they are transformed. In great joy he comes to his father to report his discovery of the truth. Varuṇa repeats his original statement, signifying there by that the answer is not correct and that the pupil should renew his efforts toward knowledge. The Teacher patiently and sympathetically takes the pupil through the stages of his identification of Brahman with life, mind, intellect and bliss.

²⁹Tait. III. 2-1.

Bliss, as has been stated earlier, is the closest and yet the farthest off from Brahman. It is truly of the nature of Brahman, but not in its worldly frame of reference. It requires great courage to relinquish the obvious and concrete joys of the world for that plenum of bliss which would mean a total transformation. It is not the aim to be blissful or be happy or to be joyous, all of which are proximate to the ultimate state which is bliss, delight or joy itself. To be ānandamaya is still to remain under a trace of ignorance; the Text requires one to become of the nature of ānanda itself.

In pursuance of the final repetition of the statement Bhṛgu goes back to his life of contemplation and achieves the liberating knowledge of Brahman as Ānanda: ānando brahmeti vyajānāt.³⁰

The Upaniṣad then summarises its own teaching in this passage: The enquiry into Brahman knowledge begins with Bhṛgu's question and concludes with his realization of the Yāruṇī vidyā (the teaching of Varuṇa). The discovery of the supreme knowledge which lies well hidden in the heart is the culminating point of the search for Brahman. Any person who proceeds in the same manner from the most gross to the subtle elements in his being will also realize this highest state and attain to the Bliss of Brahman-knowledge.

³⁰Tait. III. 6.1.

Words such as transformation, attainment, liberation, create an impression, that the seeker after knowledge is lost to the world; this evidently is not so. The Upanisad very clearly describes the enriched life of this man who by his way of existence and his utterances out of the joyousness of his experience of fulfilment is of great benefit to his fellow men and perhaps continues to live in it in compassionate sympathy with the world. Thus we see that the brahmavit (Knower of Brahman) can be anybody anywhere; like the Emperor Janaka, or a sage like Yājñavalkya, a woman like Gārgi or a youth like Sanatkumāra.³¹

We may see the Text of the Taittiriya a summation of all themes treated in the other Upaniṣads. It preserves a well-knit unity of enquiry, knowledge and realization, It makes a beginning with the world and relates this knowledge back to the world in a special way because the man of enlightenment returns to the world speaking in joy of his 'discovery', evokes enquiries but never solves them out of existence.

G. Summary and Conclusion

An attempt has been made to understand the ontology of Bliss as Being itself as enunciated by the Taittiriya Upaniṣad. The Upanisad teaches that in the heart of man Truth lies hidden,

³¹Samkarabhasya on III. 10.5 "lokānugrahārṥam".

overcast by veils of ignorance. By a mode of contemplative focussing on the problem of ignorance, the truth of the identity of the Witness-Self with Brahman may be realized, as was done by Bhṛgu of ancient times. Thus we see that the Upanisadic literature, is preeminently devoted to the raising of questions. It delineates, it describes, it refers to, it characterises, the region in the proximity of the heart but it never circumscribes it in definitive language. The unspoken is always the root from where the relevance of the utterance must be understood. This is the secret of its continued relevance. It is not the answers which lend unity to generations of the same tradition; but it is the questions which are held sacred and which exercise their innermost thinking.

The highest truth is preserved in concealment. There is no will to truth here or a rationalizing; what is sought to be preserved is the relevance of a yearning toward truth.

CONCLUSION

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If by conclusion is meant a definitive answer to a specific problem, then this thesis may only reiterate its plea for a greater understanding of the problem which it seeks to emphasize as being of paramount interest not only for the East but for the West as well. In this age of acceleration rather than progress all things are made possible in principle at all times. There are no concerns which are not global in their implications at this time. We have studied modernity and we find that the Western world is held in a tension between a sense of celebration of the great achievements of science and an anguish that it is treading a path of no return. We have seen also that the attempts at the Westernization of the language of Advaita move beyond the orbit of the traditional understanding of how life should be lived in the city as well as in the forest. Contemporary India in choosing the city certainly opts for 'what is pleasing' rather than 'what should be preferred' by men of discernment. The problem of the thesis is a problem of choice, but is it possible to speak of renunciation in a world which professes to make it possible for all men to find fulfilment in and not away from it?

Shall we say here, that māyā is exactly this predicament of remaining in thrall to the given order, with almost a metaphysical complacency regarding its ultimacy? Vedanta philosophy states that this is

so, but also that the prefiguration for overcoming the jurisdiction of māyā is given in the transient experiences of pleasures in the world. It is said that one's existence (sat) and consciousness (cit) establish a continuum with Brahman. With bliss (ananda) we come to a separation of the realm of māyā and Brahman. There is no continuity in the experience of delight; each experience is a totality in itself. It leaves nothing behind to sustain from one experience of pleasure to another. It disappears without trace leaving a craving for yet another such experience. The real importance of pleasures in the world, therefore, lies in its focus on what precisely it is not. The fragmentation of delight inevitably must move toward completion and plenitude.

Therefore, let the world be where it is (astu samsāra eva) because it alone can show the way to the Bliss of Being.

APPENDIX

Appendix

The Taittiriyaka-vidyā-prakāśah

by

Vidyaranya

With an Introduction, Explanatory Notes,

Translation and Text in Roman

INTRODUCTION

The study of a text in Sanskrit, written in the fourteenth century by an accredited exponent of Advaita,¹ is undertaken with a view to substantiating the main point of this thesis, namely, that contemporary academic interpretations of this school of thought are far removed from the hard core of classical exegeses on the subject. The distance is not only what is incidental to the circumstance of such interpretations being made through the modernist idiom; it is because of a studied departure or deviation from what is cherished as the core idea forming the whole range of doctrine. The present work of Vidyanaraya is valuable as a normative interpretation recapturing the core of the tradition.

The work is of special significance because of the quality of its approach to the central teaching of the Upaniṣad on which it is focussed. The thinkers of the tradition in classical as well as

¹Mahadevan, T. M. P., "Vidyanaraya", Preceptors of Advaita (Secunderabad: Sri Kanchikamakoti Samkara Mandir, 1968) pp. 182-189.

in contemporary times² have generally contented themselves by writing glosses on the works of the celebrated commentator of the tradition, viz., Saṅkarāchārya. But what Vidyaṛanya has accomplished in the independent work (of which a relevant part is herein translated and studied) is best described as a 'meta-commentary' being not a mere gloss on the existing commentary, but an independent exercise in interpretation of the Upaniṣads themselves guided at every step by the turns in the commentary of Saṅkarāchārya. In sum it may be viewed as the medieval counterpart of modern academic interpretations of the Upaniṣads vis-a-vis the exegesis of Saṅkarāchārya. The difference, of course, is that it defines stringently the parameters of the tradition within which the interpretative task is to be accomplished.

From a perusal of this text, we see clearly that all fundamental tenets of Advaita were crystallised into living precepts for its adherents by the time of its author, Vidyaṛanya. From this point of view also the book may be of some interest to us because the fourteenth

²The easily available commentaries on the Upaniṣads of the traditional genre are as follows:

- i) Kārikā on the Māndūkyopaniṣad by Gaudapāda (C. 5th Century A.D.).
- ii) Bhāṣya on Ten Upaniṣads by Saṅkarācārya (8th Century).
- iii) Dīpikā on a few principal Upaniṣads and some minor ones by Saṅkarānanda (14th Century) and Sri Nārāyaṇa (C. 15th Century).
- iv) Mitākṣara on Brhadāraṇyaka and Chhāndogya by Nityānandāśrama (20th Century).
- v) Maṅgīprabhā on eleven Upaniṣads by Amardāsa (20th Century).
- vi) Bhāṣya on all principal and a few minor Upaniṣads by Upaniṣadbrahmayogin (20th Century).

century was marked by the growing influence of Muslim power in India. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to see some similarity between the historical back-ground of Vidyāraṇya and that of the modern Indian scholars, who also were contending with an alien culture. It is interesting to note that the disturbed condition prevailing in his time which he helped in controlling for many years, however, finds no echo in his writings on the Vedānta. Is there a metaphysical basis for this interesting omission? One may well conclude that there is an obvious basis. Whatever the world was to Vidyāraṇya, the active participant as minister, to him as the Vedantic thinker it remained the sphere of the not-self which was to be discriminated against as such by the seeker of Truth. The importance of this relevant point may become more clear if we take into account the meagre details of Vidyāraṇya's biography.

The author, Vidyāraṇya

It may be said that in the fourteenth century, Vedic scholarship rose to a new pinnacle marked by the stupendous annotative work of the great Sāyana, without which much of the meaning of the ancient texts would be lost to us. Some scholars believe that Vidyāraṇya and Sayana are identical. One reason for this opinion is that Sāyana's bhāṣya on the Taittirīyopaniṣad is also known as the Dīpikā by Vidyāraṇya.³ A. Mahadeva Sastry has translated the introductory portion

³Kṛṣṇayajurvedīyam Taittirīyāranyakam (Ānandāśrama edition, 1969, vol. 36, p. 1).

of this bhāṣya as introduction to the Upaniṣad/ḥy Vidyāraṇya.⁴

The more prevalent view, acceptable to this philosophic tradition is that Vidyāraṇya and Sāyana were brothers and the former may have written some parts of the bhāṣya on the Vedas. It is further believed that 'Vidyāraṇya' (lit. forest of learning) is the ascetic name of Mādhavācārya, the very powerful minister in the Kingdom of Vijaynagar which came into existence under his aegis in 1336 A.D. History recognises him as a sage and scholar who guided two young princes in their campaigns against the Muslims and supported them when they re-established Hindu sovereignty over South India.⁵

Vidyāraṇya introduced many measures of good administration in the Kingdom and was a patron of learning, countenancing all shades of religious belief within his area of influence. After many years of successful ministerial rule, he elected to retire from public life. Impervious to the pleadings of his Royal proteges, he renounced the world when yet at the height of his worldly powers and became an ascetic.⁶

⁴A. Mahadeva Sastry, The Taittiriya Upaniṣad (Madras: Samata Books, 1980). Also Vasudeva Sharma, Introduction to Jīvanmuktiviveka (Anandasrama Granthavali 20).

⁵Advanced History of India, K. A. N. Sastry and G. Srinivasacari (Bombay, Allied Publishers, 1971, p. 417).

⁶Sri Pañcadaśī by Vidyāraṇya, tr. (in Hindi) by Pitambar Pandit (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1897), Introduction, p. 10.

He, however, gained greater renown as such, because he became the thirty-third occupant of the prestigious seat of Sankarācārya at Sringeri.⁷ Thus we see that Vidyāranya was one of those preceptors who lived his teachings and so kept alive the tradition of discourses on the Aupanīṣadam Puruṣam (The One who is spoken of in all the Upanīṣads).⁸

It is therefore safe to conclude that Vidyāranya's construction of the Advaita is both authoritative and true to the heart of its teachings. He is accepted as an accredited spokesman for Vedānta by later scholars right up to the twentieth century.⁹ He is also accorded the highest respect, at present by all Vedāntins belonging to the ascetic orders of India.¹⁰ Indeed the brothers Sāyana and Vidyāranya seem to have been at the crossroads of Indian philosophic thought; their writings are important links joining the ancient heritage to the contemporary writings on the Vedānta.

A question seems pertinent to the issue here, namely, whether this lack of radicalization demonstrates a dearth of creative thinking

⁷Sri Pañcadaśī, op. cit. p. 11.

⁸Br. III. 9-26.

⁹Mahadevan, T. M. P. The Pañcadaśī (Madras: Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, 1975), pp. XV-XVIII.

¹⁰Maheshananda Giri: Mānasollāsamādhuri (in Hindi, Dakshinamurthi Math, 1961), p. 4.

Also: Swami Gangeshwarananda, San̄kṣepa Sārīrakam (Varanasi: Udasina Sanskrit Vidyalaya, 1957), Introduction, pp. 19-20.

on the part of those who sought to keep alive a tradition of the quest for knowledge as the highest aim in life. In other words, how should we understand Vidyāraṇya's faithful rendering of the tenets of Advaita irrespective of the many insistent demands of the time upon him to which he did give his undivided attention as well?

An attempt has already been made in the thesis to show that the above question is not in fact relevant to the issue. There is no tension between the world and the individual in Advaita. The opposition is only between the Self and its ignorance regarding its own nature. As long as man unaware of his truer identity continues to regard himself as a knower, a do-er and an enjoyer, only so long may he relate himself to the world and his life may be described as one of being in the world. Teachers of Advaita in succeeding generations feel called upon to reiterate and explain again and again the possibility of sublating the sphere of ignorance which threatens to engulf the Self and keep it unaware of its true nature. Vedānta operates not within the polarity of the world and Self but rather within a dialectic, as it were, between yearning for self-knowledge (vividīṣā)¹¹ and self-realization (anubhūti). If there is no desire for knowledge, then the question of realization also does not arise. The world is, in fact, indispensable in the sense that it instigates the desire for knowledge. The role of Vedānta, therefore, is not only limited but highly selective also in that it addresses itself strictly to the one who has the call, i.e., one also in whom has arisen a yearning for self-knowledge. Yet it is most universal in that anyone irrespective of external consider-

¹¹The expression vividīṣā (like anubhūti) is that of the Upaniṣads: Cf. tamedam vedānuvacanena brahmaṇā vividīṣanti yajñena dānena tapasā nāsakena. Br. 6,4,22.

ations may have such desire to know his self which remains hidden by the very thing which it illumines.

Just as green scum which is born out of water, hides it from view by covering it, so is the 'ātman' hidden by layers of the not-self which are its own projections.¹²

The objective in front of the Vedantic tradition, therefore, is to keep alive the spirit of intimate communication between teacher and pupils. Within this rubric, there is scope for the widest diversification. The questions and the answers that constitute the teaching will necessarily be different from one situation to another but the content of it transmitted through such mode will remain the same. It will be the same in so far as Vedanta is but only a reflective appropriation of what is understood as eternally revealed. The synoptic progression from age to age reflected in the transmission of teaching and doctrine (as embodied in treatises) is of a different order than the dynamism required for adjusting and moving with the times. In this context it is hoped that the study of Vidyanaraya's commentary on the Taittirīyopaniṣad will be of some value to us as endorsed of what has been said earlier in the thesis. He was undeniably involved in the world for many years but the emphasis on nyāsa (renunciation) in his writings is also quite unmistakable.

¹²Vivekacūdāmaṇi, 151.

The Anubhūtiprakāśah:

In any historical survey of the writings on Advaita, Vidyāranya's Pañcadaśī¹³ and the Brhadāraṇyaka-vārtika-sārah¹⁴ would merit important places. The author's other writings also are well known and many of these have been published and translated into English as well.¹⁵ The text under study is included in an anthology of commentaries, entitled Anubhūtiprakāśah.¹⁶ This book has not been translated into any of the Indian languages or into English so far. Before we take up the study of the Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah, which forms the second chapter of the anthology, we may consider the Title and the format of the anthology itself.

¹³The Pañcadaśī: tr. by Swami Swahananda (Madras, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1967).

Also: tr. by Hari Prasad Sastri (London, Shanti Sadan, 1965).

¹⁴Brhadāraṇyaka-vārtika-sārah (Varanasi: Acyutagranthamala Series, 1941).

¹⁵i) Sarva-Darśana-Saṁgraha: tr. by E. B. Cowell and A. E. Gough (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1976)

ii) Drg-Drśya Viveka: tr. by Swami Nikhilananda (Mysore: Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, 1970).

iii) Vivarāṇa Prameya Saṁgraha: (Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1967).

iv) Jīvanmuktiviveka: (Anandasrama Sanskrita Granthavali no. 20), New numbering.

v) Dīpikā on Nrsimhottaratāpani Upaniṣad (Anandasrama Sanskrit Granthavali no. 30). Old numbering.

vi) Sri Sankara Digvijayah: tr. Baladeva Upadhyaya (Hardwar: Shri Sravannath Jnana Mandir, 1967).

¹⁶Anubhūtiprakāśah (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1926).

The word 'Anubhūtiprakāśaḥ' may be translated as 'The Exposition on Realization'. In other words, the title indicates that the contents will throw light on the nature of enlightenment. It is difficult to translate the word 'anubhūti'. Already two words have been used, namely 'realization' and 'enlightenment'. We may also describe it as 'immediate awareness or insight', or 'an instant recollection'. This state of knowledge is said to be non-indirect (aparokṣa) as distinguished from direct (pratyakṣa) and indirect (parokṣa). We have direct knowledge of sensible objects and indirect knowledge about many matters through inferences or from scriptural authority. The non-indirect knowledge is a unique (and in the one ideal case, unparalleled) juxtaposition of two direct experiences where one is instantly cancelled by the other, the classical example which is cited in explanation of this knowledge is about 'the tenth man' (daśamo'sīti).¹⁷

¹⁷ Saṅkara bhāṣya on Tait.11.1; Upadeśasāhasrī 18, 172. "Ten men are obliged to swim a river in the dark. Reaching the other shore, one of them takes a tally to see if anybody is missing. He counts nine and there is great anguish at the loss of one companion. A compassionate passerby seeing their predicament, taps the shoulder of the man who is counting, saying, "You are the tenth man". There is great rejoicing at this 'recovery'. It is not that he did not know himself as a man or that he achieved a new status; but he was made aware by a 'teacher' that his state of loss itself was an error which being dispelled he could regain his original state of tranquility."

Vidyāraṇya has also a commentary on Sankarācārya's minor work Aparokṣānubhūti, in which he writes that this non-indirect knowledge is synonymous with Self-realization.¹⁸ The Self is not directly perceived by the mind,¹⁹ because the mind may not go further than the I-consciousness evident in the waking as well as dreaming states; nor is it to be inferred by reason, which could only start a process of infinite regress.²⁰ Scriptural testimony can give indirect knowledge only which must be accepted to begin with, like the belief in heaven and hell, etc., but this is not experienced directly. Then how should the Self be known?

Sankarācārya's answer which has become classic in the tradition is that the Self is already known.²¹ It is known as the Witness-Self, which makes possible the phenomenon of the I or ego-consciousness, because there is memory of its continuity through the hiatus of consciousness in dreamless sleep.²² The ego-consciousness is subject,

¹⁸Vidyāraṇya's Dīpikā on Aparokṣānubhūti, verse 2.

¹⁹Tait.II.9.1.

²⁰Br. II.4.14.

²¹Cf. his reference to Self as pratyagātman in his celebrated preamble to V. S. bh.

²²According to the Upadeśa-sāhasrī. (I.2.93.) Teacher to the disciple, "you contradict yourself by saying that you are not conscious (in deep sleep) when, as a matter of fact, you are so,....For you deny the objects of knowledge (in that state) but not knowledge....The consciousness owing to whose presence you deny the existence of things in deep sleep) by saying, 'I was conscious of nothing', is the Knowledge, the consciousness which is your Self." tr. by Swami Jagadananda (Madras, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975), p. 53.

Also: Ātmajñānopades.avidhi IV.9-10 & Mānasollāsa VI-21.

as Vidyāranya elaborates elsewhere²³ to three forms of mistaken identities which are called natural, due to past Karma and due to nescience. The proximity of the Witness-Self, so to speak, casts its reflection on the I-consciousness. De~~luded~~ naturally by this a man says 'I know', 'I enjoy'. The 'I-consciousness' is associated with a particular body due to past karmas, so a man says 'I am this body'. Due to nescience a man although conscious of the I as knowing, doing or enjoying is not aware of the Witness-Self. He evinces an awareness of it when he awakens from a dreamless sleep and says 'I did not know anything I was happily asleep.'²⁴ This 'existence' which he implicitly asserts is due to the hidden Witness-Self which is the ground of all existence, knowing and feeling. It is the Witness-Self alone, which makes it possible for the 'I' to exist, know and enjoy.

This (Self) is the one unbroken witness of the dance of every intellect, verily, itself eternal, it views the passing without the act of looking as if through half-closed eyes.

Naiṣkarmya Siddhi 2.58. Tr. by A. J. Alston;
The Realization of the Absolute (London:
Shanti Sadan, 1971).

The dissolution of nescience is simultaneous with the realization of the Witness-Self of the nature of existence, consciousness, and bliss. This realization is called aparoksanubhūti, that is, immediate experience of Truth.

²³Drg-Drśya-Viveka, verse 8.

²⁴Upadeśa-sāhasrī, op. cit., p. 50 ff.

The role of Vedanta is to throw light on the state of ignorance and indicate the way to knowledge.²⁵ This is a crucial role because ignorance of itself is not known as such but as knowledge which mistakes what is not self for self. In following the teachings of the Upanisads, the seeker of Truth is introduced to the idea of the Witness-Self: How is he to discriminate between the Witness-Self and the layers of not-self. This he must learn from the Teacher. The reasonableness of this lesson being accepted (yukti), he must engage in meditative practices and prove to himself, the ultimacy of the Self by the experience of realization.²⁶

All expository treatises on the Vedanta in general follow a similar pattern of exegesis and so many be seen to uphold the adoption of vividiṣā (desire for knowledge) as the point of departure and anubhūti (realization) as its destined goal. This repetitive theme has gained in considerable clarity and depth in Vidyāranya's treatment of it in his Anubhūtiprakāśah. Separate commentaries on twelve upaniṣads have been subsumed under the rubric of this general theme.²⁷

²⁵Vedāntasāra of Sadananda, tr. by Swami Nikhilananda (Calcutta, Advaita Ashrama, 1974), p. 15.

²⁶Ātmajñānopadeśavidhi, IV. 12-14, also Vivekacūḍāmani, 475.

²⁷Pitambar Pandit, the well known commentator in Hindi on the Pañcadaśī (Bombay, Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1897) mentions that Anubhūti-prakāśah consists of 3000 verses (p. 12). There are 2805 verses only in the available edition of the book.

Each Section or Chapter is complete in itself with an opening verse and a concluding colophon. The author's selection of Upaniṣads is as follows:

1. Aitereya from Ṛkveda
2. Taittirīya from Yajurveda
3. Chhāndogya from Sāmaveda
4. Mundaka and Praśna from Atharvaveda
5. Kauṣītakī from Ṛkveda
6. Maitrāyaṇī from Sāmaveda
7. Kaṭṭha from Yajurveda
8. Śvetāśvatara from Yajurveda
9. Brhadāraṇyaka from Yajurveda
10. Talavakāra from Sāmaveda
11. Nṛsimhottaratāpanī from Atharvaveda.

The list leaves out the Īsopaniṣad, a conspicuous omission noted by Max Mueller.²⁸ The inclusion of Nṛsimhottaratāpanī also is unusual because it is generally not listed with the major Upaniṣads. It must be noted here that the tradition of Sanskrit scholarship is not guided by the historical method. Time also does not add anything to the venerability of a Text. In trying to recover the meaning of ancient treatises, scholars follow the method of mīmāṃsā,²⁹

²⁸Mueller, Max, The Upaniṣads (New York: Dover Publications, 1962), Part I, PLXVIII.

²⁹Akhandananda Saraswatī, Mundaka Sudhā (Bombay: Satsahitya Prakasan Trust, 1967), p. 10.

that is, a co-ordinating assessment of the subject matter. Reverence, is therefore necessary for the guidance of reason in a sphere of understanding where the teaching is about the identity of ātman and Brahman. This unique subject-matter determines the status of a Vedic treatise as a Upaniṣad;³⁰ as such all are of equal importance for the seeker of Truth.

Vidyāraṇya, therefore, is well within his right to choose a selection of Upaniṣads for his purpose, which is to give the widest possible coverage to the Vedic traditions. In accordance with the method followed by Saṃkara, the Muṇḍaka and the Praśna are treated in continuation and may be regarded as one; so the first five represent the teachings of the four Vedas. The last seven are selected from different recensions of the Śruti literature.

The Text: Taittirīyaka-Vidyā-Prakāśah

The 'commentary' on the Taittirīyapaniṣad is entitled Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah, that is 'the exposition of the teaching of the Taittirīyapaniṣad'. In 150 verses in the form of couplets Vidyāraṇya has summarized mainly the second section of the Upaniṣad, adding a few verses for the first and third sections. It is to be seen that almost all Upaniṣads propound the unity of the Self with Brahman in two ways, firstly by negation³¹ and secondly by the mode of

³⁰Brhadāraṇyakavārtika-Sārah. I.3.

³¹"Not this, not this", Br. IV. 4.22, III. 9.26.

indicative descriptions.³² Both these methods are to be met with in the Taittiriya Upanisad. Indeed this Upanisad is the fountainhead for both methods which converge to the same point in the famous declaration: 'brahmavidāponti param,' (Knower of Brahman attains the supreme).³³

The layers of the not-self which hide the Self are stated to be five and are described in the image of a bird in the Upanisad. A bird symbolises the flight from the earth to the skies, a soaring, an uplifting of the spirit toward the unknown. Another explanation is that in the Upanisadic tradition, the teaching is sometimes related to the Teacher, as for example, in the Māndūkya Upanisad Brahman is described as four-legged. Similarly the Taittiriya originating from the Tittiri birds, as it were, it moulded in the imagery of a bird.³⁴

The five sheaths are, the body, the vital air as breath, the mind, the intellect which is the consciousness of agency or will and lastly consciousness as enjoying. The first two are the material layers because the body and life-breath seem coterminous with the I-consciousness which is the shadow of the Self within us. The more

³²Ait. V. 3 (prajñānam Brahma) Ch. III. 14.1 (Sarvam Khalvidam brahma). Br. I. 4.10. (brahma vā idamagra āsīt) Katha 5.6. (guhyam brahma sanātanam) Mund., 2.2.2 (tadetadaksaram brahma); Mānd. 2. (ayamātma brahma) etc.

³³Tait. II. 1.1.

³⁴Father Gispert-Sauch SJ, has perceptively detailed a parallel of the imagery of the bird with the Vedic ritualism of building an altar for sacrifice. He finds that the background of the Taittiriya Upanisad lies in the sacrifice-rituals of the Vedas. Bliss in the Upanisads (New Delhi: Oriental Publishers & Distributors, 1977), pp. 21-37.

subtle sheaths are (i) the world of mental projections, (ii) the sphere of action where changes are brought about and the 'I' knows itself as a 'do-er', (iii) the field of enjoyments (or pains) where the 'I- knows itself as the 'enjoyer'.

These are called sheaths or 'coats'³⁵ which envelop the Self, that is the Self identifies itself with one or the other of these layers and does not know Itself as the supreme Brahman. The desire for this knowledge being awakened at the 'right' time, the pupil is required to approach a teacher for instruction. This awakening or vividiṣā is indispensable, and the one and only instigation (prayojaka) toward a life of spiritual endeavour. All texts agree that the desire for knowledge comes to the man who is rich in qualities of the head and heart summarized as the four-fold scheme of good conduct³⁶ (Sādhana catuṣṭaya).

³⁵The term sheath (kośa) does not occur in this Vallī. It has been used by Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on Il. 2.1. He evidently has elaborated Gaudapada's usage of the word and reference to Taittirīya in Māndūkyopaniṣad Kārikā III. 11. The five sheaths are treated as such in Sarvopaniṣad 2. The Symbolism of 'sheath' imparts the sense of concealment and implies the possibility of un-sheathing i.e., unveiling of what lies hidden.

³⁶The four qualities given in Vedāntasāra (op cit.) are as follows: (i) Nityānityavastuviveka (Discrimination between things permanent and transient). (ii) ihāmutrārthaphalabhogavirāgaḥ (renunciation of the enjoyment of the fruits of actions in this world and hereafter). (iii) Ṣatsampattiḥ (to be possessed of six treasures, viz., Sama-dama, restrain in mental propensities and physical sense-organs; uparati, abstinence, titikṣā forbearance, samādhāna, tranquility and sradhā, faith). (iv) mumukṣutva (yearning for liberation or Self-realization) Vedānta-sāra, 14-25.

Vividiṣā, then, automatically must lead to nyāsa or renunciation, because the pupil after being instructed by the Teacher, will be involved in meditative practices in order to bring his mind intellect and feelings to bear upon the teaching till he meets with success in the form of Self-realization. It could be asked why the yearning for knowledge together with the reading of the Upanisads, should not suffice for Enlightenment. This brings us to one of the main points of all writings on the Vedanta. It has already been said that the Knowledge of Brahman reaches the dimension of 'non-indirect' knowledge, that is a state where knowledge and experience are one. Heaven, etc. may be promised to man for good conduct, but this will always remain as far as the 'do-er' is concerned in the realm of indirect knowledge (parokṣa jñāna); but in engaging in a existential dialogue with a preceptor who is brahmavit (knower of Brahman) he is in touch with the living pulsating sphere of bliss. It is the burning lamp which enkindles other lamps. A description of the lamp may be pleasing but it cannot light the way for the wayfarer. We see, therefore that the living example of a Teacher runs like a thread through different Upaniṣads.

Specifically, the Teacher's role is to guide the seeker through his meditative investigation into the nature of the five sheaths. Starting from the *outermost*, that is, the body, the intellect must discard all layers as 'not this Self which is being meditated upon'. The last barriers are the three sheaths of consciousness,

willing and feelings. Being in close proximity to the Witness Self, the intellect seems luminous by itself whereas this is reflected light only. The negative method teaches discrimination between the real Self and all that which appears real but is not so. What is being taught is not a denial of the not-self but rather a separation from it (prthak satta). The basis for this distinction lies in the positive descriptions of Brahman and its identity with atman. Brahman, is of the nature of 'Reality, Consciousness, Infinity',³⁷ 'Unspeakable Supreme Delight',³⁸ 'Unchanging, Immortal Delight and Fearless',³⁹ 'the One without a second',⁴⁰ 'all pervasive, consciousness, bliss and unparalleled',⁴¹ etc. If this supreme is the ātman itself, then the ātman cannot be identified with the body, life breath, will or feelings or consciousness. So these outer coverings are to be discarded one by one till the ātman is revealed in its unique resplendent nature as Brahman.

Until the goal is reached, the seeker must follow a strict ethical code of conduct; but when he achieves the ultimate stage of

³⁷Tait. II. 1.1.

³⁸Gauda 3.48.

³⁹Br. 4.4.25.

⁴⁰Chh. 6.2.1.

⁴¹Kaivalya 8.

Oneness, there are no duties or rights as such for him because there is nothing which is not He Himself.⁴² Moreover all virtues naturally accrue to him and all his actions are permeated in goodness.⁴³ This is the final stage of celebration of the state of Bliss. At the end of his commentary on the Taittirīyopaniṣad Vidyāraṇya refers to the song of Self-realization by Bhṛgu in the third valli of the text. He concludes with a prayer to his Teacher 'the great Lord Vidyātīrtha', invoking his blessings for all seekers of Knowledge.

Explanatory Comments on the Verses

Verse 1: In the opening stanza Vidyāraṇya gives a title to his work and declares his intention of commenting upon the second chapter of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, namely, the Brahmavallī. Both Saṃkarācārya and Sureśvarācārya have given importance to the First Statement of the Brahmavallī, as comprising the whole intent of the

⁴²"And no duty remains for a Yogin who has accomplished his object who is satiated by nectar - like wisdom; if there be, he is not the knower of the true nature of the Brahman". Uttaragita 23, tr. by S.V. Oka (Poona Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1957).

The Gaudapādīya Dipikā on this verse clarifies that the Yogin who is established in the one-flavoured Bliss does not engage in action for benefit to Society. Uttaragita, (Bombay Gujrati Press, 1912).

⁴³Naiṣkarmyasiddhi, IV. 69. Also,
Vedāntasāra, 224.

Upaniṣad.⁴⁴ Vidyāranya also treats this as the major statement and relates other teachings contained in the Upaniṣad to it as its corollaries; hence the importance of the Brahmavallī.

Verses 2 and 3: The author mentions the qualities of the pupil who may approach the Teacher for knowledge of Brahman. The reference here is to the First Chapter of the Upaniṣad which has already described the sphere of work for the householder. The thirst for knowledge is the prime requisite for the seeker of Truth; this longing comes to those who have finished with the world as a necessary field of action. According to the author, therefore, the life of enquiry will turn out to be the last life before total freedom. There are parallel traditions which hold together a life of activity and the quest for knowledge as well;⁴⁵ but Vidyāranya here clearly follows the Samkarabhāṣya which says: "That man should attain the state of fearlessness (total freedom) while the world (fraught with duality) abides for him, is utterly untenable."⁴⁶ Good conduct in the world therefore, would engender the desire for knowledge but it cannot bring about knowledge itself.

Verse 4: The dialogue between the Teacher and the qualified pupil, starts with the recitation of the Peace-Chant. A discourse on

⁴⁴"Sarva ēva vallyartho....sūtritaḥ", Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1-1, also Sureśvara Vārtikam, II.43.

⁴⁵Mīmāṃsaka Sūtra I. ii. 1 and Īsopaniṣad 2, discussed in detail by Sureśvarācārya, Naiskarmyasiddhi, 17-98. Also by Vidyāranya in Brhadāranyakavārtika Sārah I. 2. 92-106.

⁴⁶Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1.1.

Brahman is possible only under peaceful conditions, external as well as internal; the participants must be at peace with themselves and with each other and should be assured of being free from obstructions from outside. By referring to the Peace-Chant of the Upaniṣad the author situates himself and his reader within the tradition of dialogues on Brahma-vidyā. This repetition of the pattern is like forging another link to the chain of such discourses.

Verses 5 and 6: The 5th stanza refers to the opening aphorism in the Upaniṣad, namely, 'brahmavit āpnoti param', (the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme). Apparently there is an enumeration of a triad here, the knower, attainment, and Brahman as the Supreme, but in actuality there is the One only. Attainment is to be understood as realization on the part of the seeker of his own Brahmanhood, and as such it is not a case of becoming something which was not in existence before but merely a recollection of true identity.⁴⁷

Vidyaranya takes this interpretation for granted and proceeds onwards to clarify the triad in a different way. He identifies the knower with Brahman, so that the term 'brahmavit' stands for both; since the 'knower' would realize himself as Brahman and Brahman is to be propounded as the One unfragmented whole, no duality of the knower and the known is admitted here. ~~So~~ the triad is Brahman as object of knowledge, knowledge as realization, and the resulting experience of

⁴⁷ Sāṅkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1.1.

this realization. In the succeeding stanza, the author indicates that this triadic aphorism contains the full meaning of the entire First Statement, or rather the whole of the Upaniṣad itself. As this First Statement of the Second Chapter of the Upaniṣad is being elucidated by Vidyāranya, it will be useful to quote it in full here:

- (a) The Knower of Brahman attains the Supreme;
- (b) With reference to that very fact, it has been declared:
Brahman is Real, Knowledge, Infinite;
- (c) He who knows him treasured in the highest space in the cave;
- (d) (He) enjoys all pleasures simultaneously as the omniscient Brahman;
- (e) From that very Ātman space originated; from space, air; from air, fire; from fire, water; from water, earth, from earth, herbs; from herbs, food; from food, man; he indeed is this man consisting of food and rasa.

This indeed is his head, this, his right wing, this his left wing, this is his Self (the middle portion) and this is the tail (for) support.

This is the śloka (verse) on this subject.

(Ītīrīyopaniṣad II. 1.1.)⁴⁸

⁴⁸The passage is sub-divided into sections here for easy reference.

In the aphorism 'brahmavit āpnoti param', according to Vidyāranya, is given the (1) Subject of the discourse, (2) the means of acquiring knowledge regarding it, and (3) the gain accruing from this enterprise. Firstly, the identity of the brahmavit (knower of brahman) and param (the Supreme, that is Brahman) is the object of enquiry; secondly the mode of gaining this knowledge (āpnoti) is by discrimination between that which is real and that which is merely super-imposed on it. Thirdly this text apparently goes beyond another which says "Anyone who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman indeed"⁴⁹ or "The knower of Brahman reaches Brahman".⁵⁰ In describing the result of the knowing of Brahman, Vidyāranya emphasizes therefore the phala or result as the third corner of the triad. He commences on the task of reducing this triad to the establishment of the One only by taking up the definition of Brahman given in the second verse of the First Statement or Anuvāke. (Section b)

Verses 7 - 10: What, then is this Brahman?. It is the Real, It's Knowledge, It's the Infinite. These words are not adjectives qualifying a substance, but they are characteristics by which one may recognize that which is indicated by them. In stanzas 8, 9 and 10, the author explains that the Real or Reality means not

⁴⁹Mund . III.2.9.

⁵⁰Kauṣītaki, I. 4.

non-existent, Knowledge means it is not a material thing and Infinite means it is an unfragmented whole. The three limitations with which we are familiar in the world, time, space and things, are inoperative with regard to Brahman, therefore it is said to be Infinite.

Verses 11 and 12: To the very relevant question implied here as to the nature of the visible world which is experienced in time, space and as objects, Vidyāranya replies that it is due to māyā. The word 'māyā' does not occur in the Text. Moreover the process of creation seemingly reads like an actual process in time. (See e). The answer given is, that, if this were indeed so understood then the rest of the Upaniṣad would become meaningless, because the later statements are devoted toward cancelling the world from the very gross to the most subtle. The Upaniṣad is going to teach the cancellation of the sheaths or layers of false identifications which prevent the Self from knowing itself as Brahman. Therefore, this apparent creation is like a magic show due to māyā.⁵¹ Brahman remains untouched by the name-form creations of māyā. This simultaneous event of cancellation and revelation is what is implied in the conceptualisation of māyā and its emanations. The concept of māyā as developed by Sankara and his school is accepted here by the author.

⁵¹See Verse 35 of Text.

Verses 13-15: A question may be raised here as to how this Brahman is to be known at all. If it is Infinite and beyond all modes of thought etc., and veiled by māyā, then how should its reality become a matter of fact to knowledge? The solution to this problem is said to be given in the third verse of the First Statement (See ②). This verse is construed by Sankaracarya to mean the establishment of Brahman as the innermost, indubitable Ātman itself. The Ātman is situated within the 'heart' of man, as it were, so that by this verse is established its immediacy.⁵² This identification of Ātman and Brahman, according to Vidyāranya is the object of knowledge, already indicated by the term 'brahmavit' (the knower of Brahman) of the aphorism. The Text of the Upaniṣad states that Brahman lies hidden in the cave of the sky, veiled by nescience. The concept of the 'cave' is common to the Upaniṣads.⁵³ According to Saṅkaracarya the idea of the cave signifies the intractable and impenetrable barrier of the intellect which refuses to go beyond the I-consciousness.⁵⁴ The innermost recesses of the cave is surrounded by grosser and still grosser layers of the not-self called sheaths. The space within the heart is the same as the supreme sky where Brahman as Self lies hidden, and where the last obstruction (to realization) in the form of nescience, the root cause of all projections, is to be

⁵² Saṅkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1.1c. See also Sureśvara Vārtikam II.80.

⁵³ Katha I.14, II.12; Muṅd. 2.1.10, Mahānārāyaṇīya 2.4., etc.

⁵⁴ Saṅkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1-1.

encountered. Vidyāranya has followed the lead of the Saṅkarabhāṣya for this interpretation. Saṅkarācārya writes:

It is reasonable that the space as heart should be the supreme sky because it is intended here that the (significance of the) supreme sky should be part of the knowing process (being described here) In this space of the heart is the cave of the intellect where Brahman lies hidden, that is, It is known as different from the sphere of the intellect, otherwise Brahman is not related to any particular space or time as It is all-pervasive and totally unqualified.⁵⁵

Verses 16-22: Māyā hides Brahman by creating the falsehood of I-consciousness. Initially, the pupil is obliged to begin here because consciousness is the last undeniable self-identity for him.

The author concedes the point that one may begin by thinking of Brahman residing inside as I-consciousness; that is, a duality of creaturehood and the Supreme as the in dwelling Lord within. This knowledge is tentative and needs to be overcome by the mode of discrimination about to be propounded by the Upaniṣad. Self-discipline and yoga are required for a turning around from the world to the dimension of deeper understanding. The seeker with his eyes turned inward may begin on the task of recovering his Self identity from its dispersal amongst the layers of not self. This may be named the meaning of the term 'āpnoti' of the aphorism.

Verses 23-29: What is the result of this Self-realization? The result is unique and unparalleled, namely, the attainment of all

⁵⁵ Saṅkarabhāṣya on Tait. II. 1-1.

desires, totally and simultaneously. The realization of Brahman is the attainment of param which therefore can be nothing else than supreme Bliss. This statement of the result of Self-realization also answers the implied question, "why should anyone desire to turn away from the world?" The answer given is, since everyone desires pleasures, why should they not be interested in a course of action which results in total fulfilment, a state of bliss when all desires are satisfied simultaneously?⁵⁶ All pleasures in the world are mere traces of the plenum of Bliss in Brahman; due to ignorance one thinks of objects as sources of pleasure. The quest for pleasure is quite inescapable and yet unrealizable in the world, but not so in Life. The finitude of fragmentary pleasures can be made whole and complete in the Bliss of Brahman. Knowledge of Brahman, therefore, means to be established in the Bliss of Brahman. The description of the triad mentioned by the author in Verse 6, as object, and the result of knowledge alike constitutive of Brahman is completed here.

Verses 30-40: After thus explaining the aphorism, Vidyāraṇya takes up for consideration the process of creation and its subsequent cancellation. The visible world is only an appearance of Brahman, skillfully and magically presented by māyā. World-causality is imputed to Brahman to demonstrate that Brahman is Infinite.

⁵⁶ Sāṅkarabhāṣya on Tait. II. 1. 1d.

Brahman may said to share 'reality' and 'knowledge' with its many manifestations but as Infinite it supports the entirety of creation but is not limited by it. The process of creation is nothing but an expansion of the network of māyā. The process is described as transformation of the most subtle elements into the very gross bodies of creatures. This entire world-appearance, arranged in layers as it were, is just superimposed on the immutable and unchanging Brahman, just as the illusions of a snake or a garland, or a line of water, or a crack in the ground may be superimposed on a piece of rope. Just as the 'length' of the rope pervades all these superimpositions so does Brahman pervade the world.

Verses 41-86: After describing the process of superimposition, the reverse mode of cancellation is discoursed upon in verses 41-86. One is urged to consider that a sense of belonging with progeny, with the body, the vital air, the mind, the I-consciousness, as well as I as enjoying in the world, is not tenable, because all these are determined by 'time, space and objects' whereas Ātman is Immortal and Infinite, and of the nature of Bliss. The identification with the five sheaths of the not-self should be taken up one-by-one in progressive order each as a working hypothesis and discarded by sublating the outer by the inner veil which hides the Witness Self.

This section anticipates the teaching of Chapter III of the Upaniṣad. It summarizes the meditative austerities of Bhr̥gu, who, it is stated, approached his father Varuna, as a disciple and asked,

"Reverend Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said, "Seek to know that from which all beings here are born, having been born, by which they remain alive, and into which, on departing, they enter. That is Brahman."⁵⁷

Bhrgu's meditative analysis and austerities brought him to the conclusion that Brahman is food. He approached his Teacher with this answer, but was asked to continue with his tapasyā (meditation in silent retreat from the world) Bhrgu, thereafter, progressed from identifying Brahman with food (the body) to vital air, the mind, the intellect, and the enjoying-self. Lastly, discarding even the enjoying-self as transient, he realized the identity of his Atman with Brahman as Bliss Supreme. He did not return to his father anymore with this answer but went around singing joyously of the experience of Oneness:⁵⁸

He knew Bliss to be Brahman; verily all beings here are indeed born from Bliss; having been born, they are sustained in Bliss and on departing they re-enter Bliss. This same Knowledge of Bhrgu and Varuna is established in the cosmic sky (the innermost space in the heart).⁵⁹

Vidyāranya indicates here the same procedure of sublating one sheath by another by a graduated mode of greater signification.

⁵⁷Tait. III. 1-1.

⁵⁸Tait. III. 1-10.

⁵⁹Tait. III. 6-1.

This is in keeping with the described nature of māyā, that until the veil is removed, this magic order of reality is not experienced as an illusion; it can become so only on its being sublated by a finer and thus a more insistent layer of unreality.

Sankarācārya writes that the teaching of this Vallī aims at reaching the innermost Truth in the heart of man; but the intellect and mind are so preoccupied with external things that they cannot suddenly be re-called toward an inwardisation without some kind of support for thought. The body is visible to everyone, so by the logic of the 'moon on the branch'⁶⁰ the teaching moves gradually from the body to the innermost identity of the I-Consciousness.

The first name-form unit is the body which is described in the imagery of a bird⁶¹ and this imagery is maintained throughout the descriptive of finer layers of the not-self. The body of man has five important sections: the head, the right side, the left side, the middle portion and the nether limbs which supports the body (Verse 48).

⁶⁰The sliver of the new moon is not at once visible in the sky. Attention may be drawn to the branch of a tree and then directed toward the faintly visible moon on top of it. The branch is just instrumental in directing attention toward something with which it has no real connection. Such is the case with the five sheaths.

⁶¹Neither the Text, nor Sankarācārya uses specifically the imagery of a bird. Both describe the form of a man. The word pakṣa could mean 'side' as well as 'wing'. Sureśvarācārya (T.B.V. II. 243) refers to the bird-like construction for purpose of a sacrifice in this connection; this is confirmed in Sāyana-bhāṣya (on Taittīriya II. 1.1g). Anandagiri clearly puts forward the idea of the imagery of the bird (Gloss on Sankarabhāṣya on Tait. II. 1.1g).

This body is pervaded by a vital air which is synonymous with life itself (Verse 55). Consciousness will and feelings (Verses 61, 68-70, 80) form the subtle bodies which can be distinguished as distinct functions which affect the body.

Vidyāranya has anticipated the teaching of the third vallī in these verses. In answer to the question of Bhr̥gu, his Teacher who is also his father tells him, 'From that which everything emerges, by which every thing is sustained and into which everything is re-absorbed, know that to be Brahman.'⁶² The first meditation of Bhr̥gu brings him to the conclusion that since by food and sap everything is produced and sustained and also into which everything is transformed, food is Brahman.

Confronted by this answer the Teacher again repeats his lesson. The pupil realizes that the lesson is about that which is the Infinite ground of all. Thereupon Bhr̥gu gradually comes up with more subtle identifications with Brahman. His meditative analysis tells him that since the vital air is the cause of life, its sustenance and its absence means dissolution, Breath itself is Brahman;⁶³ then he thinks it must be the Mind (manas) or consciousness without which there is nothing at all.⁶⁴ It is the mind which

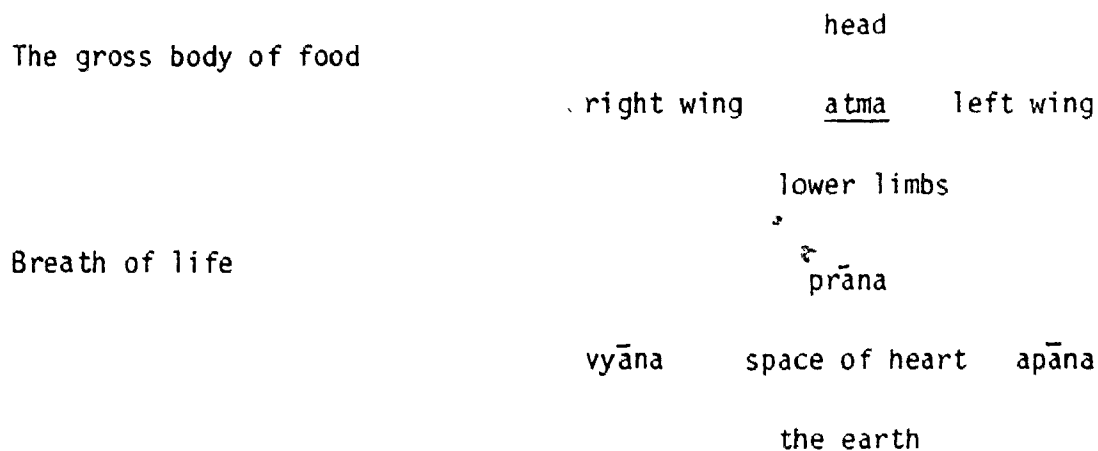
⁶²Tait. III. 2-1.

⁶³Ibid., 3-1.

⁶⁴Tait. III. 4.1.

grasps the meaning of the scriptures and is instrumental in obeying all injunctions toward moral conduct. Bhrgu is obliged to abandon this identification also because there are lapses of consciousness and it cannot sustain the entirety of creation. The Will is next thought of⁶⁵ and lastly the vital power of Enjoyment⁶⁶ which lies at the base of all manifestations.

This ānandamaya-kośa (the sheath of bliss) also has to be sublated because its form is due to the result of actions. It is true that it is the most subtle of the forms and is known only upon awakening from a deep refreshing sleep. Lastly, attention being fixed upon this innermost layer which covers the Witness-Self, the next state would be its simultaneous removal and the realization of Truth. The imagery can be diagrammed as follows:



⁶⁵Tait. III. 5.1.

⁶⁶Ibid. III. 6.1.

f

Conscious mind		yajuh	
	rk	injunctions	sāma
		atharva	
the sphere of willing		reverence	
	ṛtam	yoga	satyam
		mahah	
the sphere of enjoying		priyam	
	moda	ānanda	pramoda
		Brahman	

From the diagram, it becomes clear that the lesson teaches that the ātman which is in 'the space of the heart' inside the 'body' is to be known as Brahman. The seeker must proceed by way of restraint of propensities, active engagements in moral duties and yogic practices for achieving one-pointedness of the mind.

Verses 87-90: Vidyāranya refers to the sceptic's question in the Sankara-bhāṣya at this point. A sceptic may retort, "If one were to say that a barren woman's son, having bathed in the waters of a mirage, is passing by with a crown of sky-flowers on his head and a bow and arrow made of hare's horns in his hands, he would be as plausible as you about the reality of Brahman."

In other words if Brahman as the Witness Self is thus hidden in the sheaths then it is simply a non-entity. The author reiterates here the classical answer based on an ancient Text,⁶⁷ that even the denial of Self needs must establish that Knower which can never be known as an object of knowledge. All knowing is made possible by it, just as the Sun makes it possible for the eye to see objects. How would the sun be seen. It can only be realized as Truth or Reality.⁶⁸

Verses 91-95: The beginning of enquiry into the realms of superimposition, therefore, must start with Śravaṇa, that is, listening or hearkening to the Śruti. After listening to the words of the Teacher, the student may still have doubts and for dispelling this state of mind the discipline of meditative understanding is recommended. These doubts are not the rejections of the sceptic but questions which are likely to trouble the mind of the seeker. Vidyāraṇya mentions three doubts: (1) Regarding the reality of Brahman itself, (2) the liberation of the believer, and (3) the liberation of the non-believer.

Verses 96-100: The first question is raised regarding the real nature of Brahman. So far Brahman has been described as Infinite, of the nature of Bliss, consciousness, and the ultimate ground of the entire world. It has also been stated that this Brahman is in the innermost recesses of the heart. Now the neutrality of Brahman is

⁶⁷Br. IV. 1.14. . . .

⁶⁸Mund . , II. 2:10 & 11; Swetaswātara, VI. 14.

being personalized, as it were, by reference to His desire for creation.

Verses 101-113: Brahman, who is named God with reference to creation is not the instrumental cause like the potter; both materiality and instrumentality are due to māyā. God's desire "Let me become many" is itself the actuality of creation. God's creation is for His enjoyment alone. He as enjoyer enters into his creation and thus becomes the object of enjoyment as well. Thus we see that Brahman, desires then contemplates, creates, enters into the creations and becomes the object of enjoyment as well. By this five characterisations we may know of the reality of Brahman, not as an inferred entity but directly as so knowable by the wise.

Verses 114-125: The world created by Brahman is pervaded by His indicative qualities, namely, reality, consciousness and bliss. We experience the reality of things and are conscious, but the Infinity of Brahman cannot be experienced directly, but only as pleasures of the moment. This fragmentation of bliss-experience spurs us toward the plenitude of supreme Bliss. The quality of 'Infinite' therefore is used interchangeably with Bliss in other Texts also.⁶⁹ Vidyāranya propounds the classical view by saying that the qualities of 'is', 'known', 'pleasurable' adhering in

⁶⁹ Yajrasūcikopaniṣad 9; Adhyātmopaniṣad 32; Aksyupaniṣad 48, Mund. II. 2.7; Sarvopaniṣad 3.

objects are due their being grounded in Brahman and their variety of names and forms belong with māyā.⁷⁰ Ātman is linked with Brahman by striving perpetually for Bliss supremé because it is ever being denied of it in this world. This is established the reality of Brahman as answer to the first doubt.

Verses 126-130: The second and third doubts are two aspects of the same question. It is knowledge which liberates, neither belief nor disbelief. The desire for knowledge and its fulfilment is liberation; therefore neither is anyone specially entitled (including the gods) nor is anyone debarred from it. Moreover, the world does not ever dissipate into nothingness, it only ceases to affect the Knower of Brahman. A man will react with fear to the sudden appearance of a threatening figure in the dark, but he will not be disturbed if he knows it to be the stump of a tree.

Verses 131-140: In the next 10 verses Vidyāranya describes the state of desirelessness or complete blissfulness of the knower of Brahman. Actually the Knower cannot be said to be blissful because he is of the nature of the flavour (of bliss) itself. This one flavour pervades the entirety of creation. All those who are satisfied with their portions of this bliss do not look for the source of it but the true seeker, does not rest till he attains to

⁷⁰ Compare: Every entity has five characteristics, viz., existence, cognizability, attractiveness, form and matter. Of these, the first three belong to Brahman and the next two to the world. Drg-Drśya-Viveka, 20.

it. There is no differentiation in this state of fulfilment; all who attain liberation experience the Oneness of this homogenous flavour of bliss.

Verses 141-145: Wrongness and righteousness pertain to the world of duality. In the state peaceful self-identity with the whole of creation, there is no 'other' to be confronted in pain or pleasure. A state of contemplative 'self-joy' is to be imagined unbroken by demands as well as rewards from the world. This state of reaching beyond good and evil is for the knower of Brahman only who sings aloud in an ecstasy of joy his experience of identity with all, like Bhrgu.

Verses 145-150: Vidyāranya refers to the modes of self discipline leading upto renunciation to forestall any idea that the Bliss of Brahman is a state of irrepressible enjoyment. There is here no denial or trivializing of moral values, but an indication of a sphere of knowing where they will become irrelevant. All such questions are with regard to the duality of the I-consciousness and the 'It or they' The irreducible 'other'. If the I-consciousness were to include the entirety of creation and go beyond it as well then all would be as it should be and in no way could it be different from how it is and thus exactly it is celebrated by the Knower of Brahman. According to the philosophy which is being expounded here, gradation is recognized in the dimension of pleasure and pain and also in that of righteousness and evil. These are subjective to

the doer and the scriptures respectively; Knowledge is objective and self-evident, it is not brought about either by efforts of the doer or injunctions from the Scriptures. Both are, however, conducive to the awakening of the longing for Knowledge. Knowledge shines by its own light.⁷¹

The author concludes by saying that if the seeker is unable to achieve Self-realization in this life, then after death he may attain to more exalted spheres of action and from there again he may renew his efforts for enlightenment. For those, who are not raised to a higher world, there is rebirth again in this world. Vidyāraṇya indicates here that an ascetic by practising meditation on the identity of the Self and the praṇava (Om) may also attain to liberation. This path is for the seeker of highest qualification (sreṣṭha adhikāri) exemplified by the sage Yājñavalkya. This is the mode of expansion of Self-identity with the entirety of things, as 'I am all and all am I'. The same realization comes to the one who proceeds by way separating himself from the layers of not-self with the discriminating approach of 'I am not this, I am not this etc.' Such discriminatory analysis is for the seeker who has attained to vividiṣā, that is yearning for knowledge. Anybody could arrive at this stage of longing for liberation, as we see from the references

⁷¹ Swami Prjñānanda: History of the Philosophy of Vedānta (in Bengali) (Barisal, 1925, Vol. I) p. 193.

to Maitreyi Gargi Vidura, etc.⁷²

Vidyāraṇya concludes his commentary by seeking the blessings of his Teacher Sri Vidyātīrtha toward himself and all those who would wish to understand the teaching contained in the Taittirīyopaniṣad.

⁷²Jīvanmuktiviveka 1.

Translation of the Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah

1. This knowledge of Brahman, which has been described by Tittiri¹ in the Brahmavalli², I shall state for its easy assimilation. May the seekers of Liberation disport themselves in it (enjoy the discourse).
2. By performing all enjoined rites from darśa to piṭṛmedha,³ ranging over many lives, (thereafter) is generated the longing for knowledge in the last birth.⁴
3. Thereupon, one-pointedness (concentration of the mind) being achieved by practising spiritual exercises and upāsana (worship) such as reading of Scriptures etc. (for him) the Śruti (Veda) aphoristically indicates the Knowledge of Brahman.

¹The name of the seer who is believed to have founded that Branch of Yajurveda to which the Taittirīyopaniṣad, belongs.

²The second chapter of the Upaniṣad.

³Fire-sacrifices enjoined on householders as dutiful conduct toward family and society. For details about Darsapūṛṇamāsā offerings under different listings see Kane, History of Dharmasāstra 11, pt. 11 pp. 1297-98. Likewise for piṭṛmedha performed as daily ritual see Kane, Ibid., p. 748.

⁴The desire for Knowledge is itself an outcome of good conduct in life. Once the longing for the Knowledge of Brahman is aroused, the seeker is led toward the goal of liberation by the grace of the Teacher, who will instruct him regarding spiritual exercises, meditation and discrimination. Liberation thus being assured the life in which the desire for knowledge is generated would be the last on earth.

4. Before the aphorisms, the peace-chant is here stated, for the purpose of repetitive practice (japa)(because) by its japa such obstructions as animosity etc. pervading the mind are eradicated.⁵
5. The aphorism, "the Knower of Brahman attains the Supreme"⁶, (brahmavid parameti) being indicative of the entirety of meaning, namely, the object of knowledge, knowing, and the result thereof, all these implications are indicated hereby.
6. Brahman is the object of Knowledge, the intellect merged in Brahman is knowing, and (the attainment of) Brahman-state is its outcome. A detailed explanation of this is given in the stanza containing descriptive analysis of the aphorism.⁷

⁵The reference here is to the opening verse of the Upaniṣad, a peace-chant, seeking to invoke blessings on both Teacher and pupil, so that the dialogue on Knowledge of Brahman may take place unhindered. This peace chant is common to all the Upaniṣads of this Branch of the Yajurveda namely:

"May Brahman protect us both (Teacher and pupil) together; may he sustain us both together; may we work together with great energy; may our study be vigorous and effective; may we not wrangle with (hate) each other; let there be peace (and) peace (and) peace." Peace Chant: Tait. II.

⁶This aphorism is from the First Statement of Brahmanavallī: 'brahmavid āpnoti param', Tait. II.1.1(a), see ante p.

⁷Tait. II.1.1(a-g).. See ante p.

7. If (you are) desirous² of knowing this object of Knowledge, which is Brahman, know that to be Brahman which has the characteristics, Reality, Knowledge, Infinity.⁸
8. Being illusory, the entire world consisting of space etc. is unreal⁹. Brahman is not non-existent, therefore, it is indicated as Reality.¹⁰
9. The world not being self-pulsating is material. Brahman being self-vibrant is not material, therefore, it is called (It is of the nature of) Knowledge.
10. Material things (such as) pots etc. being limited by space, time, objectness, and so on, are finite. Since Brahman is not limited by space etc., It is stated to be Infinite.

⁸The three characteristics separately are used throughout the Upanisadic literature for designating Brahman, namely, i) Br.II.1.20, Ait. 1.1.1., Chh. 6.2.1; ii) Ait. 5.3, Br. IV-3; Mund. II.11-10; iii) Katha 3.15; Maitrī 2.4, Bṛihadāraṇyaka 2.4.12 etc. The three together as a description is unique to Taittirīya. In later works the description coalesces into one term, as Saccidānanda Brahman, mostly used for God: Ramottaratāpani, 47; Nṛsimhottaratāpani. 7. The use of it in secondary literature is too profuse and well-known to be cited here.

⁹The category of the 'illusory' defined infra under verse 11 is here distinguished from the 'unreal' while also identified ontologically speaking. Cf. Vidyaranya's distinctions elsewhere in the 'senses' of māyā for the man in the street for the logician and for the follower of scripture. Pañcadaśī VI, 130.

¹⁰The term Reality means that which is never sublated and what remains always as it is. Lest it be mistaken as something unmoving, static and therefore material, the next verse proceeds to describe it as Knowledge.

11. The three (limitations) space, time and the other one viz objects of things are the emanations of māyā.¹¹ Brahman is Reality. How can it be limited by those illusory emanations?
12. These three terms (Reality, Knowledge, Infinity) being free from materiality, falsity and fragmentation, are indicative of the part-less whole which should be understood as Brahman.
13. If it is said 'how to know Brahman of that nature?' then whoever knows Brahman dwelling in the supreme sky of the cave (really knows).¹²
14. Within the physical body is the vital air; internal to the vital air is mind; still within is the doer (intellect)

¹¹The word māyā is used to signify an order of existence which is neither true nor false, namely, an 'illusion'. Something is experienced, which cancels itself to reveal its real prop, as it were. The classical example is the illusion of a snake in a piece of rope. On perceiving the snake, there may be reactions of fear etc, but on the cancellation of the illusion the true nature of the rope is revealed. Māyā, therefore, performs a dual role of hiding the real as well as projecting the unreal. Compare DDV, 13: Two powers, undoubtedly, are predicated of Māyā, viz., those of projecting and veiling. The projecting power creates everything from the subtle body to the gross universe.

¹²Tait. II.1.1.

then the enjoyer. This succession is the cave.¹³

15. Nescience (is to be known) as cause residing in the cave of five sheaths which is the supreme sky wherein dwells Brahman well hidden.
16. If it is so understood that consciousness itself is here hidden in the creature then consider its Brahmanhood (that it is of the nature of Brahman) for the removal of the illusion of creaturehood.¹⁴
17. In itself Brahman is Consciousness. (Its) creaturehood is due to assuming of life. Due to the illusion of identification with the sheaths (It) appears as assuming life (living).

¹³The Pañcadaśī, in one similar (III.1) and one identical sloka (III.2) describes the cave of sheaths:

i) It is possible to know Brahman which is "hidden in the cave", (i.e. of the five sheaths) by differentiating It from them. Hence the five sheaths are now being considered. (III.1).

ii) Within the 'physical sheath' is the 'vital sheath', within the 'vital sheath's is the 'mental sheath' or the 'agent sheath', and still within is the 'blissful sheath' or the enjoyer sheath'. This succession (of one within the other) is the 'cave' (that covers the Atman). III-2.Tr. by Swami Swahananda (Madras:Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1967).

¹⁴The Jīva, the Locus of I-consciousness is described as 'creature' in the sense of one devoid of freedom or lordship. The upanisadic synonyms used for it are anīṣa (non-lord), paśu (one that is tethered and therefore restricted in its freedom).



18. That identification is dissipated by the discrimination being propounded (here). By such Knowledge alone comes the realization of Brahman as immediacy and in no other way (is this possible).
19. Eliminating the external world and the five sheaths (the seeker's) inward-turned intellect does indeed see (realise) Brahman who is devoid of all determinations.
20. To the outward-turned vision, Brahman appears with determinations only (therefore) it cannot dissipate (the sense of) creaturehood; understand, therefore, by the inner vision only (creaturehood is dissipated).
21. The outward-turned vision consists of the world-appearance and also the intellection of its reality. By discrimination is removed the (false) reality of the world; by yoga is removed the world-appearance.¹⁵
22. On the removal of the outward-turned vision, that which is seen by the inward-turned vision is the treasured mysterious I-consciousness which is seen as Brahman.

15 Intellectual appreciation of the fact of falsity is not enough, but meditative practices and spiritual discipline are required.

23. On its being seen, if it is asked 'By the gain of the Ultimate, what is (so) special (unique) on the part of the knower', then achievement of all fulfillment simultaneously would be the speciality.¹⁶
24. All living creatures forever desire pleasures (arising out) of objects. All these object-pleasures are impressions only of the Bliss of Brahman -- this is stated by a different Text.¹⁷
25. 'The external objects are sources of bliss': On account of this illusion, all living beings by (their) out-ward turned vision desire objects.
26. On realizing its desired object the intellect returning, enjoys the Bliss of Brahman for a moment in the heart, and (after that moment) again begins to yearn for the external.
27. On account of momentariness traceness (of Bliss) is imposed even on this perfection. Pleasure in object is due to illusion; in fact there is only the Bliss of Brahman.¹⁸

¹⁶Tait. II-1.1d. See ante p.

¹⁷Br. IV.3.32.

¹⁸Brahman as ānanda is stated in many Texts: Tait. II.4.1., II.5.1, II.7.1, III.6.1. ff. Br., II.1.19, II.4.11; etc. Maitrī, 6.13, Kaivalya 15, Mahānārāyaṇī-ja 23.1, Kausītakī 3.8. etc.

28. The discerning one, verily, with inward-turned vision continually contemplates that Bliss of Brahman. All momentary (experiences of Bliss) merge into that continuity.
29. The Knower of Reality simultaneously enjoys all desires in the form of Brahman (We have) heard of this special gain in the form of the attainment of Brahman.¹⁹
30. (Brahman) is stated to be Infinite in the explicative verse of the aphorism.²⁰ World-causality is stated for its being renowned as Infinite.
31. The Real Brahman which is hidden in nescience as cause in the cave entitled sheath, know as the supreme sky, from that (Brahman) emanates space (ākāśa).²¹
32. It should be understood that amongst (in the series of) space, breath, fire, water, earth, herbs, grains and body,

¹⁹Tait. II.1.1d.

²⁰Tait. II.1.1.b-e.

²¹The term ākāśa (space) has been mentioned in many Texts as the first evolute and thus Brahman Itself: Chh. I.9-1, Br. III. 9.13; Tif. 9.13; Tait. III.10.3; Nris. 3.1; etc. In this Upanisad as well as others, the supreme sky is identified with the space in the heart, a statement construed to mean the immediacy of Brahman as Ātman, the innermost Self: Gaud. I-2; Naitri. VI.28; Br. II.1-17; Chh. III-12. 9. etc.

- the former is cause and the latter is effect.²²
33. 'Indra became multiform through māyā';²³ (we know) from this Text these illusory manifestations of space etc. arise out of Brahman alone.
34. From another Text 'Its (Brahman's) transcendental power is many-faceted'²⁴ (is known that) Brahman has multiform power and on account of falseness it is māyā.
35. Reality being the nature of Brahman, the falsity of powers is appropriate. That insubstantial (entity) which appears (substantial) is māyā (performing) like a magic show.
36. On account of the manifoldness of māyā, there appears among its name-form manifestations, such as space etc, a variety of mutual distinctions.
37. The reality which is perceived in all (space etc), that is verily of Brahman only. Being of the nature of the ground of all, it pervades all.

²²All effects are grounded on Brahman as cause. Brahman as Ultimate Cause remains Infinite because it is unfragmented by space which is an emanation and so on, all along the series. (Sankarabhāṣya on Tait. II.1.1e).

²³Br. II. V-19.

²⁴Swetas. 6.8.

38. The manner in which the 'length' of rope inheres in all such superimpositions as snake, a line of flowing water, stick, garland on the rope.
39. (In like manner) on Real Brahman are superimposed (everything) from sky etc. to body. Brahman pervades all.
 ☞ Its reality is truly positive.
40. The A-cosmic 'becomes' (the cosmos of) becoming. This, however is (to be understood) as 'super-imposition and subsequent cancellation'.²⁵ According to this logic, superimposition is said to be (of everything) from space to body.
41. Now is being stated (the process of) cancellation of the world for (gaining) Knowledge of Brahman. In this context first is stated self-identification with body in order to remove (identity with) sons and friends.
42. The illusion of self-identity with son in the world, is established by the Text 'ātma itself assumes the name of son'.²⁶ It is reasonable also.
43. Felicity and infelicity affecting son, wife, etc. are perceived in oneself. This is why says the commentator (Sankarācārya) there is the illusion of self-identity with the son.

²⁵Cf Saṅkarabhāṣya on Gītā XIII, 13; XVIII 66 for both the use and the mention of this strategy.

²⁶Kausītakī II. 11.

44. The Aitereya states that his (the father's) very Self is substituted (as the son) for deeds of merit (rites etc.),²⁷ therefore self-identification (with son etc.), is verily an illusion.
45. Thus for abandoning (self-identification with son etc.), the body itself is here being stated to be one with the Self: the food (gross) body is itself the Self and no other.²⁸
46. 'Son, wife, etc. are mine', because of the perception of such distinction, self-identification with son is secondary, as lionness of the servant etc. (that is, when it is said that the servant or some other person is brave as a lion).
47. If due to previous desires the son is perceived as identified with Self, to remove that desire one must engage in meditation of identity with the body.
48. Meditating on the body in the likeness of a bird (as) head, wings (arms) the middle portion and tail, thereby achieving certainty of that identity (with the body) one should give up (move beyond) the Text stating self-identification with son.

²⁷Aitereya II. 1.4. The one Self, itself, continues in the father-son series. Saṅkarabhāṣya on Aitereya II. 1.4.

²⁸To deflect attention away from the Self as son, wife, etc., it is being focussed on the body and urged toward gradual inwardisation.

49. The modifications (changing conditions of sorrow and joy) pertain to the traveller,²⁹ (the man who returns home and greets his son) and not because of the son's joy and sorrow (because) 'I am a man', such an awareness is known, but not the awareness, 'I am a son'.
50. The body created out of food is Brahman, therefore, food is Brahman,³⁰ by such knowledge meditating on the totality of food man attains his desires.
51. On removal of the sense of self-identification with son etc., by discrimination or by meditation, (and) discarding the sense of self-identification with the body, vital air as self is to be reflected upon.
52. On account of its absence in the previous birth, it is not proper (for) this body to be thought of as Self. Performing bodily action previously, the Self attains this body, (of this birth).

²⁹The reference here seems to be to Kausītakī II, 11. 'Now when one has been away on returning home he should kiss his head saying 'you are born from every limb of mine, you are born from the heart, you, my son, are my self indeed.' What is stated is as a critique of the notion of the identity of oneself with one's son that is implied in the cited text and also in the Aitareya II, 1.4 referred to earlier. The joy of the father on greeting his son is not one of identification with the son's joy but of himself alone as if saying to himself, "I am myself only; I am not my son." See Sankarananda's Dipikā on the Kausītakī text cited above.

³⁰Tait. III, 2.1.

53. Being cause of life and death, it is proper to consider vital air as the living Self, because life remains while vital air lasts; with the cessation of vital air, (life) also lapses.³¹
54. To remove the desire for self-identification with body, (one should) meditate on the self-identification with vital air. Such (a one) who practices meditation believing vital air to be Brahman, attains the entirety of life.³²
55. prāna, apāna, samāna, udāna and vyāna are functions. In these one should ascribe wings, head, etc. as given above.
56. Breathing, the passage of air downward, the absorption of food in the whole body, belching etc., and strength in the body, consecutively these are their (of the five functions') activities.
57. After meditating on the entire functions pervaded by vital air, one should give up the desire for self-identification with body and thereafter, like the body should be given up self-identification with the pervading vital air.

³¹Tait. III. 3.1.

³²A full life is generally stated to be of one hundred years. Chh. II. 11-20, IV. 11-13.

58. Vital air cannot be the Self because of its materiality.
It is proper that consciousness should be the Self.
Thus is the mind on account of its appearing as conscious
to everyone.
59. The mind conditioned by the senses (like) eyes etc. is
instrument of (the knowledge of) external objects and
by the unconditioned mind is experienced internal pleasure
etc.
60. In order to relinquish the desire for self-identification
with vital air (one) should meditate knowing (holding) the
mind as Self, that (mind) is characterized by parts known
as functions.
61. There are four Vedas, Yajuh etc.; the ruling they contain
is injunction. The five mental functions by which their
knowledge is acquired, in them (is ascribed) the imagery
of the bird.
62. So that the mind should be capable of knowing that Brahman
which is beyond speech and mind, mind is to be thought
of itself, as Brahman.³³
63. In Brahman there is no pulsation arising out of the mind,
therefore, it is inaccessible (to the mind). (But)

³³Tait. III. 4.1.

nescience ~~is~~ to be destroyed, on mind becoming inward-seeing, therefore it (the mind) has capability.³⁴

64. On the destruction of the desire for self-identification with vital air, (one) should relinquish the selfhood of mind also. The selfhood is proper to the agent, the mind is only the internal organ.
65. That agent-form of consciousness, of which the characteristic appearance is such specific ignorance as 'I am the doer', is to be understood as Self itself.³⁵
66. The ego-consciousness (in) 'I am doing' fully pervades the body up to the tip of the nails (which is) manifest in the waking state.
67. Due to that (ego-consciousness) the body appears to be conscious. On its abeyance in the state of sleep the body becomes like deadwood, therefore (there is ascription of) selfhood in ego-consciousness.
68. On account of this statement, 'my mind,' mind is (seen to be) instrument of the Self, therefore, distinguishing the Self it should be meditated upon in the image of the bird.

³⁴The mind has potentiality for starting on the process of inwardisation but it may not penetrate beyond the barrier of I-consciousness.

³⁵This is a form of ignorance because the I-consciousness is not the true Self.

- 69 & 70. The five (traits), reverence etc. should be imagined existing therein as head etc. Reverence is faith, the intellect contemplating Reality is *Ṛta*, speaking exactly is truth, the one pointedness of intelligence is yoga, the knowledge arising out of yoga is mahah; Thus are to be contemplated the entirety of (the traits) reverence etc.
71. In secular as well as ritualistic (performances) if (one) knows the agency-consciousness to be Brahman and does not give up (such knowledge) until death, (he) goes happily to the region of Brahman (after) death.
72. Be meditating on consciousness the mind's desire for self-identification would be destroyed. (One) should give up self-identification with consciousness also because that is conjoined with sorrow.
73. Another Text states that 'the knower of self goes beyond sorrow',³⁶ therefore, (as) this agent is immersed in the ocean of sorrow, its self-hood verily is not proper.
74. It is proper for Bliss to be self. It is in this (self) because there is, seen attachment (for self); 'May I be forever', from such (statements) is seen abiding love for the self.

³⁶ Chh. 7.1.3.

75. Although Bliss alone is its natural state, even so sometimes due to association with agency-consciousness, it attains to sorrow repudiating its own Bliss.
76. No vestige of sorrow is seen in this essentially abiding blissfulness on the cessation of consciousness in the states of samādhi, deep sleep and fainting.
77. The nescience 'I did not know' which is apparant in the states of fainting and deep sleep is that of the intellect. The Bliss of Self is reflected in the intellectual modes (which are) of the nature of instrumentality.
78. Sorrow belongs with the mode of active intellect, pleasure happens in the mode of tranquil intellect. There are three kinds of pleasures of the intellect: love, joy and delight.
79. Through the sight of the beloved, gain and enjoyment, love etc., take place. Those three are causal Bliss. The Bliss of self is five-fold.
80. In these, the five parts; head etc., of the bird are imagined. Meditation should be of this sheath of Bliss as of the previous sheath.
81. These sheaths originate from food, vital air, mind, consciousness and bliss, amongst these the latter sheaths,

consecutively, are increasingly internal (more subtle than the former sheaths).

82. Here, result should be derived by the logic of the sheath of consciousness. The result of such meditation, in effect, will be the knowledge of Reality.
83. Knowing Bliss to be Brahman if (one) does not give up (that knowledge) till death, shedding off all demerits in the body (he) attains fulfilment of all desires.
84. In this sheath of bliss is the fifth part states the Text.³⁷ From the term Brahman one should understand that Brahman is the Bliss of Self.
85. The mind being purified by meditation there is vision of the Reality of Brahman. On knowing that Brahman treasured in the cave, all desires are attained, thus it is said.³⁸
86. The Text states thus, that which is treasured in the cave is of the nature of Reality and knowledge. These are the visible sheaths of that knowledge as well as of the entire world.
87. The sheaths of the world exist on account of being seen, but Brahman is not seen; therefore, the insensitive one says 'it is not.' But the intelligent one acknowledges its Reality.

³⁷ Sarvopanisad 6.

³⁸ Tait. II. 1.1d.

88. If anybody thinks thus that 'Brahman is not', then he himself would be proven unreal.³⁹ If the self-identification with sheaths is erroneous then according to him there cannot be any other Self.
89. The three transients love etc. are in the sheath of Bliss as well. Ignorance capable of being destroyed by knowledge does not admit in it (the reality of) Brahman.
90. If (one) admits 'Brahman exists' then his existence itself may be here established. On account of its self-luminosity the existence of the unseen (hidden) would be established.
91. Sons, wife ect. are secondary Self. The Self of food etc. is unreal-self. Bliss of Brahman is primary Self. These have been discoursed upon in order.
92. Knowledge being gained of the latter self, (in a series) the former self is transformed into the state of body. Because the former attains completion due to the latter therefore there is relationship of body and indweller between the two.

³⁹The denial of that by which everything else is made possible is stated to be self-destructive. The line of argument being followed here maintains that the true Self can be posited only by the process of cancellation of all false identifications including the ego-consciousness.

93. In this situation all the previous selfs are the body of the last self. The Bliss of Brahman alone being the self of the former is the indweller of body, this is the conclusion.
94. Harkening and meditation are the two instruments to knowledge of reality. There may be knowledge from harkening until the aforesaid conclusion (is reached).⁴⁰
95. Subsequently due to the short-coming of one's intellect, doubts may arise, therefore, he should meditate. He may have three doubts.
96. Whether Brahman exists or not -- is the first. If (It) exists then can the ignorant be liberated or not, whether the Knower of Reality attains to liberation or not; there are the other two doubts.
97. That which is pervaded by name-form, namely, space etc., exists; because Brahman is devoid of name-form, it does not exist, such is said by very deluded people.
98. The man of discernment proving the existence of Brahman by such causes as the desire for creation etc., should advise the ignorant repeatedly for dispelling delusions.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Knowledge can dawn from the instrumentality of revealed Texts only; yet there is scope for meditation to assimilate knowledge.

⁴¹ The created world affirms the Reality of Brahman as it comes into existence due only to the desire for creation on the part of Brahman.

99. At the beginning of creation God expressed desire that He Himself by his māyā would become many. Hence the desire for Self-procreation.⁴²
100. On account of this statement He Himself like clay etc. is the manifold material cause. And although desiring, there is no instrumentality, like the potter etc.
101. On account of His māyā, in the unqualified reality of Self there is instrumentality together with materiality. Māyā creates imponderables.
102. There is nothing impossible in māyā, therefore, it is not to be taken cognisance of.⁴³ Therefore, this creation is to be understood as is stated by the Vedas.
103. Reflecting on whatever is to be created, God created everything. Thereafter (He) entered into the body in the shape of the creature.⁴⁴
104. Consciousness is reflected in that which is of the nature of intellect, which supports the vital air. Thus it gets the designation of creature.

⁴²Tait. II. 6.1.

⁴³The text indicates that it is not a fruitful process to question the work of māyā. The world is to be accepted as it is presented by māyā.

⁴⁴Tait. II. 6.1.

105. God, on being the enjoyer, likewise became the object of enjoyment also. On account of the distinctions of this and that etc. the object of enjoyment is of many kinds.
106. The real is sensible and 'that' denotes the indirect and in the same manner also the absence of both. It is speakable and it is not speakable; in this opposition there is enjoyableness.
107. The nature of desires, the nature of contemplator, the nature of creator, the nature of penetrator, and the form of the object of enjoyment -- these five alike are causes of (showing) Brahman's reality.
108. On account of being the desirer God would be of the nature of reality like one desirous of creation. On account of reflection he is real like a minister; being creator, he is like the potter.
109. Being the penetrator he is like the snake (within the scale) and being the object of enjoyment is like the grain of rice etc. Not verily by inference but on account of the direct perception of the knowledgeable he is real.
110. That which is of the nature of reality has been stated earlier, that very Brahman appears as world-soul due to illusion; therefore, the wise speak of everything as Brahman.

111. The way in which snake, line of water etc. appearing so on account of illusion are (transformed to) rope itself on gaining the vision of reality, so Brahman alone is the entire world.
112. 'The world is real being connected with name-form and Brahman is not', such an opinion of the critic is not correct, therefore, Brahman should be understood as real.
113. The manner in which the 'length' of rope is pervasive in snake, line of water etc., similarly the reality of Brahman is pervasive in sky, wind etc.
114. This world of the nature of name-form ~~formerly~~ was verily non-existing. Later being created by Brahma, became real on account of the reality of Brahman.⁴⁵
115. That Brahman-Self, of the nature of, reality, consciousness, bliss, Itself with Its māyā transformed into the form of the world.
116. "It is real", 'It is cognizable', 'It is enjoyable', this is how every object is apprehended. These are the Reality, Consciousness and Bliss of Brahman, manifested in the objects.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Chh. e.19.1.

⁴⁵ Drg-Drśya-viveka, 20.

117. The name-form of pot etc. were previously of the nature of non-existence, therefore, their non-existence and existence are seen consecutively.
118. Those two qualities of being momentary and being finite cannot be of the nature of that (which is) qualified. Lying down and arising, are not of the nature of the reality of the body.
119. The reality and unreality of the other things are manifest in the form of name-form. Unreality is of the nature of māyā and reality of the nature of Brahman.
120. Materiality and sorrow belong to māyā and consciousness and bliss belong to God. If these worldly realities, consciousness and bliss, are of Brahman, how can they be unreal?
- 121-22. How can there be reality of Brahman in this, if it is asked, but no bliss, then listen to this: Just as that which is of sweet flavour is understood to be sweet etc., similarly here bliss in this is to be understood. For the undiscerning sweetness etc. are taste but for the discerning it is Brahman. The enjoyer of sweetness etc. is blissful and the knower of Brahman is happy.
123. If there is no bliss of Brahman here then who would use the body for striving? For, prāṇa, eye etc. being mere

- instruments cannot have agency in striving.⁴⁶
124. Just exertion alone is not to be cause of the pleasure of objects. From acquiring a few objects also (he, the knower) immerses in his own bliss for a moment.
125. Starting from the creation by desire upto the pleasure of objects etc. the reality of Brahman being established, thereafter the liberation of the knower and the ignorant is (next) considered.
126. If the knower on account of being Brahman is liberated, then the ignorant like the knower also would be free. If even on being of the nature of Brahman, the ignorant is in bondage, then the knower is also in bondage.
127. (To say this) is not correct because the knowledge of the one-ness of Self and Brahman is the (one and) only cause of liberation. Therefore the knower of one-ness is liberated and the knower of differences is not liberated.⁴⁷
128. Because of the form of height etc., if somebody sees the form of a thief then he is afraid; but one who sees it as a dead stump remains fearless. Therefore knowledge of reality alone is the instigating factor.

⁴⁶Tait. II. 7.1.

⁴⁷It is knowledge which liberates, neither belief nor disbelief. See also Kaṭṭha 4.11.

129. Even after knowing the meaning of rituals, there does remain the fear of birth etc. as in the case of the Wind etc., for those ignorant of the meaning of Vedanta.⁴⁸
130. Wind, Sun, Fire, Indra and Death although knowers of dharma in (their) previous birth, are now in fear of God because of not being knowers of Reality (Brahman).
131. The knower achieves all desires. He is flavour itself, thus says the Text.⁴⁹ To clarify the bliss of Brahman is being stated the reflective exegesis leading to bliss.
132. In cosmic Hiranyagarbha possessed of many qualities is internalized the bliss of the whole of mankind and the bliss of the gods. These two are to be understood.⁵⁰
133. For the one in the middle (of the path) due to the increase of previously acquired merit, happiness increases. Verily that which is the happiness of all is desired in the desireless knower. (The yogin desires the happiness of all).
134. Thereafter the gain of all desires is the bliss called rasa (flavour). That residing in the Self, that residing in the elements and that belonging to the divinities are (in fact) that one (rasa) only.⁵¹

⁴⁸Kaṭha 6.3; Tait. II. 8.1.

⁴⁹Tait. II. 6.1.

⁵⁰Br. 4.3.33; Tait. II. 8.1-4.

⁵¹Tait. II. 7.1.

135. Satisfied in their own positions they do not desire that status -- (of Brahman). But finding fault here the knower is free of desire from all that.
136. The bliss which is in the seeker of knowledge and the bliss in other men, in the Sun and the bliss in other gods is not different.⁵²
137. The characteristic of that which is the most beloved being identity, the bliss of attainment of goal is not different. Therefore flavour is partless (whole) and homogeneous.
138. Thus the knower rising above the imagined six sheaths of one's own son etc. is established in this bliss of Self which is whole and of homogeneous flavour.⁵³
139. The universal bliss etc. are hundred times more than the previous (types of) bliss, but they also are like drops, mere impressions, of the bliss of Brahman.⁵⁴
140. Therefore its limit (measure) cannot be stated and cannot be thought. The knower of that is never in fear of the cause of birth or anything else.

⁵²Tait. II. 8.5.

⁵³Tait. II. 8-5.

⁵⁴Br. 4.3.32.

141. Why did I not acquire merit, why did I commit sin, such thoughts scorch the ignorant but do not scorch the Knower.⁵⁵
142. Knowing the scorching nature of both and knowing with indifference the rituals related to both, thus making the self happy (he) makes his intellect steadfast with understanding.⁵⁶
143. Knowing both virtue and sin to be products of body and bodily organs only, seeing all things as oneself and oneself as all things, (the wise man) abides singing the hymns of the Sāma-ve da.
144. 'I am food, I am the enjoyer, I am the mediator, distinct also am I', so singing the universality of Self (he) is known to be liberated in this life.⁵⁷
145. Contemplation on Brahman is the principle means of attaining liberation in this life; by this (contemplation) Bhrigu realized Brahman.⁵⁸
146. Truth, austerities, self-control, tranquility, charity, righteousness, sacrifice, attending to fire, rituals yoga,

⁵⁵Tait. II. 9.1.

⁵⁶Tait. II. 9.1.

⁵⁷Tait. III. 10-6.

⁵⁸Tait. III. 1-10; Sankarabhāṣya on Tait. III. 10-6.

and renunciation, these verily are for the seeker of Truth.⁵⁹

147-48. Renunciation is supreme austerity; the ascetic (renunciate) should identify his self with (the mantra) Om.⁶⁰ The limbs of the yogi is equal to all the constituents of a sacrifice. For him time as day and night, is like the Darśa etc. (and) whose life verily is like a sacrifice. Such an one admired as yogi is indeed liberated.

149. Departing (after death)(along) the northern path, reaching the (region of the) Sun, he is liberated; departing the southern path, reaching the (region of) moon he is not liberated (that is, he is born again).

150. May the great Lord Vidyātīrṭha bestow (his) blessings on those who are desirous of knowledge, wishing to be enlightened by the light of the Taittirīyaka-vidyā.

⁵⁹ According to vidyaranya Bhrgu's liberation is due to Vividiṣā (yearning for Knowledge); he mentions further the possibilities of liberation for the ascetic yogi as well.

⁶⁰ The practice of pranava-upāsana (meditation on the four stages of the mind) is indicated here by the author which could lead to liberation also and is called Vidvatsamnyāsa. Anubhūtiprakāśah Chapter 20 (on Praṇava-upāsana and Jīvanmuktiviveka, 5).

Text in Roman TransliterationTaittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah

1. Brahma-vallyāṃ brahma-vidyāṃ Tittiriḥ prāha yam-imām.
Vakṣye sukhāvabodhāya krīḍantvatra mumukṣavaḥ.
2. Darsadi Pitṛmedhāntaiḥ karmabhir-bahujanmasu.
anuṣṭhitair-vividiṣa jāyate'ntima-janmani.
3. Tato yogaṃ samabhyasya Samhitopāsanādibhiḥ.
ekāgre sādHITE'thāsyā vidyāṃ sūtrayati śrutiḥ.
4. Sūtrāt pūrvaṃ śāntimantro japāyātropavarnītaḥ.
japena vighnā dveṣādyāḥ śamyanti manasi sthitāḥ.
5. Brahmavit parametīti sūtraṃ sarvārtha-sūcanāt.
jñeyam jñānam phalam ceti sarve'rthāḥ sūcitā iha.
6. Jñeyam brahma tadīyā dhīr-jñānam syād brahmatā-phalam.
sūtra-vyākhyānarūpāyām-rcyetaḥ visadīkṛtam.
7. Jñātavyam brahma yat-tat-kimiti cet-tasya lakṣaṇam.
satyam jñānam-anantaṃ yat-tad-brahmetyavagamyatām.
8. Ākāśādi jagat-sarvam-anṛtaṃ māyikatvataḥ.
nānṛtaṃ brahma tenaitat-satyam-ityabhidhīyate.
9. Jagaj-jadaṃ svataḥ sphūrṭi-rāhityād brahma tu svayam.
sphuratītyajadaṃ tena jñānam-ityabhidhīyate.
10. Jadaṃ ghatādyantavat syād deśakālādi-vastubhiḥ.
na deśādikṛto'nto'sya brahmānantam tataḥ smṛtam.

11. Deśakāḷādyanya-vastutrāyaṃ māyā-vijṛmbhitam.
brahma satyaṃ māyikais-taiḥ paricchinnam katham bhavet.
12. Jaḍānṛta-paricchinna-vyāvṛtyaiva padatrāyam.
lakṣakam syād-akhaṇḍasya tat-tad-brahmeti budhyatam.
13. Tādṛg brahma katham vidyād-iti ced-abhidhīyate.
guhāyāṃ parame vyomni sthitam brahma tu veda yaḥ.
14. dehād-abhyantaraḥ prāṇaḥ prāṇād-abhyantaram manah.
tataḥ kartā tato bhoktā guhā seyam paramparā.
15. Pañca-kośa-guhāyāṃ yad-ajñānam kāraṇam sthitam.
tad vyoma paramam tasmin nigūḍham brahma tiṣṭhati.
16. Jīve caitanyam-evātra nigūḍham-iti cet-tadā.
tasyaiva brahmatām vidyāj-jīvatva-bhrānti-hānaye.
17. Svato brahmaiva caitanyam jīvatvam prāṇa-dhāraṇāt.
kośa-tādātmya-vibhrāntyā bhātyasya prāṇa-dhāraṇam.
18. Vakṣyamāṇa-vivekena tat-tādātmyam apohyate.
brahma-satkr̥tis-tvīdṛg-bodhenaiva na cānyathā.
19. Bāhyam jagat pañca-kośāñścāpohyāntarmukhāsya dhīḥ
brahma sākṣāt-karotyeva sarvopādhi-vivarjitam.
20. Sopādhyeva bahir-dṛṣṭyā bhāti brahma na tāvatā.
apaiti jīvatā tasmād-antardṛṣṭyaiva budhyatām.
21. Bahir-dṛṣṭir-jagad-bhānam tasya satyatva-dhīrapi.
vivekāt satyatā'paiti jagad-bhānam tu yogataḥ.

22. Bahir-dr̥ṣṭāvapeḥ tayam antar-dr̥ṣṭyā yadikṣyate.
nigūḍham jīva-caitanyam tad brahmeti prapaśyati.
23. Dr̥ṣṭe tasmin paraprap̥tyā viduṣo'tiśayo'tra kaḥ.
iti ced-yugapat-sarvakāmā ptir-adhikā bhavet.
24. Kāmyante viṣayānandā nikhilaiḥ prāṇibhiḥ sadā.
brahmānandasya te sarve leśā ityaparā śrutih.
25. Ānandahetavo bāhyā viṣayā iti vibhramāt.
Kāmayante bahir-dr̥ṣṭyā viṣayān prāṇino'khi'tlah.
26. abhiṣṭa-viṣaye labdhe dhīḥ pratyāvṛtya hr̥dgatam.
brahmānandam kṣaṇam bhuktvā bāhyam kāmayate punaḥ.
27. Kṣaṇikatvāl-leśatā'sya pūrṇasyāpyupacaryate.
viṣayānandatā bhrāntyā brahmānando hi vastutaḥ.
28. Antar-dr̥ṣṭyā vivekī tu brahmānandam sadekṣate.
antar-bhavanti kṣaṇikāḥ sarve tasmin-nirantare.
29. tattvavid brahmarūpeṇa sarvān kāmān sahaśnute.
ityeṣo'tiśayo brahma-prāptirūpam phalam śrutam.
30. Sūtra-vyākhyāna-rūpāyām-rcyanantam itīritam.
tadānantya-prasiddhyartham jagatkāraṇatocyate.
31. Yatsatyam brahma kośākhyā-guhāyām vyomanāmake.
ajñāne kāraṇe gūḍham tasmādākāśa udgataḥ.
32. Kham vāyvagni-jalorvyoṣadhyanna-deheṣu kāraṇam.
pūrvam pūrvam bhavet kāryam param param-itīkṣyatām.

33. Indro māyābhir-abhāvād bahurūpa iti śruteḥ.
āsan māyīkarūpāṇi khādīni brahmagāni hi.
34. Parāsyā śaktir-vividhetyevaṃ śrutyantareraṇāt.
vividhā brahmaṇāḥ śaktiḥ sā ca māyānṛtatvataḥ.
35. Satyasya brahmarūpatvāc-chakter-anṛtatocitā.
nistattvā bhāsate yā'sau māyā syād-Indrajālavat.
36. Māyāyā vividhatvena tasyāḥ kāryeṣu khadiṣu.
nāmarūpeṣvanekatvaṃ bhātyanyonya-vilakṣaṇam.
37. Bhāti sarveṣu satyatvam-ekaṃ yad brahmagam hi tat.
sarvādhiṣṭhāna-dharmatvāt tat sarvatrā'nugacchati.
38. Sarpa-dhārā-daṇḍa-mālā rajjvām yāḥ parikalpitāḥ.
etāsu rajjugam dairghyam sarvāsvanugataṃ yathā.
39. Vyomādyā dehaparyantāḥ satye brahmaṇi kalpitāḥ.
sarveṣvanugataṃ brahma satyatvam tasya susthitam.
40. Adhyāropāpavādābhyām niṣprapañcam prapañcyate.
iti nyāyena dehānta āropaḥ khādirīritaḥ.
41. Athāpavādo jagataḥ kathyate brahma-buddhaye.
tatrāḍau putramitrādi-nuttyai dehātmatocyate.
42. Atmā vai putranāmāsītyevamātmatva-vibhramah.
laukiko nudyate putre śrutyā yuktiśca vidyate.
43. Sākalyam putra-bhāryāder-vaikalyam cātmanīkṣyate.
ityāha bhāṣyakṛt-tena putre'sti svātmatābhramah.

44. So'syāyamātmā punyebhyaḥ pratidhīyata ityadaḥ.
vaco vaktyaitareyo'taḥ svātmatā-bhrama eva hi.
45. Evaṃ vyudasitum dehasyaivātmātvam-ihocyate.
yo deho'nnamayāḥ so'yamevātmānyo na kaścana.
46. Madīyāḥ putra-bhāryādir-iti bhedāvabhāsanāt.
gaunī syād ātmā putre bhṛtyādau simhatā yathā.
47. Pūrva-vāsanayā putre syātmatā bhāti cet punaḥ.
tad vāsanāpanuttyartham dehātmatvam-upāsyatām.
48. Śirāḥ pakṣau madhyapucche iti dehasya pakṣitām.
dhvātvā tan-niṣṭhatām prāpya tyajet putrātmatā-śrutim.
49. Dhīr-manuṣyo'ham-ityasti putro'ham-iti nāsti dhīḥ.
vikāro'sti parivrājo na putra-sukha-duḥkhayoḥ.
50. Annaḥ deha evātmā tadannaṃ brahma-buddhitāḥ.
upāsyā sarvamapyannaṃ svābhīṣṭam labhate pumān.
51. Vivekādvā dhyānato vā putrādyātmatvānihnutaḥ.
tathā dehātmatām tyaktvā prāṇātmatvam vicintyatām.
52. Na dehasyātmatā yuktā pūrva-janmanyabhāvataḥ.
purātmatā dehadam karma kṛtvā prāpnotyado vapuḥ.
53. Āyur-marāṇayor-hetau prāṇe jīvātmatocitā.
sthite prāṇe bhavatyāyuh prāṇāpāye tu hīyate.
54. Dehātma-vāsanā-nuttyai prāṇātmatvam upāsyatām.
prāṇo brahmetyupāsīnaḥ sarvam-āyuh samaśnute.

55. Prāṇo'pānaḥ samānaścodāna-vyānau ca vṛttayah.
etāsu pūrvavat pakṣa-mūrdhādīn parikalpayet.
56. Śvāso'dhogamaṇam kṛtsne dehe'nnasya sarīkṛtiḥ.
udgārādibalaṃ dehe kriyāstāsām kramād imāḥ.
57. Vṛttisaṃghaṃ prāṇamayam dhyātvā dehātmavāsanām.
saṃtyajyātha prāṇamaye tyajed-dehavat-ātmatām.
58. Prāṇo nātmā jaḍatvena cetanasyātmatocitā.
manastu cetanatvena sarvasya pratibhāsanāt.
59. Cakṣurādyaḥ śāpekṣaṃ mano bāhyārtha-sādhakam.
nirapekṣeṇa manasā sukhādyantara-bhāsanam.
60. Ātmavṛttim manaso buddhvā tyaktum prāṇātmavāsanām.
upāsīta manas-tac-ca vṛttyākhyāvayavairiyutam.
61. Yajurādyaś-caturvedā ādeśas-tadgato vidhiḥ.
tad-bhāśake manovṛtti-pañcake pakṣi-kalpanā.
62. Avāñ-manasa-gamyasya brahmaṇo'pyavabodhane.
śaktam bhaven-manas-tac-ca mano brahmeti kalpanā.
63. Na brahmaṇi manojanya-sphūrtis-tasmād-agamyatā.
manasyantarmukhe naśyed-avidyā tena śaktitā.
64. Prāṇātma-vāsanā-nāśe manaso'pyātmatām tyajet.
kartur-ātmatvam-ucitam mano'ntaḥkaraṇam khalu.
65. Ahaṃ kartetyado'jñānam viśiṣṭam yasya bhāśakam.
tat-karṭṛrūpaṃ vijñānam-atmatyenāvagamyatām.

66. Ahaṁkriyāta ityeṣo'haṁkārahyaḥ sa yigrahe.
ānakhāgram-abhivyāpya sthito jāgarane sphutaḥ.
67. Tena cetanavad-deho bhāti suptau tu tal-layāt.
bhavet kāṣṭhāsamo dehas-tenāhaṁkāra ātmātā.
68. Madiyaṁ mana ityukter-ātmanah karanam manah.
ityātmanam vivicyātha tamupāsīta pakṣivat.
69. Śraddhādyāḥ pañca tatrasthāḥ kalpyā mūrdhādirūpataḥ.
Śraddhāstikyam-ṛtam buddhau yathā vastvanucintanam.
70. Yathārtha-bhāṣaṇam satyam yoga ekāgratā dhīyah.
mahastu yogajam jñānam cintyāḥ śraddhādayo'khilāḥ.
71. Laukike vaidike kartr-vijñānam brahma vetti cet.
tyajed-āmaranam co ced brahmaloke sukham vrajet.
72. Vijñāna-dhyānato naśyen-manasyātmatva-vāsanā.
vijñātmatvam-apyeṣa tyajecchoka-yutavataḥ.
73. Śokam taratyātma-bodhāditi śrutyantare jagau.
Śokasāgar-magno'yam kartā tasyātmātā na hi.
74. Ānandasyātmātā yuktā so'trāsti prīti-darśanāt.
sadā bhūyāsam-eveti nityam premātmanīkṣyate.
75. Ānandaika-svabhāvo'pi kartr-vijñāna-saṅgamāt.
nijānandam tīraskṛtya kadācic-chokam-āpnuyāt.
76. Samādhi-supti-mūrcchāsu vijñānasya laye sati.
nityānanda-svarūpe'smin-choko'lpo'pi na vīkṣyate.

77. Mūrcchā-suptyor-yadaḥjñānaṃ bhātī tat-karaṇaṃ dhiyaḥ.
kāraṇe buddhi-vṛttau ca syānandaḥ pratibimbati.
78. Duḥkhaṃ rājasā-dhī-vṛttau sāttvikyāṃ tat sukhaṃ bhavet.
priyaṃ modaḥ pramodaścetyucyate dhī-sukhaṃ tridhā.
79. Iṣṭasya darśanāl-lābhād bhogāc-ca syuḥ priyādayaḥ.
te trayāḥ kāraṇānanda ātmānandaśca pañca te.
80. Pakṣiṇo'vayavāḥ pañca mūrdhādyas-teṣu kalpitāḥ.
ānandamaya-kośo'yam-upāśyaḥ pūrva-kośavat.
81. Anna-prāṇa-mano-vijñānānanda ir-jaṇitā ime.
kośās-teṣu krameṇa syur-uttarottaram-āntarāḥ.
82. Vijñāna-kośa-nyāyena phalam-unnīyatām-īha.
tad-upāsti-phalaṃ cārthāt-tattvabodha-phalaṃ bhavet.
83. Ānandaṃ brahma vijñāya tyajet-āmarāṇaṃ na cet.
śarīre pāpmano hitvā sarvān kamān-avāpnuyāt.
84. Ānandamaya-kośe'smin pañcamāvayavaḥ śrutaḥ.
brahma-śabdena tad brahma svātmānanda itī kṣyatām.
85. Upāsanāc-cittaśuddhau brahma-tattvam-avekṣate.
buhāhita-brahma-bodhāt sarva-kāmāptirīritā.
86. Guhāhitaṃ brahma yat-tat-satyam jñānam-itī śrutam.
tasya jñānasya drśyās-te kośāḥ sarvaṃ jagat-tathā.
87. Jagat-kośās-ca drśyatvāt santi brahma na drśyate.
ato nāstītvāha mūdhās-tatsattām vakti buddhimān.

88. Brahma nāstīti ced-veda svayam-eva bhavet asat.
kośātmatā dūṣitā cen-nānya ātmāsti tan-mate.
89. Ānandamaya-kośe'pi priyādyā naśvarās-trayaḥ.
ajñānam ca jñāna-nāśyam na brahmāṅgīkarotyasaḥ.
90. Asti brahmeti ced-veda svayam-evātra sambhavet.
adrśyasyāpi sattā syāt svaprakāśatva-sambhavāt.
91. Gaunātmā putra-bhāryādir-mithyātmānamayādikaḥ.
brahmānando mukhya ātmā krameṇaite vivecitāḥ.
92. Uttarātmā-viveke'sya purvātmā dehatām vrajet.
tenottareṇa pūrvasya pūrnatvād-dehi-dehatā.
93. Satyevaṃ nikhilam pūrvam śarīram hyantimātmanah.
brahmānandas-tu śarīrah pūrvasyātmeti nirṇayah.
94. Śravaṇam mananam cobhe tattva-jñānasya sādhanē.
ukta-nirṇaya-paryantam vijñānam śravaṇād bhavet.
95. Atha sva-buddhi-doṣeṇa yataḥ sandeha-sambhavaḥ.
ato'sau mananam kuryāt sandehāḥ syus-trayo'sya hi.
96. Brahmāsti no vetyekah syād-ajñānī mucyate na vā.
tattvavin-mucyate no vetyaparau samśayā vubhau.
97. Yad-asti nāma-rūpābhyām vyāptam tad viyadādikam.
brahma nirnāma-rūpatvān-nāstītyāha vimūḍha-dhīḥ.
98. Vivekī brahmaṇah sattām sṛṣṭi-kāmādi-hetubhiḥ.
sādhanayan bahudhā mūḍham bodhayen-moha-nuttaye.

99. Akāmayata sṛṣṭyādaḥ paramātmā sva-māyayā.
bahu syām-aham-evātaḥ prajāyeyeti kāmanā.
100. Svasyaiva bahudhā cokter-upādānam mṛdādivat.
tathā kāmayitṛtve na nimittatvam kulālavat.
101. Nirdharmake'pyātma-tattve nimittatvam svamāyayā.
upādānatva-sahitam māyā durghaṭa-kāriṇī.
102. Asambhāvyaṃ na māyāyām-upalambham na sārhati.
tato vedo yathā brūte sṛṣṭiresā tatheṣyatām.
103. Sṛjyam-ālocayan sarvam-asṛjat parameśvaraḥ.
sṛṣṭvātha jīvarūpeṇa praviveśa vapuṣyayam.
104. Yo vijñānamayas-tasmiṃścaitanyaṃ pratibimbam.
tac-ca dhārayati prāṇāṃ-jīvakhyam labhate tataḥ.
105. Bhoktā bhūtvēsvaras-tadvad bhogyarūpo'pi so'bhavat.
bhogyam ca bahudhā sac-ca tyac-cetyādivibhedataḥ.
106. Sat pratyakṣam parokṣam tyat tadabhāvāvubhau tathā.
Vaktum śakyamaśakyam cetyādi dvandve'sti bhogyatā.
107. Kāmitvam-ālocakatvam śraṣṭṛtvam ca praveṣṭṛtā.
bhogyākāraśca pancaite brahma-sadbhāvabhetavaḥ.
108. Sadrūpaḥ paramātmā syāt kāmitvāt sargakāmivat.
ālocanān-mantrivat san sraṣṭṛtvāc-ca kulalavat.
109. Praveṣṭṛtvāt sarpavat san bhogyatvāc-caudanādivat.
nānumānāireva kintu vidvat-pratyakṣato'pi san.

110. Yat satyaṃ brahma pūryoktaṃ tadeva jagadātmanā.
bhāti bhrāntyā tataḥ sarvaṃ brahmetyācakṣate budhāḥ.
111. Sarpa-dhārādikā bhrāntyā kalpitā tattva-darśane.
rajjureva yathā tadvad brahmaiva sakalaṃ jagat.
112. Nāmarūpayutatvena jagat sad-brahma neti yat.
pūrvapakṣimatam tan-na brahmasattvaṃ tadīkṣyatām.
113. Rajjudairghyaṃ yathā sarpadhārādiṣvanugacchati.
brahmasattvaṃ tathā vyemavāyvādiṣvanugacchati.
114. Asadevedamagre 'bhūn nāmarūpātmakam jagat.
paścāt-tu brahmaṇā sṛṣṭaṃ sadabhūd brahmasattvataḥ.
115. Tad-brahmātmānam-evemaṃ saccidānandalakṣaṇam.
akārṣījjagadākāraṃ svayameva svamāyayā.
116. Asti bhāti priyaṃ ceti prativastvavabhāsate.
ta ete saccidānandā brahmaḡā bhānti vastuṣu.
117. Nāmarūpe ghaṭādīnāṃ prāgabhā vayute tataḥ.
abhāvatvaṃ ca bhāvatvaṃ paryāyenekṣyate tayoh.
118. Āgamāpāyidharmau yau na tayor-dharmi-rūpatā.
śayanotthanayor-nāsti dehavastusvarūpatā.
119. Sattvāsattve 'nyadiye bhāsete nāmarūpayoh.
māyārūpam-asattvaṃ syāt sattāyā brahmarūpatā.
120. Jādyaduḥkhe māyike sto bhānānandaḡ parātmagau.
laukikāḥ saccidānandā brahmaḡās-ced asat katham.

121. Bhavet-tu brahmasattā' sminnānando'sti katham śṛṇu.
ānando'trābhyupetavyo rasayān madhurādiyat.
122. Mūḍhasya madhurādiḥ syād raso brahma viyekinaḥ.
madhurādibhug-ānandī brahmayic-ca tathā sukhī.
123. Brahmānando na ced-atra deham ko nāma ceṣṭayet.
prāṇākṣāṇam ceṣṭakatvam na tatra karaṇatvataḥ.
124. Na kevalam ceṣṭakatvam viṣayānanda-hetutā.
apyalpa-viṣayāṇ labdhvā svānande majjati kṣaṇam.
125. Viṣayānandaparyantaiḥ kāma-sṛṣṭyādihetubhiḥ.
brahmasattve sthite muktiś-cintyate vidvad-ajñayoḥ.
126. Vidvān brahmeti muktaś-cen mucyetajño'pyabhiñnavat.
brahmarūpo'pi baddhaś-cedajño'bhiñño'pi badhyate.
127. Maivam brahmātmaikyabodha evaiko mokṣakāraṇam.
aikyadarśī mucyate'to bhedadarśī na mucyate.
128. Urdhvākāre same'pyasmiṅscoradarśī bibhetti hi.
sthāṇudarśī nirbhayo'tas-tattvabodhaḥ prayojakaḥ.
129. Jñāte'pi karmakāṇḍārthe vedārtham-ajānataḥ.
Janmātibhir-bhavatyeva vāyvādīnām yathā tathā.
130. Vāyuh Suryo Vahnir-Indro mṛtyuś-cātītajanmani.
dharmañña apyatattvajña idāñim bibhyatiśvarāt.
131. Jñānī kāmān-eti saryān raso vai sa iti śrutam.
brahmānandam sphuṭīkartum mīmāṃsā'nandagocyate.

132. Sampūrṇo mānuṣānandaḥ sārvaḥḥaume guṇair-yute. .
hirāṇyagarbhe sampūrṇo deyaṇando'yadhīhi tau.
133. Madhyasthe pūrvapuṇyānām-utkarṣād vardhate sukham.
sarveṣāṃ yat sukhaṃ tatttu niṣkāme jñāninīṣyate.
134. Sarvakāmāptireṣātha rasākhyānanda ucyate.
adhyātmam-adhibhūtaṃ cādhidaivaṃ caika eva saḥ.
135. Sarve svasvapade tṛptāḥ kāmayante na tatpadam.
Jñānī tu doṣadrṣṭyatra niṣkāmas-taiḥ samastataḥ.
136. Bubhutsau puruṣe'nyeṣu manuṣyeṣu ca yo'sti yaḥ.
Āditye cānyadeveṣu sa ānando na bhidyate.
137. Parapremāspadatvasya lakṣaṇasyaikarūpataḥ.
lakṣyānando na bhinnah syād akhaṇḍaikaraso hyataḥ.
138. Evaṃ vidvān svaputrādeḥ kośaṣatkāt prakalpitāt.
vyutthāyākhaṇḍaikarase svānande pratitiṣṭhati.
139. Sārvaḥḥaumādikānandaḥ pūrvabhyaḥ śatasamkhyayā.
pare'dhikāste tu leśā brahmānandasya binduvat.
140. Tasmād iyattā naivāsya vaktuṃ dhyātum ca śakyate.
na bibhetyeva tam vidvān janmahetoḥ kutaścana.
141. Puṇyaṃ nākaravaṃ kasmāt pāpaṃ tu kṛtavān kutaḥ.
iti cintā tapatyajñam jñāninaṃ na tapatyasau.
142. Tāpakatvaṃ tayor-vidvān-upekṣānuṣṭhitam tayoh,
ātmānaṃ priṇayan bodhāt sudṛdhīkurute dhiyam.

143. dehendriyakṛte punye pāpe cātmatayā sadā
 Paśyan sarvātmātām syasya gāyan sāmna'vatiṣṭhate.
144. Ahamannam tathānnādaḥ ślokaḥcetarō'pyaham.
 iti sarvātmātām gāyan jīvanmukta itīryate.
145. Jīvanmuktyavasānāyā vidyāyā mukhyasādhanam.
 vicāro brahmanastena bhṛgurbrahmāvabuddhavān.
146. Satyam tapo damaḥ śāntirdānam dharmah prajāgnayah
 agnihoṭram yāgayogau nyāsaścaitairbubhutsatām.
147. Nyāso'adhikam tapo nyāsī yuñjītātmanamomiti
 yoginastasya dehāmsā yāgāṅgairakhilaiḥ samā.
148. Ahorātrādikalāstu samā darśādiyāgakai
 jīvanam satratulyam syānmucyate yogisevakaḥ.
149. Sa cottarāyaṇe preta ādityam prāgya mucyate
 ayane dakṣiṇe pretaścandram prāpya na mucyate.
150. Taittirīyakavidyāyāḥ prakāśenopasevinaḥ
 bubhūtsūnanugrhnātu vidyātīrthmaheśvaraḥ.

Here is concluded the Second Chapter of
Anubhūti-prakāśah entitled Taittirīyaka-
vidyā-prakaśah by Śrī Vidyāranya Muni.

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