

॥ कोबातीर्थमंडन श्री महावीरस्वामिने नमः ॥

॥ अनंतलब्धिनिधान श्री गौतमस्वामिने नमः ॥

॥ गणधर भगवंत श्री सुधर्मस्वामिने नमः ॥

॥ योगनिष्ठ आचार्य श्रीमद् बुद्धिसागरसूरीश्वरेभ्यो नमः ॥

॥ चारित्रचूडामणि आचार्य श्रीमद् कैलाससागरसूरीश्वरेभ्यो नमः ॥

## आचार्य श्री कैलाससागरसूरि ज्ञानमंदिर

पुनितप्रेरणा व आशीर्वाद

राष्ट्रसंत श्रुतोद्धारक आचार्यदेव श्रीमत् पद्मसागरसूरीश्वरजी म. सा.

जैन मुद्रित ग्रंथ स्केनिंग प्रकल्प

ग्रंथांक : १



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आचार्यश्री कैलाससागरसूरि ज्ञानमंदिर  
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(079) 23276252, 23276204  
फेक्स : 23276249

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# ĀTMAN AND MOKṢA

by

**Dr. G. N. Joshi**



**GUJARAT UNIVERSITY  
AHMEDABAD**

**GUJARAT UNIVERSITY**

**Theses Publication Series—I**

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPTS OF  
**ATMAN AND MOKṢA**  
IN  
THE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF  
INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

*by*

**Dr. G. N. Joshi**

M.A., Ph.D.

PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, FERGUSSON COLLEGE  
POONA-4 (India).

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## FOREWORD

With the publication of this Thesis by Dr. G. N. Joshi on "The Evolution of the Concepts of *Ātman* and *Mokṣa* in the Different Systems of Indian Philosophy", the Gujarat University makes a beginning in the field of the publication of some selected doctoral theses. It is, indeed, gratifying that the first Thesis to be published under this category is a work of valuable research done by Dr. Joshi under the esteemed guidance of the late Professor A. K. Trivedi. I take this opportunity of paying my humble homage to the late Professor Trivedi as well as of congratulating Dr. Joshi.

I must also gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance given by the University Grants Commission for the publication of this work.

I am sure this publication will prove useful to all those interested in the study of Indian Philosophy.

Gujarat University,  
Ahmedabad-9.  
11th August, 1965.  
Śrāvaṇa 24, 1887 (Śaka).

K. C. Parikh  
University Registrar



## PREFACE

The present work on 'The Evolution of the Concepts of *Ātman and Mokṣa* in the Different Systems of Indian Philosophy' is being published in bookform after a period of ten years. It was originally submitted to the Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, as a doctoral Thesis, and was accepted for the Ph.D. Degree. The concepts of *Ātman* and *Mokṣa* have certainly undergone a continuous development, and they have evolved through several stages in the different streams and systems of Indian Philosophy right from the Vedic times to the present century, and hence I have tried to trace the 'Evolution' of these concepts.

This research work was conducted by me under the able guidance of the late Principal A. K. Trivedi of the S. B. Garda College and B. P. Baria Science Institute, Navsari (Gujarat). It is unfortunate that Principal Trivedi did not live to see this work appear in print. He had taken a very keen interest in the matter of its publication.

I feel extremely grateful to the Authorities of the Gujarat University for publishing this Thesis. I hope that this work will be of interest to all its readers, and to the students of Philosophy in particular.

I am thankful to the Authorities of several Libraries in Poona, Bombay, Baroda, Amalner and Navsari, for having permitted me the use of their rare and valuable books. I also wish to express my grateful thanks to my friends and colleagues, who read my manuscript and made important suggestions and also helped me in correcting the proofs. Among such friends I may mention Prof. D. D. Vadekar, Chief Editor, Marathi Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Poona, Prof. M. D. Hatkanagalekar and Dr. V. B. Inamdar of the Willingdon College, Sangli, Prof. B. M. Gore of the B. M. College of Commerce, Poona, and Prof. M. G. Desai of the Fergusson College, Poona.

(II)

I have also to express my sense of obligation to the Authorities of the Gujarat University Press for their able execution of the printing and all other incidental work in connection with the Thesis.

I cannot omit here the mention of the worthy name of my great *Guru*, the late P. S. Sane *alias* Sane Guruji, who exercised tremendous influence on my mind in my student days, and fostered in me the love for Philosophy, and also acted as a constant source of affection and inspiration to me in all my academic and other pursuits, particularly those regarding the study of Philosophy.

Nārālī Pournimā.  
11th August, 1965.  
Fergusson College,  
Poona-4 (India).

G. N. Joshi

## INTRODUCTION

The theme of the present Thesis is "The Evolution of the Concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa in the Different Systems of Indian Philosophy". I have made an attempt in this work to trace the Evolution of the Concepts of Ātman (Self) and Mokṣa (Liberation) in the prominent systems of Indian Philosophy, beginning from the Vedas and ending with the spiritual experience of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa who lived in the 19th century. The range of the inquiry into the nature of Ātman and Mokṣa in this Thesis is extremely wide, covering nearly the whole of the history of Indian Philosophy. As it was not my purpose to concentrate on the nature of Ātman in any one system, I have not gone into too many details ~~re~~ these concepts in the different systems of Indian Philosophy. My concern was, chiefly, with the 'evolution' of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa; and therefore, it has become necessary for me to take only a broad and synoptic survey of the ideas in all the prominent systems. And as I had not to restrict myself to any one particular system, I have proceeded from one system to another and studied the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa under their broad features as brought out in them.

As a result of the industrial and technological progress, the present age is growing richer and richer in the means of material happiness. But in spite of the tremendous multiplication of the means of happiness, man's life in general, has not become really happy on that account. The modern man has not gained, by these means, more of moral health or spiritual contentment. These instruments of material happiness and cultural development have not succeeded in bringing enduring satisfaction and undisturbed peace and tranquillity to man. There is an acute poverty of spiritual satisfaction in the midst of the plenty of



*ii*

happiness. In spite of the many-sided material prosperity, man has not succeeded in living peacefully with his fellow beings. The present century is facing crises in the various fields of social life, and appears to be fast approaching a total destruction of human civilization on account of the production of demoniac weapons like the atom bomb. Due to the tremendous multiplication of material wants man has become crazy in his search for enjoyment, but he is also experiencing disappointment and frustration in that search. The growth of gigantic and crowded cities has been responsible for making man feel lonely, helpless, anonymous, and hence insecure in the present society. Similarly, in spite of the enormous growth of man's knowledge in every field and his sustained efforts towards its acquisition man is still found to be groping in darkness. The body, mind and intellect are improving, but the promptings of the heart and the spirit are not heard. Psychologists are trying to understand it in terms of its various functions. The present man is struggling very hard to secure permanent satisfaction for himself by trying to satisfy his passions, desires and ambitions which are supposed to belong to the core of his self.

The tendency of the modern psychology is to interpret the self as the sum total of the various mental experiences of man, and to hold that, 'self' is merely a name given to such a bundle of mental content. Behaviorists and Physiological Psychologists are trying to interpret the 'self' in terms of the various physiological and cerebral processes, and thus they deny the spiritual nature of the self. Various other schools of Psychology are trying to explain the 'self' in their own ways. But all these psychological viewpoints ultimately result in denying the 'self' as a spiritual entity. Child Psychology and Social Psychology believe that the self does not exist in the individual from the birth as his spirit, and they maintain that the 'Self' is gradually constructed and instilled into the individual out of his numerous social relationships, and thus the 'Self' is a thing in time. Nowadays the Positivists and Analysts are trying to analyse and interpret the meaning of the term 'Self' in terms



of its capacity for verification. The Reductionists are trying to reduce and explain the higher entities and experiences in terms of lower ones (e.g. the spiritual is reduced to the moral, the moral to the intellectual, the intellectual to the psychological, the psychological to the physiological, and the physiological to the biological) to prove the worthlessness of the spiritual experiences and values.

The Positivist, Empirical and Scientific methods are being applied to the concept of 'Self'. The modern Psychologists and Philosophers are trying to explain 'Self' in terms of 'unselfish' entities. Thus, the old metaphysical 'self' is studied according to the new objective, positivist and scientific methods by Psychologists; but so far these psychologists have revealed no final view about the nature of the 'Self'. However, it is a fact that the present age acutely lacks inner satisfaction and peace of mind.

On account of such attempts to reduce the 'self' to some lower entity and to its externally observable functions, man is ceasing to give to the self its former native dignity and look upon it with reverence. As the self has lost its former dignity and grandeur, man is now little interested in preserving its native dignity, with the result that the present man has no right notion of 'self-respect' and worth of human life. Consequently, man is fast losing regard for and faith in the higher levels of life and consciousness, and he scarcely cares to look upon the values of life as noble, pious and holy. Nowadays, every value of life is supposed to be justifiable and desirable on utilitarian and pragmatic grounds, and thus man has ceased to regard that there is a higher, noble, sublime and supramundane plane of life and consciousness. As the pragmatic and utilitarian values are conducive to narrow individual interests and selfishness, I think that they can be held responsible for fostering a sense of disintegration and anarchy in social life. And unless its native dignity and grandeur are restored to the 'Self' and it is raised to its rightfully high position human beings are not likely to honour the higher values of life, and disregard for

## iv

higher values of life is bound to disrupt the social unity and harmony. Hence, I feel that now the understanding of the real nature of 'Self' is very much called for to prevent further disintegration of and catastrophe in our social life. I wish to submit humbly that an unwavering faith in the over-individual, trans-pragmatic and transcendental values of life alone can inspire an individual to transcend his narrow personal desires and egoistic limitations. Such a living faith in the Transcendental Self alone can serve as a powerful support to and as a perennial spring for moral values, which alone, in their turn, can sustain the well-organised, orderly and harmonious life.

As the present man is living under very great strain and tension of mind, he is experiencing a sense of inner void and hence, naturally, we find in the present society a widespread scepticism, disbelief, disappointment, acute frustration, and a want of faith in the higher moral and spiritual values. Human life is thus facing a new moral and spiritual crisis, and this, I think, is due to the prevailing confusion in the proper understanding of the real nature of the 'Self' for whose satisfaction human beings are perpetually striving.

The present age is the age of science and technology. Naturally, at present there is the tendency to put every thing to a rigorous analysis and experimental and rational tests. The old metaphysical idea of the Self also is being subjected to scientific and experimental study and rational scrutiny. However, I think, it is helpful and desirable to understand and examine the old metaphysical, psychological, ethical and religious aspects of the self, so that they may throw a new light on the problem and may suggest new approaches. Fortunately, most of the systems of Indian Philosophy and the Hindu religion, being spiritually oriented, contain abundant material on the Self (Ātman). Similarly, the ancient Indian thinkers, the Rṣis, Saints and Philosophers had engaged themselves, for centuries, in seeking to understand properly the real nature of the Self, and hence, one can obtain important and significant material on this subject from their inquiries. I think that there is enough

philosophical thinking done in India which can accept the challenge of the rationalists, intellectualists, analysts, positivists, and scientists to reassert the spiritual nature of man. The ancient Indian thinkers have also given serious thought to the ideals and the perfection of human life. In fact, the whole of Indian Philosophical thought is inspired and guided by the search for the attainment of liberation (Mokṣa). Perhaps nowhere else in the world do we get so much creative and critical thinking about the concepts of the Self and Liberation.

These Concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa, as expressed in the ancient Indian Philosophical Systems and in the writings of the Saints, may help us to overcome the present mental and spiritual unrest and crisis and to cure the present sickness of human civilization and may show the way of attaining everlasting satisfaction. They may also open up the eternal fountains of the divine and supersensuous joy, and may enable us to remedy the moral and spiritual maladies of the present age. It is with this thought in my mind, I have turned to this subject, and in this work I propose to put before the reader the various ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa and their evolution as delineated in the different systems or Indian Philosophy. This work is a faithful collection of all these ideas gathered, mostly and as far as possible, from the original sources of each system. I have tried, to the best of my ability, impartially to collect the data from each system, and to put them together and to give a synthetic account of them.

The reader may note that in this work the term 'soul' is used to mean the individual and empirical self (Jīva or Jīvātma), and the term 'Self' is used to mean the higher, universal, transcendental over-self (Paramātmā), which is also sometimes identified with the Ultimate Reality, Brahman.

The reader may also kindly note that I have not been able, for convenience of printing, to follow strictly the usual rules of Sandhi in giving original Sanskrit quotations.

—AUTHOR

*A note on the***SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION***used in this work for Sanskrit and Prakrit words*

(1) Ā - आ as in	Ātman
(2) Ī - ई as in	Īsvara
(3) Ū - ऊ as in	Sūradāsa
(4) C - च as in	Cārvāka
(5) Ch - छ as in	Chāndogya
(6) Ḍ - ढ as in	Jaḍa
(7) Jñ - ज्ञ as in	Jñāneśvara
(8) Ṃ - ँ (Nasal) as in	Sāṁkhya
(9) N - न as in	Brāhmaṇa
(10) R - र as in	Rṣi
(11) Ś - श as in	Śāṁkhya
(12) Ṣ - ष as in	Mokṣa
(13) Ṭ - ट as in	Adṛṣṭa

The dot under N has been omitted in the transliteration of the words Māṇḍukya and Mundaka Up. through oversight. Similarly at some places the mark ' over S as (Ś) to indicate ṣ has not been put exactly over the head of the letter S on account of difficulty in printing.

**Abbreviations**

Brh. Up.	Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad
Ch. Up.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
Kauṣīt. Up.	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad
Śvet. Up.	Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad
Taitt. Up.	Taittirīya Upaniṣad.



## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION ... I-V

Scheme and range of discussion. The present widespread discontent and frustration in spite of the abundance of the means of material happiness. Vain attempts of Modern Psychology to understand the Self. Reduction of the higher to the lower. Significance of the Indian concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa for real happiness, peace, and perfection.

### CHAPTER I—THE VEDAS ... 1-27

The philosophical aspects of the Vedas. Vedic Polytheism. Various meanings of Ātman or 'Self'. The concepts of Rta and Hiranyagarbha (World-soul). The Vedic concepts of Heaven and Immortality. Transmigration. The concept of Ātman in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka.

### CHAPTER II—THE UPANIṢADS ... 28-99

The philosophical nature of the Upaniṣads. Heterogeneous, inconsistent, and contradictory views about the Ātman. General nature of the Brahman as the ultimate Reality; the eternal and pervasive essence of all things. Hierarchy of the various faculties of knowledge. Ātman is beyond the sheaths (Kośas). Ātman as the immanent imperceptible principle and the fundamental presupposition. Ātmao—identified with the Brahman. Subtle nature of the Ātman. Ātman as agent and enjoyer. Two kinds of the Self. Various sizes of the Self. The Self described as not-this, not-that. The Self is intuitively knowable.

### MOKṢA ... 54

Mokṣa is attainment of immortality and freedom from the wheel of birth and death. Survival of the Ātman after death. Suffering due to actions. Bondage caused by ignorance. Mokṣa

## ( ii )

is escape from suffering, imperfection, and rebirth. Ātman is self-luminous and knowable in intuition. The soul can know the Self through identification with it. Transcendental Self cannot be objectified. The blissful nature of the Ātman. Mokṣa is psychological transformation which can be attained by Self-control. It transcends all duality and is an experience of perfect identity. Kramamukti, Jīvanmukti, Videhamukti.

## CHAPTER III—CĀRVĀKISM

... 160-112

Cārvākas known as Lokāyatas and Dehātmavādins. Denial of Ātman. Ātman as consciousness—a property of body, or as living body. Soul perishes with the body. No transmigration of the Soul. No moral life. Cārvākism as Utilitarianism and Egoistic Hedonism. Highest happiness is bodily happiness. Evaluation.

## CHAPTER IV—BUDDHISM

... 113-223

Buddhism—a revolt against Vedic ritualism and sacrificialism. Its Anātmavāda. The problem of sorrow and transmigration. Universal impermanence and momentariness. Denial of the soul. Soul is merely a name of a series of the states of consciousness. Origin of the soul from the five skandhas. The ever changing nature of the Soul like that of a burning flame or a flowing stream, which is renewed every moment. The concept of Karma. Self as not-self. Two schools of Buddhism—Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. The four schools and their view-points. Concept of Ālayavijñāna. Mādhyamika theory of Dependent Origination. Interpretation of the 'Void'. Self metaphysically non-existent, but exists for practical purposes.

## MOKṢA [NIRVĀṆA]

... 157

Meaning and cause of sorrow. Sorrow is caused by ignorance. The causal chain. Knowledge, supplemented by Yogic practices, leads to Nirvāṇa. Nature of Karma—as energy that binds the skandhas. Deed as doer. Nirvāṇa as annihilation of pain, karma, desires and consciousness. Nirvāṇa as no-more-becoming. The negative Hīnayāna concept of Nirvāṇa. The Vaibhāṣika-Nirvāṇa as blankness. Sautrāntika-Nirvāṇa as negation of life. Positive nature of Nirvāṇa in Mahāyānism. It is full

## (iii)

and alive. The concept of Dharmakāya. Yogācāra view of Nirvāṇa. Ālayavijñāna and Tatvatā. Mahāyāna view of Nirvāṇa as Śūnyatā, strifelessness. Nirvāṇa through moral perfection. Nirvāṇa—an experience of blissfulness and tranquillity. Arhat is like the Jīvanmukta. Nirvāṇa and Parinirvāṇa—Nirvāṇa escapes all definitions and descriptions.

## CHAPTER V—JAINISM

... 224-264

Jainism is opposed to Vedic ritualism and caste system. The nature of Soul as agent, enjoyer, and a permanent substance. Plurality of souls (Jīvas). All living beings possess soul. The size of soul varies with that of the body. Classification of souls. Soul and karma-matter. Bondage is caused by nescience. Bondage is destroyed by knowledge and not karma. Soul is constitutionally free and potentially divine. Concept of Samvara and Nirjarā. The nature and the way of liberation. Kinds of Mokṣa. Two sects of Jainism.

## CHAPTER VI—NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA

... 265-319

The philosophical nature of these systems. Their realistic pluralism. Seven categories. The Soul—a substance. Consciousness—an adventitious attribute of the Self. Soul is permanent, agent, enjoyer, infinite, eternal, imperishable, pervasive. It transmigrates. Ways of knowing the soul. Problem of God. The soul, buddhi, mind and senses. Misapprehension, karma, worldly pleasures and pains.

## MOKṢA

... 299

Mokṣa is a state of pleasurelessness and painlessness; a state of passionlessness, indifference, and passivity; a state like a stone. Mokṣa is attained by removing mithyājñāna. It consists in cessation of rebirth and karma. Comparison with the Buddhist concept of Void.

## CHAPTER VII—SĀMĀNYA

... 320-405

Sāmkhya—an atheistic system. The ultimate dualism of Sāmkhya. Prakṛti—everchanging, the ultimate material and efficient cause of the cosmos. Prakṛti and the three Guṇas.

## ( iv )

Puruṣa (Self) is pure consciousness, static, unmoved witness, enjoyer, but not agent. Plurality of souls. Puruṣa has no direct contact with Prakṛti. Puruṣa's reflection in buddhi. Arguments for the existence of the soul. Natural adjustment between Puruṣa and Prakṛti.

## MOKṢA

... 359

Puruṣa is eternally free. Bondage is due to non-discrimination. Mokṣa is kaivalya—complete isolation and detachment from Prakṛti. Attainment of liberation by knowledge and discrimination. In Mokṣa, Prakṛti ceases to influence Puruṣa. Complete Mokṣa when karma is fully exhausted. Subtle body, Transmigration, Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti.

## YOGA

... 379

A Theistic system with Sāṃkhya metaphysics. A science of physical and mental discipline. The nature and functions of the Citta. Soul's suffering is due to its false identification with the Prakṛti's modifications. Agentship is imposed on the soul. Yoga means cessation of the functions of mind. Yoga consists in joining the citta with God by concentration and control over the senses and the passions. The nature of God. The Yoga-practices. The eight limbs of Yoga. The nature and kinds of Samādhi. Mokṣa is attained by knowledge.

## CHAPTER VIII — PŪRVA-MĪMĀṂSĀ

... 406-442

Pūrvā-Mīmāṃsā, an orthodox, atheistic and ritualistic system. The soul—as different from senses, body, mind and intellect. Theories of knowledge as held by Prabhākara and Kumārila. Plurality of souls. Soul is immaterial, pervasive, eternal, agent, enjoyer; it supplies energy and transmigrates.

## MOKṢA

... 431

Old Mīmāṃsakas were concerned more with Vedic rites and Heaven than with Mokṣa. According to Prabhākara, Mokṣa is freedom from pleasure, pain and any conscious experience. In Mokṣa, soul becomes jaḍa, devoid of potency for knowledge. Mokṣa is not an experience of happiness, since there is present

(v)

in it neither body, nor mind, nor senses. Necessity of worship and Vedic rites for Mokṣa. Denial of God. God and the Vedas. World's orderliness is due to Adṛṣṭa.

## CHAPTER IX—VEDĀNTA (ŚĀṆKARA) ... 443-507

Advaita Vedānta—its relations with Śruti, Buddhism and other systems of Philosophy. Śāṅkara's originality of interpretation. Brahman—its nature. Brahman the same as Ātman. Illusoriness of the world. Appearances are due to avidyā and upādhis (adjuncts). Ātman is immutable, inactive, neither agent nor enjoyer. Ātman is permanent and constituted of consciousness. Infinite Self appears as limited soul due to adjuncts. Ātman is really devoid of attributes. Relation of soul to self. Self does not transmigrate. Rebirth and subtle body. Māyā produces the world, which is neither real nor unreal, and is indescribable. Nescience, God—the Saṅga Brahman.

## MOKṢA ... 485

The experience as 'I am the Brahman'; it is a positive experience of perfect knowledge and perfect bliss. Mokṣa is eternal. Bondage and suffering are illusory. Mokṣa is realisation of the Self. Mokṣa is attained by knowledge. Jīvanmukti, Videha mukti and Kramamukti. Mokṣa transcends moral distinctions. The use of Yogic practices. Moral virtues, adhikāra, Varnāśrama dharma. Mokṣa can be attained by anybody.

## CHAPTER X—THE SYSTEMS OF RĀMĀNUJA, ... 508-606 NIMBĀRKA, MADHVA, AND VALLABHA

## THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ ... 508-512

The Bhagavadgītā—a valuable philosophical work containing philosophical elements of Advaitism and Sāṅkhya. Not a consistent system since it includes heterogeneous elements. It preaches performance of karma with a sense of detachment and disinterestedness. Karma and its fruits to be dedicated completely to God on overcoming egoism. Lays more emphasis on devotion than on knowledge and action. Individual soul is really eternal,



( vi )

pure, immutable, all-pervading; but on account of ignorance, appears to be under bondage. When the soul experiences its real and pure nature, it attains Mokṣa.

The Gītā is eclectic. It is interpreted in different ways by Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Jñāneśvara, Tilak, Sri Aurobindo. The Gītā exercises tremendous spiritual influence on the Hindus. Pure Ātman assumes the form of the world by means of Māyā. By completely surrendering to God and doing acts in a disinterested manner, the soul enjoys unending peace and supreme bliss.

### RĀMĀNUJA

... 512

Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, Pariṇāmavāda, Anti-Māyāvāda and Saviśeṣa Brahman. Souls are modifications (Vikāras) of the Brahman. Jīva possesses *sat* and *cit*, but no *ananda*. Soul is atomic, eternal, self-luminous, agent, enjoyer. Kinds of Jīva. Jīva and intelligence. Distinctions of Jīvas are eternal; they are not lost in Mokṣa. Jīva and God.

In Mokṣa soul enjoys omniscience and bliss of God, but retains its individuality. Bondage is caused by ignorance. The meaning of 'Tattvamasi'. In Mokṣa, Jīva enjoys the company of God. God as person. Four Vyūhas. Mokṣa is attained by devotion (prapatti). Jīva takes positive joy in the service of God. Denial of Jīvanmukti. In Mokṣa, Jīva enjoys all powers of God except those of creation and governance of the world.

### NIMBĀRKA

... 555-569

His Anti-Māyāvāda and Bhedābheda-vāda. Souls and the world are the self-actualisation of God. Souls depend on God. Identity of Jīva and God is like one between waves and the ocean or rays and the sun. Meaning of Tattvamasi. God Kṛṣṇa is the Upādānakāraṇa and Nimitta-kāraṇa of the world. The Jīva is the knower, agent, enjoyer, and atomic, but becomes pervasive by intelligence. Kinds of Jīva.

### MOKṢA

Bondage caused by ignorance. Mokṣa, attained by Jīva when it realises absolute dependence on God. The need for moral

## (vii)

virtues and devotion (surrender) to God. The liberated souls enjoy the powers of God except those of creation and governance of the world. Mokṣa can be attained by any person irrespective of his caste, occupation, etc.

## MADHVA

... 569-589

His Dualism. Five-fold distinctions, which are real and eternal. God-Brahman is the cause of the world and souls, and they depend entirely on God. Jīva is atomic in size. Jīvas are infinite in number. They possess limited knowledge, limited bliss and limited power, due to ignorance. Their differences are eternal, and they transmigrate. Kinds of souls.

## MOKṢA

... 581

In Mokṣa, Jīva becomes bodiless, formless and completely free from Karma. Jīva enjoys perfect knowledge and perfect bliss and all the divine qualities except those of creation and regulation of the world. Mokṣa is attained by devotion (Upāsana). Brahmajñāna is Upāsana and grace of God. Madhva's dualism ends in Monism.

## VALLABHA

... 589-606

His Śuddhādvaita. God (Kṛṣṇa) has transformed Himself into the souls and the world. The souls are essentially one with God, but their ānanda is suppressed. Soul (Jīva) possesses only existence (sat) and consciousness (cit). God is the agent and the enjoyer. Jīva is atomic, but becomes pervasive through knowledge which spreads like light. Brahman is the antaryāmin. The world is created out of sport (Līlā). Souls suffer because of ignorance.

## MOKṢA

Mokṣa is attained by Jīva by means of devotion and grace of God. Kinds of Jīvas. Forms of Puṣṭibhakti. Liberated souls participate in the Nityalīlā of God Kṛṣṇa. Souls need self-control, severe discipline, devotion and grace of God for Mokṣa.

## (viii)

## CHAPTER XI—ŚAIVISM AND ŚĀKTISM ... 607-624

Śaivism—a creed parallel to Vaiṣṇavism. Śiva or Rudra—the ultimate Reality. Śiva different from Māyā, matter and Jīva. He is perfect, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, infinite, all-pervading and regulates and directs the evolution of the world. The meaning of Paśupati. Kinds of Souls. Souls are imperfect and limited in their powers. Fetters (pāśas) and their kinds. Mokṣa is attained by exclusive devotion to God. Liberated souls attain power from God. Branches of Śaivism. The worship of Śiva in the form of Linga. Forms of Śakti and Linga.

Mokṣa attained by Śivayoga—sincere devotion to God. Kinds of devotion. In Mokṣa, the soul is not absorbed, but it enjoys the bliss and powers of Śiva.

## ŚĀKTISM ... 620-624

Śiva is the final, omnipotent, omniscient, all-pervasive God. A special emphasis on Śakti. Śiva is constituted by consciousness and is immanent in the world. Souls (Jīvas) evolved from and by Śakti. Ignorance is partial knowledge. Mokṣa can be attained by removing ignorance and by spiritual insight, religious rites, and sacrifices. Transmigration and Jīvanmukta.

CHAPTER XII: THE VAIṢṆAVA SAINTS OF ... 625-751  
THE MEDIEVAL INDIA

The motive of the Saints was to seek not only everlasting peace and immortality, but also supreme bliss and perfection of God. God is demanded for the satisfaction of the human heart.

## JÑĀNEŚVARA ... 628

His personality. Influence of Advaitism. Equal emphasis on knowledge and devotion. Cidvilāsavāda. World—a sportive creation of God. The world—an expression of the Brahman, not affected by the changes in the world. A curious mixture of Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya. The non-difference of Jīva with God (Brahman). Bondage caused by nescience. Need for discrimination—Nīrakṣīraviveka. "Intellectual Mysticism". The need

## (ix)

for exclusive devotion. In Mokṣa, the soul and Self become one in an indistinguishable union. The kinds of Jīva. Unique experience of Identity. Possibility of Jīvanmukti.

**KABIR**

... 649

A unique combination of the Hindu and Islamic cultures. Kabir refused to admit the traditional religion and its rites. God pervasive and indescribable. Nirguṇa Brahman becomes Saguṇa for devotees. God is Nirguṇa Brahman, perfect, formless, immanent in all and cause of all. Symphonic nature of Reality; the central principle of harmony is in the heart. Relation between Soul and God. Need for penetration through the veil of Māyā. Highest happiness of Soul is in union with God.

**TULASIDĀSA**

... 663

His Personality. Rejuvenation of Hinduism. God is omnipresent and omnipotent Reality; and out of companion for humanity He incarnates. Rāma is the God. Nirguṇa cannot be understood without Saguṇa. Soul and God are different. Mokṣa is attained through devotion. Rāma is the ideal of perfection. God shows mercy to devotees. Mokṣa is not dependent on rituals, but on sincere devotion to God.

**SŪRADĀSA**

... 671

His personality. Depiction of the Līlā of Kṛṣṇa. He accepts Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha. God appears in Nirguṇa and Saguṇa forms. God is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world. God Kṛṣṇa is extremely loving and an object of enjoyment of the Gopis. Deliverance by means of the soul's devotion to God. Eternal peace and bliss are gained in the heart of God. Sūradāsa accepted the Śuddhapaṇḍitbhakti of Vallabha. Mokṣa is Sāyujyatā or Identity with the Lord. Supreme joy experienced by Soul in the participation in the Līlā of Kṛṣṇa.

**MĪRĀBĀĪ**

... 680

Her personality. Her intense and deep love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Her melancholy in life. Saṁsāra is ever-changing, and full of miseries. God alone is real. God is compassionate and can save

( x )

His devotees. The joy of her union with God is supersensuous and indescribable. She had Madhurarasabhakti for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the only male person in the universe.

NARASIMHA MEHTA

... 688

His personality. Deliverance can be attained only through sincere devotion to God. God is both personal and impersonal. God is Saccidānanda and possesses eternal brilliance. He is omnipresent, extremely subtle, and real agent of actions. Mokṣa is attainable not by scholastic knowledge of scriptures, not by religious rites, but by sincere devotion to God. The devotees seek not liberation, but joy in the service of God. Mokṣa can be attained by persons of any caste and social status.

CAITANYA

... 701

His personality. Spiritual fervour and maddening dances. His dualism of soul and God. God can be realised through sincere devotion. His view similar to that of Nimbārka. Kṛṣṇa manifests in four Vyūhas, Suffering due to illusion. Kṛṣṇa has infinite powers. Madhurabhakti—a synthesis of dāsyā, sakhyā and vātsalyā rasas, for the attainment of Mokṣa. Need for ethically perfect life. External and internal Sādhana. Communion with God brings unfading bliss to the soul. Caitanya's unique trances. Premayoga. In Samādhi, Jīva enjoys highest bliss. God's grace alone gives liberation to the Jīva. Mokṣa is open to all people irrespective of their caste, social status, etc.

TUKĀRĀMA

... 714

His personality. The ultimate Reality is single, eternal, infinite, formless, all-pervading, omnipresent, omniscient, immutable, unpolluted. Although Nirguṇa, it becomes Saguṇa for devotees. God—Viṭhobā, Pānduranga, is present everywhere. God sports with Himself. He is immanent and transcendent. God can be realised through wholehearted devotion. Suffering due to worldly desires. No need for austere penance. God does all actions. He is like the closest relative—e.g. father, mother, etc.—to the soul. Supersensuous joy of drinking Divine Joy. Mokṣa



## ( xi )

is superrelational and supersensuous experience. When God is attained everything becomes illusory. Personalistic Mysticism.

## RĀMAKRṢṆA PARAMAHAMSA

... 736

His personality and achievements. Brahman is a sentient, all-pervading and immanent principle. God is the Absolute beyond all dualities and relativity. God is indescribable, and can be understood only through identification with Him. He is realisable only in Samādhi. Essential identity of the Soul and God. Distinctions are fictitious and caused on account of adjuncts (Upādhis). Pain due to the identification of the soul with adjuncts. Bondage caused by Māyā which causes the false sense of egoism. God not affected by Māyā, and one realises God only when one rids oneself of one's ego. The joy of soul's union with the God is superb, unique, and brings unending peace and bliss. Soul's joy of union with God is indescribable. Knowledge and devotion are identical. For Mokṣa, total surrender to God is necessary. Jīvanmukti. For Mokṣa, practice of moral virtues is absolutely necessary.

## CHAPTER XIII—CONCLUSION

... 752-828

(a) A synthetic account of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa in different systems :

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| (1) Soul—Its Nature                            | ... 754-759 |
| (2) Nature of Knowledge                        | ... 759-761 |
| (3) The Soul—Doer of Actions                   | ... 761-762 |
| (4) The Soul—Enjoyer of Fruits                 | ... 762-763 |
| (5) The Permanence of the Soul                 | ... 763-764 |
| (6) Pervasiveness of the Soul                  | ... 764-764 |
| (7) The Soul and the Body                      | ... 765-766 |
| (8) The Soul (Ātman), the Manas and the Buddhi | ... 766-767 |
| (9) The Soul and Adṛṣṭa                        | ... 767-768 |
| (10) The Soul and Nescience (Ajñāna)           | ... 768-769 |

## (xii)

(11) The Soul—Its Pure and Empirical Aspects	... 769-773
(12) God (Īśvara)	... 774-776
(13) Liberation (Mokṣa)	... 776-783
(b) Brief Comparisons of the concepts of ĀTMAN and MOKṢA in Indian Philosophy with those of some Western Philosophers and of Islam and Christianity.	... 784-805
SELF (Ātman)	
Brief mention of the concepts of Self and Liberation in the philosophies of Western Philosophers (Ancient and Modern) including Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, Epicureans, Philo, Plotinus, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Royce, Bosanquet, Bradley, Neo-Realists, Dialectical Materialists, Lloyd Morgan, S. Alexander, Edward Caird, Herbert Spencer.	
SELF (Ātman)	... 784-793
LIBERATION (Mokṣa)	... 793-805
(c) A few words about the ĀTMAN and the MOKṢA	... 805-813
Metaphysical Concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa are Psychological sublimations of the respective Philosophers and Saints.	... 813-819
(d) The Lines of Evolution	... 819-828
ĀTMAN	... 819-824
(1) From Material to the Spiritual nature of the Ātman	... 819-820
(2) From Pluralism to Monism (Absolutism)	... 820-823
(3) From the Finite to the Infinite	... 823-823
(4) From the External to the Internal	... 823-824

## ( xiii )

<b>MOKṢA</b>	... <b>824-828</b>
(1) From the Negative to the Positive Nature of Mokṣa.	... <b>824-825</b>
(2) Change in the means of the attainment of Mokṣa	... <b>825-827</b>
(3) Mokṣa becomes accessible to the per- sons of all castes, irrespective of birth, vocation, colour, creed and social status.	... <b>827-828</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	... <b>829-836</b>
<b>Subject Index</b>	... <b>837-868</b>



**ERRATTA**

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
55	1		Delete 'a' after the word 'being'.
56	24		Add 'are' before 'transient'.
64	13	Kaha	Kaṭha
72	21	Maitrāyai	Maitrāyaṇi
88	Footnote	Munaka	Muṇḍaka
89	8	breath	breath
97	3	Brahmapa	Brāhmaṇa
99	16	Brahma	Brahmā
108	12	Ye	Eat
123	9	nama	nāma
132	27	Khandas	Khandhas
138	Footnote	Dahlke D.T.	Dahlke Paul
142	II para	Vaibh ṣika	Vaibhāṣika
158	21	he	the
158	22	ifference	difference
176	24	Viśuadbim gga	Viśuddhimagga
188	9	Sautrāntika Yogācāras	Sautrāntika-Yogācāras
191	7	character	character.
193	27		Remove comma after 'recovers'
201	2	dhr	dhṛ
207	13	indentical	identical
208	20		208
208	3	Upnisads	Upaniṣads
211	8	Nirvāa	Nirvāṇa
216	Footnote	William Monier	Williams Monier
221	25		Add 'and' before 'exist'

## ( xv )

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
221	Footnote	Nikya	Nikāya
225	26	So s	Souls
227	7	Ajva	Ajīva
230	23	Sambta	Sambita
231	Footnote	Sarvadarsanaṅgraha	Sarvadarśanasanṅgraha
241	Footnote	Sa graha	Samgraha
269	29		'through' in place of 'by'
270	28	lik ewill	like will
280	at the top	0	280
298	22	momentory	momentary
299	25	Vidyābhūṣaṇa	Vidyabhushana
312	8	diverted	divested
320	21	Niriṣvara	Nirīśvara
334	11	Kaumud	Kaumudī
338	7	sāmikhyas	Sāmikhyas
347	12	psychologica	psychological
350	16	Purua	Puruṣa
363	5	Prakṛtic	Prākṛtic
375	21	augbt	naught
397	2	indifferenece	indifference
397	25-26	abstraction	abstinence
408	24, 29	Prabhākaras	Prābhākaras
424	1	soul	souls
431	22	Prabhākaras	Prābhākaras
470	1	antaḥkaraṇa	antaḥkāraṇa
523	13-14	Ramanuja	Rāmānuja
542	7		Delete 'comma' after 'and'
605	Title	S'aktism	S'āktism
627	29	Chaitanya	Caitanya
671	Sub-title	Sūradasa	Sūradāsa
672	19	tirobhava	tirobhāva
683	6	Mīr	Mīrā
686	8	Mīr	Mīrā

## (xvi)

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688	14	Chaitanya	Caitanya
690	21	andi mperishable	and imperishable
736	Sub-title	Paramahamsa	Paramahamṣa
739	2, 17	Ramakṛṣṇa	Rāmakṛṣṇa
740	4	"	"
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749	2	Ramakṛṣṇa	Rāmakṛṣṇa
749	25	swells	wells
763	2	Jivanmukti	Jīvanmukti
763	18	Brūhmanas	Brāhmaṇas
766	13	beyon	beyond
772	27	respect	respects
774	22	S'ṛti	S'ruti
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# ĀTMAN AND MOKṢA



## CHAPTER I

### THE VEDAS

The history of Indian Philosophy begins with the Vedic Hymns. The Vedic Hymns were not composed by a single individual or by a body of individuals; they are supposed to be non-human (apauruṣeya-अपौरुषेय) in their origin. The Vedas are supposed to have a Divine origin. The ancient sages, whose names are associated with them had not intentionally composed them in the form of verses, but it is believed that they were revealed to them in their intuitive experiences and they were uttered by them in their ecstasies. No script was devised in the Vedic period and therefore, they had been transmitted to the later generations orally. There was every possibility of interpolations being made to them by the later sages who happened to receive them from their predecessors. It is, therefore, difficult to prove or disprove any authority as there never was any authoritative text or version of the Vedas.

Out of the four Vedas, — the R̥gVeda, the Sāma-Veda, the YajurVeda and the AtharvaVeda, — the R̥gVeda is supposed to be the basis of philosophical thought. The Vedas are not in fact metaphysical works, written with any particular view, nor are they consistent philosophical treatises. The Vedas consist of verses which were the free utterances of

the ancient Ṛṣis which they had given out in the inspired moments of their intuitions. The Ṛṣis seem not to have been motivated to compose the hymns (*mantras*) to propound any particular system of Philosophy. Although the hymns contain the germs of philosophical thinking, it is impossible to construct any definite system out of them. They are more religious than philosophical in character. The sages were impelled more by a poetic vision than by philosophical reasonings. The hymns exhibit a kind of religious humility and submission to the natural agencies. They are the verses sung in praise of the natural agencies like the wind, the fire, the rain, the mountains, the rivers, the sun, the moon, the dawn, the thunder, etc. Some of them are the verses sung by the Vedic sages in praise of the beneficial things and forces of nature and others are prayers to appease the evil forces of nature to seek from them security and protection. Some of them seem to have been sung by being influenced by the sublimity and grandeur of the nature. The fresh and sensitive mind of the ancient man must have felt fear, joy, awe and adoration towards the majestic natural agencies, which appeared to him extremely powerful to affect him in unknown ways. A. Barth says — "Nature is throughout divine. Everything which is impressive by its sublimity, or is supposed capable of affecting us, for good or evil, may become a direct object of adoration. Mountains, rivers, springs, trees, plants are invoked as so many high powers. The animals which surround man, the

## The Vedas

5

horse by which he is borne in battle, the cow which supplies him with nourishment, the dog which keeps watch over his dwelling, the bird which, by its cry, reveals to him his future, together with that more numerous class of creatures which threaten his existence, receive from him the worship of either homage or deprecation. There are parts even of the apparatus used in connection with sacrifice which are more than sacred to purposes of religion; they are regarded as themselves deities.”<sup>1</sup>

The thinkers of the Vedic period personified the natural agencies and things and ascribed to them desires and will, good and bad with which they could affect human life. Naturally out of awe and a desire for security, the powers came to be looked upon as deities. Paul Deussen says—“....they ascribed to them not only will, like that of man, which was perfectly correct, but also human personality, human desires and human weaknesses, which certainly was wrong. These personified natural powers were further considered as the origin, the maintainers and controllers of what man found in himself as the moral law, opposed to the egoistic tendencies, natural to man.”<sup>2</sup>

The Vedic thinkers attributed power to everything in the world that affected them or impressed them with certain power in some way. They vaguely suspected some ‘energising principle’ actually investing all the things of the world with energy, and itself remaining imperceptible. The capacity to

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<sup>1</sup> Barth A. : *The Religions of India*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 9.

initiate activity in the various things of the nature evoked a belief in the minds of the Vedic sages in the existence of some mysterious power that manifests itself in and through the movements of the things but itself remains imperceptible. The power seems to be analogous to the 'mana' power which the primitive people believed to exist in all the things that possess power to affect human life in some way; such a belief in the so-called mysterious power indicates the 'animistic' tendency. The Vedic thinkers also suspected the existence of such an 'energising principle' (*Puruṣa*) in the sun, moon, rivers, fire, etc., and which being different from those things was responsible for movements of them.

It is found after a careful scrutiny of the hymns of the R̥gVeda that the words like Suparṇa, Ajo-bhāga, Satya, Ātman, Jīva, Prāṇa, Manas and Asu stand on equal par and denote a factor in man which is subtler and is different from his gross body. Our main concern is with the word Ātman, which is usually derived from the root *an-अन्* (to breathe) and is thus philologically related to Prāṇa. Sir Monier Monier-Williams explains it as follows: Ātman (variously derived from *an-अन्*-to breathe; *at-अत्*-to move: cf. *tman-त्मान्*, the breath in R̥gVeda;) the Soul, principle of life and sensation — in R̥gVeda and AtharvaVeda; the Self.<sup>1</sup> The word 'Ātman' is used with various meanings in the Vedas. It is used in the sense of 'essence' as the 'svarūpabhūtaḥ'

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<sup>1</sup> Monier-Williams : *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 135.

(स्वल्पभूतः); it is used in the sense of body or 'deha'.<sup>1</sup> It is further used in the sense of the 'intelligent principle' (cetana-चेतन).<sup>2</sup> It is described in another place as the 'controller' (धारयिता).<sup>3</sup> It is used in the sense of 'oneself' (swayam-स्वयम्) elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> The word soul is again mainly used to mean 'breath' (prāṇa-प्राण) which is responsible for the various activities and movements.<sup>5</sup> It is further used to be truthful and joy-giving.<sup>6</sup> It is used as the self of various plants and animals.<sup>7</sup> Thus it has been used with many shades of meaning and generally it is supposed to be something which is intelligent, active, source of vitality, the doer or initiator of actions, abiding and the owning principle.

Some European scholars connect the word Ātman etymologically with the German word 'athmen' and derive it from the root 'an' - 'to breathe'. Deussen thinks that the word must have originally meant 'This I' - 'Dieses Ich'. Max Muller prefers to translate it by 'Self' - "that is the true essence of man, free as yet, from all attributes". Roth Bohtlingk and Grassmann mention 'breath' as

<sup>1</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. (RgVeda-I, 162.20; and VII, 101.6). Tr. Vol. I, p. 217 and Vol. II, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. RgVeda-I, 164.4.

<sup>3</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. RgVeda-VII, 87.5. Tr. Vol. II, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. VIII, 3.24, Vol. II, p. 113; IX, 85.3, Vol. II, p. 340.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. X, 16.3, Vol. II, p. 402.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. I, 73.2, Vol. I, p. 218.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. X, 97.4, Vol. II, p. 533.

the first meaning of Ātman. It appears that the widely known meaning of Ātman is the 'breathing principle'. In reply to a question "what is the soul? (Ko nu Ātmā-को नु आत्मा)", the term Ātman is understood as the 'thinking or intelligent principle', which, although connected with the gross physical body constituted of the five elements, yet is consciousness (Çetanah).<sup>1</sup> Deussen also says—"Thus Ātman means that which remains if we take away from our person all that is Non-Self, foreign, all that comes and passes away; it means the 'changeless, inseparable essence of our own Self, and on the other hand the essence of the Self of the whole world...it means the only true essence of our nature, our ātman, our Self.'"<sup>2</sup>

In the compound 'Ajo bhāgaḥ', the word 'Ajaḥ' (अजः) is used in the same sense as the Ātman; there the Agni (fire) is asked not to destroy the 'unborn part' (Ajo bhāgaḥ-अजो भागः) of the human body, but just to kindle it, so that after being purified it may be in a fit state to enter into the higher world. Sāyaṇa explains Ajaḥ, as the unborn part of the body, as different from the senses of the body, and that which has the inner person's attributes.<sup>3</sup> It definitely indicates the fine and indestructible portion of the body, which can survive the destruction of the physical body.

<sup>1</sup> RgVeda-I, 164.4, Sāyaṇa Bhāṣya. आत्मा तैः (पञ्चमहाभूतैः) संबद्धचेतनः।

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> RgVeda-Sāyaṇa Bhāṣya : अजः जननरहितः शरीरेन्द्रियादिभाग-व्यतिरिक्तः अन्तरपुरुषलक्षणः यः भागः अस्ति....। RgVeda-X, 1.16.4.



The word Jīva, though used a number of times, according to Sāyaṇa it is used twice to denote the 'individual soul' and also in the sense of 'life'.<sup>1</sup> Jīva means the active and animating principle of the individual, in whose body it resides. Similarly in the latter part of another hymn it is referred to as the 'immortal principle' which continues to live by subsisting itself in the offering of manas of the human body.<sup>2</sup> According to Sāyaṇa the entire hymn drives to the meaning, that the human body is without essence, and the animating principle, which dwells in it, is eternal.

The word Prāṇa also is derived from the root *an* - 'to breathe' and, therefore, it must have been related to Ātman.<sup>3</sup> Here a reference is made to Hiraṇyagarbha who is described as the "Giver of vital breath of power and vigour.... The Lord of death, whose shade is life immortal. .... who by his grandeur has become Sole Ruler of all, the moving world that breathes and slumbers."<sup>4</sup> Hiraṇyagarbha (हिरण्यगर्भ) is described as the world-soul to whom the individual soul owes its powers and knowledge. The universal soul, also described as the Puruṣa is the embodied spirit, or Man personified and regarded as the soul and original source of the

<sup>1</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.) : *The Hymns of the RgVeda* (RgVeda-I, 113-16; 164-30). Tr. Vol. I, pp. 151, 224.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. (R.V. 18-8). Tr. Vol. II, p. 407.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. R.V.-I, 66-1. Tr. Vol. I, p. 90; R.V.-X, 59-6, Vol. II, p. 463.

<sup>4</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.) : *The Hymns of the RgVeda*, R.V.-X, 121-2-3. Tr. Vol. II, p. 566.

universe, the personal and life-giving principle in all animated beings, is said to have a thousand, that is, innumerable *heads*, *eyes*, and *feet*, as being one with all created life. A space ten fingers wide; the region of the heart of man, wherein the soul was supposed to reside. Although as the universal soul he pervades the universe, as the Individual Soul he is enclosed in a space of narrow dimensions.”<sup>1</sup> The same Self of the universe is thus the Self of the individual. The word *Asu* also is equivalent of soul and means the same as the ‘breath’ or ‘vital-breath’.

All these words which are used synonymously point to the fact that the R̥gVedic thinkers were aware of some entity, known as the Ātman that is essentially the principle of vitality or animation, and it could not be identified with any one part of or the whole body. It also survives the latter's destruction. It also possesses consciousness, movement, imperceptibility, subtlety, eternity and essence.

The Vedic hymns exhibit a kind of primitive faith in polytheism as the various objects of the world are thought of separately and each of them is worshipped as a separate deity. Every natural powerful agency is approached separately as a deity, and its favour was sought separately. In the beginning, the Vedic thinkers were not aware of a unitary principle working behind the manifold. But gradually the philosophic thought progressed and the new idea of the *Rta* begins to appear. *Rta* is the single power

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Tr. Vol. II, p. 517 (Note).

that maintains the regularity and order of the processes of the nature. It also maintains the moral order of the universe and remains at the heart of the reality. It testifies the natural tendency of the philosophic thought to pass from many to one, plurality to unity, separativeness to synthesis. As all the notable natural agencies were looked upon as gods, the concept of godhood being shared in common, it can be taken to be an advance towards pantheism instead of monotheism. Garbe says—“Old hymns of the R̥gVeda, which in other respects are still deeply rooted in the soil of polytheism, show already the inclination to comprehend multifarious phenomena, as a unity and may, therefore, be regarded as the first step in the path which led the old Indian people to pantheism.”<sup>1</sup> Among the Vedic gods, Varuṇa, the god of rains, wields a superior position. He is raised to the status of a sovereign over all others. He possesses every power to do and to undo things as he pleases. He is the supreme both in the physical and moral spheres. He possesses a crushing power over others. He could mercilessly suppress all other deities. Nicol Macnicol says—“Varuṇa’s ordinances are fixed and sure so that even the immortal gods cannot oppose them. He places his fetters upon the sinner; his is the power to bind and the power also to release and he forgives sins even unto the second generation.”<sup>2</sup> Thus Varuṇa possesses absolute power over

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<sup>1</sup> Garbe Richard : *The Philosophy of Ancient India*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Macnicol Nicol : *Indian Theism*, p. 14.

others and rules the universe as a sovereign.<sup>1</sup> Varuṇa thus acts as the moral governor of the universe. In him the physical strength is combined with the moral authority. The principle of moral order, the Ṛta (ऋत) is embodied in him. As Nicol Macnicol says—"Perhaps the most significant fact of all in regard to this Vedic deity, is the connexion of the doctrine of Ṛta or the moral order with his name and authority."<sup>2</sup> In the hierarchy of gods, Varuṇa stands as the supreme who has under his guardianship the cosmic and the moral order of the universe. Thus in the process of philosophical systematisation in passing from polytheism or numerous gods to one single all-in-all commanding figure like the Varuṇa to whom all others are subordinated; as Radhakrishnan remarks, we pass from a polytheistic anthropomorphism to a spiritual monotheism.<sup>3</sup> But for the ethical authority of Varuṇa the monotheism could not have been called spiritual. Any power of the highest magnitude divested of its moral use for the betterment of human life turns demonic in nature.

Analogous to the idea of human soul a mention of the world-soul known as the Hiranyagarbha does not escape our sight in the ṚgVeda. The Hiranyagarbha is the first product of the primeval waters which are created by the first principle known as

<sup>1</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the ṚgVeda*. ṚgVeda-I, 24-25. Tr. Vol. I, p. 30-33; and VII, 84, 86. Tr. Vol II, pp. 80-82.

<sup>2</sup> Macnicol Nicol: *Indian Theism*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 91.

the Brahman. Brahman is supposed to be the ultimate reality, the final resort of all things of the world. It is the source, the sustainer and the final resort of all the things. From the Brahman is born the world-soul, the Hiranyagarbha, as the first evolute. The world-soul is to the world as the individual soul is to the individual body. The RgVedic thinkers hold that the Hiranyagarbha is the mind of the world.<sup>1</sup> As the mind is always associated with living body, so the world as a body must be possessing its own cosmic mind, being possessed of consciousness and will. As Paul Deussen says about the Hiranyagarbha that as the individual subjects are mortal, they come into existence and pass away, but there must remain behind all these mortal subjects some stable and permanent subject that abides for the maintenance of law and order of the world. The Hiranyagarbha is the sustainer of the individual souls. As "Space and time are derived from this subject, it is itself accordingly not in space and does not belong to time and, therefore, from an empirical point of view it is in general non-existent. It has no empirical only a metaphysical reality."<sup>2</sup> The Hiranyagarbha can be broadly compared with the 'Nous' of Anaxagoras. His 'Nous' is the 'cosmic-reason' and is responsible for the order of the universe as it intelligently guides the affairs of the cosmos. The Hiranyagarbha possesses

<sup>1</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. R.V.-X, 121.1-3. Tr. Vol. II, pp. 565, 566.

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul: *The Philosophy of the Upanisads*, p. 201.

intellection and volition in common with the finite souls but its powers are highly magnified as compared with those of the souls. The Vedas speak of the omnipresent and all-pervading spirit which dwells in all things and remains imperishable in them. It is the spirit (manas) that goes to Yama, to earth and heaven, to the billowy mountains and all those things which live and move, and is all that is and is to be. It is thus the eternal spirit that pervades the whole universe.<sup>1</sup>

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (शतपथ ब्राह्मण) holds that every man has three births. He receives first birth from his parents; the second, at the time of the wearing of the sacred thread; and the third, after death. The third birth to which the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers here occurs after the death of the body. It has to be understood in a special context of a ṚgVedic verse in which the Agni (fire) is asked to temper the 'Unborn Spirit' and not consume it entirely so that it gets a fresh birth.<sup>2</sup> The ṚgVeda speaks elsewhere of the individual who at cremation leaves behind on earth all that is evil and imperfect and proceeds by those paths by which his fathers travelled.<sup>3</sup> The mention of the third birth of the individual after death clearly shows that the Vedic thinkers believed in the survival of some non-physical or immaterial element after the destruction of the

<sup>1</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. RgVeda-X, 58 (whole). Tr. Vol. II. pp. 461, 462.

<sup>2</sup> RgVeda-XI, 2-1-1.

<sup>3</sup> Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): RgVeda-X, 14-8. Tr. Vol. II, p. 399.

## The Vedas

15

physical body. They also believed that the soul after abandoning the previous body assumes another body. The unborn-part of the body thus continues to exist by assuming many bodies successively. Their belief was that the state after death was not one of non-existence or void but one of continuance of life. As a result of this belief, there was a widespread custom of burying with the corpse the things of utility for the dead person. The arms, sacrificial and other utensils used to be buried with the corpse that they may serve him even after death. As Maurice Bloomfield says, they are for the occupations and necessities of those who have gone forth (*preta*), as the dead are called euphemistically, are the same as upon the earth, sacrificing included.<sup>1</sup>

The dead persons rise to the land of Yama after death. Yama, the first Royal man had gone ahead and had secured for himself and his successors and descendants, a territory in heaven and the RgVedic sages hold that all dead persons go to the land of Yama.<sup>2</sup> The fathers of the old have travelled it, and this path leads every earthly person born and mortal there. There in the midst of the highest heaven, in the lap of the Goddess Dawn, beams unfading light and eternal waters flow. There Yama sits under a tree of beautiful foliage, engaged in an everlasting bout in the company of the gods; there mortals gather after death at Yama's call to behold Varuna. They have left all imperfections

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<sup>1</sup> Bloomfield Maurice : *The Religion of the Veda*, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> Bloomfield Maurice : *The Religion of the Veda*, p. 250.

behind them on returning to their true home, the rich meadows of which no one can rob them. In that place there are no lame nor crooked of limb; the weak no longer pay tribute to the strong, all alike share with Yama and the gods the feast of the gods.<sup>1</sup> It appears from this description that the state after death, according to the Vedas, is one of continuance of life in the land of Yama. All kinds of imperfections and shortcomings are absent in it, and, it is full of happiness. The soul is not destroyed along with its body, but it remains even after death. The dwelling place of Yama is the resting place for the departed souls.<sup>2</sup> When after death the soul enters the abode of Yama, it shakes off all imperfections and bodily frailties.<sup>3</sup> The limbs are no longer lame or crooked and all sickness is cast off.<sup>4</sup> The departed soul enters a land full of butter and overflowing with milk, wine, curds and sweet waters.<sup>5</sup> There is eternal light and there all persons are equal and the weak are no longer subject to

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. R.V-X, 14.9. Tr. Vol. II, p. 399.

Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the AtharvaVeda*. XVIII, 2.37. Tr. Vol. II, p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. X, 14.8. Tr. Vol. II, p. 399.

<sup>4</sup> Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the AtharvaVeda*. VI, 120.3. Tr. Vol. II, p. 311.

Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the AtharvaVeda*. III, 28.5. Tr. Vol. I, p. 123.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. A.V.-IV, 34.6. Tr. Vol. I, p. 177.



pay tribute to the strong.<sup>1</sup> There the person is united with a bright and glorious body and lives a life of eternal enjoyment. In this heaven, the sound of the flute and songs is heard.<sup>2</sup> There seems to be abundant scope for the sensual gratification also.

These Vedic passages throw light on the idea of the state after death imagined by the Vedic seers. It is similar to a happy and comfortable life on the earth. They believed in the verity of goodness of bodily and mental happiness and such a life is depicted by them in their description of their ideal heaven for which they strove. They sought a material happiness. The ancient people of the Vedic period did not stand for physical tortures and they did not look up for spiritual gains at the cost of flesh. Body was not looked upon with contempt but it was used as a means for the achievement of happiness. Whitney's observations give a clearer idea of their aim. It is said, "The earliest inhabitants of India were far enough removed from the unhealthy introversion of their descendants, from their contempt of all things beneath the sun, from their melancholy opinion of the vanity and misery of existence, from their longings to shuffle off the mortal coils forever, and from the metaphysical subtlety of their views respecting the universe and its creator. They looked at all these things with the simple apprehension, the naive faith, which usually characterises a primitive people.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. A.V.-III, 29.3. Vol. I, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Griffith (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. R.V.-X, 135.7. Tr. Vol. II, p. 581.

They had a hearty and healthy love of earthly life and an outspoken relish for all that makes up for the ordinary pleasures of life. Wealth and numerous offsprings were the constant burden of their prayers to their gods; success in predatory warfare, or in strife for consideration for power, was frequently besought. Length of days in the land, or death by no other cause than old age, was not less frequently supplicated; they clung to the existence of which they fully appreciated all the delights."<sup>1</sup>

What the Vedic thinkers aimed at was not only a freedom from pain and misery in earthly life and the life after death, but they sought positive happiness, wealth and health, progeny and power, victory over the enemies. They were fond of assertive and manly life. They took a positive joy and pride in enjoying a perfectly happy life here on the earth and a similar one there in the heaven. It is evident from their prayers for a life for one hundred autumns and for hundred cows and horses. They were afraid of going to the dark regions, the hell after death. They positively aimed at reaching the heaven to live a fuller and more perfect life. Their Mokṣa has a positive connotation. It lies in perfecting life rather than in withdrawing from it, or in attaining desirelessness and void. They cherished a robust and optimistic outlook on life. The ideal mokṣa is an elaboration of a rich and happy earthly life. It is an improvement over their life on earth. The life which they aimed at in heaven is not different

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<sup>1</sup> Whitney : *Oriental and Linguistic Studies*, pp. 49 ff.

## The Vedas

19

in kind from their life that they lived on the earth. Their ideal was simple and within their reach.

The Vedic thinkers strove to attain immortality after death. Their desire for immortality and their idea of the perfect life at which they aimed are expressed in the following prayer—

“O Pavamāna, place me in that deathless, undecaying world  
wherein the light of heaven is set and everlasting  
lustre shines.

Flow, Indu, flow for Indra's sake.

Make me immortal in that realm where dwells the King,  
Vivasvān's Son.

Where is the secret shrine of heaven, where are those  
waters young and fresh....

Make me immortal in that realm where they move even  
as they list,

In the third sphere of inmost heaven where lucid worlds  
are full of light....

Make me immortal in that realm of eager wish and  
stronger desire

The reign of the radiant moon, where food and full delight  
are found,

Make me immortal in that realm where happiness and  
transports, where

Joys and felicities combine, and longing wishes are fulfilled.”<sup>1</sup>

From the passage mentioned above it becomes clear that the R̥gVedic thinkers have irrepressible desire for freedom, joy, immortality and light. They

<sup>1</sup> Griffith : *The Hymns of the R̥gVeda*. R.V.-IX, 113.7 to 11.  
Tr. Vol. II, pp. 381-382.

यत्रानन्दाश्च मोदाश्च मुदः प्रमुद आसते ।

कामस्य यत्राप्ताः कामास्तत्र माममृतं कृधि ॥

want to breathe quite healthy and sunny air “where pleasures, enjoyments, raptures and abiding bliss” exist. They recognise three kinds of heavens. The lowest of them is intimately associated with *soma* and moon. It belongs to Yama. It can be attained by those sacrificers and philanthropists who have at their credit ordinary merit. The other two heavens are situated in the higher region. Out of the two, the realm Savitṛ and Sūrya is the lower one. Men like Ṛbhus and Māruts who because of their exceptional merit attain immortality and divinity can be members of this region. The last and the highest heaven of Viṣṇu can be reached only by those who have an immensely pious and holy life, because of their pure devotion to the gods. They are the great visionaries. The attainment of the last region, the region of Viṣṇu is regarded as the highest end that one can cherish and attain to.

The word ‘immortality’ (amṛta-अमृत) occurs very frequently in the R̥gVeda. Sāyaṇa takes it to mean in the majority of cases ‘that which is not mortal’ (अमरणशील, मरणवर्मेरहित, मरणरहित). The other noteworthy meanings which it connotes are ‘god’ (deva), ‘liberation’ (मोक्ष, सायुज्य), ‘continuity of the race’ (सन्तत्यविच्छेद), ‘nectar’ (नीयूष), ‘freedom from fatigue’ (आलस्यराहित्य), ‘imperishability’, ‘eternity’ (नित्यत्व), ‘sun’ (सूर्य), ‘herbal juice’ (सुधा), ‘divine-drink’ (देवपान), etc. In spite of all these numerous shades of meanings, it is more probable that what they really implied by the word ‘immortality’ is ‘imperishability’ or ‘eternity’ (avināśitva, nityatva).

## The Vedas

21

Immortality to the Vedic thinkers was not more than a continued existence after death in the company of the gods enjoying fully their privileges. It was a sort of apotheosis which to the individual meant a transfer of existence from earth to higher regions and a transformation from mortality to divinity. While in this state he exercises influence over those who were left behind. Like the gods he receives worship and oblations from the mortals and confers upon them the benefits that they deserve. It means that the mortals on the strength of their merit can acquire godhood with its powers which they can use with their discretion and can participate in the running of the world. Human beings possessed a scope to attain higher kind of life. This must have been meant when it is said that Rbhus and others of their class became gods by their pious deeds. The Vedic people possessed an optimistic outlook on life and the vigour and the enthusiasm to direct and master their destiny. They did not willingly submit to the cruel fate. They were not helpless fatalists. They had a conquering attitude and a belief in their latent powers and so they hoped to be the masters of their fate.

This very fact is the implication of the doctrine of Karma. The virtuous and pious men who perform morally good actions and practise the prescribed religious rites rise to the heaven; and those who indulge in the evil actions, morally contemptible deeds and are addicted to irreligious deeds, are sent

by Varuṇa to the dark regions of the hell. There is an inseparable relation between the two. A man's future birth is determined by the kind of actions in his previous birth. Deussen thinks that the dark regions to which the ignorant and the vicious are sent is this one in which we live.

The Vedic hymns and sacrifices were supposed to be invested with certain inherent power from which the goodness or badness of the deeds was determined, and from that the nature of the subsequent births came to be determined. The utterance of hymns and the performance of sacrifices themselves possessed some potency of their own which ultimately was responsible for deciding the nature of the subsequent births. These actions seem to have been related particularly to the heaven and hell in the period after death. The Vedas seem to be silent over the exact mechanism of carrying the impressions of the deeds of the previous life to the subsequent. The Vedic hymns seem to have greater concern with the attainment of heaven rather than with the theory of transmigration of the soul. Bloomfield says — "This 'death-anew' or 're-death' (punarmṛtyu) as the Hindus call it, is an exceedingly characteristic idea, but it is not yet transmigration of souls. As long as it is located entirely in the other world, and as long as it is thought possible to avoid or cure it by the ordinary expedients of sacrifice, so long as the essential character of that belief is not yet present."<sup>1</sup> It seems from the above remarks of Bloomfield that

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<sup>1</sup> Bloomfield Maurice: *The Religion of the Veda*, pp. 253-54.

the theory of transmigration of the soul is restricted only to the earthly existence. The relation of the virtuous and vicious deeds with their fruits in terms of the attainment or otherwise of the heaven has no elements of transmigration theory in it, and hence, it would be highly risky to say that the Vedic people believed in the transmigration of the soul.

Moreover, the concept of transmigration also is not Aryan in origin. It seems to have been prevalent in India before the migration of the Aryans. It seems to have been a dominant and prevalent folk-belief in India and the Vedic thinkers seem to have borrowed it from the old natives of India. Bloomfield further writes—"The germs of the belief in transmigration are very likely to have filtered into the Brahmanical consciousness from below, from the popular sources, possibly from some of the aboriginal, non-Aryan tribes in India."<sup>1</sup> Richard Garbe also supports him. He says—"Under all circumstances the Aryan Indians can have received only the first impetus to the development of the theory of transmigration from the aboriginal inhabitants; the elaboration of the idea they borrowed—the assumption of a constant changing continuance of life, and its connection with the doctrine of the power of deeds, having in view the satisfaction of the moral consciousness—must always be regarded as their own peculiar achievement."<sup>2</sup> The Vedas describe the omnipotent, loving, merciful, sweet nature of God

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Garbe Richard : *The Philosophy of Ancient India*, p. 5.

and hold that He gives eternal solace, rest, peace and joy to His devotees. The state in heaven is described in the following hymn of the Vedas :

Like the Sun's glance, like wealth of varied sort,  
like breath which is the life, like one's own son,  
like a swift bird, a cow who yields her milk, pure  
and refulgent to the wood he speeds —

He offers safety like a pleasant home, like ripened corn,  
the conqueror of men.

Like a seer landing, famed among the folk; like a steed  
friendly he vouchsafes us power.

With flame insatiate, like eternal might; caring for each one  
like a dame at home;

Bright when he shines forth, whitish mid the folk,  
like a car, gold-decked, thundering to the fight.

He strikes with terror like a dart shot forth,  
e'en like an archer's arrow tipped with flame;

Master of present and future life, the maiden's lover  
and the matron's Lord.

To him lead all your ways; may we attain the kindled God  
as cows their home at eve.

He drives the flames below as floods their swell the rays  
rise up to the fair place of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

The Āraṇyakas and Brāhmaṇas belong to the post-Vedic period. The Upaniṣads are still later works than the Āraṇyakas. The Āraṇyakas and Brāhmaṇas stand midway between the Vedas and Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads are mainly speculative and philosophical compositions; they are more philosophical in character, while the Āraṇyakas and Brāhmaṇas deal mainly with the details of the performances of

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<sup>1</sup>Griffith R. T. H. (Tr.): *The Hymns of the RgVeda*. R.V.-I, 66.1, Tr. Vol. I, pp. 90, 91.



## The Vedas

25

sacrifices. They deal with the nature and performance of the various sacrificial rites to be undertaken for the attainment of heaven, after death. They serve as the Karmakāṇḍa of the Vedas. They contain less of philosophy in them. However, the *Aitare'ya Āranyaka* makes a passing reference to Ātman. The *Aitare'ya Āranyaka* inquires into the nature of the soul in the following manner and attempts to explain it in its own way. "What is the soul that we may worship him? Which is the soul? Is it that by which a man sees? by which he hears? by which he smells odours? by which he utters speech? by which he discriminates a pleasant or unpleasant taste? Is it the heart (or understanding)? or the mind or will? Is it sensation? or retention? or attention? or application? or haste? (or pain)? or memory? or assent? or determination? or animal action? or wish or desire?"<sup>1</sup> Attempts were made to understand the soul in terms of the various psychic modes either by identifying the former with them or by projecting some agent behind them. The questions aim at understanding whether there is any entity like the Ātman behind all these mental phenomena which controls and regulates their activities.

In reply to these questions the philosopher of the *Aitare'ya Āranyaka* proceeds thus— "All those are only various names of apprehension. But this (Soul, consisting in the faculty of apprehension) is Brahman;

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<sup>1</sup>Colebrooke H. T. : *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, p. 29.

he is Indra, he is (Prajāpati-प्रजापति) the lord of creatures; these gods are he; and so are the five primary elements: earth, air, the etherial fluid, water and light; these, and the same joined with minute objects and other seeds (of existence), and again other (beings) produced from eggs, or borne in wombs, or originating in hot moisture, or springing from plants; whether horses or kine, or men, or elephants, whatever lives, and walks and flies, or whatever is immovable (as herbs and trees); all that is the eye of intelligence. On intellect (every thing) is founded; the world is the eye of intellect, and intellect is its foundation. Intelligence is (Brahmā) the great one. By this (intuitively) intelligent soul, that sage ascended from the present world to the blissful region of heaven; and obtaining all his wishes, became immortal. He became immortal."<sup>1</sup>

This passage from the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* clearly states that the soul according to the Āraṇyakas is constituted of intelligence; it is an intelligent principle, present in all the things ranging from the inanimate things like the earth to the highest gods like Indra and Prajāpati, including the vegetative and animal kingdoms. It is according to them abstract, immaterial and conscious principle. The soul is a wider and subtler principle of intelligence present in all the things, though in different grades. They also believed that the realisation of this intelligent principle enabled the individuals to rise to

<sup>1</sup> Colebrooke H. T.: *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, pp. 29, 30.

## The Vedas

27

the higher regions of the heaven. They agree with the Vedic idea that after death the individual can rise to the heaven, wherein all kinds of happiness *can be acquired. All their desires become fulfilled* eternally in the heaven and thus they become immortal. They believe with the Vedas that the end of human life is the attainment of the heaven where a fuller and more perfect life can be enjoyed. Their immortality is combined with positive enjoyment.

## CHAPTER II

### THE UPANIṢADS

The Upaniṣads form the concluding portions of the Veda, and are therefore called the Vada-anta or the end of the Veda. They contain more of philosophy and no ritualistic portion of the Vedas. The Upaniṣads are the free utterances of the inspired sages given out by them in their mystical experiences. The Upaniṣads are the collection of varied statements of different thinkers and therefore they are heterogeneous in character. The Upaniṣadic statements being inconsistent with each other and sometimes even contradictory of each other, it is impossible to construct a scientific and logically tenable philosophical system from them. They are stray inspired utterances of the seers in the form of the outpourings of the poetic imaginations of philosophically tempered minds in the face of the facts of life. They express the restlessness and striving of the human mind to grasp the true nature of Reality. The later Vedāntic systems of S'āṅkara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha differ from each other but they tried to remain faithful to and tried to find support from the Upaniṣads. Due to the conflicting and incompatible views expressed in the Upaniṣads it is impossible to hold dogmatically that the Upaniṣads have any particular system of philosophy

## The Upaniṣads

29

of their own. It is however true that the Upaniṣadic thoughts and words possess tremendous force and an unusual power of giving consolation, peace and solace to the restless human heart. Out of the one hundred and twenty Upaniṣads only thirteen, i.e. the Īśa, Kēna, Kaṭha, Pras'na, Muṇḍako, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitarēya, Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, S'vetāśvatara, Maitrāyaṇī and the Kauṣītaki are philosophically more noteworthy and hence the following discussion will be based upon and confined to these Upaniṣads.

The Upaniṣads deal with such philosophical topics like God, Brahman, immortality, salvation, individual soul, the bondage, the origin and nature of saṁsāra, the cosmology and cosmogony, the problem of evil, etc. They contain lofty thoughts about the Brahman, the world, Ātman, Māyā, Mokṣa (liberation) and so on. Almost every Upaniṣad contains some thing, some interpretation of the ultimate Reality known as the Brahman, the Ātman or the Mahat or the Avyakta. The Brahman is the Absolute, the source, sustainer and end of every thing in the world and it includes in it all the things of the world, whether gross or subtle, physical or mental, transient or immortal, concrete or occult, material or spiritual. The Brahman is the all-pervading Reality as it envelopes everything that exists. It is the underlying reality of all the existent things. It is the essence of all things. It is eternal, without beginning, imperishable, devoid of a specific nature, divested of all attributes. It is

described as the truth, good, blissful, consciousness immortal, pure and free. It is the Supreme Reality and the first and the last thing of the universe. Nothing can be outside it. It is all and still it is not any one particular thing of the world. It is unique and incomparable. It is beyond description since words are incapable of grasping and describing it. It is incomprehensible because it is similar to nothing other than itself. It is beyond all distinctions and relations. It is, therefore, far from the relative world. It cannot be understood in terms of any worldly thing with which we are familiar. It being unique, nothing is similar to it. Being the cause and source of all, it transcends all its effects either great or small in magnitude. Nothing is equal to it. It is infinite and perfect. It is pure, free from imperfections and, therefore, free from desires which cause discontent and restlessness. Being perfect, it has no desire to acquire anything. It is ever-satisfied. It is the eternal spirit, immutable, intelligent, pure, unconditioned, self-same, self-satisfied and free from fear, desire and restlessness. It being perfect, its realisation brings unending bliss and everlasting peace to the individual soul.

All sorts of ideas about the Ātman are scattered in the Upaniṣads. The Ātman appears as the principle of vitality (prāṇa-प्राण) as it is found in the Vedas. The human body is composed of the bones, flesh, blood and the sense organs. The *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* describes the pre-eminence of the prāṇa, the vital principle over all other sense organs and thus states that the soul of man must be this principle of

animation or liveliness. According to the story of the deities (speech, eye, ear, mind) contending with one another for supremacy, went out of the body and the body lay without breathing, withered, like a log of wood. The body could not function when those deities entered the body one by one; but it rose again and began to function when the prāṇa entered into it. Thus the deities recognised the pre-eminence of the prāṇa and began to look upon it as the conscious soul (prajñātman).<sup>1</sup> This story clearly proves by the methods of agreement and difference that the human body cannot live and function in the absence of this inner essence — the ātman, which is its reality. It is therefore, natural to think that the prāṇa without which life is impossible and which is the only and the most important criterion of life must be the soul of an individual. The soul thus came to be identified with the breath or the principle of vitality or the prāṇa. Continuing in the same vein Pratardana said — “Man lives deprived of speech, for we see dumb people. Man lives deprived of sight, for, we see blind people. Man lives deprived of hearing, for, we see deaf people. Man lives deprived of mind, for we see infants. Man lives deprived of his arms, deprived of his legs, for we see it thus. But Prāṇa alone is the ‘conscious Self’ (Prajñātman) and having laid hold on this body it makes it rise up.... What is ātman (self-consciousness) that is prāṇa, what is prāṇa that is prajñā, for together they

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller (Tr.) : *The Upaniṣads* : Kaust. Up. 21.4, pp. 290, 291.

live in this body, and together they go out of it.”<sup>1</sup> The power that animates the body is not a blind thing but it is consciousness itself. The prajñā and prāṇa, consciousness and vitality, are inseparable and are the same. It is not only conscious but is higher than the mind. This prāṇa is regarded not only as the soul of an individual but it is exalted even to the status of the Brahman which is the *summum bonum* of the universe. But according to the Pras'na Up. the prāṇa is born from the spirit (Ātman); it is a separate entity which is subordinated to the Ātman.<sup>2</sup>

In another passage in the *Kāṭha Upaniṣad* regarding the interrelations of the various members of the psychical apparatus we do not get even the mention of the prāṇa, the vital principle. It says — “Know the Self to be sitting in the chariot, the body to be the chariot, the intellect (buddhi) the charioteer, and the mind the reins. The senses they call the horses, the objects of the senses their roads. When he (the Highest Self) is in union with the body, the senses, and the mind, then wise people call him the Enjoyer.”<sup>3</sup>

Continuing the same, a sort of hierarchy of the mental apparatus is formed. It is said — “Beyond the senses there are the objects, beyond the objects there is the mind, beyond the mind there is the

<sup>1</sup> Kauṣītaki Up. 3.3. Tr. Max Müller, pp. 294, 295.

यो वै प्राणः सा प्रज्ञा या वा प्रज्ञा स प्राणः ।

<sup>2</sup> Pras'na Up. 3.3. See *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*. Tr. R. E. Hume, p. 383.

<sup>3</sup> Kāṭha Up.-I, 3.3, 4. Tr. Max Müller, p. 12.



intellect, and the Great Self is beyond the intellect. Beyond the Great there is the Undeveloped, beyond the Undeveloped (avyakta) there is the Person (Puruṣa). Beyond the Person there is nothing — this is the goal, the highest road.”<sup>1</sup> Here, in the chain of the various members of the psychic apparatus, there is no special place ascribed to prāṇa; the chain is only of the senses—objects—mind—buddhi (intellect)—and the soul—Ātman. Here, the Ātman is not only dissociated from the prāṇa but the word prāṇa is not even mentioned. However, it is made clear here by the Upaniṣadic thinkers, that the real knower is the Ātman and not the mind. Apparently the mind is the knower, but the real experiencer or enjoyer is the subtle Ātman that can know the things only when it is attached to mind and senses. This Ātman is hidden and is imperceptible to us. Further the Ātman is described thus—“That Self is hidden in all beings and does not shine forth but is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect.”<sup>2</sup> It implies that the Ātman is a subtle principle that does not possess any material and perceptible quality with which we can know it by the sense organs. It being subtle has to be known intuitively in our own experience. It expresses itself to us only as a subject and not as an object.

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad gives a cosmology wherein we get the stages of the evolution of the world and body and Ātman from the Brahman.

<sup>1</sup> Kātha Up.-I. 3.10.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.-I, 3.12. Tr. Max Müller, p. 13.

The Brahman is described as the Truth, Knowledge and Infinite. We get a full cosmology here. "From that Self (Brahman) sprang ether (Ākāśa that through which we hear); from ether, air (that through which we hear and feel); from air, fire (that through which we hear, feel and see); from fire, water (that through which we hear, feel, see and taste); from water, earth (that through which we hear, feel, see, taste and smell). From earth, herbs, from herbs, food, from food, seed, from seed, man. Man thus consists of the essence of food."<sup>1</sup> Thus it means that the human body which is corporeal cannot be formed without the various earthly matters which an individual derives from the plants and grains in the form of food. Human existence, thus, becomes impossible without food. From food is man born and on food he subsists. Therefore it is natural to suppose that the essence of man must be the food, the matter. Therefore, the essential nature or the soul of man can be said to be food.

But human life does not constitute only of food. The physical body formed out of the earthly matter is not all; over and above it is the vitality or the energy that sets the human body into activity is also indispensable. This vitality is expressed by means of the breath. Therefore it is further said — "Different from this, which consists of the essence of food, is the other, the inner Self, which consists of breath. The former is filled by this." It means the physical

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<sup>1</sup> Taitt. Up. 2. 1.

स वै एष पुरुषः अन्नरसमयः ।

body becomes relatively worthless as compared with this inner and essential principle of vitality without which the human body cannot work as a 'living organism'.<sup>1</sup>

The human being cannot be completely understood in terms of only the physical body and the vital principle. The human beings share both these attributes with the organisms of lower species, but over and above them the human beings possess some characteristic quality, because of which they stand higher in the scale of organisms. The special feature or the differentia of mankind is the mind, the thinking mind. An organism though equipped with all the sense organs, the physical apparatus with all motor organs and the vitality, it cannot reach the status of a man as long as it does not possess the 'mind' the 'thinking mind.' Therefore 'mind' comes to be regarded the substantial nature of man. It becomes the essential part of man. So the Taitt. Upaniṣad goes ahead and says — "Different from this, which consists of breath, is the other, the inner Self, which consists of mind. The former is filled by this."<sup>2</sup> The soul comes to be identified here with the mind as it is supposed to be the essential nature of man, because of the mind man is called man, or in the absence of it man ceases to be man and gets degraded to the lower species. It needs to be noted here that the 'mind' is regarded here as the superior principle to the prāṇa which

<sup>1</sup> Taitt. Up. 2-2. अन्योऽन्तरात्मा प्राणमयः ।

<sup>2</sup> Taitt. Up. 2-3. अन्योऽन्तरात्मा मनोमयः ।

is just reverse in the scale of the psychic apparatus mentioned in the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad, where prāṇa is put above the mind.

But penetrating still into the deeper levels of consciousness, it will be found that mind is not the last thinking agent. Mind has to be subordinated to a still higher faculty, known as the 'intellect' or 'understanding' whose function is to weigh various alternatives, to deliberate by thinking over the pros and cons of a thing and then to decide the rightness and wrongness of things under consideration. It discriminates between the good and the bad, right and the wrong to decide the line of action and thought. It is the 'reason' of man. Therefore psychologically a separate faculty known as 'intellect' has to be admitted. "Different from this, which consists of mind, is the other, the inner Self, which consists of 'understanding' or Reason; the former is filled by this."<sup>1</sup> This intellect guides and governs the working of the mind. This previous possession of the intellect raises man to a higher level of consciousness and thus enables him to conquer nature by an understanding of the laws of its working.

Even this 'Reason' is not the last thing in man. Reason many times falls short of meeting the demands made on it by the environment. Reason too is fallible. Reason also is one part of his total consciousness. Consciousness is wider than the Reason. The pure unconditioned, unborn and imperishable part of man remains still behind. It is called the

<sup>1</sup> Taitt. Up. 2.4 अन्योऽन्तरात्मा विज्ञानमयः ।

'bliss'. The Taitt. Upaniṣad says—“Different from this, which consists of understanding, is the other inner Self, which consists of bliss. The former is filled by this. This Self is free from all imperfections, therefore, it is full of joy or bliss. It is free from imperfection and finitude which cause grief and restlessness in man, because there is an irrepressible tendency in man to grow infinite and as long as he does not attain infinitude he remains under a strain of the mind. He cannot till then experience what is called the bliss, or unqualified peace which is the real nature of the innermost Self; known as the ānandamayāḥ (आनन्दमयः). Penetrating the lower sheaths of corporeality, vitality, mentality, intellection man at last reaches this last faculty of ānanda and then rests satisfied for ever, because it is an experience of perfection which is marked by peace and tranquillity. So long as man identifies his essential nature with any one of the inferior sheaths or faculties, he does not find final satisfaction in his life. When man realises his innermost Self as one full of joy and bliss, then nothing remains for him to achieve. He then enjoys the highest bliss.

This Ātman, constituted of bliss is beyond description. It cannot be understood in terms of any other physical or mental attributes. The mind is incapable of understanding it in its own terms. Therefore in the Taitt. Upaniṣad it is said that the Self cannot be understood by mind (manas). It is that from which the words come back because the mind cannot reach there.

This inner Self is the real knower. It knows the objects through the mind and sense organs, using them as its instruments. Throughout the process of knowing, in all the stages — in sensation, perception, association of ideas, comparison, judgement, deliberation and discrimination, the same inmost Self is present, though its presence is not felt. Yājñavalkya in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad says — “He who dwells in beings, in the breath, in the tongue, in the eye, in the ether, in the mind, in the skin . . . . He who dwells in knowledge, and within knowledge, whom knowledge does not know, whose body knowledge is, and who pulls (rules) knowledge within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) from within, the immortal.”<sup>1</sup> Continuing the same Yājñavalkya further says — “He who dwells in the seed, and within the seed, whom the seed does not know, whose body the seed is, and who pulls (rules) the seed within, he is thy Self, the puller, the ruler within, the immortal; unseen but seeing; unheard but hearing; unperceived but perceiving; unknown but knowing. There is no other seer but he, there is no other hearer but he, there is no other perceiver but he, there is no other knower but he. This is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.”<sup>2</sup> So far we were thinking of this Self as an inner thinking principle in man; it forms a part of his psychology. But this same inner Self of man is also described as one who dwells in every

<sup>1</sup> Bṛh. Up. 3.7.22. Tr. Max Müller, p. 136.

आत्मा अन्तर्यामी अमृतः ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3.7.23. Tr. Max Müller, p. 136.

other external thing of the universe. This Ātman dwells in the inner citadel of man as well extends all over the universe outside him. Yājñavalkya describes the Self the indwelling immortal Self thus. He says — "He dwells in the earth, in the waters, in the fire, in the atmosphere, in the wind, in the sky, in the sun, in the quarters of heaven, in the moon and stars, in space, in the darkness, in the light, in all things, in the breath, in speech, in the eye, in the ear, in the mind, in the skin, in the understanding, but they do not know him."<sup>1</sup> The Ātman gradually came to be identified with the Brahman the ultimate eternal, all-pervasive and infinite Reality. It—the soul of man, the owning principle in the individual—grew in magnitudes to such an extent that in the Brh. Upaniṣad we find that it became co-terminous with the universe and still transcends it. The Self comes to be of varying nature from different points of view. The same Self appears in different forms to be sought by them in their own ways. The same all-pervading eternal Ātman which is the indweller of everything meets persons in whichever form they seek it. It presents itself to persons in all forms when it is sought.<sup>2</sup> It remains identified with the particular world, but only temporarily, and only to those whose knowledge is limited only to that world; but actually, in its real nature it is greater than all these worlds; it is not only immanent in them, not only does it pervade

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 3.7 (whole). Tr. Hume R. E., p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1.4.16. Tr. Hume R. E., p. 85.

them, but also it transcends all these worlds which it envelopes in itself and remains above (परा) all these. It now assumes infinity and pervasiveness. The Ātman of the individual becomes now the essence (मय) of the whole universe; it becomes the Ātman of all the things, animate and inanimate.

The following passage from the Chāndogya Upaniṣad testifies to the above statement that the same Ātman is the external and the internal, the cosmic and the spiritual principle. It says—“He is myself within the heart, smaller than a grain of rice, smaller than a grain of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He also is myself within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than the heaven, greater than all these worlds.”<sup>1</sup> In another passage from the same Upaniṣad it is clearly stated that the first Being that created the fire, water and earth in order, entered them with this living Self and thus manifested itself in the manifold of the world. It is said there—“That Being (i.e., that which had produced fire, water and earth) thought, let me now enter those three beings (fire, water and earth) with this living Self (jīvātmā) and let me then reveal (develop) names and forms.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, it becomes clear that the Self is the innermost self of everything, and that it is present in each and every thing. This Self is present in all the objects of the world in

<sup>1</sup>Ch. Up. 3.14.3. Tr. Max Müller, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Ch. Up. 6.3.2. Tr. Max Müller, p. 95.



## The Upaniṣads

41

the most subtle form. Svétaketu receives a reply from his father in regard to the subtlety of the Ātman. It is said—"Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the true. It is the Self, and thou, O Svétaketu art it."<sup>1</sup> Thus the self is present in every thing of the world, in the human and non-human world in the subtle form; therefore, it is not perceptible in any ordinary form of perception. The Svétāsvatara Upaniṣad in one passage describes how in a subtle form the Self exists in every thing of the world. The passage runs as follows —

"As oil in sesame seeds, as butter in cream,  
As water in river-beds, and as fire in the frictionsticks,  
So is the Soul (Ātman) apprehended in one's own Soul,  
If one looks for him with true austerity (tapas).  
The Soul (Ātman) which pervades all things,  
As butter is contained in cream,  
Which is rooted in the Self-knowledge and austerity."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, another passage from the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad says—"Just as a razor is laid in a razor case or a bird is pent up in its nest, even so is this conscious Being placed in the body up to the very nails, up to the very nails of the body." Thus the Self is immanent not only in the human body but in every thing in the world. It is not apparently visible but has to be extracted out of the upper coverings by special labour in the form of severe

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 6.10.3. Tr. Müller, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Svét. Up. 1.15.16. Tr. Hume R. E., p. 397

तिलेषु तैलं दधिनीच सर्पिरापः स्त्रोतःस्वर्णीषु चाग्निः ।

एवमात्मात्मनि गृह्यतेऽसौ सत्येनैव तपसा योऽनुपश्यति ॥

penance and knowledge. As we do not obtain butter directly from the cream or oil directly from the sesame seed without crushing it, so also our Self, though it is always with us, and is latent in us, is not easily known. The Self has no measurable magnitude, because it is immaterial and subtle. The *Mundaka Upaniṣad* describes the Self as "Great and lustrous is that inconceivable being, and yet it is subtler than the subtle. It is farther than any far-off end, and yet quite near to us, being shut up in the cave of our heart."<sup>1</sup> In another passage occurring in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the Self again is described as "Smaller than the small, greater than the great, and is hidden in the heart of the creature. Similarly in the same *Upaniṣad* the Self is described "the Self as bodiless within the bodies, as unchanging among changing things, is great and omnipresent."<sup>2</sup> Thus it can be seen from such numerous illustrations that the Self is subtle, bodiless, incorporeal, immutable, illimitable, conscious, invisible and omnipresent or all-pervasive. The *Upaniṣadic* thinkers hold not only that the Self is present in all the beings and things of the world but they also think that the Self is both the material and efficient cause of the universe. The *Bṛh. Upaniṣad* says—"As the spider comes out with its thread, or as small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all Devas, all beings come forth from that Self."<sup>3</sup> Thus

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<sup>1</sup> *Mundaka Up.* 3.1.7.

<sup>2</sup> *Kaṭha Up.* 1.2.20.22.

<sup>3</sup> *Bṛh. Up.* 2.1.20.

## The Upaniṣads

43

it holds that everything of this world is intimately connected with the Self; this world is his body and he is its inner controller or the antaryāmin (अन्तर्यामिन्). The Self is not only present in all these things but is also the agent in a person's various functions. The Maitāyaṇi Upaniṣad says—"Assuredly, the Soul (Ātman) of one's soul is called the Immortal Leader. As perceiver, thinker, goer, evacuator, begetter, doer, speaker, taster, smeller, seer, hearer and he touches the All-pervader (i.e., the Self—the Ātman) has entered the body."<sup>1</sup> Thus the real doer of actions and the enjoyer of fruits of those actions is the Self.

This Self is conscious and present not only for certain moments but is present for ever. It is the experiencer not only in the waking state, but is equally present during the states of dream and dreamless-sleep also. It is the witness of all these states but is not affected by its experiences, good or bad. The Self is supposed to have four legs-Pādas: (i) The first the state of being awake known as the —baḥiḥ prajñāḥ— in which the Self knows the objects of the external world; (ii) The second state is the dreaming state in which the Self knows the internal things, i.e., is in touch with the memory images of the dreamer. It is known as the antaḥ prajñāḥ— knowing the internal phenomena or objects; (iii) The third state is that of dreamless sleep in which the Self knows nothing and desires nothing. It is known as the Susupti. It is known as the third leg in which the Self enjoys its unified and conscious

<sup>1</sup>Maitrāyaṇi Up. 6.7. (Tr.) Hume R. E., p. 428.

state and is full of joy. When the self is conscious neither of the external objects, nor of the internal objects, nor of both — not a cognition — mass (प्रज्ञानघन), not cognitive, not non-cognitive, unseen, with which there can be no dealing, ungraspable, having no distinctive mark, non-thinkable that cannot be designated, the essence of the assurance of which is the state of being one with the Self (एकात्म-प्रत्ययसार), the cessation of development, tranquil (शान्त), benign (शिव), without a second. Such they think is the fourth state. He is the Self (Ātman). He should be discerned.”<sup>1</sup> It is known as the Turīyā avasthā, in which the Self enjoys itself — that is, it is without a second, it enters itself and enjoys eternal peace. There is the constant and unflickering light of itself. Thus, the Self is identical in all these states of wakefulness, dreams, dreamless sleep and the fourth one — the Turīyā — in which the Self enjoys its peace and tranquillity in the purest form.

The Upaniṣads also recognise two kinds of Self: the one is the universal Supreme Self and the other, the particular individual soul — the jīvātmā. The one is unchanging, eternal, unborn, imperishable, above all qualities, the essence of all the things, immortal and tranquil; the other is changing, mortal, subject to pleasure and pains, the doer of actions and reaper of their fruits, the transmigrator, finite and particular being confined to particular body. The particular or the individual soul is also known as the Ego. The Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad distinguishes between

<sup>1</sup> Māndūkya Up. 7. Tr. Hume R. E., p. 392.

the two. It is said — “There is indeed another, different soul, called the elemental soul (bhūtatman) he, who, being overcome by the bright or the dark fruits of action, a good or an evil womb, so that his course is downward, overcome by the pairs of opposites. The five subtle substances (tan-mātra) are spoken of the word ‘element’ (bhūta). Likewise, the five gross elements (mahā bhūta) are spoken by the ‘world element’. Now the combination of these is said to be body “sarīra” and that who is said to be in the body is said to be the ‘elemental soul’. Now its immortal Self (Ātman) is like ‘the drop of water on the lotus leaf’. This elemental soul is overcome by Nature’s (prakṛti) qualities (guṇa). Now because of being overcome, he goes on to confusedness; because of confusedness, he sees not the blessed Lord, the cause of action, who stands within oneself (आत्मस्थ). Borne along and defiled by the stream of qualities (guṇa), unsteady, wavering, full of desire, distracted, this one goes on to the state of Self conceit (abhimānatva). In thinking ‘This is I’ and that is mine he binds himself with his Self, as does a bird with a snare, consequently being overcome by the fruits of his action, he enters a good or an evil womb, so that his course is downward or upward and he wanders around, overcome by the pairs of opposites.”<sup>1</sup> This is the full description of the nature of the individual soul, the जीवात्मा or the भूतात्मा. The philosopher of the Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad further distinguishes this Self from the Universal and Higher Self in

<sup>1</sup> Maitrāyaṇi Up. 3-2. Tr. Hume, R.E., p. 418.

the following manner: "Verily he, who is the doer is the elemental soul. The causer of action through the organs is the inner Person. Now, verily as a lump of iron, overcome by fire and beaten by workmen, passes over into a different form — so, assuredly, indeed, the elemental soul, overcome by the inner Person and beaten by the qualities, passes over into a different form."<sup>1</sup> The universal Self is beyond these three qualities—sattva, rajas and tamas—and so it is free; it does not whirl in the wheel of birth and death; actions good and bad, do not affect him. While the individual soul is the doer of actions and reaper of their fruits, is governed by the three qualities, is subject to afflictions and death. A similar parable occurs also in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad which describes the two Selves, one, the higher and the other the empirical by means of two birds—sitting on the same tree, one on a higher branch and the other on a lower—the latter experiencing by turn sweet and bitter tastes of the fruits, while eating them, and the former sitting quiet, unruffled, without eating anything, a silent witness of the world.<sup>2</sup> This also is a symbolic representation of the states of the universal and the empirical soul. The one is the transcendental Self, the other the empirical soul, moving on the wheel of earthly life. In fact, all the numerous individual souls are in their essence the same. They do not differ substantially. The inner Self or the indweller—the cause and the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 3/3, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> Muṇḍaka Up. 3.1.2.

## The Upaniṣads

47

sustainer of them all, is the same Universal Self—the अन्तर्यामी; but their differences are due to the separate adjuncts or mediums in which the same inner Self manifests itself. The Kāṭha Upaniṣad explains it as follows—“As the one fire, the one air, after it has entered the world, though one becomes different according to whatever it enters, thus the one Self within all things becomes different, according to whatever it enters, and exists also without.”<sup>1</sup> Thus it can be said, that in spite of the plurality of the different individual souls, they are basically one in so far as their substantial and essential nature is concerned. All the differences are due to the differences of their adjuncts or of their mediums through which they manifest themselves. The individual souls are sometimes compared to the reflections in different vessels full of clean water, of the same sun which is like the highest Universal Self.

The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad describes the soul as follows—

“Whoever has qualities (guṇa, distinctions) is the doer of deeds that bring recompense;

And of such action surely he experiences the consequences.

Undergoing all forms, characterized by the three qualities, treading the three paths;

The individual Self roams about according to its deeds (karman).

He is of the measure of a thumb, of sunlike appearance,  
When coupled with conception (saṁkalpa) and egoism (ahamkāra).

<sup>1</sup> Kāṭha Up. 2.5.9, 10. Tr. Max Müller, p. 19.

But with only the qualities of intellect and of Self,  
 The lower (Self) appears of the size of the point of an awl.  
 This living Self is to be known as a part of the hundredth  
 part of the point of a hair—subdivided a hundredfold.  
 The soul is neither a male, nor a female, nor neuter.  
 The soul being attached to what it experiences, gets new  
 births according to previous deeds.  
 The form and nature of the soul is determined from the  
 qualities of the deeds of each soul.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the individual soul is mutable and finite being subjected to changing experiences and their results. It is subject to pleasure and pain and thus moves in the cycle of births and deaths.

An important parable is found also in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. Indra the king of Gods and Virocana (Asura), without letting each other know, approached the same preceptor Prajāpati to seek knowledge of the Self to acquire superiority over each other. Prajāpati helped them to carry on the search of the self. First Indra was told that the reflection in a mirror or the person seen in the eye was the Self, then that one, who moves happy in dreams was told to be the Self, then a man fast asleep without dreams was told to be Self, then the body. . . . a self. At last he was given to understand that none of these things could be the Self. The Self was entirely different and above all these things. The Self cannot be identified with any of these corporeal things. The Self cannot be a reflection in mirror or eye-ball, a

<sup>1</sup> S'vet. Up. 5.7-12, Tr. Hume, p. 407.



## The Upaniṣads

49

shadow, a person in dream, a body or any such thing. The Self is the bodiless, incorporeal, subtle, immortal, conscious principle which has its own category; and hence it can never be understood in terms of any non-selfish or unspiritual thing.

There is no particular and one single version of the size of the Ātman. There are various views expressed in the different Upaniṣads about the size of the Ātman. It is said in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, "My Soul in the heart is smaller than a grain of rice or barley, or a mustard or a canary seed: and yet my soul, which is pent up in the heart, is greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than the heaven, greater than all these worlds."<sup>1</sup> Still subtler than this, is the self that is described in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, as a hundredth part of the extremity of a hair divided into a hundred infinitesimal parts,<sup>2</sup> or as still subtler than this size is described in the same Upaniṣad as oil in the sesame seed, ghee in the cream and fire in the fire-sticks.<sup>3</sup> Thus, here the Self is described as the finest and subtlest element immanent in the things; it has only metaphysical existence and not a physical and perceptible magnitude. Then gradually the size seems to have increased from a mustard seed to a thumb (अंगुष्ठमात्र). The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* further holds that this inner Self is only of the size of thumb and is pent up

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. 3.4.3.

<sup>2</sup> Śvet. Up. 5.8.9.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1.1.16.

in the heart of men.<sup>1</sup> It also holds that the Self is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest and dwells in the cave (heart) of human beings.<sup>2</sup> It is further said that the word hṛdayam is derived because this (ayam) dwells hṛdi (in the heart) it is called hṛdayam. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* also we get the mention of the Self as “The Person not larger than a thumb, the inner Self, is always settled in the heart of man.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, we find that the size, conceived of Ātman, went on increasing gradually from fire in stick and ghee in cream and oil in seed to a grain of rice or a mustard seed and thence to that of a thumb; and later to that of a span—filling the body—from the hair to the nails.<sup>4</sup> The Self is also found to be identified with the Person in the sun—big and lustrous; and at the end the Self assumes the largest size infinitude; it is the person in the sun, in the moon, in the lightning, in the thunder, in the ether, in the mirror, in the echo, in the sound that follows a man, person in the shadow, the person that is embodied, the Self which is conscious (prajñā), the person in the right eye, the person that is in the left eye, etc.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the size of Self went on widening, and at last it is found that

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 3.13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3.20.

<sup>3</sup> Kaṭha 2.6.17.

<sup>4</sup> Kauṣītaki Up. 4.20. आत्मेदं शरीरमात्मानमनुप्रविष्ट आनोमभ्य  
आनश्चेभ्यः ।

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 4.1-15.

## The Upaniṣads

51

the Self came to be looked upon as the infinite Reality (Brahman) itself. Like the Brahman the Ātman also is held to be the source of all the things of the world. The Self is also said to be at the centre of existence and everything is revolving round it. So also the same Ātman creates this world out of itself like a spider,<sup>1</sup> being the material and efficient cause of the universe.

Thus we find that the same Self that is imagined to be dwelling in the innermost citadel of our heart is also found everywhere, in each and everything of the world; the inner psychical reality is also the same cosmic reality; that one who is the indwelling person or the inner controller (antaryāmi) of the individual is also the controller from inside (antaryāmi) of all the cosmic agencies and the material things.

The Self no more remains confined in the heart of the individual, but gradually it assumes various spacial magnitudes and finally it becomes coterminous with the whole Reality. The Ātman of the individual becomes the Ātman of the whole universe. That which abides in and fills the whole body of the individual, from the hair to the nails also fills everything in the universe. The *Brh. Upaniṣad* says that the Self is the same as the ultimate Reality—the Brahman.<sup>2</sup> The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also holds that all this is Brahman.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S'vèt. Up. 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> Brh. Up. 2 . 5 . 19. अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

<sup>3</sup> Ch. Up. 3 . 14 . 1. सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।

A. Barth says regarding the Ātman—"..the ātman is the one, simple, eternal, infinite, incomprehensible being, assuming every form, and itself without any, the only, yet immovable and immutable agent, the cause of all action and all change. It is both the material and efficient cause of the world, which is its manifestation, its body. This it draws from its own substance, and again absorbs into it, not by necessity, however, but by an act of its own will, as the spider spins forth and draws back into itself the thread of its web. From it proceed and to it return all finite existences, just as sparks leap from the furnace and fall back into it again, whilst the multiplicity of these existences no more affects its own unity than the formation of the foam and the wave affects that of the sea. More subtle than an atom, greater than the greatest of existences, it has nevertheless a dwelling, the cavity of the heart of every man. It resides in its fulness, and that it rests rejoining in itself and its works. This direct and material immanency of the absolute being in the creature, which is the unreasoned, and mystic assumption of the system, is also its connecting bond."<sup>1</sup> Richard Garbe in course of his discussion describes Ātman thus—"The word Ātman originally meant 'breathing', then 'the vital principle', 'the Self', but soon it was used to signify the Intransient One, which is without any attribute or quality,—the

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<sup>1</sup> Barth A. : *The Religions of India*, p. 73.

All-Soul, the Soul of the world, the Thing-in-itself or whatever you like to translate it . . . Having attained this stage of development, the word Brahman became completely synonymous with Ātman. The objective Brahman and the subject Ātman amalgamated into one, the highest metaphysical idea; and this amalgamation comprises the doctrine of the unity of the subject and the object: the inmost Self of the individual being is one with that all-pervading power 'Tattvam-asi — thou art that'."<sup>1</sup> As the Self or Ātman does not possess any particular physical attribute, it cannot be described in terms of any of the physical things or material qualities. It is unique by itself. It is like none of the things that we experience here on the earth. It is infinite and beyond all qualities and so devoid of any particular qualities. It evades every description of it as the words which describe them are incapable of grasping and describing the infinite and immeasurable, abstract, formless, bodiless, qualityless thing—the Ātman. Yājñavalkya in the *Brh. Upaniṣad* describes, finally, the Self in the following manner. He says—"The Self (Ātman) is not this, it is not this (नेति, नेति). It is unseizable for it cannot be seized. It is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed. It is unattached, for it does not attach itself. It is unbound. It does not tremble. It is not injured."<sup>2</sup> Going further the

<sup>1</sup> Garbe Richard : *The Philosophy of Ancient India*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Brh. Up.* 4.4.32.

same Upaniṣad describes the Ātman as "This great, unborn Self, undecaying, undying, immortal, fearless, is indeed Brahman."<sup>1</sup> Yājñavalkya describes it (the Ātman) as the protector of all, exceedingly fine, latent, lustrous, imperishable, not above, not across, nor in the middle; there is no likeness of Him, His form is not to be seen, is invisible to the eye, abides in the heart."<sup>2</sup>

### Mokṣa — मोक्ष

To the Ancient thinkers the aim of philosophical inquiry was, mainly, the attainment of liberation, mukti, mokṣa, amṛtatva, niḥsréyas. Knowledge was a means to the end of Self-realisation, which is also understood as Mokṣa. It is said in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*—"But he, who has understanding, who is mindful and always pure, reaches indeed that place, from whence he is not born again. He who has no understanding, who is unmindful and always impure, never reaches that place, but enters into the round of births."<sup>3</sup> "He, who has perceived that, which is without sound, without touch, without form, without decay, without taste, eternal, without smell, without beginning, without end, beyond the Great, and unchangeable, is freed from the jaws of death."<sup>4</sup> Passages like these abound in the Upaniṣads in which the desire of the individual is expressed to free himself from the wheel of birth and death. It

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 4.4.25. Tr. Max Müller, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> Svêṭ. Up. 4.19. Tr. Hume, p. 405. न च तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति ।

<sup>3</sup> Kaṭha Up. 1.3.8, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Kaṭha. Up. 1.3.15.

## The Upaniṣads

55

is said that the Self or Ātman being a indestructible leaves the body at death and assumes another suitable body to dwell in. The Ātman that dwells in the body leaves one mortal coil and assumes another. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says—“This (body) indeed withers and dies when the living Self has left it; the living Self dies not.”<sup>1</sup> The same Upaniṣad further says—“.. But those who go hence having found here the Soul and those real desires—for them in all worlds there is freedom.”<sup>2</sup> Yājñavalkya says—“And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, so does this Self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto himself another, newer and more beautiful shape, whether it be like the Fathers, or like the Gandharvas, or like the Devas, or like Prajāpati or like Brahman, or like other beings.”<sup>3</sup> The same Upaniṣad further contains the following verse—“.. And as the slough of a snake lies on anthill dead and cast away, thus lies this body; but that disembodied immortal Spirit is Brahman only, is only light.”<sup>4</sup> The Self is a living principle and the body is inconscient and inanimate (jada). The Self drags the body or is the cause of the bodily movements. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says—“Like a horse attached to a cart, so is the Spirit (the conscious

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. 6 . 11 . 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 8 . 1 . 6.

<sup>3</sup> Brh. Up. 4 . 3 . 4.

<sup>4</sup> Brh. Up. 4 . 4 . 7.

Self) attached to this body.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, it becomes clear that most of the Upaniṣads hold that the body that is composed of the material elements like fire, air, water, earth and wind, is perishable and the imperishable part of it is the Ātman, the Self. The Self departs from the body at the time of death. Whatever is a part of the earthly body and is experienced by it is according to them, transient and hence incapable of yielding eternal bliss. “What is perishable is Primary matter, what is imperishable, is Hara, the Bearer, the Soul.”<sup>2</sup> The earthly life has its own limitations and the reflective minds are unable to secure everlasting joy from it. Naturally, man finds it useless to revolve round and round in the cycle of births and deaths. Thus, it is said in the *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* — “In this sort of cycle of existence (saṃsāra) what is the good of enjoyment of desires, when after a man had fed on them, there is seen repeatedly his return to earth? Be pleased to deliver me. In this cycle of existence, I am like a frog in a waterless well. Sir, you are our way of escape.”<sup>3</sup> It was natural that man should have found it fruitless to continue to revolve in this cycle of births and deaths as the pleasures enjoyed here transient. Men must have felt it worthless to come to the earth repeatedly and to live a tiresome finite life in which all pleasures and joys are transient, momentary and limited. But rebirth is not supposed to be a voluntary

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. 8.12.3.

<sup>2</sup> S'vāt. Up. 1.10.

<sup>3</sup> Maitrāyaṇi Up. 1.4. Tr. Hume R. E., p. 414.



act of an individual. A person is reborn, because he has to reap the fruits of his actions. Every action produces its effects and those effects, good or bad, are retained and they cannot be wiped out without being experienced in a fresh birth. Thus rebirth is caused by one's own actions. Good actions have good results and they have to be experienced in the form of pleasures; bad actions have bad results, which also are to be experienced in the form of suffering. In the *Bṛh. Upaniṣad* it is stated — "Now as a man is like this or like that, according as he acts and according as he behaves, so will he be; a man of good acts will become good; a man of bad acts, bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds."<sup>1</sup> The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also supports the doctrine of Karma.<sup>2</sup> The body that the Soul assumes in the succeeding birth is determined by its actions in the previous life. The *S'vē'tas'vatara Upaniṣad* also supports this view. It says—"According unto his deeds (Karman), the embodied one successively assumes forms in various conditions."<sup>3</sup> It becomes evident from the above passages from the various Upaniṣads that the Upaniṣadic philosophic thinkers believed that the determination of the kind of birth and body depends exclusively upon the kind of actions that one undertakes in the previous birth. The Self is free and remains for ever free, though it assumes numerous forms. The

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<sup>1</sup> Bṛh. Up. 4.4.5.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Up. 5.10.7.

<sup>3</sup> S'vēt. Up. 5.11.

forms that it assumes are temporary and transient, they are perishable because they are formed out of perishable matter. The indwelling Spirit is not bound by these forms which it assumes. The *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* describes this idea thus—"Verily, this Soul (Ātman), poets declare—wanders here on earth, from body to body, unovercome, as it seems, by the bright or the dark fruits of action. He, who, on account of his unmanifestness, subtlety, imperceptibility, incomprehensibility, and Selflessness is (apparently) unabiding and a doer in the unreal—he truly is not a doer, and he is abiding. Verily, he is pure, steadfast and unswerving stainless, unagitated, desireless, fixed like a spectator and Self-abiding. As an enjoyer of righteousness he covers himself (ātmānam) with a veil made of qualities (but he remains fixed—yea—he remains fixed."<sup>1</sup> Similar is a passage that runs in the *Śvetasvatara Upaniṣad* about the Self assuming bodies—"whoever has qualities (guṇa, distinctions) is the doer of deeds that bring recompense; and of such action surely he experiences the consequence; undergoing all forms, characterized by the three qualities, treading the three paths, the Individual self roams about according to its deeds."<sup>2</sup>

The earthly existence and the various earthly deeds are not worth-pursuing according to the Upaniṣads. They contend that these Karmas or deeds are the results of ignorance (avidyā). A man performs all these deeds and experiences, pleasure and pain as

<sup>1</sup> Maitrāyaṇi Up. 2.6. Tr. Hume, p. 417.

<sup>2</sup> Ś'vēt. Up. 5.7. Tr. Hume, p. 407.

## The Upaniṣads

59

long as he is under the spell of ignorance; and ignorance consists in misappropriation of the Karmas. He thinks that the individual soul is the doer and experiencer of the actions; that the actions and their results pertain to him; that he is the real doer of actions and the experiencer of their fruits. He attaches the actions and their results to himself, to the individual soul, when in fact, the real doer and enjoyer is his innermost Self, the Ātman, which is situated at the heart of the reality and of himself.<sup>1</sup> The Self governing the individual from within, as the (प्रेरयिता) in the capacity of the antoryāmin prompts and inspires him to act and also to experience the fruits of them. In the *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* it is clearly stated that the transcendental Self or the Ātman itself is the experiencer or enjoyer, not only of nature, but also of the lower Self, the bhūtātmā or the individual soul.<sup>2</sup> It is the real doer of actions because it supplies energy to the mind and to the buddhi; it is the initiator and sustainer; but even though it does the actions it is not bound by them. It perceives and acts through the sense organs and motor organs, but itself remains behind them, as the invisible thread-puller. The results of actions do not stick to it (न लिप्यते) as the drops of water on lotus-leaf do not adhere to it. It is described by Yājñavalkya in the following manner—“He is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the understood understander. Other than

<sup>1</sup> Bṛh. Up. 2.5.15.

Maitrāyaṇi Up. 6.10.

He, there is no thinker. Other than He there is no understander. He is your Soul, the inner controller, the Immortal.”<sup>1</sup>

The knowledge of the Ātman in its own unqualified, unconditioned, unmodified and pure form is the real knowledge; and whenever the Self is thought of as something different from its pure unqualified form, is called ignorance or avidyā. When one sees the ultimate unity of the Ātman, it is said, he knows the Self quite properly; but instead of that, when one sees the plurality as real, he is under the spell of ignorance. Ignorance thus consists in knowing the Ātman in a distorted fashion, in seeing him as something which it is not (as anātman). The removal of such misconceptions i.e., the Self being something other than itself, is called the higher knowledge. The *Mundaka Upaniṣad* recognises two kinds of knowledge (dvè vidyè) as the ‘Higher one’ (Parā-vidyā – पराविद्या and the Aparā-vidyā – अपराविद्या) the former dealing with transcendental Self—and the latter, the other branches of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> It is already made clear that the Higher Self or the Transcendental Self, which is the real Self of the individual, cannot be known as other finite and material things of the nature can be known with sense perception and reflection. The Ātman or the Higher Self escapes every conception that we can form of it. It evades all description and, therefore, we have to know it in some different way. Out of ignorance the finite

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 3.7.23.

Mundaka Up. 1.1.5.

Soul of the individual, that is subjected to pleasures and pains and thus to rebirth, is regarded as the eternal Self and because of the transiency of pleasurable experiences of the individual soul, the individual now and then has to suffer from disappointments. Not realising his true nature as the Higher Self, the individual falls now and then into infatuation and thus finds life miserable and bitter. By making proper discrimination between the two, he can make himself free from such sorrows of life. Paul Deussen makes a clearcut distinction between these two souls—the Universal and the individual, the transcendental and the empirical, the higher and the lower—in the following manner—“The former is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent; the latter are limited in wisdom, power and capacity for movement. The former is neither active nor passive, and is therefore free from the very beginning; the latter are active and receptive and are therefore entangled in the eternal round of Saṁsāra, and stand in need of deliverance. Yet the individual ātmas are not properly distinct from the supreme ātman. Each of them is in full and complete measure the Supreme ātman himself, as he manifests himself though his real nature concealed by the Upādhis (manas, indriyas, etc.). These Upādhis are unable to change his real nature, as little as the purity of the rock crystal is destroyed by the red colour with which it is externally smeared. Rather, it is solely avidyā, ignorance, which imposes the upādhis on the Supreme ātman.”<sup>1</sup> “It is the ātman

<sup>1</sup> Deussen Paul : *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 257.

himself who alone exists and creates the universe, who as Jīvātman enters into the universe that he has created.”<sup>1</sup> “This enjoyer, the individual soul results from the union of the ātman (the Supreme Soul) with the organs, manas and the indriyas.”<sup>2</sup> “..after getting rid of the delusion of empirical reality, we recognize this infinitely small individual soul as identical with the infinitely great Supreme Soul.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the inner Self of the individual is the all-pervading Brahman. The *Chandogya Upaniṣad* says—“..myself in the heart is that Brahman.”<sup>4</sup> Thus as long as a person does not see the immortal Person, who dwells in all, as long as one does not realize the highest Self, he cannot be free from grief and rebirth. Thus the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says—“There is only one ruler, the Self within all things, who makes the one form manifold. The wise who perceive him within their Self, to them belongs eternal happiness; not to others. The wise who perceive him within their Self, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.”<sup>5</sup> “Every creature that knows him, is liberated, and obtains immortality.”<sup>6</sup> “One who sees here many (nāneva—नानेव) he goes from death to death.”<sup>7</sup> It is said in the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* that “One who knows this Brahman, becomes Brahman only... he

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 259.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 261.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. Up. 3.14.4.

<sup>5</sup> Kaṭha Up. 2.5.12, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 2.6.8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 2.1.11.

## The Upaniṣads

63

crosses grief and all sins and becoming free from the knots of the dark cells, attains immortality.”<sup>1</sup> The *Ke'noṣanīṣad* says—“By ātman is obtained valour and by knowledge immortality.”<sup>2</sup> The *Īs'a Upaniṣad* says—“Where one sees everywhere one, where is there scope for infatuation and grief?”<sup>3</sup> Yājñavalkya says in the *Brh. Upaniṣad*—“It should be perceived by mind that there is nothing different or many (nanéva) here; one who sees here many passes from death to death.”

These and many such passages that occur in the various Upaniṣads speak that the Upaniṣadic people sought freedom from birth and death, pain and misery, imperfection and finitude which is characteristic of the earthly life; and they also believed that such liberation could be attained by the proper knowledge of the Self. There is only one and royal way to liberation, and that is the knowledge of this innermost Self of the individual or the Brahman. Therefore, attainment of this knowledge seems to be the only prescribed way to freedom. According to this *Mundaka Upaniṣad*, the only way that leads to the realization of the Self, is one of knowledge and not one of sacrificial performance or any other rituals. The *Mundaka Upaniṣad* says—“..Nor is the Self to be gained by one who is destitute of strength, or without earnestness, or without right meditation. But if a right man strives after it

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<sup>1</sup> *Mundaka Up.* 3.29.

<sup>2</sup> *Kēna. Up.* 2.12.

<sup>3</sup> *Īs'a Up.* 1.7.

by those means (by strength, earnestness and right meditation), then his Self enters the home of Brahman."<sup>1</sup> It is stated in the *Kaṭha* and the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* that "The Self cannot be gained by understanding nor by much learning nor by much hearing and preaching. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. This Self chooses him (his body) as his own."<sup>2</sup> The *Mundaka Upaniṣad*, again, emphatically states that "By truthfulness, indeed, by penance, right knowledge and abstinence must that Self be gained; the Self whom spotless anchorites gain is pure and like a light within the body."<sup>3</sup> Regarding the same the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says—"He who has perceived which is without sound, without touch, without form, without decay, without taste, eternal, without smell, without beginning, without end, the great and unchangeable, is freed from the jaws of death."<sup>4</sup> All these passages speak about the eternal happiness and about the freedom from recurrence of births and deaths and their resulting miseries. It can be attained only if a person can experience everywhere, outside and inside him, the one, the Self, that is the essence of everything and which is the only Reality of the universe. Yājñavalkya says, "Even if one performs a great and holy work, but without knowing this, that work of his, merely perishes in the end."<sup>5</sup> So also the *Maitrayaṇi*

<sup>1</sup> *Mundaka Up.* 3.2.4.

<sup>2</sup> *Kaṭha Up.* 1.2.23 and *Mundaka Up.* 2.3.

<sup>3</sup> *Mundaka Up.* 3.1.5.

<sup>4</sup> *Kaṭha Up.* 1.3.15.

<sup>5</sup> *Brh. Up.* 1.4.15.



## The Upaniṣads

65

*Upaniṣad* says — “The mind in truth is for mankind the means of bondage and release; for bondage, if to objects bound; from objects free that’s called release.”<sup>1</sup> If some rituals be prescribed here and there, they are the means of cultivating an appropriate mental attitude and background; but the most important thing is the mind which knows. The knowledge of the Vedas, according to the Upaniṣads does not possess magic-power to effect liberation in man. Mere mechanical utterance of the sacred hymns is not at all useful and sufficient to effect liberation. What is important is the understanding of the nature of Brahman and its actual realisation, a throbbing and living experience of the Ātman’s being himself, in his own heart.

It has been stated frequently by the Upaniṣadic seers that the Self cannot be perceived by the sense organs.<sup>2</sup> Although it dwells in words the words do not know it, though it dwells in the eyes, in the ears, in the skin, in the mind they cannot know it; it is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the understood understander, is the immortal inner controller of all things and beings,<sup>3</sup> it cannot be known by the mind because it cannot reach it; it is even beyond intelligence.<sup>4</sup> The Self is beyond all the means of understanding. It cannot be understood by any of these agents. It

<sup>1</sup> Maitrāyaṇi Up. 6.34. Tr. Hume, p. 448.

<sup>2</sup> Muṇḍaka Up. 3.1.8; Kaṭha 1.3.15; Kēna 1.3.

<sup>3</sup> Bṛh. Up. 3.7 (whole) and 3.7.23.

<sup>4</sup> Kaṭha Up. 2.6.12 and 1.3.10.

being beyond all these means of understanding, cannot be known as an object. It cannot be objectified, therefore, the inner Self can be understood only as the unchanging subject of all knowledge. It is the eternal Self-shining principle. Regarding this self-luminous nature of the Self it is further said "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings and much less this fire. When he shines everything shines after him; by his light all this is lightened."<sup>1</sup> The *Śvetāś'vatara Upaniṣad* calls it the Sākṣin—the witness that sees everything in its own light. It is the self-shining principle in man by which it manifests itself and also other objects. Thus the Self can be known in mystical intuition. The Self cannot be known in any other way. If it be called unknowable, it is called so in a definite sense. Prof. R. D. Ranade says—"The Ātman is unknowable because he is the Eternal Subject who knows. How could the Eternal Knower, ask the Upaniṣads in various places, be an object of knowledge?" 'The Ātman is the Great Being' says the *Śvet'.* *Upaniṣad*. "Who knows all that is knowable; who can know him who himself knows?" In the Brh. Upaniṣad in various passages, we are put in possession of the bold speculations of the philosopher Yājñavalkya "That by whom everything is known, how could he himself be known? It is impossible to know the knower." "It would not be possible for us to see the seer, to hear the hearer, to think the

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<sup>1</sup> S'vet. Up. 6.14. Tr. Max Müller, p. 265; Kaṭha Up. 2.5.15.

thinker, and to apprehend him by whom everything is apprehended." "He is the eternal seer without himself being seen; he is the eternal hearer without himself being heard; he is the only thinker without himself being thought; he is the only comprehender, without any one to comprehend him; beyond him there is no seer, beyond him there is no hearer, beyond him there is no thinker, beyond him there is no being who comprehends. We thus see that the question of the unknowability of Ātman has another aspect also, namely, that He is unknowable because He is the Eternal Subject of knowledge; and hence cannot be an object of knowledge to another beside him."<sup>1</sup> But though this Self is not accessible to others, though it cannot be known in the form of an object by others, it can be known by oneself as his own self. Thus the Self can be known only as the knowing subject, an inevitable and indispensable presupposition of all knowing processes.

Prof. R. D. Ranade says — "In fact, Self-knowledge or Self-consciousness is the ultimate category of existence. The Self can become an object of knowledge to himself. According to the Philosophy of Yājñavalkya, nothing is possible, if Self-consciousness is not possible. Self-consciousness is the ultimate fact of existence. Self-consciousness is possible only through

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<sup>1</sup> Ranade R. D.: *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishads*, p. 273.

See also S'v&t. Up. 3.19.14; Brh. Up. 2.3.14.

स वेत्ति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता । येनेदं सर्वं विजानाति तं केन विजानीयात् । विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात् ।

the process of introspection. The Self is endowed with the Supreme Power of dichotomising himself. The empirical conditions of knowledge are inapplicable to the Self. The Self can divide himself into the knower and the known. It is wonderful how Kant should have posited the "I am I" as the supreme metaphysical category, which he called the transcendental original and synthetic unity of apperception, and yet should have denied the reality of the corresponding psychological process of introspection. The answer of Yājñavalkya is that Self-consciousness is possible, and is not only possible but alone real."<sup>1</sup> Thus the Self, that is all-pervading, manifests itself in every act of comprehension, either in perception, reflection, contemplation or intuition. Every act of knowledge is necessarily accompanied by the revelation of the Self. The Self acts as the revealer of objects that are known, and in that process reveals itself, automatically. Thus, consciousness is inseparable from the Self, which is its originator, nay, consciousness and Self are synonymous. A. A. Bowmann writes about the relation of consciousness to the Self, "...it is impossible to be conscious at all and not at the same time to experience the Self as subject. It is in this sense that the principle 'all consciousness is Self-consciousness', is to be understood."<sup>2</sup> Clarifying the idea of Self-consciousness, Bowmann again says "...it is a special way of being conscious, disting-

<sup>1</sup> Ranade R. D. : *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishads*, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Bowmann A. A. : *Sacramental Universe*, p. 260.

## The Upaniṣads

69

uishable from all others by the fact that its object is just the Self, which sustains the consciousness in question. 'Primary' Self-consciousness is an implicate, rather than a species of awareness, and as such must be attributed to all subjects of experience, whether persons or not."<sup>1</sup> Thus, in real Self-consciousness the dualism of subject and object must end; or the difference between the subject and the object must vanish. It is said in the Upaniṣads that in the final experience of the Self all multiplicity comes to an end; the dualism of subject and object disappears, all becomes one; and one knows that he is all and all is he; that he is whithin all and all is whithin him — he then realises 'I am the Brahman' (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि) and all this is the Brahman (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म).

Nothing in such an experience is alien or external to the Self. Whatever happens to be in the consciousness of the individual, appears then, only a vital part of himself. Everything then becomes as his own; nothing remains outside him which he can call as that which is not his. To be more precise it can be said he becomes everything. Everything is then coloured with his self-feeling. His Self grows wider and wider and envelopes everything in himself, feeling that everything is a part of his inmost Self. Everything good or bad, great or small, beautiful or ugly, shining or dark, love and hate, all such dualities lose their oppositions and occupy their own places in such an experience of identity. All oppositions are resolved and the Self shares none of the finite characteristics.

<sup>1</sup> Bowmann A. A : *A Sacramental Universe*, p. 221 (note).

In such experience the individual rises to a higher state which is one of pure identity. The liberated individual transcends all differences, dualities and relativities and begins to look upon everything as his own. In his eyes everything is good because it is his. Yājñavalkya in the *Brh. Upaniṣad* says — “Therefore, having this knowledge, having become calm, subdued, quiet, patiently enduring, and collected, one sees the soul just in the soul. One sees everything as Soul. Evil does not overcome him; he overcomes all evil. Evil does not burn him; he burns all evil. Free from evil, free from impurity, free from doubt, he becomes the Brahman.”<sup>1</sup> It is an experience of complete homogeneity in which there remains not a trace of any other heterogeneous element of otherness. It is a state of purity and distinctionlessness. Yājñavalkya further describes such a final state of self-realisation, in the following words: “It is a mass of salt, without inside, without outside, entirely a mass of taste, even so, verily is this Soul, without inside, without outside, entirely a mass of knowledge.”<sup>2</sup> Thus the individual loses his sense of separate individuality. Everywhere he finds himself as if he fills everything, as if he becomes all-pervasive and one with the Reality. As the very category of distinctions or differences disappears, there remains no separateness of things; all things are experienced as one in their essence. All the apparent distinctions are melted away and what remains behind is himself alone. Everything then appears as one and the same

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 4.4.23.

<sup>2</sup> Brh. Up. 4.5.13.

and not an iota of 'otherness' or 'not-mineness' is experienced. It becomes an experience of infinity and non-duality. As all changes disappear, it becomes a steady and immutable state. All changes become to such an individual illusory. All surfacial experiences of change, pleasure and pain, knowledge and ignorance no more remain real for him. He attains permanence, all-pervasiveness and all-contentedness. This becomes possible for him because he transcends all limitations, all distinctions. Yājñavalkya describes the actual state of this experience in the following way — "In this condition, as a man in the embrace of his darling wife does not have any consciousness of outer or inner, so the soul embraced by the Self consisting of knowledge has no consciousness of outer and inner. The spirit in this condition is without desire and free from all pain; it is unaffected by good, unaffected by evil, the father ceases to be father, the mother the mother, the worlds the worlds, the gods gods."<sup>1</sup> The state of such identity, experienced by the individual is expressed by Yājñavalkya in the following manner — "Where there is a duality, as it were, there one sees another; there one smells another; there one tastes another; there one speaks to another; there one hears another; there one thinks of another; there one touches another, there one understands another. But where everything has become one's own self, then whereby and whom would one see? Then whereby and whom would one smell?

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<sup>1</sup> Bṛh. Up. 4.3.21.

Then whereby and whom would one taste? Then whereby and to whom would one speak? Then whereby and whom would one hear? Then whereby and whom would one think? Whereby and whom would one touch? Then whereby and whom would one understand? Whereby would one understand him by means of whom one understands this All?"<sup>1</sup> Thus the subject and object are relative terms; the one exists only in the presence of the other, and for the other; neither can exist by itself. When such an experience of the perfect unity and identity is attained, naturally the subject and the object, the knower and known, the experiencer and the experienced these distinctions are lost, not because they are annihilated but because they are transcended. They are then transmuted and live in identity with their inner Self. The *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* says—"If there were no objects, there would be no subjects; and if there were no subjects, there would be no objects. For on either side alone nothing would be achieved."<sup>2</sup> Similar thought is expressed also in the *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad*. It distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge—(i) that one in which there is a duality of subject and object, and (ii) that which is free from duality and is an intuitive experience of identity.<sup>3</sup> Yājñavalkya, while describing the exact condition of the individual soul's union with the Supreme one, makes it clear by taking an illustration of salt and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 4.5.15.

<sup>2</sup> Kauṣīt. Up. 3.8.

<sup>3</sup> Maitrāyaṇi Up. 6.7.



## The Upaniṣads

its dissolution in water. He says—“It is as a lump of salt cast in water should dissolve right into the water; there would not be (any) of it to seize forth, as it were (iva), but wherever one may take, it is salty indeed, --so—lo, verily, this great being (bhūta), infinite, limitless, is just a mass of knowledge (vijñāna-ghana). Arising out of these elements (bhūta), into them also one vanishes away. After death there is no consciousness.”<sup>1</sup> The philosopher of the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* describes the nature of the union of the individual soul with the Supreme Self in the following words—“As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their name and their form, thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the divine Person, who is greater than the great.”<sup>2</sup> Further he says that the actual state of the union does not allow any distinction between the individual soul and the Self. It is said in the *Kathopaniṣad*—“As pure water poured forth into pure, becomes the very same, so becomes the soul (ātman).”<sup>3</sup> There is no one experience and no one to get the experience. There the experience becomes the experiencer and the experiencer the experience. They are one and the same thing. The knower becomes the known and vice versa. The following verse of the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* states it in the clearest words: “He who knows that highest Brahman becomes even Brahman. In his race no one is born ignorant of Brahman. He overcomes grief,

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 2.4.12.

<sup>2</sup> Mundaka Up. 3.2.8.

<sup>3</sup> Katha Up. 4.15.

he overcomes evil; free from the fetters of the heart, he becomes immortal.”<sup>1</sup> Thus it is an experience of oneness, which is found everywhere. It is an experience of non-duality. The spirit of these verses is that, it is only a discovery of our inmost Self that was lost under ignorance. The Self is falsely understood under the various kinds of Upādhis or adjuncts which are quite different from it. It manifests itself through the Upādhis, but in truth it is none of them. Paul Deussen makes it clear as “Each of us is this eternally free ātman. We do not first become ātman, but we are it already, though unconscious of the fact.”<sup>2</sup>

Yājñavalkya says—“That Self is dearer than a son, is dearer than wealth, is dearer than all else, since this Self is nearest...One should reverence the Self alone as dear.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the nearest thing that an individual ever has, is his soul. The inner Self of the individual is that identical part of him, which remains the same in all the four states of him; it is that which is awake not only in the waking and dream-state, but even in the state of deep sleep and the fourth one, where no consciousness of distinctions exists. All our activities pertain to the Self. Every activity of the individual is meant for the satisfaction of his Self. Nought happens except for the Self. No consciousness can work without reference to the Self. The Self is the reality for which the individual

<sup>1</sup> Mundaka Up. 3.2.10.

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul : *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> Brh. Up. 1.4.8.

## The Upaniṣads

75

lives; the absence of the Self in an individual means the annihilation of the individuality itself. Yājñavalkya states in the *Brh. Upaniṣad* that whatever we feel dear to us, is not dear for the sake of the thing, but everything is dear for the sake of the Self. He says that the son, husband, wife, wealth, world, gods, etc., all are dear not for their own sake, but “not for love of all is all dear, but for love of the soul all is dear. Verily, it is the (Ātman) that should be seen, that should be harkened to, that should be thought on, that should be pondered on, O Maitreyī, Lo, verily with the seeing of, with the harkening to, with the thinking of, and with the understanding of the Soul, this world—all is known.”<sup>1</sup> Everything is not dear that you may love everything; but that one may love the Self, all is dear. Thus the Self is the ultimate end towards which all the cravings of the individual are directed; thus consciously and unconsciously the destiny of all our thoughts and actions, of all our attractions and temptations—and drives—is the Self—the Ātman. The attainment of the Self thus gives the individual the final relief, the ultimate satisfaction. All the passions and desires, all the urges and cravings rest satisfied in the Self. When the Self is realized all passions and desires come to an end. When the Self is known, no more does the individual experience any kind of uneasiness and restlessness. All his desires being fulfilled in it, he lives a completely self-satisfied man. Then he attains eternal and abiding satisfaction which is marked

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<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 2.4.5.

by peace. The bonds of his finitude being broken, his personality becomes one with the infinite and enjoys perfection. The Self, in its nature, is peaceful, tranquil, perfect, eternal, unchanging, shining and blissful. The individual does not experience there a kind of void or nothingness. But it is a state of eternal bliss and contentment. It is a state of perfection and fullness. The bliss that is experienced in this state is of the highest magnitude. It is beyond imagination and comprehension. Only those who actually experience it, know it. This is the state of the liberated soul. The liberated soul is freed from all kinds of fetters of ignorance. Ignorance is completely annexed and there is only the unflickering light of the immortal Self. Ignorance is finite and can be brought to an end by the right knowledge of the Self. It is said in the *Śve'tas'vatara Upaniṣad* "...ignorance is a thing perishable, but knowledge is a thing immortal."<sup>1</sup> Ignorance is terminated with the rise of self-knowledge. The liberated soul not only overcomes all distinctions and differences, not only assumes unity with all, but enjoys the highest bliss of the Ātman. The highest bliss is incommensurate with any of the material happiness. It is a state of desirelessness and still of infinite joy. The Bliss of the Brahman is described in the following passage— "One hundred times that human bliss is one measure of the bliss of human Gandharvas and of the great sages, . . one hundred times that bliss of human Gandharvas is one measure of the bliss of divine Gandharvas and

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<sup>1</sup> Ś've't. Up. 5.1.

of a great sage who is free from desires : One hundred times that bliss of divine Gandharvas, is one measure of the bliss of the Fathers and likewise of a great sage who is free from desires. One hundred times that bliss of the Fathers, is one measure of the Devas, born in the āgāna heaven;...one hundred times that bliss of the Devas...is one measure of the bliss of the sacrificial Devas who go to the Devas by Vaidic sacrifices, and likewise of a great sage who is free from desires . . . : One hundred times that bliss of the sacrificial Devas is one measure of the bliss of the thirtythree Devas and likewise of a great sage who is free from desires : One hundred times that bliss of the thirtythree Devas is one measure of the bliss of Indra, and likewise of a great sage, free from desires : One hundred times that bliss of Indra is one measure of the bliss of Brihaspati, and likewise of a great desireless sage : One hundred times that bliss of Brihaspati is one measure of the bliss of Prajāpati, and likewise of a great desireless sage: One hundred times, that bliss of Prajāpati is one measure of the bliss of Brahman, and likewise of a great desireless sage. :—He who knows the bliss of that Brahman from whence all speech with the mind turns away, unable to reach it, he fears nothing, —He does not distress himself with the thought why did I not do what is good? Why did I do what is bad? He who thus knows these two (good and bad), frees himself. He knows both, frees himself."¹ Thus an effort is made to give some idea of

¹ Taitt. Up. 2.9. Tr. Max Müller, p. 63.

the infinite bliss of Brahman. The bliss being unique and infinite, is not describable in terms of any number. It being unique, nothing is like it and therefore, it cannot be understood in terms of any other kind of earthly joy with which human beings are familiar. It is a joy of an entirely different category. But the above description of it may help us, at least to get a faint idea of the Brahman's bliss.

The *Taittīyā Upaniṣad* says— "When he finds freedom from fear and rest in that which is invisible, incorporeal, undefined, unsupported, then he has obtained the fearless. For, if he makes but the smallest distinction in it, there is fear for him. But fear exists only for one who thinks himself wise (not for the true sage).<sup>1</sup> Thus it is repeatedly stated that, on getting the vision of the Ātman the individual becomes completely free from fear; because there is left no other person or thing of which he can be afraid. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says— "Those who go hence without here having found the Soul (Ātman) and those real desires (satya kāma)—for them in all the worlds there is no freedom. But those who go hence having found here the Soul and those real desires—for them in all worlds, there is freedom."<sup>2</sup> It is not only a freedom from misery, pain and sorrow, which may be called the outcomes of finitude; but there is the joy of fullness of life and perfection. In liberation the enjoyer and the enjoyment are one and the same. As it is a state

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<sup>1</sup> Taitt. Up. 2.8.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Up. 8.1.6.

## The Upanishads

79

of perfection, and as there is nothing wanting, it is state of blissfulness. Eternal peace and joy rule there. The quantity of bliss is immeasurable and indescribable. A. B. Keith says — "The Spirit in this condition is without desire and free from all pain; it is unaffected by good, unaffected by evil, the father ceases to be father, the mother mother, the worlds worlds, the gods gods. There is no interruption of seeing of seeing, though the spirit does not: we have in fact the condition of a pure objectless knowing subject, continuing in this condition. The Soul now passes from the 72000 veins in which it has moved during dreamless sleep and rests in the paricardium in supreme bliss, like a great king or Brahman."<sup>1</sup> About the bliss enjoyed by the jīva in this state Prof. R. D. Ranade says — "If, in short, desirelessness is to constitute the highest bliss, there is no meaning in saying that the highest good could be measured in terms of the unit of physical good. In any case, it does not seem possible that the spiritual good can be of the same kind as physical good; the two are probably incommensurate, differing, not in degree but in kind. The bliss of the Sage, who has realised Brahman cannot be measured in terms of the physical happiness of any beings whatsoever, however highly placed or however divine they may be. The bliss of self-realisation is entirely of its own kind, absolutely sui generis."<sup>2</sup> Thus it is a

<sup>1</sup> Keith A. B : *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, Vol. II, p. 569.

<sup>2</sup> Ranade R. D. : *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishads*, p. 301.

unique experience and is incapable of being described and understood in terms of our earthly happiness. It is not a creation of something absolutely new, but it is our own realisation, the discovery of our own self. It is the discovery of our own Self that had been lost in the numerous allurements of the not-self. It is the search and recovery of our Self that was lost in the midst of the not-self. It is the unfoldment and visualisation of the Ātman within us, instead of the incipid and soul-less realisation of the various faculties of man, namely the intellectual, the emotional and the moral. It does not consist in the harmonious development of all the faculties of human mind as the Eudæmonists suppose; it is on the contrary, a complete conversion or transmutation of the human soul into the divine Self. It is like being reborn in the divine life. This is possible only in a mystical way. It is a life of a different category, in which the individual no more belongs to the human kingdom. It is a complete transformation of the human soul into the divine. The soul attains its original state of perfect knowledge and bliss and hence, it naturally rises beyond all the earthly pleasures and earthly goods. It is not unnatural, that such an individual should look upon the world and the worldly life, as belonging to a lower plane, unworthy of being satisfied with. The earthly pleasures and allurements cease to tempt him then, and he no more feels like pursuing them. The world ceases to acquire any value for such an individual who attains self-realisation.



## The Upaniṣads

81

It is a spiritual attainment. Such an individual may be living in this world, but no more does he remain of this world. The world becomes incapable of influencing him either favourably or unfavourably. The worldly objects and forces lose their power to please him or displease him. The world becomes impotent to disturb his inward quiet which is stable and everlasting. He assumes equanimity towards all; because he finds himself everywhere. He lives then in the mystical trance of his own Self, where nothing else has an access. He is lost in his own contemplation. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says—“Verily, he who sees this, who thinks this, who understands this, who has pleasure in the Soul, who has delight in the Soul, who has intercourse with the Soul (आत्म-रतिरात्मकीड आत्ममिथुन आत्मानन्दः) who has bliss in the Soul—he is autonomous (स्वराज): he has unlimited freedom in all worlds. But they who know otherwise than this are heteronomous (anya-rājan); they have perishable worlds; in all worlds they have no freedom.”<sup>1</sup> It is then the eternal enjoyment of the Self with itself. The mukta becomes similar to the Aristotelian God—who is the matterless form—and is ever lost in his own contemplation. He thus acts only as “a witness, an observer, a thinker” of the paraphernalia of the universe, but he never acts as a participant in it. He remains above all, being untouched by any of the happenings of the world, howsoever powerful. He rests in his own magnanimity. He is then eternally free. He enjoys an unshakable

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. 7.25.2.

tranquillity of mind. It is said in the *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* — “For, by tranquillity (prasāda) of thought, Deeds, (Karman), good and evil, one destroys. With soul serene, stayed on the Soul, Delight eternal one enjoys.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the freshness of the delight that is enjoyed never withers nor fades. Such a soul is described as follows — “Henceforth being pure, clean, void, tranquil, breathless, selfless, endless, undecaying, steadfast, eternal, unborn, independent, he abides in his own greatness.”<sup>2</sup> Going further the same *Upaniṣad* clarifies the point in a more elaborate way in the following manner — “Born along and defiled by the stream of Qualities, unsteady, wavering, bewildered, full of desire, distracted, one goes on into the state of self conceit. . . Hence a person who has the marks of determination, conception, and self-conceit, he is bound. Hence, in being the opposite of that, he is liberated. Therefore, one should stand free from determination, free from conception, free from self-conceit. This is the mark of liberation (mokṣa). . . therein all desires are contained. When cease the five,

(Sense) knowledges, together with the mind,

And the intellect stirs not —

That, they say, is the highest course.”<sup>3</sup>

All the *Upaniṣads* testify to this idea of liberation which consists in an absolute cessation of pain and suffering which is characteristic of finitude, by overcoming all dualities and distinctions and by

<sup>1</sup> *Maitrāyaṇi Up.* 5.34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 6.28.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 6.30.

## The Upaniṣads

83

entering into an everlasting identity with the eternal, all-pervasive conscient Self which is the essence (madhu) of existence. This liberation can be attained only by actually experiencing oneness with the reality; by experiencing the truth of "all this is Brahman" and "I am the Brahman". The liberated soul becomes free for ever from the recurrence of births and deaths; his ignorance is destroyed and the karma, because of which he has to revolve on the wheel of birth and death, comes to an end. As long as the stock of Karma is not exhausted, nobody can attain liberation. But the Upaniṣads hold that the Karma can be burnt by the fire of knowledge and hence, the acquisition of the knowledge of the Brahman, frees an individual from his bondage to the saṁsāra. It is repeatedly said in the Upaniṣads that by the vision of the One ātman, by overcoming the distinctions (नाना) one attains perfection and immortality; and at last it comes to this—"One who knows Brahman, becomes Brahman." That means one enters into identity with the Brahman which is also the Ātman. To be the Brahman means to possess all the characteristics of Brahman, which are—eternity, immortality, blissfulness, consciousness, incorporeality, infinity and tranquillity, purity, freedom and luminosity. The individual acquires all these attributes and enjoys the ultimate state of liberation. Here liberation does not consist in becoming like the Brahman but in becoming one with the Brahman by experiencing it as the Ātman—the innermost Self of the individual.

It is necessary to examine the path that the Upaniṣads prescribed for the attainment of liberation. Liberation is not something that can be attained by an individual as something separate and outside him. Liberation, according to the Upaniṣads, is becoming liberation (Mokṣa). It is a psychological transformation of the individual who seeks liberation. This freedom is not given and cannot be given as an object; it has to be actually felt. Freedom consists in feeling in oneself, that he is free. As pleasure or happiness is known by actual feeling it, so is liberation. It is a spiritual rebirth; and hence liberation requires a steady and progressive preparation for effecting a psychological conversion in the individual. Naturally, a long and tedious procedure has to be followed to reach the final end which is liberation. The Upaniṣads do not believe that liberation can be attained by the mechanical performance of rituals and religious rites. The Upaniṣads clearly and emphatically state that liberation can be attained only by the proper knowledge of the Self.<sup>1</sup> The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* compares the horses with the senses and says that one who keeps his senses and mind under his proper control, and knows the Ātman properly, becomes free from the round of births and deaths.<sup>2</sup> In fact, according to the doctrine of Karma, an individual obtains a subsequent birth in accordance with one's Karma. An act becomes good or bad by the good or bad desire which the

<sup>1</sup> Kaṭha Up. 1.2.24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 1.3.

## The Upaniṣads

85

individual entertains. Therefore, the root cause of all births and their miseries consists in the desires. It is said in the *Bṛh. Upaniṣad* — “And as is his desire, so is his will; and as is his will, so is his deed; and whatever deed he does he will reap.”<sup>1</sup> Thus it will be found that the root cause of all misery and suffering is the desire of the individual. Because of the attachment of the individual's mind to objects, desires arise; and because all the desires do not always get satisfied, naturally the individual's mind suffers from frequent disappointments from which is born anger which eclipses the intellect and because of that the individual often falls under the spell of infatuation which ultimately ruins him. Desires are powerful driving forces of the individual, but they can never fetch abiding satisfaction. All the satisfaction that one derives from the desires separately, is only temporary, lasting only for a short time; after the desire is satisfied, the individual again feels a void, which needs to be filled by another fresh desire; thus the individual keeps hunting after desires and their satisfaction; but none of the desires, taken either individually or collectively can produce everlasting satisfaction. The individual who is in pursuit of abiding satisfaction, gets tired of deriving such satisfaction from the desires. The Upaniṣads say, that the way of obtaining permanent satisfaction is not one of pursuing the desires, but is one of being free from the desires. Thus, the Upaniṣads preach curbing of the senses and controlling of the

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<sup>1</sup> Bṛh. Up. 4.4.5.

mind. It is, therefore, necessary according to the Upaniṣads, first to free the mind from the influence of the sense organs. The Upaniṣadic philosophers seem to lay more stress on the necessity of withdrawal of the sense organs and the mind from the external world; they seem to emphasize the necessity of going deeper into the heart of Reality by not being allured by the objects of sense and not being deluded by the enormous changing variety of nature. A little serious reflection enables us to infer the existence of the ground of change which remains unchanged in spite of the unceasing changes going on in it. For that we have to rise above the knowledge given by sense organs. Sense organs cease to be the ultimate source of knowledge. Abstract thinking becomes necessary for inferring the existence of the inner unchanging and stable ground of existence. Thus serious thinking becomes of a very great help for taking us to the real nature of the reality. Such serious thinking requires a stern control on the sense organs and on the lustfulness of the mind. It requires a high degree of concentration on the thinking of the nature of this permanent ground of existence. Thus curbing the activities of all the sense organs and of the mind and thus directing their energies towards the knowledge of the Reality becomes a prime necessity. Thus liberation presupposes a stern control on the senses and a consequent withdrawal from the external world and, simultaneously concentration on the inner identical, immutable, qualityless and essential nature of the ultimate

Reality. The *Mundakopaniṣad* says—"By truthfulness, indeed, by penance, right knowledge, and abstinence must that self be gained."<sup>1</sup> The individual needs to devote himself body and mind, to the search of this inner principle. The individual not only requires to exercise adequate control over his body and mind, to withdraw his senses from the objects of enjoyment, to avoid every contact with lustful objects, but also requires to cultivate a good and sound moral character. The individual is also to practise morally suitable life that purifies his heart by enabling him to be more and more selfless. The practice of moral virtues helps the individual to widen the experience of the personality by passing from egoism to altruism. The moral virtues help the individual to actually experience that of which he is already intellectually convinced. For understanding the real nature of the ultimate Reality, the individual requires to rise above his empirical self, to forget his likes and dislikes, to overcome his various prejudices and grudges, to conquer the passions like lust, anger, fear, greed, to prepare the mind to think in the most impartial terms just to understand the Reality in the scientific way. It means that the individual needs the purification of his body and mind. When it is done and when the individual understands properly the nature of the Ātman, he strives to remove all the impediments—physical or mental, from the path of knowledge. He, thus, purifies his physical, mental and intellectual canals and prepares

<sup>1</sup> Mundaka Up. 3.1.5.

them to receive in the best possible way the influx of the knowledge of the Self. He prepares his soil favourable for the growth of the divine-seed. He purifies his apparatus to receive the divine light in. He purifies his organism in such a way that the internal light of his Self becomes visible through it. This preparation ultimately comes to the curtailment and annihilation of many of the egoistic tendencies and activities of the individual. In fact, the ego, the overgrown and thick sense of his own limited personality makes his personality opaque and thus deprives him of the vision of his own light. The egoistic tendencies, therefore, need to be annihilated to enable him to make his personality infinite. Thus, it is said in the *Mundakopaniṣad* that the moral Katharsis of oneself is necessary. The *Mundaka Upaniṣad* therefore clearly and emphatically says — "It is only when a perfect Katharsis of the whole moral being takes place by the clearness of illumination, that one is able to realise the immaculate God after meditation; for he can be attained neither by sight, nor by word of mouth, nor by any other sense, nor by penance, nor by any actions whatsoever."<sup>1</sup> The Self, though immanent in the body, has to be extracted from it by vigilant practice of virtues and serious reflective thinking.

By a proper control over the senses and the activities of the mind, by withdrawing himself from the external world and by concentrating on the ultimate Reality, the Yogin attains union with the

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<sup>1</sup> *Mun aka Up.* 3.1.8.



Brahman. The word Yogin is derived from the verb 'to yuj' to join, to connect; one who joins his soul to the Supreme Self is a Yogin. The Yogin follows a definite prescribed way of attaining the realization of the Self. The *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* mentions the Yogic method of penance in the following manner — "The precept for effecting this (unity) is this: restraint of the breath (prāṇāyāma), withdrawal of the senses (pratyāhāra), meditation (dhyāna), concentration (dhāraṇā), contemplation (tarka), absorption (samādhi). Such is said to be the sixfold Yoga."<sup>1</sup> The Yogin by means of selflessness ultimately attains a joyous vision of the Self. He thus enters into an ultimate amalgamation with the Universal Self. In his experience of final unity he loses the sense of his separate individuality and, as there remains no element of egohood, there is none to experience the pleasure and pain with the result that the individual enjoys the absolute unity.<sup>2</sup> The purification of the receptacle for such a divine grace is absolutely necessary. In an impure receptacle the grace will never flow, and if it be poured it will not be properly experienced. So the purification of mind has to be brought about by making it free from all desires, which presuppose egohood. The *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad* describes mind as —

"Pure — from desire completely free !

By making mind all motionless,

From sloth and from distraction freed,

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<sup>1</sup> *Maitrāyaṇi Up.* 6.8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 6.21.

When unto mindlessness one comes,

Then that is the supreme estate!"<sup>1</sup>

The Yogic discipline is very rigid. The individual, because of the austerity of penance and unflinching devotion to the Self, undergoes a total physical and psychological revolution, even to the extent that the liberation can be called his new birth—a total transformation of his outer and inner being.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* stresses the need of the purification of the physical and mental being of the individual. It states—"When the intellectual ailment has been purified, the whole nature becomes purified. When the whole nature has been purified, the memory becomes firm. And when the memory (of the Highest Self) remains firm, then all the ties (which bind us to a belief in anything but the Self) are loosened."<sup>2</sup> Thus the attainment of godhood or the highest state of spiritual perfection depends much upon the individual's preparation for it. The individual's desires and deeds are mostly responsible for his spiritual progress.

Every person is the real architect of his destiny. If he means to attain perfection and godhood, he can do so by concentrating all his energies with a singular and undeviating devotion to the Brahman. Man becomes as he wills. It is said by Yājñavalkya "This Self, then, as his conduct and behaviour has been, so does he become. He, whose works have been

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 6.34.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Up. 7.26.2.

## The Upaniṣads

91

good becomes good; he, whose works have been evil, becomes evil. By holy works, he becomes holy; by sinful works, sinful. It is for this reason that they say that a person consists merely of desires; as his desire is so is his will; as his will, so his work; as his work, so his evolution."<sup>1</sup> The *Mundakopaniṣad* is, therefore, perfectly justified in stressing the need of the moral Katharsis of the individual for the invaluable spiritual attainments. The *Mundakopaniṣad*, therefore, emphatically states that the Ātman can be attained neither by sight, nor by word of mouth, nor by any actions whatsoever.<sup>2</sup> It is only when a perfect Katharsis of the whole moral being takes place by the clearness of illumination, that one is able to realise the immaculate God after meditation. It becomes evident from this passage, that the Self could be attained only by knowledge and not by the rituals and sacrifices as the Vedic thinkers held. There seems to be a distinct advance in thought from the Vedic to the Upaniṣadic period, in so far as the Upaniṣadic thinkers did not accept the Vedic religion of sacrifices and rituals; they declined to accept that sacrifices were absolutely necessary for liberation; on the contrary, they emphatically preached that knowledge alone can liberate the individual soul from the earthly fetters and from the wheel of births and deaths. Even the moral actions were not sought as ends-in-themselves, but as necessary means for the purification of the individ-

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<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 4.4.5.

<sup>2</sup> Mundaka Up. 3.1.8.

ual's body and mind to make them fit for the reception of the divine bliss. The individual's efforts did not necessarily succeed in reaching the final state. As the *Kātha Upaniṣad* says he whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. The Self chooses him (his body) as his own.<sup>1</sup> The efforts of the individual need to be responded by the divine Self and the Self too needs inspire the individual inwardly for such an attainment. Thus, for the attainment of spiritual perfection, it seems, the Upaniṣads emphasize, both the 'ascent' of the individual and the 'descent' of the divine. When the spiritual perfection is actually attained by a real union of the soul with Self, the individual transcends all limitations. To him then everything becomes alike. He passes beyond good and bad, beyond merit and demerit, beyond virtue and vice.<sup>2</sup> Prof. R. D. Ranade calls it a state of 'supermoralism'. He compares the Upaniṣadic "Supermoralism" with the supermoralism of Nietzsche and that of Bradley — "Nietzsche's supermoralism affects only the Superman, who, in the possession of absolute strength, defies, and therefore, rises above all conceptions of good and bad. The Bradleyan Supermoralism affects only the Absolute, which, in its absoluteness is to be regarded as being beyond good and bad. On the other hand, the Upaniṣadic supermoralism affects the Individual as well as the Absolute, and the Individual only so far as he may be regarded as having

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<sup>1</sup> *Kātha Up.* 1.2.23.

<sup>2</sup> *Mundaka Up.* 3.1.3.

realised the Absolute in himself.”<sup>1</sup> His view can be justified from the many passages that occur in the various Upaniṣads like the *Kāṭha*, *Chāndogya*, the *Mundaka*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. All these passages describe the state of the Ātman as beyond the good and the bad, virtue and vice, and they contend that the moral agent goes beyond the reach of good and bad, when and only so far as he has attained to likeness with, or becomes merged in, the Ātman, who is himself, metaphysically speaking, beyond the reach of good and bad. Ranade writes about it—“The real meaning of Revelation seems to the present writer to be not any external message delivered to man from without, but a divine afflatus springing from within, the result of inspiration through god-intoxication.”<sup>2</sup>

A. B. Keith, looks at this state of emancipation of the individual soul from a different point of view. He does not quite concur in thinking that the state of emancipation is the state of perfection of the individual and in it he completely loses his separate individuality and he looks upon emancipation as a reward of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> It seems from the above remarks of Keith that the individual seeks immortality by the union of the soul with the Self only as a reward of knowledge; the implication of

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<sup>1</sup> Ranade R. D. : *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishads*, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Keith A. B. : *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, Vol. II, p. 583.

it seems that the individual, as if, remains a separate and independent person, even in emancipation to receive the reward of his knowledge and that the individual does not seek knowledge for its own sake but seeks for the acquirement of immortality. Therefore, Keith does not seem to be justified in holding that immortality is sought by the individual as a reward of the knowledge of the Brahman. In fact knowledge means the experience of oneness with the Brahman. Keith further seems to refuse to accept the contention of 'supermoralism' of Upaniṣads as described by Ranade. Keith writes regarding it "The emancipated Self possesses autonomy, but it is not an ethical state; it is merely a condition of unhindered power, the ideal of a despot, the state of the man who goes up and down these worlds, eating what he desires, assuming what form he desires"<sup>1</sup> This interpretation, given by Keith, seems just against the spirit of the Upaniṣads. The emancipated soul, no doubt, is not bound by the good and bad; but that is because he transcends them; because he goes beyond them and occupies a higher and superior position. The emancipated soul becomes completely free from the desires, it is a state of utter desirelessness and therefore it would never be possible that the emancipated soul would entertain any lowly desire and enjoy it. Even though in that state the soul possesses 'unhindered power', it does not mean that that power would be utilised for the low

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 587.

aims which can be called submoral. One who utilises his power for such low aims—of selfishness at the cost of others—is called a tyrant, a merciless despot, with no power of discrimination and with no desire for higher spiritual attainments. The liberated soul, as depicted by the Upaniṣads, attains perfection, in which all desires are eternally fulfilled, and therefore, there is absolutely no fear, of his entertaining any kind of low desires. To him, everything, which we ordinarily suppose to be very valuable, is only lowly and unworthy of his desire. Even the so called ‘ethically good’ things of our world, are quite limited and superfluous to him and such good things of the world in which he freely moves, can never tempt him, in the least. He, in a way, looks upon them with some contempt, in the sense that he is too big to be moved by them. They no more remain worthy of his pursuit of them. He transcends all limitations and the domain of conditionality and relativity, and resides in the realm of the Absolute, by being one with the Absolute.

So far we have examined the real nature of the Upaniṣadic liberation; but we find in them also certain references of the different kinds of worlds to which the soul departs after the cessation of the earthly-life. It is necessary to consider briefly the peculiar and mythical ideas about the state of the individual after his death. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says, “Those who know this (even though) they still be grihasthas (householders) and those who in the forest follow faith and austerities (the vānaprasthas)

and of the parivrājakas, those who do not know the Highest Brahman, go to light (archis), from light to day, from day to the half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the north, from the six months when the sun goes to the north to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon, from the moon to the lightning.

There is a person not human — He leads them to Brahman (the conditioned Brahman). This is the path of the Devas. But they who living in a village practise (a life of) sacrifices, works of public utility and alms, they go to the smoke, from smoke to the night, from night to the dark half of the moon, from the dark half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the south. But they do not reach the year. From the months they go to the world of the fathers, from the world of the fathers to the ether, from the ether to the moon. That is Soma, the king. Here they are loved (eaten) by the Devas, yes, the Devas love (eat) them." This is known as Kramamukti or Progressive Liberation.

Having dwelt there till their good works are consumed, they return again that way by which they came, to the ether, from the ether to the air. Then the sacrificer, having become air, becomes smoke, having become smoke, he becomes mist. Having become mist, he becomes cloud, having become a cloud, he rains down. Then he is born as rice and corn, herbs and trees, sesamum and beans. From thence the escape is beset with difficulties. For, whoever the persons may be that eat the food, and



## The Upaniṣads

97

beget offspring, he henceforth becomes like unto them. Those whose conduct has been good, will quickly attain some good birth, the birth of a Brahmana, or Kshatriya, or a Vaishya. But those, whose conduct has been evil, will quickly attain an evil birth, the birth of a dog, or a hog, or a chāṇḍāla.<sup>1</sup> From the above passage it seems that those who do not have the knowledge of the Brahman, have to pass through the extremely complicated passage and have to come even back to the earth to be reborn in the lower species. The description of the various lokas seems to be quite imaginary and fictitious. The above passage gives us a fantastic picture of the individual's destiny after death. A similar depiction of such various worlds is also obtained in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*.<sup>2</sup>

These passages indicate the destiny of the individual soul after the death of the individual. These passages make it clear that those who do not obtain the knowledge of the Brahman or those who do not attain self-realisation, remain involved in the cycle of births and deaths. They traverse from region (loka) to region and at last come back to the earth again. Unless they possess high merit they do not get access to the higher regions of Prajāpati and Brahmā. But it seems clear that the knowledge and the knowledge of the Brahman alone can redeem the individual soul from the wheel of births and deaths. Actions could not lead to final liberation.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. 5.10.1 to 7.

<sup>2</sup> Kauṣīt. Up. 1.2, 1.6. Tr. Hume, p. 306.

Thus, it is true, as Deussen remarks, that actions cannot effect liberation; actions produce other births good or bad, knowledge of Ātman alone can bring about liberation to the individual soul.

So far as the individual soul that has not attained the knowledge of the Brahman is concerned, it roams through the realm of the various lives; it assumes various forms of and passes from species to species in accordance with the fruits of his deeds. At the death of the individual his voice returns to fire, his breath to the wind, his eye to the sun, his mind to the moon, his hearing to the quarters heaven, his body to the earth, his soul (Ātman) to the space, the hair of his head to the plants, the hairs of his body to the trees and his blood and semen are restored to water but what remains behind is the Karma. What remains undestroyed is the Karma of the individual and in virtue of good action one becomes good and in virtue of bad action one becomes bad.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is clear that the physical body is perishable and it returns to matter from which it is created; but that which passes to the next birth is the Karma which is comparatively more subtle. The individual obtains another body only because he has to reap the fruits of his Karma in the previous birth. Karma is the potency, the power which does not go out of existence without being exhausted in the form of experiences of the individuals. The Karma wields great power and is also beyond the authority of the gods. The individ-

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<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 3.2.13.

## The Upaniṣads

99

ual soul passes from one existence to another existence after the death, i.e., after the previous body is destroyed. Yājñavalkya describes the process of the soul's transmigration in the following manner: "Now as a caterpillar, when it has come to the end of a blade of grass, in taking the next step draws itself together towards it, just so this soul in taking the next step strikes down this body, dispels its ignorance and draws itself together (for making the transition). Also as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, reduces it to another newer and more beautiful form, just so this soul, striking down this body and dispelling its ignorance, makes for itself another newer and more beautiful form like that either of the fathers, or of the Gandharvas, or of the gods, or of Prajāpati, or of Brahma, or of other beings."<sup>1</sup>

The Upaniṣads seem to be silent over the concept of Jīvanmukti; Liberation while alive or the liberation even when the body continues to exist. Nowhere in the Upaniṣads the particular term 'Jīvanmukta' or 'Jīvanmukti' seems to be clearly mentioned. It seems to be a later development of the concept of a mukta. Śaṅkara emphatically holds that such a state of a Jīvanmukta is possible. He implies by this word that an individual may attain the knowledge of the Brahman and even then he may continue to experience the bodily existence without being ensnared in the pleasures and pains of the body, without being affected by the good and bad worldly experiences.

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 4.4.3, 4.

## CHAPTER III

### CĀRVĀKISM

There are mainly three atheistic schools that came into existence in the post-Vedic period. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā school also is regarded as an atheistic school. All these four schools, i.e., the Cārvāka system, Buddhism, Jainism and Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā philosophy are unanimous in denying the existence of God, simply because they can explain the world and life without the idea of God. Out of these four schools the Cārvāka philosophy is not only atheistic in character, but it is also anti-theistic. The Cārvāka philosophy, Buddhism and Jainism were powerful reactions offered against the Vedic and Brāhmanic ritualism and sacrifices. They refused to believe in the Vedas and in their divine-origin. They did not believe in animal and human sacrifices and their efficacy. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system, of course, believed in the validity, authority and the divine-origin of the Vedas; but the Cārvāka philosophy offered a deadly resistance to the Vedic ritualism and sacrificialism. Buddhism also most vehemently criticised the practice of the Brāhmanic sacrifices as cruel and unfounded.

The Cārvāka school is known also as the Lokāyata school of philosophy. The Cārvākas are sometimes known as the Āsuras (असुर) or Dehātma-

vādins (देहात्मवादी). They denied the existence of soul as something different of the living body and superior to it. They refused to admit that the soul is an eternal and transmigrating entity. As a consequence of it, they denied the existence of the life after death, heaven and rebirth.

There were two sub-schools of the Cārvāka system. They were the Dhūrta-Cārvākas and, the Susikṣita Cārvākas. Both of them were materialists. Both of them denied the existence of the soul as a spiritual entity. They believed that the end of life is enjoyment pure and simple as long one existed. The aim of life (Puruṣārtha-पुरुषार्थ) consisted, according to them, in the highest bodily enjoyment of every sort. Therefore, they were called Cārvākas.

Cārvākas, of both these schools believed that consciousness is a product of the body. They believed that the ultimate elements are only four. According to them what exists as permanent substances are the earth, water, air and fire. The atoms of these four substances form the ultimate Reality and, whatever is found in the world is a result of their combination, in different proportions. They held that everything is a result of the combination of the atoms of these four ultimate elements in different forms. Consciousness, which is an essential characteristic of the soul, is according to the Cārvākas a product of the living human body. Consciousness is an effect of the material body. Just as, by mixing blue colour with red colour black colour is prepared, similarly by forming organic compound from the atoms of the

four elements consciousness could be produced. The body is formed out of the four elements and, consciousness is produced from it as its attribute. Just as the power of intoxication is produced by molasses when allowed to ferment, so the atoms of these four elements, when combined in a particular way, produce consciousness.<sup>1</sup> According to them, consciousness exists as long as the body exists. With the disappearance of the living body consciousness also disappears.<sup>2</sup> Consciousness is not for them a different principle which cannot be reduced to any physical attribute. They held that consciousness is generated by the body to adapt successfully to the nature to fulfil the requirements of the body.

The Dhūrta Cārvākas held that there exists nothing but only the four elements from which the body is formed and that consciousness is produced from the body. They did not believe in anything like a soul, as a distinct entity, different from the body. They held that consciousness is nothing more than the reaction of the physical body to external stimulus in a peculiar way. The Sus'ikṣita Cārvākas, on the contrary, believed that the soul exists as a separate entity, over and above the body. They held that the soul is something that perceives, and experiences pleasures and pains, but lasts only as long as the physical body lasts. With the destruction of the physical body the soul also comes to be destroyed,

<sup>1</sup> Sāyaṇa Mādhava : *Sarvadars'anasanigraha*, p. 2. Edited by Vasudev Shastri Abhyankar.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

according to them. S. Dasgupta writes — “The school of Susikṣita Cārvākas holds that so long as the body remains, there is an entity which remains as the constant perceiver and enjoyer of all experiences. But no such thing exists after the destruction of the body.”<sup>1</sup> It is further stated that the ‘living body itself is the Self’.<sup>2</sup> They could not admit the existence of an immaterial entity like the Self because the Self did not present itself in any sense perception. The Cārvākas accepted the sense perception as the only valid and reliable means of knowledge. They did not believe in the knowledge obtained by other means like inference (anumāna) and authority. They accepted only the direct and immediate knowledge by sense perception as the only reliable source of knowledge.

The Cārvāka teacher Kambales'vatara says that the consciousness is produced from the body through the influence of the prāṇa and other bio-motor faculties. They could not also admit the so called dormant consciousness in the foetal state of the individual, simply for the reason that the human organism in the foetus-state does not possess the sense-organs in a developed form, to the extent of being capable of cognising objects; and as there is no cognition possible, consciousness cannot be ascribed to the foetus. They also argued, that cons-

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 540.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars'anasamgraha*, p. 3.

चैतन्यविशिष्ट-देह एवात्मा।

consciousness does not exist in the states of deep sleep and swoon, in the form of potentiality; for, even for the consciousness to exist in a potential form, it requires a substratum to inhere, and as there is nothing like a Self wherein consciousness can exist in a potential form, the other possibility also is eliminated. Even though the body is the cause and consciousness is its effect, the effect does not always follow the cause. The two entities are not related in all states. For, the body during deep sleep and swoon remains without consciousness. The effect is not thus unconditionally and invariably related to the cause. The relation between the body and consciousness, if accepted as true, can be subjected to criticism, because numerous fallacious conclusions follow from it. If the whole of the body were the cause of consciousness, any changes caused in the body would affect the consciousness also in the corresponding ways; and that consciousness may vary according to the variations in the size of the body. But we find in actuality, that in spite of the deformities of the body and variations in the sizes of the body, the mind can work in the usual normal ways; and even though the same body continues to exist unchanged, there can be many mental changes in an individual. Thus, if the body be regarded as the cause of consciousness many fallacious and absurd conclusions follow. Merely because the body and the consciousness coexist they cannot be said to be related as the cause and the effect. The body may be absolutely necessary for the appearance and



operation of consciousness, it may be the most important and inevitable condition for the occurrence of consciousness, but that does not prove that the body is therefore, the cause of consciousness. One condition, howsoever important and indispensable out of the set of conditions that form the cause of a particular effect, cannot enjoy the privilege of being the whole cause of the corresponding effect. Body may happen to be an indispensable precedent condition of consciousness, but therefore, it cannot be the cause of the latter. The dependence of consciousness upon body for its occurrence does not, therefore, prove that the latter is exclusively the total cause of the former. It is equally absurd to conceive consciousness or the soul existing independently of body. The combination of the atoms of the four elements may be absolutely necessary to form the brain-structure of an individual and consciousness cannot operate without the suitable mechanism of the brain, this being granted as a fact, it will not be logically permissible to say that consciousness is epiphenomenon or effect of the body.

The Cārvākas also held that because there is no abiding self, naturally there did not exist virtue and vice, good and evil, merit and demerit. Because there is no responsible agent, there is no fear of reaping bad fruits of bad deeds. Because there is not a soul that acts consistently and thoughtfully, there is nothing which can be held morally responsible for good and bad acts. If the body is the doer of the actions, the body cannot be held ethi-

cally responsible for the good or bad acts or virtuous and vicious deeds because it is unintelligent. The body is a means or an instrument of action, it is not really initiator and doer of the action. Naturally, in the absence of a consistent thinking and discriminating abiding agent the moral distinction of good and bad, virtue and vice, merit and demerit cannot be tenable. The Cārvākas including the Susikṣitas, openly denied the transmigration of the soul because they held that the soul also is destroyed along with the body at the time of death of an individual. Although the Susikṣita Cārvākas admitted the soul as distinct from the body, they did not admit it as the abiding principle. As they did not accept any other source of knowledge than sense perception, they denied the existence of the life after death and the other world. They lay contented with this very worldly life and regarded it as the ultimate reality. They did not accept the existence of anything beyond the present worldly life. The span of an individual's life on the earth alone was a reality to them. They did not believe in the rebirth of an individual. They disputed the phenomenon of rebirth on the ground that an individual does not remember his past life. Had the same individual assumed rebirth keeping his soul the same, it should have become possible for him to remember his previous life, even after the abandonment of the previous body; but none so far is able to say anything of his past life; and if it becomes possible to remember something from one's previous life, how

to verify its truth? On what grounds should its truth be decided? And how to determine that a particular individual assumes a particular rebirth? They consistently denied transmigration, rebirth and moral responsibility from the denial of the soul as an abiding conscious entity. They did not recognise morals and religion. All moral precepts, religious rites and observances are meaningless to them. They denied the existence of God and the heavenly beings because this very world was the final reality to them. They were atheists in so far religion was concerned and they were a-moralists in moral sphere.

The end of life is death. Nothing continues to exist after death. Whatever one perceives and experiences here is true. Nothing beyond the present life exists. Hence one must strive to make the best of what he has here and now.

### Liberation

The Cārvākas did not recognise any supramundane existence. To them death was the end of life. They did not believe in the continuation of life beyond the grave. To them death means extinction of all life. Mokṣa is for them the destruction of the body<sup>1</sup> which one meets inevitably. As there is no fear of reaping after death the evil fruits of evil deeds performed in this life, they remain unscrupulous about the moral and immoral aspects of the deeds. Goodness or badness of actions

<sup>1</sup> Sāyaṇa Mādhava : *Sarvadars'anasangraha*, p. 6.

देहोच्छेदो मोक्षः ।

is solely determined, according to them, by their utility and serviceability to happiness in the present life. Pleasure and pain determine the goodness and badness of actions. An action was looked upon as good in so far as it helps to secure pleasure, and an action becomes evil and undesirable, if it led to pain and suffering. The Puruṣārtha or the aim for an individual is the achievement of maximum physical happiness such as derived from eating delicious food or enjoying beautiful women. They preached the doctrine of enjoying the carnal pleasures without scruples. 'Ye drink and be merry' is their philosophy. Physical enjoyment is the highest happiness and physical pain like the pricking of thorn is the pain of hell according to them. The sufferings of this life is equivalent to the hell according to them; because they did not recognise any other paradise and hell.<sup>1</sup> They were out and out hedonists. Whatever led to highest physical enjoyment was worthy of pursuit to them. They were unrefined hedonists. They did not recognise any other morality. S. Radhakrishnan describes their view as follows—"Virtue is a delusion and enjoyment is the only reality. Life is the end of life. There was a distrust in everything good, high, pure and compassionate. The theory stands for sensualism, selfishness and the gross affirmation of the loud will. There is no need to control passion and instinct, since they are nature's legacy to them. While the Upaniṣads prescribe resignation

<sup>1</sup> Sāyana Mādhava : *Sarvadarś'anasāṅgraha*, p. 6.

कष्टकादिजन्यं दुःखमेव नरकः ।

and severity of life and development of universal benevolence and love, the materialists proclaim the doctrine of uncontrolled energy, self-assertion and reckless disregard of all authority. . . . Moral rules are conventions of men."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, they openly preached that one should enjoy wherever and whenever possible. The only happiness that one ought to pursue is that which is derived from the embraces of women and the highest suffering is like that which one gets from thorn-pricking.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless they were not blind to the fact that happiness can never be had in the purest form; happiness is always mixed with pain. They preached the enjoyment of pleasure by avoiding pain as far as possible. They plainly say — "It is the part of wisdom to enjoy the pure pleasure as far as we can, and leave aside the pain which inevitably accompanies it. It is not therefore for us, through a fear of pain, to reject the pleasures which our nature instinctively recognises as congenial."<sup>3</sup> Thus they advocated the pursuit of pleasure at any cost. Although pleasure does not exist unmixed with pain, yet one should try to derive as much pleasure as possible by wisely keeping off pain and suffering. According to them if one abandons pleasure that one comes across simply for the fear of pain following it, one may be regarded as silly as a beast.<sup>4</sup> From all these passages it be-

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 281-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars'anasamgraha*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

comes obvious that the Cārvākas or the Lokāyatas were unrefined hedonists and stood for pleasure and pleasure alone, without thinking of any morals, religion, rebirth and the supramundane existence. They exhibit a primitive narrow outlook on life. Their vision was strictly confined to the earth and earthly goods and it could not reach the realms beyond the earth. They could not grasp the transcendental entities. They cultivated a narrow outlook on life and remained stuck to it by theoretically justifying it. They did not believe in any other God but a powerful king supported by the people here on the earth. As against the Upaniṣads they held that liberation could not be achieved by knowledge; for, according to them the destruction of the body was the only liberation (mukti). No special efforts like austere Yogic practices or the knowledge of Brahman or the performance of rituals and sacrifices are necessary, according to them, for the attainment of liberation. Liberation, according to them is attained by each and every person simply in the form of death. Men should not bother and worry about liberation because one inevitably obtains it in the form of death. Instead of thinking about it, one should strive to enjoy the highest possible happiness on the earth; this was their ideal of life.

The Cārvākas were not only unbelievers in the Vedas, but they strongly criticised the Vedas in the most impolite manner. They not only protested against the Vedic ritualism but even ridiculed it as nonsensical. They condemned the Vedas in the

roughest possible way. They attributed evil motives to the composers of the Vedic hymns and charged them as deceivers of the people in the name of religion and God. They also charged the Vedic thinkers that they composed the hymns to earn their livelihood. They ridiculed the ideas of S'rāddha ceremonies, life after death and charged the authors of the Vedas as being buffoons, knaves and demons.<sup>1</sup>

Cārvākism represents a wild reaction against the Vedic orthodox and dogmatic ritualism. At the rise of the Cārvāka system the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic ritualism and sacrificialism had reached its peak; too much was made of sacrifices and excessive importance was attached to the mechanical performance of sacrifices with simultaneous singing of the Vedic hymns. Animals were sacrificed to appease gods, natural powers and the heavenly beings. In fact the Cārvāka criticism against such sacrifices was not mistaken. Even now, after sufficient advance in scientific thinking, it is difficult to establish any logical relation between the animal-sacrifice and the appeasement of the divine beings. Apart from the excesses of condemnation it is noteworthy that the Cārvākas exposed the true nature of the Vedic religion which had been degraded to superstition. Some elements of rationality were certainly present in the opposition of the Cārvākas to the Vedic religion. They were responsible to a certain extent to open the eyes of the people to the facts of life. They encouraged independent and rational thinking. Their conclusions were not

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<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasamgraha*, pp. 13-15.

certainly right and acceptable but so far as their stern opposition is concerned, they were bold enough to assert their rational views against the Vedic ritualism. They have played their role in the history of religious development. S. Radhakrishnan passes following general remarks on this system. "Liberal efforts at improving existing institutions sanctioned by time and embodied in the habits of people will remain ineffectual if the indifference and superstition of centuries are not shaken up by an explosive force like the Cārvāka creed.... The Cārvāka philosophy is a fanatical effort made to rid the age of the weight of the past that was oppressing it. The removal of dogmatism which it helped to effect was necessary to make room for the great constructive efforts of speculation."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 283-284.



## CHAPTER IV

### BUDDHISM

Buddhism is one of the atheist schools of the Indian Philosophy and it had tremendous following in the past and still it continues to have much influence in the eastern part of Asia. It disbelieves in God as well as in Ātman (Self) on various grounds; however, it is regarded as a spiritual system due to its trust in the doctrine of Karma and in moral perfection. There is no wild criticism in it on God, heaven, immortality, etc. Buddha has made his statements moderately. He was mainly occupied with the problem of the origin and nature of sorrow and with finding out the ways of its permanent cessation.<sup>1</sup> Buddha's mind was so much filled with the idea of the sufferings of human life that he was not at all interested in the purely philosophical speculations regarding cosmology and theology; he was mainly concerned with the problem of salvation.<sup>2</sup> Buddhism does not also believe in the existence of the Self. It is called a philosophy of sorrow since it has given greater emphasis on the sorrows of the worldly life and it is also nihilistic in its nature since it has developed the concept of Nirvāṇa as the ideal of life.

<sup>1</sup> Keith A. B.: *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Barth A.: *The Religions of India*, pp. 109-110.

Buddha occupied himself mainly with the problem of suffering. His mind being too sensitive, was too much aware to the sufferings of life. He most seriously dealt with it and busied himself with its solution. His doctrine is therefore expounded in the four noble truths—(i) the existence of sorrow, (ii) the cause of sorrow, (iii) the cessation of sorrow, and (iv) the path leading to the cessation of sorrow.<sup>1</sup> Thus the whole of Buddhist philosophy revolves round the central problem of sorrow or suffering. A right understanding of the four noble truths mentioned above, it is said, led to the final solution of the problem and to the freedom from all sorrow.

Buddhism does not believe in the existence of an entity called the self or the Ātman. Buddhism is, therefore, called a school of non-self or (nairātmya-नैरात्म्य). Buddhism does not recognise any such thing as self apart from the infinite momentary states of consciousness. Buddhism regards everything as momentary or impermanent. The world is a series of infinite momentary existences. Nothing in the world abides for more than one moment. The world is a continuous series (सन्तानम्) of momentary existences. Every momentary existence has all its four states, i.e. (i) the birth, (ii) the sustenance, (iii) the decay, and (iv) the end in one single moment. Every moment new existence appears and it disappears no sooner than it appears. Everything in the world is impermanent (सर्वमनित्यम्). The world is an eternal and

<sup>1</sup> Davids Rhys (Tr.): *The Sacred Books of the East Series*, Vol. XI, Buddhist Suttas, p. 23.

continuous flux of momentary existences. The Reality is momentary in its nature. There is nothing permanent in this world. Permanence is only apparent and illusory; what is really existing is a continuous series of momentary existences. Buddha defined Reality as that which is momentary, *yat satyam tat kṣaṇikam*. Whatever is real is only momentary. The essence of Reality is to be only momentary. There is nothing which abides or remains permanent for more than one moment. It neither arises out of anything nor does it pass into any thing. It comes out of nothing and passes into nothing. It is unrelated to other moments in any direct form. Th. Stcherbatsky describes the Buddhist Reality in the following manner — “The elements of existence are momentary appearances, momentary flashings into the phenomenal world out of an unknown source. Just as they are disconnected so to say, in breadth, not being linked together by any pervading substance, just so are they disconnected in depth or in duration, since they last only one single moment (क्षण). They disappear as soon as they appear, in order to be followed the next moment by another momentary existence. Thus a moment becomes a synonym of an element (dharma), two moments are two different elements. An element becomes something like a point in time-space.. Consequently, the elements do not change, but disappear, .. the world becomes a cinema. Disappearance is the very essence of existence; what does not disappear does not exist.”<sup>1</sup> Thus every

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, pp. 37-38.

moment becomes a separate element by itself. The world is thus a continuous stream whose waters remain everflowing. The stream appears as the same but in truth the stream is a continuous process where the same water will not be found again at the same place. Once the water has flown it has flown for ever. Heracleitus, the great Greek Philosopher, also believed in the eternal impermanence of the world. He said—“You cannot step twice in the same river.” The Buddhists also fondly cherished the same idea about nature. For them Reality is everchanging; it is never the same for two moments. Every momentary existence possesses an independent individuality, which is unique in itself. Moreover, the existence of a moment also becomes its non-existence because its emergence and disappearance take place in one and the same moment. Therefore, Stcherbatsky describes it in the following words—“Thus existence becomes synonymous with non-existence for every fact disappears at the same moment when it appears.”<sup>1</sup>

Buddhism holds a general theory of the universal impermanence of things. Naturally, the self also cannot be an exception to it. It did not believe in any thing like a self, a separate principle of consciousness or a substratum of all different states of consciousness, abiding in all mental experiences, as the same. Buddhism did not accept the concept of self at all. It believed in a succession of separate and distinct stages of consciousness occurring in an orderly form. It did not

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<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 38.

## Buddhism

117

accept the idea of a self over and above the various states of consciousness like perception, memory, imagination, emotion, volition, etc. It did not find it necessary to project any separate entity that would hold together all the different states of consciousness, and would appropriate the things as one's own, and would act as a unified and a synthetic agent of actions and enjoyer of their fruits. It, on the contrary, holds that everything is '*anatta*' (अनत्त)—non-self. Buddha addresses Bādarāyaṇa in the 'Scriptural Chips' while elucidating the concept of self in the following manner—

".. But a self in the sense of the real Self does not exist. By false (imputation the elements of consciousness) is fancied (to represent a Self). There is here neither a Self nor a sentient Being. There are elements which depend (upon other elements acting as) causes. If we carefully examine them, we do not find among all of them any Individual."<sup>1</sup> The Buddhists, therefore, do not recognise the Self as a spiritual entity. The Self according to Buddhism is only a name given to a bundle of certain mental states like perception, thought, feeling, memory, emotion, volition. It understood the various orderly and unified states of consciousness, by the name 'Self' when, in actuality, it did not believe in any such a thing existing. A. B. Keith describes it in the following way—"The conclusion is, therefore, that there is no real Self; the term is accordingly merely a convention. We never know the self as such, but merely have Knowledge of psychic happenings, sensations,

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<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, p. 839.

perceptions, feelings and so on.”<sup>1</sup> The self, thus, came in the hands of the Buddhists to be regarded as a congeries of the various mental states which are transient. The Self also is, according to Buddhism, in a state of continuous flux. It is a name given to a bundle of certain characteristics which always go together because of their natural affinity. Just as a liquid possessing certain qualities like whiteness, certain taste and from which butter can be prepared, is given the name or designation ‘milk’, so also various mental experiences are fictitiously grouped together, and a designation like ‘self’ is given to them. All these mental attributes are, thus, understood under the name ‘self’. The Self thus exists only in and through the mental experiences. It has no existence without and beyond the states of consciousness. The Buddhists did not mean by the Self a spiritual abstract entity or a psychological element, but they used the term ‘self’ or ‘attabhāva’ for a whole concrete individual. Mrs. Rhys Davids says—“Linguistically there is in Pali the useful compound attabhāva, “self-state” or “self-hood”, meaning personality, individual life, the bodily and mental organism. . . Whatever restrictions the religious philosophy of Buddhism imposed upon the metaphysical implications of the term and concept of ‘Self’, the use of it as convenient label for the totality of anything individual was by that philosophy both approved and exploited. As such a label it belongs to the stock of

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<sup>1</sup> Keith A. B. : *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, p. 176.

terms and ideas called Sammuti, or 'of conventional usage'. The Buddhist scholar used it as such. Philosophically speaking, it did not mean for him an ultimate unitary principle, continuous and self-identical amid a stream of transient manifestations. Contrariwise it was merely a name-and-concept binding together and labelling a transient aggregate of factors. For him the ultimate principles, material and psychical, were not in the bond or lable, but among those factors. But even they were evanescent, ever-changing."<sup>1</sup> Thus Self is merely a name, an arbitrary designation by means of which certain psychical unified experiences are understood. The Self as such is an ever-flowing stream or process renewing itself every moment, because it is constituted of momentary existences which are ever-changing. Therefore, there is nothing permanent in the Self, but the name 'Self'. The names alone have a permanent and abiding existence. Mrs. Rhys Davids points out in the further passage the nominalist view of Reality of the Buddhists—"These are merely names, expressions, terms of speech, designations in common use in the world. Of these he who has won truth makes use indeed, but is not led astray by them."<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Rhys Davids says the that Buddhists seem to admit a higher self that is not momentary, that is a conscient and moral self.<sup>3</sup> This self has a dura-

<sup>1</sup> Davids Rhys : *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 351. Article on Buddhistic Self.

<sup>2</sup> *Digha Nik ya*, i. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Davids Rhys : *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 351.

tion of more than a moment. Self is also used as the subjective knower as opposed to the objects known. In spite of the Buddhists' denial of an enduring self, they seem to have been compelled to speak in terms of the enduring Self which can be held morally responsible.

Even though the Self seems to suggest relatively more enduring personality, Buddhism remains the most cautious in denying the individuality and the permanent and everlasting soul-principle. The continuity of consciousness is due to the recurrence of consciousness—units in close, unbroken succession, and does not imply the existence of any real continuum. The chain or continuum is but an apparent, ideal continuum, being an illusion generated by the homogeneity of the moments of consciousness. Thus two moments, one being followed by another that comes in succession, make appearance of a cause and effect relation. In fact, there cannot be a cause and an effect because every existence lasts only for a moment and disappears totally without stretching itself out in the other succeeding moment. They come continuously in a series, but without being related to each other, in any way. In Hume's terms it can be said they have only a 'customary conjunction' and not a necessary 'causal connexion'. They are, no doubt, conjoined together, only superficially. The series of these moments is beginningless and endless; but when it is taken as a period of sixty or seventy or hundred years, it forms the duration of an individual's life. Thus, every series of such momentary existences



possesses its own peculiarity and because of it, it acquires its own individuality. C. H. S. Ward describes it in the following words—“Although, Buddhists deny the existence of a person or an individual, as an ultimate Reality, they acknowledge that there are individual streams of existence which are distinct from all other such streams. The individual stream is made up of all the mental and physical elements of the individual mind and body, together with such external objects as enter into the consciousness at any given moment. But this stream is never the same for two consecutive moments; it is like the Kaleidoscope...”<sup>1</sup> Thus every orderly series is supposed to possess its own individuality. The noteworthy thing is that Buddhism does not accept the doctrine of causation at all. It does not believe that one moment creates the other as its effect. Stcherbatsky says—“A cause for the Buddhists is not a real cause, but a preceding moment which likewise arose out of nothing in order to disappear into nothing. Consequently the elements do not change but disappear.”<sup>2</sup> Ward thus makes it clear, that the Buddhists theory of becoming “is not really a theory of cause and effect. The elements of being are all independent entities existing of and by themselves and not in dependence, one upon another.”<sup>3</sup>

The Self as such does not exist by itself. The emergence and appearance of the Self depends upon

<sup>1</sup> Ward C. H. S. : *Buddhism*, Vol. I (Hīnayāna), p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Ward C. H. S. : *Buddhism*, Vol. I (Hīnayāna), p. 82.

other factors. The general theory of the Buddhists is that the five Skandhas, when combined, produce what is known as the Self. Consciousness, which is the most essential characteristic of the Self, is generated only when the five elements known as the Skandhas combine together. Paul Dahlke, a reputed scholar of Buddhism, remarks in the following manner—"This personality is an apparent I, as we have seen since it presents us with the illusive picture of something actual and eternal,—a 'soul', where there is really nothing but a "Becoming", void of any enduring core. Every illusion however, must have something real behind it, by reason of which it comes to exist. Hence this, my present I, this Bhāva, must be based upon something real. This something real, this substratum, is the five Khandhas, namely, corporeality (rūpa), sensation, perception, differentiation (Saṅkhāra), and consciousness (Viññāna). All five inclusive, as representing the I, are also called nāma rūpa (name and form), nāma representing the four latter, with viññāna at their head."<sup>1</sup> There are five Khandhas (Skr. Skandha) which means the trunk of a tree and is usually used to mean group or aggregate. The Skandhas are aggregates of bodily and psychical states which are intimately connected with us. The Khandhas are divided into five classes: (i) Viññāna (consciousness), (ii) Vedanā (feeling either painful or pleasurable or indifferent), (iii) Saññā (conceptual knowledge), (iv) Saṅkhāra (synthetic mental states and the synthetic functioning of compound

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 24.

sense-affections, compound feelings and compound concepts), (v) rūpa (four elements, the body, the senses), sense data, etc.<sup>1</sup> Thus a broad division of these aggregates is made between the nāma and the rūpa. The word rūpa stands for matter and material qualities, the senses and the sense-data. All corporeality is represented by the word rūpa and all mental characteristics are represented by the word nāma. The world is a play of these two categories nama and rūpa. When all these five Khandhas operate in a combined form, the various mental states arise. The states of consciousness do not arise separately from any of them. When all are present and they operate in a definite way the states of consciousness are generated. Thus when all these Khandhas form a compound there emerges the self of an individual.

The Self cannot emerge in the absence of any of the five aggregates of Khandhas. The Khandhas are absolutely necessary for the emergence of the Self. The Self thus appears to be an epiphenomenon of the body. Suzuki describes it as — “The existence of an ego-soul cannot be conceived apart from sensation, perception, imagination, intelligence, volition, etc. and therefore, it is absurd to think that there is an independent individual soul-agent which makes our consciousness its workshop.<sup>2</sup> . . . . When the five Skandhas are combined according to the previous Karma and present a temporal existence in the form of a sentient being, vulgar minds imagine that they

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta Nikāya* III, 86 etc.

<sup>2</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 147.

have an individual entity sustained by an immortal egosubstratum. In fact, the material body (rūpakāya-  
रूपकाय) alone is not what makes the ego-soul, nor the sensation (वेदना), nor the deed (संस्कार); nor the consciousness (विज्ञान), nor the conception (संज्ञा); but only when they are all combined in a certain form they make a sentient being... This combination of the constituent elements, Buddhism declares is achieved by themselves after their Karma."<sup>1</sup> These aggregates, even though they are the constituents of the Self are not stable substances. They are always changing their nature without pause. Consequently the Self never remains an immutable entity. The Self also is in a continuous flux. Poussin describes the Self quite appropriately in the following passage—"There is not a Self, a permanent substantial unity, but there is a person, to be described as 'a living continuous fluid complex', which does not remain quite the same for two consecutive moments, but which continues for an endless number of deaths, without becoming completely different from itself."<sup>2</sup> The Self is impermanent in its nature. In fact, it has no essential nature of itself. It is entirely dependent for its emergence and presence upon the co-operation of the five aggregates. J. E. Ellam puts the view of eternal impermanence of the Self as follows—"The Buddhist analysis of man's being into the five Khandhas (स्कन्ध) is exactly in accordance with scientific monism. The body (रूप, the vehicle) we know to be made

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Poussin D. L. V. : *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 35.

## Buddhism

125

up of elements which are in constant process of flux... It is the same with the rapid changes--of sensation, perception, consciousness, and the mental properties (Sankhara); which last if anything, might be called the "soul", since it is here that the illusion of the self-separate "Ego" arises. This has been aptly likened to a flame, a shifting iridescence... Never for one fraction of a second is it still, or at rest. This is the 'I', the "self", what men call the "soul". Immortal? It is so mortal that one moment's time can hardly span its life. The body is less mortal than the "soul".<sup>1</sup> Thus it becomes evident from all these descriptions of the self that the self is not something that endures and maintains its identity in spite of the changes that take place in its various states of experience. It is what it is experienced separately in various states of consciousness. It is constituted of all the changing mental and bodily states. It does not have its separate nature independent of the various states of consciousness. It is curious whether consciousness is an attribute of the body or is entirely independent of it and is only accidentally conjoined to it. Paul Dahlke, while describing the nature of consciousness, passes the following remarks about it—"Consciousness is, as compared with the whole of the remainder of the body, nothing but a product, a compound, a symptom—the spiritual in us, nothing but a modification of the corporeal."<sup>2</sup> Paul Dahlke thus, suggests that

<sup>1</sup> Ellam J. E. : *The Buddhist Annual of Ceylon*, 1921, pp. 79, 80.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essay*, p. 205.

consciousness is a modification of the corporeal body which conditions the former's appearance. So far as he makes consciousness depend on the matter or body, Buddhism agrees with the Cārvāka system which also makes consciousness depend upon body for its appearance. Of course body is neither the generator nor the substratum of consciousness, even then the dependence of consciousness upon the physical organism is suggested. Paul Dahlke goes so far in asserting that consciousness is a product or a modification of the corporeal body. It will be difficult, nay, impossible to admit that consciousness is a direct and actual product of the body for many reasons. If they are related causally, consciousness will change in magnitudes and forms in proportion to the magnitudes and forms of the body; thereby physical deformities will cause corresponding deformities in consciousness which arises out of it. It will be difficult, in that case, to explain the absence of consciousness in a dead body, for, cause and effect will have to be permanently related. Dahlke is not going beyond the limits when he makes consciousness dependent upon the corporeal body.

Suzuki, another authority on Buddhism, also states the same dependence. He writes—"To postulate an independent Ātman outside a combination of the five Skandhas, of which an individual being is supposed by the Buddhists to consist, is to unreservedly welcome egoism with all its pernicious corollaries. It is a religion without soul."<sup>1</sup> It becomes therefore

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 32.

clear that the Self does not exist prior to the states of consciousness. Both the main Buddhist schools—the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna agree in holding that the appearance of what is known as the Self is conditioned by the five Skandhas operating together in a combination. It is, however, clear that the Buddhists named all the states of consciousness following in a series, as Self and thus, the Self came to be identified with all these momentary states of consciousness taken in their entirety in their succession. One thing is certain, that Buddhism never admitted any spiritual substratum or agent holding the mental states together.<sup>1</sup> In the idea of Self, Poussin writes—“The physico-psychical life does not depend upon a living principle (jīva) or a Self; in itself it is not a something; it is lacking both in substance and in unity; it is only a series of physical states and states of consciousness generated in succession, depending one upon another, although each of them lasts only for a moment.”<sup>2</sup>

The Self is momentary and ever-changing in so far as it is composed of momentary existences which have only a single moment's duration, but it is also a continuous process of a series of moments. It lives as a unitary whole, not as a fixed and unchanging entity, but as a continuous series ever renewing itself at every moment. It has no identical nature of itself. All its permanent attributes and identical nature are merely appearances. In fact, it

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Poussin L. D. V. : *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 53.

is a flux of ever-dying momentary existences. It is an aggregate not only of the mental states of an individual, but it also includes in it the physical and bodily states. Th. Stcherbatsky describes the Self in the following manner—"Buddhism never denies the existence of a personality, or a soul, in the empirical sense, it only maintains that it is no ultimate reality (not a dharma). The Buddhist term for an individual, a term which is intended to suggest the difference between Buddhist view and other theories, is *santāna*, i.e. a 'stream' viz. of interconnected facts. It includes the mental elements and the physical ones as well, the elements of one's own body and the external objects, as far as they constitute the experience of a given personality."<sup>1</sup> Thus the changing Reality and the Self also is often compared by the Buddhists with a burning flame or an everflowing stream of water. The flame, in fact, changes every moment and in spite of its changes it appears as stable and identical; so also a stream appears the same in spite of the fact that the waters flowing in it never remain the same at any spot for more than a moment. Thus, in spite of their internal changes they appear as permanent things. The Reality in the same manner appears as permanent and identical even though it is ever-changing in its real nature like a burning flame and a flowing stream.

Buddhism refused to admit the existence of a fictitious entity called Self because it did not find

<sup>1</sup>Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 26.



it necessary. Generally the existence of the Self is established on the grounds of the following three arguments: (1) Self is necessary for maintaining synthetic unity of our conscious life, (2) Self is necessary for explaining the teleological character of physical, biological and psychological activities, and (3) Self is necessary for explaining the activities being of the nature of qualities and actions which must inhere in a substratum (the Self). But the Buddhists refute all these arguments, and finally they hold their opinion about the Self firmly, that the Self as a permanent and abiding principle is not necessary at all. They refute arguments mentioned above in the following manner:—

(1) It is held by certain systems, like the Nyāya Vais'eṣika, that our cognitions are not discrete elements but are synthesised by reference to an ego-principle and this ego-principle is the Self. But this argument according to the Buddhists is not conclusive. For, the Buddhists hold, that all cognitions are self-revelatory and self-cognisant. Every cognition is a distinct and independent state of consciousness at a time, and it being self-revelatory reveals itself in its own light without standing in need of any other second cogniser to illumine it. Therefore all cognitions must shine by themselves and must reveal themselves as well as their objects, just as a candle-flame in course of revealing others reveals itself also. It cannot reveal other objects unless it reveals itself also with its own light. Moreover, if the different cognitions be held to be the products or states of an eternal ego-

principle, the sequence of these states will be unaccountable. When the synthesiser and cause of cognitions is eternally present, why should all the cognitions not take place, all at once? Moreover, if the synthesiser of our states of consciousness is an eternal and permanent principle, it must be self-sufficient, not standing in need of any other external factors like the cognitions. For, if the Self is a synthesising agent it can have its existence only if there are multiple cognitions to be synthesised and unified, which implies that the Self becomes dependent upon the cognitions for its existence and operations. Thus, it ceases to be a self-sufficient and perfect principle of the unification of cognitions. The Self is, in fact, nothing but a particular conscious state, as qualified by the impression of unity due to the similarity of the conscious units. The Self is nothing but a conscious state modified by ego-consciousness, which is an illusory idea.

(2) Secondly, cognitions being non-concrete or immaterial, do not require a substratum or receptacle to lie in. Buddhists hold that it is simply an analogy to suppose that the Self acts as a substratum to the states of consciousness. Inherence of some thing into some other thing implies that the inhering things must be concrete, and that to which they belong or in which they inhere, also must be concrete. The states of consciousness are non-concrete or immaterial; therefore they do not need any substratum. Self as a substratum is, therefore, fictitious and unnecessary. If the various psychical phenomena like desire,

aversion, pleasure, pain, cognition etc. inhere in the Self, and act as the modifications of the Self, they would all emerge at once or simultaneously, for, the Self being of a permanent nature, remains the same in these psychical experiences. But it does not happen so in actuality. The variety of psychical experiences takes place not simultaneously but at different times in succession. Another problem is how these psychical facts can be related to the Self unless they enter into the constitution of the Self, and become identical with it? If they are identified, the Self will be a transitory event like the cognition. If however, the cognition remains distinct, it will not be related and the Self need not be posited as a condition of it. Similarly, pleasure and pain are looked upon as qualities of the Self; but being transitory modifications, they cannot belong to the Self, and if they could belong to it, then the Self being modifiable would become non-eternal. Now, these qualities will either belong or not belong to the Self. On the first alternative, the Self cannot but be a fluxional entity like pleasure and pain; on the second alternative, the hypothesis of a Self as the ground and condition of the psychical manifold will be absolutely unnecessary. Thus the Buddhists prove that there cannot be an eternal Self. What, therefore, exists is only a continuous series of momentary existences. The Buddhists thus confront their opponents with a dilemmatic situation. The Self would be subject to emergence and cessation if it was not regarded as absolutely different from the

moods or states of consciousness. On the contrary, if the Self remained the same unaltered entity, it could not assume the role of an active agent, much less an enjoyer. If the Self undergoes any modification on the emergence of a cognition, it will be impermanent; if it remains unaltered as before, the Self cannot be conceived to be a cogniser.

(3) The Buddhists also reject the third view about the necessity of the existence of the Self as a guiding principle for the realisation of some purpose or and for psychological, biological and physical activities.

The Buddhists do not find it necessary to posit a fictitious entity like the Self to explain the orderly, organised and systematic workings of the nature, nor do they admit the necessity of projecting a God to manipulate the working of the world to embody this purpose or ultimate goal. This work, usually attributed to God, is explained by the Buddhists with the help of the Kamma-principle. The Kamma-principle is not a sentient and conscious principle, but it works with a mechanical blind rigidity and an inexorable regularity. The Kamma represents a force created by the past Karma (good or bad, as the case may be). The Kamma thus acts as a force responsible for the organisation of the aggregates of Khandas in accordance with the past Karmas. D. T. Suzuki says—"When the five Skandhas are combined according to their previous Karma, and present a temporal existence in the form of a sentient being, vulgar minds imagine that they have here an indi-

vidual entity sustained by an immortal ego-substratum."<sup>1</sup>... This combination of the constituent elements, Buddhism declares, is achieved by themselves after their Karma. Thus all unifications, syntheses and organisations take place because of the potency of Kamma. The Kamma arranges the sequences of momentary existences in unbroken continuities. By Karma, called in Pāli Kamma, all five are held together—that is to say, constitute life—so long as Karma is in force. They fall apart as soon as Kamma is exhausted.<sup>2</sup> Dahlke makes the role of Kamma clearer in the following passage—“The will to live, the lust for living, is the force which keeps going the endless play of action and reaction, the arising of one life out of another. ‘There is Kamma’, simply means that with this life is already given the next and the next again, and so on through the endless series of existences. “Life” is synonymous with the beginninglessness, and endlessness of life, and Kamma is merely the concise formula for the fact that this unfathomable endlessness, this play of life, is in progress.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the work of coordination of different physical and biological factors is done by the Kamma energy. The unification of the various states of consciousness also is effected by the Kamma energy, and hence, the existence of the Self becomes unnecessary and uncalled for. According to Buddhism there is no such inherent

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp.149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 25-26.

teleology in the universe; if there is any system and order it is automatic and unplanned or unanticipated, and lastly, the orderly functioning of nature is carried on by the Kamma energy. Teleologically also, the existence of a kind and perfect God cannot be established, because the world in which we live, is imperfect, and full of sufferings. God, being all-kind, cannot inflict suffering on his own creations, or he must be powerless to control the evil, which is against his nature of being omnipotent. God or a sentient immutable and perfect Self cannot be the author of this imperfect world. All such interpretations, thus, remain true only on human level. S. Radhakrishnan says— "It is man's anthropomorphism that makes him look upon the cosmic process as a sort of human activity. Nature obeys no laws imposed from without. We have only necessities in nature."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Buddhism does not admit the existence of the Self as a necessity to explain the teleological nature of the various physical, psychological and the moral activities. There is no willed teleology; more over, if there are any elements of teleology in it, they are simply inherent in an unwilled form. There is no conscious and purposive guidance of the activities of the universe by any spiritual principle.

Buddhism denies the existence of the Self as living by itself. The Self does not possess any nature of itself. The Self is an illusion caused by the various mental and physical states when combined in a certain pattern, discharging a particular kind of

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 456.

function. The Self is thus non-substantial anātta — not-self. The Self has no existence of itself, by itself and in itself. It is nothing but a conglomeration of a number of physical forces and characteristics (dharmas) working together. Mrs. Rhys Davids quotes a passage from the Saṃyutta-Nikāya (IV.54) which speaks about the nothingness or non-existence of such a Self as an independent entity.<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids makes it clear that a grave error is committed if independent existence apart from the Skandhas is, attributed to the fictitious entity known as the Self. She warns in the following words — “In other words, whenever the word attā implies that in the temporary bundle is a mysterious little being, which uses the changing body as a shell, coming at or before birth, and flitting away at death, itself unchanged, eternal, above the laws of nature, then does the word become the sign of the worst of errors.”<sup>2</sup> It is worthwhile to understand the real meaning of the Buddhist theory of *anatman* (अनात्मवाद). Th. Stcherbatsky amply clarifies the meaning of anātman in the following passage — “The underlying idea is that, whatsoever be designated by all these names, it is not a real and ultimate fact; it is a mere name for a multitude of interconnected facts, which Buddhist philosophy is attempting to analyse by reducing them to real elements (dharma). Thus “soullessness” (nairātmya-नैरात्म्य) is but the negative expression, indeed, a synonym for the existence of ultimate realities (dharmatā).

<sup>1</sup> Davids Rhys : *Buddhism*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 55.

Buddhism never denied the existence of a personality, or a soul, in the empirical sense; it only maintained that it was no ultimate reality (not a dharma)."<sup>1</sup>

The Self is, thus, denied not as an empirical and practical entity but as the ultimate principle of intelligence. The absolute dependence of the Self itself upon the five aggregates, is sufficient to prove that it has not its own unconditioned existence. The Self does not possess its 'own nature (svalakṣaṇa). It is not Self-subsistent and is not an independent entity. It is therefore tantamount to non-self or anātman. An element becomes a substance in virtue of its possession of special characteristic (धर्मता). But the Self does not possess any such independent characteristic in itself. It does not contain its essence in itself, therefore, it is not an ultimate Reality. A thing has its dharma if it has some definite essence of itself in it. The current definition is—An element is something having an essence of its own (स्वलक्षणधारणाद्धर्मः). The real meaning of the term anātina (anāṭta) is brought out by Stcherbatsky. He equates the Ātman or the Self to the various elements which give rise to the Self by mutually combining together. Stcherbatsky writes—"anāṭma is synonymous with five Skandhas, twelve āyatanas and eighteen dhātus, i.e., with all dharmas; a single dharma is likewise synonymous with niḥsattva."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, p. 840.



Another passage from the same book conforms to the same view. Buddha, in course of his address to Bādarāyaṇa, says — “.. But a Self in the sense of the real Self does not exist. By false (imputation the elements of consciousness) is fancied (to represent a Self). There is here neither a Self nor a sentient Being. There are elements which depend (upon other elements acting as) causes... If we carefully examine them, we do not find among all of them any Individual.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, “..The Individual is neither identical with the bodily frame, nor is it something different. (If the bodily element does not differ from the Self, it cannot represent the non-Self.)”<sup>2</sup> D. T. Suzuki also supports the following Buddhist view of Self as non-ātman.<sup>3</sup> Thus, there is incessant change; everything disappears not to appear again and nothing remains stable and permanent. Every moment the world is renewed. All permanence is illusory, and the terms indicating the existence of unchanging and permanent things, are simply names.

It becomes obvious that the Buddhists analysed all the concepts and reduced all qualities to the various dharmas, which are physical or non-spiritual, and tried to explain any mental or spiritual phenomena in terms of their constituent members. Thus analysed, they found that everything is a compound of simple elements (dharma) and the ultimate Rea-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 839.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, p. 840.

<sup>3</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyān Buddhism*, pp. 42-43.

lity at the basis, is the anātman, the non-self. Therefore, Paul Dahlke says — “To understand one’s Self is to dissolve one’s Self, as a light reveals itself only by consuming itself. In other words the I is comprehensible only-as not-I, becomes not-I in being comprehended.”<sup>1</sup>

Buddha and his followers were not speculative philosophers. They did not pursue knowledge for the sake of mere knowledge. They sought and pursued knowledge only as a means of achieving freedom from suffering. Buddha mainly dealt with the existence of sorrow, its cause and its removal. All knowledge was, therefore, to Buddha only instrumental to attaining complete freedom from sorrow. Just as he maintained ‘all is impermanent’ (सर्वमनित्यं) so also he believed ‘all is sorrow’ (सर्वदुःखम्). The world is transient and impermanent. Everything in the world has only a moment’s existence. Because everything lasts only for a moment man cannot derive lasting pleasure from it. A thing which is dear to an individual, causes disappointment and pain in him by ceasing to exist immediately after its occurrence. Man has an inborn tendency to expect long long duration of a thing which gives him some kind of pleasure or satisfaction. Momentary things give only momentary pleasures. The moment an individual begins to enjoy the pleasure, it disappears. It is inherent in the nature of things to be evanescent and transient. Transiency or the short duration of the things to which men attach their minds neces-

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke D. T. : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 269.

sarily causes a kind of disappointment and sorrow in him. Every moment he experiences something new, but the beginning of that pleasant experience proves to be an end of it. The moment he begins to experience pleasure he faces sorrow because the experience terminates immediately in the same moment. One may experience a series of separate pleasant experiences, but that experience is not a unitary whole. It is like a chain of separate beads, wherein each has its own peculiarity. One embraces a thing or invites a pleasurable experience with a fond hope that it would last long and will bring to him unceasing satisfaction; but what he finds in actuality is just the contrary of it. His pleasurable or agreeable experiences along with those, which are painful, have only momentary life. His urge to seek lasting pleasure remains unsatisfied. His craving to seek and enjoy happiness becomes more and more sharp and intense, but the objects of happiness being transient in their nature, fail to satisfy his craving permanently. Because everything is transient, it is also painful. Pleasure and pain are thus inseparable. The impermanence of the experiences thus creates a sense of deprivation. Pain becomes more powerful than pleasure. Pain overcomes pleasure. Transitoriness means disappearance, which means deprivation, which finally means sorrow and suffering. Because everything is momentary and life is a series of such momentary experiences, life becomes synonymous with sorrow and suffering. Paul Dahlke, therefore, makes sorrow and transiency synonymous. He

writes—"The sorrow of the Buddha is nothing else but the perception of the transiency of all that has arisen.... Life and transiency become synonymous ideas; whether the life be an earthly or a heavenly one makes no difference whatever; life and transiency are one and the same."<sup>1</sup> Thus sorrow being transient and momentary like the Self both become the same. He further says—"Sorrow must be understood to be transiency and not-I."<sup>2</sup> Sorrow is thus invariably attached to the feeling of 'I'-hood. So long as one feels his own existence he experiences sorrow. The cessation of the experience of egohood also becomes the cessation of the experience of sorrow and suffering in one's life.

Dahlke thus continues and says—"Sorrow is real only so long as life is real—that is, so long as this corporeality is looked upon as a true, soul-endowed I. The reality of sorrow falls along with the reality of the I. When the I is perceived to be illusion the sorrow also is perceived to be illusion. Sorrow is the result of ignorance."<sup>3</sup> So long as a man experiences his own life, so long as he cherishes desires, the desires being certainly to be met with disappointment, sorrow necessarily follows. A right understanding of sorrow, thus, leads to the complete abrogation of sorrow. Sorrow is thus a necessary consequent of ignorance. Dahlke says—"Where there is no willing, there is no desire, no gratification, no

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 74.

attachment to objects. Where there is no attachment, there is no parting, no passing away, no sorrow.”<sup>1</sup> The only way to be free from sorrow is to know the I as not-I, to understand in the most dispassionate fashion that everything is anattā.

So far we have studied the general philosophical ideas of Buddhism; but Buddhism is not one single philosophic system. From the teachings of Buddha his followers in their subsequent generations, drew different kinds of inferences and formed different systems by giving full scope for the free operation of their speculations. Buddhism has two main sects known as the Hīnayāna Buddhism and the Mahāyāna Buddhism. The word Hīnayāna means “Small or inferior vehicle”, and the word Mahāyāna means “The Great vehicle”. The ultimate good of an adherant of Hīnayānism is the attainment of his own Nirvāṇa, confining it to oneself only, while the ultimate good of an adherant of Mahāyānism is the attainment of nirvāṇa not only for oneself but for all beings by helping them, and they were prepared to work for others even for infinite time. As compared with the Mahāyānists the Hīnayānists required only shorter period to attain Nirvāṇa as they had confined their efforts to the individuals only. They were, for that purpose, regarded as belonging to a ‘lower’ category—the Hīnayānists. The Hīnayāna School of Buddhism represents the earlier phase of Buddhism as compared with the Mahāyāna sect, which is definitely a later development of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 76-77.

Buddhist philosophy. These two schools also differ in holding different theories of causation. These two main branches of Buddhism are, still divided into further sub-branches. There are, according to the Hindu thinkers, four chief Buddhist schools—of which two belong to Hīnayānism, and two, to Mahāyānism. The Hīnayāna schools are the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas. Both are Sarvāstivādins and believe in the reality of the external world, which we know with the help of ideas, which correspond to the external objects. The Sarvāstivādins (सर्वास्तिवादी) are known in Pāli as the Sabbāttivādins. The two Mahāyāna schools are the Yogācāra (योगचार) and the Mādhyamika (माध्यमिक) school. The Yogācāras are also known as the Vijñānavādins (विज्ञानवादी), who are characteristically known for denying existence of the external world and reducing it to mere ideas, and making it mind-dependent. The Mādhyamika school is characterised as 'negativist' or 'nihilist' school as it proves that everything by itself is, only a void. All these schools accept the impermanence of things, the sorrowfulness of life and the necessity of attaining nirvāṇa, as the final goal of life. But they explain the world from their own peculiar standpoints, hence their differences.

*The Vaibhāṣika (वैभाषिक) School*—The Vaibhāṣikas are Sarvāstivādins and they believe in the 'Pluralistic realism'. They are also natural dualists, in so far as they believe in the existence of two independent Realities as matter and mind. The Vaibhāṣikas, like the Sarvāstivādins, analyse the complex phenomenal

## Buddhism

143

nature into its constituent elements, which are fixed and permanent, and which, in their combinations in different forms, produce the phenomenal effects. They accept the eighteen dhātus as the ultimate permanent Realities, and the five Skandhas are responsible for the creation of the 'Self'. All effects are regarded not as entirely new creations, but simply changed forms of the same causes. The underlying cause remains the same under the changing aspects of effects. Āryadeva says—"The cause never perishes but only changes its name, when it becomes an effect, having changed its state."<sup>1</sup> Th. Stcherbatsky writes—"This leads to the construction of two sets of elements, the one representing the everlasting nature (dharmasvabhāva), the other their momentary manifestation in actual life (dharmaalakṣaṇa)."<sup>2</sup>

The Self, according to them, is called the 'pudgala', and it exists as an effect of the combination of the constituent elements. The existence of the individual is not any concrete entity, but a fictitious name ascribed to the unity of the physical and mental states of an individual. Th. Stcherbatsky describes the Self in the following way—"Every combination of these data (dharma) was then declared to represent a nominal, not an ultimate reality. A substantial soul was thus transformed into a stream

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 27.

of continuously flowing discrete moments of sensation or pure consciousness (vijñāna) accompanied by moments of feeling, of ideation, volition.”<sup>1</sup>

*The Sautrāntika* (सौत्रान्तिक) School—Another Buddhist Hīnayāna school is the *Sautrāntika School*. It has much common with the Vaibhāṣika school in holding that there exists the extra-mental world. The outside world can be known by the individual not directly with the sense organs as the Vaibhāṣikas hold, but that it is known through the ideas. The ideas act as the representatives of the external objects. The ideas cannot exist unless they have their actual counterparts of which they are the symbolic representations. The world is given to the perceiver in his perception. It is not made by the perceiver. Another important point which the Sautrāntikas emphasize is that all cognition has an end. Knowledge is sought by men for the realization of the object of their ends. The rightness of knowledge depends upon its capacity to attain the desired end. Knowledge begins with the presentation of an idea and terminates with the fulfilment of the desire. The Sautrāntikas, thus, developed an elaborate epistemology consisting of the theories of perception and inference. The Self loses its meaning if it be separated from its immediate consciousness of the world. The Self reveals its nature only when it is confronted with a non-mental or corporeal world. The awakening of self-consciousness, thus, depends

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 39.



upon the existence of the external world.

*The Yogācāra (Vijñānavāda) (योगाचार, विज्ञानवाद) School*—The third main Buddhist school which belongs to the Mahāyāna creed is known as the *Yogācāra School*. This school is known as the Yogācāra school, since its followers believe that the absolute truth or bodhi can be attained only by the practice of Yoga. Yogācāra emphasizes the more practical aspect of the philosophy which is propounded mainly by the Vijñānavādins. The Yogācāra school is idealistic. The Yogācāras deny the existence of the external world. They contend that what can be known by us are only our own ideas. We can be directly aware of our own ideas. Our ideas themselves are the objects of our knowledge. There do not exist any concrete or material objects outside us corresponding to our ideas. What really exists are only our ideas. We have no ground to admit the existence of the outside world because we cannot go beyond our ideas. The external objects do not exist, according to the Vijñānavādins. If the external world exists, we have no means to know it. We cannot know anything except by means of ideas, and thus, ideas alone form the content of our knowledge. The world, therefore, is only ideal. It is impossible to admit the material substance as the cause of our ideas, for, matter also is simply an idea to us. The external world is only a fiction. It has no real existence. Things are clusters of sensations. The position of Vijñānavādins and the Yogācāras is like that of Berkeley who reduces the whole material

world only to ideas and sensations. The corporeal world melts into ideas in the philosophy of Berkeley. Similarly, the Vijñānavādins reduce the whole world simply to mental ideas and regard the latter as the ultimately real things. Our ideas themselves appear to exist as external objects. It is plainly said in *Ālambana Parikṣā* that "It is, therefore, rationally deduced that the objects of different sensual cognitions do not exist externally... It is the object (artha) which exists internally in knowledge itself as a knowable aspect and which appears to us as if it exists externally... Though the external things are denied, what exists internally is knowledge itself (i.e., its knowable aspect) and appears to us as though it is existent externally serves as a condition of the actual object, *ālambana pratyaya* (to consciousness)."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the external objects cannot exist apart from the knowing consciousness. The external objects do not have independent existence of their own. The so called objects are constituted of ideas. Thus, the whole world is contained in our thinking, and hence is ideal (*sarvaṁ buddhimayaṁ jagat*). No external world exists apart from our consciousness. It is said—"Because consciousness is the essence (of the external object) and that (object essence of which is consciousness) acts as the condition (to consciousness)... The Internal consciousness appears as (manifold external) object (artha) and also arises from that (objective aspect of its own)."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the

<sup>1</sup> Dinnāga of Dharmapāla : *Ālambana Parikṣā and Vṛtti*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 49.

Yogācāras and the Vijñānavādins make the existence of the external world absolutely dependent upon the knowing mind or Vijñāna — the consciousness. Nothing could exist in the absence of consciousness. The external world is not dependent upon the knowing consciousness but it is also constituted of the latter. It is further said — “(Though the external object) is only a part (of the internal consciousness) it is a condition (pratyaya) (to consciousness) because it is invariably associated with the consciousness.”<sup>1</sup> The external things do not exist as real objects; they have only an illusory existence. The same states of consciousness play the double role of being subject as well as the objects of knowledge. It is further said by Dinnāga — “But as different images (in consciousness) are (experienced), we describe them (as if they are) distinct (from consciousness). We assume that consciousness is possessed of distinctions (in itself) for the reason that there exists the divergence between the perceptible part and the image-part (of consciousness).”<sup>2</sup>

The Yogācāras do not admit the dependance of consciousness on external objects. They also hold that consciousness is Self-subsistent. Their view is, therefore, known as nirālambanavāda, which means non-belief in the substratum. They deny the existence of the material things and the material substratum holding them together. They believe in a

<sup>1</sup> Dinnāga of Dharmapāla : *Ālambana Parikṣā and Vṛtti*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 85.

peculiar thing, known as the Ālaya Vijñāna (आलयविज्ञान) which Th. Stcherbatsky translates as 'store-consciousness'. This ālaya-vijñāna or store-consciousness acts as a substratum to numerous ideas and imaginary entities. The ālaya-vijñāna acts as the substratum of all changing, evanescent ideas. It serves as the permanent background of the endless variety of feelings and ideas, common to all minds. It exists as a stable ground for all the fleeting and momentary states of consciousness. It is general and common to all the infinite separate states of consciousness. It contains in itself the whole world which is constituted of ideas. Particular phenomena are manifestations of the ālaya-vijñāna, according to the special particular conditions in which they appear. Asvaghōṣa, Āryasaṅga and Dinnāga agree in holding the peculiar idea of 'ālaya-vijñāna' (आलयविज्ञान). Th. Stcherbatsky describes it in the following way "The ālaya-vijñāna is here a new element, a store house, a real granary, where the seeds (bīja) of all future ideas and the traces of all past deeds are stored up."<sup>1</sup> It stretches in the past, present and future. It is not only a stable and unchanging ground of the various ideas, but is equally active in so far as it manifests itself by means of the ideas and feelings which are its real modifications. All modes of consciousness are ultimately reducible to this ālaya-consciousness, and therefore, it can be held to be analogous to the Primary matter of the Sāṃkhyas. It is not a dead and blank Absolute which is devoid of change and

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 32.

activity. The ālaya seems to be like a continually changing stream of consciousness, and hence, it can be contrasted with the Ātman which is supposed to be an immutable seat of the states of consciousness. It seems to be a living entity, which grows and develops by means of the various states of consciousness which arise from and disappear in it. Ālaya-consciousness, the general store-consciousness itself appears in particular forms as it particularises itself when it appears as a finite mode of consciousness. It receives impressions of Karmas of the past and develops their corresponding effects in the subsequent periods in itself. It is therefore always active. Suzuki writes about the Ālaya that "The Ālaya, as was explained, is a sort of universal soul from which individual empirical souls are considered to have evolved."<sup>1</sup>

This idea of ālaya-vijñāna is peculiar with the Yogācāra school. The Buddhists are, in-fact, believers in the philosophy of universal impermanence, but even then they developed the idea of the ālaya-vijñāna which is a permanent store-consciousness, a house of all states of consciousness and it serves as a living substratum and a fundamental ground to the particular states of consciousness. The traditional idea of the spiritual Self also is not far from such an idea of ālaya-vijñāna. The Self also is supposed to be a seat and substratum of consciousness and that it acts as an active principle of knowledge. Stcherbatsky therefore remarks on it in the following way.

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<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 165.

He writes — “This represents a disguised return from the theory of a stream of thought to the doctrine of a substantial soul. In the stream of thought every preceding moment of consciousness is the cause of the next following one. This relation, called samanantara — pratyaya is now replaced by the relation of the store-consciousness (ālaya) to its modifications (paripāma).”<sup>1</sup> Thus, in the vehemance of denying the existence of individual souls the Vijñānavādins went to the other extreme, and established the existence of a spiritual entity which is very much akin to the idea of universal Self. By the logic of thought the Yogācāras were compelled to project the existence of a fictitious entity i.e. the ālaya-vijñāna as the ideal substratum of all individual ideas just as Berkeley ascribed all ideas to the mind of God. Yogācāra system resembles much the subjectivism of Berkeley. In spite of its positive nature Stcherbatsky calls it nairātmya or soullessness. He remarks in the following words — “Asvaghōṣa conceived soullessness as a kind of general consciousness — (ālaya-vijñāna) of whom the separate elements were so many aspects, thus giving to the primitive teaching an idealistic interpretation.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Mādhyamika (मध्यमिक) School* — The most important personality whose name is associated with the Mādhyamika school is Nāgārjuna. The

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, p. 826.

Mādhyamikas are known as the 'nihilists', since they believe that everything is void. They are known as the Sūnyavādins (शून्यवादी) or the Sarvavaināś'ikas. The Mādhyamika school is a branch of the Mahāyāna creed of Buddhism. The Mādhyamika philosophy is one of absolute relativism. The Mādhyamika school does not believe in the existence of a thing independently of others. It holds that everything is non-existent or illusory simply for the reason that the being of everything is not contained in itself. It holds that only those things are real and existent whose being issues from themselves. The real things, according to them, must be self-subsistent. The Mādhyamikas hold that a thing is what it is because of its relations to other things. The relations of itself to other things and of other things to it constitute its existence. Th. Stcherbatsky says about it — "Real was what possessed a reality of its own (svabhāva), what was not produced by causes (akṛtaka i.e. asaṃskṛta), which was not dependent upon anything else (paratra nirapekṣa)."<sup>1</sup> Thus, according to the Mādhyamikas, whatever is dependent on anything other than itself, is not real. All elements, therefore, are unreal because they are not self-created and self-subsistent, or because all the elements of the world are interdependent. They regarded all the things void, which means void of existence, or Sūnya (शून्य), because everything is svabhāvasūnya (स्वभावशून्य). The Mādhyamika theory

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 40.

of the phenomenal nature of the world follows from the doctrine of dependent origination (प्रतीत्य समुत्पादवाद). It is called a theory of 'dependent origination' which means, that a thing comes into existence when certain other relations are present. Because a thing cannot exist by itself and in itself, its existence becomes conditioned. It does not exist as an independent and unconditioned thing. According to the Mādhyamikas, a thing exists through its vast congeries of relations with other things. Causality is reduced by them to the co-existence and co-ordination of the innumerable momentary existences. In fact, the Mādhyamikas did not admit any such thing as causality. Cause and effect are relative terms and one depends upon the other for its existence. Neither can exist apart from the other. Neither cause nor effect exists by itself.

According to the Mahāyānist and especially the Mādhyamikas, all parts or elements are unreal (sūnya शून्य), and only the whole or the complexes are real. The definition of Reality (tattva) in Mahāyānism is the following one. "Uncognisable from without, quiescent, undifferentiated in words, unrealisable in concepts, non-plural—this is the essence of reality."<sup>1</sup> For them no dependent existence is a real existence just as borrowed money never makes one's real wealth. Nothing is therefore, intelligible by itself. Everything lives in and through other things, or in and through the infinite relations of things

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 41.



among themselves. Stcherbatsky explains it in the following way—"Since we use the term "relative" to describe the fact that a thing can be identified only by mentioning its relations to something else, and becomes meaningless without these relations, implying at the same time that the thing in question is unreal, we safely, for want of better solution can translate the word *sūnyatā* by relativity or contingency. This is in any case better than to translate it by "void" which signification the term has in common life, but not as a technical term in philosophy. That the term *sūnya* is, in *Mahāyāna*, a synonym of dependent existence (*pratitya samutpāda*) and means not something void, but something "devoid" of independent reality (*svabhāvasūnya*) with the implication that nothing short of the whole possesses independent reality, and with the further implication that the whole forbids every formulation by concept or speech (निष्प्रपञ्च), since they can only bifurcate (*vikalpa*) reality and never directly seize it."<sup>1</sup> Suzuki also explains the idea of Buddhistic negation or void in the following manner—"Therefore, emptiness according to the Buddhists, signifies negatively, the absence of particularity, the non-existence of individual as such, and positively, the ever changing state of the phenomenal world, a constant flux of becoming, an eternal series of causes and effects. *Sūnyatā* means conditionality or transitoriness of all phenomenal existences; synonym

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, pp. 42-43.

for anitya or pratītya.”<sup>1</sup> This doctrine of void is also known as one of Emptiness.

The Mādhyamikas do not recognise the Self as an independent entity existing by itself, because they believe that nothing can exist by itself. The Mādhyamikas hold that no substance could exist apart from its qualities; so also there is no Self as an independent entity apart from the states of consciousness. There is no soul prior to acting, feeling and thinking. S. Radhakrishnan quotes the following passage from Nāgārjuna — Nāgārjuna says in Chapter VI—“But how can we know that it existed prior to acts. If soul could exist prior and therefore without the act of seeing, cannot seeing take place independent of soul? The soul does not exist in the elements from which the acts of seeing, hearing and feeling proceed.”<sup>2</sup> He thus proves that the Self is an unnecessary assumption for explaining the psychical phenomena; for if the soul exists prior to the acts of seeing, etc. it should be known before such acts take place, but that is against our experience; hence, the Self cannot exist before the acts begin. Nor can it become existent posterior to such acts; because if these acts can take place independently of the Self, there is no necessity of the Self which is supposed to be agent of these acts. In fact, the Self is revealed and becomes existent in these various psychical acts. The appearance of the Self and its acts are simultaneous according to the Mādhyamikas. The

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 652.

## Buddhism

155

very fact of their being simultaneous in their occurrence implies that they are independent of each other. But the Self is not any such independent entity to exist separately from the various states of consciousness; on the contrary, the very totality of the successive states of consciousness itself is understood as the Self by the Mādhyamikas. As S. Radhakrishnan says—“The uninterrupted series of momentary mental states is all we mean by Self. We know nothing about the nature of consciousness as such. It is a stream, an evolving field of presentations unrolling before us.”<sup>1</sup> In fact, there is nothing like a Self over and above and except the totality of the discrete states of consciousness. Nevertheless, we assert the existence of such an independent thing for practical purposes. The states of consciousness and the idea of Self are reciprocally conditioned and hence neither of them becomes intelligible in the absence of the other. As they are mutually dependent one cannot be precisely understood without the other. As both are reciprocally conditioned neither exists and either is empty in itself. Thus, all things being related to each other have only a relative, and therefore, conditioned existence which is true only so far, and never absolute. As the Mādhyamika school denies independent existence and character to everything so does it, even to the Self. The Self, therefore, according to the Mādhyamika philosophy, has only a tentative and practical existence. The Self, thus exists according to it, only conventionally and not

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 653.

as an independent ontological reality. It is simply a projection by the human mind, of a fictitious entity which is required for the explanation of psychological workings. The Mādhyamikas being nihilists did not admit the existence of the Self as a real entity. They reduced it to a fiction and regarded it to be true only conventionally, and for practical purposes. They denied the Self as a metaphysical and ontological reality. Suzuki makes the same idea still more clear in his following passage—“As there is no transcendent agent in our soul-life, so there is no real, eternal existence of individuals as individuals, but a system of different attributes, which, when the force of Karma is exhausted, cease to subsist. Individual existences cannot be real by their inherent nature, but they are illusory, and will never remain permanent as such, for they are constantly becoming, and have no selfhood though they may appear to our particularising senses on account of our subjective ignorance. They are in reality *sūnya* and *anātman*, they are empty and void of *ātman*.”<sup>1</sup> Thus Suzuki continues in the same vein and further writes—“In as much as all beings are transient and empty in their inherent being, they cannot logically be said to be in possession of Self—essence which defies the law of causation. All things are mutually conditioning and limiting and apart from their relativity they are non-existent and cannot be known by us. Therefore, says Nāgārjuna “If substance be different from attribute, it is then beyond all

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 170.

comprehension.”<sup>1</sup> “That cannot exist without this, nor can this exist without that. Whatever is subject to conditionality, is by its very nature tranquil and empty.”<sup>2</sup> This nothing is indescribable. It is not totally a negative entity. As Nāgārjuna describes it, It cannot be called void or not-void, or both or neither, but in order to indicate it, it is called the void.

### Mokṣa (Nirvāṇa निर्वाण)

Buddhism is known as essentially a religion of sorrow. Buddha did not profess to be an expert metaphysician, and he did not claim to devise satisfactory solutions of the most formidable metaphysical problems. Buddha had to philosophise in so far as he was concerned with the finding of the ways of eradication of pain and sorrow in human life. He did not seek knowledge and truth for their own sake but knowledge was a means of attaining complete freedom from pain and sorrow, according to him. The most important thing that occupied his mind for ever was the presence of evil and sorrow in life, and he most seriously exerted himself to discover the ways leading to the final cessation of sorrow. The ultimate end that he always sought, was Nirvāṇa, which means the total abrogation of sorrow and extinction of all consciousness. S. Radhakrishnan therefore names his philosophy as ‘The Ethical Idealism of Buddhism’. All the epistemological,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 171. : लक्ष्यालक्षणमन्यच्चेत्स्यालक्ष्यमलक्षणम् ।

<sup>2</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, p. 173.

प्रतीत्य यद्यभवति तत्तच्छान्तं स्वभावतः ।

ontological and metaphysical inquiries of Buddhism were subservient to the primary end of them, which was attainment of perfection of life in the form of Nirvāṇa. Buddha's mission of life was not to reveal truth but to help men to free themselves from the all-pervading sorrow and pain of life. His preaching appears, therefore, to possess more moral fervour than epistemological and logical approach to problems of life. He says—"The best refuge is to understand pain, the origin of pain, the destruction of pain and the eightfold holy way that leads to the quieting of pain."<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary to understand properly the nature of sorrow. Buddhism believes in the universal impermanence of things. It is possible to infer the evanescence of things as the cause of sorrow. But Paul Dahlke makes them synonymous. He writes—"The sorrow of the Buddha is nothing else but the perception of the transiency of all that has arisen. Life and transiency become synonymous ideas; whether the life an earthly or a heavenly one makes no difference whatever; life and transiency are one and the same."<sup>2</sup> Thus sorrow is another word for transiency of life. Every human experience is only a passing phase of human life and possesses only a limited duration. The duration of the lives of things may change, but nothing remains for ever. One's mind attaches itself to pleasurable things and avoids all unpleasant and painful objects and experiences.

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller (Tr.) : *Dhammapada*, 191, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, pp. 68-69.

If one's experience is pleasant one naturally expects it to continue to exist and yield to him continuous pleasure. But every experience turns to be momentary, and therefore, one gets only bits of momentary pleasures. As every experience terminates after a very short duration, one loses the happiness with the consequent result of disappointment which fills the mind with sorrow. Thus, life becomes a continuous series of moments of disappointment and sorrow.

The Buddhist concept of Nirvāṇa (निर्वाण) is similar to that of Mokṣa in the other systems. The essential nature of Nibbāṇa consists in one's becoming completely free from every kind of desire. Nibbāṇa or Nirvāṇa is a state of total desirelessness. Paul Dahlke says — "Nibbāṇa means nothing but a condition of perfect freedom from desire. That heart has reached the final goal of all which, upon the ground of perception of the true nature of things, through the knowledge of Not-I, has so completely detached itself from everything that it no longer has any desires. Where there is no desire in the heart, there is no attachment either. Where there is no attachment, there is also no parting, no sorrow. Where there is no sorrow, there is also no transiency, no change. And thus with Nibbāṇa the true condition of eternal rest and changeless, birthless safety is eternally attained."<sup>1</sup> Nirvāṇa, thus, means eternal freedom from all kinds of attachments which are generated by desires. Desires are the root-cause of all sorrow. But Buddhism also maintains that sorrow

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<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 85.

is caused by ignorance. Ignorance is the root cause of all desires, infatuations and all the suffering of the world. It is said in the Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts—“The idea of ignorance is what gives the root to the huge poison tree of mundane existence with its trunk of pain.”<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky also traces ignorance (nescience, illusion) to be the fundamental root cause of all suffering. It is a kind of misconception of the world to which we fondly cling but it necessarily leads to a total disappointment and frustration.<sup>2</sup>

Schayer also agrees with this view and regards that the adequate knowledge of the world can bring about the cessation of pain and suffering. He admits the fact that nearly in all Indian Philosophical systems knowledge has been regarded as the ultimate means of the attainment of salvation. He writes—“The centre-point of Indian salvation theories was “knowledge”, by which man acquires the power to annihilate suffering and to lead empiric reality back to its origin.”<sup>3</sup> Right knowledge of the causes of suffering leads to the annihilation of sufferings. Schayer further writes—“... the underlying idea is that knowledge is an efficacious power, so that it suffices *to know* an object to be able to control and to possess it.”<sup>4</sup> He further states—“Liberation thus

<sup>1</sup> Cowell E. B. (Tr.) : *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLIX-36, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Schayer Stanislav : *Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 2.



**Buddhism****161**

depends on our reversal of the sequence of emanation by our knowledge of it; or, to put it more plainly, on reducing the multiplicity of isolated differentiations literally back to the primal entity of the one."<sup>1</sup> Buddhism believes like the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya that the right knowledge of the ultimate reality can deliver an individual from his worldly shackles. All bondages are psychological in nature. A thing has value only in reference to the mind that desires it and comes to attach itself to it. The bondage is never a corporeal and material thing. It is essentially psychical and spiritual. If a mind can dissociate itself from the mental attachments to the worldly things, if the mind becomes proof against the influences of worldly things, if the mind can rise above such temptations and does not allow itself to be influenced by the external things, naturally the mind can release itself from the painful shackles. If a mind becomes immune to the external influences, it remains for ever in a peaceful state. It is also a fact of human experience that a man generally pursues only those things which he thinks to be right and harmless. Man usually pursues the right and avoids the wrong, irrational and evil. This is possible only when one acquires right knowledge of things. As man's bondage is a creation of his mind and is based on knowledge, the Buddhists emphatically contend that liberation can be attained by proper knowledge which brings to an end ignorance and illusion.

<sup>1</sup> Schayer Stanislaw : *Mahayana Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 5.

Ignorance consists in the absence of right knowledge of things. It is neither void nor absence of knowledge but it consists in wrong knowledge or distorted knowledge. It consists in understanding things not as they are but in understanding them otherwise than what they really are. D. T. Suzuki describes the ignorant persons as "Ignorant are they who do not recognise the evanescence of worldly things and who tenaciously cleave to them as final realities .... in a word, ignorant are those who do not understand that there is no such thing as an ego-soul, and that all individual existences are unified in the system of Dharmakāya. Buddhism, therefore, most emphatically maintains that to attain the bliss of Nirvāṇa we must radically dispel this illusion, this ignorance, this root of all evil and suffering in this life."<sup>1</sup> Ignorance or Avidyā according to Buddhism, is a positive entity. It is the inherent tendency of the mind, the subconscious impulses and drives (vāsanās), which make the mind cling to false ideas and notions. Sāntarakṣita holds that the passions and ignorance which form the veils of truth vanish totally as soon as the truth of non-entity is realised. It is said in *Mettagūmanava pukkha* that the creation of adjuncts or upādhis is a result of ignorance. The ignorant persons are entangled in the meshes of numerous external adjuncts and find it then impossible to break through them. The *Mettagūmanava pukkha* says—"He, who being ignorant creates upādhi, that fool again undergoes pain;

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, p. 36.

therefore, let not the wise man create upādhi, considering (that this is) the birth and origin of pain."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, ignorance acts as the primary cause of all Kles'as and their consequent sorrow. The Buddhists give a long causal series of sorrow. Suzuki gives the full causal chain as follows—The doctrine of nescience or ignorance is technically expressed in the following formula, which is, commonly called the Twelve Nidānas or Pratyayasamutpada, that is to say chain of Dependence. (1) There is Ignorance (avidyā अविद्या) in the beginning (2) from ignorance action comes forth (3) from action comes forth consciousness (vijñāna विज्ञान) (4) from consciousness name and form (5) from Name-and-Form the six organs (ṣaḍāyatana षडायतन) (6) from the six organs Touch (spars'a स्पर्श) (7) from touch-sensation (vedanā वेदना) (8) from sensation-desire (tṛṣṇā तृष्णा) (9) from the desire clinging, (10) from clinging-Being (bhava भव) (11) from Being Birth (jati जति) (12) from birth pain-duḥkha (दुःख). We find the same causal chain in the Dīgha Nikāya which states that from avidyā (nescience) arise saṃskāra (acts), from acts vijñāna (consciousness), from consciousness (Name-and-Form) Nāmarūpa, from Name-and-Form ṣaḍāyatana (the six organs), from the six organs spars'a (touch), from touch (sensation) vedanā, from sensation tṛṣṇā (desire), from desire (upādāna) clinging, from clinging Bhava (Being), from Being jāti—Birth and from Birth jarāmaraṇa (old age and death)

<sup>1</sup> Faüsbäll (Tr.) : *Sutta Nipāta (The Sacred Books of the East)*, 194. p. 1050.

which causes grief and sorrow.<sup>1</sup> It is a psychological causal chain in which the preceding experience causes the succeeding one.

Nirvāṇa in Pāli means 'blowing off' or 'to existinguish'. Nirvāṇa consists in the complete cessation of sorrow, and it would not become possible unless the very causes of sorrow are uprooted. Buddhism advocates the eradication of all passions and lust which are supposed to be caused by ignorance. Desires, not being always uniformly satisfied, bring in their train a sense of frustration, disappointment, deprivation and suffering. Therefore, naturally, it becomes necessary to uproot them. It is said in the Dhammapada "As a tree, even though it has been cut down, is firm so long as its root is safe, and grows again, thus, unless the feeders of thirst are destroyed, this pain (of life) will return again and again."<sup>2</sup> It is not sufficient, according to Buddha, to overcome and suppress some particular desires here and there; but he advocated the complete eradication of lust itself which acts as the source of all desires. It is said—"Cut down the whole forest (of lust), not a tree only; Danger comes out of the forest (of lust), when its undergrowth, then, Bhikshus, you will be rid of the forest and free."<sup>3</sup> This becomes possible only by undertaking austere moral penance. The seekers of Nirvāṇa are advised not to indulge in any kind of passion and desire but to weed out all the passions by means of enlightenment and

<sup>1</sup> Dīgha Nikāya, Part II : *Mahānidāna Sutta*, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller (Tr.) : *Dhammapada*, 338, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 283, p.68.

proper understanding. The Nirvāṇa is described to be a state of quiescence and eternal unshakable peace. It consists in turning back upon all worldly pleasures and worldly attachments. It consists in not being entangled in the meshes of desires which are produced by ignorance. It is said in the Dhammapada, "Those who are slaves to passions, run down with the stream (of desires), as a spider runs down the web which he made himself; when they have cut this, at last, wise people have the world, free from cares, leaving off all affection behind."<sup>1</sup> Nirvāṇa is not only cessation of desires in the present life but it consists also in the permanent release from the wheel of births and deaths, by means of exhausting the already accumulated Kamma and preventing its new generation by means of stopping all mental experiences. Nirvāṇa thus becomes a state of absolute extinction of all consciousness and experience. Sōgen describes it appropriately in the following words— "In its negative aspect, Nirvāṇa is the extinction of the threefold fires of lust, malice and folly; that is to say, it conduces to the utter annihilation of all thoughts of selfishness, to the complete removal of suffering, and to absolute liberation from the round of birth and death."<sup>2</sup>

Buddhism, like other philosophical systems, emphasizes the need of attaining rigid control over the human passions and for that it also advocates

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller (Tr.) : *Dhammapada*, 347, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Sōgen Yamakami : *Systems of Buddhistic Thought*, p. 33 (Introd.).

austere physical and moral practices in the form of Yoga; nevertheless it gives supreme importance to knowledge which is synonymous with enlightenment. Sir Monier Williams calls it 'intellectual enlightenment'. He writes—"It is certainly true that the main idea implied by Buddhism is intellectual enlightenment. Buddhism, before all things, means enlightenment of mind, resulting from intense self-concentration and introspection, from intense abstract meditation, confined with the exercise of a man's own reasoning faculties and intuitions."<sup>1</sup> The Buddhists regard knowledge as the real means of attaining Nirvāṇa.

Th. Stcherbatsky describes knowledge as a means of overcoming illusion. He writes—"Illusion is neutralised by philosophic insight, but the decisive and final step which stops empirical life for ever and transfers the individual into the Absolute is achieved by Yoga, i.e. by that mystical power which is produced by absorption in intense concentrated meditation."<sup>2</sup> The Buddhists not only recognised the efficacy of philosophic knowledge but also adopted the Yogic practices as supplementary methods for 'reaching the final state of Nirvāṇa, They recognised the necessity of physical postures, abstinence, tolerance, equanimous attitude, self-control, concentration and meditation as powerful means of attaining Nirvāṇa. The Buddhists were very rigid moralists.

<sup>1</sup> Williams-Monier Monier : *Buddhism*, p. 544.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhism Nirvāṇa*, p. 56.

**Buddhism****; 167**

They were the men of strict discipline and renunciation. They were masters of themselves. They exercised severe control over their passions and senses. They possessed miraculous powers of governing their sensuous nature. They had the utmost moral fervour and lived a life of complete renunciation and tranquillity.

The causal chain of twelve *nidānas* of the Buddhists contains profound truth in it. A psychological analysis of human experiences holds testimony to the Buddhist causal chain. If we start in the reverse direction and try to reach ignorance gradually from *Duḥkha*, it will be clear that the Buddhists were not mistaken and unjustified in tracing the series of Proximate causes of each of the members of the series. The last product of the series is *duḥkha* or pain which is caused by *Birth*. The birth means a bodily and mental life on the earth. It is a fact of everybody's experience that the bodily survival is not a very easy and comfortable thing. The functioning of the body is dependent upon numerous external things and environmental factors. A body functions in a normally sound way, if it derives all the necessary nourishment from nature and society, and when the environmental conditions also are favourable. When an organism is ill-adjusted to the environment it has to meet with abnormal physical disabilities, invalidity, diseases and all kinds of sufferings and pains. Man's satisfaction, pleasure and mental stability depend upon other men's reactions to him. His mind is frequently disturbed and tortured

by the social criticism and social disapproval of his acts. No man ever receives approval and appreciation from all men and in all times. He has to face criticism and rivalry from his fellow beings, and thus, never can he enjoy unbroken peace of mind and tranquillity of heart. The body also passes through varying physical states like age, and death, and because of the transitoriness of all kinds of pleasant experiences, he always experiences a sense of deprivation and suffering in different ways. Whatever satisfaction and happiness he gains is less than the perfect, and hence, he necessarily feels a sense of deprivation, imperfection, shortcomings and helplessness. The phenomenon of birth itself is the cause of sufferings. The Buddhists are right in saying that from the six organs results contact or *sparsa* with the external world, and from the contact arises sensations, *Vedanā*, which arouse corresponding desires or *trispā* in the human mind. When desires are repeatedly experienced and satisfied in certain ways, naturally the human mind comes to attach itself to the things in uniform ways. Attachment to objects leads to bondage and to suffering. The Buddhists believe in the doctrine of Karma and therefore, they explain a present event as an effect of the preceding event. The occurrence of a birth is meant for the fulfilment of the results of his previous acts which are present in the form of subtle *samskāras*. Buddhism holds, therefore, that complete annihilation of *samskāras* leads to the eternal arrest of the emergence of consciousness which constitutes the life of



an individual. The Buddhists therefore believe that Nirvāṇa or liberation can be attained by completely destroying the accumulated saṃskāras and by arresting forever the process of the formation and accumulation of the saṃskāras by enlightenment and Yogic practices. The origin of the saṃskāras is, according to the Buddhists, Ignorance or Avidyā. All acts that leave their traces and impressions behind them in the form of saṃskāras arise out of ignorance. If an individual became free from ignorance he would not act or his acts would not produce saṃskāras which would not seek consciousness for their realization, and hence, there would remain no necessity of Name and Form, which in their turn would not produce the six organs or ṣaḍāyatanas which would not have any contact with the external things, and thus desires or cravings would not be produced; with the disappearance of desires, attachment to things would vanish, and hence, there will be no birth and its accompanying sorrows and pains also would disappear for ever. Thus, the ignorance or false-knowledge or the illusion seem to be the first cause or the starting point of the series of the twelve nidānas. The Buddhists advocated the complete cessation of desires and annihilation of ignorance from their actual experience, and stated with certainty that it would lead to cessation of consciousness and life, which is equivalent of extinction or Nirvāṇa.

Buddhism does not admit any persisting entity known as the 'Self', which it reduces to a

series of momentary states of physical and psychical modes of consciousness. Even then, it seems that for practical purposes, it believes in the existence of Self as the doer of actions and the enjoyer of their fruits. It holds the Self responsible for certain actions, and thus, one is compelled to experience their corresponding fruits. It is clearly stated in the Dhammapada by Buddha—

“By Self alone is evil done,  
 By Self is one disgraced;  
 By Self is evil left undone  
 By Self alone is he purified  
 Purity and impurity belong to the Self  
 No one can purify another.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Buddhists hold firmly that one's Self is responsible for the performance of good and bad actions, and that he has to necessarily reap the fruits of his own deeds. According to it, one cannot escape the fruits, either agreeable or bitter, of his actions. It is strange and absurd that the non-believers in Self should speak in terms of the doctrine of Karma, for the doctrine of Karma necessarily implies the presupposition of a persistent living Self, passing from one birth to another to experience the results of actions performed in the preceding births. Although Buddhism believes that everything is only evanescent and ceases to exist during the same moment in which it is born, they also believed in the absolute power of Karma energy which determines the form

<sup>1</sup> Edmunds A. J. : *Dhammapada*, V. 165. (Tr.)

of subsequent births of an individual from the preceding ones based upon the quality of actions. In fact, there is nothing which is permanent; so nothing passes from one birth to another. As Poussin describes it—"There is no migration (*samkrama samskranti*), no passage of an individual from this life to another. When a man dies, the physical organism, which is the condition *sine qua non* of psychical life, dissolves, and the psychical life therefore, comes to an end."<sup>1</sup> It means that nothing survives the dissolution of the physical organism at the time of death and passes on to the subsequent life—neither consciousness nor Self. If it is a fact, how can the subsequent lives be influenced by the preceding ones? How can the results of the acts performed in the previous life determine the state of the life to follow? What is that which persists and influences the life to follow if nothing remains for more than one moment? Unless something survives the bodily destruction of an individual, it is not possible to connect one birth to another birth that follows. What is then the linking principle? What connects the two consecutive lives? What is that which enjoys the rewards and suffers the punishment for the acts in the previous birth?<sup>2</sup> If the actions and their fruits are not real and do not possess any value, then all morality and struggle for the purification of life becomes meaningless. The Buddhists prescribed an elaborate moral code to be

<sup>1</sup> Poussin L. D. V. : *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 27.

necessarily followed by the seekers of Nirvāṇa. All things being compounds dissolve into their constituent parts, and therefore, nothing migrates from one life to the other except the Kamma.

The Karma is known as Kamma in Pāli. The five Skandhas are held together and they constitute life as long as the Kamma-energy operates. With the exhaustion of Kamma the five Skandhas fall away from each other. It is necessary to understand properly the nature of this Kamma. Dahlke describes it very clearly in the following passage—"It is that potency in virtue of which action gives rise to reaction. It is that which out of the action of this life creates as due reaction the life that follows. The will of this life, the present life impulse, is like a latent energy, which, as Kamma, creates the bridge that leads to the next existence, and at the same time creates this next existence itself. The will to live, the lust of living, is the force which keeps going the endless play of action and reaction, the arising of one life out of another. Just to the extent and for the time that life is the equivalent of will, so to that degree, and during that time exactly, does Kamma arise. To the extent that this life is the equivalent of will, to that extent is concealed in the life that succeeds it. As that which unites action and reaction on one hand belongs to action, and upon the other to reaction, so, as being that which binds this life to the next, Kamma belongs to the one at to the other."<sup>1</sup> He further makes it

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<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 25.

clear by stating " 'There is Kamma', simply means that with this life is already given the next and the next again, and so on through the endless series of existences. 'Life' is synonymous with the beginninglessness and endlessness of life, and Kamma is merely the concise formula for the fact that this unfathomable endlessness, this play of life, is in progress."<sup>1</sup> It is negatively stated by Dahlke that there is no 'soul' that transmigrates from one birth to another birth with its stock of Karma accumulated in one's previous birth. He writes—"No 'soul' unites one existence to another; no consciousness passes from one to the other; for consciousness is individual, arising fresh with each Bhava, with each Bhava again passing away."<sup>2</sup> In the absence of the persistent self Buddhism cannot consistently hold the doctrine of transmigration of the self. It tried to explain one's experiences with the idea of a round of rebirths. C. H. S. Ward says—"It follows that the Buddha, denying the existence of the soul, has no doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, as such as that which is held by Hindus. Buddhists however, substitute for transmigration the doctrine of 'a round of births.'<sup>3</sup>

But Buddha made a provision of the Kamma to operate as a substitute of the Self. Kamina thus forms the link between two lives. Karma, the potency to determine the form and mode of the life to

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*. p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Ward C. H. S. : *Buddhism*. Vol. I, p. 82.

follow, acts as a self that transmigrates. Ward explains this process in clear terms in the following passage—"The Buddha taught clearly and persistently that, though there is no living entity in man, which will survive the death of the body, Karma (the good and evil fruits of his actions) survives. We may say, therefore, that in the Buddha's thought Karma took the place of the soul in man and made Rebirth possible."<sup>1</sup> The only persistent and abiding thing that remains behind, after the complete dissolution of the body into its constituent elements, is the abstract Karma-energy, which finally determines its subsequent mode of life.<sup>2</sup> It is widely known that Buddhism holds that amidst the flux of Reality what remains enduring and persistent from time to time in certain sets of conditions is the Kamma. Some Buddhists, as it is found in the Pitakas, could not resist the temptation to believe that 'consciousness' (vijñāna) is the thing that passes from one birth to another. Sir Monier Williams explains the actual process of the passing of Kamma from one body to the other. He writes—"Theoretically it (the soul) perishes with the other Skandhas, but practically is continued, since exact counterpart is reproduced in a new body.... For although when a man dies, all the five constituents of existence are dissolved, yet by the force resulting from his actions (Karma), combined with Upādāna, 'clinging to existence' (one form of the fetters) a new set of five,

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<sup>1</sup> Ward C. H. S. : *Buddhism*. Vol. I, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 86.

**Buddhism****173**

of which consciousness is still the dominant faculty, starts into being. The process of the new creation is so instantaneous that it is equivalent to the continuance of the same. . . personality, pervaded by the same consciousness; though each personality is only really connected with the previous by the force of acts done and character formed in each force operating through Upādāna. In short, speaking of transmigration of souls in Buddhism gives a wrong idea. Metempsychosis with Buddhists resolves itself into continuous metamorphosis or Palingenesis.—It is the act-force (Karma), combined with Upādāna, 'clinging to existence' (abhinivesa—अभिनिवेश) in the Yoga II, 9), which is the connecting link between each man's past, present and future bodies."<sup>1</sup> In the process of rebirth there is no such thing which actually passes from one life to the other. There is no identical and persistent consciousness that binds the two successive lives. Silācāra Bhikkhu says — "In the selfsame way, the now-being, which is the present manifestation of the stream of Karma-energy, is not the same as, has no identity with, the previous one in its line; the aggregations that make up its composition being different from, having no identity with those that made up the being of its predecessor. And yet it is not an entirely different being, since it is the same stream of Kamma-energy—though modified perchance, by having shown itself in that last manifestation—which now is making its presence known in the sense-perceptible

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<sup>1</sup> Williams-Monier Monier : *Buddhism*, pp. 109, 110.

world as the new being.... Thus we see, according to Buddhism, there is nothing that passes from one life to another for there is nothing to pass. The cessation of the Khandhas (Groups) in one life gives birth to some other Khandhas in another."<sup>1</sup> Sīlācāra Bhikkhu also does not admit the endurance of any other thing than the Karma — energy — the potency that moulds and casts the future life of the individual. The Kamma-energy is more or less; but it manifests itself through varying media known as the upādhis and the peculiarities of the upādhis, or the adjuncts make the individual peculiar and unique. The Kamma operates simply as the force behind. Monier-Williams further says — "In its subtle and irresistible operation it may be compared to stored-up chemical or electric energy. It is a force which continually creates and recreates the whole man, and perpetuates his personal identity through separate forms, whether it compels him to ascend or descend in the scale of being."<sup>2</sup>

Consciousness does not pass from one life to another. Consciousness cannot live apart from the body which is an aggregate of the five Skandhas. Buddhaghōṣa clears this point in *Viśuddhimaggā* in the following manner : "For at the hour of death the last conscious act is as a man who, to cross a ditch, swings himself over by a rope hung upon a tree above him. Yet he does not really alight, for

<sup>1</sup> Sīlācāra Bhikkhu : *The Buddhist Chronicle*, March 12, 1922, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Williams-Monier Monier : *Buddhism*. p. 110.



while the last conscious act dies away (and this is called "passing away") another conscious act arises in a new life, and this is called "rebirth" or conception. But it is to be understood that the latter conscious act did not come into the present life from the previous life. We must also understand that it is only to causes contained in the old existence that its present appearance is due."<sup>1</sup>

It is desirable to see the exact process of the transference of the Kamma from one existence to another. There is no Self which passes from one birth to another nor any consciousness. What then is that which binds one life to the other? Paul Dahlke explains the idea in the clearest way. He says—"To be sure, there is no I-doer, but there is a deed. For its effectuation no true I is necessary; it clings to the apparent I, which ever and again rebuilds itself anew out of the will to live. Every deed incontestably brings its consequences along with it, as the body casts a shadow, as the stone thrown into the water gives rise to its ripples."<sup>2</sup> He further makes the idea more elaborate—"...reward follows good deeds: punishment evil deeds. The existence accordingly will correspond in its make up to the deeds of this existence. Even if there is no I present, yet the tiniest particle of my action is not lost."<sup>3</sup> But it is difficult to conceive that if there is no I as the doer, how can its consequence fall upon me

<sup>1</sup> Davids Rhys : *Buddhism*, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

consistently. Why should I not experience the fruits of other's actions? What exactly is the force which connects the doer of action to the experience of its results? Paul Dahlke does not make a distinction between the two. He identifies the doer and the deed and overcomes the absurd situation. He says—“..if there is no I present which could commit the deed, no doer whose product the deed is, then am I myself the deed. I am deed corporealised. If, however, I myself am the deed, then I myself am also the consequence of the deed; just as the reaction represents precisely the same energy as the action.... I myself am both punishment incorporate, reward incorporate. It is after this mode and manner that the deed and its consequences 'cling' to the doer.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the distinction between the doer and the deed is lost, and the individual lives by means of his deeds. The individual's deeds are the concretised forms of his will to act, which is the essence of an individual. All other constituents of a human personality being perishable there is nothing that persists even after death. The individual can be remembered and thought of as existing in and through his deeds. His deeds are bound by an ironlaw to their consequences. No one, howsoever powerful, has the power to escape the consequences of his acts. As Monier-William says—“( Buddha ) by his doctrine of Karma bound a man hand and foot to the inevitable consequences of his own evil actions with chains of adamant.” Thus, the moral law of retribution

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<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul ; *Buddhist Essays*, p. 29.

**Buddhism****179**

determines the nature of the subsequent existences from the preceding ones, and no power on earth and heaven can defy and contradict it. The Kamma can never rest or fall into oblivion unless its effects and actualises its consequences. The doctrine of Karma wields the sovereign power in the Buddhist philosophy. The continuation of life could be explained only in terms of the moral effects of deeds. The moral law connects two successive lives, according to Buddhism.<sup>1</sup>

We are now in a position to understand the real nature of liberation or Nirvāṇa after thoroughly examining the nature of ignorance, which is the root cause of all Being, sorrow and the Kamma, which entangles us in the bondage of life. Broadly speaking, Nirvāṇa, according to Buddhism, consists in the absolute cessation of consciousness and in the arrest of the accumulation of all Kamma, and thus, in extinguishing existence for ever. It means ultimately the total abrogation of all pain and sorrow and the attainment of the state of absolute peace and tranquillity. The state of Nirvāṇa is one of absolute peace and tranquillity or sometimes an experience of pure void and nothingness. Nirvāṇa means removal of ignorance by enlightenment and annihilation of the accumulated Kamma including the prevention of the accumulation of new Kamma; and thus, terminating for ever sorrow and suffering. Buddhism agrees with other systems of philosophy in so far as the 'cessation of suffering and sorrow' is concerned. Negatively speaking all

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<sup>1</sup> William-Monier : *Buddhism*, p. 548.

the systems of Indian philosophy agree in holding 'cessation of pain' (Duhkhanivṛtti) as the aim of philosophy. The positive contents of the ideas of liberation of the different systems differ. Each bases its idea of the end of life on its theory of Ātman; Buddhism, having no 'soul', contents with the annihilation of sorrow, and seeks ultimate satisfaction in the experience of absolute nothing or the void.

Dahlke describes Nirvāṇa in the following way—  
 "Nibbāṇa means nothing but a condition of perfect freedom from desire. That heart has reached the final goal of all which upon the ground of perception of the true nature of things, through the knowledge of not-I, has so completely loosed itself from everything, that it no longer has any desires. Where there is no attachment there is also no transiency, no change. And thus, with Nibbāṇa the true condition of eternal rest and changeless, birthless safety is eternally attained."<sup>1</sup> Somehow, it simply means the absence of the present becoming, and no-more-becoming. It does not mean the destruction of the changing phenomenal world and assertion of the permanent existence of the eternal Self or Brahman. It simply indicates the stoppage of all kinds of becoming. Dahlke makes it clear—"But it must be carefully noted that it stands to arising and passing away—to Becoming—not as Being, as Brahman, as God, but solely as "No-more-becoming." This system does nothing but abolish, negate. It sets up no new gods in the places of those destroyed."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 98, 99.

It is difficult to say whether Nirvāṇa is a state of being or an absolute nothing. Dahlke quotes one passage from Buddha which suggests that the state of Nibbāṇa or Parinibbāṇa is a positive existence; that it is not absolute nothing or absolute void. Buddha says in his teachings — “There is disciples,” says the Buddha, “a condition where there is neither earth nor water, neither air nor light, neither limitless space nor limitless time nor any kind of being, neither ideation nor non-ideation, neither this world, nor that world. There is neither arising nor passing away; nor dying; neither cause nor effect; neither change nor standing still.—This is Parinibbāṇa. — By no stress of thinking can it be reached, for it lies beyond all thought. By no comparison is it to be come at, because it is beyond all comparing.”<sup>1</sup> It indicates that Nirvāṇa is not nothing but is something, a state of existence.

The Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna schools differ in the views about Nirvāṇa. The Hīnayāna school holds that the aim of individual is to seek Nirvāṇa or perfection of himself alone and has to do nothing with that of others; and hence, it is looked upon as inferior as compared with the Mahāyāna school which holds that the aim of an individual's life is to seek Nirvāṇa not only for himself but for the whole humanity. According to Hīnayāna, the individual strives to attain enlightenment for himself alone and remains contented with it; but the Mahāyānist has a greater ambition and a more powerful urge to uplift the whole humanity. Schayer distinguishes the two ideals in

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 100.

the following manner—"In fact, if we now put the question : what is the difference between Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna in connection with older teaching ? The answer can only be that the duty of every true believer is not to seek his own but the general enlightenment, and that, thus, it is possible for every one, by the grace of Buddha, to become himself a Buddha ! Therefore, the new teaching is called the Mahāyān, the larger vehicle, or the greater course, while the s'rāvakas content themselves with the lesser course or the smaller vehicle, the Hīnayāna. The vehicle of the S'rāvakas is not the great vehicle, says Asanga, because its teaching is incomplete in not pointing out that the service of others must be the true goal."<sup>1</sup> The Hīnayānist did not preach the aim of serving others for their own perfection. They were taught simply the fear of saṃsāra, and therefore, the desirability of fleeing away from it. Hīnayānism did not preach a kind of optimism and the gospel of reforming the life of the society by self-sacrifice. Schayer further writes "Faint heartedness and discouragement are signs of lesser capability (hīnās'aya—हीनशय) which belongs only to the weak S'rāvakas; the true sons of the conqueror (Jīna-putrāḥ) possess a great and magnanimous-hearted character (udāramāhātmyā-s'aya—उदारमाहात्म्याशय) and do not tremble at life. Armed with heroic strength (vīrya—वीर्य) and pity (karuṇā—करुणा) they willingly take upon themselves the calamities of further existences, nor give in

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<sup>1</sup> Schayer Stanislaw : *The Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 34.

until they are born again finally as perfected Buddhas (samyak sambuddha) and have led to salvation of all living beings, men or gods, or demons or animals. For, all beings are embryos of Tathāgata (Tathāgata garbha), and carry within themselves from the very beginning the germ of Buddhahood, that only needs a purification from contingent (āgantuka) blemishes, "like gold which lies buried in grime".<sup>1</sup>

The Mahāyānist were the men who struggled to transform their weak and feeble imperfect personalities into the highest Bodhisattva who is the perfectly enlightened soul on the earth. The Mahāyāna ideal of life is one of self-elevation and the elevation of all. Thus, in the very centre of Mahāyāna stands the ideal of the Bodhisattva, the enlightened human being who has become divine, who only declines the immediate entrance into Nirvāṇa because he feels that he has not yet completed his self-imposed task to present to all living beings the Good Law. Far more sublime than the Arhat, he stands on the level of a Tathāgata; for "out of the Rulers of the wise (munīndra) arise the Śravakas and the Pratyeka buddhas, but out of the Bodhisattva the perfected Buddha himself is born."<sup>2</sup>

To the Hinayānist creed belong two sub-schools known as the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika schools

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<sup>1</sup> Schayer Stanislaw : *The Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, pp. 34, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 35.

of Buddhism. Both of these schools are known as the Sarvāstivādins.

*The Vaibhāṣika (वैभाषिक) School* — Vasubandhu thinks that Buddha, after considerable thinking over the troubles of mankind, offered to the people a means of salvation, which does not consist of magic or religious boons, but which is one of knowledge of a method of converting all utpatti-dharmas into anutpatti-dharmas, i.e. of stopping forever, the commotion created by the operation of the forces active in the process of life. If one knows the process of working of the dharmas, and thus, consequently causing the miseries of life, one can suppress their operation. Therefore Th. Stcherbatsky remarks "A thorough knowledge, a discrimination, of all elements of existence is essential for salvation, since when they are known they can be singled out and gradually suppressed one after the other. Thus, the ultimate goal of the world process, the final result of all purifying, spiritualising agencies and effects is a complete extinction of consciousness and all mental processes. The absolute (nirvāṇa) is inanimate, even if it is something. It is sometimes, especially in popular literature, characterized as bliss but this bliss consists in the cessation of unrest (duḥkha). Bliss is a feeling, and in the absolute there neither is a feeling, nor conception, nor volition, nor even consciousness."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Vaibhāṣikas mean by Nirvāṇa a state in which consciousness is absolutely

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, pp. 49-53.



negated, and the dharmas cease to operate for ever. It is an inanimate state. Th. Stcherbatsky compares it to the Vais'eṣika ideal of mokṣa in which state the self remains without any consciousness (pāṣāṇavat) insensible like a stone because they believe that consciousness is a separable and accidental characteristic of the Self. The Self becomes conscious only when it comes to attach itself to the external world through the manas.<sup>1</sup> The Vaibhāṣikas, thus, hold that the Nirvāṇa is a positive state, something that exists positively, though devoid of life and consciousness. It is simply a blank entity from which differentiation and its awareness are absent. The Vaibhāṣikas would describe their Nirvāṇa in the following manner: "You must not understand nirvāṇa to be the extinction of passion (and of life), but you must say that the entity (dharma) called nirvāṇa is the thing in which passion (and life) are extinct. The extinction of light is a mere example, and it must be interpreted as pointing to that (inanimate) thing which remains when consciousness is extinct."<sup>2</sup> The Vaibhāṣika idea of Nirvāṇa is much similar to that of the Vais'eṣikas. The Vaibhāṣikas think that when all the Kamma is totally exhausted, and there no more remains the animating force, the elements remain at rest. The whirlpool of life stops and ultimately a state of final quiescence is reached. It is a

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 28.

state of perfection or of non-being in which all movement is absent. The elements are completely dissociated from each other and as the Kamma energy which is the binding force is exhausted for ever, there remains no more chance for new combinations. In fact, the combinations are the producers of suffering and misery. The cessation of combinations ultimately leads to the permanent cessation of the occurrence of pain and sorrow in human life.<sup>1</sup> It implies that the Vaibhāṣikas accepted the uniform and the imperishable existence of the ultimate entities (dharmas) in the noumenal state; but at the same time they denounce the permanent reality of the various combinations and results of the dharmas. The Self being a consequent of such combination of the dharmas is regarded as temporary and evanescent. Therefore, their Nirvāṇa does not connote annihilation or extinction of being of any of the categories and dharmas; it means that there is only an absolute dissociation and disjunction of the elements from one another, and consequently of all the manifestations of imperfect life, which are due to the association of these elements in the state of Saṃsāra. Th. Stcherbatsky puts it briefly as follows: "At last the absolute stoppage of all the pure dharmas of the highest spiritual beings is reached, an eternal blank is substituted for them. This is Nirvāṇa, absolute annihilation of all the Sanskr̥ta-dharmas, which is tantamount to the presence of

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<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 4.

asaṃskṛtadharmaś."¹ It becomes thus a state of utter insensibility.

*The Sautrāntika (सौत्रान्तिक) School*—The Sautrāntika school (Hīnayāna) holds that bondage or bandha, which is phenomenal life (saṃsāra), is a positive fact. The saṃsāra is real because it is the outcome of causes and conditions which are absolutely real. According to them, bondage is nothing but the presence of avidyā or ignorance in the chain of consciousness from beginningless time. They believed that Nirvāṇa can be attained by completely terminating avidyā with all its effects. Nirvāṇa, according to them, consists in ending all manifestations, the passions and life for ever. They mean by Nirvāṇa the cessation of the process of life with all its experiences leaving nothing behind. They mean by Nirvāṇa the negation of active life. The Sautrāntika Nirvāṇa is described as follows—"Nirvāṇa was the absolute end of manifestations, the end of passion and life (kleś'ajanmanorkṣayaḥ), without any positive counterpart. It is decidedly insisted upon the fact that nirvāṇa means only the end of the process of life, without any lifeless substance (dharma) as the residue or the substratum in which life has been extinguished. Nirvāṇa thus loses its materialistic character."² It is obvious from the above passage that the Sautrāntika Nirvāṇa differs from that of

¹ Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 53.

² Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 29.

the Vaibhāṣika school in that the former, unlike the latter, derives the existence of the inanimate state or the insensible state in Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa is absolutely a negation, a cessation of all life and its various aspects leaving nothing behind as the Vaibhāṣikas hold.

The later Sautrāntikas seem to be influenced by the Mahāyānist ideas; therefore, two new hybrid schools known as the Sautrāntika Yogācāras and the Mādhyamika—Sautrāntikas came into existence. They admitted the doctrine of Dharmakāya which is peculiarly a Mahāyānist concept. Stcherbatsky writes about them: "From the Tibetan sources we know that they admitted the doctrine of dharmakāya, i.e. of a divine Buddha, and this solves the question, because this dogma is the common characteristic of all the schools of Mahāyāna."<sup>1</sup> A distinction can be made between the two schools. The pure Sautrāntikas, unlike the other two new schools, admitted the reality of the varying phenomenal world, which according to the Sautrāntikas, included only sense data, consciousness and volition. Even the momentary flashes are regarded as real and not illusory as did the Mādhyamikas. The pure Sautrāntikas of course, believed that in Nirvāṇa the phenomenal things come to be totally extinguished. Further Stcherbatsky remarks—"They neither admitted the monistic spiritual principle (ālayavijñāna) of the idealistic Mahāyānists, nor the principle of relativity

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 30.

(s'ūnyavāda) of the Mādhyamikas.”<sup>1</sup> It is mentioned that Vasumitra who belonged to the later Sautrāntika schools believed that after the extinction of all phenomenal life and its contents, some subtle consciousness survives and that all the things, physical as well as mental which form the phenomenal life, are only the manifestations of this subtle consciousness, which survives even in the Nirvāṇa. It is definitely a deviation from the old idea of materialistic Nirvāṇa. Besides those which are subject to total extinction at the time of Nirvāṇa, there is a subtle consciousness which survives after Nirvāṇa and of which the former are but a manifestation. We have here the germ of the ālaya-vijñāna of the Yogācāras. Most probably they were in this point only the continuators of the Mahāsaṃghikas, i.e. they adhered to that tendency which at an early date manifested itself among the schools of the Hīnayāna and represented against the treatment of Buddha as essentially human and against the theory of his total disappearance in a Materialistic Nirvāṇa.<sup>2</sup>

The Sautrāntikas regarded Nirvāṇa as the final aim—the summum bonum (Sivam) of life which meant complete deliverance from the imperfections and limitations of phenomenal existence. According to them, all the sorrows and miseries of worldly life get terminated, all the passions and defilements

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<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 30.

(kles'a) that stick to the souls in bondage are totally and irrevocably extinguished in Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa thus becomes blissful existence which simply consists in being entirely free from deprivation and suffering.

The second important Buddhist creed is known as Mahāyānism. The distinction between Hīnayānism and Mahāyānism is already pointed out. The Mahāyānists held that an individual could not reach Nirvāṇa until all the human beings reached it. The Mahāyānists did not seek Nirvāṇa only for the individual person but they sought for the whole of the humanity. The Mahāyānists did not mean by Nirvāṇa a state of absolute void and nothingness but they gave a positive meaning to it. Mahāyānism did not preach the absolute annihilation of consciousness and life resulting into a mere insensible blank; on the contrary, Mahāyānism stood for enlightenment and illumination. As D. T. Suzuki describes it "...the Mahāyāna Nirvāṇa is not the annihilation of life but its enlightenment; that it is not the nullification of human passions and aspirations but their purification and ennoblement. This world of eternal transmigration is not a place which should be shunned as the playground of evils but should be regarded as the place of ever present opportunities given to us for the purpose of unfolding all our spiritual possibilities and powers for the sake of universal welfare."<sup>1</sup> Thus, Nirvāṇa received an altogether different turn in the hands of Mahāyānists. Nirvāṇa no more remained a state of absolute negation and

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 367.

extinction of life and activity but Mahāyānism preached a more optimistic and positive nature of Nirvāṇa. Mahāyānism introduced new vigour and enthusiasm in the followers of Buddhism by preaching the superior value of selfless-service rendered to the feeble, poor and weak and simultaneously cultivating pious, noble and holy character. Mahāyānism preaches, no doubt, the annihilation of egoism but it also preaches the necessity of practising universal love and sympathy for all the beings. Suzuki very eloquently describes it in the following way : "Nirvāṇa, according to Buddhists, does not signify an annihilation of consciousness nor a temporal or permanent suppression of mentation, as imagined by some; but it is the annihilation of the notion of ego-substance and of all the desires that arise from this erroneous conception....and its positive side consists in universal love or sympathy (Karuna) for all beings."<sup>1</sup> Mahāyānism possesses both the aspects. It is negative so far as it denounces a selfish and egoistic life strictly confined to oneself; but positively it preaches not the extinction of such a limited personal life but it teaches the universalisation of one's personality. Mahāyānism positively stands for universal love and harmony. It preaches the necessity of freeing oneself from the narrow egoistic life of individuals and of identifying themselves with all others. It is a philosophy of activism and energy. It stands for the betterment and elevation of the life of the whole humanity. It aims at the ennoblement of human passions

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<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp. 50, 51.

and thus, it tries to make human life more sublime and holy. Mahāyānism does not preach simply the eradication of human passions, but it also preaches love and sympathy. Suzuki says—“Theoretically speaking, Nirvāṇa is the dispersion of the clouds of ignorance hovering around the light of Bodhi. Morally, it is the suppression of egoism and the awakening of love (Karuṇā). Religiously, it is the absolute surrender of the Self to the will of Dharmakāya.”<sup>1</sup> According to the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas who belong to the Hīnayāna creed, Nirvāṇa becomes simply an empty and dry thing from which all passions and desires are totally absent. Their Nirvāṇa is entirely free from any kind of human experience as the consciousness with all its states is totally absent in it. The Sautrāntikas, no doubt, try to retain in Nirvāṇa consciousness as such making it completely free from the defiling passions, desires and ideas. The Mahāyāna-Nirvāṇa is full of animation and is live with love and sympathy. In the Hīnayāna-Nirvāṇa every emotion disappears but Mahāyānism retains an emotion of love in its Nirvāṇa but that is retained in a purified state. Their love no more remains encased in and ‘for the narrow personality of oneself. It is universal love freed from all limitations and defilements. Suzuki gives a very clear idea of it. He writes—“Self-love has no meaning whatever unless it is purified by love for others. But this love for others must not remain blind and unenlightened, it must be in harmony with the will

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 369.



of the Dharmakāya which is the norm of existence and the reason of being. The mission of love is ennobled and fulfilled in its true sense when we come to the faith that says "thy will be done." Love without this resignation to the divine ordinance is merely another form of egoism; the root is already rotten, how can its trunk, stems, leaves and flowers make a veritable growth?"<sup>1</sup>

Love in order to be purified and ennobled has to be freed from the limitations of a narrow personality and its selfishness. Suzuki criticises selfish love and says that love in its pure state is possible only when it is freed from its narrowness and selfishness. He writes—"Those who wish to see nothing but an utter barrenness of heart after the annihilation of egoism, are much mistaken in their estimation of human nature. For they think its animation comes from selfishness, and that, all forms of activity in our life are propelled simply by the desire to preserve self and the race. They therefore, naturally shrink from the doctrine that teaches that all things worldly are empty, and that there is no such thing as ego-substance whose immortality is so much coveted by most people. But the truth is, the spring of love does not live in the idea of self, but in its removal. For the human heart, being a reflection of the Dharmakāya, which is love and intelligence, recovers, its intrinsic power and goodness, only when the veil of ignorance and egoism is cast aside. The animation, energy, strenuousness which were shown by a

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 369.

self-centred will, and which therefore, were utterly despicable, will not surely die out with the removal of their odious atmosphere in which egoism had developed them. But they will get an ever nobler interpretation, ever more elevating and satisfying significance; for they have gone through a baptism of fire, by which the last trace of egoism has been thoroughly consumed. The old evil master is eternally burnt, but the willing servants are still here and ever ready to do their service, now more efficiently, for their new legitimate and authoritative lord."<sup>1</sup> Mahāyānism developed the idea of a kind of eternal Being which is at the back of everything and acts as the source of everything. This eternal Being is a storehouse of consciousness and is itself an intelligent principle; all the phenomenal things of the world not only ultimately rest in it but are its manifestations. It is the eternal spiritual principle at the back of all momentary existences. It changes but only internally; as such it does not disappear, nor does it pass out of existence as an entity. It is the ultimate resort of all things. Everything as absorbed in this final being known as the Dharmakāya persists even in Nirvāṇa; and Nirvāṇa, according to the Mahāyānists, means the persistence of this Dharmakāya and the complete absorption of all particular finite existences in it. The Dharmakāya possesses its own will which manifests itself in all the particular things. Suzuki describes the state of Nirvāṇa as one of enlightenment and not of darkness and blankness.

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<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp.54-55.

He says—“Individual existences then as such lose their significance and become sublimated and ennobled in the oneness of Dharmakāya. Egoistic prejudices are forever vanquished, and the aim of our lives is no more the gratification of selfish cravings, but the glorification of Dharma as it works its own way through the multitudinousness of things. The Self does not stand any more in a state of isolation (which is an illusion), it is absorbed in the universal body of Dharma, it recognises itself in other selves, animate as well as inanimate, and all things are in Nirvāṇa. When we reach this state of ideal enlightenment we are said to have realised the Buddhist life.”<sup>1</sup> What is thus lost in Nirvāṇa, according to Mahāyānism, is the narrow egohood. Suzuki definitely asserts that Nirvāṇa of Mahāyānism is a positive entity; but Dahlke speaks with a great precaution. He says—“In Buddhist thought, however, Being in nowise passes into Non-Being. It is the becoming only that ceases. The end here is not Non-being, but Never-more-becoming.”<sup>2</sup> But Dahlke again suggests indirectly that the ultimate state may not be one of negation. He further says—“It is to be noted that nothing is destroyed at death; nothing is overthrown but the appearance, the illusion of this Bhāva.”<sup>3</sup> Very cleverly Dahlke escapes this controversy about the nature of Nirvāṇa and inclines to the negative side. He says—“Whether ‘Not-becoming’ resembles

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D.T. : *Outlines of Mdhayana Buddhism*, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

'Being' or whether it does not resemble it, who can know? Who needs to know? It is only Becoming that can be seized; it is only Becoming that is life; it is only Becoming that is sorrow. Hence the problem is solved with the transformation of Becoming into "No-more-becoming". To speak of this Parinibbāna is a contradiction in terms, for to speak of anything means to call it into life, to make it a Becoming, and to think of anything implies the same thing."<sup>1</sup> Thus, Dahlke means that it is impossible for us to determine either the negative or the positive nature of Nirvāṇa; for according to him, we can grasp in thought only the Becoming and hence, nothing which is not Becoming or beyond Becoming is conceivable. On the contrary, Suzuki emphatically states "Buddha taught, therefore, that Nirvāṇa does not consist in the complete stoppage of existence, but the practice of Eightfold path."<sup>2</sup> As Suzuki emphatically states "This moral practice leads to the unalloyed joy of Nirvāṇa, not as the tranquillisation of human aspirations, but as the fulfilment or unfolding human life."<sup>3</sup>

If the Suttas be carefully scrutinised, the negativistic and nihilistic tendencies do not escape our attention. Repeatedly references are made to the extinction of consciousness and life. The Suttas represent the Hīnayānist tendencies, and hence, Dahlke's and Monier-Williams' honest opinions seem to seek

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Suzuki D.T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 340.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 341.

support from the Suttas. It is said in the *Pingiya-mānava pukkha* 'seeing others afflicted by the body, — O Pingiya, so said Bhagavat, — '(seeing) heedless people suffer in their bodies, — therefore, O Pingiya, shalt thou be heedful, and leave the body behind, that thou mayest never come to exist again'.<sup>1</sup> — "...therefore thou, Pingiya, shalt be heedful, and leave desire behind, that thou mayest never come to exist again'. It is similarly stated in the *Upasīva-māneva pukkha* —<sup>2</sup> 'As a flame blown about by the violence of the wind, — O Upasīva, so said Bhagavat, — 'goes out, cannot be reckoned (as existing), even so a Muni, delivered from name and body, disappears, and cannot be reckoned (as existing).' It further continues "8—'For him who has disappeared there is no form, O Upasīva' so said Bhagavat, — 'that by which they say he is, exists for him no longer, when all things (dhamma) have been cut off, all (kinds of) dispute are also cut off'.<sup>2</sup> Existence, according to the Suttas, is in no way desirable. They do not seek some kind of existence or continuation of existence even in the Dharmakāya as do the Mahāyānists. It is clearly stated in the *Māgandiya sutta* — (The inward peace is explained) — "5.—Not by (any philosophical) opinion, not by tradition, not by knowledge', — O Māgandiya, so said Bhagavat, — 'not by virtue and (holy) works can any one say that purity exists, nor by absence of (philosophical)

<sup>1</sup> Faustall V. (Tr.) : *Sutta Nipāta* (Sacred Books of the East Series), p. 198.—1073.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 199—1075.

opinion, by absence of tradition by absence of knowledge, by absence of virtue and (holy) works either; having abandoned these without adopting (anything else), let him, calm and independent, not desire existence."<sup>1</sup>

On the contrary, Schayer describes a Buddhist saint of the Mahāyāna sect in the following way — "The Buddhist saint, the Arhat, not to mention a Buddha, stands as high as heaven above the world; he does not despise the world but he also does not love it; he "pities" it only, and again not the Christian sense of fellow-feeling and of ebbing inside the sinful world, but from without, as an outlooker who has himself escaped from the misery and looks down on striving humanity in the full consciousness of his own further immunity from suffering."<sup>2</sup> A similar description of the Arhat is obtained in the *Mahāpadāna Sutta* (7).<sup>3</sup>

The two distinguished schools of Māhāyānism are the Yogācāra and the Mādhyamika schools. The Yogācāras denied existence of the external world.

*The Yogācāra* (योगाचार) or *Vijñānavāda* (विज्ञानवाद) *Nirvāṇa* :

The Ālaya-vijñāna of the Yogācāras thus forms the ultimate background and source of the phenomenal existence. The phenomenal world becomes a manifestation of the eternal Ālayavijñāna which undergoes only internal changes. It is only an existing entity

<sup>1</sup> Fausbäll : *Sutta-Nipata* (Sacred Books of the East), p. 160/verse 339.

<sup>2</sup> Schayer : *Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> See *Digha Nikāya*

(vastumātra). S. Radhakrishnan describes it in the following manner—“The Ālaya is free from diversity, though its phenomena are innumerable in space and time. The highest state which transcends all opposites, in which the positive and the negative are one and the same (Bhāvābhāvasamānatā—भावभावसमानता) is called by the Yogācāras Tathatā (Tathatā—तथता) pure being. The Tathatā is described thus—“This is the transcendental truth of everything, and is termed Tathatā, because its essential nature is real and eternal. Its nature is beyond the reach of language. It is indefinable.—Vasubandhu.”<sup>1</sup> It is beyond all words and attributes. It is the universal abode of all and therefore, escapes all particularization. Asanga says—“It can neither be called existence nor non-existence. It is neither such nor otherwise. It is neither born nor destroyed. It neither increases nor decreases. It is neither purity nor filth. Such is the real lakṣaṇa or nature of the transcendental truth.”<sup>2</sup> It is further said—“Pure being or tathatā is called Ālayavijñāna in its dynamic aspect, when it is combined with the principle of individuation or negativity. The moment we make pure being into vijñāna or cit, we introduce the element of individualism. The ālaya has difference at its own heart.”<sup>3</sup> Suzuki also explains the relation between the Ālaya and the Tathatā (suchness) clearly in the following way—“The Ālaya, however, is not a particular phenomenon, for it is a state of

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 640.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 640.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 640.

suchness in its evolutionary disposition and, has nothing in it yet to suggest its concrete individuality. When the manas finds out its error and lifts the veil of Ignorance from the body of the Ālaya, it soon becomes convinced of the ultimate nature of the soul', so called. For the soul is not individual, but supra-individual."<sup>1</sup> The state of suchness or Tathatā is thus the ultimate existence which is free from all kinds of differences and contradictory qualities. It lies at the heart of everything and manifests itself in all the particular phenomena. It possesses consciousness, and is spiritual in nature. The Mahāyanists develop a more elaborate notion of the Dharmakāya from this Ālaya Vijñāna, and regard the Dharmakāya as the end of all life. It is the consummation and perfection of the phenomenal existence. The concept of Dharmakāya is a special and extremely significant contribution of Mahāyānism.

Dharmakāya seems to be a modified form of Tathatā or Suchness. The Tathata gets transmuted into a more elaborate form which is known as the Dharmakāya. Suzuki distinguishes the two thus— "Dharmakāya as understood by the Mahāyānists, not an abstract metaphysical principle like Suchness, but it is living spirit that manifests itself in nature as well as in thought."<sup>2</sup>

The word Dharmakāya is usually translated by the western scholars by "Body of the Law" meaning by the Law the doctrine set forth by Śākyamuni,

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 223.



the Buddha. The etymological meaning of the word Dharmakāya is as follows—Dharma from dhr—to hold, to carry, to bear—then “that which carries or bears or supports” and then that which forms the norm, or regulates the course of things”, that is ‘law’. Institution, rule, doctrine, then duty, justice, virtue, moral merit, character, attribute, essential quality, substance, that which exists, reality, being, etc. English word is ‘law’ or ‘doctrine’.”<sup>1</sup> In Mahāyānism Dharma means in many cases “thing”, “substance” or “being”, or “reality”, both in its particular and in its general sense. It is also many times used in the sense of law or doctrine. Kāya may be rendered “body” not in the sense of personality, but in that of system, unity and organized form. Dharmakāya is a combination of Dharma and Kāya, and means the organised totality of things or the principle of cosmic unity, though not as a purely philosophical concept, but as an object of the religious consciousness. The *Avatamsaka Sutta* gives a comprehensive description of it—“The Dharmakāya, though manifesting itself in the triple world, is free from impurities and desires. It unfolds itself here, there and everywhere responding to the call of Karma. It is not an individual reality, it is not a false existence, but is universal and pure. It comes from nowhere, it goes to nowhere, it does not assert itself, nor is it subject to annihilation. It is forever serene and eternal. It is the one, devoid of all determinations. This body of Dharma has no boundary,

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<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyān Buddhism*, p. 221.

no quarters, but is embodied in all bodies. Its freedom or spontaneity is incomprehensible, its spiritual presence in things corporeal is incomprehensible. All forms of corporeality are involved therein, it is able to create all things.”<sup>1</sup> The Dharmakāya is immensely full of intelligence, though it is devoid of any particularity. It is an all-pervading principle and is present in each and everything of the world. There is nothing where it is not present. It is universal and the resting place of all, and hence, it is free from all contraries and opposites. Asanga in his *Mahāyāna Saṃparigraha* describes the Dharmakāya in the following words—“...the Dharmakāya or the Body of the Tathāgata, or the body of Intelligence, whatever it may be designated, is not a mere philosophical abstraction, standing aloof from this world of birth and death, of joy and sorrow, calmly contemplates on the folly of mankind; but it is a spiritual existence which is “absolutely one, is real and true, and forms the *raison de être* of all beings, transcends all modes of upāya, is free from desires and struggles for (compulsion) and stands outside the pale of our finite understanding.” From this description, the Dharmakāya appears similar to the Brahman preached by the Upaniṣads. It is the source and end of all things and all things are only its manifestations. Suzuki describes Dharmakāya thus—“Dharmakāya is like and unlike Christian God and the Brahman; but it is not transcendental like the former and impersonal like the latter. The

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<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 223.

world is a manifestation of it. The Dharmakāya is on the contrary, capable of willing and reflecting or to use Buddhist phraseology, it is Karuṇā (love) and bodhi (intelligence) and not the mere state of being.”<sup>1</sup> The most well-known Mahāyāna philosophers Asanga and Vasubandhu describe the Dharmakāya as possessed of the following characteristics: (i) The Dharmakāya is free and absolutely unrivaled in its activities. It is unique and supreme. (ii) It is absolutely free from all intellectual and affective prejudices. (iii) All its activities are spontaneous and are not the outcome of any external compulsion. Its activities spring from its own will. (iv) It possesses all eternal virtues in their perfection. It serves as the ultimate norm of all the things and activities of the world. It represents the perfection of all things. (v) It is also the inexhaustible, physical and spiritual wealth. It possesses infinite varieties and richness, as it is in everything and everything is its manifestation. (vi) It also exhibits intellectual purity in being most universal and general; it is free from the onesidedness of particulars. (vii) It moves all the earthly beings towards itself in Nirvāṇa. It represents the ultimate unity of all things.

The Dharmakāya is not an abstract metaphysical unity and a dry and bloodless entity, but it is a living thing possessing even certain emotions of love. Suzuki describes it—“But the Dharmakāya, infinite in love and goodness, is incessantly managing to bring this world-transaction to a happy terminus.

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 46.

Every good we do is absorbed in the universal stock of merits which is no more, no less than the Dharmakāya. Every existence, great or insignificant is a reflection of the glory of the Dharmakāya and as such worthy of its all-embracing love."<sup>1</sup> The Dharmakāya is full of profound love for all beings. Every one of us partakes something of it in ourself, and every one is destined to attain Buddhahood when our individual human intelligence (Bodhi), is perfectly identified and absorbed in that of the Dharmakāya and when our earthly life becomes a realisation of the superior of the Dharmakāya. It does punish our wrong deeds and does not allow the Karma to be exhausted unless its fruits are borne; but even then through all these odds it ever directs our lives towards the actualisation of its will and at the same time it ever stretches its hands to receive all in its embrace. The Dharmakāya thus being immanent in everything pushes every thing towards itself from within and drags to itself all the beings serving externally as the norm or ideal.

The Mahāyāna Buddhism also depicts Nirvāṇa as the end of all life and existence; but the idea of Nirvāṇa undergoes a complete change in the hands of the Mahāyānists. Their Nirvāṇa becomes a positive entity and state of perfect enlightenment and illumination rather than one of darkness and extinction. "Nirvāṇa", writes Suzuki, "according to the Buddhists, does not signify annihilation of consciousness nor a temporal or permanent suppression of mentation

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 233.

as imagined by some; but it is the annihilation of the notion of ego-substance and of all desires that arise from this erroneous conception. But this represents the negative side of the doctrine, and its positive side consists in universal love or sympathy (Karunā) for all beings."<sup>1</sup> Thus, negatively it liberates us from the narrow sphere of egoism and from the shackles of evil passions and positively, it leads us into the heart of the Dharmakāya by absorbing us in it. And unless the former happens the latter cannot take place. Unless one frees oneself from the narrow limitations of his ego he can never realise the Universal love and goodness. One cannot experience the joy of the highest universalisation of his personality unless he breaks through his limited egoism. The Mahāyānists preached the cultivation of universal love and compassion for all beings in the form of Nirvāṇa, and thus, made optimism conquer pessimism, life death, light darkness. They denied ultimate existence to the particular as separated from the Dharmakāya but assured the particulars permanent place in the Dharmakāya. The individual's negation means the abandonment of his limitations and separatism but it achieves its eternal life and perfection in its absorption in the infinite Dharmakāya.

### *The Mādhyamika (माध्यमिक) Nirvāṇa :*

The Mādhyamika school of Buddhism belongs to Mahāyānism. The Mādhyamikas are known as the Nihilists or Sarvavaināśikas because they did

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki D. T. : *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp. 50, 51.

not believe in the existence of any Reality. They were known as Sūnyavādins. The Mādhyamikas believed that everything is void in the sense that nothing possesses its own independent nature by itself (svalakṣaṇa).

The ultimate Reality of the Mādhyamikas is called the Absolute which means only a relational existence. According to Nāgārjuna Nirvāṇa does not mean absolute nothingness, because it is simply inconceivable.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Nāgārjuna further says—"Nirvāṇa not an Ens (being)". Nirvāṇa to the Mādhyamikas is neither non-existence, nor is it existence and is not subject to decay and death.<sup>2</sup> Nāgārjuna seems to be justified in holding that the Nirvāṇa cannot be existent since whatever exists is subjected to decay and death and is perishable. Moreover, if it exists, it will have to be produced by something else and as the existence is the Absolute, the Ultimate Reality, it is impossible to conceive any thing beyond it. Any attempt to explain it in terms of some thing else will involve the grave fallacy of regressus-ad-infinitum. Similarly, going ahead, Nāgārjuna argues that if the Ens or the Being exists, it must not lack substratum. Its essence must be included in itself. But if Nirvāṇa does not exist it is likely to be mistaken for non-existence. But Nāgārjuna refuses to reduce it then to non-Ens or nothing.<sup>3</sup> Thus Nāgārjuna

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th.: *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 193.

describes the Nirvāṇa or the Absolute as that which is neither existent nor non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent, nor different from both non-existence and existence.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the absolute or the Nirvāṇa cannot both be non-existent and existent at the same time.

If Nirvāṇa were both existence and non-existence at the same time, it would be a logical contradiction-in-terms, leading to the identification of Bandha and Mokṣa. It being a system of relativity and interdependence and interrelatedness of things, it cannot be described either as the finite or infinite, sentient or insentient, identical or different, real or unreal. It cannot be described in any of the finite categories of understanding. It transcends all such categories. Our incapacity to understand and to describe it in any of our familiar terms should not compel us to reduce it to nothing or void. Nothing can be asserted about the nature of the Nirvāṇa.<sup>2</sup> The Ultimate Reality, the Absolute, which is the Nirvāṇa, evades all its descriptions and remains above all descriptions.

The Nirvāṇa as conceived by the Mādhyamikas is negatively not any one of the relative and changing things, but it is not also positively non-being. It is a mysterious thing which is beyond imagination and description.

S. Radhakrishnan quotes Nāgārjuna from his works and thereby likens the Absolute of the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 210.

Mādhyaṃikas to that of the Upaniṣads. He says — “Nāgārjuna admits the existence of a higher reality, though with the Upaniṣads he considers it to be not an object of experience. “The eye does not see, the mind does not think, this is the highest truth, wherein men do enter. The land wherein the full vision of all objects is obtained at once has by the Buddha been called the Paramārtha, or absolute truth, which cannot be preached in words.”<sup>1</sup> Going ahead, he further quotes Kumārajīva, commenting upon Nāgārjuna and suggest that the Nirvāṇa (Sūnyatā-सुन्यता) must be a positive existence at the back of all the phenomenal existence, serving the latter as its substratum.<sup>2</sup> Such is the Mādhyaṃika Nirvāṇa. S. Radhakrishnan compares it with Hamilton’s unconditioned or Spencer’s inscrutable power, and on account of its relational character, it is sometimes compared with that one of Plotinus, with the substance of Spinoza, and with the neutrum of Schelling. Schayer describes the Nirvāṇa as “this ‘Negativism’ should in no way be identified with mere denial of any thesis is proved in the epitheton ornans of Subhūti, who is always described as araṇa-vihārin which Walleser very aptly translates as “one abiding in strifelessness.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the state of Nirvāṇa seems to be free from the unceasing change and strife of the phenomenal life. Schayer writes — “This shows that the Mahāyānist does not deny the existence of objects, but he considers

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 662.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 663.

<sup>3</sup> Schayer Stanislav : *Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 39.



them unreal, he is not interested in them, and does not take them seriously, just in the same way as no one would dream of tarrying in an enchanted city, or of mistaking an effigy for the person itself, or a portrait for the original."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Nirvāṇa ultimately means freedom from all relative thought. Thought is dualistic based upon the relation of the subject and object which can never reveal the real nature of the Absolute which is indescribable. The Mādhyamikas adopt the middle path by avoiding the two extremist positions. Due to avidyā (ignorance) the phenomenal and related world appears. Avidyā is the principle of relativity. In fact, all things in their nature have sūnya or void for their essence at their heart. The world is caused by the false play of avidyā which is inherent in the human mind. This ignorance makes us believe that the phenomenal world is real and thus becomes the root cause of deception (Māyā) and suffering. Schayer says—"It becomes especially the kind of ignorance that fails to understand the highest, completest truth, i.e., emptiness is not accessible to ordinary human knowledge, thought; and that logical deduction, therefore, represents both the "falling-away from emptiness" and suffering."<sup>2</sup> Thus, in Nirvāṇa nothing is to be gained except the cessation of all suffering. Schayer says—"One sees that the Mahāyāna is quite indifferent to the "what" of revelation. Its quest is not

<sup>1</sup> Schayer Stanislaw: *Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*. pp. 42, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 46-49.

for pure truth or for the satisfaction of the impulse of exact critical understanding, but primarily for the liberation from suffering.”<sup>1</sup> The knowledge, which, according to the Mādhyamikas, leads to the attainment of Nirvāṇa is not a knowledge of the full details; it is no positive knowledge but it is the suspension of all knowledge through the destruction of all views and of all opinions. The ultimate knowledge is of Nothingness. It is to understand nothing but to know that Nothing exists. Thus, Nāgārjuna describes the state of Nirvāṇa as—“Our bliss consists in the cessation of all thought, in the quiescence of Plurality.”<sup>2</sup> It becomes obvious from the above description that the knowledge of the relative and evanescent existence of all the things and that the Absolute is free from all such relativity, leads to the cessation of all dualistic thinking, and thus, to the highest state of Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa is not a theoretical knowledge but an actual experience of stopping all knowledge. Schayer writes about it—“In this quest ‘Strifelessness’ and ‘Universalism’ touch each other because a theoretical attitude is irrelevant, and for this reason salvation is possible even for the weak and simple-minded; and also the reverse, because salvation must be universal, therefore, knowledge as contained within limitation, becomes meaningless.”<sup>3</sup> Buddhism provided salvation to all men irrespective

<sup>1</sup> Ibid p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> Schayer Stanislav : *Mahāyāna Doctrines of Salvation*, p. 51.

**Buddhism****211**

of their higher and lower capacities to understand the nature of the ultimate metaphysical Reality. The Nirvāṇa of Buddha was accessible to all persons because it did not require the highly complicated knowledge of the Reality but only the stoppage of all knowledge, to understand that Nothing really exists. Buddhism, therefore, had a universal appeal. The Nirvāṇa, to the Mādhyamikas, does not mean elevation to a higher plane but it simply means the dissolution of the cosmic phantasmagoria, and thus, to be totally out of the fluxional phenomenal world and to rest into utter thoughtlessness and absolute silence, with the realization that nothing contains its existence in itself, and therefore, nothing exists in the real sense; all existence is a product of avidyā and is tantamount to Māyā and hence everything existing is unworthy of our attention, interest and devotion. It is a state of desirelessness and thoughtlessness. It is a state of unspeakableness and beyond the grasp of human thought. It is not even Self-realization because Self is a relative term related to the non-self. Every finite and relative thing disappears there. What remains behind, one cannot know and describe. It is a unique experience by itself.

Notwithstanding their disbelief in the ultimate personal God, the Buddhists gave supreme importance to moral actions and the doctrine of Karma. They were not, therefore, crude materialists like the Lokāyatas. The Buddhists did not believe in the existence of an eternal and transmigrating Self, even then they are known to be spiritualists, for the very

simple reason that they believed in the efficacy and in the superior value of moral actions. Stcherbatsky explains the position of Buddha in the following way — “Between the Materialists who denied retribution and the Eternalists who imagined a return to a pure spiritual condition, Buddha took a middle course. From the Eternalists he borrowed the doctrine of a gradual accumulation of spiritual merit through a series of progressing existences but he was averse to their doctrine of an eternal spiritual principle.”<sup>1</sup> The succession of births was meant for the gradual purification and moral purge of the individual to be worthy for the final attainment of liberation or Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa is the cumulative result of the moral transformation and the progressive purification of the individual.

The doctrine of Karma implies that it is solely the individual's responsibility to attain liberation. The individual has to prepare himself by all the necessary moral observances for the final state of Nirvāṇa. Buddhism gives importance to every individual person for the attainment of liberation. Individuals could not be released from their bondage by any external power or person. The destiny and perfection of each individual lay in his own hands. Buddha could not be conceived as the redeemer of humanity in the real sense. Redemption has to be acquired by oneself with one's strenuous moral efforts. Schayer explains the position of Buddha in

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<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky Th. : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 2.

## Buddhism

213

this respect in the following manner—"For, although Buddha appears as Teacher and Deliverer of mankind, yet the salvation of each individual is entirely dependent on his own self. Buddha shows the way and necessary attitude, but does not himself interfere with the process of salvation or liberation. In the same sense it is true that one may entirely think away the person of Buddha without Buddhist teaching ceasing in any way to be all that it has ever been."<sup>1</sup>

Buddhism stresses the need of cultivating the moral virtues to reach the final state of Nirvāṇa. The practice of moral life totally transforms one's being from within and from without, and thus, one becomes a renunciate in the real sense. Rhys Davids says—"The Buddhist salvation was held to consist in a change of heart, a modification of personal character to be attained to in this world."<sup>2</sup> The actual living of moral life is absolutely necessary for one who seeks Nirvāṇa. It is the very precondition for the attainment of Nirvāṇa. Buddhism emphasises the need of right knowledge and right practice of those moral principles for being fit to experience the state of Nirvāṇa. Buddhism prescribed the noble eightfold path (*ariyo aṭṭhāṅgiko Māgga*). The eightfold path leading to the attainment of Nirvāṇa consists in the following eight things : (1) Right views,

<sup>1</sup> Schayer Stanislaw : *Mahāyāna Doctrine of Salvation*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Davids Rhys : *Buddhist Suttas* (The Sacred Books of the East Series), Vol. XI, Mahasudassana Sutta. Intrd., p. 243.

(2) High aims, (3) Right speech, (4) Upright conduct, (5) A harmless livelihood, (6) Perseverance in well-doing, (7) Intellectual activity, (8) Earnest thought.<sup>1</sup>

The seven kinds of wisdom preached by Buddhism (Satta Bogghangā) are (1) Energy, (2) Thought, (3) Contemplation, (4) Investigation (of scripture), (5) Joy, (6) Repose, and (7) Serenity.<sup>2</sup> The life that is prescribed for a seeker of Nirvāṇa is one of a mendicant and a renunciate. The seeker of Nirvāṇa must become free from all kinds of desires, passions, insistence and consciousness. Sir William Monier describes Nirvāṇa in the following way : "Nirvāṇa—'a state of a blown-out flame'—complete extinction of three chief fires—of lust, ill-will and delusion, and a total cessation of all evil passions and desires, especially of the desire for individual existence (name and form). Following on this is the state of release from all pain and from all ignorance, accompanied by a sense of profound rest—a state achieved by all Arbats while still living in the world (a state, unchangable state of conscious beatitude)... Nirvāṇa then is not necessarily the annihilation of all existence. It is the absence of Kles'a as in the Yoga system and corresponds very much to the Brahmanical Apavarga—or of Vātsyāyana's sarvaduhkha chchheda."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Davids Rhys : *Buddhist Suttas* (The Sacred Books of the East Series), Vol. XI, Mahānibbāna Sutta, Ch. III-63.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Ch. III-63.

<sup>3</sup> Williams Monier : *Buddhism*, p. 139.

By properly controlling the sense organs, one must be free from the sensuous attractions and keep the mind free from the mental disturbances. The inner calm can be enjoyed only when one becomes free from the desires that make men uneasy.<sup>1</sup> The Dhammapada contains a large number of moral injunctions, preaching freedom from lust, passion, hatred, egoity, envy, attachment, sense-enjoyment and positively the practice of love and compassion for all, purity, serenity and tranquillity of mind. The *Mahānibbāṇa Sutta* preaches four meditations on (i) body, (ii) sensations, (iii) ideas, and (iv) reason and character. Buddhism like Yoga stresses the need of concentration and meditation on the ultimate principle by stopping the functioning of other states of consciousness. The Dhammapada says—“Stop the stream valiantly, drive away the desires, O Brāhmaṇa! When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made.”<sup>2</sup> By practising all these virtues the mind becomes free from the various mental states that make men restive. It is a positive experience of tranquillity. “A Bhikkhu who has entered his empty house, and whose mind is tranquil, feels a more than human delight when he sees the law clearly.”... “As soon as he considered the origin and destruction of the elements (Khandha) of the body, he finds happiness and joy which

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller (Tr.) : *Dhammapada* (Ch. XIX-66), Verses 271-272.

<sup>2</sup> *Dhammapada*, 26/383.

belong to those who know the immortal.”<sup>1</sup> From these verses it clearly seems that in Nirvāṇa there is a positive and unadulterated joy and happiness of a unique character. Even though it is free from all states of consciousness it is profoundly filled with the tranquil and calm joy of a supramundane category.

Such a perfect person who reaches Nirvāṇa is known as an Arhat. The word Arhat is derived from the root *Arha*—to deserve. Arhat is the most deserving person of Nirvāṇa. Arhatship is open to all. William Monier describes the Arhat in the following words—“....the Arhat is perfect, freed from all pain (*nishklesa*), from all the ten fetters, from all attachment to existence (*Upādāna*) whether on earth or in heaven; and from all recreative Act-force. He has already entered Nirvāṇa, and while still living, he is dead to the world. He is the *Jīvanmukta* ‘emancipated man’ of the Yoga. By the force of the fourth *Dhyāna* he has gained the *Abhijñāsa* (*Abhiññā*), or ‘transcendent faculties of knowledge’, the inner eye, inner ear, knowledge of all thoughts, and recollection of previous existences, and the extraordinary powers over matter called *Iddhi* (= *Riddhi*). In short he is *Asekha*, one who has nothing to learn.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Arhat is the perfected human being and is like the *Jīvanmukta* of the *Vedānta*. He is free from the Karma force and is the supreme knower. The Buddhists imagine a

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 373, 734.

<sup>2</sup> William Monier : *Buddhism*, p. 133.



hierarchy of the perfect spiritual persons. Firstly there is the state of the Simple Arhat—who attains perfection through his own efforts but through the teaching of Buddha; but he cannot teach it to others. At a higher stage above the Arhats are the Pratyeka Buddha or solitary saint who attains perfection only for and by himself without the help of any other Buddha. Even above the pratyeka Buddha, there is the superior state of the Supreme Buddha—once a Bodhisattva. He has perfect knowledge and enlightenment; he has practised all virtues through the extinction of all passions. His bodily existence also becomes completely extinct (Parinirvāṇa—परिनिर्वाण). In that perfection of all Arhatship ends and he becomes capable of being a Saviour,—not as god-sent, but by teaching men how to save themselves.

The Buddhists make a distinction between Nibbāna and Parinibbāṇa. The Parinibbāṇa (परिनिब्बान) is the ultimate state and Nibbāṇa seems to be the penultimate state of perfection. Paul Dahlke tries to make a clearcut distinction between the two. About Nibbāṇa he writes—"Nibbāṇa means nothing but a condition of perfect freedom from desire. That heart has reached the final goal of all which, upon the ground of perception of the true nature of things, through the knowledge of Not-I, has so completely loosed itself from everything that it no longer has any desires....And thus with Nibbāṇa the true condition of eternal rest and changeless, birthless safety is eternally attained."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dahlke Paul : *Buddhist Essays*, p. 85.

It is worthwhile to see how Paul Dahlke contrasts Parinibbāṇa with Nibbāṇa. He writes—“Parinibbāṇa is only Nibbāṇa free from this corporeality; Nibbāṇa, from which this body has been dried up, withered away; sorrowlessness without an organ by which to become aware of itself—that is, the transition of sorrowlessness into changelessness—perfect peace. As sorrow is simply the concept of transiency as coloured by the individual, so sorrowlessness is nothing but the concept of timelessness while still coloured by the last dregs of this individuality. Nibbāṇa is the timeless, so long as it finds its echo in the individual. Parinibbāṇa is the timeless—pure, uncoloured, unbesmirched of individuality.”<sup>1</sup> From the distinction between the two Nibbāṇas drawn above, it appears that they are the two forms of Mukti—one the Jīvanmukti and the other Videhamukti. Parinibbāṇa seems to be akin to Videhamukti, the highest possible attainment which cannot be even touched by the space-time categories. It is said that in the Parinibbāṇa even the consciousness of nothingness itself disappears. The Yogācāra Mahāyānists change the original nature of Nirvāṇa by depicting it as a positive state of bliss and fulfilment. Suzuki says—“This moral practice leads to the unalloyed joy of Nirvāṇa, not as the tranquillisation of human aspirations, but as the fulfilment or unfolding of human life.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, to certain Buddhists Nirvāṇa is not the extinction of consciousness and Karma but

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Suzuki D. T.: *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 341.

a complete absorption in the higher reality of Dhammakāya—in which one remains immortal. According to Vijnānamātra Sāstra, Nirvāṇa is characterised by four features—(i) eternality—nityatā, (ii) bliss—possessed of sukha, (iii) self-acting—possessing ātmā—its own intrinsic nature, and (iv) pure—in and out—Sūchi. In the same place we obtain the two main types of Nirvāṇa—one the Upādhisēṣa Nirvāṇa—imperfect and conditioned liberation and the other Anupādhisēṣa Nirvāṇa—the absolute and pure Nirvāṇa—free from all adjuncts and conditions. It is said that perhaps the satisfaction of ending the long and toilsome journey of the worldly life at the end of the last life itself remains for ever. C. H. S. Ward writes—“The possibility of bringing this long and toilsome journey to an end, of escaping from ‘the wheel of life’ on which he has been whirling since time began, gives him a sense of satisfaction, exaltation and peace, which words cannot express. The certainty that this is his last existence, brings to him exquisite happiness. He enjoys this wonderful experience now and when the body dies he will have reached Parinirvāṇa—dreamless peace.”<sup>1</sup> This remark of Ward is extremely significant. Because of the furiously raging controversies about the nature of the state of Nirvāṇa, it is very difficult to say anything definitely. But one thing is certain, that the very idea and experience of ending for ever the worldly life, full of pain and suffering and which has been running for ages together, might bring relief and infinite

<sup>1</sup> Ward C. H. S. : *Buddhism*, Vol. I, p. 98.

contentment which itself constitutes Nirvāṇa. Such a final satisfaction at the end of the toilsome journey of the saṃsāra itself remains for ever, and therefore, the Buddhists seem to be justified in calling it eternal peace, calm, tranquillity and quietude. At least negatively as there is no-more-becoming, the very experience of such relief itself means the exquisite peaceful contentment. If Nirvāṇa is not any special joy or bliss, it is at least the ultimate satisfaction experienced at the termination of the last miserable life and a permanent cancellation of a new toilsome life.

Thinking about the possibly happy or painful state of Nirvāṇa Poussin very cautiously suggests the indifferent nature of it as both the views are fraught with their consequent evils. He writes—"If Nirvāṇa be a happy state, the monk would strive for a Nirvāṇa as one would strive for a paradise, and he would accordingly miss it; he would reach at death, some paradise, an enjoyable but transitory paradise. If Nirvāṇa be annihilation, Nirvāṇa would again inspire desire or abhorrence; in both the cases, sanctity is impossible. Anxiety and speculation concerning the life after death (antagrāha paramārśa) is one of the five heresies. A monk will reach sanctity and Nirvāṇa, without knowing what Nirvāṇa is, and for this very reason, that owing to this ignorance, he remains free from the desire of existence (Bhavatrṣṇā—भवतृष्णा), free from the desire of non-existence (Vibhavatrṣṇā—विभवतृष्णा): "I do not long for life; I do not long for death."..We believe

that the most exact and the most authoritative definition of Nirvāṇa is not annihilation, but 'unqualified deliverance', a deliverance of which we have no right to predicate anything."<sup>1</sup> Nirvāṇa cannot be properly understood by vigorously continuing the various controversies as Nirvāṇa escapes them all; perhaps stopping thinking about it and stopping to put it in the rigid frames of thinking, it is the easier way to know the real nature of Nirvāṇa.

The Mahāyānistis refuse to remain fully content with the attainment of Nirvāṇa only for the individual. They were the men who came ahead to help all the needy and helpless in their task of attaining the Nirvāṇa. As it is said in the *Mahāpadāna Sutta*, one should look from above at the world which is drowned in the grief of birth and life by overcoming all passions, attachments and suffering with love and compassion for all as though one looks on the surrounding land standing on the peak of a high mountain.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the individual completely forgets his own particular existence, relinquishes his limited personality and liquidates his separate existence. He no more exists as a particular individual. He completely negates himself. No more does he aspire anything for himself exist for his personal happiness. He is no more interested in his personal gains. He rises beyond his personal happiness and pain. He is no more pleased by his gains nor is he afflicted by his personal loss. Nothing remains for

<sup>1</sup> Poussin D. L. V. : *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha Nikya*, Part II—Mahāpadāna Sutta-7.

him as his own. He, as a separate individual, becomes a non-entity. His egoistic life is for ever relinquished. That is his Nirvāṇa. It does not mean at the same time the disappearance of his body. He lives but not for himself. He lives like a Jīvanmukta. The Mahāyānist depicts their mukta or liberated individual as one who himself becomes free from his personal desires, aspirations, passions and egoism; but over and above that he lives a life which is dedicated to the betterment and elevation of the other people who suffer, are helpless and stand in need of his assistance. He looks upon the suffering people with profound compassion and love. He showers his sympathies and love upon them and helps them gradually to rise above their rotten lives. He acts not as their saviour, and deliverer but as their guide and teacher. He bears goodwill towards all and ill-will towards none. He is moved by their afflictions and sufferings and hence bears forever sympathy and compassion for them. He looks upon the weaklings of the world with the motherly affection and tries to heal their wounds with the delicate hand and tenderly heart of the mother. He universalises himself and lives for others. He refuses perfection that has come to himself as he is moved by the altruistic motive of living for all. He refuses to enter the final Nirvāṇa so long as his fellow beings remain suffering in Saṁsāra. He is prepared to undergo even numerous births for the uplift and betterment of the teeming millions. There lies the greatness of the Mahāyāna saint. He then

**Buddhism****223**

lives as a part of the great Dharmakāya. He becomes an embodiment of perfect love, sympathy and peace. He stands firm like a rock, ever prepared to face evil. He acts like the divine healer who relieves the weak and the meek of their pains. He stands as an embodiment of selflessness, peace, purity, tranquillity, freshness, tenderness, excellence and grandeur and preaches with all modesty the great doctrine of universal peace, universal love and universal brotherhood.

## CHAPTER V

### JAINISM

Jainism represents a powerful reaction against the orthodox Brāhmanic religion. Jainism represents a revolt against the old Vedic sacrificialism. The Vedic religion had been degraded at that time. In the name of sacrifices to be offered to Gods to appease them, serious atrocities were being committed. Cārvākism and Jainism are called anti-Vedic schools for this reason that they resisted the Brāhmanic aggression on other castes and that they fought against the Brāhmanic practices of perpetrating atrocities in the name of religion and God. Jainism was simultaneous with Buddhism and both preached the principles of love and sympathy. Jainism, like Buddhism, strove to do away with class distinctions based upon birth and occupation and thereby to combat the Brāhmanic arrogance and aggression. Jainism did not completely abolish the class distinctions but it did not attach to the classes the original religious sanctity of Brāhmanism. Jainism denounced like Buddhism the authority of the Vedas; and it did not believe also in God. Jainism is therefore atheistic and anti-Vedic; however, it retained some of the features of the Brāhmanic religion. As A. Barth describes it — “The Jainas, like the Buddhists, reject the Veda of the Brāhmanas, which they pronounce apocryphal and



corrupt, and to which they oppose their own Āngas, as constituting the true Veda. They observe caste distinctions without attaching religious significance to them.”<sup>1</sup> Like the Buddhists, the Jainas did not admit the existence of a creator or God because they thought it to be unnecessary. They could explain the world without God. According to them, the world is eternal. Another reason for the denial of God must have been their dislike for the Brāhmanic predominance which exploited God for its own supremacy. Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson describes the causes of the Jain revolt against the Brāhmanic supremacy in the following manner. Jainism raised its voice against the caste-hierarchy and made the way to turn ascetic easier, more practicable and accessible to the persons of all castes. According to Jainism, any person who accepts the Jain-creed can turn a wandering mendicant at any stage in his life; and that Mokṣa can be attained by all persons irrespective of their castes provided that they lead that type of life which is prescribed by Jainism. Stevenson describes the reason why the reformers like the Jainas and the Bouddhas must have felt dislike for the sacrificial Vedic practices. She writes—“The faith of the woodland peoples inspired them with the idea that all things—animals, insects, leaves and clouds—were possessed of souls; and this, together with the growing weight of their belief in transmigration, gave them a shrinking horror of taking life in any form, whether in sacrifice or sport, lest the blood of the slain should chain them still more firmly to the wheel of rebirth. So

<sup>1</sup> A. Barth : *The Religions of India*, p. 143.

they came to dislike both creed and the pretensions of their own priests, and the times were indeed ripe for revolt."<sup>1</sup>

Jainism shares some features of Buddhism, but it does not believe in universal impermanence like Buddhism. It believes that in spite of the incessant change that is going on in the world there is something stable which remains identical. Buddhism denied the existence of any substance or substratum against which change would be going on for ever. Jainism does not maintain that there is something which does not admit change; on the contrary it maintains that in spite of the incessant change and changing attributes there remains something that persists. The substance is that which persists in and through its own qualities and modifications. Thus the substance and its attributes are inseparable. There cannot be a thing without qualities nor can there be qualities without the substance. A thing is defined as that which has many qualities. (Ananta-dharmātmakam vastu.)

Jainism recognises nine categories of fundamental truths. The nine categories of Jainism are (i) Jīva (जीव), (ii) Ajīva (अजीव), (iii) Puṇya (पुण्य), (iv) Pāpa (पाप), (v) Āśrava (आस्रव), (vi) Saṁvara (संवर), (vii) Bandha (बन्ध), (viii) Nirjarā (निर्जरा), and (ix) Mokṣa (मोक्ष). Jainism interprets the whole world in terms of these nine categories.

The whole universe is analysed into the two everlasting and uncreated independent categories of

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<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 4, 5.

Jīva and Ajīva. The Jīva is the enjoyer and Ajīva is the jada or the things enjoyed. The Jīva has consciousness while the Ajīva is devoid of consciousness but it can be perceived with the sense organs. The Jīva is the conscious agent, that which desires, enjoys pleasures and avoids pain and reaps the fruits of actions. This division between the Jīva and Ajīva does not correspond to I and not-I. All animate things, those which have the vital principle in them and those that are capable of auto-movement possess the soul or Jīva according to the Jainas. S. Radhakrishnan writes—"Jīva and ajīva do not correspond to I and not-I. It is an objective classification of things in the universe that underlies the distinction of Jīva and ajīva."<sup>1</sup>

It is said in the *Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha* that the Jīva alone is conscious and the ajīva has no consciousness.<sup>2</sup> Hemācārya describes the Jīva or soul as follows—"It performs different kinds of actions, it reaps the fruit of those actions, it circles round returning again; these and none other are the characteristics of the soul."<sup>3</sup> The Jain Jīva or soul is not momentary or it is not changing every moment as the Buddhist Self is; because, in that case, the possibility of the enjoyment of the actions of the Self here on the earth or in the heaven cannot be maintained. If the doer does not remain the same and

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 314-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha*, p. 67.

तत्र बोधात्मको जीवः । अबोधात्मकस्त्वजीवः ।

<sup>3</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Search for Sanskrit Mss. in 1883-84*, p. 106.

permanent how can the actions belong to it and how will it be able to reap the fruits of its actions? The soul as the doer (Kartā) and the soul as the enjoyer (bhoktā) must therefore, be the same. If the Soul changes every moment, as the Buddhists hold, then the possibility of pertaining of the actions to it and enjoying their fruits will have to be abandoned. In order to avoid this absurdity, the Jainas hold that the Jīva or soul is permanent. If the permanence of the soul be not admitted, some one will be the doer of actions and some other will be the reaper of their fruits.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it becomes necessary that one who does a deed previously, enjoys its fruits subsequently and that the results of actions must be perpetrated on the doer of the actions and not on any other person who does not perform the actions.

There are infinite Jivas. Each animate being possesses a soul or Jīva. The Jīva is essentially constituted of consciousness and it is the sentient principle in every animate thing. It is separately possessed by each animate object; the animation of every animate object is due to the presence of the Jīva. 'Pudgala' which means matter which is termed as ajīva, is completely devoid of consciousness and animation or the vital energy, and hence, it stands in direct contradiction to the Jīva. But even though they possess contrary attributes they are not completely separated from each other; on the contrary

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvaders' unasoṅgraha*, p. 48.

न ह्येतद्वैभवत्यन्यः करोति अन्यो भुङ्क्त इति ।

they are related very closely and are separable only in the state of liberation. As Nahar describes it—"The difference between Jiva and ajiva is not absolute one. They are related to each other as subject and object. They are not incompatible. They are related to each other in an organic unity. Soul is subtle substance."<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh further distinguish the two in following words—"Pudgala matter has weight and fills the space; but the essence of soul is conceived in self-consciousness absolutely devoid of any materiality."<sup>2</sup>

About the innumerable number of the Jivas Nahar further writes—"This soul-substance of the Jainas is not a single all-pervading reality without a second of its kind to stand by it. There is an infinity of these souls. And though true it is that an infinite number of these has become free from the turmoils of the world; yet there remains an infinite number struggling for freedom; for if infinity is taken from infinity the remainder is infinite itself."<sup>3</sup>

The soul is not an exclusive possession of human beings, according to Jainism. It allows the soul principle to extend to all the living things of the universe. As Nahar explains the range of existence of the souls—"It is these souls in plasms that lie scattered in every nook and corner of the universe and each is the doer of good or bad deeds to reap the consequences of which each takes the repetition of births and deaths according to the merits of its

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 279.

own Karma, and thus traverses through the various grades of saṁsāra. Heaven, Hell or purgatory or ultimately release itself from the fetters of bondage by the dissipation of its own Karma whereupon it becomes pure and perfect and fixed as it were in the regions of Aloke."<sup>1</sup>

The soul is eternal in its pure form but while it is in the cycle of saṁsāra it seems to possess beginning and end; it seems to be born and dead. Nuhar writes—"Thus we see a reality, the soul has no beginning nor end; but viewed with the light of its own states or grades of existence, it has a beginning and an end—and herein lies the reason why the soul is stated to be both with and without form. So long as it has to go round and round through the repetition of births and deaths it has a form. But viewed with the light of bliss and beatitude which it attains to by being freed from Karma, it has no form. For, if on the one hand, the soul is to have a form by the virtue of its own, then it cannot be dull insentient matter—pudgala devoid of all consciousness and intelligence (jñānacaitanya or saab.ta); on the other hand, if it be absolutely formless then by the virtue of its being free from all activities too (kriyārāhitvāt), bondage and freedom would become incompatible with its own nature and saṁsāra too would be impossible and there would, therefore, be no necessity for teachers to impart instructions on the real nature of the soul nor for scriptures enjoying duties which are required

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 279.

to be performed for the attainment of Nirvāṇam sāntam.”<sup>1</sup>

The Jīva or soul is a Dravya or elementary substance which is uncreated. Hence it ought to be called eternal. The *Sarvadars'ānasaṅgraha* describes also the Bhinnābhinna relation between the soul and knowledge. The soul on the one hand cannot be separated from knowledge nor can it be completely identified with knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Thus, even though consciousness (caitanya) is the natural and essential characteristic of the Jīva, knowledge or jñāna is not so because it depends upon the particular state in which the soul appears. The form and degree of the knowledge that it possesses depends upon the particular avasthā or condition in which it exists. Therefore, the knowledge as possessed by the soul is variable and relative to the particular position that it occupies. Hence such a variable characteristic cannot be said to be its permanent and essential characteristic. Therefore, the Jīva or soul is said to be bhinnaabhinna, neither entirely identical nor entirely different from knowledge. It is both one with and different from knowledge.<sup>3</sup> The relation between the soul and knowledge is not one of samavāya (inherence).<sup>4</sup> Without consciousness it cannot know and discriminate and will, and therefore, cannot be legitimately held responsible for doing

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars'ānasaṅgraha*, p. 69.

ज्ञानादभिन्नो न नाभिन्नो भिन्नाभिन्नः कश्चन ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> *Syādvādamanjari*, p. 48.

deeds and cannot be consistently made to reap the fruits of its deeds. The doer and the enjoyer must be the same so that the results can be attributed to the doer himself as he has willed them. J. Jaini writes about the soul—"The soul is a Dravya, therefore, like every other Dravya it is eternal. Its peculiar attributes are perception and knowledge. It is different from Karma or matter and therefore, immaterial. It has identified itself with matter; therefore it assumes a body, to which it must fit. It is responsible for its Karmas, because it has the power to get rid of them all. It must reap the harvest of all seeds that it has sown; and therefore, must remain in the field of saṃsāra, or cycle of existences. And still all these evils are self-assumed; and in its pure condition the soul is siddha."<sup>1</sup>

The most important and noteworthy feature of the Jain doctrine of soul is that the size of the Jiva or soul changes according to the size of the body which it occupies. If the body that it occupies is big the soul becomes even as big as an elephant, and if the same enters the body of an ant it compresses itself and assumes the smallest size of the ant. Thus, the sizes of the soul are variable, and they depend upon the sizes of the bodies which they occupy. The same soul thus becomes small or great as the case may be. The soul-substance is regarded so much subtle that it is infinitely compressible and infinitely expandible; so that it can fill any body that it happens to occupy as a result of its acts. The same soul which

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<sup>1</sup> Jaini Jagmanderlal : *Outlines of Jainism*, p. 18.



is once as big as an elephant becomes as minute as an ant. Such an idea is no doubt open to serious objections. In case a body loses some of its parts or if in case it gets deformed, it will result in a damage to the soul also, because it is co-terminus with the body. Just as the body is subject to birth and death and various modifications, the soul also will be subject to these alterations and may share many deformities along with the pudgala—the bodily substance.

It is said in the *Dravya-Samgraha* — “According to Vyavahāra Naya, the conscious Jiva, being without Samudghāta, becomes equal in extent to a small or large body, by contraction and expansion; but according to Niscaya Naya (it), is existent in innumerable Pradesas.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Jainism the soul in its impure state possesses the following nine properties which have been enumerated by Jaini—(1) The soul lived in the past, is living now, and shall live for ever. (2) It has perception and knowledge. (3) It is immaterial, i.e., it has no touch, taste, smell or colour. (4) It is the only responsible agent of all its actions. (5) It completely fills the body which it occupies, e.g., that of an ant or an elephant. (6) It enjoys the fruits of all its Karmas. (7) It wanders in Samisāra. (8) It can become in its perfect condition siddha. (9) It goes upward.<sup>2</sup> The Jainas recognise two kinds

<sup>1</sup> Ghosal S. C. (Editor) : *Dravya-Samgraha*, p. 10/(28),  
The Sacred Books of the Jains.

<sup>2</sup> Jaini J. : *Outlines of Jainism*, pp. 17-18.

of souls; i.e., the Samsārin and the Siddha Jivas. The Siddha Jiva is the liberated soul and the Samsārin Jiva is the soul in bondage. It is also called the mundane soul, and it is combined with Karmic matter.<sup>1</sup> S. Dasgupta also describes the soul in the following way. He writes—“The soul in its pure state is possessed of infinite perception (अनन्तदर्शन), infinite knowledge (अनन्तज्ञान), infinite bliss (अनन्तसुख) and infinite power (अनन्तवीर्य). It is all-perfect. Ordinarily however, with the exception of a few released pure souls, all other jivas (samsārin) have all their purity and power covered with a thin veil of Karma—matter which has been accumulating in them from beginningless time.”<sup>2</sup> The *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* defines the Samsārin Jivas as that which passes from birth to birth.<sup>3</sup>

The soul in bondage (samsāri) passes from birth to birth in search of unending bliss and happiness. In its worldly state it is devoid of such bliss but it is fully capable of realising it in its perfect and liberated state. It tastes various fruits—bitter and sweet of the worldly acts but does not feel contented with them; it ultimately rests in the eternal bliss of perfection (mukta). The Jiva possesses in addition to the five powers belonging to the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and audition, three powers known as Baḷa Prāṇa which are—“... bodily power (Kāya-baḷa), speech (Vacanabaḷa) and mind (manabaḷa).

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*, p. 70.

The ninth Prāṇa Ānapāna prāṇa gives the powers of respiration; and the tenth prāṇa, Āyu prāṇa, is the possession of the allotted span of life during which the jiva has to sustain a particular bodily form.<sup>1</sup> It is said in the Dravya-Saṃgraha — “According to Vyavahāra Naya, that is called Jiva, which is possessed of four Prāṇas, viz. Indriya (the senses), Bala (force), Āyu (life) and the Āṇa-prāṇa (respiration) in the three periods of time (viz. the present, the past and the future) and according to Nischaya Naya, that which has consciousness is called Jiva.”<sup>2</sup>

Jainism possesses quite an elaborate and thorough-going classification of Jivas. The Jivas are broadly divided into the intelligent (samanaska) and un-intelligent (amanaska). The samanaska Jivas are those who are saṃjñin or capable of receiving education and instruction and the amanaska are those who are incapable of receiving the saṃjñā in the form of education and instruction and of imitating actions of others. The samanaska Jivas are those that are capable of thinking in terms of the goodness and badness of actions, i.e., discrimination. They can reflect over the nature of actions and can discriminate good from bad, right from wrong. In this category fall the Gods (Devas), the Gandharvas and human beings.<sup>3</sup> Umāswamin also divides the Saṃsārin Jivas broadly into two classes—as the Trāsas and the Sthāvaras. The earth, water and

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Ghosal S. C. : *Dravya-Saṃgraha*, pp. 4, 5. The Sacred Books of the Jainas.

<sup>3</sup> *Sarvadars'anasaṃgraha*, p. 70.

vegetables belong to the category of the Sthāvaras and fire, air and those who are possessed of two senses belong to the category of the Trāsas.<sup>1</sup> But the *Sarvādars'anasāṅgraha* states that the names—Trāsa and Sthāvara—are given according to the peculiar types of functions which those things do. The Trāsa Jīvas are those who are governed by the Trāsa activities and Trāsa Karma is defined as a mixture of the good and bad.<sup>2</sup> The *Sarvādars'anasāṅgraha* clearly states that the samanaska Jīvas belong only to the class of the Trāsas and even among them to the class of those that possess five senses. The commentary of the *Sarvādars'anasāṅgraha* further states that the Sthāvaras are those that exercise the aśubha—bad Karma.

The Trāsas (त्रस) are classified according to the number of sense organs; the organisms possessing two senses (Dvīndriya—दीन्द्रिय), three sense organs (Trīndriya—त्रीन्द्रिय), four sense organs (Caturīndriya—चतुरिन्द्रिय) and those with five sense organs. S. Dasgupta gives the list of the jīvas classified on the basis of the number of sense organs. He writes—“The lowest class consists of plants, which possess only the sense organ of touch. The next higher class is that of worms, which possess two sense organs of touch and taste. Next come the ants, etc. which possess touch, taste and smell. The next higher one that of bees, etc. possessing vision in addition to touch, taste and smell. The vertebrates possess

<sup>1</sup> Umāśwāmī : *Tattvārthadhigama Sūtra* — 2/31 p. 42, 2/14 p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvādars'anasāṅgraha*, p. 79 (Com.).

all the five sense organs. The higher animals among these, namely men, denizens of hell, and the gods possess in addition to these an inner sense organ namely *manas* by virtue of which they are called rational (*saṁjñin*) while the lower animals have no reason and are called *asaṁjñin*.”<sup>1</sup>

The Jainas invest all the things of the universe with spirit or the Jīva. Even the things like stones and bricks which are only *Sthāvaras* or immovable things are imagined to be possessing soul. All the things of nature which appear to and are called inanimate by an ordinary man, seem to be possessed of Jīvas to a Kevali and thus Jainism holds a kind of pan-spiritualism—the whole universe is invested with the spirit. The *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha* also states—“That is the Pṛithvijīva who accepts the Pṛithivi as his body.”<sup>2</sup> Nothing is without the soul; though the degree of the expression of the soul is varying in the various objects of the world, the whole world with its objects is possessed of the Jīva in some form. Vegetables, winds and cyclones, fire, heat, electricity and magnetic force, dew drops and fogs, stones and bricks also possess the soul, though at the lowest level. As we ascend higher in virtue of the number of sense organs we find that gradually the worms, beeches, earthworms, ants, bugs, moths, wasps, scorpions, mosquitoes, gnats, flies, locusts and butterflies and the hell beings, lower animals, human beings and demigods—all these small and big

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha*, p. 70. (Com.).

things possess soul though not visible to all. Thus we find it is a kind of pan-spiritualism; nothing in the world is devoid of the soul or Jiva.

It appears that as all the things are possessed of souls and soul has a definite nature of consciousness and bliss, all things are manifestations of one spirit which is omnipresent and the same in all. But the Jainas do not reduce all the particular finite souls to one single spiritual principle or universal self; they, on the contrary, maintain the existence of infinite independent souls. Stevenson clearly sounds a warning against such a confusion. She writes—  
“They also differ, of course, from the Vedāntists, who believe in one all-soul, not in numberless individual souls like these.”<sup>1</sup>

The Jains divide the Saṃsārī Jivas also according to sex. There are male Jivas, female Jivas and the neuter Jivas. In fact the sex does not belong to the essential nature of the Jiva; it is a physical adjunct with which the abstract principle of sentience, i.e. the Jiva is associated, while living in the earthly life. The *Tattvārthadhigamasātram* of Umā-swamin or the *Sarvadars'anasaṅgraha* does not mention this division of the Jiva according to sex. This division is obtained in the ‘Heart of Jainism’ by Stevenson. Similarly she mentions the division of soul according to the place where it was born. According to this division there are four possible Jivas. The Jivas born in hell are called the Nārakī;

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<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 98 (foot note).

those that are born in a state lower than human and inhabiting the bodies of insects, birds, reptiles, animals, or plants, are named as Tiryañc; Manuṣya are Jīva born as human beings; and those who are born as spirits, whether gods or demons.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Jainas make an exhaustive classification of the Jīvas on the basis of various physical differences. The division of the Jīvas is not a real metaphysical division, it has no bearing on the substantial nature of the Jīva, but these differences are differences of the physical bodies in which the Jīva is embodied. There is a very complicated and detailed classification of the Jīvas—but it is not of use for our metaphysical purpose.

Like other Indian Philosophical systems, Jainism also holds that the Jīvas in the Saṃsāri condition are in bondage and that they become Siddhas when they attain liberation or Mokṣa. According to Jainism, the Jīva remains in bondage so long as it is in contact with the Karmic matter. The Karma matter actually sticks to the Jīva and thus it keeps the Jīva in bondage or bandha. The Jainas call this particular phenomenon of the influx of the Karmic matter into the soul the *Āsrava* (आस्रव). As Jaini says—“The actual investing of the soul by the Karmic matter which has flowed into it is called bondage.”<sup>2</sup> It is further said in the *Dravya Saṃgraha* that the soul gets modified by the influx of the Karma-matter into it. It states—“The modification of the soul by

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Jaini J. : *Outlines of Jainism*, p. 39.

which Karma gets into (it), is to be known as Bhāvāsrava, as told by the Jīva, and the other (kind of Āsrava) is the influx of Karma.”<sup>1</sup> The Āsrava is the cause of the bondage of the soul. The two main kinds of bondage are the Bhāva-bandha and the other is the Dravya-bandha. Jaini writes — “The psychical condition which allows this is called bhāva-bandha. It corresponds exactly to Bhāvāsrava, and arises from false belief, want of character, etc. . . — The actual mingling of Karmic matter with the particles (prades/as) of the soul is dravya-bandha.” The Karma has a material form. There are atoms of Karma which are extremely fine and subtle; and the Karmic atoms stick to the soul as oil sticks to cloth. The Karmic atoms cover the soul and soil its pure form. Thus the mental disposition for the reception of certain Karmic influx on the soul forms the primary and the major condition of the pollution of the soul by the Karmic matter. The Bhāva-bandha operates as a precedent condition of the Dravya-bandha. The actual extent and intensity of the coalescence of the Karmic matter with the soul is determined by the former mental disposition. The subjective aspect of bondage conditions the objective part of it.

The particular way in which the dravyasaṁbandha or dravyāsrava takes place is very peculiar, according to Jainism. Jainism holds that their relation is one of identity or Tādātmya just as water and milk mix up with each other indistinguishably.

<sup>1</sup> Ghosal S. C. (Tr.) : *Dravya Saṁgraha* — 29 p. 71.



Nahar and Ghosh write—“Bandha is coalescence of the soul and Karma matter like milk and water.”<sup>1</sup> S. Dasgupta expresses the relation between the two in the following words—“The actual connections of the Karmas with the soul are like the sticking of dust on the body of a person who is besmeared all over with oil. Thus Guṇaratna says—“The influx of Karma means the contact of the particles of Karma matter, in accordance with the particular kind of Karma, with the soul, just like the sticking of dust on the body of a person besmeared with oil. In all parts of the soul there being infinite number of Karma atoms it becomes so completely covered with them that in some sense when looked at from that point of view the soul is sometimes regarded as a material body during its saṃsāra stage.”<sup>2</sup> The same is said in the *Sarvadars'anasaṅgraha*.<sup>3</sup>

Jainism recognises four kinds of bondage or bandha; they are the Prakṛiti, Sthiti, Anubhāga and the Pradeśa bandha. The Dravya Saṃgraha says—“Bandha is of four kinds, according to the subdivisions viz. Prakṛiti, Sthiti, Anubhāga and Pradeśa. Prakṛiti and Pradeśa are (produced) from Yoga; but Sthiti and Anubhāga are from Kaṣāya.”<sup>4</sup> Thus bondage is classified in four ways—The Prakṛiti bandha is bondage according to one's nature; the nature of the bondage which arises from our action

<sup>1</sup> Jaini J. : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 544.

<sup>2</sup> Dasgupta S. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 193-94.

<sup>3</sup> *Sarvadars'anasaṅgraha*, p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> Ghosal S. C. : *Dravya Saṅgraha*, p. 33/82.

depends upon the nature of our actions; if the doer is by nature bitter and sharp so will be his Karma and its bondage; if he is sweet and pleasant so will be his bondage. Bondage according to Sthiti is according to duration; it may last for any length of time—extending to even thousands of years. The bondage depends also upon the intensity or Anubhāga; it may be fast and loose, sharp and acute and with angularities. The Prades'abandha refers to the different parts of the soul to which the Karma particles attach themselves. The duration of stay of any Karma and its varying intensity are due to the nature of the Kaṣāyas or passions of the soul. It is really queer and difficult to connect together the two entities—the soul and the Karma pudgala vitally when the soul, the cognitive and cogitative soul has nothing in common with the latter—the Karma which actually penetrates into the soul and remains at one with it.

The Jainas further recognise eight kinds of Karmas as the influx of Karmas affects the soul in eight different manners. The eightfold Karmas are thus—(i) the jñānāvaraṇīya (ज्ञानावरणीय) (ii) the darsanāvaraṇīya (दर्शनावरणीय), (iii) the Vedaṇīya (वेदनीय), (iv) the mohaniya (मोहनीय), (v) the āyu (आयु), (vi) the nāma (नाम), (vii) the gotra (गोत्र) and the (viii) antarāya (अन्तराय).

The Jñānāvaraṇīya Karma prevents our receiving mental illumination. The Jñānāvaraṇīya Karma is further subdivided into eight more classes. The Jñānāvaraṇīya Karma not only impedes us in gaining

true knowledge and sound learning but actually gives rise to false and hurtful knowledge and misuse of the intellectual powers. It comprises of Mati ajñāna, Sruta ajñāna, etc.

The Darśanāvaraṇīya Karma prevents our beholding the truth. It obstructs our realisation of the final truth. The Vedanīya Karma makes us experience pleasant or sweet fruits or the bitter and painful results of our previous deeds. The Mohanīya Karma causes in us infatuation by means of worldly attachments and indulgence of our passions. Because of the operation of this Karma one begins to consider the good things as unwholesome and the bad ones as wholesome. The Āyu Karma fixes the length of time for a Jīva to spend in a particular form which has been given to it by its Karma. It determines the span of life of the gods, human beings and the animals of the lower species. The Gotra Karma determines the caste in which a Jīva may be born and spend its life throughout the period of his existence. The Antarāya Karma is responsible for causing the puzzle and unwillingness in the mind of persons to let go important and favourable opportunities for their uplift and betterment. It is called the hindering Karma as it hinders the right decisions at right times. These eight kinds of Karmas can further be comprised under two categories of Karma — known as the Ghātin and Aghātin karama. The Jñānāvaraṇīya, Darśanāvaraṇīya, Mohanīya and the Antarāya Karma are known as the Ghātin Karmas and the Vedanīya, Āyu, Nāma and Gotra

Karmas are known as the Aghātin Karmas. All these Karmas cause covering—āvaraṇa—over the soul, and the soul is thrown into delusion out of which the bondage arises. Bondage is of course primarily caused by ignorance or ajñāna about the real nature of the ultimate reality or truth. The removal of Karma from the soul enables the soul to enjoy peace and bliss which are in its nature.

Jainism holds that the Karma matter has extremely fine atoms which are imperceptible by the senses. It also holds that the Karmic matter actually enters the soul just as water enters into a boat through holes. There are forty two main channels, which are called Āsravas through which the Karma enters the Jivas; among these forty two seventeen are considered major ones.

The Jainas maintain a peculiar view about the influx of the Karma into the soul. They hold that the Karmic matter enters a Jīva through the senses. Stevenson mentions these ways of entrance of the Karmic matter into the soul. A Karma may be good or bad but every Karma produces attachment to the objects of experience into the soul, and thus, ultimately it makes one indulge into those experiences for ever. Finally, it leads to unbroken fetters, and thus, the Jīva cannot enjoy its original blissful nature. Stevenson mentions the Kāna āsrava, Ānkha āsrava, Nāka āsrava, the Jībha āsrava and the sparsa āsrava—which mean the inflow of the Karmic matter into the soul through the ear, eye, nose, tongue and skin

respectively.<sup>1</sup> Similarly the Jainas also hold that the Karmic matter flows also through emotions (Kaṣāya). There are four kinds of ās'ravas : the Krodha ās'rava, the Māna ās'rava, the Māyā ās'rava and the Lobha ās'rava, which put the soul into fetters and hinder the soul's enjoyment of its blissful nature. The Jainas give a long and elaborate list of the ways by which the soul comes to be tied to the earthly life. They also recognise the S'ubha and the As'ubha ās'rava—through which good and evil Karmas enter into the soul. If one obtains good influence by meditating upon the Tīrthankara, instead of good Karma merit or puṇya flows into it. The various kinds of ās'ravas are nothing but those ways by which one comes to be attached to the things of earthly life, which create in him attachment and false impressions. It makes him experience pleasurable or painful experiences, and thus, he moves continuously in the circle of birth and death. The original peace and tranquillity of the Jīva is lost, and thus, he continues to exist in bondage. So long as one remains under the influence of Karma one has to experience the good or evil fruits of it, and thus, remains for ever unsteady and unhappy.

The root cause of the Jīva's falling into bondage is subreption or Mithyātva. The subreption is like the nescience of the Vedānta. It consists in false identification of soul and Karma-matter and their attributes. It consists in wrongly attributing those qualities to the soul which do not belong to it as

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair; *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 139-40.

its essential nature. It is caused by wrong ascription of qualities to the soul, in supposing the soul to be that which it is not in reality at all. The *Sarvadars'ana-saṅgraha* states that bondage arises out of influx of the Karmic-matter into the soul because of wrong-perception (mithyādarśana).<sup>1</sup> The soul in its essential nature is free and does not partake either in bodily pleasure or in pain. It is free from such modifications in its real state. It is said by Nahar and Ghosh—“It is in reality neither fettered nor tainted with any of the blemishes; neither it is in reality the agent of any deed nor the enjoyer of any fruits thereof. But by subreption it becomes an object to itself through the other media of organism and senses and introspection and thereby appears as the Jīva Bhoktā and Kartā. The energy is provided by the mind stuff which is bereft of intelligence and intellectuality.”<sup>2</sup> The same authors make it clear further by saying that this subreption (mithyātva) is itself Ajñāna, and that it can be removed not by good Karma or any kind of Karma, since Karma can generate only Karma and nothing else.<sup>3</sup> Jainism shares the view of the other Indian Philosophical systems that the root cause of bondage and misery is ignorance, nescience or subreption, and that one can attain deliverance from this bondage by acquiring real knowledge of the soul. That self-realization is the path of liberation; that Mokṣa can be attained by right knowledge of the soul.

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'ana-saṅgraha*, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 548.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 616.

The aim of Jain philosophy is the same as that of other systems of Indian Philosophy, and it is the attainment of Mokṣa or liberation. The Jīva in its saṃsāri state suffers various kinds of afflictions. It experiences pleasures as well as pains; but it never enjoys the unshakable peace for which it strives. All the earthly experiences which the Jīva feels are momentary; they are not everlasting. As all the experiences come to an end now or then, in short or long periods, they cannot yield eternal peace and satisfaction. So long as one is bound to this earthly life he is under bondage; he is imprisoned in the fetters of attachments; so long as one comes to attach himself to objects, he has desires and due to those desires, Karmas or actions are performed, which in their turn bear their fruits which one has to experience in successive births. Thus, so long as one is bound by Karmas he keeps on revolving on the wheel of births and deaths, and remains eternally under bondage. The eternal peace and bliss for which he strives can never be attained so long as the operation of the Karma over the Jīva does not come to an end. Karma may be sūbha (good) or Asūbha (evil). It may have pleasurable consequences or painful ones; but it can never terminate the earthly existence. On the contrary, the bonds of earthly life get strengthened by the repeatedly performed actions. It has already been stated that bondage is due to Mithyātava or subreption or delusion, which arises out of ignorance about the real nature of things. As the soul's real nature is hidden from us by ignorance, the ignorance which

produces false beliefs and delusion (mithyātvā मिथ्यात्व) when removed can effect liberation. As Nahar and Ghosh say — “Karma and Knowledge are altogether opposite to each other in kind, but Karma does not stand in such relation of opposition to nescience. Hence Karma cannot be said to remove nescience (Ajñāna). Nescience which means misapprehension, doubtful knowledge, can only be removed by knowledge alone and not by Karma.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, a right understanding of the soul alone can deliver one from the bondage of the Jiva. No Karma can bring to an end Karma. On the contrary, cessation of the operation of Karma frees the soul for ever from the fetters which cause to him afflictions.

The Karma particles which penetrate into the soul prevent the pure perception of the soul of its own nature. As S. Dasgupta describes — “In the saṃsāra state on account of the Karma veils this purity is sullied, and the veils are only worn out imperfectly and thus reveal this and that object at this and that time as ordinary knowledge (mati), testimony (Śruti), supernatural cognition, as in trance or hypnotism (avadhi), and direct knowledge of the thoughts of others or thought reading — (manaḥ paryāya.).”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the particles of Karma-matter which adhere to the soul, make the soul obscure and dusty, they cause a kind of covering or veil (Āvaraṇa) upon the soul, and hence, the soul

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 616.

<sup>2</sup> S. Dasgupta : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. p. 207.



falls into delusion, and mistakes his own nature for something else which it is not in actuality. Therefore, the Jainas hold that Mokṣa can be effected by removing all Karma or veil of the Karma from the soul (सर्ववर्णविमुक्ति मुक्तिः). Complete deliverance from veil and covering of Karma is called mokṣa or emancipation. Thus as Nahar says—"Mokṣa is the emancipation of the soul from the snares of Karma (Karmapāsha)."<sup>1</sup>

Liberation or Mokṣa, thus, is not produced as a positive thing. It can be only negatively be attained by making oneself free from the Karma or influence of the Karma.

According to Jainism the Jīva is constitutionally free and potentially divine. The Jīva, in fact, is not the real enjoyer of the earthly pleasures and pains nor is the doer of actions. As Nahar and Ghosh say—"Self is Niscaya Naya. It is in reality neither fettered nor tainted with any of the blemishes, neither it is in reality the agent of any deed, nor the enjoyer of any fruits thereof. But by subreption it becomes an object to itself through the other media of organism and senses and introspection and thereby appears as the Jīva—bhoktā and kartā."<sup>2</sup> It is said that the soul in Mokṣa enjoys a state of pure and infinite knowledge (anantajñāna) and infinite perception (anantadarśana). The Jīva is constitutionally free and the real bliss belongs only to the soul. It has been said in the commentary on

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 617.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 548.

the Dravya Saṃgraha — “Really speaking Jīvas only enjoy eternal bliss which is their essential characteristic. Therefore, according to Nīschaya Naya, a Jīva should only be regarded as an enjoyer of bliss resulting from its characteristic of consciousness. But through the generation of attachment, aversion, etc., Jīvas attain such condition that they become ready for the assimilation of matter. It is only in such states of Jīvas that there is an influx of matter in them. When there is such an influx of matter the Jīvas have to enjoy sorrow and delight, happiness and misery, as these are the fruits of Puḍgala Karmas. Thus, really, a Jīva through its characteristic consciousness, is incapable of being affected by happiness or misery — the fruits of material Karmas. It is only when matter assimilates itself with a Jīva that we see the fruits of material Karmas also in that Jīva, and say that this Jīva is enjoying happiness or misery as the fruits of material Karmas. But it should be remembered that this enjoyment of the fruits of Karma by a Jīva is only apparent, not real. Really speaking Jīvas enjoy bliss only, which is the resultant of its characteristic consciousness.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is quite clear that the Jīvas are eternal according to the Jainas and that bliss is inherent with them; but it is obscured and distorted because of the assimilation of the Karmic matter into the Soul. In the state of emancipation the soul transcends the states of worldly pleasures and pains and enjoys

<sup>1</sup> Ghosal S. C. : *Dravyasaṃgraha*, Vol. I, The Sacred Books of the Jainas.

its real original nature of bliss and knowledge. During the state of emancipation the soul gets completely detached from the Karma.

Jainism, thus, pictures the state of Mokṣa not as something which is created anew by human efforts; but it is something like the recovering of a lost object. Mokṣa according to Jainism means self-finding; it consists in recovering one's consciousness of soul which had been forgotten or had become obscure due to delusion or subreption (Mithyātvā). It consists in regaining one's lost self. In Mokṣa the soul enjoys in its perfection its original blissful and omniscient state. It is a kind of self-rule where everything is pervaded and governed by one's own soul. Nahar and Ghosh describe it as "For the Jains it is a kind of swarajya, self rule, a state of autonomy, pure and simple, which every jīva instinctively aspires after to realize by tearing asunder the veil or the covering in and through the process of which the Ideal is realised and complete deliverance from the veil and covering of Karma is called mokṣa."<sup>1</sup> It is a kind of illumination where the soul is in its eternal purity. In this state the flame of the soul burns steadily without flickering and the Karma particles no more dare to touch it. The light of the knowledge of soul dispels the darkness of ignorance and delusion. It is a state of eternal rest and bliss. Thus, when mokṣa is attained the possibility of rebirth is completely brought to an end. One who attains to mokṣa becomes a Siddha, a perfected

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<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 609.

being. A Siddha is depicted by the Jainas as "one without caste, unaffected by smell, without the sense of taste, without feeling, without form, without hunger, without pain, without sorrow, without joy, without birth, without old age, without death, without body, without Karma, enjoying an endless and unbroken calm."<sup>1</sup>

In order to attain such a state of liberation, the Jainas advocate the Saṁvara which is a process of arresting the influx of Karmic matter into the soul. The flowing of the Karma-matter into the soul has to be checked; otherwise there will not be any possibility of attaining mokṣa. Saṁvara, therefore consists in stopping the inflow of the Karmic matter into the soul.<sup>2</sup> The Saṁvara is twofold. There is Bhāva-saṁvara and there is Dravya-saṁvara. The Bhāva-saṁvara is a kind of subjective mental preparation or the development of consciousness and voluntary striving, mental and moral, along certain lines which can arrest the further influx of the Karmic matter into the soul. It consists in developing a kind of indifference towards the worldly things, and because of that further attachment to the worldly objects can be checked; naturally, the result is no new Karma sticks to the soul. The other kind of saṁvara is Dravya Saṁvara or objective way of preventing the further influx of Karmic matter into the soul, by actually shutting the channels through which the particles of Karma matter enter.

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Jaini J. : *Outlines of Jainism*, p. 40.

It is said in the *Dravya Saṃgraha*—“The modification of consciousness which is the cause of checking Āsrava (influx) of Karma, is surely Bhāva-saṃvara, and the other (known as the Dravya saṃvara is known from) checking Dravyāsrava.”<sup>1</sup> It is further said in the commentary of it—“... the holes will allow influx (Āsrava) of water (Karma) in a boat; but if these holes are stopped (saṃvara), there will be no advent of water (Karma) in the boat (Jīva).”<sup>2</sup> The actual stopping of the inflow of the Karma particles into the soul is known as the Dravyasaṃvara.

This inflow of the Karmic matter into the soul can be effected by observing certain preventive checks—e.g. by practising non-injury to living things while walking (īryā samiti), by avoiding harsh and painful speech (Bhāṣa-samiti), by avoiding food which would inflict pain on living beings (Eṣaṇa samiti), i.e. by avoiding eating things which contain flesh or insects. Similarly the mind has to be controlled (Manogupti) in chiefly three ways. One must not indulge in passions like anger, anxiety, grief or joy, nor should one show a kind of partiality; one must wear equanimous attitude to all persons and show kindness to all; one must similarly observe Vacanagupti by observing complete silence or by speaking as little as possible. One must also practise Kāyagupti (कायगुप्ति)—bodily control, so that he may not harm anything in the world; it is further expected of a saint when he becomes a Kevali that he must maintain his

<sup>1</sup> Ghosal S. C. : *Dravyasaṃgraha*, 34/p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 34/p. 85.

limbs in the state of absolute immobility. The Jains, thus lay, excessive emphasis on the observance of the principle of non-injury to others, or the principle of non-violence. They look upon non-violence as the supreme religion. Similarly in order to arrest the effects of Karma upon the soul, the Jains preach *Paṛiṣaha*—or endurance of hunger, thirst, heat and cold, sting, inconvenient places. Jainism stresses the need of preparedness to suffer all kinds of hardships of food, lodging, reproaches, gains and losses, diseases, dirt, and ignorance of others. He should develop a serene attitude towards all and should not allow himself to be perturbed or harassed by any of these hardships because of which ordinary men feel grief and they lose the balance of mind.

On the contrary, Jainism preaches for a seeker of liberation the necessities of practising positive virtues like forgiveness (*Kṣamā*) to all without feeling the least anger towards anybody for any offense; (*Mārdava*) or humility and modesty towards all by controlling one's arrogance and pride. One must also cultivate (*Ārjava*) or simplicity and honesty by separating himself from every sort of intrigue or deceit in speech or action to fight cunningness. Jainism does not preach the doctrine of 'Tit for tat' or the gospel of paying in the same coins to opponents. On the contrary, it preaches the noble path of overcoming evil with good, of conquering evil with pure means. It believes in the efficacy of the precept of 'winning the opponent by love and forgiveness' or by 'changing the heart'. Jainism has much in

common with Buddhism in so far as it preaches the gospel of universal brotherhood, universal love and universal compassion. Further, the seeker of liberation is expected to be completely free from all greed (Nirlobhatā-निर्लोभता). He must not possess anything except his absolutely necessary clothes otherwise he may develop attachment to objects, and thus, Karma may overcome him and pollute his soul.<sup>1</sup>

Jainism prescribes twofold path for the attainment of Mokṣa. It is said in the *Tattvarthadhigama sūtra* that Mokṣa can be attained by means of austerity and Nirjarā.<sup>2</sup> The seeker of liberation must practise austerities by controlling his body and speech (saṁyama), by telling the truth, by practising purity and cleanliness (S'auca) of body and mind, detachment—not looking upon anything as his own and celibacy and chastity (Brahmacarya). The *Tattvarthadhigama sūtra* advocates the threefold path to reach liberation. It says that the path of liberation lies in right faith or perception, right knowledge and right conduct.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Jainism is not ritualistic or only an ethical school but it believes that liberation can be reached by right knowledge and right conduct. Mokṣa, thus, lies in one's own control. Man can become a siddha if he desires to be and if he tries to be so.

Jainism advocates twelve kinds of austerities in order to reach liberation. It divides the austerities

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair: *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 144, ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Tattvarthadhigama sūtra* : X. 3. तपसा निर्जरा च ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. I. 1. सम्यग्दर्शनज्ञानचरित्राणि मोक्षमार्गः ।

into two parts—(i) The exterior or physical austerity and (ii) the Interior or mental austerity. These austerities help the soul to get a clear insight into the real nature of things. The external austerities or (bāhya tapas) consist in controlling the physical nature of man. The six exterior austerities consist in fasting—(Anasana Vrata-अनशन व्रत), Unodari—avoidance of full meals, Vṛttisarikṣepa—limiting the diet from the points of view of Dravya, Kāla (times), Kṣetra (places) and Bhāva, postures; renunciation of palatable articles and dainty dishes (Rasatyāga), endurance of physical troubles regarding the hot and the cold, avoidance of temptation by control (samīnatā) over the operations of the sense organs on their respective objects.

The other part of austerities is interior austerity which prepares an individual to detach himself from the external allurements and to prevent the further influx of the Karmic matter. It also helps the gradual purgation of the mind of the seeker of liberation. The interior austerity is known as the Antar-tapas. The interior tapas consists in confession, humility, charity, swādhyāya (intensive study), discrimination between the soul and non-soul, and meditation (dhyāna) and penance or repentance for the blunders (pramāda) that he has committed through negligence. The exterior and the interior austerities<sup>1</sup> constitute the ethical code of the Jain sādhus or the seekers of liberation. These austerities purify the individuals by burning the undesirable elements which

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, pp. 591–596.



act as hindrances in the path of the attainment of Mokṣa. These austerities when practised sincerely and honestly, help to arrest the further influx of the Karmic matter into the soul, and its attainment of redemption becomes easier. The practice of such an ethical code naturally purifies the character of an individual and thus he can reach the final state with greater confidence and greater speed.

The other necessity of the attainment of mokṣa is the Nirjarā. Nirjarā means dissipation or throwing off the Karma-matter from the soul. It means the complete neutralization of the Karma-matter. The fetters of the soul may gradually wear out in a lengthy and tedious period. But Nirjarā consists in deliberately casting off the Karmic matter or in hastening the ripening of the Karma and thus shedding it from the soul. As J. Jaini says—"By removing the mind from the demands and impulses of the body, and by mortifying the physical man through not listening to its greed and temptations, matter may be overcome and the soul freed from the bondage."<sup>1</sup>

Nirjarā may be Akāma or Sakāma i.e. with a purpose or without a purpose. The natural maturing of a Karma and its separation from the soul is called Sa-vipāka-nirjarā (सविपाक निर्जरा). Inducing a Karma to leave the soul by means of a contrary Karma, or by means of ascetic practices is called a-vipāka-nirjarā (अविपाक निर्जरा) (riddance without fruition).<sup>2</sup> Just as a fruit may become ripe on the tree

<sup>1</sup> Jaini J. : *Outlines of Jainism*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 41.

and then fall off from the tree or it may be plucked only when it is half ripe or even unripe, and then it be ripened by artificial means, so also nirjarā means destroying the Karma before it matures and bears its fruits in its regular course. The attainment of mokṣa can be hastened by artificially bringing the Karmas to an end and by completely detaching them from the soul for ever.

The Karma pudgalas while standing in some relation with the soul assume various phases through successive processes of transition according to laws that are inherent in them. The Karmas are divided into four kinds. They are—Satta Karma, Bandha Karma, Udaya Karma, Udīrṇa Karma.<sup>1</sup> When the soul becomes free from the fourfold Karmas through the processes of dissipation (nirjarā) with the help of right perception, right knowledge and right conduct, the soul becomes omniscient (Kevalin केवली), and realizes the final state of liberation. As Nahar and Ghosh say—“Having attained the Kevala jñāna, the cause of forging fresh fetters of bondage being absent by virtue of saṃvara or stoppage, and nirjarā being yet in the process of working, the jīvanmukta kevalin gradually becomes free from all the residue of Aghātiya Karmas known as a Vedaniya, Āyu, Nāma and Gotra and thereafter attains to a state of bliss never ending and beatitude everlasting. The realization of the jīva of this, viz. his permanent state of being in knowledge and delight infinite is what is termed as Mokṣa, freedom or emancipation

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, pp. 585–86, 87.

from the snares of Karma. And when the soul is thus liberated, it goes straight up to the Siddhasila or the region of the Free and Liberated at the summit of Lokākāśa. Speaking from the point of view of noumenal naya, a Siddha has no form whereof he is imperceptible by the senses, but viewed from the Vyavahāra stand point he has a shadowy form of a human figure which is but an embodiment of Right-vision, Right-knowledge and Right-conduct in and through which a jīva attains to a state of perfection, bliss and beatitude which is otherwise known omniscience and Freedom Absolute."<sup>1</sup>

The Dravya Saṅgraha recognises two kinds of mokṣa. The Sūtra runs as follows — "The modification of the soul which is the cause of the destruction of all Karmas is surely to be known as Bhāva-mokṣa and the (actual) separation of the Karmas (is) Dravya mokṣa. In the commentary of the above sūtra the concepts of these two kinds of Mokṣa are made clear. When a person is desirous of having liberation he attempts to have perfect faith, perfect knowledge and perfect conduct. Having perfect faith, knowledge and conduct, he becomes free from the four kinds of Ghātiya Karmas, i.e. Jñānāvaraṇiya, Darsanāvaraṇiya, Mohaniya and Antarāya. The modification of the soul which leads to the destruction of the Karmas mentioned above is called Bhāva mokṣa. .... Dravya mokṣa consists of the separation of the soul from the Aghātiya Karmas, viz. :

<sup>1</sup> Natar and Ghosh : *An Epitome of Jainism*, p. 619.

Āyu, Nāma, Gotra, and Vedanīya Karmas. Both these kinds of mokṣa together lead to perfect liberation.<sup>1</sup>

“Thus after attaining Kevala Jñāna, the cause producing bondage being absent and Nirjarā being present, a person becomes free from the remaining Karmas, viz. Vedaniya, Āyu, Nāma and Gotra Karmas and thus being void of all kinds of Karma, attains liberation”, says Umaswamin. When all the Karma is completely burnt up and when nothing remains behind to transmigrate from one existence to another, the Jiva no more passes from one birth to another. Then the Jiva becomes eternally free from the cycle of transmigration and lies at rest in its own pure form. It then enjoys permanent bliss and shines in its own light. The root cause of saṁsāri jiva's existence, Karma, being eternally destroyed, the soul rises to its supreme heights of the Lokākāśa and rests there in its grandeur and glory of purity and perfection.

According to the Jainism, the liberated persons, either men or women, have to lead mendicant's life, for otherwise they cannot keep themselves free from Karma. The Jaina liberated persons are dispossessed of everything. They live by begging. They have driven from their heart all desires, passions, emotions, attachments, prejudices. They observe strict non-violence or non-injury towards all organisms, from men to the smallest invisible creatures. They speak less, eat less and claim nothing. They have severed all bonds and ties. They seek nothing for the

<sup>1</sup> Ghosal S. C. : *Dravya Saṅgraha*, Vol. 1, 37, pp. 96-97.

satisfaction of their senses because they have withdrawn them. They bear an equanimous attitude towards all and treat all with compassion, love and serenity. Their minds are completely purged of sinful and selfish thoughts. They go beyond all finitude as they have realized the infinite nature of the soul. They enjoy highest bliss and are possessed of all knowledge. As Dasgupta points out — "...the state of mukti is the state of the soul in pure happiness. It is also a state of pure and infinite knowledge (anantajñāna) and infinite perception (anantadarsana) . . . In the state of release however, there is omniscience (Kevala-jñāna केवलज्ञान) and all things are simultaneously known to the perfect (Kevalin) as they are. In the saṁsāra stage the soul always acquires new qualities, and thus suffers a continual change though remaining the same in substance. But in the emancipated state the changes that a soul suffers are all exactly the same, and thus, it is that at this stage the soul appears to be the same in substance as well as in its qualities of infinite knowledge, etc., the change meaning in this state only the repetition of the same qualities."<sup>1</sup> Nahar explains it most appropriately — "Thus we see a reality, the soul has no beginning nor end; but viewed with the light of its own states or grades of existence, it has a beginning and an end, and herein lies the reason why the soul is stated to be both with and without form. So long as it has to go round and round through the repetition of births and deaths it has a form. But viewed with

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 207.

the light of bliss and beatitude which it attains to by being freed from Karma, it has no form. For, if on the one hand, the soul is to have a form by the virtue of its own, then it cannot but be dull insentient matter — Pudgala devoid of all consciousness and intelligence (Jñāna caitanya or sambhita); on the other hand, if it be absolutely formless then by the virtue of its being free from all activities too (Kriyārahitvāt), bondage and freedom would become incompatible with its own nature and saṁsāra too would be impossible and there would therefore be no necessity for teachers to impart instructions on the real nature of the soul nor for scriptures enjoining duties which are required to be performed for the attainment of Nirvāṇam S'āntam."<sup>1</sup>

The Jainas regard complete renunciation as the prerequisite of the experience of liberation. The Jaina Sādhu must be entirely free from all kinds of attachments and should make use of nothing as his own. He should not use even clothes to experience complete freedom. The Digambara sect of Jainism holds that only the nudes or naked ones can attain final redemption. The Digambara sādhus, therefore, move without any garment. They consider the (dik) or direction or air as their ambar or garment. They hold that women feel ashamed of remaining naked, they cannot move naked, therefore, they can never reach liberation. According to the Digambara sect, women can never attain mukti or mokṣa. The other Jain sect known as the S'vetām-

<sup>1</sup> Nahar and Ghosh: *An Epitome of Jainism*, pp. 279, 280.

bara, (wearing white garments) believes that women also by practising all the virtues prescribed by the Jain scriptures can attain the mokṣa. Stevenson quotes Banarasi Dass in the following passage which throws light upon the importance of nakedness for redemption. "Jain monks are naked because Jainism says that as long as one entertains the same idea of nakedness as we do, he cannot obtain salvation. One cannot, according to Jain principles, obtain Mokṣa, as long as he remembers that he is naked. He can only cross over the ocean of the world after he has forgotten that he is naked.... So long as a man thinks and knows that he is naked, that there is something like good and evil, he cannot obtain Mokṣa. He must forget it to obtain Nirvāṇa."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the liberated person has to rise beyond the distinction of the good and evil. His nakedness is a proof of his rising beyond the good and evil and realizing the real nature of the soul. The remembrance of sex itself is sufficient to cause degradation in the ethical and spiritual sphere; and hence, the Digambaras stress the need of nudity as a prerequisite.

Jainism also recognises fourteen stages of the process of attainment of mokṣa and the Digambaras believe that women can reach only upto the fifth stage, and cannot go further. The stages are called guṇasthankas or steps. In mokṣa there is no absorption of the individual soul into infinite but the liberated souls dwell for ever above the land called

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson Sinclair : *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 35.

Siddhas<sup>15</sup> whence they no more return. The Hindu idea of the Vedānta of the absorption of the individual finite soul into the Universal Self or the Brahman is alien to Jainism; according to the former, finite personality has to forget itself and remain ever absorbed into the Supreme Self, and that the liberated soul is no more reborn; the Jainas also believe that the liberated souls after attaining mokṣa are never reborn. But the Jainas hold that the liberated Siddhas maintain through all eternity their separate entity. The Jainas no more agree with the Christians about the end of life which, according to the Christians, is to enjoy a fuller and perfect life in God, by perfectly developing one's every capacity to the fullest extent, and, by enacting freely God's universal plan. It implies a kind of complete dedication and surrender to God, who uses the individuals as his tools. Jainism holds that the liberated souls are infinite and they remain as independent eternal perfected souls after Mokṣa, realizing their real nature.



## CHAPTER VI

### NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems of Indian Philosophy are known as theistic systems (Āstika) as against the atheistic schools of Cārvākism, Buddhism, Jainism and Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. They believe in the Vedas, but at the same time give a new cosmology. They believe that the world is created by God out of the eternally existing atoms. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems are ancient systems, at least as old as Buddhism. S. Dasgupta holds that they are by all means pre-Buddhistic. The two systems had been originated by two different philosophers. The Nyāya system has been associated with Gotama and the Vaiśeṣika with Kaṇāda. The first and the original work on the Nyāya is traced to Gotama, and he is taken to be the first propounder and the originator of this system. Later on various commentators like Vātsyāyana, Udyotakara, Prasastapāda, Viśvanātha, Gaṅgeśa, etc., wrote commentaries on the original Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika Sūtras. These two systems are thought of together and are taken as very similar because they believe in the eternity of the atoms which are the constituent cause of the universe. They believe that there are many ultimate principles

as the atoms instead of only one principle. These systems are known as "Pluralistic Realism".

The Nyāya system is essentially known not for its metaphysics as for the elaborate science of knowledge that it has developed. It has made a very important contribution to the science of correct reasoning. It is known as the science of Tarka or reasoned argument, as it has discovered the laws of correct and valid thinking. The Nyāya system means Logic which is the prerequisite of all philosophical thinking. The purpose of knowledge is attainment of liberation from all the pains and sufferings of life. The Naiyāyikas hold that unless the nature of pain and its root cause are properly apprehended, it is not possible to free ourselves from the pain and sufferings of life, for ever. The aim of knowing is thus the attainment of knowledge, which is instrumental to the attainment of liberation. The purpose (prayojana) of knowledge is attainment of liberation known technically as the Apavarga in the Nyāya and Nissreyas in the Vaiśeṣika systems. It is said in the *Sarvādars'anasamgraha*—"Liberation or Niss'rayas is attained by philosophical knowledge..."<sup>1</sup> It is said by Gotama in his Nyāya Sūtras—"The soul, body, senses, objects of sense, intellect, mind, activity, fault, transmigration, fruit, pain and release—are the objects of knowledge."<sup>2</sup> Thus misapprehension of these objects i.e. the soul, body, senses,

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvādars'anasamgraha*, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhushana S. S. (Tr.) : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama* 1.1.5. p. 5. (The Sacred Books of the Hindus Series. Vol. III.)

**Nyāya-Vais'eṣika****267**

mind, works and pain causes bondage and, its consequent suffering, in human life. The Naiyāyikas lay emphasis first upon the need of properly grasping the logical interrelations of these objects, and thus by going to the root cause of pain. The Nyāya and the Vais'eṣika systems do not lay stress on performance of rites and rituals, nor on idol worship; they emphasize much the pure understanding of the reality. They believe like the Advaita Vedānta that liberation can be attained by right knowledge and not by other methods.

The Nyāya and the Vais'eṣika systems are called realistic for they recognise the independent existence of the objects of knowledge. They do not hold that the external world or the objects of knowledge have ideal existence; they do not reduce them to ideas as Berkeley did, nor do they deprive them of their own independent existence by making them mind-dependent. They hold that objects of knowledge exist outside knowledge, and that they have their own existence independent of knowledge, and that they are independent of each other. They reduce all the multifarious things of the world to a few elements or 'substances' which they call Dravyas. The Dravyas are those substances to which the various things with their qualities can be reduced, and which are further irreducible to any other thing. The Dravyas are the final, eternally existing independent existences, and act as the possessors of attributes. The world is a manifestation of such dravyas in various forms. They recognise nine final and eternal realities which are mutually irreducible and explain the infinite varieties

of the universe by their properties and relations. The nine Dravyas are—(1) earth (पृथ्वी), (2) water (आप्), (3) fire (तेजस्), (4) air (वायु), (5) space (आकाश), (6) time (काल), (7) direction (दिक्), (8) the self (आत्मा) and (9) mind (मनस्). All these substance are not material but each of them has quite a distinct characteristic which is not possessed by any other substance. The Dravyas exist in the form of their infinitesimal parts, known as the *anus* or atoms. Both these systems believe that the ultimate reality consists of the minute particles or atoms. The concrete things of the world are infinitely divisible. On a thoroughgoing analysis of the things of the world, we arrive at the same existence which becomes final and which remains further indivisible. Thus, according to these schools, these final indivisible and indestructible things to which we can reduce the gross and concrete things of the world are the atoms. They form the points of termination. They are uncaused things, and act as the constituent causes of all the material things of the universe, having different magnitudes. They are simple and partless, and are perceptible to our sense organs. They are extremely subtle and infinitesimal in size and hence, their presence in *ākāśa* does not interfere with its all-pervading nature. They have to be understood by inference and imagination as they cannot be the objects of our perception or direct knowledge. They are the fundamental metaphysical points with their special peculiarities. They do not possess magnitudes, still they produce things by forming aggregates in the form of binary and triad compounds.

They form the ultimate constituent elements of the things of nature. It is difficult to conceive how these metaphysical and magnitudeless points or atoms form concrete things of the world by forming aggregates.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika doctrine of 'substances' seems from the conceptual point, a reaction to the Buddhist universal impermanence of things. The Buddhists had reduced the whole world to a continuous series of momentary existences, and had denied the existence of a permanent substance behind the momentary qualities. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of substance appears to be an antithetical and powerful reaction to the Buddhistic impermanence.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is difficult to conceive how the fleeting and momentary attributes can form a congeries and how they simultaneously give the appearance of one thing. The substance of the Naiyāyikas and the Vaiśeṣikas is the sustainer (ādhāra आधार) of the various properties of things. The substance is the underlying principle in which the relevant properties of things are unified. It is that which acts as the possessor of attributes and it is that which remains identical, inspite of the changes that take place in its surfacial nature. It remains as one and the same inspite of the changes which occur in it. It acts as the unity and identity amidst all the changes that appear to take place in it. It always appears by some attributes; it can be known only by the attributes which reveal it. It is difficult to conceive it apart from its attributes.

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 274.

According to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems, there are certain things which are immaterial or incorporeal. Knowledge, desire, will, pleasure and pain are not corporeal things. However, they have only transitory or momentary existence. They are passing phases of our mental experiences. They cannot belong to material things as their attributes. As earth has fragrance as its special attribute, so, analogically, these attributes, are imagined to belong to a separate substance and that substance is recognised by these systems as the 'soul'. It is said in the Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama—"Desire, aversion, volition, pleasure, pain and intelligence are the masks of the soul."<sup>1</sup> As colour belongs to fire, taste to water, touch to air, odour to earth and sound to ākāśa, as the attribute of each separately, so do these attributes like knowledge, desire, hatred, volition, pleasure and pain belong to a separate substance—called the soul. The Soul is regarded as a substance which acts as the possessor of the mental attributes. These qualities are not found in other beings except human beings and hence, it is natural to infer the existence of such an enduring entity, which supports these qualities. The mental qualities inhere in the soul as does odour in earth and colour in fire. The Nyāya Vaiśeṣika soul is substantive being which exists by itself and supports the mental qualities like will, desire and intelligence. Material things like stones, trees, water, mountains do not

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<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushan S. C. — *Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, 1. 1.10.  
(Tr.) इच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नसुखदुःखज्ञानानि, आत्मनो लिङ्गमिति।

possess desire, will, pleasure, pain and knowledge. The soul is a special kind of substance imagined by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems, to explain the existence of such qualities, which cannot belong to material things. Kaṇāda recognises these qualities as the signs of the soul.<sup>1</sup> The soul cannot be identified with these modes of consciousness like desire, volition, knowledge for in that case the soul will have only momentary existence as the former ones; and moreover, there will be no consistency because of the contradictory nature of these various psychical attributes. The soul will be then reduced to a floating state of consciousness without a ground or resting place underneath. The soul is not, therefore, one with any of these attributes separately nor collectively; but it acts as their permanent dwelling place and an enduring support.

Even though in the soul inhere all these qualities, the soul does not possess any of the psychical attributes as its permanent quality. Even consciousness is not an essential and hence permanent attribute of the soul. The Naiyāyikas hold that knowledge and the other psychical attributes arise in the soul when it comes into contact with the manas and body. In itself it is not constituted of eternal consciousness as the Advaita Vedānta holds. Consciousness is its quality which sometimes arises in it and sometimes is absent from it. Gotama in his Sūtra says — “Knowledge is a natural quality of

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<sup>1</sup> Pras'astapāda (Com.): *Vaiśeṣika Dars'anam* (Kaṇāda Sūtras), p. 7.

the body like colour which as natural qualities of the body exist as long as the body continues." Consciousness does not exist in dead corpse.<sup>1</sup> As it is not always possessed of consciousness, consciousness cannot be in its essential nature or it is not constituted of consciousness. Thus consciousness is only an adventitious characteristic of the soul. S. Radhakrishnan remarks—"Consciousness is not an essential property of the soul." He further says—"It follows that the soul which is the substratum of consciousness need not always be conscious. As a matter of fact, it is an unconscious (jada) principle capable of being qualified by states of consciousness. Consciousness cannot exist apart from self, even as the brilliance of the flame cannot live apart from the flame; but the soul itself is not necessarily conscious. Consciousness is regarded as a quality of the soul produced in the waking state by the conjunction of the soul with manas. It is an intermittent quality of the self."<sup>2</sup>

The soul not being inherently sentient, possesses consciousness as its quality. Consciousness is produced in the soul when it gets connected to the body through the manas. The soul has simply the potency of knowledge. Annainbhaṭṭa says that knowledge arises by the contact of the sense organs with the external objects of experience. Thus, according to the Nyāya system, body is indispensable for knowledge. It may appear from this as if body itself

<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhusana S. C. — *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*. 13:2. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 149.



is the cause of consciousness. If it were so, there will be some absurdities which S. Radhakrishnan presents as follows — “If it were a property of the body, it would exist in the various parts of the body and its material constituents. If the latter were also conscious, then we have to regard the individual consciousness as the combination of several consciousnesses produced by the different constituents. If the body has consciousness then all matter must have it, since it is of the same nature as body.”<sup>1</sup> But it is not proper to argue that if consciousness is a property of the body it must dwell in every part of the body; for, in that case, it will mean arguing that every part of a roseplant must be fragrant; because the rose flower that it bears possesses fragrance as its property. The body may possess consciousness though it is not conscious in itself. But Gotama says in his aphorism — “Knowledge does not pervade the whole body as it is not found in the hair, nails, etc.”<sup>2</sup> According to the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems matter and spirit are two entirely different categories and there can be nothing common between them. They are exclusive of each other and there is a complete antagonism between them. Body and soul are peculiar by themselves, and hence, consciousness which is a characteristic of the soul cannot be a property of the body. Had consciousness been the essential nature of the body it would have been permanently in all bodies; but it is a fact of experi-

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhushan S. C. : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, 3.2. 55, p. 100. केशनखादिष्वनुपलब्धिः ।

ence that dead bodies are devoid of consciousness. So also consciousness is absent in the states of deep or dreamless sleep. As consciousness does not exist in some bodies, it cannot be called its essential nature. Vidyabhushana in his commentary on the above Sūtra writes—“It is not true that a substance should be entirely pervaded by its natural qualities... colour does not pervade hair, nails, etc.”<sup>1</sup> Consciousness does not change correspondingly along with the changes in the body. With the deformities of the body there do not occur deformities in the consciousness. Consciousness acts independently of the bodily changes.

A similar argument from recollection has been given in the Sūtras by Gotama. It is said in the Sūtra—“(The soul is to be admitted) on account of joy, fear and grief arising in a child from the memory of things previously experienced.”<sup>2</sup> In the case of an infant there is no span of time when the first actions can be taught, hence they cannot be shown to be the results of external teaching; as they are performed in an unlearned condition, and as they possess the form of an intelligent action, the Nyāya system naturally interprets that they must be due to the recollections of similar actions in the past birth. Vidyabhushana says in his commentary on the above mentioned sūtra—“A new born child manifests marks of joy, fear and grief. This is inexplicable unless we suppose that the child perceiving certain

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 68.

things in this life remembers the corresponding things of the past life. The things which used to excite joy, fear and grief in the past life continue to do so in this life. The memory of the past proves the previous birth as well as the existence of the soul.”<sup>1</sup> This is one of the arguments forwarded to prove that the soul is enduring and persists in numerous births or survives the deaths of the body. The untaught actions of the children are explained by the present psychologists and biologists as ‘instinctive’ actions.

The endurance or persistence of the soul is proved also on the moral basis. Gotama says in the Nyāya Sūtras—“If the body were soul, there should be release from sins, as soon as the body was burnt.”<sup>2</sup> In the commentary Vidyabhusana says—that if a person has no soul beyond his body, he should be freed from sins when the body is destroyed. But in reality sins pursue him in his subsequent lives. Hence the body is not soul. The moral law of retribution demands the endurance of the soul who is the doer of actions. The soul that does the action must be the same who should reap the fruits of those actions. The doctrine of Karma implies that the good actions get the good reward of them and, the bad ones are followed by sufferings. It is said in the *Bhāṣā Pariccheda* that the soul is the substratum of merit and demerit in virtue of which it undergoes transmigra-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 3, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4, p. 63. शरीरदाहे पातकभावाद् ।

tion by assuming different births for which it is suited. "(The soul is) the substratum of merit and demerit. It is perceived on account of possessing special qualities. The substratum of merit and demerit. The word 'soul' is to be supplied. (It is the substratum), because if the body be the substratum of these, then the results of actions done by a particular body cannot be experienced by another body."<sup>1</sup>

The results of good and bad actions come to be attached to the soul, and in order to reap their fruits by experiencing them the soul has to pass from one physical body to another physical body, after the former is destroyed. The cause of transmigration is the adṛṣṭa or the unseen Karma force, and it becomes possible because of the soul that endures through many such births. The existence of an imperishable and permanent soul has to be admitted on the moral grounds. The continuity of births cannot be explained in the absence of such a transmigrating soul. If the experiencer of the consequences of the actions is not the same as the doer, there will occur the fallacy of (कृतप्रणाश) kṛtapraṇāśa and (अकृताभ्यागम) akṛtābhyāgama. There will be complete absence of the connection between good actions and good results; bad actions and bad results. Goodness and badness of actions will lose their value because good or bad consequences may follow indiscriminately. There will remain, thus, no consistency between actions and their consequences and

<sup>1</sup> Mādhavānanda (Swami) (Tr.) : *Bhāṣya Pariccheda*, Sūtra 49, p. 78.

the law of causality in the moral field will be seriously challenged. It is likely to create anarchy in the moral sphere. It is said in the *Nyāya Sūtras* of Gotama — "This is, we reply, not so because it would lead us to acknowledge the consequences of actions not done by us."<sup>1</sup> Moral life will become bankrupt in the absence of the doctrine of Karma which has to be accepted only by inference and not on any actual verification as it is impossible.<sup>2</sup>

The individual soul is thus a mere phase in the life of the eternal soul. The cycle of births or the phenomenon of transmigration implies the permanent or eternal existence of the soul. The Nyāya Vais'eṣikas believe that the soul is eternal. The body is perishable and is destroyed at the death of the individual, but the soul migrates from the previous birth to the subsequent carrying with it its stock of the merit and demerit accumulated in its previous existence. Kes'ava Mis'ra describes in the *Tarkabhāṣā*, the soul in the following way — "He is different from the body and the senses, is different for each individual body, is all pervasive and eternal."<sup>3</sup> H. T. Colebrooke describes the soul in these systems in the following way — The individual soul is infinite; for whithersoever the body goes there the soul too is present. It experiences the fruits of its

<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushan S. C. : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama* (Tr.) Sūtra 153, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 153, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Mis'ra Kes'ava (Com. Govardhana) : *Tarkabhāṣā*, pp. 62, 63.

स च देहेन्द्रियादि व्यतिरिक्तः प्रतियोगी भिन्नो विशुद्धिस्तथा ।

deeds; pain or pleasure. It is eternal because it is infinite; for whatever is infinite is likewise eternal; as the etherial element (ākāśa).<sup>1</sup> Kes'ava Mis'ra also states in his *Tarkabhāṣā* — "The soul (ātman) is all-pervasive because of his activities everywhere; it means that he has the highest magnitude. Because of his all-pervasiveness he is eternal (nitya) like the ether (vyoma). He is different in each individual body because the differences of experiences of pleasure etc. . . . The place of his enjoyment is body..."<sup>2</sup> Annambhaṭṭa in his *Tarkasaṅgraha* characterises jīva or the soul as "that which is the resort of the experiences like pleasure."<sup>3</sup> The Nyāya system finds it necessary to imagine some such substance to which mental experiences are possible. No other thing, devoid of the soul, can entertain experiences of pleasure, pain, willing, etc. . . . It is a special possession of human beings and is unique only to the human beings. Other inanimate things or the animate things like animals of the subhuman species cannot have such experiences. This capacity is a special possession of human beings, and hence, the Nyāya Vais'eṣikas deem it absolutely necessary to make a supposition of the existence of the soul as an independent substance, unique in itself and different from others. Such a soul is no doubt all-pervasive and eternal. They believe in the two kinds of ātman. The

<sup>1</sup> Colebrooke H. T.: *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*.

<sup>2</sup> Kes'ava Mis'ra: *Tarkabhāṣā* p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Annambhaṭṭa: *Tarkasaṅgraha*, p. 17.

सुखाद्याधयस्व जीवलक्षणम् ।

Supreme Self (Paramātmān) and the individual soul (Jīvātmān). The Supreme Self or the Paramātmān is not only all-pervading and eternal but his knowledge is all-pervading. He is omniscient; while the individual soul is all-pervading and eternal but is one separately for each body. The self is that which has knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The supreme self is devoid of pleasure and pain which are characteristic features of the lower soul or the individual soul (the Jīvātmān).

The soul is the real doer of the actions and not the sense organs or the body, according to these systems. It is said in the *Bhāṣa Pariccheda* about the soul — "The soul is the inspirer of the organs, etc., for an instrument requires an agent."<sup>2</sup> Vis'vanātha Nyāya Pañcānan says in his commentary on the above Sūtra — "The generic attribute of soul-hood is inferred as the determinant of the inherent causality of pleasure pain, etc., . . . ." "It is observed that cutting instruments such as an axe cannot produce any result without an agent . . . . Hence an agent over and above them is inferred."<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is made clear here that the ultimate doer of all actions is the soul. The soul is the final source of energy that is absolutely necessary for an action. Moreover, the material objects, though appear to be moving, do not move by themselves; they are not automovers. They do not possess the energy to move themselves spontaneously. They move due to some external force that is applied to them. All

<sup>1</sup> Annambhaṭṭa: *Tarkasaṅgraha*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Mādhavānanda (Swami): *Bhāṣa Pariccheda*, Sūtra 47, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 65, 66.

objects except the soul are passive or inert in themselves. Movement has to be caused in them from without. It is stated in the Nyāya Sūtras—"The regularity and irregularity of possession demarcate the soul and matter."<sup>1</sup> The sense of 'I' and 'my' is possessed only by intelligent beings, and never by any thing which is material and unintelligent. The power to voluntary action is possessed only by the immaterial or spiritual substance. Vidyabhushana in his commentary on the above mentioned Sūtra says—"A material thing is by nature inactive but becomes endowed with activity when it is moved by a conscious agent."<sup>2</sup> It is also said in the commentary of the Nyāya Sūtras which is commented by Vātsyāyana that "the mind is not independent but it is governed by the conscious agent; hence attributes like desires, etc., do not belong to it. As it is governed by other agent it does not possess any independence."<sup>3</sup> Thus it is the contention of the Nyāya system that the soul acts as the universal agent of all the actions and it uses all the material things as instrumental to it. It is also stated in the *Bhāṣā Pariccheda*—"The soul is the inspirer of the organs, etc., . . . for an instrument requires an agent."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. (Tr.): *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sūtra 115, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Vātsyāyana (Com.) (Edited by Vis'vanātha): *Nyāya Sūtras*, p. 256.

<sup>4</sup> Mādhavānanda (Swami): *Bhāṣā Pariccheda*, Sūtra 47.



There are two ways of knowing the soul. One way is of knowing it by means of introspection or by the sense of 'Ihood', and the other is, by inference. The souls of others can be known by inference from their activities which are similar to ours and, which can be performed only by some such principle as we have in our soul. The *Bhāṣā Pariccheda* further contains the following passage regarding it: "It is to be inferred from its voluntary movements, etc., as a charioteer is from the motion of a chariot. It is the substratum of egoism, and is known only through the mind."<sup>1</sup> The same point is made more elaborate in its commentary in the following way: "The existence of this soul in another's body and the like is inferred from its voluntary movements, etc., *Pravṛtti* (inclination) here means voluntary movement (*ceṣṭā*). Since it has in a way been already stated that knowledge, desire, effort (*Prayatna*), etc. do not abide in the body, and since voluntary movement is the outcome of effort, the soul which is possessed of effort, is inferred from its voluntary movements. . . . As a charioteer, etc. That is to say although the motion of a chariot is not voluntary movement, yet the presence of a charioteer is inferred from it; similarly the soul of another is inferred from actions of the nature of voluntary movement. . . . Egoism is the feeling of 'I'. Its substratum or object is the soul, not the body, etc., . . . it is incapable of being perceived by any other organ."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 50, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Mādhavānanda* (Swami) : *Bhāṣā Pariccheda*, Sūtra 50 (Com.), p. 79.

The body acts as the place or instrument of experiencing of the soul. It is said in the *Nyāya Sūtras* of Gotama—"Body is the site of gesture, senses and sentiments."<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana makes the place of the body clear in his commentary on the above Sūtra—He writes—"Body is the site of gesture inasmuch as it strives to reach what is desirable and avoid what is hateful. It is also the site of senses for the latter act well or ill, according as the former is in good or bad order. Sentiments which comprise pleasure and pain are also located in the body which experiences them."<sup>2</sup> The body serves as an indispensable means for the various experiences of the soul. It would be impossible for the soul to get any kind of psychical experience without a physical body. Body serves as an inevitable link in the process of enjoyment of pleasure because the organs with which we enjoy objects of the external world, are studded in the body. Frequently body is condemned to be vile by the lovers of the spirit but it is a real and hard fact which the Nyāya system recognises, that, without a physical body no mental or spiritual experiences become possible. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa summarises in brief in the following way: He writes—"The ground or place of the experiences (Bhoga) of the soul is the body; the instruments of experience are the sense organs, the objects of experiences are the objects of sense organs and the experiences belong to the intellect or understanding

<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushan S. C. (Tr.): *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sūtra 1.1.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

(Buddhi) and the cause of experiences is the condition or tendency of the mind; it is either good or bad (pāpa puṇyātmika) and the defects in it like attachment, etc., .... cause the origination of the body...."<sup>1</sup> It becomes thus clear that the ultimate source of energy and the ultimate substratum of all kinds of psychical experiences is the soul. It is the source of energy and acts as the final agent of actions and enjoyer of experiences, pleasurable or painful locating them in the intellect; as he is the doer of actions merit and demerit (dharma and adharma) belong to it and it revolves on the cycle of life by transmigrating from one body to another according to its moral desert; it acts as the permanent sustainer of psychical experiences and hence remembrances of the experiences of the past life become possible. It is infinite, unborn and undying, all-pervasive, but one for each separate body; it is at the root of all the mental experiences and uses the mind as its instrument of receiving experiences, though in it the consciousness does not reside for ever; because if it develops consciousness only when it comes to be associated with the external world through the senses with the help of the mind (manas).

How is the soul known by oneself? Is it known by us we know the objects of the world in the form of 'this' or 'it'? The Naiyāyikas hold that the soul reveals itself to us in the form of our ego. It reveals itself to us as our 'I' or by our experience of 'Ihood' (Ahaṁpratyaya—अहंप्रत्यय). As Jayanta

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Bhaṭṭa Jayanta : *Nyāya Manjari*, p. 428.

Bhaṭṭa remarks—“The soul does not shine like a vessel (ghaṭa) by the knowledge of it generated in us; it shines by itself; it is self-luminous (svayam-prakāśate). Consciousness is its natural property; it is not produced in it by any other instrument..”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the soul reveals itself to us as ‘I’ or the object of first person. We cannot know our soul as ‘this’ or ‘that’ object of the world, which reveals to us always in the third person. These two experiences are entirely different from each other and are also exclusive of each other. No other object except our own inner soul can reveal itself to us as ‘I’. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa more elaborately describes it in his following verse—“Just like the vessel (ghaṭa), etc., .... the knowledge of happiness as this happiness (idam sukham) does not reveal to us; the awareness or experience that ‘I am happy’ reveals in it our soul.”<sup>2</sup> The Bhāṣā Pariccheda also presents the same argument to establish the existence of one’s soul. It states —“It (the soul) is the substratum of egoism, and is known only through the mind.”<sup>3</sup> The soul serves as the abode of our sense of ‘Ihood’ or ‘ego-hood’. The soul is thus, revealed to the knower himself as his ‘I’ and as explained above the souls of others can be known by inference of it from their activities

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Jayanta : *Nyāya Manjari*, p. 431.

म हि आत्मा अन्येन ज्ञानेन घटादिरिव प्रकाशते । चेतनत्वमपि तस्य नैसर्गिकमेव ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 433.

<sup>3</sup> Mādhavānanda (Swami) : *Bhāṣa Paricched*, p. 79.

अहंकारस्याधोऽयं मनोमात्रस्योच्चरः ।

that are similar to ours. The existence of the soul can be inferred from its activities indirectly. It is true that no other state of consciousness in our mind can ever assume the status of ego-consciousness or self-consciousness. It is unique. The 'I' consciousness in us is a persistent principle. Without this 'I-sense' no knowledge of objects by memory will be possible. For remembering things, I who remember must be the same who has perceived the same thing formerly sometime in the past. The I, therefore, must be the same identical entity in these varying experiences occurring even after considerably long intervals of time. S. Radhakrishnan remarks in this respect as follows — "As a mere complex of sensational and affectional elements, no state of consciousness can be distinguished as mine or another's. The experience of another is not my experience, for my self is different from his self. — All our mental states, such as a remembrance, recognition, awareness of the relative persistence of the self, sympathy or consciousness of relation to other selves, all these imply the reality of the self."<sup>1</sup> The Nyāya system recognises two ways of knowing the soul; the direct (pratyakṣa) and the indirect, i.e., inference (apratyakṣa). But a slight difference in regarding this can be pointed out in the case of the Vais'eṣikas. The Vais'eṣikas do not seem to recognise the direct knowledge (pratyakṣa) of the self. Radhakrishnan refers to the Vais'eṣika Sūtras in the following passage which states that the Vais'eṣikas do not admit the Nyāya theory of the direct knowledge of the soul (ahampratyaya) — "The Vais'eṣika

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 145, 146.

theory of the soul is practically identical with that of the Nyāya, though a direct perception of the self where the self is both the perceiver and the perceived is not admitted (V. S. iii.2.6)."<sup>1</sup> A clarification of the issue of the possibility of the knowledge of the soul by direct perception is given beyond doubt by Messrs Athavale and Bodas in the notes attached to *Tarkasaṃgraha* of Annambhaṭṭa. They state—"The followers of Gotam hold that Jiva is perceptible by the mind, because it is the object of such mental cognitions as "I am happy" or "I am unhappy". The Vais'eṣikas maintain that jiva is not perceptible even mentally, because the cognition 'I am happy' refers not to the pure Ego, but to the quality of pleasure and pain which thus, becomes the sign of the existence of jiva. A still greater objection to the perceptibility of soul is that he being the perceiver of everything cannot perceive himself, the knower and the known being always different. Jiva is only inferrable. Jīvā may also be inferred from the existence of organs of sense, or of qualities such as Buddhi which can reside in soul alone."<sup>2</sup>

From the realistic nature of the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems, it seems more probable that these systems did not take resort to God as the final cause of the world. The system is constructed in such way that the whole world can work without an external powerful authority. Moreover these systems postulate some eternal substances which are responsible for the

<sup>1</sup> Annambhaṭṭa (See Notes by Athalye and Bodas), p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 144.

creation of the world. These systems tried to explain the systematic and coherent working of the world and the cycle of birth, death and rebirth with the help of the unseen (adr̥ṣṭa), the karma force which determines the nature of successive births in accordance with the accumulated merit and demerit of the individual souls in their previous lives. The desert or (adr̥ṣṭa) thus tried to give system and coherence to the workings of the world and God's existence was made to a very great extent unnecessary. So long these realistic systems tried to explain the working of the world in terms of the atoms of the eternal substances in which movement is inherent. They tried to give a mechanical form to the operations of the world with the effect that an external agency in the form of God was made unnecessary and superfluous. It is disputable whether the Nyāya system admitted the existence of God right from the beginning or it was a result of interpolation by the later Naiyāyikas. However, a direct reference to the divine causality is obtained in the Nyāya Sūtra.<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan says -- "While Vātsyāyana, Uddyotakara and Viśvanātha regard it as the Nyāya view, Vācaspati, Udayana and Vardhamāna interpret it as a criticism of the Vedānta view, that God is the constituent cause of the universe."<sup>2</sup> Udayana thinks that the adr̥ṣṭa is not sufficient to explain the world; if God is not the creator of the souls and the substances; he thinks God is necessary to regulate and

<sup>1</sup> *Nyāya Sūtra*, IV, 1.9.21.

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 165.

control the operation of the adṛṣṭa and thus to supervise its working. The Vaiśeṣikas and the later Naiyāyikas do not dispute the existence of God, but seek to know his nature.

God is described as a self, as the 'supreme self' of a different category by Annambhaṭṭa. In *Tarkasa graha* he distinguishes the two in the following way — "The soul is the substratum of knowledge. He is twofold, Human and Supreme. Of these the Supreme Soul is the all powerful, omniscient God, devoid of pleasure and pain for He can see all the subtle atoms."<sup>1</sup> The Supreme soul is omniscient... Knowledge is eternal with God.<sup>2</sup> God is not perceptible as He does not possess any physical quality (rūpa) like colour, etc. The Human soul and the Supreme soul have knowledge in common. The working of the world cannot be explained in terms of the movements of the atoms and the adṛṣṭa which are unintelligent. The atoms and the adṛṣṭa being unintelligent cannot work out intelligent patterns of movements in the world. God works as the organiser of the world with the help of the eternally existing atoms and the desert. He combines them and actually carries on the affairs of the world.

God has personality but no body because he is not governed by the desert or Karma power which alone is the cause of the production of body. God possesses neither merit and nor demerit. He is free

<sup>1</sup> Annambhaṭṭa: *Tarkasamgraha*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p. 12. नित्यज्ञानाधिकरणत्वमीश्वरत्वम् ।



from misapprehension (mithyā jñāna). He is completely selfsatisfied; all his desires are already fulfilled. Nothing remains for him to acquire; therefore, he is perfect. God is completely free from pleasure and pain. He has not created the world for his own pleasure, for he is free from pleasure. The world is created by him out of his compassion for his people of the world who are like children to him. In fact, the eternality of the atoms and the souls is incompatible with the creatorship of God. God acts as the final agent who uses the things of the world and the sense organs of the individuals as instruments. As God does not possess a visible body of determined magnitudes, he is imperceptible and he can be known by inference by cause and effect relation. As a jar or a sprout which is an effect cannot come into existence without a cause that produces it, so also the world, though extremely huge in form and permanent because of the atoms which form it, must have some cause who must have created it out of the already existing eternal atoms and joined it to the souls. God has the direct and close knowledge of the world as he possesses omniscience and eternal intelligence and hence, he does not need memory and inferential knowledge. The Nyāya God or the Supreme Soul is not the all-pervading spiritual reality of which we are only imperfect manifestations, but he is outside men and outside the world and acts only as moral governor and administrator of the world whose omnipotence is limited by other eternal entities.

The Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems recognise mind (manas) as not only an independent entity but also as the ninth substance. According to them, for the unification of the diverse states of mind some central agency is necessary, and thus, the manas forms a link between the senses and the soul. H. T. Colebrooke describes the manas or mind briefly as follows — "Mind is single. It is the instrument which effects the apprehension of pain, pleasure or interior sensations; and by its union with external senses, produces knowledge of exterior objects apprehended through them..."<sup>1</sup> In these systems the soul does not possess knowledge eternally. It is no doubt a substratum of consciousness but consciousness does not constitute its essential nature. Consciousness develops in it as a guṇa or quality when it comes to be associated with the external world through the manas and the body. Manas acts as an intermediary link between the soul and the sense organs. S. Radhakrishnan describes it in the following words — "In its natural state the self is devoid of intelligence as in pralaya. It has cognitions of things when it is connected with body. Consciousness is sustained by the ātman, though it is not an essential or inalienable characteristic of it. By means of manas the soul knows not only external things but also its own qualities. Though the soul is all-pervading, its life of knowing, feeling and activity resides only where the body is."<sup>2</sup> The mind is extremely subtle and hence, it is imperceptible.

<sup>1</sup> Colebrooke H. T. : *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, p. 172,

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 190.

Every soul has its own manas. It is called the internal organ (antarindriyam). It is atomic in size and it is a substance. It is also eternal but it is not pervasive for in that case one's emotions and thoughts will be experienced by all people as the mind will be a common possession of all. The mind is particular and specific for each individual person to experience pleasure, pain, volition, thoughts only for oneself privately. Annambhaṭṭa says—“Mind is the instrumental organ for the attainment of pleasure, etc.... It is one for each individual soul, eternal and of the atomic size.”<sup>1</sup> Further it is stated in the commentary on it that, there are infinite number of souls, because each soul has one mind with it.<sup>2</sup> It cannot be all-pervasive like the soul, for in that case the manas cannot be conjoined to the soul by way of samavāya or coherence, and hence, an absurd condition of the rise of knowledge would arise, for two all-pervasive substances cannot be conjoined. Moreover, if they are conjoined then it will be an eternal combination, and then knowledge will be always present, so that there will be no possibility of deep or dreamless sleep as knowledge will be eternal. If the mind has some intermediate magnitude or size (Madhyama parimāṇa) the mind or manas will face difficulty of being non-eternal (anitya) for the fear of being destroyed sometime. Hence, the only possible size will be atomic. The absence of knowledge in deep dreamless sleep can

<sup>1</sup>Annambhaṭṭa : *Tarkasaṅgraha*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Vais'eṣikadars'anam (*Sanskṛta*), p. 154.

एकस्मिन् शरीरे एकमेव मनः ।

be explained if the manas is atomic, for during the deep sleep the mind being atomic or minute enters the vein purītatī and thus, all knowledge ceases to exist for that interval; when again the mind comes out of that vein, knowledge begins to operate."<sup>1</sup>

Gotama says in his *Nyāya Sūtras* that "The mind is one on account of the non-simultaneousness of cognitions."<sup>2</sup> Every one has his own mind because his knowledge is limited only for himself and also for the reason that all the knowledge does not make appearance simultaneously at one at the same time. In one following sūtras it is stated that—"The appearance of simultaneousness is due to the mind coming in contact with different senses in rapid succession like the appearance of a circle of fire-brand."<sup>3</sup> Thus simultaneity is mistaken for continuous succession of the states of consciousness. The *Tarkabhāṣā* says—"That which is an instrument of the soul for the acquisition of knowledge is the mind..... It is the cause of attaining pleasure, etc. Due to its contact with the external object knowledge is acquired."<sup>4</sup> The manas has a peculiar function to perform. The main function of the manas is to attend to objects which are perceived by the sense organs. Even though the sense organs come to be connected to the external objects and they

<sup>1</sup> Annambhaṭṭa (Com.): *Tarkasaṅgraha*, p. 13. Edited by Athalye and Bodas.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. (Tr.): *Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sūtra 135, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 137.

<sup>4</sup> Miśra Kesava: *Tarkabhāṣā*, p. 78.

receive impressions of the external objects, their awareness does not arise in the perceiver if proper attention is not given to them. If the mind which takes the cognisance of objects by attending to them is absent, then though the senses are working and receive impressions from the external objects, the knowledge of those objects does not arise in the perceiver. Thus, the mind is that which attends to the objects of knowledge, and it is the real instrument of knowledge though senses are the indispensable means of acquiring knowledge of the external world. The mind as a separate entity has to be admitted to explain the memory of certain things which are not actually experienced by direct contact with them by the sense organs at a particular moment; but still their remembrance can occur to us. Sometimes we actually do not hear or see certain sounds or colours, still we have lively mental experience or memory of them to such an extent as if we actually experience them. This leads to the inference of the existence of the mind.<sup>1</sup> Another argument to prove the existence of mind and which is forwarded in the Vais'eṣika system is the incapacity of the external sense organs to experience pleasure and pain. The sense organs act as the receivers of impressions of the objects of the external world. They convey impressions of objects to the mind but they do not themselves experience pleasure and pain. It is argued that if the external

<sup>1</sup> Pras'astapāda ( Com. ) : *Vais'eṣikadars'anam*, p. 154.

organs of sense like ear, etc., experienced pleasure, etc., it would mean that the blind and deaf can never acquire it.<sup>1</sup> Mind is regarded as an independent substratum of the various mental states and acts as an independent entity by itself, enjoying a unique position. It can be reduced neither to the senses, nor to the buddhi nor to the soul.

Max Müller describes the role of the manas in the process of knowing in the following words—“The Self is the knower, while the mind or Manas is only the instrument (Karaṇa) of knowledge by which attention is fixed on one thing at a time... Though there are many manifestations of Manas, such as memory, inference, verbal testimony, doubt, imagination, dreaming, cognition, guessing, feeling of pleasure, desire and all the rest, yet its distinguishing feature, we are told, is what we should call attention, or as Gotama explains it, ‘the preventing of knowledge arising altogether’. Manas is therefore called the door-keeper preventing sensations from rushing in promiscuously and all at once.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, manas is that which attends to objects and uses senses for knowing the external world. Every individual has his own manas. Manas cannot be all-pervading or vibhu, in that case one’s experiences will be remembered by another person. It is said by Pras’astapāda in his commentary on the *Kaṇada Sūtras*—“On the occasion of Devadatta’s remembering he does not remember the memory (Smṛti)

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. See (Com.), p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 548.

of Yajñadatta who has retained it from impressions."<sup>1</sup>

The Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems recognise 'Buddhi' or 'intellect' as a separate entity which is different from the manas. Buddhi or intellect, according to them, reveals the objects perceived in the clearest possible forms. Swāmī Mādhavānanda understands by Buddhi—knowledge. He translates the 51st Sūtra in his *Bhāṣā Pariccheda* in the following way—"It is all-pervading and possesses knowledge and other qualities. Knowledge has two forms—experience and recollection...."<sup>2</sup> The Buddhi, according to these systems, makes the objects of knowledge clear and precise so that their meaning becomes clear. Max Müller describes the Buddhi as follows—"If therefore, we translate Manas (mind), we must always remember its technical meaning in Indian Philosophy, and its being originally different from Buddhi, understanding, which might often be rendered by light or the internal light that changes dark and dull impressions into clear and bright sensations, perceptions, and knowledge in general, or by understanding at least, so far as it enables us to transform and understand the dull impressions of the senses."<sup>3</sup> From the above description it becomes evident that the buddhi in the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems is not an independent principle, a substance like the 'mind',

<sup>1</sup> Pras'astapāda (Com.) : *Vais'eṣika Dars'anam* (Kapāda Sūtrās), p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> Mādhavānanda (Swāmī) (Tr.) : *Bhāṣā Pariccheda*, Sūtra 51, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Max Müller : *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 548.

but is subordinate to it. The mind can best be understood as the 'attention' or that which actively attends to the objects of knowledge systematically; and the mind finally understands the nature of things clearly by means of the buddhi or intellect or understanding. The buddhi acts as an instrument of the mind for clear cut understanding of the objects of experience. The buddhi thus may be useful to formulate clear images or concepts of things and relates them in such ways which adequately explain the functioning of the actual facts. It makes the acquired perceptions more articulate, elaborate or visible; it discovers the obscure meaning of the objects of knowledge by making the dull perceptions more manifest and meaningful. Max Müller compares the Sāṃkhya-Buddhi with the Nyāya-Buddhi in the following passage—"The Buddhi of the Sāṃkhya is a cosmic principle independent of the self, and meant to account for the existence of the light of reason in the whole universe; while in the Nyāya philosophy it signifies the subjective activity of thought in the acquisition of knowledge, or in the lighting up and appropriating of the inert impressions received by the senses."<sup>1</sup>

Manas is indispensable for the generation of knowledge in the soul. From the role that manas plays in the act of knowing it may appear that knowledge, therefore, resides in the manas. But it is not so. Gotama makes it clear beyond doubt, that knowledge ultimately resides in the soul and not in

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 549.



the manas. Manas may be an indispensable agent for the origination of knowledge, but, for that reason it should not be supposed that mind is the place in which the generated knowledge is located. Gotama writes — “The mind is not the seat of knowledge... on account of its being subject to an agent and owing to its incapacity to reap the fruits of another’s deeds.”<sup>1</sup> The mind (manas) is not the seat of knowledge, desire, aversion, volition, pleasure and pain.<sup>2</sup> The impressions of actions of an individual are left behind in the form of merit and demerit in accordance with which the nature of the body in the succeeding birth is determined. But in transmigration what passes on from one birth to the subsequent is not the manas but it is the soul. Hence knowledge, its effects in the forms of merit and demerit, recollection have to be located in the soul and not in the mind, not in the body.

Vidyabhushana conclusively states the whole position regarding knowledge and its location, in his commentary on the next sūtra of Gotama. He says that though knowledge is not an inseparable property of the soul it does reside in the soul and not in any other psychical apparatus like the mind, intellect, etc., .... He writes — “Knowledge is a quality which inheres in a substance. That substance is neither the body nor the sense nor the mind. It must, therefore, be the soul. The body cannot be

<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. : *Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sūtra 116, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 95.

the abode of the knowledge because it is a material substance like a pot, cloth, etc. Knowledge cannot belong to the sense as the latter is an instrument like an axe. Had the sense been the abode of knowledge there could not be any recollection of things which were experienced by the sense before it was destroyed. If knowledge were a quality of the mind many perceptions could be simultaneous. But this is impossible. Hence, the abode of knowledge is not the mind, but it is the soul which is permanent so that it can perceive a thing now as well as remember one perceived in the past.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, if knowledge belonged to the sense organs knowledge will be transient and it would cease to exist when the sense organs would stop working and recollection of past events would be impossible and in that case knowledge would not be acquired by those who are deficient in the powers of sense organs, so that deaf and blind persons would not understand anything. But it is contrary to facts. Knowledge would suffer from deformities in the events of deformities of the senses. Moreover, sense perceptions are momentary and fleeting; knowledge also would not be permanent if it resided in the sense organs. For such reasons it has to be admitted that knowledge cannot be located even in the sense organs though they act as the most essential and indispensable instruments for the acquisition of knowledge by directly fetching impressions of the objects of the external world.

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<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. (Tr.) : *Nyāya Sātras of Gotama*. See Com. on Sūtra 117.

### Mokṣa — मोक्ष

In the beginning it is said that the inquiry is undertaken for the right understanding of the world and life. The very purpose of the study of the world is the attainment of liberation. The philosophical inquiry is guided by the desire to attain liberation. It is said that the motive and end of philosophical understanding of the world is liberation. It is said in the Sarvadars'anaśaṅgraha "Indeed, liberation (Nihs'réyas निःश्रेयस्) occurs because of philosophical thinking."<sup>1</sup> It is believed by these systems that the miseries of the present life are caused by false knowledge of the world and the remedy to become free from the sufferings of this life lies in wiping away the false knowledge by the right knowledge of the world. Gotama says in his famous aphorism — "Pain, birth, activity, faults and misapprehension, on the successive annihilation of these in the reverse order, there follows release." It clearly traces misapprehension or false knowledge as the root cause of all the sufferings. Misapprehension is the final cause of sufferings and not its immediate cause. There is a long casual chain in which misapprehension acts as the final or the first cause, and at the end comes pain or suffering. In between the two there are many intermediate causes in the series. Vidyābhūṣaṇa says in his commentary on the above sūtra—"Misapprehension, faults, activity, birth and pain, these in their uninterrupted course constitute the 'world'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sarvadars'anaśaṅgraha, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. (Tr.) : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*. Sūtra 1.2.

Release, which consists in the soul's getting rid of the world, is the condition of supreme felicity, marked by perfect tranquillity and not tainted by any defilement. A person, by the true knowledge of the sixteen categories, is able to remove his misapprehensions. When this is done, his faults, viz., affection, aversion and stupidity, disappear. He is then no longer subject to any activity, and is consequently freed from transmigration and pains. This is the way in which his release is effected and supreme felicity secured."<sup>1</sup> The Nyāya system agrees with the Vedānta in holding misapprehension or ignorance as the root cause of all evil in the world.

Vātsyāyana in his ommentary on the aphorisms of Gotama says—that there are various kinds of misapprehension, like seeing the self in the non-selfish object, seeing happiness in pain, eternal in temporary, etc. Thus misapprehension consists in regarding the nature of things what it is not in actuality. It consists in attributing false qualities to things which do not possess them as their original qualities. It means some kind of distortion of the knowledge of things. Vātsyāyana in his commentary on the sūtras of Gotama further describes misapprehension or *mithyā jñāna* not simply as the absence of right philosophical knowledge but something positive something like infatuation out of which the world is generated. He writes—"The infatuation of the sense of 'I' or 'Ego' is to feel the sense of I-hood in

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<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. (Tr.): *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*.  
Com. Sūtra 1.

objects which are devoid of self. Egoism (ahamkāra) consists in seeing in the selfless or material things our ego."<sup>1</sup> The misapprehension consists in ascribing the non-spiritual or material things (anātma) the sense of ego-hood. Those things which are not a part of our inner self are wrongly supposed to be a part of our self. We falsely identify ourselves with body, senses, manas, buddhi and regard that their sufferings also are our sufferings. We attach ourselves inseparably to them and feel pleased or pained by the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of them. We confuse our soul with the non-spiritual objects. The two are entirely different from each other. The soul can never be like the soulless or material object. They are categorically different from each other. When we include our body or mind in the idea of our 'soul' naturally, we identify ourselves with them, and as they are liable to frequent disappointments and sufferings we also suffer. Here the suffering is mistaken. In fact suffering cannot belong to our innermost self.

Kesavamisra says that misapprehension means infatuation or delusion; it consists in the distortion of things i. e. in taking things to be what they are not in actuality; or to take things different from what they are.<sup>2</sup> Our attachment to body and the sense organs leads us to infatuation. It is also stated in the *Sarvadarś'anasāṅgraha* that our attachment to the

<sup>1</sup> Vātsyāyana (Com.) : *Nyāya Sūtras by Gotama* (Sanskrit),

मिथ्याज्ञानं वै खलु मोहः ।

<sup>2</sup> Misra Kes'ava — *Tarkabhāṣā*, p. 92.

body is a result of our misapprehension of the real nature of it and from it all evils are generated.<sup>1</sup>

That individual who regards his body his soul, and thinks that his life comes to an end with the destruction of his body always remains replete with desires and is prompted to undertake activities by them. Those activities generate good or bad Karma or effects which ultimately decide the type of body that he will be having in the succeeding birth. Thus, the very generation of the physical organism becomes the root cause of all suffering. A man performs various activities so long as he is under the spell of his misapprehension that he is the body which enjoys pleasures and suffers the pains. But the moment he discriminates himself from his body he apprehends the real nature of suffering and its cause. Gotama says in his Sūtra that "The body is produced as the fruit of our previous deeds (deserts)."<sup>2</sup> The union of the parents is only accessory or auxiliary to the production of the body. The real cause of the production of the body, therefore, lies in the effects of the acts of the past life of an individual. As are the acts, so is the nature of the begotten body. Gotama holds the desert responsible for the production of the body. He says—"Desert is the cause not only of the production of the body but also of its conjunction with a soul."<sup>3</sup> A mere body without

<sup>1</sup> Sarvadars'anaśaṅgraha, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*,

Sūtra 3.2.64.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 3.2.70. p. 105.

its soul is never generated; a body without a soul is only a corpse. The moment a living body comes to birth it means it is associated with soul. The association of a soul with a particular body is thus caused by one's deeds in the past life; and the dissociation of the two also takes place when the Karma or the effect for the experience of which the body is created gets exhausted. Gotama further states that the soul and the body get dissociated with the exhaustion of the Karma. "And the separation between the soul and the body is effected by the termination of the deserts."<sup>1</sup> The whole cycle of birth and death and the continuity of it with the successive births is guided and regulated by the doctrine of Karma or by the desert of individuals. It is responsible also for maintaining the consistency of relation between the deeds and their effects. But for the idea of desert the correspondence between the acts and their results cannot be satisfactorily explained.

It is again a fact of our experience that we never have pure pleasure which is entirely free from the slightest tinge of pain. The Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems hold that pure pleasure cannot exist absolutely. Pleasure, howsoever pure, is to some extent mixed with pain. The two are inseparable. One cannot enjoy only pleasure and pleasure throughout his life by keeping off from pain, and thus, cannot make his life worth living by making it happy through and through. Pleasure and pain are inseparable. One who seeks pleasure which is completely free from

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 3.2.72., p. 105.

some pain which is usually associated with it, in this imperfect earthly life, he would come to complete grief and disappointment, for nowhere on the earth can there exist pleasure without pain. The earthly life (Saṁsāra) can never give us the absolute happiness; for the attainment of happiness (Sukha) itself requires a lot of work and labour, trouble and exhaustion which causes fatigue, worry and physical and mental uneasiness. Thus, the acquisition of happiness involves much of pain and suffering, and moreover, as we live in the space-time dimensions every event that we have here on this earth is transient. Every pleasurable experience that we have here, is bound to come to an end resulting into the loss of it. Thus, after the particular pleasurable experiences are over, at the end we reach a non-pleasurable event. The body also is not capable of enjoying sermons and intellectual pleasures illimitably because of its physical limitations. However pleasant an experience may be, the body feels saturated with it at some time and it can no more derive pleasure from an object or situation which can still yield happiness. After enjoying physical and mental pleasures because of its limited capacities the body feels exhausted, and hence, it experiences fatigue and it no more wants the continuation of the pleasurable experience but it becomes eager to stop the pleasurable experience. An individual, thus, can never enjoy continuous and unending happiness with his limited capacities. All pleasurable experiences are bound to lead ultimately to non-pleasurable experience which either is a void or sometimes painful due to excess



of pleasures. Such pleasures cannot bring to man the everlasting happiness and satisfaction. S. Radhakrishnan writes regarding this—"Pain, the cause of uneasiness, is the sign that the soul is not at rest with itself. The highest good is deliverance from pain and not the enjoyment of pleasure, for pleasure is always mixed up with pain."<sup>1</sup>

All pain or suffering arises out of activity which becomes possible only when body exists. Thus, suffering is inevitably related to the birth of the physical body of an individual. S. Radhakrishnan expresses the relation of pain to activity and body in the following passage—"Pain (duḥkha) is the result of birth (janma), which is the result of activity (pravṛtti). All activity, good or bad, binds us to the chain of Saṁsāra and leads to some kind of birth, high or low.... The activity is due to the defects of aversion (dveṣa), attachment (rāga) and stupidity (moha). Aversion includes anger, envy, malignity, hatred and implacability. Attachment includes lust, avarice, avidity and covetousness. Stupidity includes misapprehension, suspicion, conceit and carelessness. Stupidity is the worst since it breeds aversion and attachment. Through these defects, we forget that there is nothing agreeable or disagreeable to the soul and come to like and dislike objects. The cause of these defects is false knowledge (mithyājñāna) about the nature of the soul, pain, pleasure, etc.... So long as we act, we are under the sway of attachment and

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 161.

aversion and cannot attain the highest good."<sup>1</sup> The nature of activity and attachment and pain remains the same in spite of the nature of objects with which they develop their relations. S. Radhakrishnan says—"The hatred of pain is still hatred and the attachment to pleasure is still attachment and, so long as these are operative, the highest good is beyond our reach."<sup>2</sup> It becomes evident from this passage that the root cause of all evil is the existence of the physical body of an individual, which itself is generated as a result of one's activities in the past birth. The body and activities are thus the mutual causes of each other, and they form a vicious circle. Gotama Sūtra itself states—"Birth is a pain because it is connected with various distresses."<sup>3</sup> In his commentary on the above Sūtra, S. C. Vidyabhushana writes—"Birth is stated to be a pain because it signifies our connections with the body, the senses and the intellect which bring us various distresses. The body is the abode in which pain resides, the senses are the instruments by which pain is experienced and the intellect is the agent which produces in us the feeling of pain. Our birth as connected with the body, the senses and the intellect is necessarily a source of pain."<sup>4</sup>

To live means to act in some way, because life itself means the capacity to act. The continuous

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<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II. p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 162, 163.

<sup>3</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. ( Tr. ) : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 4.1.55, p. 122.

cycle of birth, activities, acquisition of Karma, death, next birth and death forms the ever revolving wheel of Saṁsāra. And liberation means getting oneself freed from such ever revolving wheel of life. It consists in stopping for ever the wheel by eliminating the changes of the formation of a new body by exhausting the previous Karma (sañcita karma) and by not accumulating any new Karma that would lead to a further birth. It mainly consists in freeing oneself from pain. Gotama says in his Sūtra that liberation means complete freedom from pain and suffering.<sup>1</sup> Gotama says further in his next Sūtra that the state of release is absolutely free from distress as that of dreamless sleep. The Sūtra runs as follows—"As there is no distress in a person who is sound asleep and sees no dream, so there is no association of troubles in one who attains release."<sup>2</sup> Here the term distress or Kles'a is used in the sense of moral depravity according to the Nyāya.

Commenting upon the Sūtra of Gotama that states that there is absence of a body in our release Vidyabhusnana says—"Our merits and demerits having already been exhausted, we cannot get a body after we have attained release. Release is the perfect freedom from all sufferings; it consists in a complete destruction of all the seeds and seats of suffering."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vātsyāyana (Com.) : *The Gotama Nyāya Sūtraṇi*, Sūtra 22-37.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyabhusnana S. C. (Tr.) : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sūtra 4-1.63.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 45, p. 138.

Liberation or mokṣa is known as Apavarga in the Nyāya system. Colebrooke describes the Nyāya liberation thus—"Deliverance from pain is beatitude; it is absolute prevention of every sort of evil; reckoned, in this system of philosophy, to comprehend twenty-one varieties of evil, primary or secondary; viz., one body (sarīram), the six organs of sense (śaḍindriyāṇi), six objects (viṣaya) of sensation, six sorts of apprehension and intelligence (śadbuddhayaḥ), one pain or anguish and the last one is pleasure."<sup>1</sup> All those agents who are directly and indirectly connected with activity and pleasure and pain completely disappear in the state of liberation. The very absence of the body makes every activity impossible, and when no activity good or bad is possible, naturally it bears no results which end into pain and pleasure, adharma and dharma and thus it leads to the cessation of rebirth and pain in the future. It thus leads to a state of utter painlessness in the future also. Kes'ava Mis'ra mentions in his *Tarkabhāṣā* the twenty-one primary and secondary varieties of evil, and states that liberation consists in the absolute negation of all them.<sup>2</sup> It is frequently imagined that liberation is a state of perfect happiness and joy. The happiness and joy which we obtain here in the earthly life is imperfect

<sup>1</sup> Colebrooke H. T. : *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Mis'ra Kes'ava : *Tarkabhāṣā*, p. 92.

मोक्षोऽपवर्गः । स चैकविंशति भेदभिन्नस्य दुःखस्यात्यन्तिकी निवृत्तिः ।

as it is usually eclipsed by pain and sufferings; therefore, people cherish a fond hope that in the state of liberation happiness would be completely free from pain, joy from disappointment. The happiness that would be obtained is completely pure and everlasting. But the Nyāya Vais'eṣikas do not support this idea of liberation. In the Nyāya-liberation there, will be utter absence of pain and suffering and so also that of happiness and pleasure. They cannot abstract pleasure from pain, and hence, cannot imagine pure pleasure devoid of all pain, and hence, do not hold that in liberation pleasure or happiness of any sort exists. Liberation here means a state of painlessness as well as pleasurelessness. Kes'ava Mis'ra says—  
 "Pleasure being associated with pain is equivalent to pain. Their association means their inseparability. Just as honey mixed with poison becomes poison, so becomes pleasure pain when mixed with the latter."<sup>1</sup>  
 Liberation is a state of neither pleasure, nor pain nor of hopes, and even vague expectations completely disappear in it. It is a state of indifference and neutrality. Max Müller describes it in the following passage — "This summum bonum is called by Gotama Nih'sreyasa, literally that which has nothing better, the nonplus ultra of blessedness. This blessedness, according to the ancient commentator Vātsyāyana, is described as consisting in renunciation with regard to all the pleasures of this life, and in the nonacceptance of, or indifference to any rewards in the life to come..."<sup>2</sup> It is free from every kind of desire

<sup>1</sup> Mis'ra Kes'ava : *Tarkasaṅgraha*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 484.

and craving, for it produces bondage, and thus, one's freedom is lost by being entangled in their meshes. No passion can exist in the state of liberation as it leads astray the soul from its real state of peace. The liberated person is said to have fulfilled all his desires. But the *Sarvadars'anasāṅgraha* says — "the 'fulfilment of desires' here means 'absence of all the desires'. In liberation, when there cannot be the desire of the person who is devoid of the body and senses, how can there be the fulfilment of desire?"<sup>1</sup> Vātsyāyana in his commentary states — "In liberation the seed of all pain and the resort or dwelling place of pain is destroyed, hence there is complete emancipation of pain; pain cannot originate without a seed and cannot exist without a resort."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Nyāya Vais'eṣikas advocate the uprooting of the first and ultimate cause or seed of suffering. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa states in his *Nyāya Mañjarī* "The pain as effect is destroyed when its cause that produces it is destroyed. If its cause exists in the successive births, pain always exists. Therefore the tendency (pravṛtti) which produces the pain in many births deserves to be destroyed."<sup>3</sup> After making a thorough analysis of the occurrence of pain its root cause is traced to misapprehension or false notions about the nature of the soul and the reality. In the removal of such misapprehension lies the hope of the attainment of liberation.

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasāṅgraha* (Com.), p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gotama Nyāya Sūtras* (Sanskrit), Com. Sūtra 43 (Vātsyāyana).

<sup>3</sup> Bhaṭṭa Jayanta : *Nyāya Mañjarī*, p. 508.

Jayanta Bhaṭṭa states in his *Nyāya Mānjari* that liberation is to be achieved by the complete eradication of all the nine qualities of the self, i.e., intelligence (buddhi), pleasure (sukha), pain (duḥkha), desire (icchā), hatred (dveṣa), effort (prayatna), the impressions of merit (dharma) and demerit (adharma)."<sup>1</sup> In a verse, further he clearly states that so long as all the qualities like passions, etc., of the self are not eradicated, the entire destruction of pain cannot be imagined."<sup>2</sup> Jayanta Bhaṭṭa is justified in emphasizing the need of the eradication of the qualities of the self which are psychological, and bondage consists essentially in the experience of them. If bondage is not felt or experienced, then all the external material powerful chains and restrictions will be incapable to put a person into bondage. Bondage implies the mental experience or the sense of being bound in certain limitations. The qualities of the self are essentially psychological, and unless the experience of bondage is completely wiped off from the mind, liberation or emancipation will not be felt, and if it be not felt it is as good as bondage. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa thus, gives quite an appropriate description of the state of liberation. These mental ties or bondage can be broken entirely only by enlightenment, or by proper apprehension of the nature of the soul and the reality. The path to liberation lies through the philosophical understanding of the

<sup>1</sup> Jayanta Bhaṭṭa : *Nyāya Mānjari*, p. 508.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 508 — यावदात्मगुणाः सर्वे नोच्छिन्ना वासनादयः।

तावदात्यन्तिकी दुःखव्यावृत्तिर्नोपकल्पते ॥

self and the world. Proper philosophical apprehension of the self and nature acts as an antidote against misapprehension (mithyājñāna) which is the root cause of all evil and pain. H. T. Colebrooke describes the process of the attainment of liberation in the following passage— "This liberation from ill is attained by soul, acquainted with truth (tatva), by means of holy science, diverted of passion through knowledge of the evil incident to objects; meditating on itself; and, by the maturity of self-knowledge, making its own essence present; relieved from impediments; not earning fresh merit or demerit by deed done with desire; discerning the previous burden of merit or demerit, by devout contemplation; and acquitting it through compressed endurance of its fruits; and thus (previous acts being annulled, and present body departed and no future body accruing), there is no further connexion with the various sorts of ill, since there is no cause for them. This, then, is prevention of pain of every sort; it is deliverance and beatitude."<sup>1</sup> This is in general the broad idea of the way prescribed by the Nyāya System for the attainment of liberation.

Vātsyāyana also describes in his commentary the stages of the attainment of liberation and, shows the causal link of the various factors that lead to final liberation. He writes—"When the misapprehension (mithyājñāna) disappears, because of its disappearance faults (doṣa) also disappear, with the

<sup>1</sup> Colebrooke H. T. : *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus*, p. 184.



disappearance of the faults disappear the tendencies to activities (pravṛtti), with the disappearance of the tendency disappears birth (janma) and with birth (janma) disappear pain and in the disappearance of pain lies the absolute liberation (apavarga) or final beatitude (niḥsreyas)."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the propounders of these systems hold misapprehension (mithyājñāna) responsible for causing in us wrong ideas about our soul and the reality, and they advocate the removal of the misapprehension to achieve complete freedom from pain and suffering by removing the intermediary proximate causes — The Advaita Vedānta also advocates the removal of nescience under the spell of which we think wrongly, act wrongly and suffer due to mistaken identification with those things which do not form a part of our real innermost self.

Max Müller says regarding the attainment of liberation — "...the Nyāya and Vais'eṣika systems though they also aim at salvation, are satisfied with pointing out the means of it as consisting in correct knowledge, such as can only be obtained from a clear apprehension of the sixteen topics treated by Gotama, or the six or seven categories put forward by Kaṇāda. These two philosophies, agreeing as they do among themselves, seem to me to differ very characteristically from all the others in so far as they admit of nothing invisible or transcendent (Avyakta) whether corresponding to Brahman or to Prakṛiti. They are satisfied with teaching that the

<sup>1</sup> Vātsyāyana : *Gotama Nyāya Sūtras* (Sanskrit), Com. pp. 12-13.

soul is different from the body, and they think that, if this belief in the body as our own is once surrendered, our sufferings, which always reach us through the body, will cease by themselves."<sup>1</sup> Thus, according to the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems the knowledge of the fundamental categories of existence and the basic elements of the world is necessary for the attainment of liberation. The real understanding of the nature and origin of the things with which we falsely identify ourselves, and by the sufferings of which we suffer, removes from our mind the uncalled for grief and the sense of depravity which make life miserable and unbearable.

It is not sufficient according to the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems, to break contact with an existing body. The physical body disappears with the destruction of the world (Pralaya) also, but therefore, it does not become equivalent to the state of liberation for the very simple reason that there is every possibility of its retracing to the original condition of the worldly life from the state of Pralaya. The possibilities of returning back of the soul to the worldly life have not completely exhausted themselves, but they remain dormant, ready to actualise at any opportune moment; while liberation means complete negation and exhaustion of such possibilities of returning of the soul to the life of the world. The liberated soul becomes free eternally not to relapse into its original state. It is liberated for ever as it has exhausted all his accumulated Karma

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p.487.

(sāncit karma), remains exhausting the Karma that has already begun its operation in the present life (the prārabdha karma) and due to complete psychological detachment to the objects of experience it no more accumulates new Karma, and hence, the possibilities of his future birth are nullified. One revolves and continues to revolve on the wheel of birth and death in the worldly life as long as one's Karma does not cease to operate. The desert is the cause of rebirth.<sup>1</sup> When the original stock of the accumulated Karma is exhausted and when no new Karma is accumulated by practising detachment and aversion towards the objects of experience, one need not continue his worldly existence for ever. His chances of assuming future birth get nullified and he has to lead his present life in order to exhaust the Karma whose fruition is already begun. He has to wait for its exhaustion in its normal course. Thus, liberation comes in its final form when the past, present and future Karma is exhausted for ever, by practising the Yoga also.

Frequently, the state of liberation is depicted to be one of positive, immense, pure, unadulterated and unending happiness. But the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems do not support this view. They describe liberation, on the contrary, negatively as a state of utter painlessness. Max Müller writes — "Lastly, the Apavarga (bliss) of the Nyāya and Vais'eṣika systems seems entirely negative, and produced simply by the

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<sup>1</sup> Vidyabhushana S. C. : *The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama*, Sutra 3.2.64, p. 103.

removal of false knowledge. Even the different names given to the supreme bliss promised by each philosophy tell us very little. Mukti and Mokṣa mean deliverance, Kaivalya, isolation or detachment, Nih-sreyas, non plus ultra, Amrita, immortality, Apavarga, delivery. Nor does the well known Buddhist term Nirvāṇa help us much."<sup>1</sup>

Liberation according to the Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas seem to be completely free from any element of positivity. It is devoid of merit as well as demerit (Adharma). As it is entirely free from sin at the same time it is also free from puṇya or good works. It is negative in its character in so far as nothing remains in that state. The Nyāya soul does not intrinsically possess consciousness as a part of its basic nature. It is free from sentience and even consciousness. The soul in its original and natural state is therefore, devoid of consciousness and knowledge. Udayanācārya says in his *Lakṣaṇāvali* "The soul is absolutely devoid of knowledge. Knowledge takes its resort only as its attribute."<sup>2</sup> The Nyāya system thus, clearly holds that in the state of liberation there cannot exist any trace of any psychical character either in the form of knowledge or sentience, desire or effort, pleasure or pain if it is a state of the realisation of the soul in its natural and real form since all such psychical attributes arise in the soul only after it is connected to the physical body. Max Müller brings out its negative character in his

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 488.

<sup>2</sup> Udayanācārya : *Lakṣaṇāvali*, p. 7.

following remarks—"If, therefore, good works continue, there will be rewards for them, in fact there will be paradise, though even this would really have to be looked upon as an obstacle to real emancipation. Nothing remains but a complete extinction of all desires, and this can be effected by knowledge of the truth only. Therefore, knowledge of the truth or removal of all false notions, is the beginning and end of all philosophy, and of the Nyāya philosophy in particular. The first step towards this is the cessation of Ahamkāra, here used in the sense of personal feelings, such as desire for a beautiful and aversion to a deformed object. Desire therefore has to be eradicated and aversion also."<sup>1</sup> But though it is a negative state from which all sentience and psychological experiences remain absent, the Nyāya philosopher does not make liberation equivalent to the Buddhist state of Nirvāṇa which is void or negation of every possible existence. There is a difference between the two. The Buddhist negation is thoroughgoing and they negate every existence in the final state of Nirvāṇa in which nothing but nothingness remains. But as Max Müller says in the final state of liberation in the Nyāya Vais'eṣika systems the eternal particles of the eternal substances (dravyas) exist. Max Müller writes—"There cannot be annihilation because Aṇus or smallest parts are realities."<sup>2</sup>

The state of liberation in the Nyāya System is conveniently likened to the state of a stone (pāśāṇa

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 558.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

kalpa) due to the absence of knowledge from the stone<sup>1</sup>. It is but natural to regard such a lifeless and unconscious state equivalent to the lifeless state of a stone. But in the stone can never occur the various psychical attributes like knowledge, desire, pain, pleasure, effort and volition of the soul. The soul possesses the unique capacity or potentiality to possess or develop in suitable circumstances the above characteristics. The soul is therefore, entirely different in kind and power from the stone. The simile of stone is too inadequate to express the real condition of the soul in the state of liberation. Th. Stcherbatsky quotes from Nyāyasāra (p. 40) the following passage in reply to the above objection raised against the Nyāya liberation—"But", says the author, "Wise men do not exert themselves for bliss alone. Experience shows that they also exert themselves to escape pain, like even they, e.g., "avoid being stung by thorns."—Phenomenal life being here comparable to pain, the result is that the annihilation of it alone is the ultimate aim of man on earth. This ultimate annihilation and this lifeless substance receive the epithet of the place of Immortality (amṛtyu-padam-अमृत्युपदं), "the same epithet which final annihilation receives in early Buddhism."<sup>2</sup> Though the Nyāya liberation is negativistic, it is noteworthy that the Nyāya system ultimately leaves at least some state of existence, though stone-like, to the soul, which is not found even so much in the Buddhist passion for

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasamgraha* (Com)., p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky : *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p 59.

universal annihilation of every thing in the state of their Nirvāṇa as it is pointed out by Jayanta Bhaṭṭa in his *Nyāya Mañjarī*. What ceases to exist in the state of liberation, according to the Nyāya Vais'eṣikas is pain and the various states of consciousness and not the soul itself, nor in the least the eternal particles of the ultimate substances, which enjoy everlasting existence.

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<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Jayanta : *Nyāya Mañjarī*, p. 512.

## CHAPTER VII

### SĀṂKHYA

The Sāṁkhya system is one of the most ancient systems in the history of Indian Philosophy. It is as old as the Buddhistic Philosophy and, it also bears resemblance with the Upaniṣadic philosophy. As it contains some elements of the Upaniṣad, it is probable that it came into existence in the post-Upaniṣadic period. The system is attributed to Kapila Muni—as its first originator. As it agrees in accepting the incessant change of the world, it has resemblance with the Buddhist philosophy; but it is not certainly an offshoot of the Buddhist philosophy. Its contrast with the Buddhist schools is greater than its resemblance with it. Buddhism denies the existence of the Self and the permanent material world, while the Sāṁkhya philosophy admits both as realities. The Sāṁkhya does not reduce everything to a fleeting momentary existence like Buddhism, but it regards the Soul (Puruṣa-पुरुष) and Prakṛti as eternal existences. They may be simultaneously existing in the post-Upaniṣadic period.

The Sāṁkhya system is atheistic (Nirīśvara-निरीश्वर) in character like Buddhism. Both agree in holding the existence of God unnecessary, and both explain the origin and working of the world without



any supernatural power. The Sāṃkhyas do not fanatically oppose God for the sake of denial of God, but they refuse to admit God only for not having sufficient logical grounds to accept Him. As Max Müller says, "The Sāṃkhya atheism has its own peculiarity. The existence of God is denied not because God does not exist (is'varābhāvāt-ईश्वरान्नावात्) but because of the difficulty of proving God's existence (asiddhātvāt-असिद्धत्वात्)"<sup>1</sup>. Max Müller understands the spirit of the denial of God by the Sāṃkhyas and states that the Sāṃkhyas were not antagonists of God for they could explain the world without the interference of God as He had no place left in that system. Max Müller says—"Kapila nowhere puts himself into a hostile attitude towards the Divine idea. He simply says—and, in that respect he does not differ much from Kant,—that there are no logical proofs to establish that existence, but neither does he offer any such proofs for denying it."<sup>2</sup> In fact, Kapila had no quarrel with gods, but as John Davies says that his gods were only emanates of Prakṛti, the nature, which is eternal.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the Sāṃkhyas did not believe absolutely in the authority of the Vedas. It did not definitely support the Vedic ritualism and sacrificialism and did not think them to be indispensable for the

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 397.

<sup>3</sup> Davies John : *Hindu Philosophy (The Sāṃkhya Kārikā by Is'varkṛṣṇa)*. *An Exposition of the System of Kapila*, pp. 101-102.

attainment of liberation. It laid more emphasis on the knowledge of Reality and realisation of the spirit than any kind of ritualism. It had its own independent approach to Reality, and hence it little engaged itself in the controversies about the authority of the Vedas. The Sāṃkhya system shows pronouncedly at least some indifference towards the Vedic authority, though not hatred and antagonism for it. John Davies states that the Sāṃkhya system was decidedly against the Vedic ritualism and sacrificialism and that the former advocated the way of knowledge for the attainment of final liberation.<sup>1</sup>

Kapila seems to have taken quite an independent stand in his inquiry of truth and he has interpreted the world in his own way. Kapila's approach to the problem is novel and original, and hence, it need not be a modified reproduction of any other system preceding it. Richard Garbe writes—"In Kapila's doctrine, for the first time in the history of the world, the complete independence and freedom of the human mind, its full confidence in its own powers, were exhibited."<sup>2</sup>

The Sāṃkhya philosophy believes in the absolute dualism of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the Spirit and Matter which are exclusive of each other and collectively exhaust the sphere of Being. There cannot be anything in the world which is not either of the two. Whatever exists must be either of the two. Puruṣa

<sup>1</sup> Davies Jhon : *Hindu Philosophy* (An Exposition of the System of Kapila), p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Garbe Richard : *Philosophy of Ancient India*, p. 30.

and Prakṛti are opposite of each other in nature and there cannot be anything common between the two. The contrast between the two is complete and they are mutually irreducible to each other. The spirit or soul (Puruṣa) acts as the sole principle of consciousness, and Prakṛti acts as the source, substratum and ultimate resort of all the things that exist in the world with the exception of consciousness. Everything that exists in nature arises out of the original substance the Prakṛti, subsists in Prakṛti and, ultimately after destruction returns to Prakṛti. H. T. Colebrooke translates 'Prakṛti' by 'Nature'. He translates the original Kārikā or verse of *Is'varakṛṣṇa* in the following way — "Nature, the root (of all), is no production. Seven principles the Great or intellectual one, etc., are productions and productive. Sixteen are productions (unproductive). Soul is neither a production nor productive."<sup>1</sup> The above Kārikā or verse gives a clear understanding of the nature of Prakṛti as contrasted with that of the Puruṣa. Prakṛti or Nature thus acts as the material and efficient cause of the world, and it is so all-pervading that it is present anywhere and everywhere in the world. Whatever is in the world is modification of the original primeval-matter or Prakṛti. The Sāṃkhya system believes in the Satkāryavāda, a form of casual doctrine, which holds that the effect is already present in the cause, though unmanifest. The appearance of the effect does not mean the creation of something that

<sup>1</sup> *Is'varakṛṣṇa : Sāṃkhya Kārika or Sāṃkhya Yoga* (Kārikā 3, p. 20). Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

is absolutely new, but it means the gradual unfoldment of itself that is present in an unmanifest form. It is a passage from the unmanifest to the manifest. The manifest is a clearer expression of the unmanifest (avyakta). According to Satkāryavāda, the effect is an actual transformation (pariṇāma) of the cause; the cause though in a changed form, is itself actually the effect. The effect is the cause in a changed form. As said in the above Kārika, the Prakṛti acts as the first and the final cause of the whole material world; it is the producer of all but is the production of no other thing. It is beginningless, but it of course, acts as the source of other things. It is the effect (विकृति) of no other thing though it is the final cause of everything. The Spirit is neither the producer nor the product. It is that which is not at all understandable in terms of any material form. The Prakṛti is the producer of the twenty-four evolutes and is itself uncreated; but the Spirit is neither a product nor a producer. It stands by itself, uncreated and endless. It is eternal and imperceptible. Vācaspati Miśra in his commentary describes the basic-primeval matter (Mūla Prakṛti) as "that which is no effect or transformation of any other thing. Prakṛti is that which does some activity and the state of equilibrium of the three attributes Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, is known as avikṛti (state of being not an effect or transformation)."<sup>1</sup> It is the ultimate substance of all material things. Whatever has physical and material

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<sup>1</sup> Miśra Vācaspati (Com.): *The Tattva Kaumudī*, Com. on Sūtra 3. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

## Sāṃkhya

325

qualities must be a modification of the original primeval matter known as the prakṛti. This Prakṛti is extremely subtle in as much as it gets itself transformed into Buddhi (intellect), Manas (mind), Antaḥkarāṇa (heart) which are supposed to be psychical in character, in general. The Prakṛti is not gross but it is extremely fine, and it is so much pervasive that it leaves nothing out of itself in the universe. The whole universe is a modification of the fundamental matter known as the Prakṛti.

Spirit or the Self-principle is exactly contradictory of the Prakṛti. Here the Prakṛti is unintelligent or (jaḍa); the term jaḍa is not here applicable in the sense of being inert or inactive, but it is used to indicate the absence of consciousness in it. The Spirit is only pure and undivided consciousness. The Spirit appears in the form of self, and it is different from buddhi (intelligence), manas (mind), senses and the body. The nature of Puruṣa or the Self is unfailing light (sadā-prakāśasvarūpa-सदाप्रकाशस्वरूप). It is the everlasting source of all illumination because of which the Prakṛti becomes visible in all forms. Consciousness is its constitutive nature. Consciousness, according to the Sāṃkhya, is not an adventitious character of the soul as the Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas think. It is not of the form of bliss but it is simply consciousness which serves as the source of all illumination.

The Prakṛti or the primordial-matter remains inactive in its state of equilibrium (Sāmyāvasthā-साम्यावस्था) of the three qualities (Triguṇāḥ) of which it is composed. The three guṇas are three constituent

powers of the Prakṛti and they act like the strands of a string. The first guṇa is the Sattva which is responsible for the causation of enlightenment, knowledge, experience of pleasure and happiness. It stands for light and sweetness. The second quality is the Rajas, which acts as the source of all movement and activity, and it produces pain. It generates restless activity, uneasiness, dissatisfaction and feverish strifes. The third guṇa is the Tamas, which produces ignorance, indolence, apathy, sloth, indifference, heaviness, lethargy, and acts as an impediment to quick activity, understanding and illumination. In the first state of Prakṛti, these qualities lie in the state of a perfect equilibrium, which when disturbed, starts an overhauling movement. Somehow the equilibrium of these three qualities happens to be disturbed in a mysterious way by the mere vicinity of the Puruṣa. The Puruṣa is supposed to induce movement in the Prakṛti in an inexplicable way, and when the original equilibrium is disturbed Prakṛti starts its evolution of the whole world. According to the Sāṃkhya system, the effect is only an express manifestation of the cause; the world is only potentially existent in the unmanifest state of the Prakṛti, and it gets actualised or articulately formed in its perfect form in course of its evolutionary process which is only initiated by the mere presence of the Puruṣa.

After the first shock is received, the Prakṛti automatically starts its activity and, begins to gradually evolve the twenty-four products out of it.

The first product of the Prakṛti is Mahat or the Great, which acts as the cause of all illumination. It equally causes the psychical as well as the physical products. From the Mahat is caused Ahaṁkāra the self-sense and the five subtle essences known as the tanmātras of sound, touch, smell, form or colour and taste. On the other side, from the Mahat the Manas is created, and in addition to the Manas or mind, are produced the five sense organs, the five motor organs and the five gross elements—i.e., light, air, water, ether and earth. All these are the various factors which have their share in the formation of the world. All the mental and material products are only the successive manifestations of the fundamental Prakṛti. These twenty-four kinds of things are evolved quite in an orderly way from their original source. It is the Prakṛti that is present in both the beautiful and ugly, good and bad things. Prakṛti acts as a substratum of the qualities which are only its manifestations. The Prakṛti is at the root of everything of the world. It is all-pervasive and the world is a creation of the Prakṛti out of itself.

The Puruṣa is pure consciousness. It is omnipresent, eternal and immutable. It is entirely passive as all movement or activity is totally confined to Prakṛti. The Puruṣa is only the receiver of experiences, and therefore, it is supposed to be only the enjoyer (bhoktā) and never the doer (kartā). The Puruṣa is wrongly supposed to be active being identified sometimes with some evolutes of the Prakṛti. Īś'varakṛṣṇa describes the Puruṣa in the following

words— “And from that contrast it follows that soul (Puruṣa) is witness, solitary bystander, spectator and passive.”<sup>1</sup> Gauḍapāda, while commenting on it explains that the soul is solitary or aloof from all in the sense that it is free from the three qualities (त्रिगुणेभ्यः केवलः). The Puruṣa is devoid of the three qualities, and hence, it has no particular characteristics except being only an inert witness of the activities of the Prakṛti. All movement even in the Prakṛti is caused by the disturbance of equilibrium of the three qualities that are the constituents of it. But the Puruṣa is above the three qualities (guṇas), hence, the possibility of movement is totally eliminated from the nature of the soul. As the soul is constituted of consciousness, it acts only as a seer, immutable and undisturbed. The soul acts only as a witness being an experiencer of the various experiences but never partakes any of them as the agent or doer of them. In fact, the Puruṣa or soul is totally passive but is mistaken to be active as it is associated with the Prakṛti which is ever active. Īś'varakṛṣṇa says— “Therefore, by reason of union with it, insensible body seems sensible; and though the qualities be active, the stronger (soul) appears as the agent.”<sup>2</sup> Gauḍapāda says in his commentary on the above sūtra “As a man caught along with thieves is supposed to be a thief, so also the real agents are the three qualities, and even if the soul is inactive or

<sup>1</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*. Com. Gauḍapāda, 19-96. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* — Kārikā 20-99. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.



passive (akartā) as it happens to be associated with them, it is wrongly supposed to be an agent.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Puruṣa is even inert or inactive and it only passively witnesses the activities of the nature.

The existence of Puruṣa is not an object of direct perception but the existence of the soul is known by inference. Certain proofs are presented for proving the existence of the Puruṣa. The 17th Kārikā of the Sāṃkhya system runs as follows and contains the proofs of the soul. —“(a) Because all composite objects are for another’s use, (b) because there must be absence of the three attributes and other properties, (c) because there must be control, (d) because there must be some one to experience, and (e) because there is a tendency towards ‘Isolation’ or final beatitude, therefore, the spirit must be there.”<sup>2</sup>

It is worthwhile to examine the proofs offered to establish the existence of the soul. Firstly, from our common experience we find that composite things like the bedstead, the chair, exist not for themselves, but for some one else who makes a proper use of them; similarly, Gauḍapāda says that this world being an assemblage of the five elements must be meant for some one who uses it; thus, the nature and world which are composite in nature must have been meant for something that is simple and non-composite in its nature, in order to avoid the fallacy of regressus ad infinitum.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. See com. by Gauḍapāda — Kārikā 20-99. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Miśra Vācaspati : *The Tattva Kaumudī* with com. pp. 58, 59. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

This argument is based upon the subject-object relation in the phenomenon of experience. All objects and their particular nature have no value unless there is somebody who makes their use. The experiencer is the subject who, either is favourably or unfavourably affected by the objects. Prakṛti in all its various aspects serves as an object of experience to the experiencer, the Puruṣa. The various patterns and arrangements of the things of the world become meaningless unless they are properly appreciated. An object becomes meaningless in the absence of a subject that enjoys it. It is an anthropomorphic argument derived from human experience. Men prepare things in various patterns to satisfy their various purposes and wants; an inference is drawn conversely by Gauḍapāda that wherever there are objects of certain usable patterns and arrangements, there must be some subjects that enjoy them. Moreover, all such objects of use never exist in their simple and elemental condition; they are always composite. All composite things evolving from the Prakṛti possess the three attributes; but as the spirit or the Puruṣa is non-composite, naturally it must be simple, undivided and impartible. The *Tattva Kaumudī* says—“Thus, then, in order to escape the regressus infinitum, if we accept the non-composite nature of spirit, we find ourselves constrained to attribute to it the properties of being “without the three attributes”, “distinguishable”, “non-objective” (subjective), “uncommon” (specific), “sentient” and “not-productive”. Because being with three Attributes and other properties are always accompanied by that

of 'being composite', which latter being absent in the spirit, must lead to the inference of the absence of the three Attributes."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the famous dualism of matter and mind, object and subject, Prakṛti and Puruṣa in which the two aspects of reality are inseparably related is established by the Sāṃkhya system. The very concept of matter (Prakṛti) inevitably leads to the inference of the existence of the Puruṣa, the experiencer, without which the Prakṛti will lose all meaning and purpose. Puruṣa and Prakṛti are relative terms mutually implying each other, and neither is conceivable without the other. However, the Sāṃkhya invariably associates the Prakṛti with the Puruṣa, but at the same time it can imagine the state of the entire isolation (Kaivalya) of the soul from the Prakṛti. Their union is indissoluble at least in the phenomenal reality, though the two are separated in the original and the final state of liberation.

It has already been stated that the Puruṣa or the soul, in the Sāṃkhya system is devoid of the three attributes. The three attributes sattva, rajas and tamas are all present in every product of the Prakṛti, though the nature of a thing is determined from the predominance of some one attribute in it. The proportion of one or two of the three may be very low in a thing, but no product of the Prakṛti is entirely free from any of the attributes in the phenomenal reality. All composite objects

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Vācaspati: *The Tattva Kaumudī*, pp. 61-62.  
Tr. Ganganath Jha.

of the world are subject to change and variations. Changing objects fail to maintain their self-sameness and identity as they are governed by the changing operations of the three attributes. All things in the world possess such attributes, therefore, it is conceived that there must be something that must be totally free from mutability and variations, and it must be identical with itself; as all change is caused by the operations of the three attributes in the composite things, so there must be something that must be free from these attributes, and hence quite simple in nature.

It is further argued that there is always the need of controlling of things by agents; the Prakṛti has a very complicated net-work of relations in the infinite number of objects; therefore, it needs to have some intelligent controller and regulator, who must be managing the operations of the world in a uniform and systematic way. It is said in the *Tattva Kaumudī*, "...because the objects constituted by the three Attributes are such 'as are always controlled';—as a matter of fact it is found that every thing consisting in pleasure, pain, and delusion (i.e., in the three attributes) is controlled by something else, e.g., the chariot by the charioteer; and the Great Principle and the rest have been proved to 'consist in pleasure, pain and delusion', therefore, they must have a 'controller'—and this controller must be beyond the three Attributes and independent; and this is the spirit."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī*, p. 62. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

The arguments that there must be some one who must be enjoying the composite things of the world, and that there must be some controller of the vast expanse of nature ultimately imply the argument from 'design' as it is called by M. Hiriyanna. This argument from design implies an experiencer for experienceable objects. Usually God is supposed to be the contriver of such objects of experience which imply the existence of experiencer of them; but the Sāṃkhya being atheistic, ascribes such existence to the Puruṣa instead of to God. It is really interesting to note the remarks of M. Hiriyanna in this respect. He compares the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika doctrine with the Sāṃkhya in the following way—"In the latter (Nyāya Vaiśeṣika), the material out of which the universe is made possesses no spontaneity of its own. Its various parts have accordingly to be brought together and also kept together by some external factor—God or Karma or both. But here there is a great advance in the conception of Prakṛti in that it is of an organic entity. It is able to develop of itself. Such an entity has no need for an external manipulator. This is at the bottom of the atheism of the Sāṃkhya and shows the futility of attempts like that of Vijñāna Bhikṣu to real theism into the doctrine. But Prakṛti, though its conception is different from that of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika atoms, does not evolve for itself, and therefore, points, to sentient Puruṣa. It is this teleology implicit in Prakṛti that the design argument here makes the use of."<sup>1</sup> Thus,

<sup>1</sup> H. Hiriyanna M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 280.

it becomes equivalent to the teleological argument also which states that the production of all composite things is meant for the fulfilment of some purpose because composite things have always some kind of use and they are produced for that use. The use of a thing connotes the existence of a user or experiencer that has a mind and purpose. The term 'Bhokṭṛbhāvat' (भोक्तृभावात्) is specially used to establish by inference the existence of an experiencing subject, i.e., the Puruṣa or, the soul. It is said in the *Tattva Kaumudī* regarding this, "Thus, then something else, which does not consist of pleasure, etc., must be the one to whom things are agreeable or disagreeable; and this something else must be the Spirit."<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon of experience (bhoga) naturally implies the three parts of experience, i.e., the object of experience, the actual state of experience itself—either pleasure or pain and that to which the experience occurs, i.e., the experiencer or the subject of experience. The phenomenon of experience will be meaningless and inconceivable in the absence of any one of these three entities which are absolutely indispensable. The whole phenomenon of experience absolutely needs all these three entities. The Sāṃkhya seem therefore, to be justified in inferring the existence of the experiencer or the soul, the Puruṣa. This experiencer of the subject must have its own independent nature which can have nothing in common with others. It possesses its unique nature which can never be either the object of experience

<sup>1</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī*, p. 63. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

or the state of experience, i.e., pleasure or pain. The term 'bhokṛṭbhāva' does not mean 'visibility' as some interpreters think, but it means the phenomenon of 'experience' in the broadest sense.

It is, of course, made clear by Īś'varakṛṣṇa in his Kārikā, that though the Puruṣa or the soul is the experiencer, and the objects of experience imply its existence, the objects of experience are not created by it, nor are they willed by it. While proving that God's existence is not necessary to explain the world the Sāṃkhya states that the appropriate adjustment between the objects of experience and the subject of them is natural and unwilled. The Prakṛti and its evolutes are not purposely created for the gratification of the soul nor are they willed by the souls. They are naturally adjusted without any external agent. It is clearly stated in the following Kārikā — "As it is a function of milk, an unintelligent (substance to nourish the calf, so it is the office of the chief (principles to liberate the soul)."<sup>1</sup> From this verse follows that the adjustment between the Prakṛti and the Puruṣa or the experienced and the experiencer is natural, and is not willed by anybody, neither by God nor by the Puruṣa although the Puruṣa is endowed with the capacity to experience either pleasure or pain accruing from the operations of the Prakṛti.

<sup>1</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* — 57-227. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

वत्सविशुद्धिनिमित्तं क्षीरस्य यथा प्रवृत्तिरज्ञस्य ।

पुरुषविमोक्षनिमित्तं तथा प्रवृत्तिः प्रबानस्य ॥

Another argument to establish the existence of the soul (Puruṣa) is made from the tendency of individuals to 'isolation' or final beatitude. The *Tattva Kaumudī* says—“.. the spirit must be there, “because there is tendency towards Isolation”—The 'Isolation' which is found in all scriptures and is recognised by all sages and others possessed of divine insight—as the absolute and final cessation of the three kinds of pain—can never belong to the Great principle and other products; because, by their very nature, the pain as one of their integral components, from which, therefore, they can never be absolved; since a substance can never be absolved of something that forms its constituting element. It is only when one is distinct from the Great Principle, etc., and does not consist in pleasure, pain and delusion, that the said isolation can be possible. Thus, the conclusion is, that in as much as there is a tendency in all scriptures and among all intelligent persons towards 'Isolation', there must be something beyond (pleasure, etc., and hence) the Great Principle and the rest,—and, this is the spirit.”<sup>1</sup> It is made clear from the argument mentioned above that the Prakṛti itself being constituted of various experiences like pain, pleasure, etc., can never make itself free from it, as pain or pleasure is necessarily a part of the essential nature of itself; however we observe a tendency in all persons to make themselves free from such experience of pain and people and seek final beatitude, which is an experience of painlessness.

<sup>1</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī*, p. 64. Tr. Ganganath Jha.



The very idea of such a possibility of completely becoming aloof from pain is based upon the presumption of such a possibility of becoming aloof from such painful experience which are caused by the operations of Prakṛti, lead us to accept something like the soul (Puruṣa), which can be completely isolated and can enjoy its solitary existence in its isolation from Prakṛti. If there were no such soul that could be entirely severed from the revolutions of the Prakṛti, and if Prakṛti were all-pervasive and omnipresent, the attainment of such an 'isolation' from Prakṛti would have been inconceivable. There must be, therefore, something that can stand aloof from the Prakṛti and that can be only the soul (Puruṣa), according to the Sāṃkhya. The very idea of liberation from the painful operations of Prakṛti implies that it consists in one's complete severance from the ever revolving Prakṛti. As M. Hiriyanna describes it — "What strives to escape must be other than what it is to escape from, viz., Prakṛti."<sup>1</sup> That which can eternally escape cannot be the Prakṛti which itself is the cause of such painful experiences, therefore, it must be the other part of Reality, i.e. the soul (Puruṣa).

The Sāṃkhya believes in the plurality of Puruṣas unlike the Advaita Vedāntins, who believe that the Self is only one, though the individual souls are many. The Sāṃkhya believes that the ultimate souls (Puruṣas) are infinite in number although they do not possess in themselves any distinguishing features

<sup>1</sup> Hiriyanna M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 280.

of themselves. The eighteenth Kārikā states "(1) because there is a definite adjustment of birth, death and the organs, (2) because there is non-simultaneity of activity, and (3) because there is diversity due to the three attributes—the plurality of spirits is established."<sup>1</sup> The verse mentioned above states the various reasons for which the sāmkhya believe that there is an infinite number of Puruṣas or souls.

The first reason for plurality of souls is based upon the phenomena of birth, death and adjustment of bodies and sense organs. According to the Sāṃkhya system, the soul is eternal—it is unborn and undying; the birth of an individual consists in the association of a body to a spiritual principle, i.e., the soul and death means the disconnection of the two resulting in the destruction of physical body. As Vācaspati Miśra says in his commentary on the above verse—"The 'Birth' of the spirit consists in its connection with a new set of body, sense organs, mind, 'I—principle', Great Principle and feeling (Vedanā)—all these latter forming a composite of a particular character; it does not mean modification since the Spirit is essentially unmodifiable (unchangeable). Death also consists in giving up of the body and the rest; it cannot mean destruction, as the Spirit is unchangeably eternal."<sup>2</sup> In reality, the soul being eternal, is neither born nor it ever dies, but the bodies are created and destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī Kārikā*, XVIII. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

<sup>2</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī Kārikā*, XVIII. Tr. Ganganath Jha. (Com.) pp. 64, 65.

Had there been only one soul for all the bodies, then with the birth of one all would be born and with the death of one all would die, and thus, individual differences of birth and death would lose all distinctions. Max Müller says—"The Sāṃkhya answer is that Puruṣa is clearly many; because of the variety in the acts of pleasure, pain, trouble, confusion and purifying of race, health, birth and death; also on account of the stages in the life (Āsrama) and the difference of caste (Varna)."<sup>1</sup> As again Vācaspati Miśra points out, the absurdity of all becoming deaf or blind or unsound on one's becoming deaf, blind or unsound would follow. In order to avoid such absurd results the Sāṃkhyas deny the oneness of the soul (Puruṣa) and they believe in the plurality of souls in order to explain the individual differences.

Another argument is presented by the Sāṃkhyas to prove the plurality of souls and, it is based upon the non-simultaneity of actions. Activity is generally attributed to the soul as the body cannot function without the soul; if there were only one soul for all, then the movements of one man would mean movements of all men; but facts are quite contrary: simultaneously we find some men are at rest and some carry on intense activity. In actuality the activity of one is restricted only to himself. Therefore, it is clear that there must be separate souls for separate bodies, each body having its own soul.

The third argument to prove plurality of the

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 335-36.

souls is based upon the diversity of the three Attributes. In actuality we find persons in whom the Sāttvic element abounds, and hence, they turn up as deities or saints; so also those in whom the Rajas abounds they are extremely mobile and unsteady; and others in whom the Tāmasic element is predominant, they become indolent, lethargic, passive and darkish. If the soul were one then all of these characteristic would have appeared simultaneously in all, but they being contrary to each other, cannot exist together. They are exclusive of each other, hence the need of attributing one soul to each body. If plurality of souls is denied absurd conclusions regarding birth, death, activities and attributes would follow. If there were only one soul there should be contradictions not only in the physical sphere but there will be caused widescale confusion in the mental and moral spheres. If the soul were one for all, emotional experience of one would be simultaneously enjoyed by all; but in actuality it is found that two persons who are in close vicinity of each other do not possess the same experience, one may be cheerful, the other only gloomy; one loving, the other full of hatred. Thus, in order to make possible the occurrence of various mental experiences simultaneous, each one must possess his own soul. If the soul were only one for all the moral virtues and sins, it would be simultaneously inhering in one and the same individual, and hence, there will be contradictions. The individual will be doing pāpa (sin) and puṇya (virtue) at the same time; this becomes inconceivable unless they are entirely

excluded from each other. Moral chaos would result if the good and bad activities are not followed by their corresponding rewards, and the distinctions of rewards would be lost if they are not entirely separated from each other. If there were only one soul, on the performance of a good deed by one, all would get the credit of doing a good action and all would reap the good fruit thereof, although, in fact some of them would be morally deteriorated because of their vicious actions. Those who are morally deficient would not have to reap the evil fruits of their vicious actions as they will be benefited by the good actions of others—the soul of all being one. In order to avert such calamities and confusions in the moral sphere, it is really necessary that each doer of actions is separate and the results of his actions perpetrate on him separately. For that purpose the Sāṃkhyas are justified in recognising the plurality of souls.

The Sāṃkhya system is in agreement with the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in believing in the plurality of souls to prove the varieties of birth, death and attributes. But in the absence of any distinguishing characteristic in the essential nature of the souls, it is impossible to distinguish one soul from another. All souls possess only one characteristic and, that is simply 'sentience' or 'consciousness' as opposed to Prakṛti which is insentient. All souls or Puruṣas are souls only in virtue of sentience of which they are constituted. On the ground of sentience all are similar, but there is nothing in the very constitutions

of the souls which makes them different from each other. There is no internal principle of differentiation or individuation in them; hence, the differences or plurality of the Puruṣas is determined not internally but by some external factor. Apart from such external determinant of their individuation, all souls are exactly like each other, and hence, plurality of souls becomes logically unjustifiable. The Sāṅkhyas do not accept the intrinsic differences of souls like the bheda-vādin Madhvas. It is difficult to maintain consistently the plurality of souls of the Sāṅkhyas.

In this respect M. Hiriyanna writes—“The Puruṣas are conceived as many; and various arguments are put forward in support of that view, such as the divergent histories of men and the differences in their endowment—physical, moral and intellectual. But such reasoning only shows the plurality of the empirical selves. In themselves, it is hard to see how the Puruṣas can differ from one another. There is not even a semblance of explanation here as in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, where each self is stated to be inherently characterised by its own Viśeṣa.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, there is no logical ground to maintain metaphysically the plurality of souls. The plurality of the Puruṣas can be maintained only on their phenomenal level by means of their associations with particular minds and bodies of different individuals. There is no sufficient ground to maintain their differences as there are no intrinsic differences in them.

It is necessary to understand properly the

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<sup>1</sup> Hiriyanna M.: *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 280.

principle of the plurality of the Puruṣas when on the metaphysical grounds no soul can be differentiated from another because of the absence of any internal distinguishing feature in it. One soul or Puruṣa comes to be distinguished from another individual soul from the body it occupies. The plurality of the individual souls is thus determined from the different bodies and sense organs with which they come to be associated. S. Radhakrishnan says — “The Jīva is the self distinguished by the conjunction of the senses and limited by the body.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the particularization of the soul is dependent on the separate bodies and senses with which the soul comes to attach itself. A. B. Keith says — “The principle of individuation can only be understood as the principle through the action of which the several spirits become endowed each with a separate substratum which results in the appearance of human individuals.”<sup>2</sup> The principle of individuation is thus extraneous, and it consists in the various adjuncts with which the soul comes to be associated in accordance with its desert. This point is made quite clear by Vāsudev Shastri Abhyankar in his commentary on the Sāṃkhya system in the following way — all the particularities that are found in the individual souls are caused by their associations with the adjuncts like the pradhāna; they are only apparent and adjunctival (aupādhika औपाधिक). All particularities or differences (vies'ṣa) are

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Keith A. B. : *The Sāṃkhya System*, p. 90.

only of the nature of adjuncts.<sup>1</sup> It is made still more clear by defining the term adjunct or upādhi. 'Upādhi means that abode of expression of the consciousness (caitanya) of the spirit, just as fuel is to the fire.'<sup>2</sup> The upādhis are thus the causes of the plurality of the Puruṣas. All these adjuncts which give empirical nature to the eternal Puruṣa are modifications of the original primordial matter (Prakṛti).

The Puruṣas are infinite in number, according to the Sāṃkhya system. It has been already shown that the plurality of the Puruṣas is not metaphysically tenable; the plurality of them is real only on the phenomenal level due to the various adjuncts which are the products of evolution of the Prakṛti. Prakṛti, after losing for the first time its balance of the three attributes, produces Mahat or Buddhi. While the term 'mahat' brings out the cosmic aspect, buddhi which is used as a synonym for it, refers to the psychological counterpart pertaining to each individual. The Mahat is known also as the Great or Brahmā implying that it is the cosmic aspect of the products of Prakṛti : Buddhi is not here the intellect of individual but it is something wider than that as it is the cause of the mental and material things which

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasāṅgraha*. See (Com.) by Vāsudev Shastri Abhyankar on *Sāṃkhya System*, p. 315.

जीवगता अखिला विशेषाः प्रधानाद्युपाधिसम्बन्धेन मासमाना औपाधिका एव । विशेषास्तौपाधिका एव ।

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Com. on *Sāṃkhya System*, p. 315.

उपाधिश्चात्मचैतन्यस्याभिव्यक्तिस्त्यानम् । बहुरिन्धनवत् ।



evolve from it. The buddhi, when taken in the psychological aspect serves as the subtle substance of all mental states. When the Prakṛti actually gets modified in the buddhi the buddhi assumes the attributes of virtue (dharma-धर्म), knowledge (jñāna-ज्ञान), equanimity (vairāgya-वैराग्य) and lordship (aiśvarya-ऐश्वर्य). The buddhi is supposed here to be a term of wider denotation; it acts as the cause of both the intellect and the sense organs and elements. S. Radhakrishnan makes the distinction between the buddhi (cosmic) and the intellect (particular) in the following way—"The status of mahat or buddhi is left in an uncertain condition. Buddhi, as the product of Prakṛti and the generator of ahaṁkāra, is different from buddhi which controls the processes of the sense, mind and ahaṁkāra. If the former is identified with the latter, the whole evolution of Prakṛti must be regarded as subjective since the ego and the non-ego are both the products of buddhi."<sup>1</sup>

If it be approached from the subjective point of view it is the substratum and generator of individual intellects; if it be approached from the objective side it acts as the material substance or substratum of material things like the five elements and sense organs.

The next evolutionary product of the Prakṛti is the Ahaṁkāra. Ahaṁkāra is the self-sense or the principle of individuation which arises from buddhi. The Ahaṁkāra, through action supplies mental backgrounds to the different souls. The differences of

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 268.

the souls are due to the possession of different mental experiences which can be apportioned by the sense of egoity or I-hood. The difference between two souls is felt because of the selfness or sense of I-hood of each particular soul. When seen psychologically the self cannot be realised unless it is contradistinguished from the non-self. Ahaṁkāra is that which makes possible the appropriation of things in form of 'my' and 'mine' that which appropriates the things or mental experiences as 'my' and 'mine' as different from those of others, is the 'I', the ego, the ahaṁkāra of an individual. The function of ahaṁkāra is abhimāna or love of oneself. Ahaṁkāra is the sense of subjectivity of an individual in virtue of which one mentally separates himself from others. As Max Müller says—"Buddhi cannot act without a distinction of the universe into subject and object without the introduction of the Ego or I, which again is impossible without a Non-Ego, or something objective."<sup>1</sup> It is not sufficient to have general or unparticularised consciousness to experience the sense of I-hood; the general consciousness has to be restricted to a particular centre having the set of sense organs and body and the mind which is exclusively meant only for one individual. That which enables one to feel 'I' is the ahaṁkāra. As it is said in the *Sarvadars'ana-saṅgraha*—"Ahaṁkāra is the synonym of abhimāna (pride) or self-love and it is a modification of the mahat."<sup>2</sup> Vasudev Shastri Abhyamkara makes clear

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller: *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 327.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars'ana-saṅgraha*, p. 317.

अहंकारतत्त्वमभिमानापरनामधेयं महतो विकृतिः ।

the meaning of ahaṃkāra in the following terms in his commentary — “Aham here means here is my power, here are objects for my experience. I am such and such a person, such are the unique experiences of whom, that is ahaṃkāra.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, ahaṃkāra is the self-consciousness of an individual in virtue of which he becomes himself. The souls (Puruṣas) identify themselves with the acts of the Prakṛti by means the ahaṃkāra, and the soul feels as if it were the doer of actions and the experiencer of the results of those actions. Here the ahaṃkāra is not to be narrowed down only to the psychological sense of self-hood of an individual, but it is much wider than that as it acts also the cause and substratum of the other evolutes like the organs of sense, the motor organs, the tanmātras, the mind and the five gross elements which evolve from it. The adjuncts due to whose associations with the Puruṣa of a single nature are responsible for the appearance of many souls which are caused by the ahaṃkāra. The Sāṃkhyaas believe in the original plurality of the Puruṣas; they maintain that the plurality is felt by the souls due to their separate sense of self-hood or ahaṃkāra. Had the ahaṃkāra been the cause of individuation of the souls, it would have been analogous to the Advaita Vedānta stand-point which believes in the reality of the one single self as the ultimate reality, making all individual souls apparent. S. Radhakrishnan says — “Ahaṃkāra is not what individualises the universal consciousness, since the individuality is

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 9.317. See Com.

already there according to the Sāṃkhya.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the Sāṃkhyas have made vain efforts to prove the original plurality of the souls, but it is logically untenable as there is nothing in the souls in their intrinsic nature that can make one different from another. All differences seem to be due to the adjuncts (upādhis) with which the souls come to be associated. There is a tripartite division as the Sāttvika ahaṃkāra, the Rājasika ahaṃkāra and the Tāmasika ahaṃkāra based on the three attributes, as a result of which issue good, bad and indifferent consequences.

From the Sāttvika ahaṃkāra (vaikārika) are produced the manas (mind), the five organs of perception and five motor organs, and from the tāmasika ahaṃkāra the five fine and five gross elements are produced.

Manas is the next evolute of Prakṛti, and it serves only as an instrument for the acquisition of knowledge of the world. The manas is not here all-pervading as the Naiyāyikas believe; here the mind is limited as it possesses movements and action. It is made up of parts as it is associated with the various senses. It is like the doorkeeper that regulates the flow of the sense-perceptions and synthesises them into percepts. It also helps discharging the various functions or motor actions, which take place in accordance with the data of the sensations that are received. The mind is subordinate to buddhi and it helps the systematic functioning of the sense organs and their corresponding impressions, and it

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 269.

also helps to find new proper reactions to stimuli. What is peculiar with the Sāṃkhya is that the mind is not a product of a mental or spiritual substance, but it is a product of the material substance known as the Prakṛti. The thirteen factors of evolution of the Prakṛti, i.e., the five senseorgans, the five motor organs, the mind, the ahaṃkāra and the buddhi are no doubt psychical in nature, but they are psychical only so far as they perform psychical functions; but by origin they are modifications of the material substance (Prakṛti). M. Hiriyanna explains their real nature in the following passage—"They are psychic in the sense that they lend themselves to be lighted up by the Puruṣa unlike the other products of Prakṛti, viz., the elements whether subtle or gross. It is this that distinguishes the two series, the subjective and the objective, as we may call them. They are the products of the Prakṛti to adapt itself to the requirements of the Puruṣa. In other words, the functions that we describe as mental are really mechanical processes of physical organs, which assume a psychical character only when illumined by spirit. The senses are here derived from the ahaṃkāra, and not from the elements (bhūtas) as in the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika."<sup>1</sup> The ahaṃkāra, the manas and the buddhi are collectively known sometimes as the antaḥkaraṇa as they are not properly distinguished from each other. The antaḥkaraṇa along with the ten organs acts as the psychic apparatus mediating between the Puruṣa and the outside world

<sup>1</sup> M. Hiriyanna : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 284-85.

thereby securing for the former the experiences of life (bhoga), or, if the time for it is ripe, final freedom (apavarga) through right knowledge (viveka).

The Puruṣa and the Prakṛti being entirely exclusive of each other, and the Puruṣa having no physical position or magnitude, it is difficult to understand how it comes to be connected with the Prakṛti. The relation between the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti is described in the Kārikā to be like the association between a lame and a blind person. The Prakṛti, being completely insentient (अचेतन) possesses no vision but possesses tremendous power for activity, and hence, it is evermoving, but due to the want of vision and intelligence, it does not know the way in which it should act; the Puruṣa is all-intelligence but being devoid of the three attributes, is eternally passive, inactive and inert. It cannot move by itself though it possesses the vision that reveals to itself the way by which it has to go. But the Prakṛti is only physically strong, and therefore, it is described as 'blind' and the Puruṣa is no doubt a visionary but it cannot move by itself; hence, it is described to be like a lame person who visualises his way but cannot move because of the lack of physical activity. It is said in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā—"For the soul's contemplation of nature, and for its abstraction, the union of both takes place, as the halt and blind. By that union a creation is framed."<sup>1</sup> The Prakṛti is in no

<sup>1</sup> Is'varakṛṣṇa : *S kīṃhya Kārikā*, p. 104. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke,

direct contact with the Puruṣa. Their contact is merely one of compresence. The Puruṣa influences the Prakṛti only from a distance when it comes in the vicinity (Sannidhi-सन्नधि) of the Prakṛti. The adjustment of the Prakṛti to the soul again is not purposeful; it is simply automatic and unwilled. Had it been purposed the Prakṛti would have to be regarded as 'intelligent', but the Prakṛti is devoid of any intelligence (acetana). It is again said that the activities of the Prakṛti are carried on with a view to finally release the Puruṣa from its bondage. It is the function of the chief (pradhāna) to liberate the soul,<sup>1</sup> just as it is the function of the milk to nourish the calf. The milk, though unintelligent, serves the purpose of nourishing the calf, so also, the mahat principle which is unintelligent carries on its evolution in order to liberate the Puruṣa without any conscious and willed purpose. Gauḍapāda holds that nature acts spontaneously for the liberation of the soul. While Vācaspati Miśra says that irrational nature cannot act in such a rational way to satisfy the purpose of the soul, and therefore, there must be reason to direct nature. Commenting thus, Gauḍapāda proceeds to infer the necessity of the divine guidance, "Embodied souls, though rational, cannot direct nature, as they are ignorant of its character; therefore, there is an omniscient Being, the Director of nature, which is Īśvara or God. But the atheist Sāṃkhyas hold that there is no occasion for a guiding Providence, but that the activity of

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 57/227. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

nature, for the purpose of accomplishing soul's object, is an *Intuitive necessity*."<sup>1</sup> From the nature of the operation of the Prakṛti, from the adjustment of means to end, the guiding principle that controls and regulates all the activities in a particular planned way is suggested for the sake of rational understanding. The inherent teleology, which the Sāṃkhya describe as the spontaneity in the Prakṛti, does satisfy our rational demand for logical explanation. M. Hiriyanna passes significant remarks over this and tries to wind up the problem—He writes—"Next, evolution is here regarded teleological; but as Prakṛti is by hypothesis not sentient, we cannot take it wholly so. We may characterise it is quasi-teleological, however hard it may be to understand that term. What is meant is that the whole process serves a purpose, though it cannot be described as consciously pursued."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the evolution of Prakṛti in Sāṃkhya system is not linear, but it is only cyclic and it has a definite pattern. It repeats in the same forms, hence, there is no possibility of continuous progress.

It is difficult to conceive how the Puruṣa, the soul, which is totally disconnected with the Prakṛti can be the subject of the experiences that are obtained in a physical body. For being an experiencer the experiencer must be connected at least with the means of experience. But the Sāṃkhya Puruṣa or soul stands completely out of the Prakṛti, and hence,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. See p 226.

<sup>2</sup> Hiriyanna M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 273.



the chances of the Puruṣa's being the subject are dubitable. The Sāṃkhyas, however, attribute the quality of subjecthood to the Puruṣa or soul. It is therefore, necessary to examine the structure of the mechanism of knowledge into details.

The subject of experience is the Puruṣa, and the external objects are known by the Puruṣa with the help of the sense organs, mind, the ahaṃkāra and the intellect (Buddhi). When the sense organs get excited they convey impressions to the mind which properly arranges them, and the buddhi forms their concepts. It is true that the Puruṣa cannot undergo any change; the buddhi, being liable to change, gets itself modified in the forms of objects with which it comes into contact through the sense organs. The buddhi assumes the forms of the objects that are known. But the buddhi is a modification of the Prakṛti which is unintelligent, and it cannot shine or reveal the object by itself. The modification of the buddhi is manifested by the light of consciousness of the Puruṣa. The awareness in knowledge of the objects perceived would be impossible if it is not revealed by the illumination of the consciousness of the soul. The buddhi reflects in itself the pure consciousness of the soul as soon as it is modified in the form of the objects of its experience. Due to the reflection of the Puruṣa in the buddhi, it appears as if the Puruṣa itself has been modified after the objects of experience, and hence, the Puruṣa appears to be the real experiencer. But throughout the process of knowledge the Puruṣa remains passive

and inert. The reflections of it in buddhi do not cause any movement and disturbance in it, just as the movements of reflections of the sun in water do not disturb the sun itself. The buddhi, which is non-conscious in character, appears intelligent because of its reflection in the Puruṣa that never transfers its consciousness to any other thing but enjoys it as its special possession. The Prakṛti is extremely fine in its sāttvic part, and when the soul is reflected in it the soul begins to feel as if it is what appears to it in the buddhi. It wrongly appropriates the movements going on in the buddhi and forms false ideas that it is the agent or doer of actions, which in fact belong to the Prakṛti. The Puruṣa contributes only illumination to knowledge and the Prakṛti contributes movement or activity. Vācaspati holds that due to the reflection of Puruṣa in buddhi, the buddhi becomes conscious and the contact between the two can be made only by means of reflection, since there is no possibility of a direct contact (saṁyoga) between the two, as they belong to two different categories of reality. The ego consists in only an apparent unity of buddhi and Puruṣa. As the reflection of the Puruṣa in the buddhi is enduring in all mental experiences they are interpreted as the experiences of the Puruṣa; but it is mistaken. On the contrary, Viññānabhikṣu holds that while Puruṣa is the Sākṣin of buddhi, i.e., the witness of the states of buddhi without any intermediary, it is the beholder (draṣṭā-~~वा~~) of others through the aid of buddhi. The indifferent Puruṣa becomes the sākṣin

when connected with buddhi.<sup>1</sup> S. Radhakrishnan brings out the difference between the two philosophers in the following way—“While Vācaspati thinks that the self knows the object through the mental modification on which it casts its reflection, Vijñānabhikṣu holds that the mental modification which takes in the reflection of the self and assumes its form is reflected back on the self, and it is through this reflection that the self knows the object.”<sup>2</sup> A. B. Keith also expresses Vijñānabhikṣu’s view in the similar way—“Vijñānabhikṣu admits, therefore, a real contact of spirit and intellect, while denying that contact involves any change in spirit; change is confined to intellect alone; when these changes are reflected in spirit there arises the idea of spirit as an experimenter, and when spirit is reflected back in intellect, its states appear as conscious.”<sup>3</sup> The consciousness-force that reflects in the buddhi assumes the form of the modification of the buddhi, and this is known as the apprehension or upalabdhi. S. Radhakrishnan expresses this phenomenon as follows—“The reflection of the Puruṣa is not an actual intercourse, but is only apparent being due to the failure to perceive the distinction between the Puruṣa and buddhi. The connection of the Puruṣa, as reflected in the buddhi, with the object is called knowledge, and the connection of the Puruṣa with this knowledge is seen in the resulting determination that “I act”,

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: See *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 295, foot note.

<sup>3</sup> Keith A. B.: *The Sāṃkhya System*, p. 116.

whereas in reality the "I", or Puruṣa, cannot act, and what acts, i.e., buddhi, cannot think."<sup>1</sup> The Sāṃkhya adopts the reflection-theory to explain the contact between the Puruṣas and the Prakṛti and avoids direct contact between the two, which would contradict the immutability of the soul and at the same time it secures illumination of dull matter. It seeks to maintain the grandeur and purity of the Puruṣa by completely keeping it away from the everchanging Prakṛti. The reconciliation is a clever attempt but it fails to convince rationally. The relation between the Puruṣa and the buddhi is further interpreted by Vijñānabhikṣu as one like that of a crystal to a rose reflected in it; there is no actual transference (uparāga), but only the assumption of such transference (abhimāna). Though the Puruṣas are many and are universal and infinite, they do not illumine all things at all times. They reflect only those modifications belonging to their respective buddhis and not those of others.

The arguments that the Sāṃkhya has forwarded for establishing the plurality of the Puruṣas go to establish the plurality of the individual souls or Jīvas and not of the transcendental selves which have been described by the Sāṃkhya as those without attributes, without parts, imperishable, motionless, absolutely inactive and impassive, unaffected by pleasure or pain or any other emotion. Max Müller writes— ".... Puruṣa is without beginning, it is subtle, omnipresent, perceptive, without qualities,

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 295.

eternal, seer, experiencer, not an agent, knower of objects, spotless, not-producing.”<sup>1</sup> Max Müller gives a thorough causal account of all the characteristics of the Puruṣa in the following passage — “And why is the Puruṣa without beginning? Because there is no beginning, no middle, and no end of it. Why is it subtle? Because it is without parts and super-sensuous. Why is it omnipresent? Because, like the sky, it reaches everything, and its extent is endless. Why perceptive? Because it perceives (that is, for a time) pleasure, pain and trouble. Why without qualities? Because the qualities of good, indifferent and bad are not found in it. Why eternal? Because it was not made. Why seer? Because it perceives the modifications of Prakṛti. Why enjoyer? Because being perceptive it perceives (for a while) pleasure and pain. Why not an agent? Because it is indifferent and without qualities (Guṇās). Why the knower of body or of objects? Because it knows the qualities of objective bodies. Why spotless? Because neither good nor evil acts belong to the Puruṣa. Why not-producing? Because it has no seed, that is, it can produce nothing. Thus has the Puruṣa of the Sāṃkhya been described.”<sup>2</sup>

The above descriptions of the soul or Puruṣa clearly pertain to the self that is devoid of attributes and is above change and finite experiences. All the arguments that the Sāṃkhya presents go to establish the individual souls, the Jivas, and not the transcen-

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 332.

dental self, though it is suggested from the descriptions of the Puruṣas that they are transcendental selves of the nature of seers, only experiencers and never the doers. S. Radhakrishnan says—“The Sāṃkhya arguments for the existence of the Puruṣa turn out to be proofs for the existence of the empirical individuals and not transcendental subjects.”<sup>1</sup> The Sāṃkhya seeks to prove the plurality of souls from the possibility of simultaneous births and deaths of all, had there been only one soul. But the Sāṃkhyas already state that the soul is without beginning and without end; therefore the argument from birth and death goes to establish only the individual souls and never the transcendental self. The diversity of experiences well proves the multiplicity of souls that experience separately for themselves; but they are only empirical selves; there is no “need to pass from the manyness of empirical souls, to the manyness of eternal selves”. All the experiential characteristics of the Puruṣas are applicable only to the individual souls that are subject to change and suffering; the transcendental souls are above them. Radhakrishnan’s remarks on this issue are very important and hence noteworthy. He writes—“If each Puruṣa has the same features of consciousness, all-pervadingness, if there is not the slightest difference between one Puruṣa and another, since they are free from all variety, then there is nothing to lead us to assume a plurality of Puruṣas. Multiplicity without distinction is impossible. That is why

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 321.

even the Sāṅkhya commentators like Gaudapāda are inclined to the theory of one Puruṣa. That there must be an enjoyer of things shows that there is an enjoying soul and not a passive Puruṣa. The separate allotments of form, birth, death, abode and fortune lead only to the empirical multiplicity of Jivas. From the different conditions of the three modes we cannot infer a radical pluralism, since they are only the modifications of Prakṛti. .... But let us remember that the pure Puruṣa is immortal and indifferent and has no longing for anything. The play of Prakṛti is not for the sake of the ever-free Puruṣas but only for the sake of the reflected egos. There is no dispute about the manyness of the latter. Superintendence and yearning for release hold good of selves which suffer from want of discrimination. The different arguments prove the plurality of actual souls in relation to Prakṛiti and not of the Puruṣa we re-act by way of abstraction. Plurality would involve limitations, and an absolute immortal, eternal and unconditioned Puruṣa cannot be more than one. If the being of Puruṣa were necessary for the play of Prakṛti, one Puruṣa will do."<sup>1</sup> The Sāṅkhya arguments for the plurality of Puruṣas fail to establish the final plurality of the transcendental selves.

### Mokṣa

Kapila has divided the reality into the two broad features, Prakṛti and Puruṣa which are entirely independent of each other in as much as they

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 322.

are irreducible to each other, and each of them is existing without beginning. They are beginningless and eternal. However, the world has come into existence out of their impact. The Prakṛti evolves the whole infinitely complicated world out of itself in a graduated series. But the cosmic life which evolves most systematically has an inherent purpose of liberating the soul. Īś'varakṛṣṇa says in one of the Kārikās—"As people engage in acts to relieve desires, so does the undiscere (principle) to liberate the soul."<sup>1</sup> It is clearly stated that the evolution of the Prakṛti is going on for the liberation of the soul. In another Kārikā it is stated that "The evolution of nature, from intellect to the special elements, is performed for the deliverance of each soul respectively; done for another's sake as for itself."<sup>2</sup> It is made here clear that the evolution occurs for the liberation of the soul as well as for the liberation of the Prakṛti. The whole process of evolution from the mahat to the gross elements with Ahaṁkāra, manas, the five sense organs, the five motor organs, the five tanmātras (subtle essences) as the intermediary evolves is known as the Saṅkara and Pratisaṅkara means just the reversal of the whole process which consists in the absorption of the effects in their causes respectively. In Pratisaṅkara the gross elements are dissolved in their tanmātras, the tan-

<sup>1</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, Kārikā 58—p. 228.  
Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. *Kārikā* 56—p. 224.

प्रतिपुरुषविमोक्षार्थं स्वार्थं इव परार्थं आरंभः ।



mātras and the eleven organs into the Ahaṃkāra, the Ahaṃkāra in the Buddhi and the Buddhi into the unmanifest (avyakta). The whole world ultimately loses itself into the first primordial matter, the Prakṛti or undeveloped, being eternal, remains. Max Müller says—"The undeveloped is nowhere dissolved, because it was never evolved out of anything." The Prakṛti and the Puruṣa are uncaused as they are ultimate realities.

It is said that the study of the Sāṃkhya philosophy is motivated by the desire of the attainment of liberation from the three kinds of pain; the ādhyātmika, the ādhibhautika and the ādhidaivika. The *Tattva Samasa* mentions the three kinds of duḥkha or pain in the following passage—"Ādhyātmika is pain arising from the body, whether produced by wind, bile, or phlegm, etc., and from the mind (Manas), such as is due to desire, anger, greed, folly, envy, separation from what is liked, union with what is disliked, etc., Ādhibhautika is pain that arises from other living beings, such as thieves, cattle, wild beasts, etc., Ādhidaivika is pain that is caused by divine agents, as pain arising from cold, heat, wind, rain, thunderbolt, etc., all under the direction of the Vedic Devas."<sup>1</sup> The drift of the worldly life is thus directed towards the removal of all these pains and sufferings from the lives of the souls. In fact, the pain can occur only to those who have the capacity to feel it. Nothing else but the souls are conscient or sentient; the suffering of worldly life is experienced

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 360.

only by them and not by any non-conscious objects of the material world; hence the significance of liberation or freedom from pain is only for the souls, the experiencers (bhoktā). The efforts of the Prakṛti are directed towards the liberation of the souls (Puruṣas) from their three kinds of pain. The above list of pain is exhaustive so that it does not leave out any other possible pain. It appears that the Prakṛti carries on its enormous activity for displaying its rich and wonderful capacities of producing the infinite varieties of things. The Prakṛti, no doubt, does evolve out of itself such a great variety of things and thus becomes successful in causing various kinds of enjoyments in the soul. But all such pleasurable experiences are transient; they last little and ultimately they leave behind them a sense of deprivation and frustration. The worldly pleasures are inseparably bound with pains which arise, either in course of their acquisition and maintenance or after their being exhausted. Anyway, the worldly pleasures fail to secure for the souls final enduring bliss and peace, and hence, there is a search for a permanent freedom from such experiences. It has been already sufficiently discussed whether the unintelligent Prakṛti can carry on its evolution to satisfy the purposes of the souls. As the Prakṛti is devoid of intelligence and consciousness (acetana) it cannot carry on its evolution with a purpose or teleology. However, its activities are carried on in such a way that its activities are automatically adjusted to the purposes of the souls. The teleological nature of the Prakṛti's evolution is,

on the other hand, inferred because its activities are adjusted as means to the satisfaction of the purposes of souls as their ends. It is difficult to say that the activities of the Prakṛti are willed; hence it is better to call the Prakṛtic evolution only as "quasi teleological".

It is again disputable whether the Puruṣas which are devoid of the three qualities can have any purpose which is satisfied by the Prakṛti. The Puruṣas in their transcendental nature are free from all desires and imperfections; but they seem to encounter desires when they exist on the phenomenal plane, being overcome by the adjuncts of the Prakṛti. The Puruṣas do not feel interested in the wordly life which mostly breeds pain and sufferings. They seek to isolate themselves completely from the influence of the Prakṛti and enjoy their natural blissful state in which they experience unshaken peace and tranquillity. It is a state of perfect equanimity in which the mind is neither pleased nor displeased. In the state of liberation the Puruṣa becomes entirely free from all kinds of pains which are caused by various causes. In the state of liberation the Puruṣa becomes entirely free from all kinds of physical pains, mental disturbances and worries, spritual and moral unrest and all kinds of aspirations. Whatever causes a sense of longing and uneasiness and disturbs the equanimity and poise of the soul is totally absent in the state of liberation. It is as if a state of perfection in which nothing is lacking but all is gained and in which nothing remains to be aspired. It is not

definitely a state of happiness analogous to physical pleasures and mental joys, as mind and intellect cease to operate in it. It is something more than that and what it is, is difficult to describe positively. It is also doubtful whether it is a blissful state of mind; only negatively it can be certainly said that it is entirely free from any kind of pain. Max Müller seeks to understand the positive nature of the state of liberation in the following passage. He says—

“All that can be said is that Puruṣa, freed from all Prākṛtic bonds, whether ignorance or knowledge, joy or sorrow, would remain himself, would be what he alone can be, unrestricted, not interfered with, free and independent, and hence, in the highest sense of the word, perfect and happy in himself. This ineffable state of bliss has naturally shared the fate of similar conceptions such as the onenees with Brahman, the Niḥsreyasa or Non plus ultra, and the Nirvāṇa of the Buddhists.”<sup>1</sup> But Kapila does not make it clear anywhere that the Sāṃkhya state of liberation is one of unfading bliss and infinite joy. Kapila describes it simply by the word “Kaivalya,” which means aloofness or isolation of the Puruṣa from the Prakṛti. The word pain is vague and its connotation is indefinite. It is not restricted only to certain painful experiences and therefore, Max Müller tries to give the widest possible meaning implied by Kapila, in the word ‘pain’. He therefore, further continues—“Kapila meant something else by pain. He seems to have felt what Schelling felt that sadness cleaves to all finite life; but that is very

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 388.

different from always....being intent on getting rid of the sufferings inherent in life on earth. Kapila vidently meant by Duḥkha or pain something more than physical or even mental suffering, namely the consciousness of being conditioned, limited, or fettered, which is inseparable from this life.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, Max Müller restricts the meaning of duḥkha not to the physical and mental pain and suffering, but he stretches it to the pain of finitude itself. The earthly life can never give infinite and unbounded joy. Kapila might have extended the meaning of liberation to a sense of infinite freedom and unrestrictedness from which the sense of limitation and bondage of any sort has entirely disappeared. But it is not positively stated. Kapila means by Kaivalya simply severance of all the connections of the Puruṣa with the Prakṛti. It is clearly stated in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* — “For the perception of Nature by the spirit and for the *Isolation* of the spirit, there is union of both, — like that of the halt and the blind, and from this union proceeds Evolution.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, liberation consists in a complete separation of the Puruṣa from the Prakṛti. In liberation nothing else is done but wrong ideas of the soul arising out of its identification with the various products of the Prakṛti are removed and, the Puruṣa shines then in its solitary glory. Richard Garbe in the introduction of the *Sāṃkhya Sūtras* with Aniruddha’s commentary says — “The liberation of the Ātman is, according to

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 390.

<sup>2</sup> Miśra Vācaspati : *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, XII. See *Tattva Kaumudī*, Section 138. Tr. Ganganath Jha.

Kapila's doctrine, its complete isolation from Matter, i.e., even from all psychic process and states, an eternal (XIII) absolute existence, void of pain and sorrow, but also void of joy and happiness. In short, the Sāṃkhyas divest the liberated Ātman of self-consciousness."<sup>1</sup> It is made clear here that positively it is not a state of pleasure and joy and negatively it is completely free from pain and suffering.

It is necessary to understand the real nature of the bondage and its cause from which the Puruṣa is liberated. The Sāṃkhya philosophy holds that the pain or suffering of the Puruṣa is due to its false identification with the product of Prakṛti. It consists in the aviveka non-discrimination between what is the real Puruṣa and what is that which arises out of false identification. In fact, the Puruṣa is never in bondage; it is ever-free (Mukta). It is said in a Kārikā "Verily not any soul is bound, nor is released, nor migrates; but nature alone, in relation to various beings, is bound, is released, and migrates."<sup>2</sup> Gauḍapāda in his commentary elucidates the meaning in the following passage—"Soul is incapable of action, consequently is not liable to change. When nature attaches herself to soul, when she separates from it, the converse is equally true, soul is attached to,

<sup>1</sup> Aniruddha (Com.): *Sāṃkhya Sūtras* with Introduction. Tr. by Richard Garbe.

<sup>2</sup> Īśvarakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* — Com. by Gauḍapāda 62/235. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

तस्मान्न बध्यते नापि मुच्यते नापि संसरति कश्चित् ।

संसरति बध्यते मुच्यते च नानाश्रया प्रकृतिः ।

or is separated from nature; and is consequently said to be bound, to be set free, to undergo change. But soul is passive in all these things; it is nature that is active, that finds, loosens or changes form."<sup>1</sup> The state of liberation is known as 'apavarga' in the Sāṃkhya system. M. Hiriyanna describes it in the following words—"The self not only has no pain or pleasure in that condition; it is also without knowledge, for it has not the means, viz. the buddhi and its accessories wherewith to know. This reminds us of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika ideal; but sentience being conceived here as the very substance of the self, the Charge of insentience cannot be brought against it as in the other system."<sup>2</sup> In the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika systems the soul remaining in the state of liberation free from any consciousness as consciousness arises in it as a quality due to its contact with the mind and the sense organs; however, it remains with the potentiality of consciousness and a substratum of mental experiences. The Sāṃkhya soul being constituted of sentience or consciousness, does not lose consciousness.

Salvation, in fact, is only phenomenal according to the Sāṃkhya system, for the Puruṣas are eternally free. The soul can never be in bondage because by nature it is free from all attachments. Out of non-discrimination the soul appears to be connected with the Prakṛti but in fact Prakṛti cannot bind it.

<sup>1</sup> Īśvarakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*. See the Com. on the above Sūtra, p. 237.

प्रकृतिरेवात्मानं बध्नाति मोचयति च ।

<sup>2</sup> Hiriyanna M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 293.

When Prakṛti is active, it catches the reflection of Puruṣa and casts its shadow on the Puruṣa. The Puruṣa is active only by the reflection of the Prakṛti in it. Just as the image reflected in a mirror does not bind the mirror in any way, the Puruṣa which reflects in it the activities of the Prakṛti cannot be bound by the Prakṛti. All the experiences which appear to be of the Puruṣas are only apparent; the Puruṣas are not actually affected by the various pleasurable and painful experiences of the Prakṛti. When the Puruṣa detaches itself from the Prakṛti, it resides in its loneliness without standing in the need of any other thing besides itself. It remains thoroughly content in itself. The activity of the Prakṛti ceases with the result that there are no reflections of movement in the Puruṣa causing an impression as if the Puruṣa is active. When Prakṛti ceases to act, the modifications of buddhi cease, and the Puruṣa enjoys its original nature. The soul or Puruṣa then remains lost in itself. It is said in Sāṃkhya Kārikā—"As a dancer, having exhibited herself to the spectator desists from the dance, so does nature desist having manifested herself to the soul."<sup>1</sup> A further explanation is given in its commentary "As a dancer (or actress), having exhibited her performances on the stage in dramatic representations, rendered interesting by display of love and other passions in situations drawn from history or tradition, and accompanied by music and singing,

<sup>1</sup> *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa—Kārikā 59, p. 229, Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.*



desists from acting when her part is finished, so nature, having exhibited itself to soul, in the various characters of intellect, egotism, the rudiments, senses, and elements desists.”<sup>1</sup>

The Sāṃkhya has compared Prakṛti with a dancer and has shown that when Prakṛti ceases to operate or it retires, the Puruṣa also ceases to perceive her, and hence it becomes totally free from the empirical life. When the Puruṣa comes to realise the real nature of itself by contrasting itself with Prakṛti it ceases to enter into any more new connection with it. Once Prakṛti ceases to exhibit itself to the Puruṣa it never returns again to the Puruṣa. Once the Puruṣa is released from the bondage of the Prakṛti, it becomes eternally free with no fear of relapse to the phenomenal life. In another Kārikā it is further said—“Nothing is more modest than Nature, such is my conviction; once aware of having been seen she does not again expose herself to the view of the spirit.”<sup>2</sup> Vācaspati Miśra clarifies it further in his commentary—“By modesty here is meant extreme delicacy (of manners), the unbearability to suffer exposure to the Puruṣa’s view. If a well-bred lady, who is not to be seen even by the sun, with her eyes cast down happens to have her body uncovered by chance and thus seen by a stranger, she tries to hide herself in such a way as

<sup>1</sup> *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, p. 229. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Miśra Vācaspati : *The Tattva Kaumudī*. See Tr. 61/122 by Ganganath Jha.

not to be seen again; so Nature also—even more modest than such a lady—having once been seen by the Puruṣa (spirit) will in no case show herself again.”<sup>1</sup> It clearly implies that when once the Prakṛti is minutely observed and its real nature is thoroughly understood by the Puruṣa, the Puruṣa is never again tempted to be found in its meshes; the Puruṣa is no more likely to be influenced even by the most tempting display. It goes beyond all such temptations and remains eternally lost in its own grandeur. It remains passive and indifferent (udāsīna-उदासीन) to all influences. As S. Radhakrishnan describes—“When freed, the Puruṣa keeps no company, looks to nothing without itself, and entertains no alien thoughts. It is no longer at the mercy of Prakṛti or its products, but stands as a star apart, undisturbed by the earthly cares.”<sup>2</sup> But at the same time it is not an utter void that is reached in liberation. There is escape from suffering in release, but there is no escape from existence itself. In liberation there is not the annihilation of the Prakṛti, but there is an eternal cessation of the influence of the working of Prakṛti on the Puruṣa. The Puruṣa ultimately gazes upon every thing without the least perturbation of mind; it stands as the ultimate witness (sākṣin), calm and tranquil, with its equanimity and poise unshaken.

The Kārikā describes the final state in the following way—“Possessed of this self-knowledge, soul

<sup>1</sup> *The Tattva Kaumudī*. See Commentary on the above Kārikā, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> S. Radhakrishnan : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 312.

contemplates at leisure and at ease nature (thereby) debarred from prolific change, and consequently preached from those seven forms.”<sup>1</sup> It is further said that as both desist from each other, there is no more possibility of any creation. Another Kārikā states that even though their union continues, it is no more meant for any further creation. “He desists, because he has seen her, she does so, because she has been seen. In their (mere) union there is no motive for creation.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Sāṃkhya system admits the possibility of the “Jīvanmukta”, the freed-man who has been completely successful in discriminating properly the Prakṛti from Puruṣa and also in cultivating a sense of detachment and indifference towards the influences of the Prakṛti. He has imbibed the real nature of his self and due to that he becomes perfectly immune to the external influences of the Prakṛti. He understands all but partakes none of the functions of the Prakṛti. He experiences the isolation and detachment of the Puruṣa even when he continues to live in the bodily frame. The Jīvanmukta no more is affected by his physical activities as he is completely disinterested in them. He does not acknowledge them as his own; nor does he appropriate any of them to himself. It is said in a Kārikā — “By attainment of perfect knowledge, virtue and rest become causeless, yet soul remains a while invested with body, as the potter’s wheel

<sup>1</sup> Īśvarakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 65 / p. 243. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Kārikā 66, p. 245.

continues whirling from the effect of the impulse previously given to it”<sup>1</sup> Thus, as the effects of the Karma of his previous birth are not exhausted, his bodily existence continues as a result of his prārabdha karma though his sancita karma (accumulated karma) is burnt by knowledge and no new karma is accumulated as ignorance is completely removed. So long his prārabdha karma continues its operation, his body, which has arisen out of it, continues to exist, and hence, he is a Jivanmukta. But when even his bodily frame drops and he is totally severed from any trace of physicality or the Prakṛti, he attains final ‘bodiless deliverance’ or ‘videhamukti’. It is said in one Kārikā — “When separation of the informed soul from its corporeal frame at length takes place, and nature in respect of it ceases, then is absolute and final deliverance accomplished.”<sup>2</sup> The final state is reached when all the three karmas are completely exhausted and when there is no more possibility of a relapse to the earthly life.

But what is the means of attaining such a state of liberation? According to the Sāṃkhya, bondage is due to non-discrimination (अविवेक) between the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti, and it can be removed by a proper discrimination (विवेक) between the two. The Sāṃkhya advocates philosophical knowledge of the reality as a remedy to effect liberation. It does not

<sup>1</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 67 / p. 247. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Īś'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 68 / p. 250. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

advocate performance of rites and rituals like the Vedas for the attainment of such a final state. Max Müller writes —“And here the bold answer was, yes. The Samsāra can best be stopped, man's former acts can be shaken off and annihilated but by one means only, by means of knowledge or philosophy. In order to achieve this deliverance from all suffering, from all limitation, from all the bondage of the world, man must learn what he really is. He must learn that he is not the body, for the body decays and dies, and with all bodily sufferings might seem to end. But this is again denied because through an invisible agency (अदृष्ट or अपूर्व) a new Ego would spring up, liable to suffer for its former acts, just as it was in this life. A man must learn, therefore, that he is not even what is meant by Ego, for the Ego also has been formed by surroundings or circumstances, and will vanish again like everything else. Then what remains? There remains behind the body, and behind the Ego, or the individual person, what is called the Puruṣa or the Ātman, the Self, and that Self is to be recognised either as identical with what was in earlier times conceived and called Divine, the Eternal, the Unconditioned, namely, Brahman, or as Puruṣa, perfect, independent, and absolute in itself, blissful in its independence and in the complete aloofness from everything else.”<sup>1</sup> The non-discrimination (aviveka) of the Sāṃkhyas consists in the Puruṣa's thinking of itself something other than itself. Due to its association with the

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 363-64.

various modifications (vṛtti) of the Prakṛti the Puruṣa variously identifies itself with them and supposes that it is those. The various mental activities are in fact the forms of the Prakṛti which is ever active; they are reflected in the Puruṣa, therefore, the Puruṣa also begins to think that it itself is active and that it experiences pleasures and pains. In fact, all these activities and experiences belong to the Prakṛti which is inconscient and dull; it becomes aware of its modifications when it is lighted up or illumined by the steady consciousness—light of the Puruṣa. To the psychical experiences of an individual the Puruṣa contributes only its consciousness which makes the Prākṛtic activities aware of themselves, and hence, intelligible. But for the Puruṣa's association the Prakṛti remains dull and non-conscious. When out of ignorance of its real distinction from the Prakṛti, the Puruṣa identifies itself with the various the changing modifications of the Prakṛti like pleasure, pain, ahaṁkāra (egotism), there occurs non-discrimination (aviveka) which when removed, the Puruṣa recognises its clear distinction from the Prakṛti, and realises its own glorious nature. When the Puruṣa makes a real discrimination of itself from the Prākṛtic activities, the Puruṣa comes to know that it is neither the body, nor the sense organs, neither the mind, nor the intellect; it is neither happy nor unhappy; it is neither great nor small, and that dharma and adharma do not attach to it, it refuses to attach itself to any one of them, and thus, it becomes liberated from such restrictions and enjoys its aloofness for ever. It remains then no more liable to

deception by the display of Prakṛti, due to its discrimination from the Prakṛti. Of course, such a knowledge of discrimination that the Puruṣa is none of the things with which it seems associated, is given by the intellect which itself is a product of the Prakṛti. The buddhi or intellect develops the perception-faculty in the Prakṛti. Max Müller says—“Kapila really looks upon perception and thought as an instrument, ready made by Prakṛti for the use of the Puruṣa but remaining inert like a telescope, till it is looked through by the Puruṣa.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, with the help of the intellect the Puruṣa comes to become aware of itself, its real nature which it had forgotten through its mistaken identification with the Prakṛtic modifications and due to them it was suffering. By properly grasping its nature with the help of philosophical knowledge the Puruṣa recognises its independence from others. It is said in one Sāṃkhya Kārikā—“So, through study of principles, the conclusive incontrovertible, one only knowledge is attained, that neither I am, nor is aught mine, nor do I exist.”<sup>2</sup> As Colebrooke says the soul or Puruṣa develops the understanding that it is not agent and it is not the real experiencer. The Puruṣa after realising its detached nature isolates itself from all the experiences and modifications of Prakṛti, and remains without any knowledge, even without the knowledge of its discrimination from the Prakṛti. Gauḍapāda clarifies it in his commentary—“It is

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 373.

<sup>2</sup> Īśvarakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā* 64 / p. 240. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

merely intended as a negation of the soul's having any active participation, individual interest or property, in human pains, possessions, or fellys. I am, I do, I suffer, mean that the material nature or some of her products (substantially), is, does, or suffers, and not the soul, which is unalterable and indifferent, susceptible to neither pleasure nor pain, and only reflecting them, as it were or seemingly sharing them, from the proximity of nature by whom they are really experienced."<sup>1</sup> When the Puruṣa thus gets rid of the ahaṁkāra and refuses to appropriate any thing as 'my' or 'mine', the Puruṣa becomes able to detach itself from the Prakṛti and its influences. It no more remains subject to temptations and allurements of the Prakṛti. What exactly happens in the state of liberation of the Puruṣa, is not the annihilation of Prakṛti and its modifications, but in that state the soul or the Puruṣa completely withdraws its sanction and support by refusing to appropriate or own any of the vṛttis or modifications of the Prakṛti. In that state the soul gives up even its merit (dharma). It gives up even its moral excellence because moral and immoral activities are real only on the phenomenal plane. Nothing adheres to the Puruṣa in its final state of liberation. The soul then becomes eternally free from the cycle of birth and death. The soul no more transmigrates, and hence, there remains no fear of rebirth. The Puruṣa becomes free for ever in the videhamukti. And it is

<sup>1</sup> Is'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṁkhya Kārikā* 64 / p. 243. Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.



possible according to the Sāṃkhya system only by knowledge and by no other action.

The soul is inert and passive. It does not even transmigrate. For the sake of transmigration and to effect rebirth, the Sāṃkhya has made provision of the subtle body or the *linga* or *Sūkṣma śarīra*. The subtle body is hidden in the gross body. The gross body disappears at the death of an individual and the subtle body, the *lingadeha*, that migrates from one gross body to another gross body in the successive births, is composed of *buddhi*, *ahaṃkāra*, and *manas*, the five organs of perceptions and the five organs of action, the five *tanmātras* and some rudiments of gross elements which serve as the seed of another physical body. In the *lingadeha* or the subtle body, are accumulated the results of the past deeds. The subtle body carries with it the *saṃskāras* and dispositions to the successive birth which is predetermined by them. The subtle body persists as long as the *saṃskāras* or the results of past deeds are not fully exhausted. While commenting upon the 37th *Kārikā* it is said — “In order, however, to be placed in circumstances leading to such enjoyment or suffering, generated body is necessary; and therefore, subtle body migrates, *saṃsarati*, goes from one body to another continually; hence the world is called *saṃsāra*, migration or revolution. “Through the influence of intellect the whole of subtle body is affected by dispositions and conditions, in the same manner as a garment is perfumed from contact

with a fragrant champa flower.”<sup>1</sup> The subtle body thus invariably forms a link between two successive lives. The subtle body carries in it the germs of the successive births which have been accumulated by it from the deeds performed by an individual in his preceding birth. The effect of the deeds can never be lost; they have to be exhausted by experiencing them. The subtle body thus acts as a vehicle for the conveyance of the saṃskāras. It also carries along with it the instruments or organs which are necessary for experiencing the fruits of its actions of the past births. It is said in one Sāṃkhya Kārikā — “For the sake of soul’s wish, that subtle person exhibits (before it), like a dramatic actor, through relation of means and consequence, with the aid of nature’s influence.”<sup>2</sup> It is said on the commentary on the above Kārikā — “Soul’s purpose is either fruition or liberation; and to accomplish one or the other of these, subtle body passes through various conditions, assuming different exterior forms, as an actor puts on different dresses to personate one while Rāma, another while Yudhiṣṭhira, or again Vatsa.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the subtle body represents the soul and carries on its activities in the name of the Puruṣa. The subtle body is formed only by the saṃskāras which, when completely exhausted, the subtle body drops away becoming unnecessary. The subtle body comes into existence only for fruition or experiencing the

<sup>1</sup> jś'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*. See Com. p. 175 by and Tr. H. T. Colebrooke.

<sup>2</sup> jś'varakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, Kārikā 42, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Kārikā — Com. p. 185.

results of actions of one's preceding life. It can be destroyed by philosophical knowledge of the reality, by burning old stock of karma and by not accumulating new karma. Videhamukti or bodiless liberation is attained when even the subtle body is destroyed for ever, and hence, all possibilities of further earthly life are eliminated for ever. Colebrooke comments finally on liberation as follows—"When the consequences of acts cease, and body both gross and subtle, dissolves, nature in respect to individual soul, no longer exists; and soul is one, single, free Kévala, or obtains the condition called Kaivalya. This, according to Vācaspati and Nārāyaṇa, means exemption from the three kinds of pain. What condition of pure separated soul may be in its liberated state, the Sāṃkhya philosophy does not seem to hold it necessary to inquire."<sup>1</sup>

### Yoga

The Yoga system goes along with the Sāṃkhya system, the two systems possessing the same metaphysics of Reality. Yogā admits the metaphysics of the Sāṃkhya with a little alteration. The Yoga system admits the duality of the two eternal principles,—the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti and ascribes the material universe to the Prakṛti which is constituted of the three guṇas. It believes in the twenty-five elements of evolution of the Sāṃkhyas and admits the plurality of souls, that are purely sentient in their pure state but become experiencers when attached

<sup>1</sup> Īśvarakṛṣṇa : *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*. See Com. on Kārikā 68, p. 251.

to bodies which are modifications of the Prakṛti. Due to false identification with the Prakṛti, the soul falls into delusion and regards itself happy and unhappy. The unhappiness of the soul is caused by its non-discrimination from the Prakṛti which is ever in change except when it is in its original state (unmanifest or avyakta). The Sāṃkhya does not recognise ahaṁkāra and mind as separate from buddhi or intellect. For all the three psychic organs of knowledge Yoga uses one word — “Citta” (चित्त). Moreover, it recognises two separate lines of evolution. Unlike the Sāṃkhya it believes that from the ahaṁkāra evolves the mind and the five sense organs and the five motor organs, and the tanmātras shoot out independently from the Mahat itself and from them are produced the five gross elements. The Yoga believes that liberation can be attained by isolating the Puruṣa or soul from the Prakṛti by means of mental purification and certain bodily and mental practices which are elaborately developed by the propounder of the Yoga system, Patañjali. The special contribution of the Yoga lies in giving a thoroughgoing analysis of the mind and finding ways of attaining the final state. The Yoga owns the credit of devising the Yogic practices in order to prepare an individual for the realisation of the final state of release. The Yoga gives a ready means of attaining such a mental state. The Yoga system has its unique place in the whole of Indian Philosophy for its methods of self-realization.

The main point on which the Yoga departs from

the Sāṃkhya is the admission of God as the creator and guide, by the Yoga. The Yogic practices cannot be carried on relentlessly in the absence of a powerful personality, which assures protection, security and final success to a striving individual. The Yoga is known also the 'Sesvara Sāṃkhya' and the original Sāṃkhya system of Kapila is known as the 'Nirisvara Sāṃkhya'. God remaining outside the pale of the Prakṛti removes the obstructions from the path of the seeker of liberation. God is the intelligence that adjusts the modifications of Prakṛti to the ends of the Puruṣas. Out of compassion and affection He removes all the impediments from the path of release that is sought by the Yogins. The Sāṃkhya devoted greater attention to the metaphysical considerations of the reality, while Yoga occupied itself with discussing the nature of devotional exercises and mental discipline. The Yoga suggests concrete ways of attaining such liberation which has been already described in the Sāṃkhya system. The Yoga also seeks to escape from the painful Sāṃsāra for ever by isolating the soul completely from the Prakṛti.

The Yoga philosophy consists mainly in a psychological analysis of human experiences. According to the Yoga system, Citta is the first product of the Prakṛti, like the Mahat of the Sāṃkhya. The Citta is comprehensive so as to include in it the intellect, ahaṃkāra and mind. The Citta is composed of the three attributes which determine its nature. The variations in the states of the Citta are caused by the varying predominance of the three

attributes. In itself the Citta is insentient, but it becomes conscious by the reflection of the soul. Movements occur in Citta when it is affected by external objects through the senses. The Citta wrongly supposes that it is the experiencer due to the consciousness of the soul reflected in it. The Citta is all-pervasive like the ākāśa, and every Puruṣa has one Citta connected with it. The expanse of the Citta is variable in proportion to the size of the body. Expansion and contraction of the Citta become necessary in order to fit well in the varying bodies occupied by the Puruṣas in accordance with the adṛṣṭa. The all-pervading Citta that is common to all is known as the Kāraṇa Citta and when it is specifically embodied in certain bodies it becomes the Kārya Citta. The Kāraṇa Citta is Vibhu, all-pervading and the Kārya Citta, on the contrary, is subject to expansion and contraction as required by the body. All the changes in the Citta, in fact, are caused by one's contact with the external world. The movement always takes place in the Kārya Citta, and the efforts of Yoga are to withdraw the Citta from the external world and to regain its original pure and passive state. The Citta is variable, the soul which is the cause of all awareness and consciousness is stable and so, it helps to retain identity. The Citta is material in nature but through non-discrimination it appears conscious. From the connections of Citta with the external world arise the various kinds of desires, aversion, attachment, hatred, pleasure, pain, the sense of one's

personality, and the *saṃsāra* is an outcome of desires and passions.

The consciousness of the *Puruṣa* is stable and unchanging, all changes are due to the changes in the *Citta*. It is said in his commentary by Vyāsa on the *Sūtra* (3)—“The unconditioned and pure form of the Spirit is simply consciousness, and the active stages are due to the preponderance of the one or the other of the attributes, like the redness of the crystal due to its proximity to a red flower; as the crystal regains its pure whiteness on the removal of the red object; so, on the cessation of the functions of the Mind, does the Spirit regain its unalloyed abidance in its pristine form. The unchanging spirit itself remains of the nature of pure light, during communion as well as during the active state.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the *Citta* is always active because of the unceasing flow of ideas and thoughts in it. Max Müller understands *Citta* broadly as thought or thinking. It is the tendency of the mind to remain active by remaining in contact with the external world. It receives impressions from the external world and sends appropriate reactions to the things as demanded by the situation. The mind works in both the ways—good and bad or beneficial and harmful. It is said by Vyāsa in his commentary—“The mind riverlike flows both ways; it flows for good and it flows for evil. That which flows towards the heights of isolation through the valley of discrimination is said to ‘flow

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*. See Com. by Vyāsa on *Sūtra* III, pp. 9, 10.

for good'; while that which flows towards Birth and Rebirth, through the valley of non-discrimination is said to 'flow for evil'. Dispassion serves to attenuate the flow through worldly objects, and the the practice of discrimination serves to enliven the flow through discriminative wisdom. In this way the 'Inhibition of the Functions of the Mind' is dependent upon both Practice and Dispassion."<sup>1</sup> The mind being active and receptive is subject to attraction by external objects, and it thus gets entangled into them, and it results in false impression that the soul perceives the objects, and that the soul is happy and unhappy when it receives favourable and unfavourable impressions. It is said in the commentary on the *Sarvadaś'anasāṅgraha* — That the soul cannot suffer; for it is free from such (nirlepatvāt—निर्लेपत्वात्). The Jīva or the soul never suffers nor does it make others suffer. What really suffers (tapyah—तप्यः) is the soul reflected in the sātṭvic buddhi or the pure intellect.... Still it-said that the soul suffers.... The fools think that when the sātṭvic buddhi suffers the soul that reflects in it and assumes the form of it in its reflection, suffers.... Even learned people hold that the Puruṣa or the soul experiences by means of reflection.... Just as the sun by reflecting itself in water gives to the water its lustre, similarly the soul gives the quality of experiencing to the buddhi (Citta) in which it reflects.... Knowing consists in assuming the shape of the objects of knowledge. Such shapes are

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath: *Pāṇḍjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*. See Com. by Vyāsa on Sūtra 12/27, p. 129.



assumed by the buddhi or Citta and the soul being associated with the buddhi by reflection, is said to be the knower. Because of its contact with the soul the buddhi is said to be intelligent and though the soul is pure, it is supposed to be the active knower from its association by reflection with Citta.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the confusion between the soul and the Citta is the cause of misapprehension, and there is a kind of imposition of false nature on the soul of being active and participating in the various activities, when the fact is quite contrary to it. The Puruṣa is in its original nature passive and immutable. The example that is cited in the above passage is exactly applicable here; though the reflections of the sun are seen to be moving in moving water it does not at all mean that the sun itself moves. Max Müller also explains the position of Sāṃkhya and Yoga in this respect, in the following passage — “What he means is that in the Sāṃkhya the Puruṣa is never a real maker or an agent. He simply reflects on Prakṛti, or the products of Prakṛti are reflected on him; and as anything reflected in a crystal or a mirror seems to move when the mirror is moved, though it remains all the time quite unmoved; thus the Puruṣa also seems to move and to be an agent, while what is really moving, changing, or being created is Prakṛti.”<sup>2</sup> The Citta in itself, is unintelligent. It cannot know the objects unless it is associated with the soul which alone reveals the

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha*. Com. pp. 334, 335.

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 431.

objects. The Citta receives impressions of the external things which leave behind them certain residue, which act as the cause of desires and interest, and thus lead to rebirth. The activities of the Citta cause potencies, which in their turn, cause further potencies. Thus, the wheel of saṁsāra remains ever in revolution. From the residue of impressions arise desires, and the sense of personality also develops. The development of the idea of self is a result of the confusion between the soul and the Citta.

Patañjali advocates the cessation of the activities of the soul in order to attain the state of Kaivalya or liberation. The word 'Yoga' itself is defined as the "inhibition of the functions of the mind".<sup>1</sup> When the Citta ceases to operate, naturally there will be no fluctuations in the reflection of the soul and the sense of activity of the soul will disappear. The soul will no more appear as an agent and an experiencer of various experiences. Max Müller explains the real meaning of the nirodha or restraint of the Citta as follows — "Nirodha, restraint does not mean entire suppression of all movements of thought, but at first concentration only, though it leads in the end to something like utter vacuity or self-absorption."<sup>2</sup> The two prime necessities of liberation according to Yoga, are detachment (वैराग्य) and meditation (योग). वैराग्य or detachment consists in completely turning away the mind from the lust for objects. It

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pāṇjāli Yoga Sūtrāni*, p. 4.

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ।

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 441.

consists not only in abandoning the objects or in remaining physically aloof from them but it also implies mental indifference and an attitude of neutrality towards the objects of the world. It consists in never entertaining the desires for the objects of enjoyment. Only the complete eradication of desires from the mind can ensure detachment in the real sense. Attachment to objects is produced only by desire (तृष्णा), the susceptibility of the mind to fall a prey to the attraction to objects of enjoyment of various forms. Vyāsa explains the real meaning of vairāgya in his commentary in the following way—“Vairāgya is the controlled consciousness without rejection and acceptance, and which is constituted of absence of enjoyment by the power of meditation of the mind, which sees the faults of the objects of senses which have contact with the heavenly and worldly objects, and which is also disgusted of such worldly objects as women, food, drink, wealth, etc., and such objects mentioned in the śrūti as heaven, disembodied conditions, attainment of the submergence in the original prakṛti, etc.”<sup>1</sup>

Unless one is convinced of the futility of the objects of enjoyment detachment for them cannot be cultivated. A forced detachment always has the fear of relapse as the susceptibility to temptation itself is not completely uprooted. All kinds of desires for earthly and heavenly objects must be eradicated from the mind in order to make it free from every kind

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<sup>1</sup> Jha Gangānath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*, Sūtra 15, p. 19.

of uneasiness, restlessness and hope. Even a vague sense of an aspiration for the attainment of something causes anxiety in the mind and hence, the mind cannot become free in the real sense. After cultivating such a mental control over desires and aspirations, it becomes necessary to keep the mind or Citta free from the influences of the external objects on it. It can be done by controlling the functioning of the sense organs that convey the impressions of the world to the mind. When the mind is properly inhibited ideas cease to cause restlessness in the mind. Restraint of the mental states implies the external as well as internal control. It implies the curbing of the functions of the external sense organs by arresting the flow of impressions from the external world, internally it means the cultivation of certain mental attitudes like indifference and detachment. S. Radhakrishnan describes the nature of our mind in the following passage —

“Our mind is an arena of conflicting forces which require to be subdued to some unity. There are some desires that seek satisfaction, some vital urges of life, such as those of self-preservation and self-reproduction, which refuse to be easily controlled. The obstacles to concentration are said to be the different forms of misconception namely, ignorance (अविद्या), egoism (अस्मिता), attachment (राग), aversion (द्वेष) and clinging to life (अभिनिवेश). Others are sickness, languor, doubt, headlessness, laziness, worldliness, erroneous perception, failure to attain concentration and instability in it when attained.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 349.

The Yoga philosophy appears negative apparently from its emphasis on the need of restraint of the mind; but the word 'Yoga' itself is derived from the root 'Yuj (युज्) to join or connect. The essence of Yoga is to be understood not negatively by restraint but positively in the sense of joining the soul with the Supreme Self (Paramātmān). It is clearly stated in the commentary on the *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha* — "The word Yoga has the connotation of unification (samyoga) and not one of restraint. Therefore, Yājñavalkya has said — "Yoga is unity (samyoga) of the jīva (soul) with the Paramātmān (God; Lord)."<sup>1</sup> Max Müller writes regarding it — "Yug, from meaning to join, came, by means of a very old metaphor, to mean to join oneself to something, to harness oneself for some work. Thus yug assumed the sense of preparing for hard work, whether preparing others or getting ready oneself.. In Sanskrit this Yug is often used with such words as Manas, Kittam, Ātman, etc., in the sense of concentrating at exerting one's mind; and it is in this sense only that our word Yoga could have sprung from it, meaning, as the Yoga Sūtras tell us at the very beginning, 1.2, the effort of restraining the activities or distractions of our thoughts (Kitta-Vritti-Nirodha) of the effort of concentrating our thoughts on a definite object."<sup>2</sup> Yoga, therefore, stands

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha*, p. 346.

योगशब्दः संयोगवचन एव स्यान्न तु निरोधवचनः ।

संयोगो योग इत्युक्तो जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः ।

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 404, 405.

for concentration of mind on the objects of devotion. The mind is very fickle; it does not remain steady even for two moments on an object. The mind is a busy theatre of many ideas simultaneously crowding together. It is therefore, really, very difficult to fix our attention on some particular object continuously for a considerably long duration of time. By concentration one penetrates to the deeper layers of consciousness.

The Citta is called Kṣipta (क्षिप्त) when it is tossed by the various objects which one seeks out of passions and interests. It is due to the excess of the rajas attribute; concentration of this type does not last long. It comes to an end when the interest is over. The Citta is said to be blinded Mūḍha (मूढ), when one is asleep being governed by the excess of the tāmasic attribute. The Citta is distracted (विक्षिप्त) due to some natural defects or accidental troubles; sometimes gets pleased and sometimes displeased. Due to the preponderance of the three attributes the Citta suffers three kinds of imperfect states. When the Citta is dominated by the Sāttvic attribute, when it is able to fix attention on one single object of meditation. This state is called 'ekāgra' (एकाग्र). When the mind is able to put down the multitude of thoughts arising ceaselessly in the mind, the way to meditation is paved. When the Citta is able to concentrate itself upon one single object, all others are denied access to the mind. The various impressions that are driven out leave behind them certain latent impressions, which remain ready to manifest

themselves as conscious states on proper occasions. In order to purge the mind of all such Vṛttis or modifications, it is not sufficient to arrest the further influx of sense impressions; but in addition to it, it is necessary to eradicate the Saṃskaras or latent impressions which lie dormant in the mind ready to articulate themselves on suitable occasions. But when the Yogin is able to keep off the influx of sense impression and to uproot from his mind the latent dispositions, his power of concentration multiplies tremendously. As he acquires a balanced state (samapatti), the mind can concentrate itself perfectly upon the object of contemplation and can understand its nature thoroughly.

By gradually enhancing the power of concentration the Yogin ultimately seeks to concentrate all his attention on God with whose help he seeks to attain the final state of liberation. John Davies says—"God (īśvara, the supreme Ruler) is a soul or spirit distinct from other souls, unaffected by the ills with which all men are beset, unconnected with good or bad deeds and their consequences. In him is an absolute omniscience. He is the instructor of the earliest beings that have a beginning (the deities of the Hindū mythology), himself infinite unlimited by time."<sup>1</sup> The Lord or īśvara of the Yoga is a kind of Puruṣa that possesses the good qualities in their superlative degree. He is an embodiment of excellence. As there are degrees of goodness and greatness in the world, the Lord is the highest

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<sup>1</sup> Davies John: *Hindu Philosophy*, p. 116.

peak of goodness, i.e., He is the best; because there are great and greater things in the world, He is the greatest. He is pure Sattva devoid of the other two attributes rajas and tamas, which cause imperfection in the cases of others. God has a perfect nature (prakṛṣṭasattva-प्रकृष्टसत्त्व).

Patañjali has described God (Īśvara) as "The Supreme Lord is an extraordinary spirit unaffected by Afflictions, Actions, Fruition and Dispositions."<sup>1</sup>

Vyāsa in his commentary on the above Sūtra describes the qualities that are possessed by God. The description appears negative to indicate that God is free from the imperfection which occurs due to those qualities which human beings or the individual souls possess in their earthly life. Vyāsa says — "Afflictions—Illusion (and Egoism, Love, Hate and yearning for Life). Actions good and bad fruition—the result of actions. Dispositions—tendencies in keeping with the said Fruition. Though in reality, all these subsist in the Mind, yet they are attributed to the Spirit, because it is the spirit that experiences the results of all these (in the shape of Birth, Life and Experience)....just as victory or defeat, though really belonging to the actual fighters (soldiers), is yet attributed to their master....In the case of the liberated Man, the preceding stage of Bondage is clearly recognised; not so in the case

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi* (Com. Vyāsa) — Sūtra 24, p. 40.

क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैः अपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेषः ईश्वरः ।



of the Supreme Lord.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, God is free from all the imperfections from which the worldly beings suffer. Though He is a special kind of Puruṣa possessing special attributes, He is distinguished from the other liberated souls for never being in bondage in the past. He is ever free. Further Vyāsa says—“None equals in excellence to him.” In him rests the highest stage of the seed of omniscience. He is never likely to fall into bondage like the other Puruṣas; He is the pre-eminent being among the Puruṣas. He is represented by “Aum”. The God of Yoga is not the creator of the world and souls; He is not a cause of them. In that case the eternity of the Prakṛti and Puruṣas will be challenged. God acts only as a guide to the evolution of Prakṛti, and sees that the Prakṛti functions for the purpose of the souls. Prakṛti and Puruṣas are independent in existence; their interaction is facilitated by God. Moreover, Patañjali has stressed the need of God for practical purposes, i.e., for helping the devotees who practise the Yogic austerities to attain the final state of isolation of the Puruṣa from the Prakṛti by removing impediments from their path. The arguments of Patañjali to establish the existence of God are not philosophically sound; but he was not interested so much in a logical account of the world. He did not deal much with the metaphysical nature and place of God in his system as his main interest was to secure an omnipotent being

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.): *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*. See commentary Vyāsa—Sūtra 24, pp. 39, 40.

to help the Yogins in their efforts of attainment of liberation by means of removing obstacles from their path of progress towards isolation. Patañjali says — “From the devotion, Īśvara exists.”<sup>1</sup> God is necessary for the Yogins to concentrate their minds on Him who in His turn enables them to secure total separation or aloofness from the Prakṛti. God is not the ultimate object of attainment to the Yogins, nor do the Yogins seek to enter into direct communion with Him, nor do they wish to submerge in Him; because God is a (Puruṣa-viśeṣaḥ) a special Puruṣa among the many others whom He helps. Max Müller says — “The idea of other Puruṣas obtaining union with him; could therefore never have entered Patañjali’s head. According to him the highest object of the Yogin was freedom, aloneness, aloofness or Self-centredness. As one of the useful means of obtaining that freedom or of quieting the mind previous to liberating it altogether, devotion to Īśvara is mentioned, but again as one only out of many means, and not even as the most efficacious at all. In the popular atmosphere of India this belief in the one Supreme Being may have been a strong point in favour of Patañjali’s system, but from a philosophical point of view so called proofs of the existence of God would hardly stand against any criticism.”<sup>2</sup> The God of the Yoga is not beyond the three attributes but in Him the ‘Sattva is in

<sup>1</sup> *Patañjala Yoga Sūtrāni* — *Sūtra* 23.

ईश्वर प्रणिधानाद्वा ।

<sup>2</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 426.

the purest form and exists in its superlative degree; therefore, He is an embodiment of perfect knowledge and all the best qualities. God is not an end to be sought for, to the Yogins but He is a means to reach Kaivalya the state of complete isolation. God is the best and most reliable friend of the Yogins. God acts as a teacher who instructs the Yogins how to proceed in their way to liberation. S. Radhakrishnan says — “The personal God of Yoga philosophy is very loosely connected with the rest of the system. The goal of human aspiration is not union with God, but the absolute separation of Puruṣa from Prakṛti. Devotion to God is one of the several other ways of reaching ultimate freedom...Īśvara facilitates the attainment of liberation but does not grant it.”<sup>1</sup>

The Yoga philosophy of Patañjali holds a unique position in the Indian Philosophy because of its Yogic practices. The Yogic practices which Patañjali has advocated consist in cultivating physical and mental discipline. It is external and internal both. The external features of the Yogic practices consist in the methods of controlling the functioning of the sense organs which work with the external world, and the internal discipline consists in developing certain kinds of mental attitudes.

The human mind is never steady and its working is always unsteady. The human mind is often distracted and disturbed by the various mental states. The first necessity for making one's mind quiet is to understand such various mental states and to

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 371.

control them properly. Patañjali describes these mental states in the following Sūtra—“Disease, Languor, Vacillation, Remissness, Idleness, Absence of non-attachment, Mistaken notion, Non-attainment of the stage of (communion) and Instability. These are the distractors of the Mind; and these are the obstacles.”<sup>1</sup> ...The mind or Citta cannot remain steady because of the various mental experiences mentioned above, which in their turn are followed by their companions—“Pain, Irritation, Trembling, Inbreathing and Outbreathing are their companions of Distraction.”<sup>2</sup> Further it is said that in order to exercise control on these, the Yogic exercises are to be practised. “For checking these (there should be) Practice on the one Principle.”<sup>3</sup> As long as the mind is bustling with the noises of the passion it is difficult to penetrate to the deeper level of the Puruṣa. The arrest of the mental states enables one to think coolly and to grasp the peaceful nature of the Puruṣa. The Yogin has not to behave like a frustrate or a pervert, but he has to remain all the while extremely fresh and contented. In order to attain mental peace and tranquillity he needs to train his mental attitudes in such a way that he would always keep away depression, anxiety and melancholy. Patañjali advocates the following qualities of the mind to be cultivated—“Peace of mind (is brought about) by

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*, Sūtra 30, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 31.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 32, p. 35.

entertaining friendliness, compassion, satisfaction and indifference — as pertaining respectively to the Happy and Unhappy, the Righteous and the Unrighteous.”<sup>1</sup> Indifference to happiness and unhappiness is the main virtue which automatically makes the restraint on other desires easy. The Yogin should not feel a sense of deprivation and of desperation to turn away from the world of enjoyment. He must, therefore, possess a sense of genuine contentment, which might give him enhanced vigour in his struggle for the final achievement.

The Yogin has to overcome the various impediment in his way by special exertion and conscious efforts. Patañjali enumerates the impediments as follows — “Illusion, Self-consciousness, Attachment, Aversion and Yearning for life are the impediments.”<sup>2</sup> Each of these impediments has its own nature which is described in the following ways — “Illusion consists in regarding the non-eternal eternal, impure as pure, pain as pleasure and non-Self as Self.”<sup>3</sup> Illusion is thus the false notion of things. It consists in the misconceptions of things from which deception is caused. “Self-consciousness (अस्मिता) is the apparent identification of the perceiver—faculty and the perception faculty.”<sup>4</sup> The sense *asmitā* is caused by confusing the perception or *buddhi* for the perceiver — the soul. Further — “Attachment (राग) is that which

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 33, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 5, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Sūtrā, 6, p. 82.

dwells upon pleasure.”<sup>1</sup> The tendency to stick to pleasurable objects always ultimately makes the mental bond for the objects permanent, and hence, attachment is caused. “Aversion is that which dwells upon Pain.”<sup>2</sup> It is a psychological fact that one does not like to pursue a thing which does not yield to him pleasure or happiness. The human mind has the tendency to flee away from the objects that cause it pain; the painful objects cause repulsion or aversion in the human mind. The acquisition of pleasure and pain or happiness and unhappiness depends upon the nature of the deeds which are meritorious or the non-meritorious. It is said — “According as they are due to Merit or Demerit they bring about Happiness or Unhappiness.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the actions of merit ensure happiness and the actions of demerit bring with them unhappiness.

The Sāṃkhya philosophy holds non-discrimination (अद्वैत) responsible for the sufferings in life. The Yoga also traces the origin of suffering to illusion or अविद्या. It is further added — “The cause of that is Illusion (Ignorance).”<sup>4</sup> Ignorance of the real nature of the soul and of its distinction from the Citta that acts as an instrument of knowledge causes deception, and hence, the sufferings which belong to the Citta are misappropriated by the soul,

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*, Sūtra 7, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 14/73.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 23/94.

which is not at all the real agent and the real enjoyer. Pain arises mainly by calling those things which are not self, self.

The cessation of the mind-Citta ultimately results into its separation from the Prakṛti which is the final state of liberation of the Yoga philosophy. Vyāsa in his commentary explains the position thus—“As a matter of fact, the cessation of the Mind itself is Liberation; the ‘cessation of the mind’ follows when there is nothing to bring about ‘non-seeing’ (Illusion); this non-seeing is the sole cause of bondage, and hence it ceases on the appearance of ‘seeing’ (Right Discernment); so that the ‘cessation of the mind’ itself being Liberation.”<sup>1</sup>

Patañjali advocates the eightfold practices which form the eight limbs of his Yoga, in order to enable Yogins to secure the final isolation of the soul from the Prakṛti. The first five form a part of the physical discipline which is necessary to prepare one's mental background for the final experience. The eight limbs of Yoga enumerated by Patañjali are the following—“(1) Restraint (यम), (2) Observance (नियम), (3) Posture (आसन), (4) Breath-regulation (प्राणायाम), (5) Abstraction (प्रत्याहार), (6) Concentration (धारणा), (7) Meditation (ध्यान), (8) Communion (समाधि).”<sup>2</sup> The eight kinds of practices help the individual gradually to withdraw himself into him-

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi* (Com. Vyāsa), p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi* (Com. Vyāsa), 29, p. 101.

self from his contact and attachment to the external world. Ultimately, the aim is to purify the Yogin's mind and to make it free from all kinds of bondages. The Yamas or (restraints) consist in practising benevolence (अहिंसा), truthfulness (सत्य), abstinence (अस्तेय), celibacy (ब्रह्मचर्य), freedom from avarice (अपरिग्रह). The observance of restraints enables the Yogin to detach his mind from the external world and helps him to develop an attitude of goodwill towards all. The body is gradually trained and is not unnecessarily tortured. If the sense organs and the mind are not properly controlled, and if they run after any object that they come across, there is no possibility of experiencing the poise of mind; the mind is not able to concentrate on one object and the distraction continues to keep a man unsteady. The Niyamas consist in cultivating, certain mental attitudes by means of observing cleanliness (शौच), contentment (संतोष), austerity (तपस्), study (स्वाध्याय) and devotion to the supreme Lord. The above qualities help him to purify his mind of the passions and to develop an optimistic attitude towards things. The detachment does not cause in him dryness or a sense of pessimism. Patañjali stresses the need for developing contentment or संतोष. The pratyāhāra or abstraction consists in withdrawing the mind from the sense organs and their objects. Even breath-regulation (प्राणायाम) is practised in order that the irregular breathing-movements should not disturb the concentration of the mind. Breath-regulation produces a sense of rhythm which ultimately helps to experience an undisturbed poise. The particular kinds of



postures also keep the mind fresh and fully awake to the experience. It avoids any kind of indolence and laziness. After a Yogin is able to exercise full control over the sense organs he is able to concentrate his mind and all his energies on his object of devotion; it is known as धारणा. Once he is able to fix his attention on the particular object he continues to have that concentration without any distraction for a considerably long period and thus, ultimately it culminates into contemplation (च्यान). A Yogin acquires unusual powers by contemplation. When he is completely one with the object of contemplation he loses the sense of separateness of his body. If a Yogin misuses the extraordinary powers that he wins, he is not able to make further progress towards the final experience of liberation or isolation. The final state is one of समाधि. In samādhi a Yogi is completely detached from the external world. He loses the sense of his separatedness from other objects. He is entirely forgetful of the sense of duality. It is a state ecstasy and not one of void as the Hīnayāna Buddhists suppose. There are degrees of Samādhi or concentration. The imperfect state of Samādhi is known as the संप्रज्ञात or the conscious Samādhi, in which he continues to have the consciousness of the object of contemplation. The sense of duality is not totally overcome. The sense of distinction of himself and the object of contemplation remains, although he is forgetful of the other objects of the external world. In the (संप्रज्ञात) Samādhi the object of contemplation is fully illumined and the mind enjoys a peculiar sense of joy. The intensity

of concentration during this state increases to such a high degree as if the two have become one. This Samādhi again assumes four forms as the सवितर्क, सविचार, सानन्द, and सास्मित. We have conscious Samādhi as long as we discriminate the good from the bad, we reflect on the nature of things, we experience a sense of joy and possess a sense of our individuality. But this is not the final experience of release though it is the penultimate state. During the state of the संप्रज्ञात Samādhi, the Citta is freed from the rājasic and tāmasic attributes; it is purely a sāttvic state in which the things are known with all their beauty and light. A Yogin acquires an insight into the objects and understands the objects with an unusual clarity and distinctness in this state. The further and more evolved state of concentration is known as the final असंप्रज्ञात समाधि; the superconscious state.

The Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi is a more developed form of the former Saṃprajñāta Samādhi. In the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi even the last object of contemplation disappears; all modifications of the Citta are totally absent in this state. It is a state which is free from any distinction of the subject and object. The manifest Cittavṛttis cease to appear in this state though the latent ones may remain. Even the best kind of knowledge, predominantly sāttvic in character, ceases to exist in the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi; knowledge of any sort is totally absent; therefore it is also known as the निर्बीज समाधि, because it no more leads to a further birth as the

residual impressions, though they are existent, do not get any scope for their expression. The Saṃprajñāta Samādhi is also called *सबीजसमाधि*, for, the latent deposits of Karma (आशय) which cause the future birth, are not annihilated in it; they are uprooted or made impotent in the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi, hence the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi leads to the final emancipation with no fear of a relapse. When one experiences the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi one is free from any movement of the Citta, and thus, he gets established in the original poise of the Puruṣa. It is a state of unshaken peace and silence. Then the Citta becomes desolate but the Puruṣa rests at home; it is then quite at ease. It is negatively defined as 'the cessation of the modifications of the Citta.'<sup>1</sup> The Puruṣa becomes entirely free from the connections or the reflections into the Prakṛti, and as there remains nothing into which it can reflect, it is confused with nothing. It exists in its pure tranquil form. No more is there any confusion with any modification of Citta which has come to a standstill. It is a state of equanimity. The isolation of the Puruṣa from the Prakṛti becomes perfect in it. When the Asaṃprajñāta Samādhi is experienced the fear of relapse to the worldly life is cancelled for ever. Max Müller describes the final state in the following passage—"Then at last perfect discrimination is rewarded by what is called by a strange term, Dharmamegha (धर्ममेघः), the cloud of virtue, knowledge and virtue being inseparable

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasangraha*, p. 357.

सर्ववृत्तिनिरोधे तु असंप्रज्ञातः समाधिः ।

like cause and effect. All works and all sufferings have now ceased, even what is to be known becomes smaller and smaller, the very Guṇas, i.e., Prakṛti, having done their work, cease troubling; Puruṣa becomes himself, is independent, undisturbed, free and blessed.”<sup>1</sup>

The Puruṣas being infinite, each one attains such isolation for itself. The Puruṣa gets completely isolated from the Prakṛti so far it is concerned, and it then rests in its own isolated state and enjoys supreme peace that is inherent in it. It thinks of nothing, not even of itself in its state of isolation. But the Prakṛti does not come to stop its working as other Puruṣas are attached to it, and they enjoy it. Several other Puruṣas are in bondage simultaneously, and for their purpose, the Prakṛti cannot cease to function. In the attainment of liberation nothing is annihilated; the Puruṣa and Prakṛti both being eternal, cannot come to an end. They continue to live quite in separation from each other. As other Puruṣas enjoy the same Prakṛti, it cannot dwindle or recoil in itself; but as the Puruṣa severs its connections with the Prakṛti in its individual case, it becomes eternally free from all the pleasures and pains of the worldly life. It rests in its own nature. As Patañjali says—“There is involution of the Attributes when there is no further purpose of the Spirit to be served by them; and this is Isolation; or it may be defined as the abidance of the sentient spirit

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller : *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 471.

in its own nature (Kaivalyam Svarūpapratisthā)."<sup>1</sup> It is not the creation of something new but it consists only in the realisation by the soul of itself. Whether it is joyful or not, it is difficult to say. It is at least undisturbed peace, unshaken tranquillity, and perfect silence.

The Yoga philosophy accepts like the Sāṃkhya the doctrine of Karma, and holds that it is caused by avidyā or non-discrimination, and it is the cause of rebirth. It is responsible for the continuation of the cycle of birth and death. When the Karma and its total stock is totally destroyed, the fear of rebirth can be removed. The attainment of liberation depends not only on the practice of the Yogic austerities but it presupposes also the knowledge of the reality which guides the Yogic practices. The Yoga gives equal importance to jñāna along with Yogic practices as the means for the attainment of Kaivalya or liberation. It never disputes the necessity of knowledge for Kaivalya but it stresses more the need of the Yogic practices as a scientific means for the final achievement.

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<sup>1</sup> Jha Gangadhar (Tr.) : *Pāṭanjala Yoga Sūtrāṇi*, Sūtra 34, p. 227.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PURVA-MIMAMSA

The पूर्वमीमांसा System is the most prominent orthodox system among others, and it is peculiarly known for its adherence to, and the absolute belief in the infallibility of the Vedas. This system tries to understand properly the thoughts embodied in the words of the Vedas. It gave so much importance to sound and the words which are formed from it that it denied even the existence of God as the creator of the world. The Vedas are eternal according to the Mimāṃsā. The Vedas are self-created, and hence, their origin and authority need not be challenged. The Mimāṃsā regards that the Vedic texts are eternal, and hence God is not necessary. It denies the existence of God, and so it is called an atheistic system. It has laid special emphasis on the ritualistic aspect of the Brāhmaṇas from which it has been derived. The Brāhmaṇas are mostly ritualistic. The Mimāṃsā includes more philosophical elements than the Brāhmaṇas which also had not admitted the fourth puruṣārtha (mokṣa) as the end to be attained. The Brāhmaṇas were religious in character, and hence, they emphasized mostly the

ritualistic part of the Vedas. The Mīmāṃsā also has not omitted it, but it has given to it a more scientific form and has replaced dharma by mokṣa or liberation as the end to be attained. It has given special emphasis on the pre-Upaniṣadic ritualism of the Vedas and has interpreted them afresh so as to be acceptable to the people. The origin of the Mīmāṃsā Sūtras can be traced to Jaimini who is recognised as the earliest Mīmāṃsā-philosopher. His Sūtras or aphorisms were then interpreted by other scholars like Śābaraswāmī (शबरस्वामी), Prabhākara (प्रभाकर), Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (कुमारिल भट्ट), and the works of these commentators were further critically presented by scholars like Pārthasārathi Miśra (पार्थसारथि मिश्र), Maṇḍana Miśra (मण्डन मिश्र), etc... This system is called 'The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system' simply for the reason that it deals with the former works of the Śrīti which was existing before the philosophical Upaniṣadic works came into existence. As M. Hiriyanna states — "...the Mīmāṃsā attaches greater importance to the Brāhmaṇas than to the Mantras, which means that it looks upon the Veda as essentially a book of ritual. It not only subordinates the earlier Mantras, but also the later Upaniṣads. Its designation as Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā has reference to this latter phase, viz., its being concerned with the teaching of those portions of the Veda that come before the Upaniṣads, the darśana dealing with the latter being termed Uttara-Mīmāṃsā."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, this system holds in common with the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika system some ideas about the soul.

<sup>1</sup> Hiriyanna M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 299

The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system holds that there is some such entity as soul that is different from the body, the sense organs, the manas and the cognitions, and it goes to the heaven by the performance of the rituals prescribed. The soul is the agent of actions and the reaper of their rewards. It is eternal and without any change. Though it is an agent it does the actions without moving itself. It is responsible for actions for it is the ultimate cause of energy which it supplies for the performance of acts. It may undergo a slight change in itself but change does not affect its immutability. It is not atomic or of any intermediate size (madhyama parimāṇa—मध्यम परिमाण) but it is all-pervasive (Vibhu—विभु). Knowledge is not its essential nature but it is a mode of it. It is immaterial and omnipresent. The soul is the enjoyer of all experiences but it enjoys with the aid of the mind and uses the sense organs as the instruments; the internal and external things and their qualities are the objects of its enjoyment. The soul is the abode (आश्रय) of knowledge, intelligence and experiences like pleasure, pain, etc., which cannot be the dharma or characteristics of the body. Some Mīmāṃsakas like the Prabhākaras hold that the soul is not separately perceptible but it reveals itself in all the acts of cognition; it is not self-illuminated but it is illuminated by the act of knowledge simultaneously with the objects of knowledge. Prabhākara holds that knowledge has the power of revealing both the soul (the subject) and the objects of knowledge; but some others like Kumārila hold that the soul is separately perceptible as the object



of direct perception by the mind (मानसप्रत्यक्ष) as the substratum of the "I" element in knowledge. But Śābaraswāmī believes that the soul is Sva-saṁvedya or directly perceived as one's own Self in the sense that it cannot be directly cognised in the same way by other persons. The souls of others can be cognised by the activities similar to those of ours. The soul is eternal, and it transmigrates in accordance with the adṛṣṭa. The souls are many in number so that each person possesses his own soul separately to maintain his independence. Kumārila and Prabhākara agree in holding that the soul is not self-illuminating (svayaṁ prakāśa).

The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system is driven to the inference of the existence of the soul from the sacrifices which are performed. The sacrifices that are performed are not without purpose. They are supposed ultimately to enable the performer to go to the heaven; but the body of the performer being material, and hence perishable, cannot rise to the heaven; hence the necessity of some entity which is the performer of action, and which is immaterial so that it may rise to the heaven, and that entity is the soul. The word "Esha" in the II aphorism of the *S'lokavārtika* indicates the existence of the soul.<sup>1</sup> As Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says—"The Vedas have declared that the results of sacrifices pertain to the performer in some birth or other; and if the Soul were nothing more than mere Idea, then it could

<sup>1</sup> Kumārila Bhaṭṭa : *S'lokavārtika*, Section 18, p. 382.  
Tr. Ganganath Jha.

not have the character of the performer (of actions) and enjoyer of results.”<sup>1</sup> Similarly Śābaraswāmī and Kumārila both hold that the reference made to that which is “equipped with the implements” is clearly meant to indicate the soul and not the physical body. The physical body by itself cannot relate the means to the consequences, hence, the need of admitting an entity like the soul arises. The soul ensouls the body and is the ultimate doer of the action, the body, functioning under its superintendence. Moreover Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says — “Therefore it is with a view to establish the authority of the Veda, that the existence of the soul is sought to be proved here.”<sup>2</sup>

Śābara infers the existence of the soul from such activities as of breathing, winking of the eyes and the like, which cannot belong to the body, as they are not found in the dead body though the body is otherwise the same. As the relation between these functions and the physical body is not invariable, they cannot be said to belong to the physical body. Hence, they are attributed to the soul that runs the physical body by supplying energy to it.

The soul dwells in the body and uses it for different functions but it never means that soul and the body are identical. The soul is clearly an independent entity which is eternal and above the physical body, the sense organs and the cognitions.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Aphorism 4, p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> Bhaṭṭa Kumārila : *Ś'lokavārtika*, Section 18, p. 382.  
Tr. Ganganath Jha.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says—“We hold that the Soul is something different from the body, the sense organs and ideas, and that it is eternal; while all the rest, the body, etc., are perishable.”<sup>1</sup> The soul and the body cannot be identified because the body is perishable while the soul is imperishable or eternal. The simple proposition “My body is weak” clearly indicates that there is a difference between the body and that entity to which it belongs. The body and the possessor of the body are not one and the same. The possessive case denoting ‘my’ or ‘mine’ leads to the inference of that which owns the body as his; and that is the ‘soul’. Another important reason to distinguish the body from the soul is that the body does not possess those properties which the soul is supposed to possess. The body possesses some properties like the colour, height, etc., which are perceptible by others, and therefore they can be known by others; but some properties like knowledge, pleasure, pain, etc., are known only by the individual who experiences them. They cannot be known by others in the same objective way as the physical properties like colour, etc., of body. One can only indirectly understand the pleasure or pain of others from the similarity of his own experience of pleasure and pain. Such experiences are exclusive to each individual and they cannot be attributed to the physical body. Though they invariably depend upon the existence of the body they cannot be called as the *guṇas* or properties of the body. Had they been

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 383,

the properties of the body they would have existed in dead bodies; but it is contrary to facts. Dead bodies are devoid of any cognition and experiences like pleasure and pain. Moreover, the body is constituted of the particles of earth which are unintelligent or unconscious. It is therefore concluded by Ganganath Jha—"Such phenomena as the feelings of pleasure, pain and the like are cognised by the person himself only, while the qualities of colour and the rest which belong to the physical body are cognised and perceived by others also. This shows that there are certain qualities in the person which are directly cognisable by himself only."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, another fallacious conclusion will follow from indentifying the soul with the body. If they were identical, and the body being perishable, the phenomenon of rebirth cannot be consistently explained. The doctrine of Karma requires for explaining the continuity of successive births something that endures in two successive births; that which does some deeds in the preceding life must proceed to the succeeding birth to reap the rewards of its deeds done formerly. If the body were the soul, who would transmigrate after the body is destroyed at death? Therefore, the admission of soul is inescapable. Similarly if the two were identical, the soul would change with every change in the body and would undergo deformities which occur usually in the body. Moreover, if the body were the substratum of cognition, pleasure and pain it would always remain full of them;

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath : *Purva-Mīmāṃsā*, Ch. II, p. 27.

but we find that these experiences are transient. They cannot be, therefore, the essential properties of the body. Hence, the existence of a separate entity which can serve as the substratum of such properties becomes necessary, and hence the soul exists. Both Prabhākara and Kumārila also hold that the soul is entirely different from the body.<sup>1</sup>

The soul, according to this system, is again different from the sense organs. Pārthasārathi Miśra says that even though the organs cease to function, the memory of the objects previously seen does not vanish. A blind person quite vividly remembers the colours of objects seen by him before turning blind. It shows that knowledge does not reside in the sense organs but it resides in something beyond them. The damage done to the sense organs does not harm the knowledge. If the sense organs were the soul, all knowledge would come to an end with their cessation; but it is contrary to reality. Another argument that can be forwarded against the supposition is that, we often perceive a single object by more than one sense organ, which shows that the factor that perceives is different from the two sense organs concerned. As A. B. Keith says—“... thus the fact that I feel with my hand and that I see with my eyes shows that there is something beyond the sense organs.”<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the senses cannot relate two different cognitions taking place in two different

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*, 1-1-5, pp. 121-22. Also see—*Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, pp. 29, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Keith. A. B. : *The Karma-Mīmāṃsā*.

periods of time,—one in the past and one in the present. The fact of memory of past observations cannot be explained if the sense organs are regarded as the soul. Keith also is right in pointing out the fact that we usually say 'I see' or 'I touch' or 'I smell' and not 'the eyes see', 'the skin touches' and 'the nose smells', the various actions of perceptions thus belong to something, the 'I' which is beyond the sense organs, and it uses the sense to obtain these various experiences as instruments or *Karaṇas*.<sup>1</sup> That which uses, therefore, the *indriyas* or sense organs as its instruments for acquiring knowledge is the soul. The soul integrates the multitude of sense perceptions and provides unitary experience, and it also maintains the continuity of the experienter.

The *Mīmāṃsā* further considers the nature of the mind which is a necessary link in the mechanism of knowledge. Mind is a distinct entity separate from the soul, and it shares some of the qualities of the soul. These qualities are intellection, cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, and effort. The mind is one organ along with the other five sense organs. It acts as an intermediary between the objects and the soul. It discharges the most important function of remembrance or memory. It synthesizes the various sense organs together, and links the various sense perceptions at different times. It also acts as an instrument of the soul for acquiring knowledge of the external world. It not only observes the external objects but it also observes the various internal states

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*, 1.1.5, p. 123.

of a man. Ganganath Jha describes it further as "The Mind is a substance and not a composite body. It cannot be omnipresent like the soul because then their contact would be everlasting. It is of atomic dimension. As it has no cause it is eternal. It is extremely mobile. It has simultaneous and continuous various perceptions. Without it the soul cannot perceive the external world. The contact of the Mind with the conscious soul is due to endless series of Merit and Demerit accumulated in previous births."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the mind acts as an indispensable instrument of the soul for the acquisition of knowledge. It is extremely mobile; so by constantly moving from object to object it fetches the impressions of the external world to the soul. The soul is immobile or immutable as it is all-pervasive. The distinctions of particular individuals are maintained by means of the different minds. If the mind were to fill the whole of the body it would be conversant with the various sense perceptions at once, and there would arise confusion. It is atomic and so it can be extremely active and prompt in attending to perceptions separately. It is that which registers the sense perceptions and conveys them to the soul. Without mind there would not be attention to the various experiences. According to Kumārila, the mind is capable of knowing the soul also in the form of one's Ego: the knowledge of the soul is given by the mind by making it its objects.

The soul is also different from buddhi or intellect.

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<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath: *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 31.

Intellect takes the form of objects and ultimately the soul acts as the knower who receives knowledge. Knowledge is tripartite. It implies the existence of the three elements of knowledge; the knower, the known and the knowledge or cognition. Cognition and soul are not identical. Cognition is an act, and every act presupposes the doer or agent of it. The doer or agent must be different from the act itself. The soul is the agent of the act of cognising, desiring and the like. There are varying interpretations about the process of knowledge, especially about the knowability of the soul. Śābaraswāmī, for example, holds that the soul is 'self-cognisable' or knowable by oneself in so far no other soul can ever know it directly. The soul of other persons can be known by means of inference or indirectly from the similar activities that the person does. The knowledge of the soul is exclusive for an individual. Ganganath Jha explains the standpoint of Śābara in the following lines—  
 "This Soul, the Agent of the acts of Cognising, Desiring, Feeling and the like can be directly cognised by each man for himself; it is in this sense that the 'Soul' is regarded as (स्वसंवेद्य) self-cognised, and no Soul can be directly cognised by another."<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus Śābaraswāmī holds that the soul can be clearly known by oneself as the substratum of his "I-consciousness" as distinguished from the idam-consciousness. This knowledge is not transferrable and cannot be shared with others. The objective knowledge or the knowledge of objects can be uniformly

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath: *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* (Śābara Bhāṣya), p. 28.



had by all but this peculiar knowledge, — the subjective cognition remains only with the knower himself and it is exclusive. The soul is neither the body, nor the sense organs, nor the mind, nor the desires, nor the feelings which it experiences, but itself transcends them all as it acts as the doer or agent itself. The subject and the object of experience must be kept separate.

Prabhākara denies the possibility of the soul's being cognised separately. He holds that the soul manifests itself in all the acts of cognition as the substratum of cognition. According to him, the soul necessarily accompanies all the acts of cognition so that cognition becomes impossible in the absence of it. Prabhākara finds it illogical to make the soul an object of knowledge when, in fact, it acts as the subject of those objects. He cannot accept the possibility of making a subject an object of knowledge. Soul is not self-illuminated<sup>1</sup> (स्वयंप्रकाश); had it been so we would have had knowledge then even in deep sleep; but in deep sleep we have no knowledge though the soul exists even then. According to him, cognition of the soul is inseparable from the object-cognition; the object and the soul are simultaneously illuminated by knowledge which he believes is self-illuminated. Both Prabhākara and Kumārila agree in holding that the soul is not self-illuminating, and that the man lies only in an unconscious state during deep sleep. He has no awareness of any object during

<sup>1</sup> Somanātha: *S'āstrādīpikā* (Com. by Somanātha), p. 123.

स्वप्रकाशत्वे चात्मा सुषुप्तावपि प्रकाशेन, न च प्रकाशते.....।

sleep; nay, he confesses after being awake that 'he was asleep for such a considerable time, even forgetting himself', nor did he experience any kind of pain.<sup>1</sup> Kumārila further denies that the soul is accompanied by bliss during deep sleep (सुषुप्ति). He cites the illustration of a person given to sensual enjoyment after being awake from deep sleep; the person expresses grief for being deprived of the pleasure of being in union with his beloved due to deep sleep in which he had fallen. It clearly indicates that in deep sleep there is no experience of pleasure or bliss as there is no pain also. From the absence of consciousness in deep sleep the soul is imagined to be like a firefly (khadyota) which is partly shining and partly not-shining; the soul also is partly conscious and partly unconscious as in the case of deep sleep. Any kind of experience whether pleasurable or painful is possible only when one is awake. Therefore, though the soul endures during deep sleep, we are never conscious of it in that state. Prabhākara however denies the possibility of knowing the soul independently of any other object of knowledge. Kumārila on the other hand, holds that our soul can be known by the mind as the substratum of our I-consciousness. Prabhākara thinks that the soul is necessarily present in all the acts of cognition as the substrate of cognition. Cognitions cannot exist apart from the substratum which holds them. But

<sup>1</sup> Somanātha : *S'āstradīpikā* (Com. by Somanātha), p. 124.

तस्मात्सुषुप्तावप्रकाशात्मात्मनः स्वप्रकाशत्वम् ।

प्रबुद्धा हि सुषुप्ताववगतं किञ्चिदपि दुःखसंस्मरन्तः स्मरणानुसृत्यैव... ।

Kumārila thinks that the I-consciousness or the self-consciousness is not present in all acts of cognition. For example, in the cognition of a jar which is known as the object-consciousness. "This is a jar" nowhere does the soul appear. "This is a jar" does not mean "I know this jar". Prabhākara holds that in every act of the consciousness of the non-self the soul is necessarily involved but it is not explicitly manifested. But S. Radhakrishnan admitting the truth of both Kumārila and Prabhākara remarks—"Between the presence of the self and the consciousness of the presence, there is a difference and it is not necessary for us to be aware of the self whenever we apprehend an object. The self is manifested only in self-consciousness, which cannot be identified with object consciousness."<sup>1</sup> Though the soul is implied in all acts of consciousness as the soul acts as the necessary presupposition of knowledge in the form of the substrate of knowledge, and as the latter cannot exist without the former, it does not follow that one is aware of the soul's presence in every act of knowing the external objects. It is a fact of experience that one knows many things of the world quite precisely but one is the least aware of one's own soul. One does not usually know the nature of his own soul simply for the reason that the soul does not manifest itself explicitly to a knower in the ordinary acts of cognition. It is clearly stated in the *S'āstradīpikā* "Although the soul manifests itself in the acts of cognition of objects, it does not manifest

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 412.

because of the cognition of the objects; but manifests because of the self-consciousness (ahaṁpratyaya) perceived by the mind....<sup>1</sup> If Prabhākara's view is admitted, it follows from it that the self-consciousness would never appear if one never has object-consciousness; the non-self becomes a pre-condition or an indispensable prerequisite of the self-consciousness. The consciousness of the soul is thus conditioned by the consciousness of the not-self. It leads to the other extreme that the self is dependent upon the not-self, and not that the not-self is dependent upon the self. It lays more stress on the primacy of the matter than of the mind. It appears to be a refutation of the idealistic theory of knowledge.

Another implication of Prabhākara's theory along with that of Kumārila is that knowledge is necessarily dependent upon the functioning of the sense organs. Knowledge is possible only when one is awake. Prabhākara uses the word saṁvit (संवित्) to denote either cognition or the soul. Prabhākara considers the soul to be जड—inconscient, and knowledge occurs to it when it comes into contact with the not-self. He does not give primacy to the soul as the प्रमातृ or knower that illuminates the objects of knowledge. In order to tie inseparably the soul with the objects he ascribes the 'self-luminosity' not to the soul but to the act of cognition which finally illumines both the knower and the known. All the difficulties arise logically from the original stand that Prabhākara and Kumārila have taken, and it is this—that

<sup>1</sup> Somanātha : *S'āstrādīptikā*, p. 123.

they do not hold that the soul has consciousness as its essential or constituent characteristic. According to both, knowledge or consciousness is a separable mode or property of the soul. Sometimes, as in deep sleep, the soul lies even without its own consciousness or self-consciousness. Their position is similar to that of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas who also hold that consciousness is an adventitious characteristic of the soul, it being separable from it. Like the Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas the Mīmāṃsakas hold that the mind is absolutely necessary to cause consciousness in the soul which acts only as the substratum of it. Kumārila, like the Naiyāyikas, holds that the soul is an object of direct perception by the mind but Prabhākara like the Vaiśeṣikas holds on different grounds that the soul is not known directly but by inference. Kumārila and Prabhākara both agree in holding that the soul acts as the substratum of all cognitions and experiences of different kinds. Śābara did not go into so much of details but he seems to hold that the soul is self-illuminated in a definite way, in so far as it is known only to the person concerned and not to other persons. A. B. Keith points out a little discrepancy in the writings of Kumārila. He says—"Kumārila, however, adopts in the *Tantravārtika* the doctrine that the soul is pure consciousness, though he distinguishes it from cognition, but this characteristic is hardly more than a verbal derivation from the view of Prabhākara, as far as practical results go."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Keith A. B. : *The Karma-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 71.

Kumārila himself gives his interpretation of the 'incognisability of the soul' which is not far from that of Śābara. He says—"By saying that it is "incognisable", in general—, the meaning would seem to be that it is so (incognisable) by all persons (including even the Ego himself). But the assertion of "self-luminosity" distinctly indicates its incognisability by others."<sup>1</sup>

The Mīmāṃsā system further believes that there are many souls, and not only one. It holds that for every person there is a separate soul. The main reason that is given for the plurality of the souls is that, there would be confusion of works and their rewards if they are not separately associated with different persons. If the souls were not many, and as the soul is the doer of actions, how can we arrange systematically the connections of works and their rewards? If the doer of actions does not remain the same as a separate person to experience the fruits of his actions, one would do good actions and instead of him, others may enjoy the good fruits of his actions. Every person must get his rightful reward, whether good or bad, accruing from his actions and hence, the need of separate souls. Kumārila and Prabhākara both admit the plurality of souls. Were there only one soul for all persons all would have been happy with the happiness of one, and all would have suffered with the sufferings of one person. All would have been liberated with the liberation of one. On the contrary, we find in actuality that

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Kumārila : *S'lokavartika*, 143 / p. 407.

every person has his own separate experience of pleasure and pain, love and aversion, knowledge and ignorance. It definitely follows from the diversity of such experiences that there are many separate souls, one for each body. The doctrine of Karma which bases the cycle of rebirth on the nature of the deeds of the previous birth cannot be maintained consistently without the plurality of souls. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system believes in the doctrine of Karma or (Adṛṣṭa); it is therefore logically driven to accept the plurality of souls.<sup>1</sup> A. B. Keith writes with regards the multiplicity of souls—“Prabhākara and Kumārila are agreed as to the fact of there existing a multitude of separate souls, as it is the necessary supposition of the Sūtra and the theme of the Bhāṣya. The perception of another soul is obviously impossible, but one sees the activities of other bodies and infers thence, that they must be ensouled, just as one's own body is ensouled. Thus, if a pupil has learned half his task in one day, the fact that he continues to learn the next half the next day is a good ground for assuming that he possesses a soul. The same result can be arrived at from the fact that merit and demerit are infinitely various, and not one, as they must be, if there were one soul only. The objection that pain is felt as localised though there is but one soul in the body is met by insisting that in reality the feeling is in the soul, and it is only the cause of the pain which can be said to be localised.”<sup>2</sup> Thus

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*, 1.1.5, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Keith A. B. : *The Karma-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 71.

the plurality of soul is justified on various grounds. The main argument is that the differences of experiences and those of actions and their rewards cannot work consistently in the absence of the separate existences of the souls. The souls are not perceptible like other objects because the soul can be known by oneself in a peculiar way, i.e., in the form of his I-consciousness. The existence of the souls of others, therefore, has to be known by inference from their activities similar to those of us. As Kumārila says—“We become cognisant of other people’s Souls, by observing their methods and actions, such are not possible without the Soul;—and also of such cognition of other people’s Souls as has been shown by inferences.”<sup>1</sup> From similar experiences of pleasure, pain, love, aversion and cognitions and from the willed actions of others it becomes clear that they must have a soul as we do similar actions, because we have soul. The differences of merit and demerit because of which different persons experience different experiences, and are involved in the cycle of rebirths, also become explicable by the assumption of separate souls that act as the doers of actions and reapers of rewards of their actions, but they cannot be directly perceived by others like other perceptible objects; hence they can be known only by means of inference. To oneself the soul is self-luminous; others have to understand it by inference. Prabhākara and Kumārila are unanimous on this point.

The souls are according to the *Mīmāṃsā* विप्र

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<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Kumārila : *S’lokavārtika*, 145 / p. 408.



## Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā

425

or pervasive. S'ābaraswāmī discusses the immateriality and the possible size of the soul and is driven to the conclusion that the soul can neither be atomic nor of any middle size, but it is all-pervasive and omnipresent. He points out that the soul itself being immaterial, can never be mixed up with material elements. As it is free from physical magnitudes and limitations, it cannot be taken from one place to another. As it itself is immaterial and is different from the body, and also does not have any contact with the body, it is likely to be left behind when the body moves from one place to another. In that case, the soul will be separated from the body and the body will remain devoid of animation and experiences, which belong to the soul.<sup>1</sup> To avoid this difficulty and also the other difficulties of the size the soul needs to be all-pervasive and omnipresent. When the soul will be all-pervasive there will not be any difficulty of experiences and cognitions even when the body moves to any distances. When the soul is Vibhu or all-pervasive, there will be no difficulty for the body to have experiences in spite of its movements. The connection of the soul with the body is determined by the nature of the Karma of the past life of a person. The soul, being omnipresent, can ensoul the body wherever it may be. The relation between the two appears somewhat like that of the body and space and time, which also are omnipresent and encircle all bodies. The soul, being omnipresent, cannot move because it has filled all

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath (Tr.) : *Tantravārtika* (S'ābarabhāṣya on Jaimini's *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*), p. 518.

the space, it has no space to move in. It is immobile or unmoving and still it is active.

An objection is raised against the pervasiveness or omnipresence of the soul. If it were omnipresent, and as it is the case of the doer of actions and the enjoyer of experiences, all persons will be doing the same actions and enjoying the same experiences when they have been done so in one place. But, for this very purpose of avoiding confusion, the *Mīmāṃsā* believes in the plurality of souls. In his summary of Kumārila's philosophy Ganganath Jha says—"Even though omnipresent, one soul cannot serve the purpose for all personalities, as that would mean that one and the same Soul undergoes the experiences of all persons. The Soul, therefore, must be regarded as many and existing simultaneously. Being immaterial they would not come in each other's way."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the soul is immaterial and indivisible. It being immaterial there is no fear of its coming into conflict with other pervasive souls. Every person has a separate soul; therefore, though all souls are all pervading, there is no overlapping, and though all are simultaneous, there is no fear of having the same experiences for all. Because of the separate soul that each person has, every person can separately have his own experiences for himself. Thus, omnipresence is reconciled with the plurality of souls. The Advaita Vedāntins, on the contrary, maintain one Self for all and explain the differences of experiences of separate persons on the ground

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath : *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 35.

of the plurality of the egos and minds of persons.

All the Mīmāṃsā-philosophers—S'abara, Prabhākara, Kumārila, Pārthasārathi, etc., again discuss the possible size of the soul in the same manner. They argue if the soul were not omnipresent, it would be either atomic in size or of the size of the body.<sup>1</sup> If the soul is extremely small in size like the atom then it would be possible to have experiences of pleasure and would pain only in the part of the body, where the soul be located; and hence it would not be possible to experience the pain in head and in the foot simultaneously. If the soul would be moving constantly, it is difficult to get any sensation in a particular part of the body as the soul is nowhere stable.<sup>2</sup> If on the contrary, the soul is supposed to possess the same size as of the body it occupies it would involve many fallacious consequences. The soul then would possess parts and would be eternal even with parts. The soul would then be formed by the conjunction of so many parts and would be liable to destruction by the damage of some of the parts or the body which it fills. The Jainas believe that the soul is of the size of the body and hence, they are led to the absurd conclusion that the same soul is capable of expansion and contraction to the sizes of the elephant and the ant, and it involves contradiction.<sup>3</sup> But if the soul is immaterial, how can it then be subject to expansion and contraction? The soul being

<sup>1</sup> Mis'ra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*. See 1.1.5, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> See *Tantrayārtika* (S'ābarabhāṣya), p. 519.

<sup>3</sup> Mis'ra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*. See 1.1.5, p. 125.

of the size of the body, would be suffering frequent changes and damages due to changes and damages that take place in the body. Moreover, Śābaraswāmī points out that the various limbs of the body are strengthened, and do not wither away, simply because of their being pervaded over by the soul; because at death we find that they wither away quickly.<sup>1</sup>

The soul is the real doer of actions. The soul is the doer of actions and the enjoyer of their rewards. In order to maintain the consistency of the doctrine of Karma, the doer of the action must remain the same to experience the consequences of the actions done by him. They cannot be two different persons.<sup>2</sup> The soul is omnipresent, and hence it is immutable. It is active and also the agent of actions, still, it does not move. How can its activity be reconciled with its immobility? How can it act unless it itself moves? It appears contradictory; however, Kumārila and the other Mīmāṃsaka trace the soul to be the ultimate agent and also the enjoyer. The soul has to be the performer of the sacrifices because it has to go to the heaven. It cannot rise to the heaven, as the old Mīmāṃsakas say, unless it performs the necessary sacrifices prescribed. According to the new Mīmāṃsakas, the end of performing sacrifices is attainment of mokṣa, and not reaching the heaven. But the person who attains the mokṣa must be that persons who undertakes the efforts for

<sup>1</sup> *Tantravārtika* (Śābarabhāṣya) (English Tr.), p. 519.

<sup>2</sup> *S'lokavārtika* — Section 18/84, p. 397. (English Tr.)

## Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā

429

it. The doer and the doer alone can be the enjoyer. The agent is generally supposed to be involved in movement due to his activity. But Kumārila Bhaṭṭa denies any movement in the agent himself. He says—  
 “Therefore, even though the soul may not itself move, yet it may be the performer (of actions); just as even though Devadatta is not cut (or pierced by the sword), yet he is held to be the performer (of the cutting).”<sup>1</sup> Kumārila proves with the aid of the illustration given above, that though the soul moves others, it need not itself move or be involved in any kind of movement. Just as Devadatta, though he cuts many other things with his sword, it does not follow that he himself is cut by it, similarly the soul may act as an agent to other things by applying movement, but from that it does not follow that it itself undergoes any change. The soul is therefore, the unmoved mover of things. S. Dasgupta explains the above point in the following way and says that though the soul is the agent, it is only indirectly—  
 “The objection is sometimes raised that if the soul is omnipresent how can it be called an agent or a mover? But Mīmāṃsā does not admit that movement means atomic motion, for, the principle of movement is the energy which moves the atoms, and this is possessed by the omnipresent soul. It is by the energy imparted by it to the body that the latter moves. So it is that though the soul does not move it is called an agent on account of the fact

<sup>1</sup> *S'lokavārtika* — Section 18/87, p. 397. English Tr. Ganganath Jha.

that it causes the movement of the body."<sup>1</sup> S. Dasgupta thus interprets the activity of the soul and states that the soul supplies the necessary energy for the activities which are actually carried out by the mind and the body through the sense and motor organs. The soul is not the immediate or direct agent of the actions but it is the proximate agent that supplies the necessary energy for the various activities; and the activities will be impossible if the energy is not supplied. Hence, though proximate, the soul is the agent. A. B. Keith says that motion is not the only form of action and hence he interprets the activity of the soul in terms of superintendence. He says—"The Soul, then, is essentially active, for unlike the Vaiśeṣika school, the Mīmāṃsā does not, according to Kumārila, deem that motion is the only form of action, and it is through its superintending activity that the motions of the body are achieved. We must therefore, conceive the Soul engaged from the time immemorial in the work of directing a body...."<sup>2</sup>

The soul is thus, the ultimate enjoyer and agent of the actions. It acts and enjoys various experiences with the help of the mind; the sense organs act as the instruments. The soul enjoys through the sense organs the external objects of the world. The sense organs and the mind have the body as their abode, and all of them serve as instruments to the soul. Due to the good and evil deeds the soul acquires

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta S. : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Keith A. B. : *The Karma-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 66.

merit (puṇya) and demerit (pāpa) which ultimately bear their corresponding results in accordance with which the soul takes birth in the successive lives, and when the total stock of the accumulated Karma is completely exhausted, and when the soul acquires no new Karma by deeds, the soul becomes liberated from the bond of saṁsāra. It thus becomes mukta or liberated and then enjoys for ever its natural state.

### Mokṣa

The old Mīmāṃsakas like Jaimini and Śābara did not concern themselves with the problem of release or mokṣa. They were more concerned with finding the real meaning of the mantras of the sacrifices. They showed the way to the heaven but thought little over the necessity of and the way to release from saṁsāra which is predominantly painful in nature. As Radhakrishnan points out the later Mīmāṃsakas like Prabhākara and Kumārila dwelt over the problem of mokṣa as the thinkers of the other systems were thinking over it seriously. The theories of liberation therefore, are the contributions especially of Prabhākaras and Kumārila. Ganganath Jha writes in this connection—“We do not find any thing in regard to the details of Liberation in the Bhāṣya, and it has been explained by Prabhākara that Śābara was dealing with the subject of Karma, Action; hence he confined himself to what benefits the man addicted to Action, not the man who has washed off his impurities and renounced all Desire and Action; hence he has not gone forward to deal

with the subject of renunciation and Liberation.”<sup>1</sup> It is obvious from the above passage that Śābara's attention was not drawn to the problem of liberation and hence, he did not occupy himself with it. It is therefore necessary to pass on to the other major authorities of the Mīmāṃsā system to get their ideas on Mokṣa or Apavarga.

Even among the later authorities it is found that Prabhākara did not concern himself with the problem of mokṣa or liberation, since he too like Śābara, did not deal with the people who had transcended Karma or action. He occupied himself mainly with those who were interested in the ritualistic aspect of the system. We cannot directly know the views of Prabhākara on Mokṣa. For that purpose we have to turn to the views expressed by his followers known as the Prābhākaras. According to them, liberation or mokṣa is attained by the removal of all merit and demerit, which in their turn, result from actions. When the dharma and a dharma cease to exist, the cessation of their existence leads to the cessation of rebirth. Therefore, liberation comes to be described as—“the absolute cessation of the body, caused by the disappearance of all dharma and adharma.”<sup>2</sup> The Mīmāṃsakas hold the general belief that a new birth is obtained due to the results of some past actions. The goodness or badness of the birth is determined from the nature of the Karma which arises from the past deeds. The soul

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath: *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, Ch. III, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Śālikanātha: *Prakaraṇapañcikā*, p. 156.



## Purva-Mīmāṃsā

433

continues to revolve on the wheel of birth and death by being born in new physical bodies so long as the desert is operative and it is not exhausted. The emergence of the physical bodies along with its sense organs again connects the soul with the external world from which actions take place, which leave behind them their impressions that turn into the desert. The Prābhākaras thus hold, that once the total accumulated stock of the desert is exhausted either by enjoying or is destroyed by knowledge, the soul does not take fresh birth and thus one gets permanent freedom from the saṃsāra. Pārthasārathi Miśra also defines mokṣa as "the withdrawal from the saṃsāra."<sup>1</sup> Thus, in liberation, the soul ceases to have any connection with the body. The process by which men attain liberation is described in the following manner. The worldly life is supposed to be full of pain and suffering. Man frequently has to undergo tremendous suffering in the worldly life. Even the pleasure that one enjoys is found to be mixed up with pain. No pure or unmixed pleasure can ever be experienced in the worldly life. As even the pleasures of the worldly life are found to be invariably accompanied by pain one gradually becomes desperate and begins to lose interest in and longing for such adulterated pleasures. Man seeks always an agreeable experience. One has the psychological tendency to flee away from all kinds of pain. He moves in search of such a place where either the pleasure is not accompanied by

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi: *S'āstradīpikā*, 1-1-5, p. 130.

निवृत्तिरेव संसारोदपन्न इत्येते ।

pain or at least pain has come to an end. He finds such a hope of terminating his miseries or sorrows in mokṣa or liberation. When he properly grasps the nature of mokṣa or liberation, he stops the performance of the prohibited acts; not even that, but he goes ahead and stops performing even those acts which lead not to trouble and misery, but even to pleasures of different sorts, either here or hereafter. Before he becomes able to reach the final state he has to exhaust the old accumulated stock of merit and demerit by experiencing them. As he comes to exhaust the previously accumulated stock of merit and demerit, he prevents the further accumulation of merit and demerit by means of the right knowledge of the soul and reality. He also cultivates side by side qualities like contentment and self-control as have been prescribed by the scriptures. By means of these practices, by knowledge and mainly by arresting the further influx of Karma by denying any kind of experience of pleasure and pain one can ensure no further return of the soul into this world. When the soul is withdrawn perpetually from the world the soul rests quietly in its own natural state. Liberation is thus, according to the Mīmāṃsā, a state of utter painlessness as one of pleasurelessness. It consists in the freedom from any kind of experience. As Pārthasārathi describes it appropriately, "in such a state the liberated soul rests in its own natural state (svastha-स्वस्थ) as he is free from pleasure as well as pain."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi : *S'āstradīpikā*, 1.1.5, p. 130.

सुखदुःखविहीनोऽतो मुक्तः स्वस्वोऽवशिष्टे ।

Ganganath Jha mentions a note from Śaṅkara Misra from his *Vādi Vinoda* (p 40) in which it is stated that according to Prabhākara, Liberation consists in the Prāgabhāva — absence before appearance — of pain along with the total absence of pain; that is a state in which there is no Pain and no likelihood of (appearance) of Pain.<sup>1</sup> All future possibilities of the appearance of pain are eliminated for ever.

According to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa also liberation consists in the destruction of the Karma and the prevention of the production of a future body. Unlike Prabhākara, Kumārila has explicitly stated his idea of mokṣa in *Ślokavārtika* in the following passage — “For those who have understood the real nature of the Soul, all their past Karma having become exhausted through experience, and there being no Karmic residuum left to wipe off, there comes no future body; as it is only for the experiencing of the reactions of past Karma that the soul is burdened with the Body; therefore, the seeker for liberation should not do any such act as has been forbidden or even what has been enjoined for certain purposes (as both of these would bring about Karmic reaction which would have to be expiated by experience); but he should continue to perform the compulsory acts; as the omission of these would involve sin, which would have to be expiated by painful experience through a physical body.”<sup>2</sup> Kumārila agrees with the

<sup>1</sup> Jha Ganganath : *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, p. 37.

*Ślokavārtika* — सम्बन्धकोपपरिहार । 108-110.

Prābhākara in holding that the experience is the root cause of bondage, and dharma and adharma, which for being exhausted by being experienced by the doer, lead to future birth. Therefore, in order to attain a painless condition one has to exhaust the previous stock of accumulated Karma by experiencing it, and has to prevent the influx of new Karma so that it may not bind him even in the future. Kumārila therefore holds that in the state of liberation the soul exists in its natural condition which is characterised by the potency of knowledge and energy. Its forms of consciousness like cognition or intellect, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, the impressions, merit and demerit are destroyed. The soul lies in its natural condition (Svastha).<sup>1</sup>

The Vedānta holds that knowledge can burn the old stock of संचित Karma but Kumārila does not seem to agree with it in this respect; however, he holds like it that knowledge helps the prevention of the accumulation of new Karma and leads to the stoppage of further embodiment of the Soul. Knowledge plays, according to Kumārila, only a negative role of preventing the accumulation of new Karma, but he also holds that knowledge cannot lead to the expiation of past Karma, which can be brought about only by experiencing it. He finds thus the necessity of knowledge to be employed for the arrest of future Karma (संवायमान). He does not neglect the importance of knowledge for the attainment of release though he lays greater stress on duties.

<sup>1</sup> *S'āstradīpikā* — See Muktiśvarāṇakathanaṁ, 11.1.5, p. 130.

Pārthasārathi mentions one view, that according to some Mīmāṃsakas, although the external organs cease to exist, the mind persists in the state of liberation and the soul rests experiencing the supreme happiness by means of the mind (मानसप्रत्यक्षेण).<sup>1</sup> The Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas hold that in the state of liberation no happiness can be enjoyed since the soul loses its contact with the sense organs including mind which, according to them, are absolutely necessary for enjoying happiness.<sup>2</sup> There cannot be happiness because there are no sense organs with which happiness is enjoyed, and there cannot be sense organs since there is no body in which the sense organs reside, and there cannot be the body because there is no cause for the birth of the body as the Karma which causes rebirth is totally annihilated. Perhaps the soul may be possessing tranquillity and peace in liberation; it is also known as the bliss which may be regarded as the highest happiness; which is of the supersensuous nature. Kumārila and Pārthasārathi seem to restrict the term 'sukha' only to sensuous happiness which can be experienced only by means of the sense organs. They are perfectly

<sup>1</sup> Miśra Pārthasārathi: *S'āstradīpikā*, 1.1.5, pp. 126, 127.

बाह्येन्द्रियाण्येव मुक्तस्य निवर्तन्ते, मनस्तु तस्यामवस्थायामनुवर्तते ।

तस्या मुक्त्यवस्थायामानसप्रत्यक्षेण परमानन्दमनुभवज्ञात्मावतिष्ठते ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 127.

न च मुक्तस्येन्द्रियाणि संभवन्तीति

कथमानन्दानुभवः स्यात् ।

न हि मुक्तस्यानन्दानुभवः

संभवति करणभावात् ।

justified in holding that the liberated soul cannot enjoy the sensuous happiness. There seems to be some confusion between the meaning of the two words 'sukha' and 'ānanda'. Sukha — pleasure may be essentially an agreeable experience enjoyed by means of the sense organs, while ānanda of the Vedānta may possess a kind of different connotation which may be better understood as the 'supersensuous happiness', which is characterised mainly by peace, tranquillity and illumination. On the contrary, sukha or pleasure may be mainly characterised by stimulation, excitation, physical disturbance and evanescence. Sukha or pleasure depends for being evoked upon external objects of stimulation, and it lasts only for a few moments and after it reaches its point of satiation, it no more interests the enjoyer. After the point of satiation is reached it no more remains inviting; on the contrary, beyond its proper proportion it begins to become disagreeable, as it is limited by the physical capacities of the individual. It is not so with bliss or ānanda. It does not depend upon any external object for its generation and it has no restrictions. One is never tired of enjoying the peace and bliss. It can be eternal as the point of its satiation is never reached. It is beyond all physical limitations. We do not know whether the soul enjoys the bliss or ānanda of the supersensuous nature, although it is true that the liberated soul cannot enjoy the sensuous pleasures as there is no physical body and its sense organs. Moreover, such pleasures even like the enjoyment of

## Purva-Mīmāṃsā

439

heaven cannot be the real liberation. If liberation consists in achieving such heavenly pleasures, then such a liberation cannot be lasting, since it is caused and all effects which are produced are evanescent. But liberation will be an everlasting attainment without a fear of relapse to the *saṃsāra*. And even besides its everlasting nature, it can be said that its everlasting character is negative because from that there is no further return to the *saṃsāra* or phenomenal life. The Mīmāṃsā idea of *mokṣa* is similar to that of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika in so far as it seeks a state of painlessness and pleasurelessness and not of *ānanda* like the Vedānta.

Kumārila does not dogmatically oppose the necessity of knowledge for the attainment of liberation. He does admit it as a necessity for attaining liberation. But he admits it on a different footing. The Nyāya Ratnākara explains that there are two kinds of self-knowledge, according to the Mīmāṃsakas, and it is supported by Kumārila also.

The two forms of self-knowledge are — (1) knowledge of soul as an entity distinct from the body; and (2) that knowledge which takes the form of worship and meditation. Kumārila says that the knowledge of the soul of the former type has not been prescribed as a necessary prerequisite of liberation. It is not absolutely necessary to have the direct perception of the soul or the self-realization of the former type to reach the final end of life. But the latter variety of self-knowledge has been

prescribed as a necessary prerequisite of liberation by the scriptures. The knowledge that takes the form of worship and meditation leads to liberation. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā stresses therefore, the need of learning the methods of right worship and meditation which are taught by it into details. The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā gives instructions into details as regards the methods of sacrifices, worship and meditation. It gives also supreme importance to the potency possessed by the words of the mantras. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa says—“As for the knowledge of the Soul, it is the both Kratvartha (कृतवर्थ)—helpful to the sacrifice and Puruṣārtha (पुरुषार्थ)—helpful to man; in as much as, unless one knows the Soul, he cannot undertake the performance of a sacrifice which is prescribed. We find such Vedic texts as—‘The Soul free from evil, is to be after, etc., . . .’ which lay down the knowing of the Soul as to be acquired through reflection, etc., . . . and as leading to both kinds of results—Happiness and Liberation. Then again, there is the text—“He obtains all desires and passes beyond all sorrows”; which speaks of all the eight mystic Perfections (of Yoga) accruing to the person knowing the Soul; and then lastly there is the text “Passing his life thus, he reaches the regions of Brahman and from there never returns” which directly speaks of liberation (as resulting from Soul-knowledge).”<sup>1</sup>

In general it can be said that the Mīmāṃsakas

<sup>1</sup> *Tantravārtika*, p. 321. Under Sutra 1.3. Adhikaraṇa 9. (English Tr.).



from Jaimini to Kumārila and their followers did not believe in God as the ultimate creator of the world or as the controller and supervisor of the world. Śābaraswāmī did not accept the existence of God for it was not necessary and it would have challenged the supremacy of the words of the Vedic mantras. The Mīmāṃsakas were very eager to maintain the supremacy of the Vedic hymns over all other things. They did not find it logically necessary to believe in such ultimate agency as God; Śābara maintained that belief in God is only through tradition and convention; there is no philosophical ground to it. Even Prabhākara believes like Śābara that God is unnecessary, and words of the Vedic hymns are self-sufficient. They can exist by themselves; they do not require any originator nor any support. He also believes that the words possess enough power to enable an individual to reach the heaven when he performs the prescribed sacrifices with genuine faith in them. The Mīmāṃsā system is not in favour of believing in God as the ultimate originator or creator of the world. The Naiyāyikas believe in God as the ultramundane supervisor of the workings of the dharma and adharma. The problem is how God is connected with his control over the dharma and adharma. The control cannot be combined with God by means of conjunction (संयोग) because conjunction becomes possible only between two independent substances, and dharma and adharma are not substances, but are only qualities. Nor can it be related to God by means of inherence (समवाय) as dharma and adharma

inhere in other souls, and hence they cannot inhere in God.

It is, however, true that the capacity of guidance and supervision cannot exist in the atoms or particles as they are unintelligent. Guidance or supervision necessarily implies some kind of intellectual manipulation of relations of the things of the world. Similarly, individual souls are powerless to guide and supervise the working of the whole world. Prabhākara does not find any necessity for there being any originator of the world since, he looks upon the universe as a continuous process which has incessant internal change in it but which has no beginning and no end. Everything is causally related in an orderly fashion, and the universe works systematically with the age-long laws of nature. He does not think that there is any necessity for the interference of an ultramundane agency to run the universe. The orderliness of the world is due to the mechanical rigidity of the operation of the principle of adṛṣṭa, which is supposed to be the ultimate determiner and regulator of the world-affairs. Therefore, the necessity of the existence of God does not arise. It is difficult to conceive that the atoms act by God's will, since we find that the movements of the atoms are controlled by the individual souls. Kumārila also critically examines the problem of God and sees no reason for admitting the existence of God. He examines the various grounds on which God's existence is proved and finds that none of them is conclusive and convincing.

## CHAPTER IX

### VEDĀNTA (SĀṂKARA)

The Advaita Vedānta system of Sāṁkara has been a very renowned and powerful school of philosophy in the post-Buddhist period. The onslaught of Buddhism on Hinduism was great and Hinduism based upon the Śruti was facing a critical position. Sāṁkara, a disciple of Gauḍapādācārya, happened to be born in the ninth century and he constructed a new system of philosophy based upon the Veda and Upaniṣadas, which could meet the challenge of Buddhism. Sāṁkara assimilated some features of Buddhism and reconciled them with the Upaniṣadic thought. He counteracted the influence of Buddhism by admitting their important features and at the same time by refuting them on rational grounds. Sāṁkara concluded in his system that 'the world is unreal' but he did not stop there; he further asserted that the Brahman or the Absolute alone is real, everything else is unreal or illusory. Buddhism ends in completely denying reality to the world and leaves nothing behind which survives; therefore, it is negative and nihilistic in character. But although Sāṁkara denies reality to the world his philosophy ends in the affirmation of the Brahman which exists

eternally. It is without beginning and end. By admitting the unreality of the world with Buddhism Śaṅkara took the weapon out of the hands of the Buddhists and made it blunt; but proceeding further he ended his philosophy by affirming the existence of the everlasting Brahman which made his philosophy not nihilistic but a positive one. For denying existence to the changing world Śaṅkara was condemned by his opponents as "The Buddha in disguise" (प्रच्छन्न बुद्ध).

Śaṅkara has thought independently though he was guided by Gauḍapāda in the early period of his life. Śaṅkara's philosophy is a critical philosophy as it is subsequent in time to the earlier systems. Śaṅkara has not devised something which is absolutely novel and original. He has written commentaries on the Brahma Sūtras and the main Upaniṣads, which he has interpreted from his own point of view, and reconciled all of them in a logically harmonious system. He has supported his arguments with the help of the Śruti and criticised by the other prevalent and the preceding systems of philosophy from his point of view. He has not expounded his view separately; but his view is automatically expounded in his various commentaries. A consistent system emerges from his commentaries. He has not simply repeated the Upaniṣadic thoughts as some opponents of his say; but he has logically examined the contentions of all the main philosophical systems that preceded him and were prevalent at that time, and has shown a possibility of reconciling

the various texts of the Upaniṣads and of interpreting the Brahma Sūtras in such a way, that the other systems can be satisfactorily refuted, and that a system can be constructed. S'āṅkara had the originality of interpreting the Sūtras and the Upaniṣads in a logically harmonious way. As George Thibaut says in his Introduction to his English translation of *Śāṅkara-Bhāṣya*—"It has been said before that the task of reducing the teaching of the whole of the Upaniṣads to a system consistent and free from contradictions is an intrinsically impossible one. But the task being given once, we are quite ready to admit that S'āṅkara's system is most probably the best which can be devised."<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara has been successful in logically reconciling the various incompatible views and steering through such a wild mass of the various opinions and views. His philosophy certainly contains elements of philosophical insight, rigorous logicity and originality. He has boldly made his statements to which he is logically driven. Though a supporter of the S'rutis he never dogmatically adhered to them; on the contrary, as against the Vedic ritualism and sacrificialism he has stuck to Jñāna-Yoga by which he contends that mokṣa can be attained by knowledge of the Self.

The philosophy of S'āṅkara is described as Advaitism, which means that the ultimate Reality

<sup>1</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut G.). Introduction page CXXII, Sacred Books of the East Series, Volume XXXIV, Edited by Max Müller.

is single, or rather it is that which has no second. According to S'aṅkara, the ultimate reality is only one and that is the Absolute—the Brahman. He does not believe like the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika in the plurality of ultimate real substances, nor does he believe in the dual reality like the Sāṃkhya. He reduces the bewildering variety of things to one final entity which is known as the Brahman. According to S'aṅkara, Brahman is the first and the last thing of the world. If Realities are many, then difficulties of their interrelations arise, and they too in their turn require some superior entity to regulate and control their interrelations. If there are two ultimate realities like the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti, then again their interrelations and positions have to be explained. The word 'Brahman' is derived from the root 'Bṛh' to grow. That which grows or extends so much that it embraces the whole of the existence in all times. Brahman is thus the only substratum and root-cause of all the things of the past, the present and the future. All things are born out of it, they exist or subsist in it and by it, and ultimately return to it at the end. It is the supreme and unchanging principle of existence which acts as the final abode and support of all things and phenomena that can be imagined in all the times. It embraces the whole universe in all the times. It is like the 'plenum of Being' of Parmenides. Nothing that has existence can exist outside the Brahman.

This very Brahman, the single or identical final Reality is known as the Ātman or Self by

S'aṃkara. S'aṃkara accepts fully the truth of the Upaniṣadic saying "All this is Ātman", "I am the Brahman", "The Soul is Brahman"<sup>1</sup> S'aṃkara identifies the soul with Brahman, "The Self is the Brahman."<sup>2</sup> The Ātman is nothing else or different but it is the Brahman itself. The Ātman or Self is the innermost reality or the Self of everything. It is the essence of everything material and immaterial that exists. It is all-pervasive, and therefore, infinite. It is without bounds or limitations. It is eternal, i.e., unborn and undying. It is not created, and hence, it is imperishable. It is pure sentience or consciousness. It is eternal (नित्य), pure (शुद्ध), sentience (बुद्ध) and free (मुक्त). It is free from every kind of change or modification (विकार). It exists from the beginning and will exist for all the times to come. It cannot be touched by time because it is beyond temporal determinations. It is existent in everything and still above all; it is both immanent and transcendent. It is not material or jada but it is sentient and also full of bliss or ānanda. Hence it is characterised as the existence (सत्), sentience (चित्) and bliss (आनन्द). It is the perfection of everything and is free from any kind of determination. It is one whole and continuous. It is devoid of parts and is therefore indivisible and everywhere alike (अेकरस). It is beyond all dualities of good and bad, real and unreal, now and then, here and there and is free from the

<sup>1</sup> Brh. Up. 14/10 and 2.5.19.

सर्वं खल्वयमात्मा । अहं ब्रह्मास्मि । अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

<sup>2</sup> S'aṃkara : *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* (Nirṇaya Sagar Edition).

विज्ञासाधिकरण, सूत्र I. आत्मा च ब्रह्म.

relativity of the world. It is immutable (अविनाशी and अविकारी). It is the basis of all. All contradictions dissolve in it, and therefore it acts as the ultimate source, support and resort of all the things of the world. It is immortal and is constituted of pure bliss (ānanda), and therefore, pain and suffering can never affect it. It is the witness of all the changes that go on in the world, but it is not the least deceived by the world. It is supersensuous because it cannot be perceived by the sense organs.

Such is the Ātman according to S'aṅkara. S'aṅkara further holds that this Ātman or Brahman alone is real and all other phenomenal things as compared with it are unreal or illusory. The Brahman alone is real for, it is free from contradictions in all the times. It cannot be falsified or contradicted in all the three times, the past, the present, the future (त्रिकालावहित). All other things of longer and shorter durations can be falsified or contradicted. They, being perishable, come to the termination of their life and hence, cannot remain the same for all the times. The Brahman is imperishable or immortal, therefore, it can never be falsified by any other thing; and moreover, there exists no second to it. It is what exists in itself and for itself. As the things of the changing world are not trikalābādhitā or free from contradiction they are not real; they are unreal as compared with the only real ultimate reality, the Brahman. All change is illusory and as worldly life is changing, it is unreal. S'aṅkara calls the world or phenomenal life unreal (अव्यभिचारी).



He further holds that nothing exists in reality. All that we believe to exist is simply an appearance. It appears to exist but it does not exist in reality. All is only an appearance (Māyā); the appearance that has no existence at all. What appears through the appearances is the Brahman. The appearance of the world is due to adhyāsa (अध्यास) or superimposition, according to S'āṅkara. Superimposition (adhyāsa) consists in wrongly ascribing attributes of other things to a thing when they do not really belong to it. S'āṅkara describes the superimposition as follows. He first considers various views about it and concludes—"But all these definitions agree in so far as they represent superimposition as the apparent presentation of the attributes of one thing in another thing."<sup>1</sup> He further holds that the whole world is an outcome of adhyāsa or superimposition on the Brahman. The Brahman or Ātman remains what it is for ever; it never becomes, it simply is. All the changes which we perceive do not belong to the Brahman as it is the same for all times and never changes. The changes of the world are falsely ascribed to the Brahman by way of superimposition. Superimposition thus, consists in a false estimation of the Brahman. The moment the real nature of the Self comes to be known, wrong ideas about it melt away as unreal things which are caused by superimposition. S'āṅkara further holds that the whole world is caused by the numerous adjuncts

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras (Tr. Thibaut), Vol. 1.1.1, p. 5.

(उपाधि), which are superimposed upon the real Brahman by nescience or avidyā. The same Brahman appears in various forms due to the variety of adjuncts in which it appears. Māyā (माया) is the force which causes such false impressions of things. The Brahman appears as the world due to Māyā which in turn causes deception. All the particular attributes which the objects of the world possess are caused by the adjuncts (upādhis) and they never stick to the Brahman on which they are wrongly superimposed. The Brahman being immaterial, nothing sticks to it. It is eternally pure. No action ever belongs to it for it is immobile. All attributes involving action cannot be ascribed to the Brahman; doership and experiences thus, do not belong to the Brahman itself. They are simply adjuncts of the Brahman and through them the Brahman appears as the doer and enjoyer. Just as the rays of the sun while passing through glass or water seem to bend, but they never bend in actuality; so also the Brahman appears in many forms, but never assumes the forms. Thus the whole world or phenomenal existence is really nothing; it simply appears, and hence, it is only an illusion which is caused by the superimposition of various adjuncts on it. The world is real but only on the phenomenal plane (व्यावहारिक सत्ता). It is real to those who are governed by nescience or avidyā and to those who have not properly realised the real nature of the Brahman, which is beyond all these worldly things which are only adjuncts of the Brahman. One who has the real knowledge of the Brahman or

Ātman becomes immune to the deceptions of the world as he occupies the transcendent position and to him the whole changeful panorama of the world appears only an illusion; it is like a dream to him. So long as one is asleep and identifies himself with the dreams he becomes happy or unhappy by the events that he sees in the dreams; but when he awakens, he finds that the dreams have already disappeared. Similar is the case of person who attains the highest knowledge of the soul. When he reaches the final transcendental state (पारमार्थिक सत्ता) he realises that he, i.e., the Brahman alone is real, and everything else which is changing and transient is only illusory or apparent, and that in reality it does not exist at all. The previous knowledge of its existence was a result of ignorance. But the world is illusory to him and only to him who rises beyond all the change and relativity of the world and completely forgets his own narrow individual existence which is caused by adjuncts and has become one with the infinite Brahman. To one who has not attained such an experience and knowledge the world with its bewildering variety is as true as to an ordinary man. S'āṅkara does not as such make the world unreal or मिथ्या; the world is mithyā in a definite sense. It is not unreal to each and any man but it is unreal only to the knower of the Brahman (ब्रह्मविद्) who has himself become the Brahman. One who rises beyond the earthly existence of change and relativity becomes eternally free from the earthly pleasurable and painful experiences. As he enters into identity with the Brahman or which he himself is, becomes

full of bliss (आनन्द) which is the nature of the Brahman.

Saṅkara holds that the Ātman is the innermost reality of every person. It is that because of which one has the sense of one's egohood or 'I'ness. Saṅkara thus states that the innermost conscious nature of a person that appropriates various experiences to himself and experiences them is the soul of that person. One knows his soul in his experience of 'I'. The soul reveals itself to every person as his 'I' (अहंप्रत्यय). It is the knower and receiver of all experiences. It is the subject of the experiences that one has. All other things are the objects of this subject which is the soul. One intuitively knows his own soul which cannot be understood in terms of any other thing but itself. The contrast between the 'Ihood' and 'Thouhood' is perfect and they are opposed to each other like light and darkness;<sup>1</sup> they can never mutually replace each other. The soul of oneself shines in him as a light which cannot be denied by him. As Saṅkara says—"Hence it can be neither be denied nor be represented as the mere complement of injunctions; for of that very person who might deny it is the Self. And as it is the Self of all, it can neither be striven after nor avoided. The soul is imperishable."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the soul cannot

<sup>1</sup> Saṅkara : *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*. (Sanskrit) — Samanvayādhyaḥ — 1.

युष्मदस्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरयोः विषयविषयिणोः तमप्रकाशवत्  
विरुद्धस्वभावयोः ।

<sup>2</sup> Saṅkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), Vol. I, 1.1.4, p. 37.

be denied by any body; in the denier that which denies is itself the soul. Nobody can ever separate himself from it. It is ever present in all beings. Thus S'āṃkara establishes his statement that the soul is present not only everywhere but in every person, it reveals to him as his 'I' which he can never escape. It is inseparably associated with one's conscious life. It is that principle in each which appropriates to itself objects or experiences as its own or as 'my' and 'mine'. A thing is what it is only in virtue of this intrinsic principle in it. It is the substratum of one's self-consciousness. It is inalienably present in an individual's conscious experiences. If it is not explicitly present; it is implicitly present as the subjective revealer of the conscious experiences which are its objects.

S'āṃkara further states that the soul is constituted of eternal intelligence (Cit). In contrast with the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika systems S'āṃkara holds that the soul is self-shining or self-illuminating (स्वयंप्रकाश). S'āṃkara gives an appropriate account of it in the following passage—"To this we reply that the Soul is of eternal intelligence (नित्य चैतन्य), for that very reason that it is not a product but nothing else but the unmodified highest Brahman which, owing to the contact with its limiting adjuncts, appears as individual soul... The absence of actual intelligence is due to the absence of objects, not to the absence of intelligence; just as the light pervading space is not apparent owing to the absence of

things to be illumined, not to the absence of its own nature."<sup>1</sup> The Nyāya Vaiśeṣika holds that consciousness or intelligence is produced in the soul as an adventitious quality when it is joined to the internal organ (the mind). But S'aṃkara in reply says, as mentioned above, that the intelligence is ever present in the nature of the soul itself; but due to the adjunct through which it appears, it appears to produce consciousness sometimes. The soul is constituted, in its essential nature, of eternal consciousness or intelligence.

The soul is permanent and imperishable, according to S'aṃkara. He argues as against the Buddhists that the soul cannot be denied nor can it be momentary.<sup>2</sup> S'aṃkara points out against the universal impermanence the impossibility of release or Mokṣa if there were no abiding or permanent entity like the soul. The sufferer alone will attain liberation and the sufferer alone will seek nirvāṇa. It implies that, that which suffers must continue to exist until liberation is attained, and it would be against the Buddhist tenet of universal impermanence. Again, he criticises the possibility of causality of two succeeding moments; for the effect-moment appears when the cause moment has already vanished. The former momentary existence which has ceased to be and has entered into the state of non-existence cannot be the cause of

<sup>1</sup> *S'aṃkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), 2·3·18, Vol. II, pp. 34, 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2·2·18, Vol. I, p. 403.

the later momentary existence. How can negation serve as a cause of some positive thing? Moreover, as S'āṅkara points out 'we cannot conceive the origination of an effect which is not imbued with the nature of the cause; and to assume that the nature of the cause does continue to exist in the effect is impossible as it will contradict the Buddhist impermanence. Again the words 'origination' and 'cessation' will have no meaning if every existence is only momentary. In that case either the origination and cessation will be identified or the thing which has come into existence will be connected with three moments, viz., the initial, the intermediate and the final one; and it is against the doctrine of impermanence. If then the alternative that origination and cessation are altogether different is held to be true, it would lead to the conclusion that the thing being entirely disconnected with origination and cessation, will be everlasting. Thus, they will lead to the opposite conclusion and hence the Buddhist doctrine of universal impermanence is untenable.<sup>1</sup> According to S'āṅkara, therefore, the soul is immortal, and imperishable.

If again, the soul is not imperishable the doctrine of Karma will be nullified; because, according to the doctrine of Karma, actions of persons must bear their rewards. The rewards of actions must be received and experienced by the doer of the actions. An objection can further be raised that if the soul

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*Sa'mkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), 2.2.20, Vol. I, p. 409.

were the same or immortal it cannot be born and it cannot die. The words like 'birth' and 'death' cannot be applied to it. S'āṃkara too admits the inadequacy of the words like 'birth' and 'death' and says that the words 'birth' and 'death' have reference to the conjunction with and separation from a body merely; he further quotes a statement from the *Bṛh. Upaniṣad* which says—"On being born that person assuming his body, etc., when he passes out (of the body) and dies, etc. (Bṛh. Up. IV, 3·8)."<sup>1</sup> Thus, there must be an enduring and abiding entity which remains eternal in the chain of successive births so that it would be the sufferer of pain, doer of actions, reaper of the rewards of actions and finally the attainer of liberation. The bound soul alone will be liberated. S'āṃkara thus, logically concludes the necessity of the soul's being imperishable by explaining the births of the individual souls due to the adjuncts with which it comes to be associated at various times.

There is only one Self for all and it is the unborn, undecaying, immortal and fearless Brahman itself. S'āṃkara differs from all others in holding that the ultimate Reality is only one or unitary without a second (Advaita), and that the ultimate one Reality is the Brahman or the Ātman. The plurality of souls is unreal to the Supreme Self. The Brahman or the Supreme Self which is the soul of all, does not get itself modified into the individual

<sup>1</sup> *S'āṃkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. (Tr. Thibaut), 2·3·16. Vol. II, p. 29.



souls as Rāmānuja holds. S'āṅkara explains the plurality of the individual souls by means of the adjuncts like the mind, the intellect, the ahaṁkāra, etc. He maintains "It is not, we reply, in itself divided; for scripture declares that there is one God hidden in all things (S'veta. Up., VI. 11). It only appears divided owing to its limiting adjuncts, such as the mind and so on, just as ether appears divided by its connexion with jars and the like.. What is meant there, is only the dissolution of the limiting adjuncts of the Self, not the dissolution of the Self itself."<sup>1</sup> The plurality of the individual souls is thus caused by the various limiting adjuncts like mind, intellect, etc., of an individual, and the individual soul ceases to be a separate existence with the disappearance of the limiting adjuncts. It is indivisible. It is partless and hence, immaterial. The multiplicity of the souls is an illusion; the final unity alone is real.

S'āṅkara critically considers the various possible sizes of the soul and then concludes that the soul cannot have any particular finite size. The soul is, according to him, infinite, all-pervasive and omnipresent. If the soul is of the size of an atom and if it emits knowledge out of it as its quality, the quality (knowledge) will remain restricted only to the space of the atom; it cannot spread outside it; as the quality and the substance remain in the same place. Similarly if the soul were of atomic size, it could not experience the various sensations extending

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras (Tr. Thibaut), 2.3.17, Vol. II, p. 32.

over the whole body for, the soul would then be localised in some part of the body due to its atomicity. If again intelligence of the soul pervades the whole body, the soul cannot be atomic; since intelligence constitutes the proper nature of it, just as heat and light constitute the essential nature of fire. The qualities cannot be separated from the objects whose qualities they are. For the above mentioned difficulties the soul cannot be atomic.<sup>1</sup> S'amkara further points out that the soul cannot have the size of the body which it occupies as the Jainas hold, for, then the same soul would be as big as an elephant and as small as an ant since, it fills completely the bodies of these animals, and it would then involve contradictions. In that case the soul would be changing. If the soul is continually being repleted and depleted by the successive addition and withdrawal of parts, it, of course, follows that it is non-permanent like the skin and similar substances.<sup>2</sup> Thus, due to its changeability the soul would be impermanent. S'amkara says—"Now this is appropriate only in the case of the atomicity of the soul being metaphysical while its infinity is real; for both statements cannot be taken in their primary sense, at the same time. . . Hence, the statement about aṇutva (smallness, subtlety) has to be understood as referring either to the difficulty of knowing the soul, or else to its limiting adjuncts."<sup>3</sup> By disproving the possibility of

<sup>1</sup> S'amkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras (Tr. Thibaut), 2·3·29, Vol. II, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2·3·35 (Tr.), Vol. I, p. 432.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2·3·29 (Tr.), Vol. II, p. 44.

the soul's having the atomic size or the size of the body S'āṅkara is naturally driven further to the last alternative which states that the soul is all-pervading and infinite. It being all-pervading, it can both be atomic and infinite at the same time without any contradiction. The same Supreme Self appears to assume various forms of varying magnitudes due to the adjuncts with which it is associated. S'āṅkara says—"As light, ether, the sun and so on appear differentiated as it were through their objects such as figures, vessels, water and so on which constitute limiting adjuncts, while in reality they preserve their essential non-differentiatedness; so the distinction of different Selfs is due to limiting adjuncts only, while the unity of all selfs is natural and original."<sup>1</sup>

Further, S'āṅkara holds that the real Self or the Brahman is neither the doer (kartṛ) of actions nor the (bhokṛ), the enjoyer of the rewards of the actions. Doership and enjoyership are falsely attributed to it. In fact, they belong to the empirical or individual soul, which has existence and reality on the phenomenal plane. If the soul be held to be the doer of actions certain absurdities will follow. If the doership is a real and essential property of the soul, then the soul would ever remain active and would always be involved in actions with the result that it will then never become free; moreover, activity is painful in character, therefore, the soul would suffer

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<sup>1</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), 3. 2. 25, Vol. II, p. 172.

afflictions and it would thus lose its purity and eternal bliss. As S'āṅkara says if being an agent belongs to the soul's nature, it can never free itself from it—no more can fire divest itself of heat, and as long as man has not freed himself from activity, he cannot obtain his highest end, since activity is essentially painful. Scripture says that liberation results from the instruction about the eternally pure, intelligent, free self. The soul cannot remain eternally pure and free if agentship becomes a part of its essential nature. S'āṅkara,—therefore,—holds that the soul appears to be an agent because the attributes of agentship which are adjuncts are superimposed upon it; it does not form part of its proper nature.<sup>1</sup> The soul is partless; it does not possess limbs and without limbs and instruments action is impossible as in the case of a carpenter.

Just as the soul is not an agent or doer of actions, similarly it is not also the enjoyer (bhoktr) of the results of actions. Enjoyership of actions does not belong to the soul for the soul possesses no sense organs to enjoy the things or the fruits of actions. As it is not the doer it cannot be the enjoyer also. The soul is supposed to possess qualities like desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, etc. .... which form the essential characteristics of the soul on

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), 2. 3. 40, Vol. II, p. 53.

न स्वाभाविकं कर्तृत्वं आत्मनः संभवति,  
अनिर्मीक्षप्रसंगात्.....तस्मात् उपाधिष्वर्माभ्यासेन एव  
आत्मनः कर्तृत्वं न स्वाभाविकम् ।

the phenomenal plane, so long as it is implicated in the transmigratory existence. But these qualities are again the results of the adjuncts like the mind and buddhi which qualify the soul.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the whole empirical life of the soul which is mainly characterised by activity, experience and enjoyment of pleasure and pain is itself apparent and illusory. In fact the soul exists only as caused by the adjuncts like the mind and buddhi. The empirical soul has no real existence of its own. The individual soul is only an appearance of the transcendental Self that appears through some adjuncts that cling to it. As Mahendranath Sircar describes the empirical soul or the Ego — “The ego is a scientific and a pragmatic reality. It has a psychological and epistemological ideality, but no transcendent reality, a psychological continuity, but no metaphysical unity.”<sup>2</sup> The Ātman which is pure and boundless becomes limited in its powers and size. As Paul Deussen points out, the following qualities characterise the soul in the state of saṁsāra. (1) The soul is not all-pervading and omnipresent but dwells in the heart, its size being limited to that of the Manas. (2) It is not also omniscient and omnipotent due to the limiting adjuncts which encircle it; but they remain latent in it. (3) The soul becomes an agent (कर्तृ) and enjoyer

<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras (Tr. Thibaut), 2.3.29, Vol. II, p. 44.

बुद्ध्युपाधिर्वर्माध्यासनिमित्तं हि कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वादिलक्षणं

संसारित्वमकर्तृभोक्तृत्वासंसारिणो नित्यमुक्तस्य सत आत्मनः ।

<sup>2</sup> Sircar Mahendranath: *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, p. 123.

(भोक्तृ) due to its connection with the Upādhis. It is entangled in the saṁsāra (संसार) due to these qualities produced by the Upādhis. He therefore remarks—  
 “The beginningless and endless saṁsāra depends only on the soul’s true nature hidden from it by the Upādhis due to Avidyā. They make Brahman the individual, active and enjoying soul....”<sup>1</sup> S’aṁkara makes a categorical statement about it as follows—“To the highest Self which is eternally pure, intelligent and free, which is never changing, one only, not in contact with anything, devoid of form, the opposite characteristics of the individual soul are erroneously ascribed; just as ignorant men ascribe blue colour to the colourless ether.”<sup>2</sup>

The Brahman or the Ātman is the underlying reality of every thing. The duality of the knowing subject and the objects known is valid only on the phenomenal plane. The ultimate reality cannot be either of the two; it cannot take either of the two sides and cannot reject the other. It being the foundation, substratum and source of all it can reject nothing which exists. It embraces every form of existence whether subject or object. It itself appears sometimes as the subject when encircled by certain peculiar adjuncts like the senses, the mind and the buddhi, and appears as the object when it possesses certain perceptible qualities. It is in all the infinite number of things and still shares the property of none of

<sup>1</sup> Deussen Paul: *The System of Vedānta*, p. 468.

<sup>2</sup> S’aṁkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras* (Tr. Thibaut), 1.3.19, Vol. I, p. 190.

them particularly. As it is all, it is no one particular thing and does not possess any particular quality. As it is the same in all without any intrinsic difference or distinction, it is the highest common factor of all. It is the universal element in all and has no particular attribute. Though it is in all and though it is the essential nature of all, it is not exhausted by all the particulars. It is immanent in all and still transcends them. Such is the ultimate reality or Brahman or Self. It transcends all dualities and is unique in character. It is peculiar by itself and is similar to nothing else, for there is no second to it. It is also described as the eternal witness or the eternal subject of the whole existence. But though it is described as the subject it is not exclusively separated from the object of its knowledge. It is a synthetic unity of subject and object in itself. It is both at once. It is exclusively neither of them. It is described as the 'subject' or sākṣin (साक्षी) simply because it is a mass of pure intelligence or consciousness (ज्ञानमयः) without any internal distinction. It is the principle of existence (सत्) and awareness or consciousness (चित्) of its existence and is constituted of everlasting bliss (आनन्द). Not only is it a homogeneous unity of thought and existence, but it is complete homogeneity characterised by existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). In reality it is in itself without any particular quality. It is pure sentience or consciousness and hence, it is termed as the subject; but it is an objectless subject. Its subjectivity is not dependent upon external

objects. Its subjectivity is inherent in it. Subjectivity is originally with it as it is perfect and self-sufficient. Its subjectivity is independent of any other external object and hence, it is described as self-illuminating or self-shining (स्वयंप्रकाश or स्वयंज्योतिः). It is the eternal subject in the sense that it is the fundamental presupposition of all awareness and consciousness. S'aṅkara holds that the Self is the fundamental source and substratum of all things. It is the first prerequisite or fundamental presupposition of all knowledge and existence. Even the denier of it cannot escape it since he himself and his mind or intellect that denies it, is itself dependent upon it. As A. C. Mukerji says—"It may well be imagined that consciousness, though prior to matter in the order of knowledge, is posterior to matter in the order of existence...."<sup>1</sup> Epistemologically the knowing soul is prior to the objects of knowledge since it reveals the objects and thus makes it known; however, ontologically or in the order of existence it manifests itself in an explicit form only through the living physical body. Its manifestation depends upon the medium of the physical body and mind, but it does not therefore, mean at all that it is produced by the physical body. On the contrary, it may be said that it uses the physical body as its medium of expression. The Self or Ātman which is the same as the Brahman according to S'aṅkara is not exactly similar to the 'Transcendental Self' of Kant, because the former leaves nothing out of it, while

<sup>1</sup> Mukerji A. C. : *The Nature of Self*, p. 238.



the latter is differentiated from the 'Thing-in-itself' or the material substratum. They are unknowable according to Kant as the categories of understanding do not apply to them and they fail to grasp their nature.

The Self is thus logically prior to all things of the world. It is abstract and devoid of qualities. It is implied in existence and in every act of awareness and consciousness. It does not possess any objectivity and hence, it cannot be known in the objective way. It cannot be known as an object of our knowledge; it is known peculiarly only as our knowing subject or as the 'I' principle. As it is devoid of objective nature and objective characteristics it can never be known by perception; similarly it cannot be known by our mental concepts for they are constructed on the grounds of relativity and distinctions. The Brahman or the Soul transcends all relativity and distinctions and hence, the mind also is unable to know it in its conceptual forms.

The self is to be experienced only directly or immediately without the intervention of any other medium of senses, words, manas and intellect. It reveals directly to the knower. It is to be seen face to face. Just as a candle is not necessary to perceive the sun as the sun itself is self-shining, so also the soul being self-illuminating, directly reveals itself to the perceiver or knower without any intermediary. Sāṅkara says — "The individual soul is therefore called 'That whose true nature is non-manifest' merely on account of the absence of discriminative

Ā 30

knowledge, and it is called 'That whose nature has become manifest' on account of the presence of such knowledge. Manifestation or non-manifestation of its nature of a different kind are not possible, since its nature is nothing but its nature (i.e., in reality is always the same)."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the soul is incomprehensible in the ordinary sense as it is not perceptible by our sense organs and it eludes its understanding by means of the mind and the intellect. It is perceptible only in our direct and immediate contact with it. It is called the intuitive supersensible way of its knowledge. In fact, the Brahman can be known only by becoming identified with it. All the external ways of its apprehension are inadequate for its real knowledge. It consists in realising in the right way that 'I am the Brahman' (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि). The Brahman or the soul is rightly understood only when one forgets and dissolves his fictitious and narrow sense of individuality and enters into a direct and immediate communion with the eternal and all-pervading Brahman. The Brahman, which is eternal, pure, intelligence, free, omniscient, omnipresent, perfect, immutable and blissful, is our real self. It is properly known when we can have such an experience that 'I am the whole existence, that I am the Being itself.' As long as efforts are made to understand it, in any of the objective ways, or in terms of the qualities of the objects of the world, it cannot be really understood. In our usual terms of description the Brahman has to be described as 'not this' 'not this'

<sup>1</sup> *Samkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.3.19. Vol. 1, p. 187.

(नेति नेति) for it is like no worldly objects having the qualities with which we are familiar.

If the Self is everything, if it pervades all the things of the world it would follow that all the particular objects of the world, including even the individual souls (जीवात्मा) are unreal. It is necessary to go into details about the possible relation between the Brahman, the Self and the individual souls. The Muṇḍaka Up. compares the individual souls to rivers and the Supreme Self to the ocean, and says that both being constituted of water are identical in nature, but different in form, and as the river becomes one by losing itself in the ocean, so the individuals lose their entire individual separate nature by being one with the Self. Similarly the Muṇḍaka Up. (II, 1·1) compares the individual souls to the sparks (sphullinga) coming out from a blazing fire and the Self to the blazing fire, and points out that they are formed of the same nature as that of the general fire but the rivers and the sparks are not the same as the ocean or the general fire. They are different and not-different from the ocean and fire; similarly the individual souls are different and not-different from the self or the Brahman. This view is known as the Bhedaḥbhedā vāda. But S'amkara cannot support any other view but that of complete identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Self. If the soul is a part of Brahman, it cannot go to it since the whole is permanently existing in the part. The part ceases to be a part if it goes away from it or out of it. Moreover, the Brahman is partless and

hence, it cannot have any parts howsoever similar to it. The Brahman is continuous and the same everywhere. It is indivisible into parts. Similarly if the individual souls be supposed to be the effects of the Brahman it is already reached by the effect, i.e., individual souls, since, a jar made of clay cannot exist apart from clay of which it is made. Moreover, the Brahman being immutable, its entry into the *samsāra* is inconceivable. He further continues and gives full consideration to the other possible relations between the two and says that if the individual souls are different from the Brahman or the Supreme Self it would be either atomic or of some intervening size or infinite. If it is of atomic size the fact of sensation extending over the whole body cannot be accounted for; if it is of some middling extent it cannot be permanent, and if it is infinite or omnipresent it cannot go anywhere. The proposition "Thou art that" would be futile and meaningless if the two were not completely identical. Thus, the individual souls cannot be related to the Supreme Self either as its parts or its effects. Moreover, according to these theories, the soul could never attain final liberation since the world or the *samsāra* condition is endless. Thus, it would have to be admitted that the individual souls are the Self or Brahman itself, neither less nor more. Both are the same. The individual souls when viewed separately as limited are illusory. They are the Brahman itself appearing in certain forms (नामरूप) due to the adjuncts

with which it happens to be associated.<sup>1</sup> The Jiva is Brahman itself; it is not different from it.

Another objection is raised against their identity. It is asked if the individual souls are one with the Supreme Self or parts of it, why should its knowledge and lordship be hidden? S'āṅkara says that the concealment of the Self's knowledge and lordship is due to its being joined to a body, the sense organs, mind, buddhi, sense objects and sensations. Moreover, as he says "as the heat and light of the fire are hidden as long as the fire is still hidden in the wood from which it will be produced by friction, or as long as it is covered by ashes; so in consequence of the self being connected with limiting adjuncts in the form of a body, etc., . . . founded on name and form as presented by Nescience, its knowledge and lordship remain hidden as long as it is possessed by the erroneous notion of not being distinct from those adjuncts."<sup>2</sup> Had the soul possessed the power of the Supreme Self the individual souls would have been able to create objects like chariot that they see in their dreams from their mere wishes.

According to the Advaita Vedānta, the individual soul does not possess the final or the noumenal reality; it possesses only the phenomenal reality. It lasts only as long as it is associated with the buddhi,

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 4.3.14, Vol. II, p. 397.

जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3.2.6, Vol. II, p. 140.

mind or the antahkārṇa. S'āṅkara says — "And as long as its connexion with the buddhi, its limiting adjunct lasts, so long the individual soul remains individual soul, implicated in transmigratory existence. In reality, however, there is no individual soul but in so far as it is fictitiously hypostatized by the buddhi, its limiting adjunct. Moreover, the connexion of the self with the buddhi, its limiting adjunct depends on wrong knowledge, and wrong knowledge cannot cease except through perfect knowledge; hence, as long as there does not rise the cognition of Brahman being the Universal Self, so long the connexion of the soul with the buddhi and its other limiting adjuncts does not come to an end."<sup>1</sup> The individuality of the particular soul is caused by its conjunction with a limiting adjunct called the mind or the antahkārṇa. S'āṅkara states very clearly that — "there is no reality in such thing as an individual soul absolutely different from Brahman, but Brahman in so far as it differentiates itself through the mind (buddhi) and other limiting conditions, is called individual soul, an agent enjoyer."<sup>2</sup> S'āṅkara further compares the Higher Self and the individual soul with the snake and its coil and explains their real identity and apparent difference.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.30, Vol. II, p. 47.

यावत् एव च अयं बुद्धि-उपाधिसंबंधः तावत् जीवस्य जीवत्वं संसारित्वं च ।  
परमार्थतः तु न जीवः नामबुद्धि-उपाधिसंबंधपरिकल्पितस्वरूपव्यतिरेकेण अस्ति ।

<sup>2</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.31, Vol. I, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 3.2.27, Vol. II, p. 174.

Though the ultimate consciousness is one, the actual mechanism of knowledge is very complex and elaborate. Vācaspati calls the mind as the internal organ of knowledge. The internal organ is also known as the अन्तःकरण. It attends to the objects, receives impressions and arranges them systematically. The internal organ undergoes modifications by assuming different forms which reveal the objects of knowledge. Such modifications are known as the vṛttis. The same internal organ discharges various functions and due to the differences of functions it is differently called mind, intellect, selfsense and attention. S. Radhakrishnan describes it in the following way — “The one internal organ (antaḥkaraṇa) is called mind (manas) when it has the mode of indetermination; buddhi or understanding, when it has the mode of determination; self sense (ahaṁkāra) when it has the mode of self-consciousness; and attention (Citta) when it has the mode of concentration and remembrance.”<sup>1</sup>

The mind is different from the sense organs. Had it been identical with the senses, memory would have been impossible. Intellect analyses the percepts, knows the universal and the particular aspects of the percepts and forms concepts out of them. It relates various phenomena and brings system and organization to knowledge. S'amkara distinguishes the different constituents of the mechanism of knowledge in the following way — “The mind (manas) again is superior to the objects, because the relation

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 486.

of the senses and their objects is based on the mind. The intellect (Buddhi) is higher than the mind, since the objects of enjoyment are conveyed to the soul by means of the intellect. Higher than the intellect is the great Self which was represented as the lord of the chariot .... that the Self is superior to intelligence is owing to the circumstance that the enjoyer is naturally superior to the instrument of enjoyment."<sup>1</sup> The manas stretches in the three times and assumes various forms due to the variety of functions.<sup>2</sup>

S'āṅkara further holds that the real or the ultimate Self is all-pervasive and to it nothing sticks. It is eternally free and pure. It cannot be affected by the Karmas. The Karmas do not stick to it. It being all-pervasive and infinite, it is everywhere; therefore, it does not transmigrate. The Supreme Self is neither the doer nor the enjoyer and hence, it cannot have any desert. The individual soul is the doer and the enjoyer of actions in the world is finite; therefore, the individual soul or jivātmā transmigrates according to its desert. S'āṅkara says—"The Self is here said to be of the nature of the essence of the mind's (buddhi) qualities, because those qualities, such as desire, aversion, pleasure, pain and so on, constitute the essence, i.e., the principal characteristics of the Self as long as it is implicated in transmigratory existence. Apart

<sup>1</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.4.15, Vol. I, pp. 239-40.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2.4.6, Vol. II, p. 81.



from the qualities of the mind the mere Self does not exist in the Samsāra state; for the latter, owing to which the Self appears as an agent and enjoyer, is altogether due to the circumstance of the qualities of the buddhi and the other limiting adjuncts being wrongly superimposed upon the self."<sup>1</sup> Thus the Brahman or the Self according to the Advaita system is non-transmigratory; only the samsāri soul transmigrates along with some of its adjuncts. The transmigration of the Self consists in changing only the external adjuncts or upādhis with which it is covered in its earthly life. The Self, although all-pervading, is viewed as going because it enters into connexion with the buddhi and the rest of its adjuncts, just general space enters into connexion with jars and the like. <sup>2</sup> Thus, the rebirth of the Self consists not in actually being born; because it is eternal; but it consists in passing from one set of adjuncts of mind and buddhi to another new set of adjuncts of the mind and the buddhi in accordance with the results of its actions in the past life. The inner self remains the same and as if it changes its outer garments. After the dissolution of one body the soul enters into another body which is made from the various elements like earth, water, air, fire, etc., along with the impressions or saṃskāras of the actions done in the past life. It is said that the soul is accompanied by the chief vital air, the sense organs and the mind, its nescience, karma when it trans-

<sup>1</sup> S'ānikara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.29, Vol. II, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4.3.14, Vol. II, p. 402.

migrates to other new body. S'āṅkara does not believe in this. He simply remarks—"The subtle part of the elements can moreover easily be procured anywhere; for wherever a new body is to be originated they are present, and the soul's taking them with itself would therefore, be useless. Hence, we conclude that the soul when going is not enveloped by them."<sup>1</sup>

S'āṅkara admits the doctrine of Karma as a real thing but only it is real on the phenomenal plane. It is not the real principle like the Brahman. So long as one does not acquire the perfect knowledge of the Brahman (ब्रह्मज्ञान), one believes in the reality of the body, mind, intellect and the Karma, i.e., the effects of his actions. At the death of a person the gross body (देह, कार्यकारणसंघात) dissolves; it perishes along with its external sense organs and their functions which are known as the Vṛttis and are separate from them remain behind in the soul. Paul Deussen says—"Just as the soul carries with it the seed of the body itself in the form of the 'subtle body' (सूक्ष्म शरीरम्). How these subtle parts are related to the coarse elements in it is not further explained. The subtle body formed of them is material (तनुत्वम्) but transparent (स्वच्छत्वम्); therefore, it is not seen at the withdrawal of the soul. On it depends animal heat; the corpse grows cold because the subtle body has left it to accompany the soul on its wanderings along with the other organs."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the subtle body

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 3. 1. 1, Vol. II, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul: *The System of Vedānta*, p. 470.

is extremely subtle and is composed of the seventeen elements, viz., five organs of perception, five of action, five vital forms, mind and intellect. As S. Radhakrishnan says the subtle body and the vital forms persist as permanent factors of the soul until liberation, the varying part is that of Karma or Karmās'raya due to exhaustion of some past Karma and a constant addition of new one to the stock. He further says that the basis of individuality is to be found, not in the Ātman or the Upādhis, but in moral determination, which is a complex of knowledge (विद्या), works (कर्म) and experience (प्रज्ञा).<sup>1</sup> Thus, the individual soul continues to have this subtle body in order to connect one bodily life with another as long as the individual soul is under the illusion that it is separate and independent. The subtle body ceases to exist when the total stock of previous Karma is thoroughly exhausted and when no new Karma is further accumulated as the knowledge of the real Self, the Brahman, dawns upon the person. S'āṅkara, therefore, says — "Therefore the man who has once comprehended Brahman to be the Self, does not belong to this transmigratory world as he did before. He, on the other hand, who still belongs to this transmigratory world as before, has not comprehended Brahman to be the Self the embodiedness of the Self is (not real but) caused by wrong conception, and hence the person who has reached true knowledge is free from his body even while still alive."<sup>2</sup> The individual

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 597.

<sup>2</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1-1-4, p. 43.

remains in bondage as long as the Karma does not come to an end, and so long as an individual is in bondage the subtle body exists as it holds the Karma in it.

S'āṅkara maintains that bondage is caused by Nescience or ignorance (avidyā), i.e., wrong conception about the soul. Nescience consists in superimposing upon the soul those attributes which do not belong to it. It consists in concealing the real nature of the Brahman and in showing it to be something else. S'āṅkara says—“This superimposition thus defined, learned men consider to be Nescience (avidyā), and the ascertainment of the true nature of that which is (the Self) by means of the discrimination of that (which is superimposed upon the Self), they call knowledge (vidyā).”<sup>1</sup> He makes his idea of nescience more clear in the following passage—“The conception that the body and other things contained in the sphere of the Not-Self are our Self, constitutes Nescience; from it there spring desires with regard to whatever promotes the well-being of the body on so on, and aversion with regard to whatever tends to injure it; there further arise fear and confusion when we observe anything threatening to destroy it.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, nescience consists in ignorance of the real nature of the soul and in wrongly supposing it to be the body, the senses, the mind, the buddhi or of all other things which are other than it. Superimposition of the object over the subject

<sup>1</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Tbibaut, 1-1, Vol. I, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1-3-2, Vol. 1, p. 157.

means nescience. It consists in confusing the subject with the object and in supposing that the objects are the subject. Thus, avidyā or nescience is that which creates the sense of distinctions which actually do not exist. The sense of seeing plurality of things is perhaps inherent in all persons; it is the inherent tendency of the human mind to see things as many when in actuality, there is only one Reality. Avidyā cannot be caused by Brahman for it is immutable. To the Brahman avidyā is non-existent. It is a peculiar principle which is indefinable or indescribable; it is not real, because it can be brought to termination by right knowledge; it is not uncontradicted. It is not also unreal like the sky-lotus since we experience its actual operations when we see snake in a rope, silver instead of a shell and water-waves in desert. It has the double power of concealing (आवरण) the real nature of the thing and (विक्षेप) of distorting or perverting its vision. It is not both real and unreal and therefore, indescribable in either of the categories (अनिर्वचनीय). Avidyā is beginningless, since all persons experience it since birth and without being taught. It is perhaps inlaid in our nature of finitude to see things in certain forms and to understand them in certain limited categories. It consists in our subjective modes of understanding the world in relative forms. It is perhaps the very mode of our understanding the world in its manifoldness and with distinctions and relations. It is natural in our intellect to see things separately from one another. To one who has the

perfect knowledge of the Brahman, the distinctions and relatedness become illusory. As S.Radhakrishnan puts it—"It is not conscious dissimulation, but the unconscious tendency of the finite mind, which lives by the imperfect stands of the world.... When we see the reality of Brahman, the appearance of the world flees away. That which is proved to be an unreality by a higher experience cannot be connected with reality except through a confusion of standpoints. The appearances stand transfigured in the Absolute. If we are asked to connect the image of the snake with the reality of rope, we say that no connection is possible between what is and what is not.... When we see the rope as rope, there is an end of the matter, and we say that the rope appeared as snake. Relativity has no cause except defective insight."<sup>1</sup> Nescience thus, veils the real nature of the Brahman just as does a cloud hide the sun. Nescience thus, exists only in the absence of the knowledge of the Brahman. The planes of the two things are different and delusion is caused when the two are confused. The relative knowledge of things based upon distinctions may be true and valid only on the phenomenal plane where the trinity of the knower, the known and the knowledge necessarily exists and when knowledge becomes impossible in the absence of any one of them. But when the distinctions of the knower, the known and knowledge get transfigured into their final unity, such a knowledge becomes invalid. The analytic

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<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 575.

knowledge becomes then antagonistic to the synthetic experience of the wholeness of being. S'āṅkara says —“As soon as Brahman is indicated in this way, knowledge arising of itself discards Nescience, and this whole world of names and forms, which had been hiding Brahman from us, melts away like the imagery of a dream.”<sup>1</sup> It causes delusion and all sorts of attachments from which arise the various pairs. Avidyā is really beginningless (अनादि) and terminable (सान्त) by the right knowledge of the Brahman. The two are opposed to each other as light and darkness, and as it does not possess any specific nature it is indefinable.

S'āṅkara explains the existence of the world with the idea of Māyā (माया) which means that power which causes illusion. Māyā makes the world appear as we find it. In reality nothing exists but the Brahman. The Brahman is the universal substratum of everything. To the Brahman nothing else exists but itself. To the Brahman the world does not exist. The world is only an appearance (विवर्त) which is superimposed upon the soul by the individual finite souls. The world exists and does not exist. It does not exist because it is not everlasting, and it exists because the finite souls have its experience. The world does not exist in the Brahman; it appears to it just as we have dreams which disappear when we awaken or it appears as a snake appears on a rope. The whole world of the nāma

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānt Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 3.2.21, Vol. II, p. 163.

and rūpa is a fictitious creation of the infinite adjuncts which arise out of avidyā or nescience. S'āṅkara describes Māyā as neither real like Brahman nor unreal like the sky-flower.<sup>1</sup> Avidyā or nescience has a more subjective meaning while Māyā has an objective reference. It consists in actually producing things of various magnitudes and varieties and the jīvas are deluded by them. Like Avidyā it has the two functions of concealment of the real and the projecting the unreal. Māyā cannot be related to Brahman as there is no second to the Brahman. It cannot be related to it by means of conjunction (संयोग) because it takes place only between two independent substances or entities; but to the Brahman Māyā is non-entity.

Māyā exists as real for those who have not attained the Brahman. As S. Radhakrishnan puts it—"Māyā is the energy of Īśvara, his inherent force, by which he transforms the potential into the actual world. His Māyā which is unthinkable, transforms itself into the two modes of desire (Kāma-काम) and determination (संकल्प). It is the creative power of the eternal God, and is therefore eternal; and by means of it the supreme Lord creates the world.... It is in Īśvara even as heat is in fire. Its presence is inferred from its effects. Māyā is identified with the names and forms which, in their unevolved condition, inhere in Īśvara, and in their developed state constitute the world. In this sense it is synonymous

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on *Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.4.3, Vol. I, p. 243.



with Prakṛti.”<sup>1</sup> The God or is'vara is the Brahman but qualified by certain adjuncts like the Māyā and has personal relations with the individual souls that are devoted to him. God creates the wonderful world to delude the individual souls having finite and limited powers of cognition and who are unable to penetrate through the veil of the Māyā; but He Himself knows that it is quite unreal and unsubstantial. S'amkara quotes Gauḍapada in the following passage regarding this point—“As the magician is not at any time affected by the magical illusion produced by himself because it is unreal, so the highest self (Paramātmā) is not affected by the world-illusion. And as one dreaming person is not affected by the illusory visions of his dreams because they do not accompany the waking state and the state of dreamless sleep; so the one permanent witness of the three states (viz. the highest self which is one unchanging witness of the creation, subsistence and reabsorption of the world) is not touched by the mutually exclusive states. For that the highest Self appears in those three states, is a mere illusion, not more substantial than the snake for which the rope is mistaken in the twilight.”<sup>2</sup> Thus Māyā is created out of the imagination and unique power of God, but it does not delude Him as He himself is

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 572.

<sup>2</sup> *S'amkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 2.1.9. Vol. I, p. 312.

यथा स्वयं प्रसारितया मायया मायावी त्रिष्वपि कालेषु न संस्पृश्यते,  
अवस्तुत्वाद्, एवं परमात्माऽपि संसारमायया न संस्पृश्यत इति ।

its creator and knows its insubstantiality. It operates like the Prakṛti of the Sāṃkhyas and comes to an end when the knowledge of the Brahman dawns upon the soul.

S'āṃkara being a strict Monist and Absolutist, does not admit the existence of God as the ultimate Reality. His ultimate Reality is the Brahman, which is totally devoid of any particular characteristic (निर्गुण). The Brahman is the substratum of all the infinite number of various attributes, but it itself does not share any of them howsoever magnanimous. It is in all, everywhere, and still beyond all the particular objects. This Absolute or the Brahman of S'āṃkara cannot be identified with God; he gives an inferior place to God in his system and calls it Saguna Brahman, i.e., the Brahman with some qualities. S'āṃkara examines the various usual arguments like the argument from cause, teleology, moral necessity and perfection and shows their futility and untenability.

As S. Radhakrishnan points out, the proofs only tell us that God is a possibility. The reality of God transcends our rational powers of conceiving as well as comprehending; only if we believe in the spiritual insight of the seers of God, we come to believe in God as described by the S'ruti. The arguments as such are incapable of establishing God, that has to be directly seen, perceived, and experienced. The arguments may at best only point out the possibility of such an existence like that of God. S. Radhakrishnan says—"The reality of Is'vara's philosophy, is not

a self-evident axiom, is not a logical truth, but an empirical postulate which is practically useful. S'ruti is the basis for it."<sup>1</sup> God is the highest appearance of the Brahman caused by the association of the adjunct of Māyā (मायोपचित). Māyā is the distinguishing feature of Is'vara. God is thus not the absolute Reality but He has relative existence in so far as the creation, destruction, and regulation of the world are concerned. God is Brahman's determination of the highest magnitude due to the adjunct of Māyā. God also has not the final existence; to one who attains the highest knowledge of the Brahman God ceases to exist. God has a phenomenal significance. The reality of God is revealed by the S'ruti. He is the soul of nature, the principle, the source, the substratum, and the end of all the things of the world. He is unborn; for if He is created his eternity is challenged; He is the first cause of the world and Himself has no origin. If He is produced by some other cause, His superiority is challenged, and if He is produced from non-being, He will lack essence (निरात्मक). He is the Brahman but the inferior or Lower Brahman. He is all-pervading, and all perfections of the Brahman are enjoyed by Him. He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He is above all evil qualities and possesses all glory and excellence in Him. He is the moral governor of the world and regulates the world according to the principle of adṛṣṭa. He possesses personality but is bodiless. The whole world is His body as He is spread every-

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. II, p. 545.

where. He is infinitely superior to the individual souls in all respects. He is the repository of all perfections. He enjoys absolute supremacy over the world as He possesses all the powers to do and to undo things. He is the sovereign Lord of the universe and possesses infinite bliss in Him. He is related to the individual souls as their protector, guide and ideal.<sup>1</sup> God or Is'vara is non-doer (अकर्तृ) since He has no self-interest; the individual jīvas are doers of actions and the reapers of the rewards of actions. Is'vara is the object of worship of the individual souls. As compared with the Jīvas or individual souls which are imperfect, weak, ignorant, and mortal, God is infinitely superior to them. He creates the world and destroys it at will with His unique power of Māyā. After its destruction the world is again retracted in His Māyā. God has a personality since He has self-consciousness and is aware of the distinctions of the individual souls and objects of the world. As He is eclipsed by the adjunct of Māyā He is inferior to the Brahman and does not therefore enjoy his superb position; His reality being determined and particularised, it does not belong to the final plane of noumenal reality (पारमार्थिक सत्ता), but He has the perfection and reality on the phenomenal plane (व्यावहारिक सत्ता). S'āṅkara says that the highest Lord does not feel the pain of the saṁsāra state in the same way as the individual soul does. The pain is due to nescience but as the Lord is not deceived by nescience; He is free from all pains and is full of infinite bliss.

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.46, Vol. II, p. 64.

### Mokṣa (मोक्ष)

Mokṣa or liberation consists, according to the Advaita Vedānta of S'āṅkara, in experiencing, in the real sense, the text that 'I am the Brahman' (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि). It is also expressed by another famous proposition 'Thou art that' (तत्त्वमसि), which means 'you are not different from 'That', i.e., the Brahman, but you are the same as the Brahman. It consists in experiencing the Brahman everywhere by overcoming the sense of duality or difference which is caused by avidyā. In the state of Mokṣa the individual soul loses all its separative consciousness and becomes one with the infinite, eternal, unchanging Brahman, which experience is a unique one of identity. All bondage caused by fictitious adjuncts is lost and one ceases to feel separate from the Ultimate Reality. The individual soul feels identity with the Absolute and enjoys the 'bliss' of the Brahman. It is an experience of perfect existence (sat), perfect knowledge (cit), and perfect bliss (ānanda). It is an experience of absolute freedom as it is free from distinction, fear, and pain caused by the bondage. The liberated soul eternally enjoys a superb bliss after becoming totally free for ever from the adjuncts and also from the subtle body by attaining the perfect knowledge of the Brahman by intuition. It is attained by the removal of nescience, by gaining the right knowledge of the Brahman, which was lost for some time due to the deception caused by the Māyā. S'āṅkara says that such liberation can be attained by knowledge. Perfect liberation in the form of (विदेहमुक्ति) bodiless

liberation is attained after the body of the devotee disappears. But an individual can attain (जीवन्मुक्ति) liberation even while alive, while leading a worldly life if he can successfully free himself from the attachments to the world, discard the world only as an illusion, and can overcome the distinctions of the world. His bodily existence being caused by the previous Karma continues as long as the Karma that has begun its operation does not get exhausted.

The idea of liberation of S'aṅkara is based upon his metaphysics of the soul. The soul is the Brahman and it is eternally free. All distinctions and particularities are due to the fictitious adjuncts caused by nescience and they are wrongly superimposed upon the Ātman by the finite mind. In fact, release or liberation is not the creation of something new nor an attainment of something which did not previously exist; on the contrary, Mokṣa or liberation is eternal. It is ageold. As S'aṅkara says release is not something which is to be brought about, but is something the nature of which is permanently established, and is reached through knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Mokṣa is eternal and co-existent with the Brahman itself because it is nothing else but the free and unbound nature of the Brahman or Self itself. It is the essential nature of the Brahman to be eternally free, unaffected, and unrestricted by any other thing outside itself, and it is also an established truth that there is nothing second to the Brahman. The sense of bondage in

<sup>1</sup> S'aṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta S'tras. Tr. Thibaut, 3.4.52, Vol. II, p. 330.

the individual soul is unreal and fictitious. In fact, there is no bondage and no release. Bondage is caused by nescience when one imagines oneself to be separate from the Brahman.<sup>1</sup> The soul is naturally infinite and continuous and all distinctions and limitations are superimposed upon it by the individual soul out of ignorance.

The earthly life is always painful and therefore the earthly beings aspire to flee away permanently from the earthly life. But according to S'āṅkara, the pain is real only for the individual souls who possess body and sense organs. The Brahman or the supreme self is pure and it is eternally free from all kinds of experiences, painful as well as pleasurable. Pain is unreal to it; it is always full of the divine bliss. S'āṅkara says that the pain of the individual soul also is not real, but is imaginary and it is caused by the error consisting in the non-discrimination of (the self from) the body, senses and other limiting adjuncts, which are due to name and form, the effects of Nescience.<sup>2</sup> Pain does not really exist. It cannot exist in the self for to the self nothing sticks. It is full of perfect bliss and it is incompatible with the existence of pain which is caused by finitude. S'āṅkara describes the apparent or illusory nature of pain in the following passage—  
“Just as the light of the sun or the moon which pervades the entire space becomes straight or bent

<sup>1</sup> *S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 3.2.5, Vol. II, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2.3.56, Vol. II, p. 64.

as it were when the limiting adjuncts with which it is in contact, such as a finger, for instance, are straight or bent, but does not really become so; and just as the ether, although imagined to move as it were when jars are being moved, does not really move; and as the sun does not tremble, although its image trembles when you shake the cup filled with water in which the sun's light is reflected; thus, the Lord also is not affected by pain, although pain be felt by that part of him which is called the individual soul, is presented by Nescience, and limited by the buddhi and other adjuncts."<sup>1</sup> The pain and pleasure have reality and existence only for the individual soul and not for the Brahman which is the real nature of the jīvātmā.

Mokṣa is thus, already there for ever. Its absence is felt only due to the obscuration of the real knowledge of the Self by Māyā or Avidyā. Avidyā is like darkness which disappears with the occurrence of light. Light and darkness cannot co-exist. Similarly S'aṃkara says—"And in the state of final release also, the self, having dispelled the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge, and having reached the state of absolute isolation and rest, enjoys full ease."<sup>2</sup> The knowledge of the self or the Brahman itself means illumination since the self is of the nature of self-illumination (स्वयंप्रकाश). It eternally

<sup>1</sup> *S'aṃkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.46, Vol. II, pp. 64-65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2.3.40, Vol. II, p. 55.



shines in its natural brilliance with its unflickering flame. It is like the sun which itself becomes visible by its own brilliance and reveals other objects with which it comes into contact. Therefore, the experience of the Self is described as one of 'illumination'. It does not need any other light to become visible. It itself means light or illumination. It shines with its lustre in all the three states of the individual, i.e., in the waking state, dream, and deep dreamless sleep. The liberated soul experiences this kind of permanent illumination. It is itself the abode of its illumination and is itself the source of its illumination like a lamp.<sup>1</sup> Its essence consists in revealing others; it is self-illuminating as it cannot be the object of any other consciousness.<sup>2</sup> Its self-shining nature directly reveals to the perceiver in the moments of his intuition; it need not be revealed by other means of knowledge; for, all other means which seek to prove it are themselves revealed by it, as it is the very fundamental principle of subjectivity. It is known only by its direct experience. As Madhusūdan Saraswati says our experience of it is self-revealing, because it is its experience; if it is not existent, it (soul) does not exist.....<sup>3</sup> Thus the knowledge of Brahman is obtained not by other means of knowledge or indirectly; it is obtained by entering into direct communion with it and by becoming one with it. It is not an artificial process of

<sup>1</sup> Saraswati Madhusūdana : *Advaita Siddhi*, Vol. II, p. 810.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Vol. II, p. 790.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. See (Commentary), p. 793.

becoming one with the Brahman but it is rediscovering our nature lost due to our forgetting of it out of nescience. The Brahman and its knowledge are already there; it is only a self-finding of one's own Self. It is analogous to come to the waking state from one that of dream; when a dreamer opens his eyes and looks at the world he is completely free from the deceptive appearances with which he is confronted in his dreams. He becomes quite aware of the total unreality of the objects and experiences that he experienced while in dream. It is coming to a normal consciousness from that of an illusion or delusion. The experience of liberation is one of self-consciousness in which one is absolutely certain of his own reality. It is like coming to the consciousness of the rope which was formerly seen to be a snake. Thus, the consciousness of the soul is becoming conscious or aware of one's real and essential nature by being free from the former illusive vision which had caused false sufferings in life. This experience is acquired when one realizes that his innermost self is not the perishable body, nor the sense organs, nor the mind, nor the buddhi but it is something behind and beyond them, which is subtle, intelligent, unchangeable, pure (uncontaminated), the inner controller, revealer (*prakāś'akaḥ*), transparent, and eternal.<sup>1</sup> The knowledge of the Brahman dispels the darkness of ignorance and restores to the soul its original purity, native infinity, and blissful nature which was lost due to ignorance. S'aṃkara describes

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<sup>1</sup> S'aṃkara : *Aparokṣānubhūtiḥ*, S'lokas, 16-23.

the knowledge of the Brahman as that experience which reveals that 'I am the equanimous, peaceful, characterised by existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda), unchangeable formless, undiseased, devoid of illusion, devoid of attributes, passive, eternal, everfree, unstained, unflinching, infinite, pure, undecaying and immortal Brahman and not the unreal (असद्रूप) body.'<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara clearly says that as long as one falsely perceives jar in clay and silver in shell, and similarly individual personality (Jīvatva) in the Brahman, he is bound to perish. Thus bondage is the false estimation of one's nature, which when corrected properly, disappears and the same individual soul begins to appear in a new form. It is an internal transformation of the individual, an entirely new experience of being the whole Reality itself, and in it the old distinctions (bhedas) melt away like the objects of dreams and one experiences the fulness of his infinity and all-pervasiveness. Then one properly understands the real meaning of 'Thou art that', that he is the omnipresent, blissful, and intelligent principle of the whole Reality. He sees everywhere the Brahman which is constituted of consciousness.

Such an experience of a synthetic unity and one obtains identity by the knowledge of the Brahman. The *Sarvadarśanasa graha* says that by hearing, contemplating, experiencing by powerful emotions the Brahman which is everywhere the same or identical (ekarasa) and is constituted of existence (sat),

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara : *Aparokṣānubhūtiḥ*, S'lokas 24-28.

consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda) by dispelling the beginningless nescience (avidyā) by means of direct intuition, is reached.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it means that the Brahman, is not to be understood only by our intellect or cognition, by means of imagination, inference, and other means of knowledge; but it is to be understood with our whole being by actually growing into the Brahman itself. It is an experience of the whole being of the knower when he overcomes the various distinctions of the knowing process, like the knower, the known, and the knowledge. The individual loses the narrow limitations of his individuality by discarding his limiting adjuncts and forms perfect and indistinguishable union with the Brahman. In such a परा विद्या or higher knowledge of the Brahman, the Brahman is all and the individual is none. The Brahman is the knower, the known and, the knowledge. The individual as a separate entity is lost in the Brahman and it becomes the Brahman. The individual loses his narrow personality and gains in return the infinity of the Brahman. Nothing remains in the state of liberation except Brahman inside and outside. Just as a drop of water becomes the ocean by losing into it, or a spark of fire becomes the great fire by entering it, so does the individual soul attain the Brahman by entering into it on abandoning his fictitious limited individuality. The knower of the Brahman becomes the Brahman itself. It is not a void of the Bouddhas but it is full of perfect intelligence (cit) and perfect bliss (ānanda). It lacks nothing and so it has no sense of

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasangraha*, p. 466.

deprivation; all restlessness, craving, aspiration come to an end in liberation. It is a disembodied state of the soul that has no fear of relapse to the mundane existence. Mokṣa is eternal; it lasts for ever.

Mokṣa is a state in which the soul no more remains active. The soul appears an active agent only in the saṃsāra state as it is enveloped by the adjuncts like body, mind, buddhi, ahaṃkāra, etc. . . ., and hence, it appears as the doer of actions and the reaper of fruits; but the moment it realises the Self it ceases to identify itself with the adjuncts which made it active during the saṃsāra state as long as it was under nescience. Such a liberated soul does not do any action, either good or bad, in the ethical sense; for an action generates its results which add to its Karma. The liberated man abandons all kinds of actions as they have a tendency to involve him in further bondage. As the liberated soul transcends all distinctions in its experience of complete identity with the Brahman (ब्रह्मात्मैकत्व), it ceases to make distinction between good and bad actions. It does not feel any impulse for activity for all is the same for it, and it is already perfect. It is eversatisfied (नित्यवृत्त) and hence, requires nothing for itself. It is a state of being beyond duality (द्वैतातीत) of good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable, higher and lower as there is no other thing with which it can compare its prevailing state, and is a state of equality (परमं साम्यम्)!<sup>1</sup> The liberated soul

<sup>1</sup> Saraswati Madhusūdana : *Advaita Siddhīh*, Vol. II, p. 1035.

नापि मुक्तबुद्धिर्बन्धमात्रः, तस्य द्वितीयसापेक्षत्वेन तदा असंभवात्,  
'परमं साम्यमुपैति' इति साम्यश्रुतेः ।

abandons Karma of all kinds because all actions, good or bad, become illusory to it. Such a soul ceases to suffer any kind of pain, for it is beyond the duality of the sufferer and that because of which it suffers. Śaṅkara says as fire cannot burn itself or illumine itself so also the liberated soul neither knows itself nor does it suffer due to the want of distinction in it.<sup>1</sup> When the body becomes unreal to the liberated soul, how can its sufferings be real to the soul that is totally separated from the body, or which has ceased to appropriate the body as its own for the lack of the ahaṁkāra which is liquidated for ever? As Paul Deussen says—"Even for the man who has attained knowledge there is no longer a world, a body or suffering, there is also no longer prescribed action. But he will therefore do no evil; for that which is the presupposition of all action, good and evil,—illusion—has been annihilated."<sup>2</sup> He thus rises above all activity for it does not remain necessary for him any more. He partakes in no activity for he loses the sense of doership of the action and enjoyership of their results. With the unreality of activity the unreality of the body which exists as the fruit of works is recognised; therefore, he who has attained knowledge is as little affected by the sufferings of his own body as by the sufferings of others; and he who still feels pain, has

<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 2.2.10, Vol. I, pp. 378, 379.

<sup>2</sup> Deussen Paul—Tr. Charles Johnston : *The System of Vedānta*, p. 477.

verily not yet attained full knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Not only is such a soul free from pain and suffering but one enjoys in it the everlasting peace, tranquillity and the bliss which is supersensuous.

The liberated individual no more undertakes any activity, for he does not require any activity and looks upon it as illusory. He remains completely indifferent to and uncontaminated (निर्लिप्त) by the activities and their consequences. As Deussen says it is a matter of indifference for him whether he does works or does not; whether he does them or not they are not his works and they cleave to him no more.<sup>2</sup> As he does not do actions he does not accumulate fresh Karma which leads to rebirth. He thus becomes free for ever from the vicious circle of the Karma. He burns the accumulated stock of Karma by his knowledge; the Karma that has been accumulated from previous births becomes impotent due to his higher knowledge of the Self or Brahman, and it can no more compel it to appear in rebirth. The accumulated Karma (संचित कर्म) and the newly accumulating Karma (संचायमान कर्म) thus cease to be operative. Knowledge burns the old accumulated Karma and prevents the accumulation of fresh Karma. He thus breaks the vicious circle of the Karma by knowledge. But an individual does not get immediate cessation of his present body after attaining the knowledge of the Brahman. The present body is a

<sup>1</sup> Deussen Paul : *The System of Vedānta*, p. 477.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid p. 477.

result of the past Karma which has already begun to have its fruition (प्रारब्ध कर्म), and it cannot be brought to an abrupt end by the knowledge of the Brahman. It completes its round and so the present body continues until the Karma that has already begun fruition, gets exhausted. S'āṅkara says — "Origination of knowledge, we reply, cannot take place without dependence on an aggregate of works whose effects have already begun to operate, and when this dependence has once been entered into we must as in the case of the potter's wheel—wait until the motion of that which once has begun to move comes to an end, there being nothing to obstruct in the interim." The knowledge of our self being essentially non-active destroys all works by means of refuting wrong knowledge; but wrong knowledge comparable to the appearance of a double moon — lasts for some time, even after it has been refuted, owing to the impression it has made."<sup>1</sup> Thus even after attaining the knowledge of the Brahman and transcending all distinctions of the world by knowing it to be illusory, an individual may continue to have his bodily existence in the world; such a liberated person is known as the (जीवन्मुक्त). S'āṅkara admits the possibility of a Jivanmukta who has realised in the fullest degree the nature of the Self by entering into communion with it, and has transcended the realm of relativity and so detached himself completely from the effects of the adjuncts of the world upon

<sup>1</sup> S'āṅkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras. Tr. Thibaut, 4.1.15. Vol. II, p. 358.



him by cultivating disinterestedness in all things; but still his physical body has not disappeared. The Jīvanmukta continues to live in the body, though he has discarded nescience (avidyā) by the philosophical knowledge. The body does not immediately drop away even after the nescience is annihilated by the knowledge of the Brahman, just as trembling due to fear continues for sometime even after the false knowledge of the snake is terminated. The potter's wheel keeps on revolving though the stick that gives it movement is detached from the wheel, similarly the avidyā's impressions cannot be immediately and abruptly brought to end though it itself is annihilated.<sup>1</sup> The Jīvanmukta lives in the world but is not of the world. He is no more interested in and attached to the worldly life even though he discharges his earthly duties. He takes part in the worldly activities but is not affected in any way by them. Vidyāraṇya describes 'Jīvanmukti' as the elimination of the bondage arising out of the afflictive nature of the mental states characterised by doership, and by the experiences of pleasure and pain of a man while alive.<sup>2</sup> The Jīvanmukta seems to lead the ordinary worldly life but he is not at all attached to it. His body acts according to the laws of nature but his soul is ever free and rests in its natural condition (स्वरूपावस्था).

<sup>1</sup> Saraswati Madhusūdana : *Advaita Siddhi*, Vol. II, p. 1029.

<sup>2</sup> Vidyāraṇya : *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, p. 13.

जीवतः पुरुषस्य कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वमुखदुःखादिलक्षणः चित्तवर्मेः, क्लेशरूपत्वात्  
बन्धो भवति, तस्य निवारणानि जीवन्मुक्तिः ।

His experiences are external to him. They do not touch his innermost tranquil Ātman. Though he does certain activities they do not stick to his soul. He remains aloof from the influences of the Prakṛti or adjuncts just as a drop of water remains aloof and unmixed on a lotus-leaf. He completely becomes free from his ego and nothing sticks to his intellect; though he does actions they do not affect him; he still remains as a non-doer of them.<sup>1</sup> He cannot be contaminated by the experiences of the world like laughter, etc.... due to the total absence of his identification with the adhyāsa or superimposed adjuncts.<sup>2</sup> He enjoys unfailingly his inner calm and poise looking upon the world and even his own body only as illusory things. To the Jīvanmukta the world exists only as a chimera, a non-entity, a dream, a snake in a rope, silver in a shell, mirage in a desert. The external world is only an appearance to him and so he shares no joys and no griefs of the world. He is not elated by success nor dejected by failures; he is neither happy nor unhappy; he is neither good nor bad, for him there are no desires, no passions, no fear, no anger, no joy, no grief, no envy, no love, and no hatred. He looks upon everything with his transcendent equanimity, and all the worldly experiences of whatever magnitude, count equal in his eyes. He is never ruffled from his eternal and everlasting equipoise. He is steady and permanently fixed in his own nature (स्वरूपावस्थित). As his mind is

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 12.

## Vedānta (S'āṅkara)

402

thoroughly established in his immutable, infinite blissful Self, he is naturally indifferent to all the worldly experiences. He is a living God on the earth; an immortal among the mortals, a perfect among the imperfect, an infinite among the finites.

The Jīvanmukta is the penultimate phase of a liberated soul. The really liberated soul is not attached even to the last appendage of body. It is entirely freed from all adjuncts, even its gross body which the Jīvanmukta possesses. The finally liberated soul is called “विदेहमुक्त”; the ‘bodiless liberated soul’. Such Videhamukti is attained when a soul becomes completely separated from its last appendage of the body. In Videhamukti the gross as well as the subtle body (līṅga s'arīra) comes to an end. All the three kinds of karmas are totally exhausted and for the soul remains no purpose to possess another adjunct in the form of a body. It is completely free from rebirth. It ceases to revolve on the wheel of karma. This is the final state of liberation. The individual soul is lost for ever in the Brahman. It is no more distinguishable as a drop of water fallen in an ocean is indistinguishable from the ocean. It is one with the Brahman and enjoys to the fullest extent the perfect bliss of the Brahman. Nothing exists for it outside itself. It simultaneously experiences ‘I am the Brahman’ (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि) and ‘All this is Brahman’ (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म). It then remains filled everywhere; wherever it looks it meets itself. There is nothing else but itself. The state of liberation is thus one that transcends all spatial, temporal and mental

limitations. It is, in fact, indefinable and indescribable since our thoughts are based upon the duality of the subject and the predicate. It is inconceivable in the sense that it cannot be precisely thought of with the available conceptual method which necessarily presupposes the distinctions and limitations of the subject and the predicate. Our language falls short of its description and hence, it is indescribable (अनिर्वचनीय). It is indescribable in the sense that it is beyond any possible description. It escapes every kind of description which is based upon finite characteristics of things. It is unique in itself. It is imperceptible and unferrable; it can be known only from its descriptions given either in the S'ṛiti or by the sages who actually lived it. S'aṃkara, therefore, says—  
 “The true nature of the cause of the world on which final emancipation depends cannot, on account of its excessive abstractness, even be thought of without the help of the holy texts, for....it cannot become the object of perception, because it does not possess qualities such as form and the like, and as it is devoid of characteristic signs, it does not lend itself to inference and the other means of right knowledge.”<sup>1</sup> He further points out that it cannot be understood by our reason also since it is a fact that what a logician endeavours to establish as perfect knowledge based upon reason is demolished by another on rational grounds.<sup>2</sup> The last and the only

<sup>1</sup> S'aṃkara (Com.) on Vedānta Sūtras, Tr. Thibaut, 2.1.11, Vol. I, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 316

## Vedānta ( S'aṃkara )

501

possible alternative that is left is knowing the soul, which is freedom itself, by intuition (साक्षात्कार) by entering into direct union or identity with it. Such a direct experience is immediate when the individual soul and the Brahman lose their distinction; when the individual soul realises that it is itself the whole infinite Brahman, it realises that its sense of being different from the Brahman was fictitious. The self is present to the individual just as the self-illuminated sun is to itself; his experience is flooded with profound light which not only reveals itself but reveals also the objects of knowledge. In the direct and immediate intuition of the knower, the known, and knowledge become united into one single whole. The Kantian distinction of the transcendental unknowable self and the empirical self does not remain in it. The empirical self fast melts away as it had only a relative and fictitious existence. Mokṣa is thus a state which has to be actually experienced and it is supersensuous. All external means of knowledge prove insufficient and inadequate to know it; it is properly known only by becoming it.

S'aṃkara distinguishes those who do good works and stick to the old Vedic sacrificial cult from those who admit the doctrine of the Brahman but who are unable to rise to the perfect identity with the Brahman and so look upon it as God outside them, worship Him to reach him. S'aṃkara designates the knowledge of the lower Brahman, the Īśvara, the Saguṇa Brahmana as (अपरा विद्या), and maintains that the possessors of this aparā vidyā, i.e., the

worshippers of the Saguṇam Brahman, all enter after death by the Devayāna into the lower Brahman. Śaṅkara weaves the various stages of this long way into one whole continuity of regions. The soul of his who possesses the lower knowledge on leaving the body by the artery of the head, passes through the following regions. It goes first to the flame (अमिलोक), then to the day, thence to the half of the month when the moon wanes, thence to the half of the year when the days grow longer, then to the year, to the देवलोक (region of the gods), to the वायुलोक (region of the winds), then to the sun, then to the moon and then to the lightning. These stages help the soul only as the guides to direct them to the further regions. When the individual soul reaches the lightning it is received by "a man, who is not as a human being (Puruṣo Mānavaḥ) and conducts to the Brahman through the Varuṇaloka, Indraloka and Prajāpatiloka. The Brahman that they reach is the lower Brahman which forms the world out of it and perishes it at the pralaya, which is the destruction of the world. In the world of this Brahman the souls enjoy lordship (ऐश्वर्यं) which consists in a quasi-divine but limited omnipotence and includes the fulfilment of all wishes.<sup>1</sup> The higher knowledge (सम्बन्धदर्शनम्) is communicated to the souls here and they then, at the destruction of the world when the lower Brahman also perishes, enter with him into the eternal perfect Nirvāṇa. This gradual and progressive way of entering the Brahman is termed as the 'Progressive

<sup>1</sup> Deussen Paul: *The System of Vedānta*, p. 473.

Liberation' or Kramamukti (क्रममुक्ति). It is to be distinguished from the other kind of liberation which is directly reached by the higher knowledge (पराविद्या) of the qualityless Brahman (निर्गुण ब्रह्म) the rise of which means the rejection of the world as an illusion.<sup>1</sup> But S'aṅkara himself gives more stress on the direct liberation which is attained by the real knowledge of the Brahman, and by discarding the world only as an illusory non-existent entity.

S'aṅkara is essentially a jñānavādin; he believes that jñāna, the real knowledge of the self, can lead to liberation, because according to him, bondage is caused by nescience or avidyā, which means defective knowledge of the self under certain adjuncts. When the real knowledge dawns it necessarily implies a sudden disappearance of the false knowledge or nescience which had caused bondage. The bondage also suddenly disappears along with the nescience which is its cause. S'aṅkara gives supreme importance to the higher knowledge of the Brahman or soul as the only means of the attainment of liberation. He admitted the efficacy of other moral virtues but only as auxiliaries to the attainment of such knowledge as of 'I am Brahman' or 'Thou art that'. The knowledge as explained above, is not only cognition or ज्ञातृज्ञान but is one of experiencing identity with the Brahman. Such a knowledge consists in completely transforming the whole cognitional, affective, and the volitional nature of man. It requires an absolute cessation of the separative consciousness of

<sup>1</sup> Deussen, Paul : *The System of Vedānta*, p. 474.

the ego by discrimination (विवेक) of the eternal and pure from the non-eternal and impure things, of the Brahman from the adjuncts, howsoever subtle. He gives importance to the various ethical prescriptions in so far as they serve as means to the realisation of one's identity with the Brahman. The study of the Vedas and scripture (स्वाध्याय) is necessary for properly grasping the nature of the Brahman. As such he rejects the sacrifices prescribed by the S'ṛti; he does not admit that the mechanical performance of the Vedic rituals lead to Mokṣa, however, he admits them as necessary means in so far as they help the purification of the mind and buddhi. They help to acquire a selfless tendency and to dissipate the egoism of an individual by reducing his pride and to cultivate modesty and humility. A seeker of Mokṣa must necessarily renunciate all his desires and passions for the acquisition of pleasure and happiness here on the earth and beyond the earth. He must develop the attitude of indifference (औदासीन्यं) and detachment to things to make himself free from the influences of the adjuncts which are the creations of nescience (avidyā). He must experience a kind of disinterestedness in all the things by regarding them as illusory and unreal and hence, unworthy of his desires. He must get release from his selfish desires and narrow attachments by identifying himself with the wider social good, and thus, must gradually rise above the limitations of his fictitious ego. He must develop tranquillity, self-restraint, renunciation, resignation, concentration and belief.<sup>1</sup> S'aṅkara recognised all

<sup>1</sup> Deussen Paul : *The System of Vedānta*, p. 475.



the eightfold yogic practices like yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇā and samādhi as the means of physical and mental discipline. Self-control, renunciation and resignation help the individual soul to detach itself from the worldly objects and their influences on it which cause attachment (आसक्ति) and which make the knot of bondage stronger. The control of the breathing activities, postures (आसन) make possible the individual's concentration on the object of devotion by becoming immune to other influences of the world. The development of वैराग्य or detachment and disinterestedness helps to a very great extent to make the soul free from the various adjuncts which cause afflictions to it. An attitude of indifference thus prevents entertaining desires for action and enjoyment; as new deeds are not done fresh karma is not accumulated, and then it becomes easy to overcome the karma early. It is better to be a संन्यासी or a renunciate; but there is no objection even if one passes through the four āśramas prescribed by the traditions; but S'āṅkara emphasizes the need for an attitude of indifference, detachment and disinterestedness in all these activities. There is no objection to activity but the activity should not be undertaken out of attachment; one should not act under nescience and should not be still more entangled in the activities. If one looks at them with a detached mind, the activities cannot entangle one in further bondage. As Deussen remarks "Works have therefore in the plan of salvation not a meritorious but an ascetic role."<sup>1</sup> Concentration

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Deussen Paul : *The System of Vedānta*, p. 476.

and meditation also are necessary to realise one's real nature and to uproot all other false attachments to various worldly objects of enjoyment. S'āṅkara believes that the Vedic rituals may lead to (abhyudaya) enrichment of worldly life but not to salvation. Knowledge alone can effect Mokṣa.

However, S'āṅkara does not neglect the necessity of purifying the body and the mind. Though the self is self-illuminating, its light does not become visible if it is enveloped by an opaque or a dark medium. If the physical structure in which the self resides is made clean and transparent by removing its impurities the soul's brilliance becomes visible. Similarly, the experience of being identical with the Brahman is facilitated if one's sense of egoism and pride is annihilated and when one has totally withdrawn oneself in the Brahman. Thus S'āṅkara recognises the need for and importance of the ethical life in so far as it works on the phenomenal plane, he emphasizes the good and the right as against the evil and wrong, and helps the seekers of mokṣa to rise beyond the gross adjuncts which make the knot of bondage more and more tight. The ethically good and right is not the ultimate end to be attained, according to S'āṅkara. The end according to him, is the attainment of the Brahman itself by becoming one with it; it is a state of absolute perfection which is beyond all dualities and relativity. All our distinctions of good and evil, right and wrong, mine and thine are dissolved in the final state of liberation. It is not a state of highest morality, but it is a

state of super-morality. Morality is valid only on the phenomenal level, and not on the noumenal level. The highly moral life in the world helps one to attain such an absolute Mokṣa in so far as the practice of ethical virtues liberates an individual from his limiting adjuncts and helps him to widen his consciousness of the Brahman. The practice of psychic inhibitions helps the individuals to become progressively free from the vanity, pride, and egoism, which are falsely created by nescience (avidyā). S'aṃkara gives importance to all these various kinds of ethically important actions and mental attitudes, but he does not thereby lose the sight of knowledge. He ultimately maintains that all these ethical activities may strengthen and accelerate the attainment of mokṣa, but ultimately mokṣa can be attained only by knowledge and by knowledge alone; for mokṣa is nothing but knowledge of the Brahman, and the knowledge of the Brahman is nothing else but being Brahman itself. It consists in the infinitisation of the finite.

S'aṃkara maintains that people of all castes can attain liberation irrespective of the sex-differences. However, he recognises the traditionally sanctioned Varṇāśrama-dharma and holds that the high caste people can attain it from the study of scriptures, and the others by bhakti. He nevertheless allows Mokṣa to any person of any caste, any sex and any race, if the knowledge of Brahman dawns upon him even without any external means.

## CHAPTER X

### THE SYSTEMS OF RĀMĀNUJA, NIMBĀRKA, MADHVA, AND VALLABHA

#### The Bhagavadgītā

The Bhagavadgītā is a very valuable philosophical work as it contains important philosophical elements. It seems to have more leanings towards Advaitism as it believes in the Brahman as the only ultimate Reality. It also shows its affinity with the Sāṃkhya system for it recognises the duality of Prakṛti and Puruṣa. It also includes many elements of the Yoga philosophy. It speaks of the Brahman as the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world. It preaches a kind of pantheism by saying that everything is pervaded by the Brahman (God) and that everything is generated by it. Similarly, it holds that the world is a modification (परिणाम) of God or the Brahman itself. Sometimes it seems to hold that from the Prakṛti the whole world is created with the help of the power of Māyā and that the Ātman is different from and unaffected by all the changes in the Prakṛti. It contains many hybrid elements like the Jñānayoga, Karmayoga and Bhaktiyoga and gives equal importance to each of them for the

## The Systems of Rāmānuja.....

509

achievement of Mokṣa or liberation. Karma or action one cannot give up because it is natural with each person to act as it is prompted by the Prakṛti; but the Karma has to be performed with a sense of complete detachment and disinterestedness. One has to dedicate the Karma and its results to God by completely overcoming the sense of egoism (अहंकार). It lays stress on jñāna and holds that the knowledge that removes the nescience (अज्ञान) and its effects is absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. It gives supreme importance to Bhakti (devotion) and regards that the attainment of Mokṣa is dependent on a faithful surrender to and worship of God (Brahman), and that God loves most of all those of His devotees who love Him exclusively and wholeheartedly, even more than the jñānin and the karma-yogin. Devotion (Bhakti) can be practised by any means; by any kind of action in the form of one's own duty; the only condition is that every action must be done without pride and egoism. One must feel that one is God Himself and that the doer of actions and the experiencer of their fruits is God. One has got to negate one's separate egoistic existence. By dedicating all actions and their results to God one can experience real detachment. When a person cultivates detachment no cause is left for him to experience grief. He has to realise that the individual soul is in reality the eternal, pure, immutable, all-pervading perfect Self. It always remains what it is, and the bondage is caused by ignorance, which consists in not-perceiving the final all-embracing

unity and the infinitude of the Self. When the infinite, immortal and pure nature of the Self is realised the soul no more entertains any kind of grief and sorrow that arise from finitude and from the sense of egoism of the soul. After becoming free from the bondage of the ahaṁkāra, the soul realises its own real infinite and blissful nature. It enjoys its eternal freedom. This is its Mokṣa.

The *Bhagavadgītā* is, thus, eclectic in nature. Its eclecticism is a result of its attempt to synthesise various philosophical trends and various means of attaining liberation (मोक्ष). On account of its eclectic nature, various interpretations of its contents have been given and different philosophers found support for their views from the Gītā. Śaṅkara emphasises the aspect of jñāna, Rāmānuja, bhakti (devotion). Jñāneśvara combines the two elements and propounds the importance of the Advaita-bhakti. B. G. Tilak holds that the essence of the Gītā is enlightened Karmayoga which means the disinterested performance of the moral duties with a firm faith in and complete spiritual surrender to God. Aurobindo combines all the three elements (jñāna, karma and bhakti) together and holds that the Gītā propounds the Pūrṇa Yoga (पूर्ण योग Integral Yoga) in which all the three have an equal importance and Mokṣa can be attained not by onesided emphasis on any one of them but by synthesising them in a vital unity and by having an integral experience of the Brahman (God) which has got to be translated into our day to day activities.

The perfect peace and bliss of the Brahman has to be experienced in all our actions, small or great. One has to live permanently in God and has to do socially useful actions by becoming completely free from *ahankāra* and nescience and thus by expressing the Divine peace, beauty and joy in our day today activities. The *Bhagavadgītā* is thus a peculiar mixture of the various trends and therefore, it is very difficult and unjustifiable to attribute any particular system to it. However, it possesses tremendous spiritual influence and thus proves a source of great inspiration to religiously minded persons. I cannot, therefore, emphatically attribute any definite view to the *Gītā*.

Nevertheless the *Gītā* holds a definite view about the nature of *Ātman* (self). *Ātman* is the principle of pure consciousness and infinite power and bliss. It is in its real nature infinite, all-pervading, and perfect. It assumes the form of the world by means of its unique power of creation (*Māyā*) and it remains concealed from the finite souls by means of nescience. The finite souls (*jīva*) are its manifestations; they are limited in knowledge and bliss; they suffer in the world being governed by nescience and they transmigrate since they are governed by the *adr̥ṣṭa* (*अदृष्ट*). The *jīvas* are in their essence immortal and eternal but their finitude and suffering are caused by their association with the body and the *adr̥ṣṭa*. They can become free from their finitude and sufferings when they realise their originally infinite and blissful nature, by the knowledge of the *Ātman*, by

overcoming nescience, by complete dedication to and faith in God, and by testing their detachment by doing their work disinterestedly, not being affected by their good and bad results. The soul thus enjoys supreme bliss and unending peace by realising its real nature.

### Rāmānuja

In the post-S'aṅkarite period and among the successors of S'aṅkara, Rāmānujācārya stands as the most prominent and powerful personality. Rāmānuja was a profound scholar and a keen Vaiṣṇava devotee. Rāmānuja criticized S'aṅkara's philosophy of illusoriness of the world with a great vehemence and established his own philosophy and religion. He was a great follower of Vaiṣṇavism in the Southern India. His creed was widely accepted and he had the honour of being a powerful leader of a great religious sect. He lived in the eleventh century and was initiated in philosophy by Yādavaprakāśa and Yāmunācārya. Rāmānuja was an original thinker and therefore, he has made his own outstanding contribution to the philosophic thought. He had his own differences with his predecessors and he maintained his differences with great courage and confidence.

Rāmānuja has written his commentary on the Brahma-Sūtra, as S'aṅkara did, and he interpreted the original Brahma Sūtras in his own way by presenting supporting evidences from the S'ṛti. Rāmānuja interpreted the same Sūtras that S'aṅkara



had previously interpreted, in his own new way. He is equally logical and consistent in his treatment. After Rāmānuja lived the other Āchāryas, i.e., Nimbārka, Madhva, and Vallabha who also were equally powerful and independent thinkers. They too were profound scholars and were pioneers of great religious movements in the south and in the north. They too wrote their own commentaries on the Brahma-Sūtras quite independently, and stuck to their own views. All these Āchāryas, nevertheless, have not neglected the S'ṛiti. They have interpreted the S'ṛiti in their own favour. As the same Brahma-Sūtras have been differently interpreted by these Āchāryas, it is natural to entertain a doubt about the real meaning of the Sūtras. They have been presented and twisted in different ways. Similarly, the Upaniṣads also contain a large number of statements which are mutually incompatible and even contradictory. Ghate, after carefully examining the original Brahma-Sūtras and their different interpretations, passes the following significant remarks about them—"All these instances of the employment by the Sūtrakāra of vague and general words, not capable of being explicitly defined, leave us to believe that the Sūtras, though they were in the first instance intended to formulate a system from the Upaniṣads, reconcile the contradictions which meet us at every step, represent a stage of transition from the freedom and absolute want of system of the Upaniṣads to the cut and dry

systematisation of the commentaries.”<sup>1</sup> Further he says—“It needs hardly to be remarked that the more advanced a system is in the degree of systematisation and the elimination of contradiction, the farther removed it is from the system of the Sūtras whatever that be. In any case, the Sūtras are absolutely unaware of the particular dogmas enunciated by each of the different Vedānta schools of the later times.”<sup>2</sup>

Rāmānuja criticises very acutely and adversely Śaṅkara's doctrine of illusoriness (मायावाद) of the world and tries to restore the lost reality to the world and the individual souls on rational grounds. He finds numerous faults (दूषणाः) with the Māyāvāda of Śaṅkara and tries to give an important place to the world in the life of the Brahman.

Rāmānuja refuses first, to admit the qualityless Brahman (निर्गुण ब्रह्म) of Śaṅkara; he identifies it with Puruṣottama, the highest spirit who is by nature free from all kinds of faults and possesses in the highest number the congeries of auspicious (कल्याण) qualities.<sup>3</sup> He gives a clear and lengthy description of the Brahman from his point of view as “the highest Brahman is essentially free from all imperfections whatsoever, comprises within itself all auspicious qualities, and finds its pastime in origina-

<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S. : *The Vedānta*, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Rāmānuja : *Śrībhāṣya* (Catuḥsūtri).

ब्रह्मसन्देन स्वभावतो निरस्तनिखिलदोषोऽनवधिकातिशयासंख्येयकल्याणगुणगणः  
पुरुषोत्तमोऽभिधीयते ।

tion, preserving, reabsorbing, pervading, and ruling the universe; that the entire complex of intelligent and non-intelligent beings (souls and matters in all their different estates is real, and constitutes the form, i.e., the body of the highest Brahman...."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Brahman is not devoid of any qualities but it possesses innumerable auspicious qualities and possesses its own personality. Rāmānuja usually describes the Brahman as the Puruṣottama, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, etc....and indicates that the Brahman, though the Absolute, is not devoid of personality elements. His Brahman is the highest God living in the Vaikunṭha. The Brahman is not qualityless blank Absolute, but it is Saviseṣa Brahman, Qualified Brahman, having internal distinctions as its manifestations. The Brahman is continuous, unborn and endless and it acts as the source (सर्ग), sustainer (स्थिति) and absorber (लय) of all its manifestations which are finite. The Brahman is the infinite substratum in which all changes incessantly take place. Rāmānuja is a bhedābhedavādin and he admits the pariṇāmavāda-theory of causation according to which the effect is a transformation of the cause and both the cause and effect are real. The effect, i.e., the world is not entirely different from the cause but it is the Brahman that differentiates itself into the two main modes (प्रकार) as the soul (चित्) and the matter (अचित्). It carries duality of these two chief modes which express themselves in an infinite

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja—Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*, Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 88. (Secred Books of the East Series, Vol. XLVIII.)

number of particular objects. The Brahman being all-pervading (vibhu) is equally present in all the objects animate and inanimate, the Self or Brahman acting as its innermost reality. Rāmānuja holds that the individual souls and the inanimate objects exist as the body of the Brahman just as we have our bodies related to the soul. The highest Self, the Brahman or the Paramātmā enters every mode of it, and acts as its (अन्तर्यामी) inner controller. Ontologically the Brahman is the substratum or the sustainer of the effects, and morally, it is the inner controller of the souls and the world. In fact, the whole world and the individual souls (jīvas) are already present in the womb of the Brahman as potential (कारणवस्था) and they express themselves in the actual form (कार्यावस्था) by means of the wonderful power (माया) of Īśvara. Īśvara or Brahman or the Supreme Self being one and entering as the inner Self (अन्तरात्मतया) in the various animate and inanimate (चिदचित्) objects, assumes the various wonderful (विचित्र) forms and does various duties through them in their various forms and thus, appears as multifarious (नानारूप).<sup>1</sup> Thus, the whole world (acit) and the individual souls already exist in the Brahman, and are never without it. The Brahman pervades and envelops its whole creation. In pralaya, the world and the souls dwindle into their potential

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja : *Vedārtha Saṅgraha*. Com. by Sudars'ana Sūri, p. 127.

प्रसासितृत्वेन एक एव सन् विचित्रचिदचिद्वस्तुषु अन्तरात्मतया प्रविश्य  
तत्तद्रूपेण विचित्रप्रकारो विचित्रकर्मकारणन् नानारूपतां भजते ।

and unmanifest form — Brahman remains uncontaminated by the imperfections of the world and by the sufferings of the jīvas, which are only its modes. It is free from all imperfections and consists of pure knowledge and bliss; and that the sentient and the non-sentient things whether in the non-evolved or evolved state are merely the play-things of the Brahman and their creation and reabsorption take place only for the sport of the Brahman.<sup>1</sup> The Īśvara creates everything out of Himself and acts as the material cause (उपादानकारण) and also as the efficient cause (निमित्तकारण) of the world. He creates the world out of His own stuff as His own body with His wonderful power, and though He is one, He assumes the infinite number of particular objects. Thus, the world is a concretisation of the potentialities existing in the Brahman. The Brahman is saviseṣa or qualified by the two distinctions (भेद), cit (sentient) and acit (insentient) in it. Rāmānuja is a bhedābhedavādin believing that the Brahman is identical with the world and still it possesses its own nature independently. Rāmānuja describes the Brahman in the following way — “The highest Brahman, whose nature is fundamentally antagonistic to all evil and essentially composed of infinite knowledge and bliss — whereby it differs from all other souls — possesses an infinite number of qualities of unimaginable excellence, and analogously, a divine form suitable to its nature, and intentions, i.e.

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja — *Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.4.27, p. 406.

adorned with infinite, supremely excellent and wonderful qualities—splendour, beauty, fragrance, tenderness, loveliness, youthfulness, and so on. And in order to gratify his devotees he individualises that form so as to render it suitable to their apprehension, he who is a boundless ocean as it were of compassion, kindness and lordly power, whom no shadow of evil may touch—he who is the highest Self, the highest Brahman, the Supreme Soul, Nārāyaṇa (नारायण).”<sup>1</sup>

The same Brahman thus transforms itself into the sentient centres, the individual souls (jīvas) and the matter. The individual souls are centres of consciousness and both the individual souls and the inanimate objects (prakṛti) form the body of the īśvara. They are therefore, the emanations of the Supreme Self. In the inert material things the consciousness (चित्) and bliss (आनन्द) are absent, and in the jīva existence (सत्) and consciousness (चित्) are present but the bliss (आनन्द) of the Brahman is absent. The jīvas and the inanimate objects are in essence the Brahman though they differ in their external forms. Therefore, the Brahman is called the īśvara qualified by cit and acit (चिदचिद्विशिष्टेश्वरः). The individual soul (jīva) is separate for each body and is of the atomic nature, self-luminous and eternal. The soul is the doer but its agentship is controlled by īśvara. There are three kinds of jīvas—(i) the bound (बद्ध)—all the phenomenal (saṃsārin) souls

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja—Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.21, p. 240.

including gods like Brahmadeva; (ii) the freed (मुक्त) are those who have abandoned even their subtle bodies by means of the devotion to the Īśvara and stay in the Vaikuṇṭha (वैकुण्ठ); they have an infinite experience of the Brahman. In the state of liberation their eight qualities (गुणष्टक) like sound, touch, brilliance, taste, odour, power, knowledge, and bliss (ānanda) which were obscured (tirobhūta-तिरोभूत) while in bondage become manifest; (iii) the eternal (नित्य) jīvas are the Ananta (the cobra), the Garuḍa (eagle), etc. God is the abode of experience of the freed and eternal souls.

The jīvas, individual souls are thus the parts (अंश) of the Brahman and they are atomic in size. Though they are parts of the Brahman, they are not separate from the cause since they rest upon the cause (आधार) and the Brahman is present in each of them as their internal reality that controls them from within (अन्तर्यामी). The souls (jīvas) also form a body of the Brahman. They are like the attributes (viśeṣaṇas) of the Supreme indwelling Self, the Īśvara. Just as an adjective viśeṣaṇa (विशेषण) cannot exist without a substantive viśeṣya (विशेष्य), similarly the jīva cannot exist apart from its cause, the Brahman. Rāmānuja says — “The individual soul is a part of the highest Self; as the light issuing from a luminous thing such as fire or the sun is a part of the body; or as the generic characteristic of a cow or horse, and the white or black colour of things so coloured, are attributes and hence, parts of the things in which those attributes

inhere; or as the body is a part of an embodied being. Hence there is no contradiction between the individual and the highest Self—the former which is a Vis'eṣaṇa of the latter—standing to each other in the relation of part and whole, and their being at the same time of essentially different nature.”<sup>1</sup> The jivas or souls are only attributes of the Self and hence, the changes taking place in the attributes remain true and confined to themselves and they do not in any way affect the Supreme Self just as changes in the sun-rays do not affect the sun itself. Rāmānuja further says that though the Brahman is equally present in all the sentient and insentient things, it does not participate in their changes, imperfections, and experiences of pain and pleasure; it remains untouched or uncontaminated by them. He maintains that just as ether, although connecting itself separately with jars, pots, and so on, is not itself touched by the imperfections; and just as the sun, although seen in sheets of water of unequal extent, is not touched by their increase and decrease; thus the highest Self, although abiding within variously—shaped beings, whether non-sentient like earth or sentient, remains untouched by their various imperfections—increase, decrease, and so on—remains one although in abiding in all of them, and ever keeps the treasure of its blessed qualities

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<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras.* Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.45, p. 563.



unsullied by an atom even of impurity.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Brahman is ever free and unaffected by all the shadows of imperfections as it is full of exalted qualities. All changes, imperfections, and sufferings thus belong to the modes (प्रकार or विकार) of the Brahman.

The Jiva is of atomic size and it dwells in the heart. It is not all-pervasive, otherwise it would experience simultaneously the various pains and pleasures of all persons. It is one and single for each single person, and is extremely minute, like a monad or atom, in size and it dwells in the heart of each person.<sup>2</sup> An objection can be raised that if it is atomic and occupies an extremely minute portion of the body, how can it remain in touch with all the parts of the body and can simultaneously experience so many sensations? The difficulty is real, but Rāmānuja overcomes it by taking the help of a simile of a sandal paste and says—"As a drop of sandal-ointment, although applied to one spot of the body only, produces a refreshing sensation extending over the whole body, thus, the Self also, although dwelling in one part of the body only, is conscious of sensations taking place in any part of the body."<sup>3</sup> Though the soul thus spreads all over the body not actually, but by means of its quality (गुण). Knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja—Com. on Vedānta Sūtras.* Tr. Thibaut, 3.2.20, p. 614.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2.3.25, p. 548.

<sup>3</sup> *Rāmānuja : Śrībhāṣya Catuḥsūtrī and Com. on Vedānta Sūtras.* Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.24.

the attribute (guṇa) of the soul and the possessor of the guṇa is (guṇīn). The Self extends through the whole body by means of its quality, viz., knowledge or consciousness. As the light of things abiding in one place—such as gems, the sun, and, so on—is seen to extend to many places, so the consciousness of the Self dwelling in the heart pervades the entire body.<sup>1</sup> Thus Rāmānuja does not identify the soul with knowledge like Sāṃkara who had made soul and knowledge identical. Rāmānuja, on the contrary, makes a distinction and maintains that the soul is different from knowledge and that the knowledge is a quality (guṇa) that belongs to the (guṇīn) the subject. The soul is frequently designated as knowledge simply for the reason that knowledge is its essential quality and it cannot appear without knowledge.<sup>2</sup> The jīva is thus, not consciousness itself but the knower (ज्ञाता), the knowing subject. Its consciousness is not lost even during deep sleep. As Ghate says—“The individual soul is the subject of consciousness or knower and not mere consciousness itself. It is, however, often called consciousness, simply because consciousness is its essential attribute. Even in the dreamless sleep though there is no consciousness of objects, still the sense of “I” (अहमर्थ) persists”<sup>3</sup> Rāmānuja holds that the consciousness is always there, but is felt only in the waking state when it relates to objects. Rāmānuja further

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 2.3.26, p. 549, *Catuhśūtrī*.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.3.29, p. 550.

<sup>3</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, p. 27.

concludes that 'to be a knowing subject is the essential character of the Self and that Self is of atomic size.'<sup>1</sup>

Rāmānuja distinguishes the knower from the knowledge and regards knowledge as an attribute of the former. He points out the proposition 'I am conscious', in which I, the subject is different from the term 'conscious'; consciousness belongs to it just as a stick belongs to Devadatta.<sup>2</sup>

The higher Self which is self-luminous (स्वयंप्रकाश) assumes the form of the individual soul. The higher Self is purely intelligence in its own nature and it does not possess any other material impurity. Rāmānuja describes the Supreme Self as intelligence pure, free from stain, free from grief, free from all contact with desire and other affections, everlastingly one.. the highest Lord Vāsudeva (वासुदेव) apart from whom nothing exists.<sup>3</sup> This Supreme Self itself is consciousness. In its case there is no distinction between the substrate of consciousness and the consciousness itself. They are identical in its case. It is Self-luminous consciousness itself which constitutes the knowing soul (jivātmā). Rāmānuja further identifies them and maintains that in the absence of intelligence the Self would cease to exist as Self.<sup>4</sup> This Self is omniscient and the eternal revealer of all objects.

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.31, p. 551.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1.1.1, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1.1.1, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1.1.1, p. 37.

The quality of being the 'knower' belongs only to the finite individual souls and not to the Supreme Self. Knowership cannot be attributed to it since it belongs to ahaṁkāra which itself is non-intelligent, being an effect of Prakṛti, and itself an object of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The ahaṁkāra or the principle of egoity is a separative principle of the many individual souls and with help of it they distinguish themselves from each other. It is due to their finitude and particular nature. The knowledge of the jīvas is limited when they are in saṁsāra under bondage. The idea of 'I' also is present only when the jīva is in the waking state (जागृतवस्था); it is not present during deep sleep and swoon; therefore, it cannot be attributed to the Supreme Self or Īśvara; for, Īśvara persists in the form of His consciousness in all the times and for eternity remains immutable. The Supreme Self reveals the objects by its luminosity; that element of luminosity which is present in the form of the soul reveals the things in knowledge to it; the jīva appropriates the experiences and objects as its own with its association with the ahaṁkāra, which is a mode of Prakṛti. The egoity, the distinguishing feature of the jīva is its essential characteristic and it is never lost; it persists in it even during the state of liberation (मुक्ति). The individual soul is not lost or absorbed in the Supreme Self but it maintains its sense of 'I' who achieves liberation. Bheda (distinction) being eternal cannot be lost and therefore, the

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<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 63.

individual soul maintains the sense of its own egoity even in mukti. Rāmānuja says that were it a settled matter that release consists in the annihilation of the I, the same man would move away as soon as release were only hinted at. "When I myself have perished, there still persists some consciousness different from me", to bring this about nobody truly will exert himself.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in liberation, body disappears but egoity persists.

Rāmānuja does not accept S'aṅkara's interpretation that the differences of the jīvas are caused by the differences of upādhis like the internal organs which are variously associated with the same Supreme Self or they are caused by the Adṛṣṭa. The differences of upādhis which cause differences of individual souls are explained as caused by the principle of Adṛṣṭa, and Adṛṣṭa itself is proved by the various activities caused by the individual souls out of upādhis; it is a circular argument and does not properly explain the priority of either of them. He argues—"As the adṛṣṭas also which are the causes of the series of upādhis have for their substrate Brahman itself, there is no reason for their definite allotment (to definite individual souls), and hence, again there is no definite separation of the spheres of experience. For, the limiting adjuncts as well as the adṛṣṭas cannot by their connexion with Brahman split up Brahman itself which is essentially

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<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja — *Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*, Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 58,

one.”<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja regards that the differences are real but they last only as long as their inner unity is not realised. The exclusive differences last as long as the souls are under the spell of Nescience (Avidyā); the different souls experience their inner substantial unity when the avidyā is overcome. Then the soul realises its bhedābheda (differences in unity) relation with the Īśvara. Rāmānuja further says—“The difference of the soul—presenting itself as the soul of a god, a man etc., from the highest Self is not due to its essential nature, but rests on the basis of Nescience in the form of work; when through meditation on Brahman this basis is destroyed, the difference due to it comes to an end, and the soul no longer differs from the highest Self.”<sup>2</sup>

Every jiva is an agent (kartā) of actions and reaps the rewards of them in its next life. Every jiva is a separate being, and therefore, experiences its pains and pleasures separately. Unlike Sāṅkhya, Rāmānuja holds that the individual soul is the doer of actions (कर्ता) and the enjoyer (भोक्ता) of their consequences. Rāmānuja argues that if the Self were not an agent, and all activity belonged to the Prakṛti in a common possession of all souls, or else to none of the souls; for, as such the Self is held to be omnipresent, they are all of them in equal proximity to all parts of the Pradhāna. For the same reason it could not be maintained that the distribution of

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja — *Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*, Tr. Tibbaut, 2.3.50, p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1.1.1, p. 101.

results between the different souls depends on different internal organs which are joined to the souls; for if the souls are omnipresent, no soul will be exclusively connected with any particular internal organ.<sup>1</sup> Thus, he confutes the possibility of only one Self for all, and maintains that each individual soul acts as the doer of actions and he enjoys separately the fruits thereof only for itself. If the soul that acts in various ways does not persist as the same to reap the consequences of those actions, the moral principle of adṛṣṭa will prove invalid. The consequences will not be perpetrated on the same person who had done the corresponding good or bad deeds of which they are corresponding consequences. The principle of morality comes to be endangered and moral anarchy may arise. Rāmānuja upholds the efficacy and validity of the adṛṣṭa or moral doctrine and maintains that in the case of a soul, subject to karma and not knowing its essential nature, such connexion with a body necessarily takes place in order the soul may enjoy the fruit of its actions quite apart from the soul's desire.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the soul's birth and earthly existence is governed by the rigid moral doctrine; the soul does not acquire its existence in accordance with its desire. The moral doctrine maintains the moral order of the world. Rāmānuja further maintains that though the jīvas essentially are constituted of uncontracted,

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 2.3.36, p. 555.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 240.

undivided and pure intelligence, being enveloped by the Nescience (avidyā) in the form of the Karmas, they possess their knowledge contracted in accordance with their deeds, and as they have entered in all the various bodies from the grass to the Brahman have their knowledge spread in accordance of the magnitudes of the those bodies respectively. They possess the pride of those bodies occupied, perform their concerned duties and enjoy their corresponding pleasures and pains issuing from them which constitute the current of the *saṁsāra*.<sup>1</sup> Thus, according to Rāmānuja the intelligence of the individual souls is subject to contraction (*saṅkoca*—संकोच) and expansion (*prasaraṇa*—प्रसरण) in accordance with the Karma and body with which it comes to be associated due to its Karma. The original infinite intelligence of the soul is obscured, obliterated and delimited when it revolves in the state of *saṁsāra* as long as it is governed by Karma. Therefore, it loses its omniscience and omnipotence while in *saṁsāra*. While contrasting the powers of the bound souls with the released or *mukta* souls, Rāmānuja says — “The non-released soul has its intellectual power contracted by the influence of Karman, and hence, is incapable of that expansive pervasion without which it cannot identify itself with other bodies. The released soul, on the other hand, whose

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja: *Vedārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 123.

जीवात्मानः स्वयं असंकुचित-अपरिच्छिन्न-निर्मलज्ञानस्वरूपाः सन्तः  
कर्मरूप-अविद्यावेष्टिताः तत्तत्कर्मानुरूपज्ञानसंकोचं आपन्नाः तद्-अनु-  
गुणसुखदुःखोपभोगरूपसंसारप्रवाहं प्रतिपद्यन्ते ।



intellectual power is non-contracted, is capable of extending as far as it likes, and thus to make many bodies its own. The non-released soul is ruled by Karman, the released one only by its will—this is the difference.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the souls under bondage possess limited knowledge, limited power and imperfect happiness while the released souls possess the qualities of the Self in their unhindered perfection.

The essential nature of the individual souls (cit) is one of intelligence (ज्ञानात्मकं), and in this respect they are similar to īśvara, but īśvara is all-pervasive (विशु) and the souls are atomic (अणु). They have sajātiya difference between them but the soul is different by kind (vijātiya) from the acit (matter) which can never be conscious. Sāyaṇa Mādhava says that no contraction of knowledge can take place in the intelligence that is constitutive of its essential nature (स्वरूपभूतज्ञानस्य); the contraction takes place because of the Karma which is made identical with Nescience (avidyā) by Rāmānuja, of the attributive knowledge (गुणभूतज्ञानस्य). The attributive knowledge of the souls is also known as the धर्मभूतज्ञान. Rāmānuja holds that it is the nature of the individual souls to undergo contraction and modifications of its attributive knowledge (guṇabhūtajñāna); similarly, it is in its nature to experience pleasure and pain by its connection (संसर्ग) with the objects of the world (acit) which are its objects of experience (भोग्यभूत) and its nature is to have the

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja—*Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*, Tr. Thibaut, 4•4•15, p. 765.

knowledge of the essential nature of the (Bhagavat) Īśvara and the attainment of the feet of the Īśvara (भगवत्पद)<sup>1</sup>. Mahendranath Sircar says—"Jñāna or dharmabhūtajñāna is an eternal self-illuminating existence. It is an attribute (dharma). It admits of expansion and contraction, it reveals or expresses objects, other than itself to ātman. In Īśvara it is always expansive and all-embracing, in others it is limited, in others, again, sometimes expansive, sometimes limited. It is a continuous existence."<sup>2</sup> The souls are bound (baddha) due to their karma which arises out of their mistaken identity with Prakṛti and their intelligence thereby undergoes the infinite variations of contraction (saṅkoca) and expansion (vikāśa). The quality (dharmabhūtajñāna) undergoes expansion and contraction but the subject itself remains immutable and eternal. The soul has in addition to intelligence (ज्ञातृत्व), the attributes of responsibility (कर्तृत्व) and appetite (भोक्तृत्व). By these characteristics the soul is a distinct entity and it is different from body, senses, mind and vital airs; it being permanent does not depend on other things.<sup>3</sup> It remains in the world and moves from birth to birth as long as it acts and is not free from Karma which arises out of the Nescience or ignorance about its own real nature.

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasamgraha*, pp. 110, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Sircar Mahendranath: *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*, Tr. Thibaut, 1. 1. 1, p. 72.

## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

531

It is a fact that the jīvas are modes or modifications of the Supreme Self and the Supreme Self resides in the souls as their indwelling reality that holds them (अधार) and controls and guides them from within. However, Rāmānuja does not deny freedom to these finite souls. The souls do enjoy freedom in the moral sphere and they are the determiners of their own pleasures and pains which arise in conformity with the goodness and badness of their deeds. The individual souls have the freedom to choose their actions and also the freedom to attain mukti or liberation. Though they are dependent upon īśvara, they are not dummies or impotent entities; but they enjoy full freedom in the moral sphere. The individual souls transmigrate so long as their Karma is not exhausted. They pass from one birth to another with the help of the subtle body which contains in it the desert or the accumulated saṁskāras of the past birth. If the soul chooses to be free from the saṁsāra there is every opportunity to attain eternal redemption and to be ever free from the saṁsāra. As S. Radhakrishnan says —“ The questions of human freedom and divine sovereignty assume great importance in Rāmānuja’s philosophy, since he is anxious to emphasize both. Individual souls depend entirely on God for their activity. God declares what is good and what is bad, supplies souls with bodies, gives them power to employ them, and is also the cause in an ultimate sense of the freedom and bondage of the souls .... God does not make the soul do good or evil acts according to his caprice, but shows his constancy of nature by acting according to the

law of Karma .... The law of Karma expresses the will of God. The order of Karma is set up by God, who is the ruler of Karma (कर्माध्यक्षः). Since the law is dependent on God's nature, God himself may be regarded as rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked."<sup>1</sup> Thus, though God is the sovereign power and possesses the power to suspend the law of Karma and to give mukti directly to the souls, he does not want to use his powers in the ordinary course. His powers are reserved for emergency cases and He uses his veto when it becomes absolutely necessary; and that too, only in exceptional cases. He does not want to disturb His machinery already set up; and hence the souls have to evolve their nature gradually by means of knowledge and moral actions to purify their nature and make themselves worthy of liberation by their own strong moral will and efforts. He encourages them in such efforts.

Rāmānuja holds like all other systems of philosophy that the aim of philosophical knowledge is attainment of release or liberation (Mokṣa). Like Sāṅkara he too holds that liberation consists in the realisation of the goal as depicted in the famous text of the Śrīti, 'I am the Brahman' (अहं ब्रह्मास्मि) or 'Thou art That' (तत्त्वमसि). Liberation for him means entering into identity with the Brahman. Thus, it is an intuitive experience in which the individual realises the presence of the Brahman within himself and everywhere without him. The soul realises that it is inseparable from the Brahman and that its

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 694.

## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

533

essential reality or the innermost reality is the Brahman that is present everywhere in all animate and inanimate things, as even in the gods like Brahmadeva. The released soul realises its true nature of prakāratva or non-differentiation from Brahman as being its body. In the state of liberation unlike Śaṅkara's idea, the soul does not lose itself but it enters into the experience of inseparability with the Brahman. It persists in Brahman as its body but without the actual distinctions of name and form caused by Karma. The soul maintains its individuality but only as an attribute of the Brahman. It becomes divested from the Prakṛti and its influences. It becomes free from all Karmas and enjoys in the company of Īśvara, all His qualities in their perfection except the qualities of creation (सर्जन) of the world and controlling it (नियन्तृत्व). The souls enjoy fragmentary and sensuous pleasures in the world; while they enjoy the perfect bliss and perfect intelligence in the state of liberation. Their intelligence becomes omniscient and they become omnipotent. They become all-pervasive by being an inseparable parts of the Brahman. They are not lost in the Brahman as Śaṅkara says; but they retain also the consciousness of 'I', and live there for eternity as distinct enjoying subjects. They enjoy there the highest bliss of Viṣṇu (विष्णु) or Nārāyaṇa (नारायण) and become free for ever from the physical body, subtle body and the fragmentary experiences of pleasures and afflictions. This state is acquired by overcoming the false sense of separation from the Brahman, which is caused by avidyā. The souls can attain liberation,

by knowledge and by exclusive devotion (भक्ति) to the Supreme Self, the Paramātmā. The soul can attain eternal liberation by intellectual love (bhakti) and by (प्रणति) total submission to the Divine Person. The Paramātmā or God in His turn helps the devotee to reach Him by removing from his path the obstructions and impediments. He is extremely kind and merciful to his devotees. God is a treasure of an infinite number of auspicious qualities which he bestows upon the released souls and they enjoy them to their perfection. God gives eternal security, bliss and infinite knowledge to such souls. They no more return to the world which is full of afflictions.

Rāmānuja agrees with Śaṅkara and others in holding that bondage (bandha) is due to Nescience (avidyā) which consists in the identification of the soul with body, senses, and the Prakṛti (acit). The two are exclusive and opposed to each other. Bondage exists so long as the individual soul identifies itself with the bodily experiences and its limitations; it suffers pains and afflictions due to its false estimation, so long as it does not experience unity with the Brahman and regards the plurality real by losing the sight of the underlying unity of the Brahman and its pure, eternal, perfect and blissful nature. Rāmānuja says—“Release, which consists in the cessation of all Plurality, cannot take place as long as a man lives. And we, therefore, adhere to our view that bondage is to be terminated only by means of injunctions of meditation, the result of which is direct knowledge of Brahman. Nor must

this be objected to on the ground that Release, if brought about by injunctions, must therefore be something non-eternal; for what is effected is not Release itself, but only the cessation of what impedes it. Moreover, the injunction does not directly produce the cessation of Bondage, but only through the meditation of direct cognition of Brahman as consisting of pure knowledge, and not connected with a world. It is this knowledge which the injunction produces."<sup>1</sup> Thus, bondage is only imaginary and it has no permanent existence. Release or liberation is eternal because it is nothing but the free nature of the Self and it is co-existent with the Self or Brahman. The sense of the unhindered freedom of the Supreme Self is lost or obscured by ignorance due to false identification of the soul with the modes of the body including ahaṁkāra. When that sense of separateness is successfully overcome by meditating upon the real nature of the Brahman or Īśvara, the soul loses all its worldly pains and sufferings. It realises its real nature as pure and perfectly blissful. This experience constitutes the state of liberation.

Rāmānuja further makes it clear that release is eternal; hence, it cannot be produced and it cannot be effected by meritorious acts.<sup>2</sup> Bondage is essentially an illusory phenomenon; nescience (avidyā) cannot exist anywhere but in the thinking mind and hence it has to be uprooted by the right knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1:1-4, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1:1-4, p. 181.

of the Brahman. It can be attained by properly realising the real nature of the soul which is in essence nothing else but the Supreme Self. A proper realisation of the proposition 'That art Thou' leads to the final liberation. Rāmānuja does not mean the complete annihilation of the individual soul (jiva) by the absorption of it in the Brahman, but he means by it the generation of the consciousness of its unity and inseparability with the Brahman. It consists in the realisation on the part of the soul in itself that it is only a mode of the Brahman which is its innermost Self or reality; that it cannot exist apart from its cause, the Brahman, and that it is only an extension of the Brahman. Rāmānuja explains the meaning of the text 'that art thou' as 'in that all this has its Self'.<sup>1</sup> He maintains that not only is the soul not annulled in liberation but it maintains in it even its sense of egoity. Rāmānuja is not able to imagine a state of release in which that which attains release is not conscious of the attainment of the release. He says — "The 'I' is not a mere attribute of the Self so that even after its destruction the essential nature of the Self might persist—as it persists on the cessation of ignorance—but it constitutes the very nature of the Self."<sup>2</sup> That which undertakes severe penance for the attainment of release does not desire the final state of liberation in which it itself would

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 70.



be extinct. According to Rāmānuja, every self-conscious entity essentially possesses the sense of 'I'. Rāmānuja further makes his position clear in the following passage: "This 'inward' Self shines forth in the state of final release also as an 'I'; for it appears to itself; the general principle is that whatever being appears to itself appears as an 'I';..on the contrary, whatever does not appear as an 'I', does not appear to itself; as jars and the like. Now the emancipated Self does thus appear to itself, and therefore, it appears as an 'I'. Nor does this appearance as an 'I' imply in any way that the released Self is subject to Nescience and implicated in the Samsāra; for this would contradict the nature of the final release, and moreover the consciousness of the 'I' cannot be the cause of Nescience and so on."<sup>1</sup> Though the soul coalesces with the Self as its integral factor, it still retains its own self-consciousness, and on the ground of such consciousness it enjoys all the divine perfect qualities with the Supreme Self.

The liberated soul becomes completely free from all the Karmas and also from its physical surroundings and worldly limitations. In Mokṣa, the soul becomes free from Prakṛti and the physical body; therefore, it ceases to experience the physical pleasures and pains, and it also becomes free from the imperfections of such experiences.<sup>2</sup> As the liberated

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja—Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, pp. 70, 71.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1.1.4, p. 181.

soul becomes eternally free from the accumulated stock of Karma (कर्मसंचय) it is no more required to come back to the saṁsāra and to lead its transmigratory existence. As the released soul has freed itself from the bondage of Karma, has its powers of knowledge fully developed, and has all its being in the supremely blissful intuition of the highest Brahman, it evidently cannot desire anything else nor enter on any other form of activity, and the idea of its returning into the saṁsāra, therefore, is altogether excluded. Nor indeed need we fear that the Supreme Lord, when once having taken to Himself the devotee whom He greatly loves will turn him back into the saṁsāra.<sup>1</sup> The released soul is naturally free for ever from the subtle body which exists as long as the desert does not come to an end; but as there is no desert to be experienced and the soul is no more required to come to the worldly life, the subtle body also disappears from it for ever.

According to Rāmānuja, the jiva or the individual soul becomes not only free from the sufferings and imperfections of the wordly life in Mokṣa, but it enjoys the highest bliss and all the infinite auspicious qualities of the Divine. The individual enjoys the company and grace of the Paramātman or Nārāyaṇa, who is described as the most magnanimous personality possessing eminence, highest beauty, perfect brilliance, immense mercy and love, profound blessedness, infinite knowledge, and unsurpassable power. Such a highest Self is the object of enjoyment

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja—*Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 4.4.22, p. 771.

of the liberated souls. नारायण, that is the highest Brahman according to Rāmānuja, is described as that who resides in the Vaikunṭha, who lies on the beautiful coach of the immortal cobra forming His throne in the ever-illuminated hall in the superb palace of His, possessing body with divine lustre, divine freshness, tenderness, delicacy, beauty and who has four arms with which he holds the divine weapons like the disc (cakra), conch, etc., and who is always worshipped and accompanied by the eagle (garuḍa), etc.<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja gives an exquisite description of this Divine Person that possesses not only grandeur and divine lustre and divine beauty, but all auspicious qualities in their perfection and immense love and compassion (करुणा) for His creation. He showers love and compassion on his devotees and is ever eager to receive his devotees who worship Him as their sole end of life and their sole object of devotion. He is always anxious to help His devotees (bhaktas) to reach Him and He removes from their path all impediments.<sup>2</sup> He is not the blank and qualityless Absolute of S'aṅkara, but, is the most beautiful and grand Person (is'vara) who possesses omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, all faultless auspicious qualities, and profound love and compassion for His devotees.

Thus, the ultimate Reality, the Brahman appears in a personal form but without limitations. The impersonal Brahman of S'aṅkara is transformed by

<sup>1</sup> *S'urvadarśanasāgraha*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Rāmānuja : *Vedārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 237.

Rāmānuja into a personal Godpossessing all the perfections of the Brahman. Sāṅkara's qualityless Brahman is too abstract and dry for an average individual who always seeks his end within the reach of his intellectual and emotional capacities. The Brahman of Sāṅkara can be understood only by the few most intelligent persons possessing a high power of abstraction. It is too dry and cold and fails to appeal to the heart of an average individual who also moves in search of something that would help him to rise above the worldly sufferings and imperfections and would give him consolation and solace in the times of his trials and tribulations. He seeks some power that is close and affectionate to him and cares to stand by him in the moments of his sufferings and gives him love and compassion, strength and patience, inspiration, faith, enthusiasm, and hope. Man, as he is weak and finite, often demands such a support on which he can rely with absolute faith and confidence. He requires some power that he believes to be all-good and which assures him all co-operation and courage in the moments of his trials. Sāṅkara's philosophy of Brahman is excessively intellectualistic and it neglects the heart of man that also seeks emotional satisfaction from the object of his devotion. Sāṅkara's Brahman is blank and colourless, and hence, it is incapable of satisfying the demands and cravings of the human heart. It evokes little inspiration in the finite beings and fails to arouse faith, patience and courage, hope and enthusiasm in the finite beings. In Rāmānuja's theism, his Nārāyaṇa

## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

541

comes ahead with confidence, power and promise and seeks to give consolation, solace and promise of deliverance to the afflicted and troubled souls. Rāmānuja's Personal God, the *Īśvara* or *Nārāyaṇa* stands like a magnanimous support to all the weak groaning souls and assures them eternal bliss, perfect satisfaction, everlasting freedom and promise of no-more-return to the *saṁsāra*. He is standing for ever as a resort for all those that seek Him. He is ever ready to embrace whosoever runs to Him for protection and security. He assures all the men everlasting freedom from pain for which freedom they are ever anxious. Such a God appealed more to the people and hence Rāmānuja's philosophy came to be more appreciated and was popularly accepted. It turned into a powerful religious cult and Rāmānuja proved to be a great religious leader who stood to comfort the troubled souls irrespective of their castes, creeds and social positions. Such a God is no doubt, infinitely superior to the individual souls in knowledge, power, and glory, but He does not evoke terror and fright in the finite individuals; but He invokes in them reverence as He enters into personal relationships with them and remains ever prepared to shower on them His immense affection, profound love and immeasurable graces. As He becomes personally accessible to the finite souls, His greatness and glory increase infinitely. He commands from the finite souls reverence and devotion voluntarily. Robert Flint makes very significant remarks about the necessity of God as against the excessive intellectualism of the atheists. He says— "To the

atheist, nature may be beautiful and sublime, but it must be, above all terrible. Nature stands to him in place of Deity, but is the mere embodiment of force, the god of the iron foot, without ear for prayer, or heart for sympathy, or arm for help. It is immense, it is sublime, it sparkles with beauties, but it is senseless, aimless and, pitiless. It is an interminable succession of causes and effects, with no reason or love as either their beginning or end; it is an unlimited ocean of restlessness and change, the waves of which heave and moan, under the influence of necessity, in darkness for ever more; it is an enormous mechanism, driving and grinding on of itself from age to age, but towards no goal and for no good. We can only be rationally free to enjoy nature when we have confidence that one hand of an almighty Father is working the mechanism of the universe and another guiding His children in the midst of it so that neither wheel nor hammer shall injure one hair of their heads."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the necessity of God is supreme for the satisfaction of the human heart. God must not be only kind and affectionate but He must possess absolute power to control nature and its working so that He can combat any evil arising out of it successfully, and can extend protection and security to His children unfailingly. God must, therefore, be omnipotent and the final authority, the sovereign invincible power that can threaten, frighten and destroy evils of any magnitude that harass His children on the earth and against

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<sup>1</sup> Flint Robert: *Anti-Theistic Theories*, p. 31.

## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

543

which they seek to shield themselves under the kind hand of God. Rāmānuja's God thus seeks to satisfy the metaphysical, affectional, religious, intellectual and moral demands of man.

Such a Supreme God appears in five different modes for the purposes of the devotion of God by the devotees and the creation of the world, etc. Bhandarkar describes these following forms in detail—(i) The Para (पर) or the highest, in which mode Nārāyaṇa (नारायण), called also Parabrahman (परब्रह्म) and परवासुदेव, lives in a city called Vaikunṭha (वैकुण्ठ), which is guarded by certain persons and which has doorkeepers; seated in a pavilion of gems on a coach in the form of the serpent śeṣa (शेष), placed on a throne having the eight legs, Dharma and others; attended by Ś'ree, Bhū, Līlā; holding the celestial weapons conch-shell, discus and others; adorned with celestial ornaments, such as tiara and others, possessed of numberless auspicious attributes, knowledge, power and others; and His presence being enjoyed by the eternal spirits such as Ananta, Garuḍa, Viṣvaksena and others, and by delivered souls. (ii) Vyūha (व्यूह), in which the Para himself has assumed four forms, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha for convenience of worship and for purposes such as creation, etc. Of these, Vāsudeva is possessed of the six qualities (jñāna, bala, ais'varya, vīrya, śakti and tejas). Saṅkarṣaṇa has two, viz., Omniscience and sustaining power; Pradyumna, two, viz., controlling power and unchangeableness, and Aniruddha creative power and

all overcoming prowess. (iii) *Vibhava* (विभव) — which mode consists of ten Avatāras, fish, tortoise, etc. (iv) *Antaryāmin* (अन्तर्यामी) — in which mode He dwells in the heart and is to be seen by Yogins and accompanies the individual souls even when they go to heaven or hell. (v) *Idols* or images made of materials chosen by the worshippers."<sup>1</sup> In fact these six attributes exist in all the four Vyūhas but only two of them manifest in accordance with their functions apportioned to them and, the other four remain unmanifest or dormant in them.<sup>2</sup>

Rāmānuja holds that in Mokṣa the individual soul overcomes its false sense of complete separability from the Brahman being caused by its false identity with Prakṛti and the soul, then remains fused with the Brahman or the Supreme Self without losing the awareness of its own existence. Mahendranath Sircar gives a vivid and eloquent description of the state of liberation of the soul. He says — "And in so far liberation implies this breaking of nature's bond, we can speak of the emancipated soul as getting into the infinite expanse and the transcendental realm. But it is in no sense the parting with a finite personality. In the finitude of the soul it feels and enjoys the infinite pulse. And this becomes possible through Śakti, the divine influence. Liberation in theistic sense is not the denial of the

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 53, 54. Also see *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha*, p. 116 and Com. on p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars' anasaṅgraha*, p. 115.



## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

545

relativity of consciousness for in it is fully realised the import of the metaphysical relativity, which does not exclude difference, but includes and absorbs it in the transcendental apperception of unity..... It is a freedom and necessity and both, freedom in the sense of a release from the divided vision and obstruction, necessity in the sense of utter dependence upon the infinite.”<sup>1</sup> He further makes the relation between the two clearer and says that the infinite expresses its power and blessedness in and through the finite; the infinite Divine pours its blessedness and fullness into the finite and the finite receives it to its fullest capacities and is overfilled with the exuberance of the divine joy and bliss.

The realisation of the essential identity of the soul with the Brahman is the aim of a mumukṣu (मुमुक्षु)—seeker of liberation. Rāmānuja recognises the need of all the three yogas or paths (jñānayoga, karmayoga and bhaktiyoga), for the attainment of the state of final release. He does not at all dispute the necessity of knowledge for liberation. Knowledge is the first necessity; for, bondage arises out of nescience or avidyā which can be destroyed only by knowledge; but it is not any kind of knowledge such as knowledge by sense-perception or by inference or knowledge by word, by simply reading the texts. But the Brahman can be known properly, and the individual's unity with it can be realised only through meditation on it. The final state of liberation can

<sup>1</sup> Sircar Mahendranath: *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, pp. 265, 266.

be experienced only by means of intuitive experience of it. Rāmānuja, therefore, proposes devotion (bhakti) and total surrender to the Divine (Prapatti) for the attainment of liberation. His Bhakti or devotion is predominantly loving reverence for the Īśvara and this love for the Divine is completely fused with knowledge of the Brahman.<sup>1</sup> Bhakti means for Rāmānuja a kind of intellectual love for Īśvara. It is not a blind and superstitious worship of God but it consists in thoroughly understanding the nature of the Īśvara or the Supreme Self and its relation with the individual souls and the objects of the world; it also consists in understanding that every soul is only a mode of the Supreme Self and the Self is its own innermost reality and that, in essence, the two, the soul and the Supreme Self are of the same stuff. Therefore, the penance for Mokṣa presupposes the necessity of knowledge as the most fundamental prerequisite. Karma which consists in the discharge of the religious rites and moral duties and performance of religious worship of deities, austerity, pilgrimage, giving charity, praying to God, offering salutations, singing songs about the glory of God, etc., are equally necessary. But they are subordinate.<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar says — “Karmayoga and jñānayoga are necessary for the efficacy of the method of Bhakti. Karmayoga is the performance of all acts,

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja : Vedārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 248.

भक्तिशब्दः च प्रीतिविशेषे वर्तते प्रीतिः च ज्ञानविशेषः एव ।

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadars'anasaṅgraha*, p. 119.

ज्ञानमेव मुख्यं मोक्षसाधनम् ।

rites and ceremonies without regard for their fruit. The Karmayoga purifies the soul and leads to jñānayoga or acquisition of knowledge. This knowledge consists in seeing oneself different from Prakṛti or matter, and an attribute of God himself (S'eṣa). This jñānayoga leads to Bhakti. Bhaktiyoga, or the method of Bhakti consists in continuous meditation accompanied by the practice of Yoga process."<sup>1</sup> Bhakti is defined as 'the form of intense love towards Him (God).'<sup>2</sup> Nārada thinks that devotion is indicated by the condition of having dedicated all observances whatsoever to Him, and by the feeling of extreme uneasiness in losing Him from memory.<sup>3</sup> Sāṅdilya defines it 'as the absolute attachment to God'. Rāmānuja says — "... he who possesses remembrance, marked by the character of immediate presentation (sākṣātkāra-साक्षात्कार), and which itself is dear above all things since the object remembered is such; he, we say, is chosen by the highest Self, and by him the highest self is gained. Steady remembrance of this kind is designated by the word 'devotion' (bhakti); for this term has the same meaning as Upāsanā (meditation)."<sup>4</sup> Rāmānuja employs the term Bhakti in the sense of 'steady remembrance'. Rāmānuja holds that

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaisnavism, S'alvism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 54, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Sinha Nandlal (Tr.) : *The Bhakti Sūtras of Nārada*, Sūtra 2, p. 2. सा तु अस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Sūtra 19, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 16.

mere hearing (श्रवण) of the holy Scriptures, reflection and meditation by remembrance are not sufficient to realise the Self; but something more than that is necessary, and that is the immediate presentation (pratyakṣatā).<sup>1</sup> Such a steady remembrance in the form of immediate presentation of the object of devotion is a kind of knowledge. Rāmānuja says—“....it is only knowledge in the form of meditation which—being daily practised, constantly improved by repetition, and continued up to death—is the means of reaching Brahman, and hence all the works connected with the different conditions of life are to be performed throughout life only for the purpose of originating such knowledge.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, all the deeds possess only an instrumental value in so far as they help this kind of knowledge by constant remembrance of Īśvara. Thus, meditation or bhakti means concentrated and continuous thinking of the object of devotion by inhibiting other thoughts.<sup>3</sup> The mind has the tendency to assume the form and nature of that object on which it always dwells. Therefore, real devotee has to cultivate indifference and passivity towards other objects of experience except the Brahman or the Supreme Self. Rāmānuja quotes the Vākyakāra and says that the development of such Bhakti depends upon the observance of the following discipline—(i) *viveka* (विवेक)—abstention from impure food from the point of view of the varṇāśramadharma;

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja—*Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1.1.1, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Sinha Nandlal (Tr.): *The Bhakti Sūtras of Nārada*, Sūtra 11, p. 5.

(ii) *vimoka* (विमोक) —freeness of mind, abandonment of desires which bind the mind; (iii) *abhyāsa* (अभ्यास) —repetition; (iv) *kriya* (क्रिया) —works, performance of sacrifice according to one's capacity; (v) *kalyāṇa* (कल्याण) —virtuous conduct, truth-speaking; kindness to all, right disposition, charity and non-injury; (vi) *anavasāda* (अनवसाद) —freedom from dejection, abandoning cowardliness; and (vii) *anud-dharṣa* (अनुदर्व) —absence of exultation, absence of too much satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> The observance of these disciplines enables an individual to detach himself from the attachment to the external world and make progress in the concentration on his object of meditation. It is necessary to free the mind from alien influences and to fix it constantly on the one single object which is God. Rāmānuja advocates also the practice of the Yoga of the eight limbs (*aṣṭāṅga-saṁg*) for such a steady remembrance of God. He stresses the need for observing strictly all the eight parts of Yoga which are the *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *saṁādhi* in order to reach actually the final experience of *Īśvara*. When all these conditions which form the physical and mental discipline and go to prepare the mental background of the devotee for the final realisation of God (अंतिमप्रत्यय) are fulfilled, the *bhakti* becomes strengthened, the individual devotee becomes extremely keen and ardent for God. He then becomes forgetful of his physical and mental

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 17.

separativeness. He becomes completely free from his selfishness, pride, vanity, narrowness of mind, passions and desires and remains always in the contemplation of Īśvara. When he has the depth and profundity of devotion in his heart he becomes qualified for the final stage of Prapatti, which consists in the complete self-surrender (saraṇāgati-  
 चरणगति) of the jīva to the Īśvara. In this stage the devotee negates his private life and surrenders totally to Īśvara. It happens only once, at the death of the individual when even the Prārabdha karma has come to an end. Prapatti consists in the total surrender of the individual soul to God with a sense of absolute faith in Him, and in His goodness and power to lift it up, and make it free from the three kinds of pains. Rāmānuja recognises six factors that go to form prapatti : (i) acquisition of qualities which would make one fit for offering to God; (ii) avoidance of conduct not acceptable to God; (iii) faith that God would protect him; (iv) appeal for protection; (v) a feeling of one's own littleness; and (vi) absolute surrender. The last is one with Prapatti and others are means to it."<sup>1</sup> Prapatti is open to the people of all classes and castes while the jñāna and karma yogas are confined only to the upper three classes. When an individual has already been qualified (अधिकारी) by means of jñāna and karma, prapatti helps him certainly to reach the final stage. Ājivars of the Southern school hold that prapatti is the

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 705  
 (note).

only way to liberation. No other efforts are necessary for reaching the final state of liberation. While the Northern school (Vāḍagalais) holds that prapatti is one and not the only way to liberation. The former believes in the mārjāra nyāya (मार्जारन्याय) — the cat-theory, according to which, the kitten is taken up by the cat with its mouth, similarly the individual soul has only to surrender to God and has nothing else to do; God would release it by His grace; while the latter school believes in the markaṭa-nyāya (मर्कटन्याय) — the monkey-theory, according to which, the young monkey is required to exert to stick to the mother; the individual soul has to keep vigilant to be always with God. Rāmānuja further holds that the individual soul assumes complete humility before God and likes to serve Him as its master (स्वामी). It takes delight in giving itself up to the Supreme Self, it obtains His grace and enjoys the pleasure of His service — kainkarya (कैकर्य) or Dāsatva (दासत्व). It takes positive happiness in serving such an omniscient and merciful God. Rāmānuja further believes that only those who are qualified by their single devotion to God are shown grace by God, and they finally reach the state of liberation. He alone who has superabundance of love for God becomes dearest (priyatamaḥ-प्रियतमः) to God.<sup>1</sup> The Supreme Self can be reached only by those who develop excessive and exclusive love and devotion for Him (अनन्यभक्ति) by disregarding others and by showing indifference and no

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja : *Vedārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 255.

यस्य भगवति अनवधिकातिशया प्रीतिः जायते सः एव भगवतः प्रियतमः ।

interest in others.<sup>1</sup> But the individual's efforts and austere penance are not necessarily sufficient to lift them up to Him (God).

Rāmānuja says—“And with equal certainty we know from Scripture that this Supreme Lord, when pleased by the faithful worship of his Devotees—which worship consists in daily repeated meditation on Him, assisted by the performance of all the practices prescribed for each caste and āśrama—frees them from the influence of Nescience which consists of Karman accumulated in the infinite progress of time and hence hard to overcome; allows them to attain to that supreme bliss which consists in the direct intuition of His own true nature; and after that does not turn them back into the miseries of saṁsāra.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, God, when pleased, shows His grace to the prapanna (प्रपन्न) or surrendered devotees, picks them up, and keeps them in his own company for ever. The powers of such released soul then remain no more eclipsed and diminished as when in saṁsāra but they fully develop in it and it has all its being in the supremely blissful intuition of the highest Brahman. As the soul enjoys all the infinite glories and auspicious qualities of Īśvara and are ever-contented there remains no need for and possibility of entertaining any desire to come back to the earth to enjoy the earthly pleasures which are too inadequate and worthless for it. Moreover, God, who so

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja : *Vedārtha Saṅgraha*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Rāmānuja—*Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 4.4.22, p. 770.



much loves such a soul would not send it back to suffer on the earth.<sup>1</sup> The released souls cease to be governed by karma in the kingdom of God but they are then governed by their will as they are eternally free. They possess the power to enjoy whatever they desire only by their will and do not necessarily require physical body. As their intellectual power is non-contracted, they can extend as far as they like and can get different experiences through different bodies without hindrance.<sup>2</sup> They can freely move about anywhere. They live in a bodiless state. They enjoy equality with the Brahman by casting off their physical bodies.<sup>3</sup> The released souls enjoy all powers, knowledge and good qualities of the Īś'vara excepting a few like creating the world and ruling and guiding the different forms of motion and rest belonging to the animate and inanimate nature.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the released soul does not lose itself but maintains its distinctive consciousness and attains supreme equality (Paramaṁ Sāmyam—परमं साम्यं) with the highest Brahman.

Rāmānuja denies the possibility of Jivanmukta, who overcomes Nescience but still continues to be in the physical body due to the Prārabdha Karma, the karma of which fruition has already begun. Rāmānuja disputes such a possibility and negates it on the ground that in the final state of liberation no defect

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 4.4.22, p. 771.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4.4.15, p. 765.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 4.4.5, p. 759.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 4.4.17, p. 766.

(even the body) can survive when the knowledge of the Brahman dawns. He says therefore—“...that Release, which consists in the cessation of Plurality, cannot take place as long as a man lives.”<sup>1</sup> Liberation to him is the final attainment of an unbreaking-fellowship with the Infinite and a likeness with Brahman in Being and knowledge.<sup>2</sup> As Mahendranath Sircar says the individual soul can draw the constituent matter of the form that it may assume at its will after becoming free from *suddha sattva* and visualising itself. It is visualisation but not materialisation. If it is a form, it is immaterial, but none the less real. It is also an expression of spiritual being and consciousness. Rāmānuja does not put a limit to spontaneous expression in spiritual life. It is a life of free expansion and free expression, beyond the calculation of human reason and intellect.<sup>3</sup>

This is the idea of Mokṣa in the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja seems to depart from the earlier systems like Buddhism, Cārvākism, Sāṅkhya, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā in holding that the state of Mokṣa is not only a negative one consisting in the absence of pain, suffering and other conscious experiences; it is not also like the Mokṣa of Sāṅkara, according

<sup>1</sup> *Rāmānuja — Com. on Vedānta Sūtras*. Tr. Thibaut, 1.1.1, p. 187.

अतः सकलमेदनिवृत्तिरूपा मुक्तिः न जीवतः संभवति ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4.4.4. साम्यसाधर्म्यव्यपदेशः ब्रह्मप्रकारभूतस्य एव प्रत्यगात्मनः स्वरूपं तत्त्वमता इति ।

<sup>3</sup> Sircar Mahendranath : *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*. p. 280.

to whom, the individual soul gets ultimately lost and dissolved into the Supreme Self, the Brahman; but it is a positive state in which though the individual soul loses its physical and subtle body, maintains its separate consciousness and enjoys all the powers of the Brahman (God) except that of creation and regulation of the world. It also enjoys overwhelmingly the perfect intelligence, perfect bliss and all the innumerable auspicious qualities of the Supreme Self. It is a state of positive unending enjoyment of happiness in which the soul and the Self are equal and remain inseparable forever.

### Nimbārka

Nimbārkaācārya, another powerful leader of Vaiṣṇavism was a successor of Rāmānuja and was a predecessor of the dvaitavādin Madhvācārya. He lived in the 11th century A.D. His philosophy resembles to a very great extent the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja. He was a Bhedābheda-vādin in as much as he believed that the individual soul (jiva) and the world are identical in essence with the Brahman or Kṛṣṇa, and still they are different from the Brahman as they possess their own distinct natures which are peculiar only with them. Nimbārka agrees with Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja in holding that the Brahman is the unitary and ultimate Reality which stands as the source (sarga-सर्ग), sustenance (sthiti-स्थिति) and reabsorption (laya-लय) of the whole world and the souls. But he rejects the Vivartavāda-विवर्तवाद (or illusoriness of the world

and the souls) of Sāṃkara and he agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that the Brahman as well as the individual soul (jiva) and the world (Prakṛti) are equally real. He also agrees with Rāmānuja in holding that the souls and the Prakṛti are the modes (prakāra or vikāra), the modifications of the Brahman.<sup>1</sup> The Brahman is related to the world by the relation of Bhinnābhinna (भिन्नाभिन्न) difference and non-difference.<sup>2</sup> The Brahman is at the centre of Reality, and the individual souls and the matter are its own transformations. It is both the material cause (upādāna kāraṇa) and the efficient cause (nimitta kāraṇa) of the world. It possesses unique and wonderful power (śakti-शक्ति) by means of which it transforms itself into the souls and the world, and it assumes the sentient (cit) and insentient (acit) forms.<sup>3</sup> Though the Brahman is omniscient and omnipotent, it assumes all the finite forms possessing defects (doṣa-दोष) but still it maintains its absolute purity. It is not contaminated by its defects. It always remains pure and unchangeable. All changes belong to its effects in so far as it appears in the phenomenal realm being immanent in all its particular creations. In its transcendental

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.1.9.

ब्रह्मविकारः संसारः ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4. सर्वभिन्नाभिन्नो भगवान् वासुदेवो विश्वार्त्मेव ।

<sup>3</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 1.4.26.

ब्रह्म एष निमित्तं उपादानं च, परिणामाद् । सर्वज्ञं सर्वशक्तिब्रह्म स्वशक्ति-  
विशेषेण जगदाकारं स्वात्मानं परिणमय्य अकृतेन स्वरूपेण शक्तिमता परिणतं  
एव भवति ।

aspect it remains for ever pure; it is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and possesses immense bliss, self-glory, immortality and pervasiveness.<sup>1</sup> It is full of bliss (आनन्द) and is independent (स्वतंत्र). The world is an effect in the sense that it is absolutely dependent (परतन्त्र or अस्वतंत्र) on the Brahman for its origin and existence. The Brahman alone is svatantra, self-dependent or independent in so far as it is self-subsistent. It does not require any other source and support for itself, and for its origin and existence. It is self-originated and the support of itself. It is the ultimate eternal Being beyond which nothing exists. All the particular finite things are but its creations or effects in so far as it is their underlying substantial nature and they are dependent for their origin and subsistence upon the Brahman; they also return to it at their end. They are therefore dependent (परतन्त्र) as they are governed (niyāmyatva) by the Supreme Self or the Brahman. They cannot exist apart from the Brahman. In pralaya (प्रलय) or in the pre-creation state they potentially exist in the Brahman and become actualised in the visible concrete form due to the wonderful creative power (asādhāraṇa śakti-असाधारण शक्ति) of the Brahman, just as a piece of cloth becomes visible with its expanse (prasārita-प्रसारित) when it is unrolled.<sup>2</sup> In all the forms the universe exists in the Brahman and the Brahman exists in it as its innermost reality

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 1.3.9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.1.18.

यथा च पूर्वसंवेष्टितः पश्चात्प्रसारितः पटः तद्वत् विश्वम् ।

(antaryāmin) by remaining immanent in it. Thus, the cosmic order is not an illusory projection of māyā but it is the self-actualisation of the creative potencies (s'akti-शक्ति) of the Brahman. The Brahman is the very stuff and substance of the universe of mind and matter.

Nimbārka is a Bhedābheda-vādin and he brings out the underlying identity of the plurality of souls and matter by presenting the similes of the ocean and its waves and the sun and its rays which are inseparable from each other; though the waves are non-different from the ocean and the rays of the sun are non-different from the sun their differences are not unreal. Similarly, though the souls and the inanimate objects are made of the stuff of the Brahman and so they are non-different from the Brahman they bear their own individual differences.<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka says that the effects are non-different (अनन्य) from the cause in the sense that they are not absolutely different (अत्यन्त भिन्नत्वम्) from them.<sup>2</sup> He maintains that the Brahman, or the Supreme Self (Paramātman) is the ruler (अधिपति-ādhipati) of all, the controller or regulator of all;<sup>3</sup> these words being used in the possessive case indicate that though the souls are His effects and modes, He is

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.1.13.

अविभागे अपि समुद्रतरंगयोः इव, सूर्यतत्प्रभयोः इव, तयोः विभागः स्यात् ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.1.14.

कार्यस्य कारणानन्यत्वमस्ति न तु अत्यन्तभिन्नत्वम् ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1.3.44.

different from them in virtue of His independent and extraordinary nature. Thus, bheda or difference means the possibility of existence which is separate, at the same time dependent (परतन्त्र सत्ताभावः); while a-bheda or non-difference means the impossibility of an independent existence (स्वतंत्र सत्ता अभावः). Thus, in the text 'Tattvamasi' the word 'tat' signifies the Brahman which is omniscient, omnipotent, independent and the Self of all; the word 'tvam' signifies the individual soul which depends for its existence upon the Brahman; and the word 'asi' is the copula signifying the relation of the two which is difference, not inconsistent with non-difference, and which can be illustrated by the relation between the fire and its sparks or by that between the sun and its lustre.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Brahman or Paramātmā is bhinnābhinna different and non-different at the same time with the souls and the world. Nimbārka assigns equal reality and importance to the difference while Rāmānuja gives primary importance to the unity of the Brahman by reducing the differences to its adjectives (विशेषण). Rāmānuja lays more emphasis on the unitary aspect of the Brahman which is only qualified by the parts or the souls and the world; while Nimbārka puts both on equal par and calls both real in the same sense.

Nimbārka discards the illusoriness of the world being caused by superimposition (adhyāsa-अव्यास) as S'aṅkara says. He argues that the world which is superimposed out of ignorance upon the Brahman must exist somewhere as a real object; it cannot be

<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, pp. 31, 32.

entirely imaginary and illusory. He regards the world also real. Nimbārka divides the whole reality into three parts which are equally real: (i) the *bhoktr*—भोक्त्— the individual, sentient soul with the capacity for sentience and experience; (ii) the *bhogyā*—भोग्य— the material world which forms the object of experience of the soul; and (iii) the *niyantr*—नियन्त्र— who controls and regulates their functions from within and on which the *bhoktr* (cit) and the *bhogyā* (acit) are absolutely dependent. Nimbārka designates the Brahman as Kṛṣṇa (कृष्ण) and describes it as the Paramātmā who is naturally free from all faults like ignorance, passion, hatred and attachment. He is the storehouse of all beneficent attributes, is adorable by all, has four forms of Vyūhas (व्यूह), i.e., Vāsudeva (वासुदेव), Saṁkarṣaṇa (संकर्षण), Pradyumna (प्रद्युम्न) and Aniruddha (अनिरुद्ध) and appears under various incarnations like Matsya, Kūrma, etc. He is the material (upādāna) and the efficient (nimitta) cause of the universe.<sup>1</sup> Kṛṣṇa is adored (vareṇya) by all because he has a holy celestial body and celestial qualities such as beauty, tenderness, sweetness and charm. All these are non-material (aprākṛta—अप्राकृत) though inanimate.

Thus, Nimbārka indicates the essential identity of the individual souls (jīvas) with Kṛṣṇa, the Paramātmā or the Brahman and still he maintains that all the jīvas are different in nature from the Brahman or Paramātmā and also from the prakṛti or acit. The jīva is atomic in size and becomes

<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S.: *Vedānta*, p. 31.



pervading by means of its attribute of knowledge. The Jīva is the knower (jñātṛ), the agent (kartṛ) and the experiencer (bhokṛ); it is limited in its knowledge and bliss while in saṁsāra as it is enveloped by karma which is caused by avidyā which is beginningless but terminable. The jīva is limited in its knowledge and powers and it suffers in the world. There are innumerable souls, one for each body, and each soul is the knower as well as knowledge at the same time, knowledge being its property (dharma). The soul suffers as long as it is in bondage, which is a result of ignorance (avidyā). The soul becomes free from the worldly afflictions (kleśa) by dissociating itself from the prakṛti and karma. It attains liberation (Mokṣa) when it becomes one with the Brahman finding its shelter in it. But it does not lose its individuality in Paramātmā even in Mokṣa. It enjoys then the perfect knowledge and bliss of Paramātmā. It enjoys the divine bliss, omniscience and divine glory in Mokṣa. Mokṣa can be attained by prapatti, total and unconditional surrender to the Parmātmā who by His grace liberates the finite souls and gives them eternal rest and delight.

The soul (jīva) is atomic in size;<sup>1</sup> it is extremely minute and is as minute as the hundredth part of the extremity of a hair when divided into hundred parts.<sup>2</sup> It occupies some one portion in the body and

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.3.19.

जीवोऽणुः ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.3.12.

एषः अणुः आत्मा बालाग्र-शतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च भागो जीवः...

still it can experience all the sensations occurring in other parts of the body. It can feel any experience occurring all over the body without any difficulty, for, it occupies the whole body by means of its knowledge or consciousness, which is its attribute just as a sandalpaste gives delight to the whole body though placed on one part of it.<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka holds like Rāmānuja that the jīva or individual soul is a possessor of knowledge and it spreads all over the body just as the light of a lamp placed in the interior of a room spreads in all the corners of the room.<sup>2</sup> The soul is no doubt, constituted of intelligence (jñānasvarūpaḥ-ज्ञानस्वरूप) but it is not intelligence itself as S'āṅkara holds. On the contrary, Nimbārka maintains a difference between the two by regarding knowledge as an attribute (guṇabhūta-गुणभूत) of the soul, the soul that has knowledge as its attribute as the fragrance is to the sandalwood, is different from knowledge or intelligence; it is the abode or substratum of such an attribute.<sup>3</sup> Thus, he does not identify knowledge with the soul like S'āṅkara; he does not make the knower and the knowledge the same. On the contrary, he maintains that knowledge is its attribute (dharma) and the soul is

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 2.3.23.

देहैकदेशस्थः अपि कृत्स्नं देहं चन्दनचिन्दुः यथाह्लादयति तथा जीवः अपि प्रकाशयति ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.3.25.

देहे प्रकाशः जीवगुणात् एव कोष्ठे दीपालोकादिवत् ।

<sup>3</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.3.36.

गुणभूतस्य ज्ञानस्य व्यतिरेकः तु गन्धवत् उपपद्यते एतादृशगुणाश्रयं जीवम् ।

its possessor (dharmin).<sup>1</sup> The soul is the knower, the knowing subject that is conscious by means of knowledge which acts to it as its attribute which spreads everywhere. The soul is a part of the all-pervading (vibhu) Brahman but it being not-pervading, it does not come into conflict with other souls in its experience and acts. Every soul, being atomic, is confined to itself and to its own body; and so, it is not able to experience the pleasures and pains of other souls.<sup>2</sup> Every soul is conscious of its own existence which is different from its knowledge. The jiva presents to itself as the knowing subject in the form of 'I'. It is also the Ego (ahamārtha-अहमर्थ) and it continues to persist not only in the waking state but also in the states of dream and deep sleep; it becomes visible from one's expressions after getting up from sleep as 'I slept happily'. It continues to persist even in the state of liberation. It means the ego-sense or the sense of 'I-hood' that belongs to the Parabrahman also, for it is frequently found that Kṛṣṇa refers to himself in the first person.<sup>3</sup> The soul or jiva does not lose its distinctive self-consciousness even in Mokṣa; it persists there as an independent entity to enjoy the divine bliss though it does not maintain any separation from the Brahman; in this respect he agrees with Rāmānuja.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 2.3.27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2.3.48.

विभोः अंशत्वे अपि गुणेन विमुक्त्वे अपि च आत्मनां स्वरूपतः अणुत्वेन सर्वगतत्वाभावात् कर्मादिव्यतिरेकः नास्ति ।

<sup>3</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, p. 29.

The soul (jīva) is also the agent (kartṛ) of actions.<sup>1</sup> It possesses a separate body and sense organs for itself and it does various acts while in the saṁsāra; the actions produce certain impressions (saṁskāras) which bind the soul and thus the soul has to move on the wheel of birth and death to experience the consequences of its acts. The same soul which is the agent of actions (kartṛ) remains the same and has to reap the consequences of its actions by experiencing them in an orderly manner. It has the sense of being the master (swāmibhāvaḥ) of its senses and body and so, it acts also as the enjoyer (bhokṛ) of the results of its actions.<sup>2</sup> It continues to revolve on the wheel of birth and death so long as it acts, and it acts so long as it is under spell of avidyā. Its form is distorted and obscured owing to its contact with karma which is produced by its ignorance about its real nature that it is not the body or senses or the manas, but is different from and above them, and that it is the Supreme Self, Paramātman Himself. Nimbārka further divides the jivas or souls in two kinds— (i) those that are delivered (mukta) and live in a supremely blissful condition, and (ii) those that are tied down to the circle of existences (saṁsāra). He again subdivides the former ones—muktas into those who are eternally in a supremely blissful condition such as Garuḍa, Viśvakāṣeṇa and the crown, ear-ornaments, the flute considered as living beings; and

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.3.33.

<sup>2</sup> Nimbārka : *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 2.4.15.

those that are freed from the trammels of life. Of these latter kind, some attain to the likeness of God and others are content with the perception of the nature of their own soul. Corresponding to these last two are two kinds of Mumukṣu, those who seek deliverance of either kind.<sup>1</sup>

The jiva suffers from its bondage so long as it regards itself independent and identifies itself with the Prakṛti. The soul attains liberation when it realises its dependence (परतन्त्र्य) on the Paramātmā and also realises that it is in reality one with Him as it is only a mode of the Paramātmā. It attains liberation when it realises that the sense of its complete independence and difference from the Paramātmā is false and such a sense is caused by avidyā. It overcomes its bondage and avidyā by the grace of God. The devotee of the Paramātmā who seeks liberation must know the following five things. (i) The nature of the Being to be worshipped — the nature of God being constituted of existence (sat), intelligence (cit) and joy (ānanda), and possessing a celestial body which is immaterial, and who is omnipotent, tender, merciful and gracious towards His devotees; (ii) The nature of the worshipper — as an atom, possessing limited knowledge and joy and as the servant of Kṛṣṇa; (iii) The fruit of God's grace — the self-surrender and the giving up of all actions except the service of God; (iv) The feeling of enjoyment consequent on Bhakti or love. It arises

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 63-64.

from serenity, servitude, friendliness, affection and enthusiasm; (v) Obstructions to the attainment of God—such as regarding the body the soul, dependence on others than God and one's preceptor, indifference to the commands of God, ingratitude and spending life in an aimless and worthless manner.<sup>1</sup> After knowing all these things and developing single and undivided loyalty and craving for the realisation of God the devotee has to offer himself totally to the Divine by means of Prapatti, which means total self-surrender, believing that after making complete self-surrender, God would liberate him from the trammels of saṁsāra and would end his phenomenal life and bondage since He has profound love and compassion for His devotees. Rāmānuja gives more emphasis on (उपासना) worship while Nimbārka gives more stress on (prapatti) self-surrender. Nimbārka relies more upon the efficacy of self-surrender to the Divine for the attainment of Mokṣa.

Nimbārka states that the seeker of the knowledge of Brahman should necessarily cultivate the virtues of calmness and tranquillity (शान्त) by means of indifference towards all objects of enjoyment of the world (उपरति) by practising complete self-control over his desires and sense organs (dama दम), and he should intensify his capacity to tolerate all kinds of extremes (titikṣā तितिक्षा) with the help of the knowledge of the Scripture as prescribed in accordance with the various periods (as'rama) of life.

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaiṣṇavism, Ś'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 65.

Thus he should concentrate his whole being in the Self and realise it for himself.<sup>1</sup> The liberated soul (mukta) experiences non-difference (अविभाग) with that which is opposed to its finite nature and is different from it.<sup>2</sup> The liberated soul does not lose its sense of egoity or (ahamarthaḥ अहमर्थः) even in Mokṣa; it retains it in Mokṣa and manifests itself there in all its perfect powers of intelligence, bliss and other powers which appear only in limited magnitudes in its phenomenal existence. The jivas attain omniscience in the state of Mokṣa.<sup>3</sup>

Nimbārka maintains further that the liberated soul (mukta) experiences the very Brahman which is free from the modifications like origin, etc., and naturally it is an ocean of infinite qualities which are unimaginable, and it is possessed of glory and brilliance. The liberated individual soul establishes itself in such an invisible Brahman and enjoys the very essence of it and becomes happy for ever.<sup>4</sup> The soul becomes more powerful but is free from the affairs of the world (jagadvyāpāravarjam-जगद्व्यापारवर्जम्). It enjoys all the joys and the perfect bliss along with Kṛṣṇa; it becomes competent to enjoy the joy of the Brahman and when it enjoys such a principle of intelligence and illumination

1 Nimbārka: *Brahma Mimāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 3.4.27.

2 Ibid. 4.4.4.

मुक्तः परस्मात् आत्मानं विभागविरोधेन अविभागेन अनुभवति ।

3 Ibid. 4.4.16.

मुक्ति-अवस्थायां च सर्वज्ञत्वम् ।

4 Ibid. 4.4.19.

(jyotirūpam ज्योतिरूपम्) it is not required to return again to the worldly life.<sup>1</sup> The bodiless emancipation (videhamukti) is attained when all the accumulated karmas are fructified by experiencing them, and thus the process of attaining such a final state requires a very long period even more than one life-span. But the attainment of such a state can be expedited by devotional faith and prapatti to the Supreme Self, the Paramātman. Dasgupta describes the final state of Mokṣa by quoting from *Vedānta Kaustubha Prabhā* in the following passage—“A saint, after the exhaustion of his fructifying deeds, leaves his gross body through the suṣumnā (सुषुम्णा) nerve in his subtle body, and going beyond the material regions (prākṛta maṇḍala प्राकृतमण्डल) reaches the border region—the river Vijarā—between the material regions and the universe of Viṣṇu. Here he leaves aside his subtle body in the Supreme being and enters into the transcendent essence of God. The emancipated beings thus exist in God as His distinct energies and may again be employed by Him for his own purposes. Such emancipated beings, however, are never sent down by God for carrying on an earthly existence. Though the emancipated beings become one with God, they have no control over the affairs of the world, which are managed entirely by God Himself.”<sup>2</sup> Nimbārka advocates the necessity of the performance of the Vedic duties of caste

<sup>1</sup> Nimbārka: *Brahma Mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya*, 4.4.22.

<sup>2</sup> Dasgupta S.: *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 415.



and stages of life (Varṇās'rama) so long as they help the attainment of wisdom although they become afterwards unnecessary. He believes that there are some who can attain wisdom without performing the prescribed customary duties of caste and stages of life.<sup>1</sup> He threw the doors of mokṣa open to the persons of all castes and he simplified the way of attainment of mokṣa by means of bhakti to God that culminated into total surrender (prapatti) to God. The released soul enjoys its inseparability with the Brahman even by maintaining its separate self-consciousness (aham-ārtha) in a mystical way. He, being a Vaiṣṇava saint, agreed to the efficacy and necessity of all the modes of religious worship. He emphasized the importance of knowledge along with karma, the religious duties to be performed with a feeling of complete faith, love and reverence for the Paramātmā by means of a loveful self-surrender (शरणगति) to God.

### Madhva

Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava saint of the South was also known as Ānandatīrtha and Pūrṇaprajña belonged to the Vedānta school but proved to be a complete deviationist. He did not admit the monistic interpretation of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja nor the semi-monistic interpretation of Bhāskara, Yādava, Nimbārka, etc. He is a dvaitin (द्वैती) or a pure bheda-vādin (भेदवादी) who admits the reality of differences and refused to reduce them to illusoriness. Madhva is faithful to the Advaitic tradition as he admits that

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 416.

the ultimate Reality is the Brahman which he names as Hari, that is the same as Puruṣottama or Nārāyaṇa of Rāmānuja and Kṛṣṇa of Nimbārka. The ultimate Reality according to Madhva, is one single all-pervading Brahman that is Hari, the Supreme Lord. Madhva believes that there are five final differences (bhedaḥ) which are mutually irreducible to each other. The five differences are (i) that between God and the jivas, (ii) that between one jiva and another jiva, (iii) that between God and the matter, (iv) that between jiva and matter, and (v) that between one material thing and another. He believes that the Brahman or Ātman or God is the cause of the world. God is not the material cause (upādānakāraṇa) but is the efficient cause (nimittakāraṇa) of the world. The world and the individual souls (jivas) are His effects not because they are constituted of the stuff of God, for, God is formless and He does not possess material body. The jivas and the world are effects of the Lord, Viṣṇu or Hari in the sense that they are (Paratantra-परतन्त्र) or dependent for their existence on God, the Brahman, that is Svatantra-स्वतन्त्र, a self-subsistent and self-existent Reality. The individual souls and the matter cannot exist apart from the Brahman or the Lord and hence, they are called a-svatantra or paratantra. The Brahman or Viṣṇu is self-caused and self-governed; while the jīvas or individual souls and matter are solely governed (niyamita-नियमित) by the Lord. According to Madhva, God is all-penetrating and the cause of all the eight aspects of the world (i) *sr̥ṣṭi* (सृष्टि)-creation; (ii) *sthiti*

(स्थिति)–protection; (iii) *samhara* (संहार)–dissolution; (iv) *niyamana* (नियमन)–controlling all things or governance; (v) *jñāna* (ज्ञान)–giving knowledge; (vi) *ajñāna* (अज्ञान)–ignorance; (vii) *bandha* (बन्ध)–bondage and worldly fetters; and (viii) *moksa* (मोक्ष)–deliverance, liberation or emancipation. Thus the Brahman is the all-pervading Reality and governs the whole of the prakṛti and the jivas by making them entirely dependent on itself. It controls from within (antaryāmin-अन्तर्यामी) as well as from without. He maintains the distinctions of the jiva, prakṛti and God as fundamental and eternal. The distinctions are never lost. The souls and the world or prakṛti remain existent as distinct entities even in pralaya, but only in a subtle (sūkṣma) form. The differences or distinctions cannot be entirely abrogated or annihilated. The souls retain their distinctions from each other and from God even in the state of liberation. Madhva is thus, apparently a dualist (dvaitin द्वैतिन्) or bhedavādin but at the same time he maintains his Advaitism or monism by making all the pluralities dependent on the final Reality, God. Madhva strictly adhered to the Śruti and the Vedas. The eightfold functions which he has attributed to the Brahman or God simply bring out the all-pervasive and sovereign nature of God.

The jiva is totally dependent (paratantra) and is possessed of limited knowledge and limited joy. There are infinite jivas and each jiva is atomic in size but still it can experience the sensations taking place in the whole body by intelligence which is its

attribute. The knowledge and bliss which are possessed by jīva are fragmentary as contrasted with those of God who possesses them to their perfection. The individual souls are the knowers (cit), the doers of actions (kartā) and also the experiencers (bhoktā) of the fruits of actions. God enjoys the sovereign power because He is independent or svatantra; He does not derive his power from any other source. The individual soul's powers, knowledge and bliss are limited as they are obscured by karma which is caused by ignorance or avidyā. The souls acquire karma due to their worldly activities which they carry on under ignorance or avidyā. The jivas being dependent do not cause their activities but their activities are propelled (kārayitā) by God. For every state of the lives of the jivas God is responsible for, He is the impeller (kārayitā-कारयिता) of all their actions. The knowledge, ignorance, bondage, deliverance, birth and death of the individuals are caused and governed by God Himself. His powers are totalitarian. Whatever the souls enjoy or suffer is ultimately caused by God for them in accordance with their karmas. The existence and happiness of the souls are wholly a matter of the grace of God; God is the prompter from within of the whole life of the souls and He alone can effect their liberation or Mokṣa. Complete self-surrender (s'ara āgati-सर्वाङ्गमति) is absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. Madhva advocates (Bhakti) devotion and grace of God as the only fruitful means for the attainment of liberation. The knowledge of the five distinctions

and other austerities and worship of God are subservient to Bhakti.

God is omnipotent (sarvas'aktiva-सर्वशक्तित्व) for He is independent स्वतंत्र. His powers and perfection follow from His own nature. He is not inferior (gauna-गौण) to any other Superior Being; He does not derive his powers from any other source but Himself.<sup>1</sup> He derives His independence from His own eternal nature. He is doer of all actions directly or indirectly. All actions are caused by God in the sense that they are caused at the will of God.<sup>2</sup> No action in the world can take place without the will or consent of God for, He alone is the prompter or impeller (preraka-प्रेरक) of the actions in all the states. His independence (svātantrya) is based upon his omnipotence (sarvas'aktimatva). He is present in all the things, not in the gross form but in an extremely subtle form (परमसूक्ष्म). He is present everywhere inside and outside. Whatever is seen and heard is pervaded by Nārāyaṇa.<sup>3</sup> Madhva further holds that the same Brahman or the Ātman possesses all the infinite qualities since it is the innermost Reality or the cause of all.<sup>4</sup> He possesses wonderful powers and with the help of these powers He produces the multifarious things of the world, from the prakṛti.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jayatirth : *Tattvaparakāśikā*. 3, p. 42.

ईश्वरस्य पूर्णशक्तित्वात्स्वातंत्र्यं जीवस्य तद्विपर्ययादस्वातंत्र्यम् ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3, p. 43. स्वातंत्र्येण कर्तृत्वं अपि तु ईश्वरेच्छया एव ।

<sup>3</sup> Madhva : *Madhya Bhāṣya*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 26. परमात्मनः विचित्राः च शक्तयः सन्ति न अन्येषाम् ।

He acts as the inner controller (antarātmā-अन्तरात्मा) of all the things of the universe and still, He has His own different nature which is not possessed by any other thing produced by him. Madhva further states that God, the Puruṣottama (पुरुषोत्तम) who is devoid of qualities (nirguṇaḥ-निर्गुणः) becomes many and still remains one (ekibhūya-एकीभूय) and without any defect or contamination.<sup>1</sup>

The jiva is a finite being limited in its knowledge and bliss. Its capacities are limited due to its physical and psychical limitations which are caused by uescience or avidyā. Similarly, the jiva is of atomic size, it is neither of the size of the body which it occupies nor is it all-pervasive; since it does not evolve that which is possible for an all-pervading principle.<sup>2</sup> The jiva or soul possesses two aspects (upādhi)—one is its own essential and unchanging nature (svarūpa-स्वरूप), and the other is its changing external nature (bāhya-बाह्य). The external aspect consists in the physical body, senses, mind, the subtle body and the saṃskāras which are perishable, while its real essential nature remains constant; the soul remains in its own true nature (sthitī-स्थिति) in liberation (mukti).<sup>3</sup> Thus, in the state of

<sup>1</sup> Madhva : *Madhva Bhāṣya*, p. 5.

स देवो बहुधा भूत्वा निर्गुणः पुरुषोत्तमः ।

एकीभूय पुनः शेते निर्दोषो हरिः ॥

<sup>2</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvapraśaṅkā*, 2.3, p. 115.

जीवोऽणुरेव न व्याप्तः ।

<sup>3</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvapraśaṅkā*, 2.3, p. 119.

जीवोपाधिर्द्विधा प्रोक्तः स्वरूपं बाह्य एव च ।

बाह्योपाधिरित्यं याति मुक्तावन्यस्य तु स्थितिः ॥

liberation the jīva enjoys its native qualities constituting its own nature (svarūpa). In spite of the changes in its external nature the jīva does not lose its own inherent nature which is in essence, the same as that of God, being constituted of knowledge (jñāna) and bliss (ānanda) which are only imperfectly manifested in the jīva while living in the worldly life. The infinite knowledge and infinite bliss remain latent or potential in the jīva so long as it does not recover its own real nature by discarding ignorance. As the soul becomes gradually free from its ignorance and realises its true nature its lost qualities like perfect jñāna and perfect ānanda and other Divine powers begin to become manifest just as with the advancing age and full development of men and women begin to manifest their procreating capacity in their mature age. In a similar way, as Jayatirtha says even though the soul possesses intrinsically in its real nature the qualities of knowledge, bliss, etc., the soul becomes happy when they begin to get actualised by manifesting themselves by the grace of God. They are not newly created but they simply become explicit for which the seekers of liberation have to undertake special exertion.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the soul is different from the Supreme Self (Paramātmān) in so far as its powers are limited (alpasakti-अल्पशक्ति) and its knowledge and bliss are fragmentary. The soul is different from the Supreme Self as they are related to each other as the servant (सेवक) or the worshipper, the devotee,

<sup>1</sup> Jayatirtha : *Tattvaparakāś'ikā*, 2.3. p. 119.

and that who is worshipped and served (सेव्य), just as a king (rājā) is served by his servants. That which serves is definitely different from that which is served<sup>1</sup>, and this relation continues even in Mokṣa. Though the jīva is different from the Ātman or the Supreme Self both are equally real; no one is real at the cost of the other. Every soul is different from another soul (jīva) in virtue of the differences of its experiences of pleasure and pain, knowledge, love, hatred. A jīva is not, therefore, an ephemeral entity, but it is eternal; it persists in spite of its external changes; it is that which transmigrates from one birth to another birth to experience the rewards of its past karmas. It recollects its past experiences. The jīva is, therefore, the knower, the sentient subject of the cognitions and other experiences that it obtains by coming into contact with the external world by means of its sense organs and motor organs. It is evident to oneself as ego. Every jīva is different from other jīvas in so far as it has its own unique experience in virtue of its unique dispositions which are never common or the same for two souls.

The jīva possesses the freedom of choice and the freedom of action but that freedom of action (kartṛtva-कर्तृत्व) also is not enjoyed by the jīva unqualifiedly, unconditionally and absolutely. Though the jīva is possessed of the power to act (kartṛtva-s'akti) it is not its entire possession (jivādhīna-जीवा-

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasaṅgraha*, p. 135.

परमेश्वरो जीवाद्धीनः, तं प्रति सेव्यत्वात् ।



## The Systems of Rāmānuja ....

577

धीन but, that is at the same time dependent upon the Divine will (is'varādhīna-ईश्वराधीन).<sup>1</sup> The doing or not-doing of an action is solely determined by God and not by the finite soul. It is true that as the jīva is solely dependent on the God for all its powers and experiences, God Himself must be the doer of actions and the maker of choices thereof. But it seems that God must not be partaking every act of choice of the soul, for, had it been so, the soul would never have mistaken in its choice and suffered for it as God knows what the evil is and what its consequences are. In actuality, we find that men very frequently stumble in the selection of the good and suffer for the same. But God is all-wise, and He being a possessor of perfect knowledge understands in anticipation the results of all acts. He cannot be mistaken in His choice and similarly, He would not choose a bad or an evil act, since, He possesses only the best things. For Him, no evil exists at all, because, the very existence of an evil, which is against His essentially good and auspicious nature, challenges his omnipotence and delimits it. Nothing against God can ever exist, because He is the final Reality and a storehouse of all powers which are invincible, and hence, it cannot be challenged by any evil. However, if God assumes the doership (kartṛtva) of actions of every soul, God Himself would be involved in the fallacy of choosing the evil either out of ignorance of it or out of falling prey to its temptation; in both cases His

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvapraśaṅgikā*, 2·3, p. 121.

omniscience and omnipotence and inherent auspiciousness are challenged. Therefore, God is responsible for the actions of the jivas only indirectly in so far as He supplies them the necessary energy for choice and action. God adopts also the doctrine of Karma or the law of moral retribution by which every doer has to reap the consequences of his actions, good or bad, as the case may be. God can forgive any soul at any time if he is exclusively devoted to Him, and thus, He releases him for ever; but God does not disturb the general law of karma, according to which, the souls which are the doers of actions have to reap the fruits of their past deeds. God is, no doubt, responsible for the actions of individual souls, but it is true only so far as He is the final prompter or propeller (kārayitā-कारयिता) of actions; He has also adopted the law of karma strictly in prompting the jivas in accordance with their past deeds, and He gives them works and enjoyments only as they deserve. God adopts the law of karma in actuality to prove His impartiality and to make Himself free from the charge of being unfair or unkind (nirghṛā-निर्घृण) to some and partial (viṣama-विषम) to some others by showing His favour in the form of His grace.<sup>1</sup> He does not misuse His powers to pardon and forgive and to give direct release. He allows the souls to attain mokṣa in the natural course in accordance with their qualifications, purity,

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvaprakāśikā*, 2.3, p. 121.

स्वस्य वैषम्यनैर्घृण्यपरिहाराय च जीवस्यानादिकर्मप्रयत्नयोग्यतापेक्ष एव जीवं प्रेरयति ।

efforts, and worth. Only in exceptional cases He uses power to give redemption directly to exhibit His omnipotence and supremacy over the doctrine of karma.

All the jivas are the various manifestations of Īśvara in the form of reflections (pratibimba) of the one Īśvara who serves as the object reflected (bimba), and therefore, that Īśvara who has been reflected in all the souls is the object of intuition for them. The infinite names and forms of Hari are manifested by means of gradations (व्यूह). Even though all the souls are the reflections of the one Supreme Self because of their differences (वैचित्र्य) in their cognition (vidyā) and in their karma (adr̥ṣṭa) there occur differences in existence of the gods, demons (dānava) and human beings (mānava), etc.<sup>1</sup> Madhva further maintains that Īśvara who is the impeller (preraka) of the actions of the jivas is also the awarder of the fruits of actions (phaladātā-फलदाता) corresponding to them; but this is done too indirectly. Īśvara does not directly participate and intervene in any action and its fruits; even the orderliness of the unseen principle (adr̥ṣṭa) of karma which distributes proper rewards for certain actions and not for other actions, depends upon Īśvara for its operations, for, He is the ultimate source of all energy which is required for all kinds of activities. Not only the particular activity of giving reward (phaladānakriyā-फलदानक्रिया) but even the existence of the unseen depends upon God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvaparakāśikā*, 2.3, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3.2, p. 162.

The adṛṣṭa depends on Īśvara for the energy (cetanā-चेतना) which is necessary for connecting deeds with their results, and the adṛṣṭa being itself dependent on God has to derive the necessary energy from God to carry on its operations. Thus, ultimately, the process of awarding rewards to the souls (phaladānakriyā) is carried on by God only too remotely as He is the only source of energy which He supplies to all His dependents (ās'rita-आश्रित).<sup>1</sup>

Madhva recognises three kinds of jivas or souls like Nimbārka and Rāmānuja: (i) Those fit for the attainment of the final bliss, (ii) those always going through the circle of existences (saṁsārin), (iii) those fit for the condition of darkness. The Ṛṣis and the best of men belong to the first class; ordinary men to the second class; and demons, ghosts and violent men belong to the third class. All these souls are different from one another and from the Supreme Self.<sup>2</sup> S. Radhakrishnan mentions the traditional three forms of the conscious souls as recognised by Madhva. According to him, they are (i) those eternally free (nitya-नित्य) like Lakṣmī; (ii) those who have freed themselves from saṁsāra (mukta)—devas and men, ṛṣis and fathers; and (iii) the bound (baddha), including the (muktiyogya-मुक्तियोग्य) eligible for liberation; it also includes those who are intent for hell or the blinding darkness

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha: *Tattvaprakāśikā*, 3.2, p. 161.

ईश्वर एव फलदाता न कर्म; तस्य चेतनत्वेन फलदानोपपत्तेः ।

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 60.

(tamoyogya-तमोयोग्य) or those who are bound to the circuit of saṁsāra for all time (nityasaṁsāraṇaḥ-नित्यसंसारिणः). This classification is based upon the three guṇas or attributes. The sāttvika soul goes to heaven, the rājasa revolves in saṁsāra, while the tāmasa falls into hell.<sup>1</sup>

### Mokṣa-मोक्ष

Madhva holds that Mokṣa can be attained by the right knowledge of the Brahman, that of one's own nature and of the world and of their mutual differences; but according to him, knowledge is equivalent to upāsanā (उपासना) or worship of the Brahman which becomes possible only by a faithful total surrender to the Divine. According to Madhva, Mokṣa is dependent on God (īś'varādhīna-ईश्वराधीन). If God is pleased with His devotee He shows His grace to him and gives him Mokṣa. In Mokṣa the soul becomes bodiless, formless and completely free from the karmas and the subtle body. The soul enjoys the company of īś'vara and lies at rest in its own nature, which is one of perfect knowledge and perfect bliss. It enjoys all the Divine powers except that of creation and governance of the world. The soul retains its distinction even in Mokṣa. Difference or distinction (bheda-भेद) is eternal. In Mokṣa too the Jīva maintains its independent existence and enjoys the full dependence of itself upon īś'vara and maintains the sense of itself being a servant of īś'vara. Mokṣa is attained by the direct knowledge of īś'vara and by the cultivation of moral qualities

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 744.

like renunciation (vairāgya-वैराग्य), etc. Yogic practices act as auxiliary to it.

The knowledge of Īs'vara or Brahman also is dependent on Īs'vara Himself. Knowledge has two forms, the one is that of the world which leads to further attachment, and the bondage of the world becomes stronger thereby; the second is that of Īs'vara which leads to the attainment of Mokṣa.

According to Jayatīrtha, Brahmajijñāsā (ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा) the curiosity of the Brahman is equivalent to upāsana (उपासना) which means worship.<sup>1</sup> Upāsana, according to him, consists in the contemplation of Īs'vara after fully studying the scriptures and removing all kinds of ignorance and doubt from the mind about the nature of Īs'vara. The contemplation also is the contemplation of the pure and blissful nature of the Paramātmā, who is free from all sinful qualities by means of observing all the rules of worship like sandhyāvandana (संध्यारवन्दन), etc.<sup>2</sup> Mokṣa is attained by the contemplation of Paramātmā (dhyānenaiva-ध्यानेनैव) and of His extraordinary (aloukika-अलौकिक) attributes.<sup>3</sup> Madhva gives supreme importance to bhakti as the most indispensable means for the attainment of Mokṣa. He states that merely attending to the scripture and the grace of the guru is not sufficient but bhakti also must be practised along with them.<sup>4</sup> It is necessary for a

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvapraśaṅgikā*, 3.3, p. 163.

उपासना नाम ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3.3, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvapraśaṅgikā*, 3.3, p. 169.

<sup>4</sup> Madhva : *Madhva Bhāṣya*, p. 57.

seeker of Mokṣa to concentrate his full attention on the Self and he must worship the Self (Viṣṇu-विष्णु). Everywhere he must realise the presence of the Ātma (Īśvara, Brahman).<sup>1</sup> According to Madhva, the following qualities are necessary for the attainment of liberation—(i) Renunciation (vairāgya-वैराग्य), (ii) Equanimity (s'ama-शम) and self-control (dama-दम), (iii) Acquaintance with love, (iv) Self-surrender (s'araṇāgati-शरणगति), (v) Attendance on Guru, (vi) Acquisition of knowledge from Guru, (vii) Reflection, (viii) Devotion (bhakti-भक्ति), (ix) Love of God (Pārmātmabhakti-परमात्मभक्ति), (x) Sympathy and love for others, (xi) Performance of rites without desires, (xii) The Avoidance of prohibited deeds, (xiii) Resigning every act to Hari, (xiv) Knowledge of Viṣṇu, (xv) Knowledge of the five distinctions, (xvi) Distinguishing Prakṛti from Puruṣa and all beings issuing from Nārāyaṇa, (xvii) Reprobation of false doctrines, and (xviii) Upāsana (उपासना)—learning Sāstras.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Madhva stresses the need of cultivating all the important moral virtues and an attitude of renunciation, and also the Yogic practices like yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇa, and samādhi as the expediting agencies for the attainment of Mokṣa.

As Īśvara is the final prompter of all actions, Mokṣa also is under the control of Īśvara, and hence, the grace of God is absolutely necessary for it. The

<sup>1</sup> Madhva : *Madhva Bhāṣya*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 61.

seeker of liberation (mumukṣu-मुमुक्षु) must always think of Īs'vara and Īs'vara only, and of nothing other than Īs'vara.<sup>1</sup> The liberated souls (muktāḥ) enjoy perfect happiness and no pains; they cross over all the griefs of life and become free from all sins and merits; they become free from all defects and faults (nivṛtta-doṣāḥ-निवृत्तदोषाः). There cannot be any other desire in the muktas, for any object other than Īs'vara is not worthy of their desire.<sup>2</sup> The worship (upāsana) of Hari is extremely pleasing to the devotee; when he enters the blissful (ānandamaya-आनन्दमय) Hari he ceases to be reborn, ceases to die, ceases to diminish or to increase. He enjoys as he likes, he drinks as much as he desires, he plays as much as he likes. For the mukta nothing painful (apriyam) exists; whence can there be pain when happiness is present always?<sup>3</sup> Jayatīrtha says that pain (duḥkha-दुःख) arises in the saṃsāra or worldly life from dependence (asvātantrya-अस्वातंत्र्य), and the muktas or liberated souls are eternally liberated, and hence, they resemble God.<sup>4</sup> The muktas do not entertain their own desires, but their desires are in tune with those of Īs'vara. The muktas are dependent on, and therefore, governed by Paramātman; they are not independent. They pursue the desires of Paramātman; therefore, all their desires are fulfilled

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha: *Tattvaparakāśikā*, 4.1, p. 200.

विष्णुरात्मा इत्युपासनं सदासर्वदा कार्यम् ।

<sup>2</sup> Madhva: *Madhva Bhāṣya*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 75. हरेरुपासना चात्र सदैव सुखरूपिणी नाप्रियं किञ्चिदपि तु मुक्तानां विद्यते । सुखमेव तु सदोदितम् ।

<sup>4</sup> Jayatīrtha: *Tattvaparakāśikā*, 4.2, p. 209.



and hence, they are ever-satisfied. They would be subjected to pain and suffering when they desire that which is not in tune with the wish of Īśvara. But the muktaś desire exactly in tune with the God (Bhagavān), and therefore, for them remains no cause to come to grief.<sup>1</sup> The liberated souls attain the Paramātmān in the sense that they attain penetration into the being of the Paramātmān (sāyujyatā-सायुज्यता), and thus, having reached (prāpya) Him the jīvas enjoy various pleasures (bhogān-भोगान्) there. Whatever happiness the Supreme Self or Paramātmān has, the muktaś enjoy there. They participate in the enjoyment of the perfect bliss (pūrṇānanda-पूर्णानन्द) of the Paramātmān, and though they are devoid of body of their own they enjoy by entering into the body of the Paramātmān.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the muktaś enjoy fully along with the Paramātmān all His good qualities to their perfection. Madhva agrees with his predecessors like Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Yāmuna, etc., in holding that the soul remains distinct even in Mokṣa and it is not lost in it. It enjoys positive ānanda in Mokṣa even though in it there is the absence of body and its pride (dehābhimāna-देहाभिमान). The soul enjoys in the state of Mokṣa in spite of the absence of the body just as one does not have the pride of the external body when one enjoys in the state of dream.<sup>3</sup> The souls

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvaprakāśikā*, 4.2, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4.4, p. 219. ये भोगाः परमात्मना भुज्यन्ते त एव मुक्तैः भुज्यन्ते ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 4.4, p. 221. यथा खलु स्वप्नावस्थायाम् बाह्यदेहाभिमानाभावेऽपि भोगः, तथा मुक्तौ देहाभावेऽपि भोगोपपत्तेः ।

in the state of liberation enjoy happiness which is entirely devoid of any element of sorrow (nirduḥkhaḥ-nirduḥkḥaḥ), for, otherwise the Bhagavān or Paramātmān—will face the absurdity of not possessing the excellence (sarvottamatva-सर्वोत्तमत्व). The souls, being in God, who is the abode of all kinds of perfections, cannot lack there any satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> They are all-satisfied (sarvātṛpta-सर्वतृप्त). Discontent and imperfection in bliss and knowledge would be incompatible with the Divine rule in Mokṣa. The mukta breaks off all kinds of its bonds with the world. The mukta does not have any relation with the world; yet it has desires and they are duly satisfied. The liberated souls are not able to conduct the affairs of the world.<sup>2</sup> As they lose all their connections with the world, no reason is left for them to return to the world. They attain the final liberation (Mokṣa) not to return to the world again.<sup>3</sup>

Madhva's special contribution lies in making everything dependent on God and in making God responsible for every experience and event of the world. According to him, God is responsible for knowledge as well as for ignorance, for bondage as well as for Mokṣa. Whatever happens, happens at the will of God, and God is the ultimate agent of all events of human experience. Madhva consistently maintains that the final emancipation or Mokṣa

<sup>1</sup> Jayatīrtha : *Tattvaparakāśikā*, 4.4, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 4.4, p. 222, न मुक्तानां जगद्व्यापारः किन्तु तद् व्यतिरिक्त-कामवाप्तिरेव; न मुक्तो जगद्व्यापारशक्तिमान् ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 4.4, p. 223. ततश्च न तस्य पुनरावृत्तिः ।

occurs only with the grace of God who is to be sought by the most ardent faith and devotion for Him, and also by the knowledge of scriptures of Him and of the five distinctions; the karma or moral duties and religious rites help as subservient to it. Knowledge gets transformed into bhakti which ends into the total self-surrender of the jiva to the Paramātman who is the final authority, as He alone wields the Supreme power necessary to overcome the evils of the world and to save the souls from them. The devotee has to undertake serious efforts to attain the grace of God by qualifying himself (adhikārin—अधिकारिन्) by practising the various ethical virtues and yogic practices and other prescribed means. An all-absorbing love for God with aversion for all things other than God, is absolutely necessary. He has to strive from below to rise above by becoming more and more worthy of the Divine grace, and the Parmātman has to lift him up to His bosom by removing all the impediments from his path. Thus, theism cannot effect emancipation of the individual soul without the Divine grace. The purely human efforts always prove to be insufficient for the deliverance of the souls. Nicol Macnicol says—“For Theism to be possible man must be recognized as a self-determining agent, whose character is not externally fixed, but for whom the future may be a land of hope and promise. He must be one, God helping him, burst the bonds of habit, and enter into the experience of a moral victory that is really his, and the God whom he knows must be

one who can bring him into such an experience. There must be windows in his sky through which the light of divine forgiveness can stream into his penitent heart. The black clouds that legalism breeds—the clouds of sin and retribution must not be doomed to hang for ever as an unbroken pall over his life.”<sup>1</sup> It is true of every theistic system that the human efforts prove to be insufficient, and hence futile to acquire the final state of Mokṣa; the help of God becomes absolutely necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. Madhva’s emphasis on the need of the Divine grace for Mokṣa is not thus unjustified. Though he starts with the five fundamental real distinctions (bhédas) ultimately he ends as an Absolutist by making God or Parmātmā all-in-all, responsible for every event of the life of man and of the earth. As he remarks in the Māṇḍukya Bhāṣya the duality or differentiation is only caused by Māyā which is the wonderful power of the Is’vara, and non-difference (advaita-अद्वैत) is transcendently real.<sup>2</sup> Thus the differences not possessing their own independent power and worth to maintain themselves are deprived of their true reality by making them absolutely dependent on the Paramātmā. The differences lose their reality by being made entirely dependent on the Paramātmā. Madhva interprets the famous text ‘That art thou’ as ‘thou art His’—‘Tvaṁ tadyiḥ asi’ (त्वं तदीयः असि ।) or ‘Tvaṁ tasya asi’ (त्वं तस्य असि ।),

<sup>1</sup> Nicol Macnicol : *Indian Theism*, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> Madhva : *Māṇḍukya Bhāṣya*. मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतमद्वैतं परमार्थतः ।

which means that the individual soul belongs to God, that it is His, as it cannot exist apart from Him. According to Madhva, therefore, the individual soul realises intuitively that it belongs to the Paramātmā; and that is its real nature.

### Vallabha

Vallabhācārya, who lived in the fifteenth century was a very prominent Vaiṣṇava Ācārya. He was an extreme devotee of Kṛṣṇa who was his Parabrahman. He was predominantly a saint and a God intoxicated man. He preached the gospel of Divine love (bhakti) as a means of attaining salvation. He was not given mainly to scholastic and analytical studies of the scriptures, but he chose to remain a devout worshipper of Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. He had created such an enchanting atmosphere that the men and women around him were filled through and through with the most ardent love for Kṛṣṇa in various forms. He preached the doctrine of love and devotion (bhakti) as the necessary means of salvation.

Vallabha was a complete antagonist of Śaṅkara in as much as he denounced Śaṅkara's doctrine of the illusoriness of the world (Māyāvāda-मायावाद). Vallabha was also a thoroughgoing Advaitin (Suddhādvaitin-शुद्धाद्वैतिन) who believed that the ultimate Reality is only one, the Brahman, which is the same as Kṛṣṇa, and is all-pervading; and it itself is present everywhere as it is all-pervading, and every thing that exists in the world is nothing but the Brahman

itself, or the Kṛṣṇa Himself, in different forms. The whole universe is nothing but purely Brahman without a second (S'uddhādvaita-शुद्धाद्वैत) manifesting itself in different forms. He believed that every thing that exists is nothing but the Brahman and Brahman itself. The Brahman is characterised as the existence (sat-सत्), intelligence (cit-चित्), and joy or bliss (ānanda-आनन्द) which is with form (sākāra-साकार), one (ekam-एकं), omnipotent (sarvas'akti-सर्वशक्ति), the doer of all acts (sarvakartṛ-सर्वकर्तृ) and from it is created this world.<sup>1</sup> The Brahman itself is world, the effect (kārya-कार्य), and it itself is the cause (kāraṇa-कारण), of this effect.<sup>2</sup> The Brahman gets itself transformed into the world. The same and perfect Brahman possessed of saccidānanda (सच्चिदानन्द) by suppressing some of its attributes (tirobhāva-तिरोभाव) assumes the form of the imperfect objects of the world. When it manifests or evolves (āvirbhāva-आविर्भाव) its hidden or obscured attributes it becomes the same perfect and pure Brahman. The world, therefore, appears due to the suppression (tirobhāva) of some attributes of the Brahman; when those qualities are manifested clearly the same thing begins to appear as the pure Brahman.<sup>3</sup> The Brahman has become all this (existence) voluntarily (svēcchayā-स्वेच्छया) just for sport-ing, just as a serpent out of sport forms coils.<sup>4</sup> The

Giridhar Mahārāja : S'uddhādvaitamṛtāṇḍa, S'loka-8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. S'loka 6. कार्यस्य ब्रह्मरूपस्य ब्रह्मैव स्यात्तु कारणम् ।

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. S'loka-11.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. S'loka-12. रमणार्थमिदं सर्वं ब्रह्मैव स्वेच्छयाभवत् । यथा सर्पः स्वेच्छया हि कुण्डलाकारतां गतः ।

universe is an effect of the Brahman (Brahmakāryam-ब्रह्मकार्यं) only voluntarily. Thus, the Brahman is the whole cause of the world. The Brahman itself undergoes transformation by its unique powers (sāmarthya-सामर्थ्यं) and assumes the various forms of the objects of the world and the jivas by suppressing some of its attributes. The multifarious differences in the world exist due to Brahman in its state of effect (kāryatayā-कार्यतया) assumed by Hari voluntarily just sportively. The bheda (difference) exists only in the form of the effect (kāryarūpatayā-कार्यरूपतया) and in its causal state there is no difference at all.<sup>1</sup> The world is one with the Brahman (tādātmya-तादात्म्यं) as it is nothing but the Brahman itself that has assumed its form by suppressing two of its attributes joy (ānanda-आनन्द) and intelligence (cit-चित्). Thus, it is the pure Brahman (S'uddha Brahman-शुद्ध ब्रह्म) in its states of cause and effect, and it is not qualified by any other thing like Māyā.<sup>2</sup> Vallabha was a thorough monist, and therefore, he was unwilling to admit the existence of any other thing like Māyā responsible for the creation of the world. Vallabha says that the world (prapañca-प्रपञ्च) is the effect of the Bhagavān, and is, therefore, of His stuff (tadrūpaḥ-तद्रूपः), and the world has come into existence by means of the Māyā.<sup>3</sup> The word Māyā changes its connotation in the hands of Vallabha, and he describes it as the

<sup>1</sup> Giridhar Mahārāja : *S'uddhādvaitamārtanda*, S'loka-32.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. S'loka-28.

<sup>3</sup> Vallabha : *Tattvārthadīpaḥ*, S'loka-27.

प्रपञ्चो भगवत्कार्यः तद्रूपो माययाभवत् ।

power to become all things and it resides in God.<sup>1</sup> With this power (Māyā) God has transformed Himself and formed this world out of Himself. Thus, the Brahman or God acts as the material cause (उपादान कारण) and the efficient cause (निमित्त कारण) of the world. The world is already present in a potential form in the Brahman and its creation lies in its manifestation by suppressing the intelligence (cit) and joy (ānanda) of itself. Vallabha further maintains that the world (prapañca) is not a creation of the prakṛti, nor is it produced from the atoms of the fundamental substances, nor is it an illusion (vivarta) of the Self, nor is it produced even by means of the unseen principle (adrṣṭa), nor is it produced out of nothing (asataḥ), but it is an effect of the God (Bhagavatkāryaḥ-भगवत्कार्यः), and is one with God (Bhagavadrūpaḥ-भगवद्रूपः). Had it not been so, existence or being would be produced from nothing (asat).<sup>2</sup> He, therefore, maintains that the Brahman is the material and the efficient cause of the jivas and the world, but it is also the inherence-cause (samavāyikāraṇam-समवायिकारणं) of the world and the jivas.<sup>3</sup> The inherence-cause means that the Brahman itself is actually present in the jivas and in the world and that it is inseparable from them. It forms the jivas and the world out of its own stuff and substance. It is actually present in all its effects. The Brahman is one (tādātmya-तादात्म्य) with

<sup>1</sup> Vallabha : *Tattvārthadīpaḥ*, p. 40. माया हि भगवतः शक्तिः सर्वभवनसामर्थ्यरूपा ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid : p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Vallabha : *Aṇubhāṣya*. तत् ब्रह्मैव समवायिकारणम् ।



## The Systems of Rāmānuja .....

593

the jīvas and the world. He defines the term samavāya as identity or tādātmya and not a difference of objects. Samavāya or inherence is that kind of relation by which the thread and the cloth are bound to each other by interpenetration; thus it becomes both the material cause and the creator of it and they are non-different (svābhinnā-स्वभिन्न).<sup>1</sup> Thus the world is a real creation of the Brahman produced out of itself to amuse itself (ramavārtha-रमणार्थ). Vallabha, thus, believes that the whole universe including the individual souls is through and through the pure Brahman, unconditioned and unqualified by any other thing, and that it is the only and ultimate Reality without a second. His system is, therefore, known as the sūddhādvaita (सुद्धाद्वैत) as contradistinguished from that of Saṃkara, which is described as the Kevalādvaita (केवादाद्वैत), according to which, the Brahman alone (Kevala-केवल) is real, and every other thing besides it is unreal or false. Vallabha depicts the Brahman as the Paramātmān or the God Kṛṣṇa who does not possess a physical body, but He can produce the whole world merely by the force of His will. He is the repository of all qualities which are opposite to one other, and He appears in multiple forms (bahurūpataḥ-बहुरूपतः) by means of manifestation (āvīrbhāva-आविर्भाव) and concealment (tirobhāva-तिरोभाव).<sup>2</sup> He is the doer of actions (Kartā) as well as the enjoyer (bhoktā) of their results. Even though

<sup>1</sup> Vallabha : *Tattvārthadīpah*, p. 113.

समवायः च तादात्म्यं एव ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. S'loka 73, p. 115.

He has all the qualities, He does not possess any particular qualities which are possessed by His parts (aṃs'a-अंश); He cannot be said to be possessing qualities (saguna-सगुण), although He is the creator (kartā) of the world.<sup>1</sup> He assumes several forms as are needed by His devotees to please them.<sup>2</sup>

The jīva is atomic, extremely minute in size, according to Vallabha, and it becomes pervasive so that it may experience the sensations all over the body even though it occupies one portion of it. It becomes pervasive by means of its intelligence which is its property just as the fragrance (gandha-गन्ध) spreads over a great distance from the flower. The souls are many and eternal. In soul the same Brahman is present but its one quality-bliss (ānanda) is concealed, and thus, the jīva possesses existence (sat-सत्) and consciousness (cit-चित्). It is a part of the Brahman which is God. The Brahman, when obscured by ignorance, loses its bliss and assumes the form of the jīva. In fact it is God. Vallabha distinguishes jīvas into of three kinds—(i) those pure (suddha-शुद्ध) jīvas whose lordly qualities (aiśvarya-ऐश्वर्य) are not obscured by the force of ignorance (avidyā); (ii) the mundane (saṃsārin-संसारि) jīvas that are under the spell of ignorance and experience birth and death and other finite experiences; (iii) the liberated (mukta) jīvas that are free from the bonds of the saṃsāra as they have acquired knowledge of the Self. The soul, when

<sup>1</sup> Vallabha : *Tattvārthadīpaḥ*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Vallabha : *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, 1.1.20-21.

liberated, regains its concealed bliss (ānanda-आनन्द) and becomes one with God, and thus, experiences the whole nature, i.e., saccidānanda (सच्चिदानन्द) of God. The same Self, God or the Brahman descends down even in the inanimate objects by obscuring its consciousness or intelligence and also the bliss or ānanda. Everything is spiritual in essence; there are the differences of degree and there is a continuity from the matter to the jiva and from the jiva to the Īś'vara. The creation and destruction of the objects of the world, and birth and death of the individual souls are nothing but the manifestation or non-manifestation of the Supreme Self or God.

The jivas and the inanimate objects (jada-जड) come into existence just as sparks (visphulinṅga-विस्फुल्लिङ्ग) come out of the blazing fire. The consciousness and bliss (cit and ānanda) of the Divine are suppressed in the material objects and bliss (ānanda) is suppressed in the souls or jivas.<sup>1</sup> The jiva is as minute as the extremity or tip of a grain of rice and its consciousness spreads at long distances just like the fragrance of flower, which keeps itself stationary at a particular spot.<sup>2</sup> Thus, according to Vallabha, the soul is atomic (anu-अणु) in size and it can become pervasive like the Brahman (Brahma-vyāpaka-ब्रह्मव्यापक) by means of intelligence. Vallabha says that just as Kṛṣṇa, though sitting in the lap of

<sup>1</sup> Giridhar Mahārāja : *S'uddhādvaitamārtanda*. S'lokas, 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> Vallabha : *Tattvārthadīpah*, p 78.

जीवस्तु आराधमात्रो हि गन्धवद्व्यतिरेकात् । यथा गन्धः पुष्पापेक्षया-  
धिकदेशं व्याप्नोति, तथा चैतन्यगुणः सर्वदेहव्यापीत्यर्थः ।

Yasodā, becomes the support (ādhara-आधार) of the whole world, similarly the soul, though atomic in size becomes as expansive as the Brahman.<sup>1</sup>

The jiva is similar to God in so far as it shares with Him the two qualities, existence (sat) and intelligence (cit) and the jiva differs from God because of the absence of bliss (ānanda) in it. When the bliss or ānandāns'a (आनन्दांस) becomes manifest in the soul it assumes the status of the Supreme Self.<sup>2</sup> the Brahman is, on the contrary, constituted of existence (sat), consciousness (cit), and bliss (ānanda), is all-pervasive (व्यापक), unchangeable (अव्यय), all-powerful (सर्वशक्ति), independent (स्वतंत्र) and omniscient (सर्वज्ञ), and still devoid of other properties (guṇa), and it is free from similar (sajātiya-सजातीय), dissimilar (vijātiya-विजातीय), and internal (svagata-स्वगत) differences (dvaitam-द्वैत).<sup>3</sup> The jiva is supposed to be governed by ignorance (avidyā) when it fails to understand its real nature characterised as saccidānanda, and when it falsely identifies itself with the material objects like the body, senses, mind, etc. Vallabha advocates the realisation of the truth of the text 'That thou art' for the attainment of liberation. As Ghate says Vallabha means in the real sense the identity of the two while it is only metaphorical in the case of others.<sup>4</sup> The soul (jiva) is other than and beyond the body, the senses, the

<sup>1</sup> Vallabha: *Tattvārthadīpaḥ*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. S'loka 67, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> Ghate V. S.: *Vedānta*, p. 38.

## The Systems of Rāmānuja .....

397

manas, and the intellect. It is that which wills, acts (kartṛ), and enjoys the pleasurable and the painful experiences. To such jivas bound to the mundane life and its pleasurable and painful experiences, the omniscience and the bliss of the Divine are unknown. They have a very narrow vision of the world, and therefore, they develop attachments to the objects of the world. They are deceived by the paraphernalia of the mundane objects. As Ghate says the infatuating ignorance affects the jiva and presents to it the real and actually existing world with illusory or unreal forms. While the world is real it is only its experience (pratīti-प्रतीति) which is erroneous. The world has objectivity for us, but it is essentially of the nature of Bhagavān and so is purely subjective; but it is only the objectivity with which the jiva endows the world that is unreal and it is projected by ignorance.<sup>1</sup> Thus the experience of the world is mistaken and the mistaken view of the soul about itself and about the world constitutes ignorance or avidyā. The world is real but its understanding is wrong and distorted. Thus avidyā has only subjective existence for the knower and his acts remain faulty and defective as long as his view remains mistaken. The same world, therefore, appears differently to different persons. Ghate, therefore, says—“Thus, this prapañca, which is real, appears to be in three different forms to three different kinds of persons : (i) to those who have become Brahman, it appears as pure Brahman;

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<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, p. 36.

(ii) to those who have got the right knowledge by means of the s'āstras; it appears as endowed with both subjectivity (Brahmadharman-ब्रह्मधर्म) and objectivity (Māyādharmān-मायाधर्म), at the same time with a clear discrimination between the real character of the former and the unreal character of the latter; (iii) finally, to those without knowledge, the prapañca appears as endowed with both these forms but without any discrimination. Thus, all the difference or plurality is in the matter of perception (pratiti-प्रतीति) of the prapañca, but none at all in the matter of its form (svarūpa-स्वरूप). To say that the prapañca itself is unreal and at the same time to say that it is identical with Brahman, is against all reason, since relation of identity cannot possibly exist between a real thing and an unreal thing (cf. Sūtra II, 1.14)."<sup>1</sup> The saṁsāri soul transmigrates as long as it is under the spell of ignorance. It acquires karma so long as it is attached to the objects of experience of the world and its bondage becomes more and more strong as it acts with attachment and passion for the worldly objects. It possesses subtle body which stores in it the saṁskāras or the impressions of the past birth and conveys them to the subsequent birth for fruition. The jīva goes on revolving on the wheel of saṁsāra as long as its karma is not exhausted by fruition.

According to Vallabha, the Brahman has three forms: (i) the highest divine form (ādhidaivika-आधिदैविक) as Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottam, possessing an infinite number of auspicious attributes which can be attained by a sincere devotee; (ii) the akṣara (अक्षर) form

<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S.: *Vedānta*, p. 37.

(ādhyaत्मिका-आध्यात्मिक), in which all the attributes have become non-manifest and which alone is attainable by a sage jñānin; and (iii) the (antaryāmin-अन्तर्यामी) form as seen in the different incarnations or avatāras of Viṣṇu.<sup>1</sup>

The jivas are broadly divided into two kinds: (i) the saṁsārins, and (ii) the muktas. The saṁsāri jivas move through the circle of existences and are subject to misery which is caused by the false knowledge that the body and the senses are the soul. This state of misery continues till it acquires the knowledge of the Brahman, and is convinced of the futility of the mundane life, and till it devotes itself to meditation and love of God. Such souls remain miserable so long as they are under bondage which is caused by the five kinds of avidyā or ignorance.<sup>2</sup> The pure souls are free from ignorance. The souls attain liberation (mukti) by knowledge (ज्ञान) or by devotion (भक्ति). Vallabha defines Mukti as a perfect union of the soul with Kṛṣṇa. Vallabha regards that liberation can be attained by acquiring sāyujyatā (सायुज्यता) or penetration into the being of the Lord Kṛṣṇa by means of singular and intense devotion. Those worldly souls in whom there is no divine nature and evil qualities predominate, are known as the āsura jivas (आसुर जीव), and they always move in the circle of existences. They lack the divine qualities, they labour under ignorance, have their objects of desire of lower kind (nīcabhāva-नीचभाव)

<sup>1</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, pp. 37, 38.

<sup>2</sup> Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna : *Prameya Ratnāraṇya*, p. 8.

and indulge in those evil desires which act as prohibitory to liberation. Due to such evil desires they obtain suitable gross bodies and engage themselves in condemnable activities (nindita karma) and thus go to the lower species (nicayoni). They ever remain worldly miserable souls. They always move in the sub-human, devilish (āsuri-आसुरी) species and always suffer degeneration (adhamāṅgati). They acquire purity and attain the status of pure souls (suddha jivas) when God himself pleases to sport with them, He shows compassion to them and relieves them of the ignorance (avidyā). Thus, their defects are removed and they become the pure souls (suddha jivāḥ-सुद्धजीवाः). In them intelligence and bliss (cit and ānanda) manifest fully.<sup>1</sup>

The jivas that possess the divine nature are again of two kinds—(i) the maryādāmārgiyāḥ or maryādājivāḥ (मर्यादामार्गीयाः or मर्यादाजीवाः) and (ii) the puṣṭimārgiyāḥ (पुष्टिमार्गीयाः or पुष्टिजीवाः). Those who subject themselves to certain moral discipline are known as the maryādājivāḥ, and those who depend entirely on God's grace are the puṣṭijivāḥ. Both the kinds of the souls attain the final deliverance, but by two different paths. The maryādāmārgiya (मर्यादामार्गीय) jivas are distinguished by their following the path of knowledge, karma, religious and moral duties, bhakti-concentrated devotion, and the Yogic practices as prescribed by the scriptures. The Puṣṭimārgiya (पुष्टिमार्गीय) jivas solely depend upon God for His grace and favour (viśeṣānugraha (विशेषानुग्रह)

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna : *Prame'ya Ratnāṇava*, pp. 8, 9.



and by that achieve the final state of mukti.<sup>1</sup> The puṣṭibhaktas sustain on the grace (anugraha-अनुग्रह) of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore, puṣṭibhakti is known as that which issues from the special favour or grace of God. It is characterised by the complete absence of desire for any object other than the essential nature (svarūpa-स्वरूप) of God (Bhagavān).<sup>2</sup> The puṣṭibhakti leads to the attainment of the earthly (laukika-लौकिक) and heavenly (alaukika-अलौकिक) things. The puṣṭibhakta, therefore, totally surrenders himself to the Divine and relies solely upon the grace of God to achieve his final end. The Maryādāmārgiya devotees, on the contrary, exert much to qualify themselves for the final attainment by acquiring scientific knowledge of the S'ṛtis and by vigilantly practising moral virtues and Yogic practices to purify themselves. They believe that when they are thus qualified they become worthy of the Divine grace and God gives to them deliverance most lovingly.

Vallabha further recognises four forms of puṣṭibhakti — (i) pravāha Puṣṭibhakti (प्रवाह पुष्टिभक्ति) — it is the path of those who, while engaged in a worldly life with their me and mine, which is compared to a stream (pravāha), do acts calculated to bring about the attainment of God; (ii) Maryādā puṣṭibhakti (मर्यादा पुष्टिभक्ति) — of those who, withdrawing their minds from worldly enjoyments, devote themselves

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna : *Prame'ya Ratnār avā*, p. 9.

मर्यादामार्गीयास्तु ज्ञानभक्तिकर्मयोगादिभिः सच्छास्त्रप्रतिपादितैः

यथायथं मिश्रिता विशेषानुग्रहेच्छया पुष्टिमार्गीयफलम् . . . . .।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 17. विशेषानुग्रहजन्या या भक्तिः सा पुष्टिभक्तिः ।

to God by hearing discourses about Him, singing His name, and such other processes; (iii) *Puṣṭipuṣṭi-bhakti* (पुष्टिपुष्टिभक्ति)—of those, who, already enjoying God's grace, are made by another grace competent to acquire knowledge useful for adoration and thus, they come to know all about the ways of God. They have to depend on their own efforts for the acquisition of knowledge; (iv) *S'uddhapuṣṭibhakti* (शुद्धपुष्टिभक्ति)—is of those who through mere love devote themselves to the singing and praising of God as if it were a haunting passion. This bhakti depends on God's grace and not upon the human will.<sup>1</sup> The puṣṭimārga puts emphasis on the grace (अनुग्रह) of God and cares little to take into consideration the qualification and preparedness (yogyatā-योग्यता) of the devotee, but requires complete surrender (samarpaṇa-समर्पण) of the whole being of the devotee to the Divine by renouncing all desires for the objects of enjoyment, and it requires complete reliance and faith in God. The only requirement is that the bhakta or devotee has to concentrate his mind on Hari by doing all kinds of worship and services to Him.<sup>2</sup>

The puṣṭimārgiyas (पुष्टिमार्गीय) develop ardent love for God whom they look upon as their lover (preman). The devotion of this kind is known as the Prémabhakti (प्रेमभक्ति) and its pitch grows when it assumes higher intensity and ardour because of excessive attachment and addictiveness (āśakti-

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna : *Prame'ya Ratnāṛava*, pp. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 19, 23, 25.

आसक्ति) for the Lord, their lover. The love, when it deepens still more, becomes a vyasana or haunting passion for him. When the intensity of the devotee reaches such a high pitch it leads to the final perfect bliss (ānanda) of the Divine. When this pitch is attained the devotee enters into the final realm of the Divine and takes supreme joy in the service of Hari. When his devotion assumes the highest pitch and it becomes a haunting passion for him he begins to see everywhere Hari, and hence, everything becomes an object of love and adoration for him. He goes further even to identify himself with everything that assumes the nature of Hari. He then identifies himself with all the things; the separateness of the inner and the outer and the egoism of the individual are liquidated and he attains complete unity with the Divine. The puṣṭi-mārgiya thus takes supreme joy and satisfaction in getting an access into the eternal Līlā (लीला) of the Divine Kṛṣṇa. The liberated soul then participates in the eternal sport (nitya līlā-नित्यलीला) and feels the supreme satisfaction in enjoying the happiness of the company of the Lord by assuming the forms of even cows, beasts, birds, trees, rivers, etc.<sup>1</sup> They derive boundless joy from the company of the Supreme Lord (Puruṣottama-पुरुषोत्तम) and enjoy the Divine joy by assuming even the celestial body. The liberated devotees derive superb joy in the service of the Puruṣottama with whom he has sought identity (sarvātmabhāva-सर्वात्मभाव) by singing songs of

<sup>1</sup> Bhajja Balkrishna : *Prame'ya Ratnārnava*, p. 27.

praise for Him (भजन). He drops his physical (gross) and the subtle body and assumes a body which is suitable for the use of the eternal Līlā (nitya līlā) of the Divine.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Mokṣa, according to the puṣṭimārga, consists in the attainment of the abode of the Divine enjoyments that are identical with the nature of the Puruṣottama in the company of the Puruṣottama Himself.<sup>2</sup> It is the everlasting experience of the unfading eternal joy of the Divine which the liberated soul (mukta) enjoys in company with the Lord Puruṣottama.

The Maryādābhaktas attain the Sāyujya-mukti (सायुज्यमुक्ति) which means the actual penetration of the liberated soul (mukta) into the being of Puruṣottama by means of knowledge, religious duties, bhakti, the other yogic practices, and the moral virtues; while the Puṣṭibhaktas reject this kind of mukti with scorn, and they seek in mukti the actual participation in the eternal līlā of Hari. The Maryādābhaktas lay great stress on a highly evolved moral life by means of aversion to the worldly objects (vairāgya-वैराग्य), rigid self-control, and indifference to the earthly desires. The Puṣṭibhaktas, on the contrary, try to sublimate all the natural propensities and passions by redirecting them to Puruṣottama as their object of attainment. Vallabha remarks about the Maryādābhakti that the highest aim

<sup>1</sup> Bhaṭṭa Balkrishna : *Prame'ya Ratnārnava*, p. 44.

सर्वात्मभावोत्पत्तौ सदैव पुरुषोत्तमाविर्मावात्सेवायां भजनानन्दानुभवः फलति ।  
स्थूललिङ्गशरीरयोः नाशे भगवल्लीलोपयोगी देहं प्राप्य नित्यलीलायां प्रविशति ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 44.

to be attained, for the Maryādāmārgīyas, is to experience sāyujyatā or identity with the self-illuminated God, who has revealed or manifested Himself to him who has purified his mind from within by means of attending to the Ś'ṛti (s'ravaṇa), repetition of it (manana), contemplation of it, and by means of external practices like self-control and cultivation of the calm and tranquil state of mind, etc.<sup>1</sup> Like his predecessors he believes that ultimately such liberation consists in the removal of ignorance (avidyā), and that knowledge is the most important means of attaining Mokṣa.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, the Puṣṭi-mārgīyas seek an everlasting accompaniment of the God by intensifying their loveful devotion (Prema-bhakti) for Him. Ghate (regarding Puṣṭibhakti) says — "....and this is the highest kind of bhakti — the devotee, without having recourse to any sādhanas, depends upon nothing but pure and simple love of Him; his goal is only the service of Hari; his highest pleasure is to become one of the associates of Hari and to sport with him in the Vṇḍāvana. This puṣṭibhakti is the privilege of only him whom Bhagavat is pleased to favour; it begins with preman which removes a liking for any thing but Hari, and passing through āsakti which produces a positive aversion to objects not connected with Hari, culminates in vyasana or entire devotion to Hari."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vallabha : *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* — तस्य श्रवणमनननिदिध्या-  
सनैरन्तरंगैः शमदमादिभिश्च बहिरंगैरतिष्ठुद्धे चित्ते स्वयमेवाविर्भूतस्य स्वप्रकाशस्य  
सायुज्यं परमपुरुषार्थः ।

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. मोक्षश्च अधिष्ठानिवृत्तिरूपः . . . . !

<sup>3</sup> Ghate V. S. : *Vedānta*, p. 39.

Thus, Vallabha depicts a most sportive and romantic picture of mokṣa which creates charm, thrill, and an extraordinary and uncontrollable temptation in the minds of the individuals suffering on the earth. It is filled with a positive enjoyment of the Divine happiness.

## CHAPTER XI

### ŚAIVISM (शैव) AND ŚAKTISM (शक्त)

Saivism is a powerful religious creed in the Southern India like Vaiṣṇavism, and both are the rivals of each other. The Vaiṣṇavas regard Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa or Nārāyaṇa or Vāsudeva, or Rāma or Vithobā as the ultimate Reality and the God to whom they direct their devotion, and they seek redemption from them. The Śaivas, like the Vaiṣṇavas look upon Śiva as the ultimate Reality and the cause and substratum of the universe, and they believe that redemption can be acquired by surrendering to God Ś'iva or Rudra who is approachable by sincere devotion, and He redeems His devotees by his grace. Like the Vaiṣṇavas the Śaivas also emphatically hold that Śiva can be attained by pure exclusive devotion, faith and, love for him by withdrawing from the objects of the world. Ś'aivism is as old as Vaiṣṇavism and is predominantly popular in the Southern India.

God Ś'iva or Rudra was supposed to be a God of destruction and terror in the times of the Gṛhya-sūtras. "He was the god that held sway over regions away from home, over fields, wildernesses, cemeteries, mountains, old trees, and rivers. Whenever a man

came to anything which inspired awe and terror, Rudra was the God thought of and prayed to protect."<sup>1</sup> S'iva is supposed to be a powerful God wielding superior power over all the evils like epidemics, diseases, poisons, serpents, storms, thunderbolt and other awe-inspiring phenomena of nature. Macnicol believes that S'iva is mainly not an Aryan but an aboriginal God. The adoption of the euphemistic name (S'iva, the auspicious) is itself an indication of an attempt to civilize a deity always terrible, but not always worthy of reverence. His aboriginal name may have been Bhairava. S'iva by His very force and fury was fitted not inaptly, to represent that power in the universe which causelessly destroys and causelessly creates.<sup>2</sup> He is taken to be an antidote against all such evils, and therefore, men approached Him to appease Him and to secure from Him protection, security, and happiness against the evil forces of the world. Men approach S'iva out of fear while Viṣṇu is approached out of love and admiration being attracted by His good and auspicious qualities and men seek to achieve from Him perfection, bliss, peace, and everlasting joy. The sentiment of love, admiration, and worship is at the root of Vaiṣṇavism, while in Rudra-S'aivism the sentiment of fear is more predominant, both being monotheistic in nature.<sup>3</sup>

The philosophy of the S'aiva-creed is known as the S'aiva-Siddhānta. S'aivism looks upon God as the

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Nicol Macnicol : *Indian Theism*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religions Systems*, p. 106.



## S'āivism and S'āktism

609

director of the universe and as different from Māyā, soul, and Aṇava (matter) which together form the universe. He is perfect and hence immutable; however, He is omnipotent and He directs the affairs of the universe by His will. He guides and regulates the evolution of the world. As He is perfect, He neither thinks, nor desires, nor acts, nor likes, nor dislikes. He is impartial to all like fire and water, and loves all equally. He is not in space and so He must be omnipresent. He is immanent in all the things of the world, animate and inanimate. He possesses infinite love for all and hates nobody. His main five acts are (i) creation, (ii) sustenance, (iii) disembodiment (death), (iv) suppression of Aṇava, and (v) enlightenment. The devotees need love and adore Him out of gratitude. He is unborn and imperishable, and so, eternal. He is free from all defects and imperfections. He is omniscient as Aṇava has no influence on Him. He is all-doer in the sense that He is the impeller of all actions simply by His will. He is blissful and quiescent.

The S'āivas look upon Rudra that is mentioned in the S'vetāś'vatara Upaniṣad as the ultimate God, and worship Him as S'iva. Rudra in the Mahābhārata is associated with Umā or Pārvatī, Durgā, Kālī, Karālī. S'iva is also worshipped as the Paś'u-Pati, where Paś'us are the individual, finite, imperfect souls and their master is the Lord S'iva. The Pās'upatas divide the reality mainly into three aspects—The Lord (Pati) is S'iva Himself. He

Ā 39

cuts the Karmas of the souls and produces things to be enjoyed and suffered and also their means. He exercises His power of creation only as impelled by Karmas of the finite souls. He possesses a body which is unhuman and unfettered. The body is made up of powers and five specific formulas (mantras) being imagined to be the different parts of the body. The five powers and forms are — creation, protection, destruction, concealment and benefaction.<sup>1</sup>

The Paś'us whom the Lord S'iva rules, are the individual souls having the atomic size, and are self-conscious. The Paś'us are all-pervading, eternal, and the doers of actions. They are imperfect in knowledge and powers as compared with S'iva; but when they secure mukti or emancipation after their fetters (Pāś'as) are removed, and then they become omniscient, and possess the real powers of actions. The individual souls are of three kinds: They are the (i) Vijñānākala, (ii) Pralayākala, and (iii) Sakala.<sup>2</sup> The first kind of Paś'u is Vijñānākala. Such a soul has shaken off its connection with all organs by destroying the impressions of deeds done in the past by means of knowledge, meditation, asceticism or by enjoying the fruits of actions. The Pralayākala is that paś'u whose organs are destroyed by the dissolution of the world; but the impressions of deeds and their taints remain behind. The Sakala

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Ś'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvadarś'anasaṅgraha*, p. 182.

is that which possesses all the three Kalas or fetters, taint or mala. The Vijñānakalas, when their taint is removed are raised to the status of Vidyas'varas which are eight—(i) Ananta—endless, (ii) Sūkṣma—atomic or subtle, (iii) S'ivottamaḥ—the most excellent S'iva, (iv) Ekanetraḥ—the one-eyed, (v) Eka-rudra, (vi) Trimūrtikaḥ—one with three forms, (vii) S'rikanṭhaḥ, and (viii) S'ikhandi.<sup>1</sup> The Pralaya-kalas also are of two kinds—those whose fetters have matured reach liberation and others whose subtle body undergoes many births in accordance with impressions of deeds. Liberation is conferred upon the souls or Pas'us in accordance with their deeds.

Pās'as or fetters are divided into four kinds which are (i) Mala or taint which hides the powers of knowing and acting of the soul, and is like the husk that envelops the grain of rice; (ii) Karma—impression of deeds for the attainment of fruits; (iii) Māyā, the material cause into which the whole world returns at the time of dissolution, and the world springs from it; (iv) Rodhasakti—the obstructive power of S'iva. It regulates the other three fetters and conceals the true nature of the soul.<sup>2</sup> S'iva is possessed of this power and hence, He can create the world. The Pas'us are of two kinds, the impure and the pure; the former being associated with the body and the latter exist without any body.

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadaś'anasāṅgraha*, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 187.

The Paś'us attain liberation after they become free from the four fetters by means of sincere and singular devotion to the God, Ś'iva. Ś'iva can be attained only by those who exercise self-control and dedicate themselves to Him exclusively and love Him wholeheartedly. The souls (Paś'us) become Ś'iva in emancipation; they become omniscient and their powers also enhance, excepting that of creation. The Paś'us become eternally free from ignorance, Karma and, the miseries of the worldly life. In other systems the destruction of misery is final deliverance, in the Pāś'upata system the attainment of the highest powers is also to be added...with others the fruit of Yoga is the attainment of the absolute condition; here it is attainment of the highest powers. The powers that are acquired are three — (1) Manojavatva — the power of doing any thing instantly, (2) Kāmarūpitva — power of assuming variety of shapes and forms or bodies and senses without an effort, (3) Vikramatadharmitva — great power. Thus a man acquires these miraculous powers of knowledge and action at the end of the course of conduct and discipline.<sup>1</sup>

Śaivism had its own internal divisions. *Kāś'mīra Śaivism* is a well known branch of Śaivism which itself is again redivided into the two branches known as the *Spandas'āstra* and *Pratyabhijñās'āstra*. Kāsmīra Śaivism came into existence during the 9th century A. D. and it is supposed to be a more humane and rational school. Vasugupta and Kallaṭa are associated

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 124.

## S'aivism and S'āktism

613

with the Spandas'āstra. This branch derived the existence of any material cause and, any prompting cause like the Karma for the creation of the world. They did not believe in the Paripāmavāda nor in the Vivartavāda, according to which, the world is created by God out of Himself or by Māyā, respectively. The Kās'mīra S'aivism looks upon Māyā as the Lord's power, which is peculiar (s'aktivis'eṣaḥ-शक्तिविशेषः), and it accomplishes something that is impossible of accomplishment for any other agency. Māyā is the Tirodhānas'akti (तिरोधानशक्ति), the wonder-working power. According to this school, the Lord S'iva is entangled in the five sheaths created by the Māyā and He then becomes the jiva.<sup>1</sup> According to this school, God is independent and creates merely by the force of His will all that comes into existence. He makes the world appear in Himself, as it were distinct from Himself, though not so really, as the things appear in a mirror, but He is not affected by them. God possesses such a wonder-working power and He Himself appears in numerous forms. The individual soul also is identical with the Lord S'iva, the Supreme Self. But it does not perceive this identity with S'iva due to impurity (mala) which is of three kinds. The soul forgets its free and universal nature through ignorance and believes itself to be imperfect; it falsely identifies with things which are not itself, like body, and is afflicted by the pains accruing from them. The impurities are of three kinds — Āṇava — caused by the

<sup>1</sup> Sakhare M. R. : *History and Philosophy of Lingāyat Religion*, p. 444.

finitude of the soul, the Māyīya—caused by Māyā and the Kārma resulting from actions. These impurities make the soul forgetful of its real eternal and pervasive nature. These impurities vanish when the devotees acquire the vision of S'iva that absorbs all the finite thoughts by means of the most intense contemplation of him. When this condition becomes stable the jīva becomes liberated for ever and becomes the Supreme Self, the S'iva Himself.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Kāsmīra school of S'aivism holds that liberation or Mokṣa consists in attaining identity with S'iva by the jīva (s'ivasāyujya-शिवसायुज्य) and not in simply attaining similarity (sārūpya-सारूप्य) with Him. The individual soul becomes free from the three taints, attains complete at-one-ment with ParaS'iva; once such a state is attained Māyā cannot separate them.<sup>2</sup>

The other branch of Kāsmīra S'aivism is represented by *Pratyabhijñāśāstra*. According to this school the jīva is neither a vikāra, modification of Siva, nor an illusory appearance, but it is S'iva Himself in essence, although concealed by Māyā. It believes in the identity of the jīva with S'iva and it is forgotten due to ignorance. It believes in the self-illuminated (svayam-prakāś'a) nature of the Self and the individual souls are different due to the adjuncts with which the fundamental light of the Self is associated. In fact, there is only the same universal infinite self-illuminated consciousness, and it is the

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Sakhare M. R. : *History and Philosophy of Lingāyat Religion*, p. 358.

Supreme Self. S'iva or Mahes'vara is characterised by His sentience, absence of limitations, knowledge free from dependence on any adjuncts, independence, blissfulness.<sup>1</sup> Everything, therefore, shines with the light of the Self or S'iva. Similarly, S'iva is omnipotent and possesses infinite power and He creates the world only with His will.<sup>2</sup>

The soul is, in essence, of the nature of God S'iva; the only thing is that their identity is not recognised. The jiva remains unconscious of the omniscience, omnipotence, and of the all-blissful nature of the Supreme Self. The Pratyabhijñā holds that the soul can become the Self only when and only if it recognises its original identity with the Self. The jiva can regain its lost divine nature by simply recognising (pratyabhijñā—प्रत्यभिज्ञा) that it itself is nothing else but the Self. This is possible by two means, i.e., by externally knowing the divine attributes of God S'iva and developing love for Him, and internally by developing the consciousness that — I am the God, Himself. The difference between the two stages is like that of a woman who is enamoured with a man whose fine qualities are described to her and she becomes restless to meet him in the first stage, and in the next when she is shown the man himself for whom she feels intense love she meets him and enters into union with him. Similarly, here it is necessary to recognise the Lord S'iva, as the essential nature of the jiva, is absolutely necessary for the attainment of liberation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sarvadars'anasāgraha*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 200.

The Spanda school mentions the dawning of the form or vision of Bhairava or God on the mind in the course of meditation and thereby clearing away of the impurities as the way to the realisation of the identity with God, while the Pratyabhijñā school maintains that recognition of one-self as God is the way.<sup>1</sup>

S'aivism became a popular creed in the Southern India in the form of the *Viras'aiva* or *Lingayat* Sect founded by Basava in the 12th century. The Lingāyat school continues to be a powerful and popular creed even in the present days. It holds the main tenet of S'aivism that S'iva is the ultimate Reality, the Brahman, the Highest, and He is characterised by existence (sat), intelligence (cit), and joy (ānanda). He is the support or the resting place of all the things (sthala) and is the non-dual (advaita) final Reality.<sup>2</sup> The Viras'aiva school is thus a monistic school and holds that S'iva is the Absolute, the final reality devoid of any particular attributes. S'iva is the supreme entity. He is the all-knowing, all-doing, all-sustaining being called Prakāś'a, the serene Lord, all-pervading, indivisible, and infinite. He has two aspects—the immanent and the transcendent. S'iva as immanent appears as involved in the changing phenomenal world, and S'iva as a transcendent entity is the immutable Reality, the substrate of all change, permanent, and non-relational absolute entity. In it He is beyond

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 134.



all manifestations.<sup>1</sup> As Sakhare says, He is the origin and source of the universe and is the Para-brahman, as the Vedāntins are pleased to call Him. He is self-conscious. The vibration of the perfect egoity is His s'akti and through it He holds and visualises the entire universe of objects as "This is". The Vimars'a, the perfect Egoity, is the S'akti.

S'iva manifests Himself with the help of His unique power as the Linga and Anga; Linga being the God, the object of worship of the Angas which are the individual souls (jivas) that worship the Linga. The power with the help of which S'iva manifests Himself in these two aspects is inalienable with Him, and it can never be dissociated from Him. It is a part of His nature, and therefore, the doctrine of the Vira S'aivas is described as the S'aktivis'istā-dvaita-सक्तिविशिष्टद्वैत), monism qualified by the S'akti. God is characterised by S'akti. The relation of this power with S'akti is one of essential identity (sāmarasya-सामरस्य) which means the union of two things which are identical in their essential nature. The idea of Sāmarasya is peculiar with the Lingāyatas. The whole world of names and forms exists in S'iva as His own externalization, an object of His own enjoyment. S'akti is the Ātmavimars'a or Prakāś'avimars'a, the expressive nature of S'iva Himself, and it works wonders in obedience to S'iva's will, which again is nothing but a phase or mode of His power. She possesses the common nature of S'iva and is styled Dharmacāriṇī

<sup>1</sup> Sakhare M. R.: *History and Philosophy of Lingāyat Religion*, p. 431.

or the lawfully wedded wife of S'iva acting in perfect accord with her husband's disposition or will.<sup>1</sup> The Paras'iva is tranquil and content and creates the manifold world only to sport with it. The S'akti divides itself into two parts by its own will, one of the parts resorting to S'iva is called Kalā, and the other resorting to the individual souls is called Bhakti or devotion. Such a creative activity or S'akti of Paras'iva has a peculiar suceptibility of leading to action and entanglement; it is downward (adhomukhi) and it tends to the creation of the universe associated with the vale of miseries; while Bhakti, another form of the same S'akti or power is ūrdhvamukhi (ऊर्ध्वमुखी) and it has the upward direction; it has a tendency to the upliftment of the individual soul into thorough union or at-one-ment with Paras'iva leading the jīva to final deliverance by making it free from the malatraya three taints. Bhakti exists in the Anga while S'akti (Kalā) exists in the Linga (God).

Linga represents Paras'iva, the highest Absolute Brahman in the saguṇa form of the God that is merciful by nature and is related to the world and to His devotees. Linga is S'iva Himself and not His emblem. It is divided into three forms—(1) Bhāvalinga—which is without parts and is perceived by faith. It is the highest existence (sat) unconditioned by space and time. (2) Prāṇalinga, has parts and is apprehended by the mind. It is intelligence of the

<sup>1</sup> Sakbare M. R.: *History and Philosophy of Lingāyat Religion*, p. 435.

Supreme Self. (3) Iṣṭalinga has parts and is apprehended by the eye. It is the joy. The first is the highest principle, the second in the subtle form, and the third is Sthūla one.<sup>1</sup>

The Viras'aivas hold like the Vaiṣṇavas that one can attain deliverance by sincere and faithful devotion to S'iva. The way of the attainment of S'iva is called S'ivayoga (शिवयोग) which does not consist in the formal worship of images, in the performance of Yajña, or in muttering hymns, but it consists in the sincere devotion, aspiration, and self-concentration, inward and upward, to the Divine Power above and its working to the Divine presence in the heart, and by rejecting all that is foreign to these. This bhakti is self-opening and self-expansive. It is of three kinds—faith (Vidheyabhakti-विधेयभक्ति), aspiration (Vicārabhakti-विचारभक्ति), and surrender (Vis'uddhabhakti-विशुद्धभक्ति). Bhakti essentially consists in prayer (prārthanā) and worship (ārādhanā).<sup>2</sup>

Again the devotion takes three forms—the Yogāṅga in which a man obtains happiness by his union with S'iva, it is also known as saṁsārabhakti (संसारभक्ति); the Bhogāṅga (भोगाङ्ग) in it the individual enjoys along with S'iva, and the third is the Tyāgāṅga (त्यागाङ्ग) which implies the abandonment of the world as transient and illusory. The method of attaining deliverance, according to this school, is one

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Sakhare M. R. : *History and Philosophy of Lingūyat Religion*, p. 575.

of sincere devotion (bhakti) and one of moral and spiritual discipline. Deliverance means to them the realisation of sāmānyasya—identity in the qualified form, and the experience of the blissful state of S'iva. It does not mean in the least, the absorption of the finite individual soul into the Paraś'iva or Parabrahman but the retention of it in a highly evolved form in the company of the Lord S'iva, enjoying S'iva's blissful company. Sakhare interprets it in a different way and says that the aim of S'ivayoga is not only to rise above ordinary ignorant world—consciousness but to bring the supramental power of the Divine consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them to manifest the divine life in matter.<sup>1</sup> It aims at bringing down the Divine from the heaven to the earth by gradually purifying the senses and the mind, the vital and mental medium of layers to make them worthy of the manifestation of the S'iva to bring down the Divine peace, joy, and light on the earth. The Vīras'aivas also admit the possibility of the living liberated soul (Jīvanmuktas) who are free from ego and manifest the Divine peace and joy while alive.

### S'āktism—शाक्तवाद

The S'āktas, who are called so for they choose their Deity of worship (Iṣṭadevatā—इष्टदेवता) S'akti. The S'āktas are the "Tāntrikas" and they share to a large extent the philosophical views of the

<sup>1</sup> Sakhare M. R. : *History and Philosophy of Lingāyat Religion*, p. 574.

S'aivas. In this cult, both in doctrine and practice, emphasis is laid on that aspect of the one which is the source of change in Time and Space.

The S'āktas recognise S'iva as the final infinite, omniscient, all-pervading, and omnipotent God, and they do not subordinate the power (S'akti) to God S'iva, but give equal importance to S'akti along with S'iva. S'iva equipped with the S'akti is the cause of the world. S'iva's omnipotence cannot be proved without His Supreme Power over all the objects of the world. S'iva without this S'akti represents the static Brahman that is beyond all change of the world and is the immutable and eternal Reality; while S'iva when associated with S'akti represents the dynamic aspect of the Reality which includes all the changing phenomena of the world. In fact, both are the same, the difference lies in the points of view and the attributes that are given importance. S'akti is not always in the manifest form; it remains invisible and does not actualise itself into its manifestations. As Woodroffe says, until there is in fact, change, S'akti is merely Potency of Becoming in Being, as such is wholly one with it. The Power (S'akti) and the Possessor of Power (S'aktimān) are one. As, therefore, He is Being – Bliss – consciousness so is she. She also is the full (Pūrṇa) which is no mere abstraction from its evolved manifestations.<sup>1</sup> The two are inalienably related to each other. S'iva, so far He is imagined to be the creator and sustainer

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<sup>1</sup> Woodroffe John : *Shakti and Shākta*, p. 39.

of the world, is associated with S'akti. S'iva and S'akti are related as prakāś'a and vimars'a. S'iva is prakāś'a, pure consciousness, and S'akti is Vimars'a, the power latent in Prakāś'a, and gives rise to the world of distinctions. If S'iva is consciousness (cit), S'akti is the formative energy of consciousness (Cidrūpini). Brahmā, Viṣṇu and S'iva perform the functions of creation, preservation and destruction in obedience to S'akti. In the perfect experience of ānanda, S'iva and S'akti are indistinguishable. The two coalesce in one being.<sup>1</sup> S'iva acts like the indeterminate Brahman and is characterised as quiescent, while S'akti being determinate and dynamic is possessed of will (icchā-इच्छा), knowledge (jñāna-ज्ञान) and action (kriyā-क्रिया), and thus, the whole world is projected by S'akti. The two are inseparably related since force is inherent in existence. The S'akti is addressed as Mother in the Mahākālī Samhitā and the prayer runs as follows — "Thou art neither girl, nor maid, nor old. Indeed thou art neither female, nor male, nor neuter. Thou art inconceivable, immeasurable Power, the Being of all which exists, void of all duality, the Supreme Brahman, attainable in illumination alone".<sup>2</sup> Thus, S'akti is supposed to be not of feminine gender, or a female Reality. However Bhandarkar says — "Though it admits a male element in the beginning, still it is thoroughly subdued by the female element which becomes predominant; and the highest deity is Tripurasundarī (त्रिपुरसुंदरी). The ambition of every pious follower of the system is to become identical

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 735.

<sup>2</sup> Woodroffe John : *Shakti and Shākta*, p. 26.

## S'aivism and S'āktism

623

with Tripurasundari, and one of his religious exercises is to habituate himself to think that he is a woman."<sup>1</sup> He also refers to a number of goddesses worshipped as the forms of the S'akti, i.e., Umā, Rudrānī, Durgā, Bhavānī, Kumāri, Kālī, Kāpālī, Mahākālī, Caṇḍī, Kātyāyanī, Karālā, Vijayā, Kausikī, Lalitā, Ānandabhairavī and Tripurasundari, Tripurasundari being the supreme in excellence and power.<sup>2</sup>

The same S'akti which is one with S'iva evolves infinite real forms and is present in all those forms; Māyā is not here illusory, but is the real power of S'iva that evolves the whole universe. S'iva, the Self or spirit, is essentially constituted of pure consciousness; S'akti is a part of Him and S'akti manifests herself in the form of Mind and Matter both being derived from the same cause. There is a parallelism. The pure-consciousness of S'iva is immanent in both the Mind and the Matter. Inorganic matter also is consciousness in full subjection to the Power of Ignorance. It is consciousness identifying itself with inorganic matter. Mind and matter are the subjective and objective aspects of the one polarized consciousness.<sup>3</sup>

The Jivas, the individual souls, are the evolutes of the S'akti, the Māyā. They are the finite centres of consciousness and are produced out of Ignorance. They are not unreal, but their reality or experience is limited. They cannot have the full

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaiṣṇavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> Woodroffe John: *Shakti and Shākta*, pp. 46, 47.

experience of S'iva. Ignorance, therefore, becomes equivalent to partial knowledge and limited powers. Illusion, therefore, is neither in God nor in man.<sup>1</sup> God cannot have the vision of man although He is the cause of man and his experience. The experience of the jiva, though limited, is real, but out of ignorance it thinks that it is the agent or doer of actions; it does not recognise S'akti as the real agent of all actions. Its bondage is, therefore, caused by ignorance.

The Jiva, the finite soul can attain liberation by removing from its mind the ignorance which consists in falsely identifying its real nature with what it is not. It must realise by knowledge and spiritual insight that it is reality the pure consciousness (Prakāśa-प्रकाश), and its limitations are not real. "Knowledge of S'akti is the road to salvation, which is dissolution in the blissful effulgence of the Supreme. Liberation, according to the S'āktas, is not dependent on the observance of the external forms of religion like recitation of hymns, sacrifices, and other rituals. What is necessary for the attainment of liberation is the knowledge for jiva that it is an evolute of S'akti, and is, in essence, identical with it; and Bhakti or devotion along with the physical and mental discipline help it.<sup>2</sup> The S'āktas admit the possibility of the Jivan-mukta and believe in the doctrine of transmigration of the soul.

<sup>1</sup> Woodroffe John : *Shakti and Shāṅkta*, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan S. : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 736, 737.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE VAIṢṆAVA SAINTS OF THE MEDIEVAL INDIA

It is beyond the scope of this work to inquire into the origin and rise of the phenomenon of Bhakti or devotion. However, it becomes evident from the study of the ancient literature that the phenomenon of bhakti or devotion had existed repeatedly in all the periods, i.e., in the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads, the epics like Mahābhārat and Rāmāyaṇa, the Bhagavadgītā, the Bhāgavat and in all the Purāṇas. All these works testify to the existence of devotion of the finite to the Infinite God either out of fear and desire for security and peace or out of regard and adoration for that which is far superior to the finite, weak, and miserable souls lacking in knowledge, power, duration, and happiness. Though the ancient men approached the Divine with the motive of seeking security, protection, and prosperity, it was not true in all cases. It was equally true that man was attracted to God to worship Him simply out of regard and love for His infinite knowledge, powers, and bliss and he felt a craving to share His supreme happiness. It is not true that man approached God simply out of his quest for truth being governed by the desire of inquisitiveness and curiosity; but man felt it exalting

Ā 40

to enter a personal and loving relationship with such an almighty, omniscient and omnipotent God, who is ignorant of sorrow and suffering, of finitude and limitations. The desire on the part of man to seek communion with the Divine ultimately culminated into the loving adoration and sacrifice, into Bhakti-devotion for the Divine. The knowledge of the impersonal, qualityless, and heartless reality (absolute) finally fails to quench the craving of the human heart to widen itself to infinity, to realise an identity with the Reality, and to experience forever an unending bliss which ultimately relieves him of the shortcomings and the sorrows of the worldly life. The finite human heart, therefore, demands the perfect and all-powerful Being, who is not only the creator, the sustainer, and the absorber of the whole universe, but who is also full of profound compassion (dayā) and love for His creation, and who possesses the supreme power to destroy the evil by which the worldly beings are constantly harassed. He also possesses the power to redeem the individual who has for ever surrendered himself totally to Him by cutting short the mechanical operations of the Adṛṣṭa. The human heart thus craves for the attainment of such a perfect loving God who would become a source of everlasting peace, consolation, solace, and contentment to him, and would no more send him to the realm of suffering. This desire on the part of man has ultimately led to Theism, which means that the ultimate Reality is not the impersonal Brahman but a personal entity possessed of the qualities like love, compassion, and joy. The later Advaita systems of

Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and others transformed the Absolute of Śaṅkara into a Theos, God, who possesses all the characteristics of the Brahman, and over and above them, possesses elements of personality, and thus, can enter into a direct relation with the human beings or finite souls, and gives them solace and consolation for ever. The whole of Indian philosophical thought has been prompted not by a purely cognitive motive but is mainly guided by the desire of acquiring a permanent release from the worldly life which is predominantly full of suffering and finitude. The devotion to God, for Indian saints and philosophers, was meant for the attainment of liberation (Mokṣa). The final state that the jīva or individual soul seeks, according to the Indian Theism, is not one of ethical perfection but it is one of spiritual perfection and eternal communion with the Divine; it is a state above the duality of good and evil. It being the highest state of perfection, and a state of absolute truth and absolute good transcends all distinctions and dualities including those of good and evil. It transcends all distinctions; therefore, it is improper to describe it as unethical but it is supra-ethical meaning thereby that it is more than the ethical perfection which forms only a byproduct of the life of the highest spiritual perfection.

In the Northern India flourished Kabir, Tulasīdāsa, Sūradāsa, Chaitanya, Mirābāi, Narasiṃha Mehtā and in the Southern part Jñāneśvara, Nāmdēva, Tukārama, Rāmdāsa as the most powerful Vaisṇava.

saints who popularised the Vaiṣṇava religion among the people, removed the barriers of caste distinctions, and preached that any body could attain liberation on the strength of one's pure and wholehearted devotion (bhakti) to the Paramātmā, who is named in different ways. It was not essential for the seekers of Mokṣa to be very well conversant with the original Sanskrit scriptures; nor was it necessary to follow the orthodox path of Karma and religious rituals, but it was sufficient even for an illiterate person to know the name of God and he could attain Mokṣa by repeating the name of God with singular devotion, love, adoration, and complete surrender to the Almighty who could redeem His devotees by his grace. I propose to give an account of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa which occur in the writings of the Medieval Saints of the Vaiṣṇava Cult. I propose to refer here only to the most outstanding saints like Jñāneśvara, Kabir, Sūradāsa, Mirābāi, Tulasidāsa, Narasimha Mehtā, Chaitanya, Tukārāma and Ramakṛṣṇa Paramahansa.

### Jñāneśvara

Jñāneśvara has been recognised as the most prominent saint of Mahārāṣṭra. He lived in the thirteenth century during 1271 A.D. and 1296 A.D. He ended his life quite prematurely at the age of twenty-five as his mission was fulfilled. He was an exceptionally talented person and could propound his philosophy at an early age of 20. He did not form any particular cult of religion. He had attained the realization of God, and therefore, his writings

## The Vaisṇava Saints of ....

629

possess not only intellectual integrity but also a spiritual insight. His main works are *Jñānes'varī* and *Amṛtānubhava*. His preceptor was his elder brother Nivṛttināth, who too was a philosophical genius. *Jñānes'varī* is a commentary on the Bhagavadgītā by Jñānes'vara. Jñānes'vara has propounded practically his whole of philosophy in *Jñānes'varī* and in *Amṛtānubhava*, which are supposed to be his monumental works.

Jñānes'vara was highly influenced by the absolute Monism or Advaitism of Sāṅkara as well as by the Sāṅkhya doctrine of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. His philosophy exhibits a curious mixture of these two philosophies. Jñānes'vara emphasized knowledge (jñāna) and devotion (bhakti) equally and held that final emancipation could be attained only by enlightened devotion to God. Jñānes'vara holds that the Ātman is different from the body and it is a sentient (cinmaya) principle. It is unborn, undecaying, and imperishable. It is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. It is extremely subtle and is present in everything. Whatever is in the world is Ātman. It is eternal and beyond the three attributes (guṇātīta). It is indestructible and is characterised by the three qualities—existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). It is free from all limitations and hence is infinite.

Jñānes'vara further holds the doctrine of Cidvilāsa (चिद्विलास), according to which, this whole existence is a sportive expression (Cidvilāsa) of the Absolute (Brahman) or the Ātman which is essentially the

sentient principle. Everything is Ātman or the Brahman which is beyond the three attributes, and which is devoid of any particular nature. It is beyond all duality, and hence, beyond all relativity. The jiva or soul is inseparable from the Brahman. It is identical with Ātman in a particular way. In this respect he believes in bhedābhedavāda (भेदाभेदवाद) or in the theory of difference and non-difference as true simultaneously. The Jiva is one with the Brahman or the Supreme Self (Ātman) just as a ripple (tarang-तरङ्ग) is one with the ocean and still different from it. Jiva is one with the Brahman as the rays of the sun are one with the sun. He also resorts to reflectionism and compares the jiva to a reflection of the sun in water, the reflection being subject to changes, while the Ātman that is reflected is immutable. Ātman is not affected by the various experiences of pleasure and pain of the jivas.

Jñānes'vara says in his *Amṛtānubhava* that the world is neither caused by māyā nor by ajñāna (nescience), but it is a spontaneous expression of the Brahman by itself. He denies the vivartavāda and contends that the world is one with the Brahman; everything in the world is a sportive expression of the Brahman. He calls it also the 'Sphūrtimatra' (स्फूर्तिमात्र) a spontaneous and unmotivated expression of the Brahman. This theory is also known as 'Sphūrtivāda' (स्फूर्तिवाद). When there arises a desire in the Supreme Ātman to see Himself, He Himself becomes the manifold world, an object to Himself, and thus comes to see Himself as the visible world.

Thus, the Ātman, being beyond all triads, and of the nature of pure light, expands Itself as the world.<sup>1</sup> But although Brahman itself becomes the visible world, and being itself seer, enjoys it, its unity is not in the least disturbed by it, as the unity of the original face is not disturbed by its being reflected in a mirror, or as the standing posture of an excellent horse which sleeps while standing, is not disturbed even when it wakes up. Just as water plays with itself by assuming the form of waves, the Absolute is playing with Itself by assuming the form of waves; the Absolute is playing with itself by becoming the world. Is any difference created in fire, when it wears the garlands of flames? There is no duality between the Sun and its rays when it is surrounded by the rays. The unity of the moon is not disturbed even when enveloped by the moonlight. The lotus remains one even when it blooms into a thousand petals... Even when there are spread on a loom a number of threads, there is to be found in them nothing but thread. Similarly, there is no difference in the Absolute, when it presents itself either as the seer of the world, or as the world that it sees; for, it is the Absolute alone that becomes the both. Thus, the unity of the Ātman is not lost even when it comes to fill the whole universe.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, everything is nothing but the Ātman itself. Whatever is only a particular form of the

<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'vara : *Amṛtānubhava* (Marathi), VII, 129, 131, 156.

<sup>2</sup> Ranade R. D. : *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, p. 159.

Jñānes'vara : *Amṛtānubhava*, 132-149.

Ātman and the Ātman is free from the duality of the subject and object. It is both, and still it transcends both. It is of the nature of light which is self-illuminated; it shows itself and at the same time reveals other objects. It is thus inexpressible in words, and forms no object either for knowledge or experience.<sup>1</sup> Its richness is incomparable with any object other than itself.<sup>2</sup>

Such an ultimate reality, the Brahman itself, becomes the jiva in a particular and limited form. The jiva is in reality the Puruṣa, the immutable principle as contrasted with the mutable Prakṛti. It is the nature of the Prakṛti to be always in change and flux; while the Puruṣa is only reflected in the various changing states of the Prakṛti. It is the unchanging principle that appears to be changing, but does not change actually. The jiva is the finite and empirical soul having the sense of being one with the body and its sense organs; being the subject that experiences pleasure, pain, aversion, love, volition and acts differently in different circumstances, revolves on the wheel of birth and death to reap the fruits of its past actions, and has limited powers of knowledge, feeling, and willing. It acts as a moral agent and possesses essentially the consciousness of egohood, I-ness. It experiences pleasure when its desires are satisfied and feels grief when they are frustrated. It is thus always subjected to sufferings of the worldly life. The jiva is falsely identified

<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'vara : *Amṛtānubhava*, VII. 252.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. VII. 257.



with the body and one feels that it is fair or black, blind or deaf, old or young, etc. In fact, all the external changing qualities belong to the body which is mutable and perishable as it is formed as a complex out of the thirty-six elements.<sup>1</sup> But Jñānes'vara distinguishes the soul from the body and says that the soul is mirrored in the body as the sun in a lake. The body is subject to Karma and it revolves on the wheel of birth and death. It has a temporary existence. On the contrary, the soul is a sentient principle (cit), it is pure, eternal, and beginningless. It is partless, formless; it is neither joy nor joyless. It is the silent witness of the changing states of the mind and the body. It is above all these changing states and is of the nature of consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

The Self or the Brahman is not different from the world; the tree with all its branches, leaves, buds, flowers, and fruits is nothing else but the original seed unfolded; similarly, the Self is identical with the material world and the jivas. The world and the souls are only the manifestations of the original Self which is also termed as 'God'.<sup>3</sup> The jiva is like an ornament of the Self or Brahman which is like gold from which it is prepared. The wise man thus sees the real basic identity of the jiva and the Brahman or God. Jñānes'vara thus regards that the underlying cause of which the world is an expression is alone real, because it is eternal and all other changing

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'varī*, XIII. 151-156.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* : XIII. 1095-1124.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* : X. 98-118.

things are unreal since they are evanescent. In reality, the Brahman is imperishable (avināś'i-अविनाशी) but it appears to be born and going to destruction simply due to Māyā (delusion); just as ripples seem to have been produced by a gust of wind on the surface of water which again becomes calm when the wind stops blowing.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the limited experience of pleasure and pain of the soul is produced by ignorance which is known as Māyā. But the real Self is eternal, all-pervading, free from birth and death, and indestructible by weapons; it cannot be drowned in the waters at the pralaya, nor can it be burnt, nor can a hurricane move it; it is eternal, immovable, all-pervading, immortal, and perfect.<sup>2</sup> Jñānes'vara describes it further as that which cannot be known by inference and is imperceptible. The mind cannot grasp it; it is infinite, devoid of the three attributes, beginningless, unmodified, beyond every form, and manifested in all forms: such is that Supreme person (Puruṣottam).<sup>3</sup> Man forgets this nature of his innermost Self and comes to grief by identifying his Self with any of his external adjuncts, which do not belong to the Self or Ātman. The pains, sufferings, and griefs of the jīva do not affect the Supreme Self which is the innermost Self of man. "A blow given to a shadow does not cause a wound in the body. When a vessel full of water is upturned, the reflection of the sun, which was visible therein, is seen no longer, but

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, II. 105, 106.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* II. 145, 146, 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* II. 148, 149, 150.

the sun is not destroyed. Space (Ākāśa) appears in the form of a house, but on the house being pulled down the space is still there. So also with the loss of the body the Soul is not destroyed. Like a man wearing a new robe discarding the old and worn out one, the Soul leaves one body and enters another.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is necessary to discriminate between the immortal Self which often times comes to be mistaken for many transient things just like the royal swan that distinguishes milk from water when the two are mixed and it sucks milk and leaves water.<sup>2</sup>

Jñānes'vara holds that the jīva feels itself to be in bondage due to nescience which consists in the failure to know the real nature of the Self.<sup>3</sup> The jīva which acts under the influence of the three attributes does many actions, which bear their corresponding results as good and bad, and in order to experience them the jīva has to revolve on the round of births and deaths. The jīva thus transmigrates as long as it acts under the spell of ignorance and regards itself as the real agent of actions. But according to Jñānes'vara, the world and the sense of egohood and agentship is a result of nescience (avidyā), because only the Brahman and Brahman alone and no other thing is real. Kṛṣṇa in Jñānes'vari says to Arjuna that nescience (avidyā) which is beginningless and indescribable, is His eternally young wife; avidyā has no real

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari* II. 140, 141, 142, 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* II. 127.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* XIV. 136.

nature of itself (i.e., has no positive existence), who has very great dimensions, and is always away while awake, but is near during sleep, avidyā is awake when He is asleep and conceives only by her mere contact with His existence (sattāsambhoga-सत्तासंयोग), and thus develops in its womb the Prakṛti, and out of it the whole world of manifold objects.... Out of it are produced the eighty-four lacs of species; it assumes numerous bodies and limbs, assumes the ornaments of names, nourishes them with the milk of infatuation (moha).<sup>1</sup> Thus, the whole world, jivas, their actions and sufferings, merit and demerit are the products of nescience (avidyā) which exists only in the absence of knowledge. The world, therefore, has only illusory existence. It does not exist as a real thing by itself. It is not in reality what it appears to us. In fact, the world and the jiva are the Brahman (Kṛṣṇa). All that exists is the Brahman just as the waves are the waters of the ocean and fire and flame are nothing but only fire; the ornaments of gold do not cease to be gold itself and the opening of petals does not destroy the lotus. Therefore, all this is only Brahman if one tries to penetrate into and go beyond the world.<sup>2</sup> Jñānes'vara sometimes suggests the Parivāṃavāda also when he says that the effect, the world, is created of the same stuff as that of the cause, the Brahman; their relation being interpreted as one of jar to clay and cloth to cotton.<sup>3</sup> Thus,

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari* XIV. 88-109.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* XIV. 122, 123, 124, 125, 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* XIV. 121.

here the Brahman seems to be the material cause of the world. He also figuratively says that the Brahman is the father, and *Māyā* the mother of the world.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the whole universe is deluded by nescience and dances due to it. Nescience acts as the missile of infatuation (*moha*), as a vessel of the drink of delusion its hymn (*mantra*) being non-discrimination (*aviveka*).<sup>2</sup>

Jñānes'vara urges the necessity of a proper discrimination between the non-eternal and the eternal just as the swan separates milk from water. The jīva which struggles on the earth for the achievement of happiness but often-times it has to undergo numerous sufferings, is compelled to suffer only due to nescience or the ignorance of its own real nature. If it properly understands that its changing nature is only illusory and its real nature is immutable, eternal, and blissful and that, if it overcomes its false identification with the external upādhis, and if it realizes that it is in reality the Supreme Self or the Brahman itself, it will be eternally free from all the sufferings, and in addition, it will enjoy the immense happiness of the Supreme Self. It will then experience the bliss of its infinite nature.

Jñānes'vara, therefore, advocates both the knowledge of and devotion to God to attain the final state of emancipation. He says 'Liberation is to know Me in My true form. The man of non-wisdom is in bondage, as he does not know Me, but dwells

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'varī*, XIV. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* XIV. 176, 177.

on the multiplicity.<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'vara describes the state of liberation as one of communion with God by the absorption of the soul into the infinity of the Supreme Self or God; it can better be understood if we call it the recovery of the infinite and perfectly blissful nature of the Self which is lost in the course of its saṁsāra state. In liberation, the jīva becomes eternally free from the three attributes and hence, from its corresponding finite experiences of pleasure and pain, love and hatred, anger and greed, etc. It becomes free for ever from the Karmas as it ceases to have bodily life. It becomes free for ever from rebirth. It enjoys the infinite consciousness and bliss by entering into perfect identity with the Supreme Self, and has no fear of returning any more to the miseries of the worldly life. This state is attained by devotees by wholehearted and sincere devotion to God who gives them liberation by being pleased with their sincere bhakti. He comes to help them in their goal of liberation by showing His grace.

Jñānes'vara urges most emphatically the need to be free from the attachment to sense objects and all kinds of desires. For the realisation of God one must withdraw oneself from the world of sensuous enjoyment and contemplate on the nature of the Supreme Self. Jñānes'vara says—“Therefore, a man, who looks with great suspicion on all objects of senses, who constantly controls his senses, and whose mind is never drawn by the desire of any

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<sup>1</sup> Subedar Manu : *Jñānes'vari*, (Gītā explained by Jñānes'vari) English Translation, p. 223,

physical happiness, is the true candidate for the attainment of Yoga. He directs his understanding to the knowledge of the Soul. He is firm in his heart and never forgets Me. He knows that even if he does not actually enjoy the senses but thinks of them in his mind, he will be caught in the cycle of (physical) life and death, and will never be free. A little poison can spread in the whole body and destroy life. A little desire of the objects of senses in the mind is also ruinous, because it unsettles discrimination.<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vara* stresses the need for renunciation, detachment, and indifference for a devotee to the objects of enjoyment and asks the devotees not to do actions, which generate in them attachment and which enhance their sense of egoity. He says that the Yogi performs only those actions which are absolutely necessary; in fact, all actions are being done by Prakṛti; but the wise person bakes his actions by the fire of his knowledge, and all his undertaking is without any desire for the fruits of his actions, and he does not entertain any kind of determination of the actions in his mind.<sup>2</sup> *Jñānes'vara* holds that there is no harm in doing actions but they must be fully dedicated to God and they should not be performed out of personal attachment and out of desire for personal gain.<sup>3</sup> He who gives up attachment (*sanga*) for the work by leaving it to the Brahman, is not affected by the good or evil

<sup>1</sup> Subedar Manu : *Jñānes'vari* (Tr.), p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, IV. 103-105.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. III. 186, 187, 188.

results of that work, and he remains untouched by it like a leaf of the lotus plant to which water does not stick. Thus, although he does actions, he is not bound by them, because he does them disinterestedly.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Jñānes'vara supports the Gītā in holding that there is no objection to lead a worldly active life of work, but what is necessary is an attitude of detachment and indifference to the actions and their fruits. Jñānes'vara says that the devotees must develop renunciation for the worldly objects. The sanyāsi is one who does not desire anything out of attachment, is free from hatred, and has overcome the sense of dualism. Even though he is encircled by upādhis he is not bound by them, and his mind is free from any kind of predetermination.<sup>2</sup> He must develop an attitude of equanimity towards pleasure and pain, gain and loss, praise and censure, honour and dishonour, who looks equally upon a snake and Ūrvas'ī, on dung and gold, gem and stone and thus on all dualities. His equanimity (sāmya-buddhi-साम्यबुद्धि) is never disturbed. He must thus rise above the attributes (guṇātita-गुणातीत), and must remain unaffected for ever just as the sky is never touched by the six seasons.<sup>3</sup> Jñānes'vara prescribes a long code of virtues under the name of Divine heritage to be practised by the devotees in order to prepare themselves for the final achievement. He prescribes fearlessness, purity, fixity of knowledge,

<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'varī. V. 48, 49, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. V. 20-25.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. XIV. 351-371,



charity, self-restraint, sacrifice, study of the scriptures, control of one's limbs and body, straightforwardness, truth, non-anger, tranquillity, compassion, uncovetousness, softness, bashfulness, spiritual lustre, courage, purity, love towards all, absence of pride<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, he denounces the practice of certain qualities that go to form the demonic heritage, i.e., hypocrisy, pride, arrogance, anger, harshness, ignorance, etc.<sup>2</sup> Jñānes'vara states like the Gītā that the practice of the qualities making the Divine heritage leads to liberation and that of the demonic qualities leads to further bondage.<sup>3</sup>

The philosophy of Jñānes'vara is described as 'Intellectual Mysticism' by Ranade. Along with knowledge Jñānes'vara emphasizes the need for sincere and wholehearted devotion to the Supreme Self. God can be realized only by singular devotion to Him. It is not possible to reach God by means of the Vedas, austerity, and charity.<sup>4</sup> What is, therefore, necessary, is the wholehearted and pure devotion to God; God would certainly accept any trifling thing like a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water; God would certainly be extremely pleased to accept such offerings, provided that they are offered with the most sincere and pure devotion.<sup>5</sup> Going ahead, it is then said that whatever one does, whatever one enjoys, whatever one

<sup>1</sup> Ranade R. D.: *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, pp. 86-91.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 91-93.

<sup>3</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, XVI. 266-270.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. XI. 686-690 and 632-635.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. IX. 382-396

sacrifices and gives to others, whatever penance one does, all that must be dedicated to God. When this will be done the actions will not bear good or bad effects just as seeds which are burnt in fire do not sprout. When all the actions are performed by offering them and their fruits, they do not bind any more. God is present in all the beings equally. Those who know Him to be existent in all, do not exist in their bodies, but in fact they exist in God and God also exists in their hearts, just as a huge banyan tree is existent in its seed and the seed exists in that tree. Thus, they simply appear different outwardly, inwardly they are the same. Thus, those who worship Him by forgetting their egoity and become one with Him rest in Him for ever.<sup>1</sup> Going further, God assures that even a person, howsoever sinful and vicious, if he comes to worship God exclusively he will be regarded as a saint. God would gladly give them His immortal peace. It is vain to look for the high descent and to take pride in calling oneself jñāni (ज्ञानी) and to take pride in possessing health and youth if there is no devotion for God. It is like a town without population. Life without the love for God is vain. It is not the descent and caste and the body that matter. What matters is the sincere feeling of devotion and love for God; if that is there, even beasts like crocodile and elephants reach God.<sup>2</sup> Jñānesvara further denounces the autocracy of the upper classes which forbid

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<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vart*, IX·407-414.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* IX·425-442.

liberation to the people of lower castes and to women. But as he says that those who surrender themselves to God singularly and without reservation, they meet Him as particles of salt dissolve in the ocean-waters, may they be Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, women, irrespective of their descent and family. The real devotee of His will never come to ruin.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, for the attainment of liberation what is necessary is an exclusive and singular devotion (ananyabhakti-अनन्यभक्ति) to God. God is prepared to meet his devotees in those forms in which they seek to worship Him.<sup>2</sup> God, of course, loves those who do penance (tapaswins), but he attaches greater value to Yogins than to those who are essentially engaged in work and in knowledge. Even among the Yogins, he who loves Him from the heart of his heart with full faith is dearest to Him.<sup>3</sup>

Jñānes'vara means by true devotion the vision of identity-in-difference. "There is difference in the world; but, for that reason, knowledge does not become different. There is difference between the limbs of the body, but they all belong to the body. Branches are small and great, and yet they grow on the same tree. The Sun sends an infinite number of rays, but they all belong to the Sun. Thus, in the midst of the differences of individualities, the differences of names, the differences of temperaments, one should know Me as unchanging through all the changes. What-

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, IX. 459-474.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* IV. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* VI. 474-488.

ever one happens to see, and in whatever place he happens to see it, he should regard it as non-different from Me that is indeed the mark of devotion.”<sup>1</sup> Jñāneśvara propounds Advaita-bhakti or devotion-in-identity which is singular and exclusive (avyabhicāri-अव्यभिचारी). He describes the Advaita-bhakti in the following passage. Kṛṣṇa says—

“He can destroy the Guṇas, who without the notion of quality in his heart, is devoted to Me. I am to this world, what a jewel is to its own lustre, what liquidity is to water, what space is to the sky, what sweetness is to sugar, what fire is to flame, what bud of the lotus is to the lotus, and what the tree is to the leaves, branches, and fruits. A large collection of snow has got the name of Himālaya. Milk in a certain condition gets the name of curd. So what is called the universe is nothing but Myself. The moon is not different from his fifteen sizes which are visible during the bright half of the month. Ghee, when it sets and becomes solid, does not cease to be ghee, and a bracelet never ceases to be gold. Cloth and threads are one, except on a close analysis. An earthen pot is nothing but earth. In order to find Me, it is necessary to look beyond the world. I exist in the form of this world. A firm belief of this kind itself constitutes an unbroken devotion to Me. Get over the feeling of distinctions and with a single purpose consider the universe including yourself to be Brahman.... The smallest wave is a part of the ocean.

<sup>1</sup> Jñāneśvari, IX•250-261.

So are you, not separate from Brahman. With this belief firmly established, the feeling of real unity will grow, and that is what is called devotion. Guidance from this sense of unity is itself wisdom.”<sup>1</sup>

Jñāneśvara holds that liberation consists in the final unity of the devotee with God where no trace of a distinction is left. It is a kind of unitive experience which is obtained only intuitively and it is mystical in character. Jñāneśvara puts the following passage in the mouth of Kṛṣṇa — “This is the final goal of Yoga. Just as between the cloud and the ocean, when rain is falling, all the three appear to be one, so must be the consciousness of unity (between the three, viz., the universe, the individual, and Brahman). Space contained in the well and space contained in the sky are the same. So are the awakened soul and Brahman, one. From the sun to the reflection of the sun in water, there is the light of the sun. So far the sage has the feeling of “I am Brahman” all over the universe. When the mind will admit nothing else except the notion that “I am Brahman”, the highest branches of learning disappear. A lump of salt, when once dissolved in the ocean, cannot dissolve any more. When the straw has been burnt out, fire is also put out. When duality has been removed wisdom (jñāna) itself goes away. Then the feeling that “I, the Lord of the Universe, am great, and My devotee is a humble being”, also goes. There is eternal unity..... This

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<sup>1</sup> *Jñāneśvari*, XIV • 372 to 390. See — Subedar Manu : *Jñāneśvari* (Tr.), p. 230.

condition briefly is the condition of Brahman, and whoever has unbroken devotion to Me will attain it. Equanimity arising out of wisdom and devotion towards Me, would lead a man to Me. Not only in this condition of Brahman but it is also what is called Mokṣa (liberation)."<sup>1</sup> This is Jñānes'vara's idea of Mokṣa or liberation. It is a distinctionless and unitive experience of the Brahman where everything is Brahman and all particulars are inseparable expressions of the same Brahman and knowledge of distinctions which is ignorance, comes to an end. L. R. Pangarkar, a famous scholar of the literature of Saints in Maharashtra remarks—"We call it bhakti (devotion) when one's vision enlarges by the experience of the unity of Brahman, universe and jīva. The perfection of knowledge is such a devotion and the end of Yoga also is this devotion. Bhakti (devotion), Jñāna (knowledge) and Yoga (spiritual practices) become here one. To rest all the states of consciousness in the Parama Puruṣa (Supreme Self) is called bhakti, jñāna and Yoga. This condition is known as Brahma-tva, Sāyujya, Mokṣa, Parābhakti and Abhedabhakti."<sup>2</sup>

Jñānes'vara describes such a state most eloquently as in the following passage. It is a state in which the immutable (akṣara-अक्षर) and the mutable (kṣara-क्षर) are united. Even the experience 'That I am' disappears in it....the seer and the seen lose their distinction and one experiences only that (Brahman).

<sup>1</sup> Subedar Manu: *Jñānes'vari* (English Tr.), XIV•392-404 (Tr.) p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Pangarkar: *Marathi Vāṅmayacha Itihasa*, Vol. I, p. 707.

## The Vaisnava Saints of ....

647

There is light without the object which is revealed, God without that which is governed; the sound being heard by the sound itself and flavour is being tasted by flavour itself; the bliss (ānanda) enjoys bliss (ānanda) itself. It is a result of perfection and rest of rest. Happiness meets with happiness, fire finds fire and the void drowns into the great void. The substance is not lost in the particular objects which are created out of it. The difference between water and waves disappears and there is simply an indescribable identity.... Everywhere there is the experience of the Saccidānanda; the Eternal is felt everywhere and all duality comes to an end. Therein, as if the sky embraces the sky and ocean of milk entertains another ocean of milk, nectar mixes with nectar, fifteen and a half should be added to fifteen and a half and still they should make fifteen and a half.<sup>1</sup> It is like the union of the Ganges with the ocean and the ripples are non-different from the ocean, lustre is one with the sun, so God is identical with all; know Him in such a way. This is the real bhakti.<sup>2</sup>

Jñānes'vara recognises three kinds of souls which are — (i) Ārta (आर्त) — afflicted in saṁsāra, (ii) Jijñāsu (जिज्ञासु) — curious to know, (iii) Arthārthī (अर्थार्थी) — who are desirous of material gain.<sup>3</sup> God becomes both the devotee, his craving, and the objects which he respectively seeks. God is present in all His devotees and cravings. The souls are governed by ajñāna or nescience,

<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'vara means by this illustration that when pure gold is mingled with pure gold the resultant is pure gold only.

<sup>2</sup> Jñānes'vari, XV • 538-570.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. XVIII • 1112.

and therefore, those things appear to them true. But in the final state of liberation by means of knowledge nescience is removed and one reaches bhakti or devotion, which is beyond all the visible ways and which consists in the union of the Brahman with itself. Devotion is nothing else but the realisation of the natural state of Brahman (sahajasthiti-सहजस्थिति) itself.<sup>1</sup> Jñānes'vara most eloquently describes such a state of identity (advaita) and says that in the final state of liberation when the Brahman alone exists everywhere and becomes all, all relations come to an end. In this state, only the Ātman that is free from illusion exists and it is beyond duality and non-duality. Just as salt remains with water by dissolving in it, camphor, after burning disappears along with fire that burns it, and what remains behind is something third, which is only space, similarly all the differences of 'I', 'he', and 'this' dissolve and amalgamate together into the unique joy of the Brahman.<sup>2</sup>

Jñānes'vara recognises also the possibility of Jīvanmukta who is a living liberated soul. "The Saint has refused to identify himself with the body, and therefore, he feels no pangs of separation from it when he wants to throw it away; nor does it follow that he reaches Me only after he has thrown off his mortal coil; for he has been already during his life merged in My Being....By having been one with Me in life, after death he also becomes

<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, XVIII • 1113-1129.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* XVIII • 1208-1210.



## The Vaisṇava Saints of ....

60

Myself.”<sup>1</sup> The Jivanmukta is practically one with God as he has overcome the consciousness of his narrow ego and has not the least attachment to his body and ego. “Those....who see Me with their eyes and hear Me with their ears and think Me with their minds, who by every limb make salutation to Me, whose charity and merit are done only for My sake....whose passion is only the love for God, whose only desire and love are the desire and love of God, who are infatuated by Me,...these, even before death, have already come into My Being.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Jivanmukta is as good as the fully liberated soul for he is completely free from egoity (ahankāra) and attachment, and he is not the least tempted and deluded by the external world. He is firm in God and always remains in God by being one with Him.

## Kabir

Kabir was a medieval saint and he is said to have lived in the 15th and the 16th centuries (from 1440 A.D. to 1518 A.D.) being born of a virgin widow, the daughter of a Brahmin but being forsaken by the mother for the fear of social criticism, he was brought up by Nirū and Nīmā, a weaver-couple, who were Mohammedans. Kabir's birth date is accepted as 1440 A.D. by Evelyn Underhill, but it is not accepted by other biographers, some holding it to be 1400 A.D. But anyway, he lived

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<sup>1</sup> *Jñānes'vari*, VIII • 136-139.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* IX • 355-365.

the major portion of his life in the 15th century. He was brought up in the atmosphere of Islamic culture and inherited the Islamic idea of One God and was highly influenced by the mystical and loving faith of the Sūfis, which was an Islamic cult. He was illiterate but a highly gifted and an original personality. He had sought initiation (dikṣā-दीक्षा) from Rāmānanda who had carried the Vaiṣṇava doctrine of bhakti from the south to the north. Rāmānanda happened to be the source of inspiration and enlightenment to Kabir and Kabir received from him the hymn (mantra) of Rāmanāma. Rāmānanda was a highly powerful missionary and a religious reformer who advocated the complete abolition of the caste distinctions, and preached that the low-caste-people too are qualified for liberation (Mokṣa) if they are sincerely devoted to God, and he also preached the dissemination of the knowledge of God to all people in the language of the people.

Kabir has left in writing nothing behind him. His disciples carried his verses orally from place to place and from generation to generation. Kabir usually uses his name in the last line of his verse, i.e., 'Kahata Kabira suno bhai sadho' and we have to accept it as his creation. His compositions are numerous and they were ascribed to his first disciple. Kabir was opposed to the traditional exclusivistic tendencies of religions. He refused to admit the Hindu and the Mohammedan religions in their prevalent forms, their external observances, rituals and dogmatic ways of religious

worship. As Underhill says, from the point of view of orthodox sanctity whether Hindu or Mohammedan, Kabir was plainly a heretic; and his frank dislike of all institutional religion, of all external observances—which was as thorough and as intense as that of the Quakers themselves—completed, so far as ecclesiastical opinion was concerned, his reputation was as a dangerous man.<sup>1</sup> He held that each soul can independently contemplate on the Divine and enter into a direct communion with God without the assistance of religious institutions and rites and other external observances. He denounced the Hindu and Moslem means of piety like the temple and mosque, idol and holy water, scriptures and priests and sharply criticised the Yogins as well as the Mullahs and maintained that the God resides neither in the temple nor in the mosque, but he held that “All the men and women of the world are His living forms”.<sup>2</sup> He denounced the necessity of observing the external forms of religious worship like clearing mouth, counting beads, performing ablution, bowing before the deities, keeping beard and lock of hair, muttering the name of God without real faith in it, going to the sacred places and shrines like Mecca and Medina, etc., dyeing clothes, piercing ears, clean shaving of the head, etc.<sup>3</sup> He disbelieved in the significance of the scriptures like the purāṇa and koran and says they are all futile (jhūṭha—~~झूठा~~)

<sup>1</sup> Tagore Rabindranāth (Tr.): *Kabir's Poems*, Introduction, p. XV.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poems 67, 68, 69, pp. 70-72.

<sup>3</sup> Dvivedi Hajariprasad : *Kabir* (Hindi), Poem 66, pp. 271, 272.

and what is real is the actual experience (anubhava-अनुभव) of God.<sup>1</sup> He holds that God 'dwells at the heart of all things' and that He is also wrapped in the mantle of his heart.<sup>2</sup> God is infinite Being and dwells everywhere in earth, water, sky and air, 'He who is within is without'. God is omnipresent, infinite, and his nature is indescribable.<sup>3</sup> Kabir says that everything in the world is pervaded by the Lord or God. Naught exists without Him. He is the underlying reality of the whole universe. Kabir describes Him as —

"When He Himself reveals Himself,  
Brahma brings into manifestation  
That which can never be seen.  
As the seed is in the plant, as the shade  
is in the tree, as the void is in the sky, as  
infinite forms are in the void—  
So from beyond the Infinite, the Infinite comes;  
and from the Infinite the finite extends."<sup>4</sup>

Thus, God whom Kabir addresses as 'Rāma' is nothing else but the Absolute or Brahman of the Advait system. Rāma is thus the source, sustainer, and the absorber of the whole universe. He is the eternal reality, unborn and undying. He is the noumenal reality which transcends all phenomenal forms. He is the cause of the manifold universe. The phenomenal and changing world (saguna-सगुण) dances before the Unconditioned (nirguna-निर्गुण).<sup>5</sup> According to

<sup>1</sup> Dwivedi Hajariprasad : *Kabir* (Hindi), Poem 42, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poems 78, 72.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 61.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 7, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Poem 28, p. 35.

Kabir, the Conditioned existence, i.e., the universe emanates from the Unconditioned (nirguṇa) like a flower and fruit from the seed.<sup>1</sup> Carpenter describes this idea of God or the ultimate reality of Kabir in the following passage — “Here is a conception which embraces all contrarieties of life and transcends them all. Like the opposites which Heracleitus beheld within a higher unity, differences and antagonisms disappear. The right hand and the left hand are the same; the inward and the outward become as one sky; life and death are in conflict no more, their separation is ended; in the light of love day and night, joy and sorrow, cease to be at strife; fear and trouble pass away, and renunciation is transfigured into bliss. For, he, who is within, is without, and one love pervades the whole world.”<sup>2</sup> Though God is the cause of the universe He transcends it. He pervades the whole universe, and assumes the innumerable forms; everything springs from Him. He is full of brilliance, and millions of unstruck notes of melodies are sounded there. Within Him all the creation goes forward and philosophy cannot comprehend Him. He is without form and body.<sup>3</sup> He is infinite and illimitable. He is completely different from all the perceptible objects of the world. He is beyond the Vedas, beyond all the distinctions, beyond merit and demerit, beyond knowledge and the known, different from the gross and subtle; He is unique (trailokya-

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. : (Tr.) *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 80, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Carpenter J. E. : *Theism in Medieval India*, pp. 464, 465.

<sup>3</sup> Tagore R. : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 76, pp. 78-81.

vilakṣaṇa-वैलक्षण्यविलक्षण). He has no caste, no clan, no form, no line, no colour.<sup>1</sup> Thus Kabir's God or Rāma is immanent in the world and still transcends it. He is devoid of any particular attribute and hence is attributeless (nirguṇa-निर्गुण). Kabir's Rāma is attributeless (nirguṇa) in the sense that He is beyond the three attributes sattva, rajas, and tamas. Kabir describes this nature of Rāma who is beyond attributes (guṇātīta-गुणातीत) by the word attributeless (nirguṇa-निर्गुण). In fact, He is in all and all are in Him. He is present in all the finite things and still is different from them. He is beyond the individual as well beyond the universe. His Hari is above all those which are qualityless (aguṇa) and above those possessing qualities (saguṇa); He is beyond that which does not decay (ajara) and which is immortal (amara). He is the nirguṇa Rāma.<sup>2</sup> He is neither existent nor non-existent. Further, Dvivedi says that the One God depicted by Kabir is not accepted by the Mohammedans also, since the God of Kabir is just the Brahman itself which is all-pervading and everything is His manifestation. He is in all and all are in Him. The two are inseparable. Apart from Him exists nothing. Kabir says — "As you never may find the forest if you ignore the tree, so He may never be found in abstractions."<sup>3</sup> This Rāma of Kabir is not, therefore, the Rāma of mythology, the son of Daśaratha and the husband of Sītā

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.): *Kabir's Poems*, Poems 81, p. 87-88.

<sup>2</sup> Dvivedi Hajariprasad: *Kabir* (Hindi), Ch. 9, pp. 121, 122.

<sup>3</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.): *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 90, p. 96.

but He is the ultimate Reality itself. He is beyond the three attributes, different from different and non-different (dvaitādvaitavilakṣaṇa), free from existence, and non-existence, imperceptible, incomprehensible by the usual means of knowledge, but can be understood only by Love or faith for Him. Acarya Ramchandra Shukla has passed very significant remarks about the Saints of the nirguṇa type. He says that it is futile to search for any particular philosophical system in the writings of these saints. It will mean an exhibition of our ignorance of the philosophical systems if we seek to classify them by charging them to belong to dualism, to monism, or to qualified monism. The differences that appear in them are due to the greater or less degrees of the elements of these systems. Their philosophies are constructed by the combinations of these elements in various degrees. In some of them one may find the predominance of the principle of knowledge of the Vedānta, in some that of the means of penance of the Yogins, in some other that of sweet principle of love (madhura prematattva) of the Sūfies, and in still some other that of the earthly devotion of God (being accompanied by the sentiments of agent, father, God, etc.).<sup>1</sup> Only a sincerely devoted heart, pure and unsophisticated, free from all other attachments except that for Him, can know Him.<sup>2</sup>

Another important feature is the rhythmic and symphonic nature of the Reality. Kabir interprets that the universe is full of the most melodious notes

<sup>1</sup> Shukla Ramchandra : *Hindi Sahityaka Itihasa*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Dvivedi Hajariprasad : *Kabir* (Hindi), Ch. 9, pp. 125, 127.

of the love and joy of Hari. Kabir imagines that at the centre of the universe there is the perfect harmony which is expressed in the form of infinite melodious notes which are heard everywhere. He often calls it 'the Unstruck Music' (अनहत ढोल). He says—"Have you not heard the tune which the Unstruck Music is playing? In the midst of the chamber the harp of joy is gently and sweetly played; and where is the need of going without to hear it?"<sup>1</sup> He imagines that the creation of the universe from Rāma assumes the form of a wonderful symphony composed of infinite harmonious sounds and that the whole Reality works with a wonderful rhythm and harmony. He further says—

"The flute of the Infinite is played without ceasing,  
and its sound is love:

When love renounces all limits, it reaches truth.

How widely the fragrance spreads! It has no end,  
nothing stands in its way.

The form of this melody is bright like a million suns:

incomparably sounds the vjñā of the notes of truth."<sup>2</sup>

The Infinite or Hari dances with His unbound joy and the melodies of Him serve as an eternal fountain of love and bliss to those who can hear His unstruck Music by loving Him thoroughly. Carpenter says—"Like the seer of the Apocalypse, Kabir heard the whole universe singing in adoration day and night. The harmonies of the Divine Joy sounded continually in his ears; the unbeaten melodies filled

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 54, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Poem 50, p. 56.



the air like light."<sup>1</sup> This principle which works as the central symphony is within the individual and without him. It is filled everywhere. As Kabir says 'He is in you from head to foot'. Kabir thus held that the ultimate reality is one single God from whom all the manifold objects of the world issue as His manifestations. He thus seems to propound Monotheism and Monism.

Bhandarkar however, believes that Kabir's philosophy is one of dualism instead of Monism. He gives an account of the creation of the world in the following manner. In the light of Rāma there existed a substance which was the subtle element, the sum total of all individual souls. And then the substance was illumined by that light. He further holds that God created the souls in the form of a sound at His will.<sup>2</sup>

Kabir however, holds that in the beginning there was only one unconditioned distinctionless existence from which arose all the distinctions.<sup>3</sup> He often metaphorically says that the individual soul (jiva) is like a bride or beloved and Rāma or God is like the Lover or Bridegroom.<sup>4</sup> The jiva suffers from various afflictions while in the state of saṁsara (world) due to its separation and bereavement from its Lover (piva or piyā or sāheb).<sup>5</sup> The beloved, the worldly soul

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter J. E.: *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 469.

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaishnavism, S'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.): *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 81, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 95, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Poem 52, p. 57.

suffers from the pangs of separation and bereavement while it is away from its Lover, the God. On the other hand, he depicts the identity of the two by metaphorically describing the non-difference of the river and its water. The waves of the river are the same as the river itself though it appears in different forms. Kabir frequently refers to the relation of the individual soul and the Supreme Self or God as one between a beloved and her Lover or Lord. He says—“My heart must cleave to my Lover; I must withdraw my veil, and meet Him with all my body; Mine eyes must perform the ceremony of the lamps of love; . . . he understands who loves. If you feel not love's longing for your Beloved One, it is vain to adorn your body, vain to put unguent on your eyelids.”<sup>1</sup>

Kabir further holds like the Advaita Vedānta that bondage is caused in the jiva by ignorance (avidyā) which is the same as Māyā, the power of Rāma to cause deception in the minds of the people. It catches men into various doctrines and sects and hides the real nirguṇa—attributeless nature of the God.<sup>2</sup> Kabir holds that it is necessary to go behind and beyond this veil of Māyā; then and then alone can we see the Lord or God. Kabir asks the Māyā to depart from him as he is not going to be deceived by it, and thereby he does not want to displease God.<sup>3</sup> He, therefore, holds that it is

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 11, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Das Shyamsundar (Editor) : *Kabir Granthāvali* (Hindi); Poem 187.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 270.

necessary to remove the separating veil (ghūnghatake pata-घुंघटे पट) to see God living behind it and who can be properly approached by abandoning harshness and pride.<sup>1</sup> It is absurd to aspire to secure eternal bliss from the world as it is illusory; how can one obtain butter from a barren cow which does not secrete milk.<sup>2</sup> Kabir points out the impediments in the path of removal of the *Māyā* which causes attachment, anger, pride, and vain glory. What is thus necessary is to realise the Self or God within one's own heart and not to run wild in search of Him outside us like a musk deer.

Kabir does not think it necessary to renounce home and to take resort to jungle for the attainment of liberation or deliverance. He, therefore, says that the home is the abiding place; the home is reality; the home helps to attain Him who is real, so stay where you are, and all things shall come to you in time.<sup>3</sup> What is necessary for the attainment of God is casting away pride, vanity and the sense of 'I' and 'mine' which negates the all-pervading God. The work of the Lord can be done only when the love of I and mine is dead.<sup>4</sup> Kabir, therefore, advocates the need of overcoming the sense of narrow egoism and of destroying the separative consciousness and to prepare oneself to offer himself entirely to the Divine, body and soul, just as a bride does to her

<sup>1</sup> Dvivedi Hajariprasad ; *Kabir* (Hindi), Poem 224, p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 253, p. 361.

<sup>3</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 40, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 6, p. 5.

beloved. What is necessary, therefore, is to awaken a sense of irrepressible attraction and restlessness for the Lord. As he says—"My body and mind are grieved for the want of Thee; O my Beloved! Come to my house....I have no taste for food, I have no sleep; my heart is ever restless within doors and without. As water is to the thirsty, so is the lover to the bride....Kabir is restless: he is dying for the sight of Him."<sup>1</sup> The Lord hides Himself from the devotees and also wonderfully reveals Himself to them. The Lord Himself brings the various kinds of experiences of sorrow and joy to souls. Kabir believes that one can meet the Lord only by awakening faith and immense love for the Lord; He cannot be known by reason. He says—"Hark to the unstruck bells and drums! Take your delight in love.... They are blind who hope to see it by the light of reason, that reason which is the cause of separation. The House of Reason, is very far away."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the world of Lord has to be experienced directly, and has not to be understood indirectly and mediately by means of words and symbols. The way to meet the Lord is one of intercommunion with Him by becoming one, body and soul, with Him just as the sense of separation cannot exist in the union of the bride with her beloved. He says—"Hang the body and the mind between the arms of the Beloved, in the ecstasy of deepest longings of your heart..bring the vision of the Beloved in your Heart."<sup>3</sup> Thus,

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem, 35, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 92, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, Poem 100, p. 105.

Kabir describes the nature of the union of the soul with God metaphorically by means of the union of the bride with her lover.

Kabir describes the state of deliverance which is attained by a mystical intuitive experience. It is a kind of ecstasy in which the soul merges itself into the Divine joy and sweetness and finds final rest. When he reaches such a state he becomes free for ever from the bondages of the world, from fear, error, and death. There is then the joy for ever, and no sorrow and no struggle. He enjoys the perfect joy. As Kabir says—"I have known in my body the sport of the universe : I have escaped from the error of this world. The inward and the outward have become as one sky, the Infinite and the finite are united : I am drunken with the sight of this All. This light of Thine fulfils the universe : the lamp of love that burns on the salver of knowledge."<sup>1</sup> There remains then nothing to say, nothing to hear, and nothing to do. It is a source of unending joy and happiness. One enjoys the everlasting and indescribable sweetness of nectar.<sup>2</sup> It is a supersensuous joy; as Kabir says, he tasted without eating the sweetness of nectar and without water quenched his thirst, there is the response of delight and there is the fullness of joy.<sup>3</sup> He becomes mad with joy; he dances and enjoys the grand symphony of the universe. He stands in the midst of such a grand ocean of

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 17, pp. 23-25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 21, pp. 28-29.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 27, p. 34.

melodies and hears everywhere the sweet notes of unstruck Music.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the liberated individual enjoys the unique unspeakable joy in the state of his ecstasy and in his complete union with God. Just as the river enters into ocean so does the heart of the devotee touch the feet of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> The body and mind cannot contain themselves when they are touched by His great joy. One then begins to experience the infinite joy of the Lord in the whole of his creation and transgresses all distinctions as the joy of the Lord expresses itself through the whole of his creation.<sup>3</sup> Kabir seeks to realise God everywhere, the beautiful smile of God everywhere by overcoming the sense of duality by keeping eyes and ears open instead of closing them.<sup>4</sup> Kshitimohan Sen says — “Kabir was not for the mortification of the flesh. He believed that by living a natural life, in a pure manner, one can carry on one’s sādhanā. “The universe”, he says “is within one’s own Self”. So, giving up pursuit after external things one should realise the universal principle within one’s own self; for, the Lord of the universe exists there. There will then be no difference between in and out; for these two have met in the Lord. And the perfect truth and fulfilment are to be gained only by uniting with all in spirit.”<sup>5</sup> Rāma of Kabir is not one God among

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.) : *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 28, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 34, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 82, pp. 88-89.

<sup>4</sup> Dvivedi Hajariprasad : *Kabir* (Hindi), Poem 41, p. 262.

<sup>5</sup> Sen Kshitimohan : *Medieval Mysticism of India*, pp. 100-101.

many but is superior to all other gods like Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, and His is a realm of sorrowlessness. The thirst of five senses is quenched there, and three forms of misery cease there for ever.<sup>1</sup> The rains of nectar pour there unceasingly. The mind becomes calm and satisfied for ever; from there, there is no more return to the worldly life.

Kabir further holds that there is an absolute necessity of an initiator (Guru-गुरु) to guide the devotee to prepare himself for the final achievement of liberation.<sup>2</sup> He holds that the word or the hymn by which one remembers God constantly is the means of reaching the final state.<sup>3</sup> He identifies knowledge with love for the Lord and believes that Mokṣa can be attained by ceaselessly uttering the name of God (Harināma-हरिनाम).

### Tulasīdāsa

Tulasīdāsa, another Vaiṣṇava saint and poet of the Northern India wielded tremendous influence over the millions of hearts and he acted as a great spiritual leader of the people in the 16th century. He was a devotee of Rāma and had produced copious religious literature. He was himself a keen devotee and is mainly known as a powerful poet in Avadhī. He bore profound love for Rāma and spread the gospel of Rāmabhakti at the inspiration of Rāmānanda. He lived from 1532 to 1623 A.D. He was an orthodox

<sup>1</sup> Tagore R. (Tr.): *Kabir's Poems*, Poem 15, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 17.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 27, p. 34.

Hindu unlike Kabir who refused to stick to any particular religious creed and believed that God, described variously in the different systems of religion, is one and the same, Allah is the same as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, is the same as Rahim. He was a master of language and metaphors and had written the life of Rāma in a most poetic vein. He has propounded his theory of social well-being (Loka-kalyāṇa) in his poetical works. His most famous poetic work is the *Rāma Carita Mānas*. Tulasidāsa lived in the times of depression and anarchy; everywhere there was confusion and disharmony, and society was gradually degenerating. Tulasidāsa preached in such a period the doctrine of extremism or perfectionism (Maryādāvāda-मर्यादावाद) in the form of Rāma who lived the perfect kind of life in all the aspects of His life. He depicted Rāma as an ideal or standard of perfect behaviour and showed the way to lead an ideal life which was necessary for the development of the individual as well as for the ideal development of society, simultaneously. His Rāma is, therefore, the ideal or standard of perfection in all the aspects of life (Maryādā Puruṣottama-मर्यादापुरुषोत्तम). He was a 'harmonist' and his *Rāma Carita Mānas* (रामचरित मानस) is, from the beginning to the end, a poem of harmony and reconciliation (samanvaya) of household duties with renunciation, devotion with knowledge, the nirguṇa with saguṇa, the high caste with low caste, etc.... He was a master of harmony (sāmañjasya-सामंजस्य) in the different aspects of the individual and social life.



Tulasidāsa depicted his Rāma as the ultimate Reality. He sang that there is only one God. He is the Universal Soul, the Supreme Spirit; He is all-pervading and Uncreated. He is All-good, All-powerful, All-gracious, and extremely compassionate to His creation and His faithful devotees. Such an omnipotent being is God and He assumes concrete form and becomes incarnate out of love and compassion for His children to relieve them of the evil and destructive forces of the world. In his theology, Tulasidāsa attributes to the philosophical Reality which is the Brahman, which is passionless, formless, attributeless, the quality of goodness (sattva).<sup>1</sup> Tulasidāsa supported the Vedānta system in so far as the nature of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman is concerned. The Brahman is described by him as God or Rāma who is immeasurable, sinless, omniscient, and full of bliss. He is the destroyer of duality and the theme of the Veda and Vedānta. He is the transcendent being, unbegotten source of light and life. He is the sovereign of the universe, preceptor of the gods, and becomes manifest in the world's delight.<sup>2</sup> Thus, as Bhandarkar says Tulasidāsa was a teacher of Bhaktimārga or the path of devotion, which is based upon a dualistic philosophy with a leaning towards Spiritual monism of the Advaita system.<sup>3</sup>

Tulasidāsa describes his God Rāma as the Absolute Intelligence (cit-चित्), Perfect Goodness

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter J. E.: *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 511.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 511.

<sup>3</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 75.

(s'ubha-सुभा), and Universal Love (priti-प्रीति).<sup>1</sup> He is extremely loving and full of compassion, and He assumes incarnation to bestow the peace of deliverance to serve as the bridge for erring mortals over the ocean of existence.<sup>2</sup> Rāma, the Supreme God, is the omnipresent centre of the universe and, therefore, He acts on the physical side as the abiding source of all power. On the ethical side, He is the shield of righteousness, the remover of impurities, the tamer of pride, lust, lying, and selfishness and thus, ensures salvation for the saints. On the spiritual side, He is the unbodied ruler of the soul that dwells for ever in the hearts of all.<sup>3</sup> Tulasidāsa does not ignore the other gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu (Hari) and Śiva (Hara). He recognises them and respects them equally, but makes them completely subordinate to Rāma. They are produced from the latter and act at the command of Rāma and thus, they administer the great drama of life. The blessed Jānaki or Sītā acts as the mother of the world and Rāma as the father; both are beneficent and their grace destroys sin.

Tulasidāsa interprets Māyā as the power that hides Brahman from the soul. He uses it in two senses — (i) merely 'magic' and is the evil force used by demons in their combat with Rāma's armies; (ii) in the other it represents a combination of the Gnostic demi-urge and the Christian 'Temper', it is

<sup>1</sup> Tulasidās : *Rāma Cārītā Mānasa*, VII: 77.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. II. 85.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. VII. 77.

a personality, a female, subordinate to the Supreme, and to a certain extent, His agent. In the latter capacity, she sets the whole world dancing, yet she herself is set a-dancing, like an actress on the stage, by a movement of the Lord's eyebrows. She sullies everyone even the gods with her temptations; and the deity sometimes sends her forth specially to tempt some pious person who begins to show pride. As the world, the flesh, and the Devil in one, she leads mankind to sin, but, if a man has true bhakti, he is surely armoured against her, and she cannot approach him.<sup>1</sup>

Tulasidāsa further holds that the pure essence of intelligence of the transcendental principle (Rāma) cannot be fully realised in this world in its pure form. Rāma can be known only by reference to this relative phenomenal life which contains the element of nescience (ajñāna). There cannot be knowledge completely devoid of nescience nor can there be the attributeless (nirguṇa) without reference to that which possesses attributes (saguṇa); just as light stands in the need of darkness for its real manifestation. The nirguṇa can be well expressed and understood only by reference to the saguṇa. The nirguṇa cannot be understood without the saguṇa.<sup>2</sup> Tulasidāsa follows the Bhaktimārga or the path of devotion and knows God by simple, pure, and intense love. He does not, therefore, enter into the details of the jñānamārga or the path of knowledge. As such, at times he inclines to the

<sup>1</sup> Tulasidāsa : *Rāma Cārita Mānasa*, VII. Ch. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Shukla, Ramchandra : *Goswāmi Tulasidāsa*, p. 64.

Kevalādvaita when he regards the final Reality, the Brahman as pure (suddha-शुद्ध) devoid of the internal (svagata), similar (sajātiya), and dissimilar (vijātiya) differences. He cannot then make the individual soul (jīva) a part (aṁśa) of God but he finds it necessary for maintaining his doctrine of bhakti, to maintain some difference between the soul (aṁśa) and God (aṁśin), and thus, tends to accept the qualified monism of Rāmānuja. From the transcendental point of view the differences of the souls and Brahman do not really exist, they are created by Māyā, but to overcome these differences and to realise the real nature of God it is necessary to pray to God by regarding Him as soul's master by showing devotion. Thus Tulasidāsa oscillates between Kevalādvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Tulasidās does not deny the nirguṇa Brahman which is beyond comprehension of human mind, but, for the sake of devotional adoration (bhakti) human beings require a concrete personal entity (saguṇa) that acts as the incarnation of the impersonal (nirguṇa) Brahman. Hence, he depicts Rāma a concrete individual, but describes thereby the nirguṇa Brahman.

Tulsidāsa, being a devout Vaiṣṇava, extolled the Lord above all, and regarded that the Supreme Being becomes accessible only to those who love Him intensely and singularly. He believed that man is by nature sinful and unworthy of salvation. Nevertheless, the Supreme Being becomes incarnate in the

<sup>1</sup> Shukla Ramchandra : *Goswami Tulasidāsa*, p. 66.

## The Valṣṇava Saints of ....

669

person of Rāma to relieve the world of sin. He himself is free from desires but fulfils all desires as He is the benefactor of all. Though he returns to the heaven and enjoy ineffable bliss, he knows by actual experience how great are man's infirmities and temptations. He is ever ready to extend His hand of help to him who is eager to become free from his sins and who repents for them. Tulasidāsa defines sin as that which is contrary to the will of Rāma, and it is only by acknowledging this, and by abandoning himself to utter loving faith in Rāma's power to save him from its thralldom that a man can escape from a weary round of transmigration and can attain the final liberation (mukti).

Tulasidāsa emphasized that bhakti or loving devotion to Rāma is the only means of attaining liberation. Rāma does not recognise lineage, wealth, power, virtue, and ceremonial religion and the ceremonial religious exercises as useful as bhakti itself which alone possesses the power to remove all mental stains and impurities. Bhakti, when cultivated with humility, self-control, kindness, contentment, prayers, praises, and sincere devotion to the preceptor qualifies and individual for the higher attainment. When he is thus equipped with all these virtues Rāma gets pleased with him and then showers love and grace on such a worthy devotee. Even bhakti is bestowed by God as a gift on the devotees who deserve it by their sincere devotion. Bhakti also is given as a gift by God. Rāma is pleased only with simple and pure love and not with sacrifices

and rituals, abstraction of thought, or Yoga—concentration and fasting, nor with prayer, almsgiving, and self-mortification.<sup>1</sup>

When one attains the vision of Rāma other desires disappear and the influence of Māyā dwindles. The liberated soul attains supreme and everlasting bliss. The good soul is like the Mānasa lake and in it is the pure water of the sweet glory of Rāma. Sin is washed off and the heart becomes pure and one becomes holy and blessed by the Divine grace of Rāma without the fear of returning any more to the sufferings of the worldly life.<sup>2</sup>

Tulasidāsa believes that unless one becomes free from lust, attachment, and greed one cannot attain final liberation. Lust, anger, and greed are three inveterate enemies of man. They disturb the tranquility of the minds of even great and holy sages.<sup>3</sup> The pure persons go to salvation and the impure and lustful to hell. The devotee requires to purify himself morally and then, to surrender to God with all trust and faith. Tulasidāsa says — “Without trust there is no faith or love. Without faith the Lord does not show His grace, without His grace there is no peace in the mind.”<sup>4</sup> By cultivating moral purity the intellect gets purified and refined, and then it becomes capable of knowing Rāma properly.

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter J. E.: *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 518.

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar R. G.: *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Kannoo Māl Lālā: *The Sayings of Tulasidāsa*, 24, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 62, p. 29.

Tulasidāsa says that having ignited the fire of Yoga (contemplation) let one offer in it his good and bad deeds; and when the dross of egotism (attachment) is burnt away, intellect would not cool as the pure butter (ghee) of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The jiva is governed by Māyā, and as long as it does not get rid of it, its native Lordly nature cannot be revealed. Perfect happiness can be attained only by complete self-surrender to the Lord, self-control, and proper discrimination.<sup>2</sup> Those who are totally devoid of all desires and are completely merged in devotion to the Lord, swim happily like fish in the lake of divine love.<sup>3</sup>

### Sūradāsa

Sūradāsa, a famous poet and saint of the Northern India, is revered equally with Tulasidāsa. Sūradāsa lived in 16th century and is held to be born sometime between 1474 and 1480 A.D. There is no unanimity on his birth date. He was a little younger than Vallabhācārya whom he had accepted as his preceptor (Guru). Sūradāsa was a highly gifted and talented poet and he was blind for the major period of his life. He possessed unique powers of poetic composition as he possessed high power of imagination and sound knowledge of rhythm and classical music. He was thoroughly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, and his famous work the *Sūrasāgara* (सुरसागर) is an exhaustive picture of the life of Śrīkṛṣṇa right from the childhood to the later period of life. Sūradāsa was asked to com-

<sup>1</sup> Kannoo Mal Lala : *The Sayings of Tulasidāsa*, 93, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 90, 97, 106, 112.

Ibid. 114, p. 47.

pose a large poem on the lilā of Kṛṣṇa by his Guru, Vallabhācārya and Sūradāsa did it accordingly. Sūradāsa wrote hundreds of verses on the life of Kṛṣṇa and his poetic genius is exhibited in every line of his poetic works like the *Sūrasāgara* (सुरसागर), *Sāhitya Lahari* (साहित्यलहरी), etc. He most beautifully depicted the life of Kṛṣṇa in all the phases of his life and gave a detailed account of his love-sport (प्रेमलीला) with His friends, the goaps and the milk-maids (gopis), with Rādhikā (राधिका), with his mother Yashodā (यशोदा).

Sūradāsa was a Vaiṣṇava like Tulasidāsa and he had derived inspiration and knowledge from his preceptor, Vallabha. He accepted the latter's doctrine of Pure-monism (suddhādvaita-सुद्धाद्वैत) totally and did not construct any new philosophical system for himself. Like Vallabha, he believed that the ultimate Reality is one single and it is Kṛṣṇa and He is manifested in all the particular forms of the world by the unique powers of obscuration (tirobhava) and manifestation (āvirbhāva). Kṛṣṇa is the same as the Brahman and He is the ultimate source, sustainer and absorber of the world. Sūradāsa did not develop elaborately his system. He applied extensively the Lilāvāda (लीलावाद) of Vallabha and depicted poetically the various kinds of sports (līla) of Kṛṣṇa throughout His life. But he was essentially a poet with a sensitive, unassuming, and unsophisticated heart of a child throughout his life. He has described exhaustively the sportive and playful life of Kṛṣṇa without an element of restraint and artificiality. He was never a reformist nor a seeker of knowledge nor did he ever



pretend to teach any doctrine to the people. He did not form any sect nor did he show a kind of bitterness towards other sects. He himself possessed natural love and devotion for Kṛṣṇa and he expressed his profound love and interest for the sports of Kṛṣṇa in his poems. He accepted the devotion by love (premalakṣaṇābhakti-प्रेमलक्षणाभक्ति) of Vallabha and imagined Kṛṣṇa to be an embodiment of love, sweetness (mādhurya), and joy (ānanda). The bhakti adopted by Sūradāsa is madhurā-bhakti-मधुराभक्ति, the most tender and sweet feeling of devotion and adoration, for Kṛṣṇa. The object of devotion and praise, according to Sūradāsa, is Kṛṣṇa, who is also addressed as Vāsudeva, Hari, Govind, Prabhu, etc.

Sūradāsa describes his God as omnipotent, who makes the lame climb a mountain, a blind see, a deaf hear, a dumb speak,<sup>1</sup> who is the father of the world, the controller of the world, the guide (guru) of the world, and who forms friendship with men without selfishness.<sup>2</sup> He, whom the Vedas and the Upaniṣada describe as attributeless (nirguṇa), becomes possessed of attributes (saguṇa),<sup>3</sup> who is extremely deep and generous,<sup>4</sup> who is extremely loving (vatsala) to His devotees irrespective of their caste, origin, relatives, status as poor or rich,<sup>5</sup> who is all-compassionate, shows grace when His devotees are in distress, and helps them to rise above

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*, Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha I, Verse 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Verse 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Verse 8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Verse 11.

their distress just as in the cases of Ajāmila, Vyādha etc.<sup>1</sup> Further, Sūradāsa holds that Māyā is the deceptive power which generates in men infatuation (Mahāmohini-महामोहिनी), and it produces greed and various other desires in men by assuming various forms.<sup>2</sup> Māyā is extremely powerful. It has created this world and has absorbed in itself the minds of all the people.<sup>3</sup> Bondage is caused by nescience (avidyā).

The Kṛṣṇa of Sūradāsa is not the Kṛṣṇa of Dwarka, who stands to organise the society and the state among the other kings but He is the Kṛṣṇa encircled by the gopis intensely filled with love. The form of Kṛṣṇa which they adore is an ocean of beauty and merriment. These devotees are lost in their own enjoyment, and were the least concerned with constructing a new ideal of Kṛṣṇa who would form norms and standards for the society. Their Kṛṣṇa was an embodiment of amorosity and sport and gave even sensuous satisfaction to the people.<sup>4</sup>

Like the other spiritualists, Sūradāsa also is afflicted here in this world in various ways. He is conscious of his defects which are caused by the various passions by which his mind is governed from time to time. He is conscious of his own defects and degeneration. To him such a life full of passions and bad desires is not bearable. He, therefore, requests the Lord to dispel his ignorance

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*, Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha I, Verses 12, 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Verse 44.

<sup>4</sup> Shukla Ramchandra : *Hindī Sahityak Itihāsa*, p. 164.

(avidyā). He danced much in the world by wearing in various forms of passion and anger, sensuous enjoyment, temptations, harsh criticism, delusion, desires, greed, and māyā. Sūradāsa frequently realises that he is a fallen (patita) individual and is full of all possible vices like anger, passion, greed, crookedness, cruelty, deception, falsehood, etc.<sup>1</sup> He clearly admits his faults and his sinful nature being possessed by the vices which lead him away and away from the Lord.

Sūradāsa is thoroughly conscious of the sinful nature of man and the miserable nature of the worldly life. He appeals to the God who loves his devotees extremely (bhaktavatsala), and is an ocean of infinite compassion (kṛpānidhi),<sup>2</sup> to relieve them of their sufferings of the worldly life and to uplift them. Who else than the Lord Himself can be capable (samartha) of giving him resort, like the Lord who is the Lord of the helpless and forsaken (anātha)?<sup>3</sup> To whom else can he go and offer himself with all humility? The Lord is his end (gati). Once he becomes of the Lord, why should he seek any other resort? Why should he milk a goat when he has already secured the wish-fulfilling cow (Kāmadhenu)? Why should he ride an ass by getting down from the king of elephants (Gajendra) on whom he has already mounted? Why should he tie round his neck glass beads on removing those

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*, Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha I, Verse 140, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 161, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Verse 160, p. 53.

of gold ? Why should he apply the black soot (Kājal) to his face by rubbing out the appliance of kumkum ? Why should he wear a torn and rough garment prepared from different pieces of cloth (gūḍaḍ) by giving up a beautiful and fine garment ? Why should he bathe with pond-water by giving up ocean-waves ? Why should he go and sing at others' door by leaving his own Lord ?<sup>1</sup> Thus, Sūradāsa seeks to achieve permanent deliverance from his worldly miserable life and his shortcomings by offering himself completely to God. The way to attain liberation, according to Sūradāsa is, loving-devotion (bhakti). He adopts the loving-devotion (premabhakti) as the only means of achieving deliverance. He says that the devotion of the Lord is his very life-breath (prāṇa).<sup>2</sup> Therefore, he takes his shelter in the Lord by abandoning all else; he offers himself entirely (saraṇāgata) at the feet of the Lord and requests Him to accept him as His own, whether he is good or bad, and requests Him to release him by His grace.<sup>3</sup> He describes God as the most beautiful one, possessing a divine and precious body (divyadeha), and assuming infinite love and compassion in His eyes. He stands to protect all His devotees. By giving up other means of knowledge like inference (anumāna) and the study of the scriptures and the Yogic practices he seeks deliverance through God only on the

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*, Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha I, Verse 166, p. 54-55.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 169, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Verse 170, p. 55.

strength of his devotion and of the God's grace as He did in the cases of Ajāmīla, Jasu, Vyādha, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Sūradāsa says that he danced and danced in the world of Māyā being possessed by the passions like desire (kāma), anger (krodha), greed (lobha), infatuation (moha), and assuming various forms of bodies, exhibited himself variously; he danced through the eighty-four lacs of species and still did not acquire perfection. Being tired of such a life, he now returned and surrendered (śaraṇāgata) to the all-compassionate Lord who has owned him.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Sūradāsa seeks his final rest and peace in the heart of the Lord who possesses immense love and compassion for His creation.

Sūradāsa gives supreme importance to the name of the Lord as the only means of attaining liberation. He says that like Hari there is nothing else and there cannot be deliverance (mukti) without Hari, even though millions of other efforts are made. Without Hari no one can achieve bliss, neither on the earth nor in the heaven; therefore, His name must be uttered, day and night.<sup>3</sup> He advocates the utterance of the name of Hari constantly with full faith in Him just like a faithful wife who has devotion for her beloved; or remembering Him as intensely as the Cakora does the moon and the Cātaka prays for the

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*, Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha I, Verse 204, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 205, pp. 67-68.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Skandha II, Verse 5, p. 116.

clouds.<sup>1</sup> He stresses the need for acquiring knowledge and for control over passions by means of purifying the mind and thus removing the darkness of ignorance (tama).<sup>2</sup> Sūradāsa, being essentially a believer in the Bhaktimārga (the path of devotion), holds that it is sufficient to develop a passion and an ardent devotion for Hari (Haripada anurāga), and then it is not at all necessary to observe the external signs of religious life. It is immaterial where one is and what one does. One has simply to contemplate Hari and to do every action as not of himself but as that of Hari by forgetting his narrow egohood, since Hari dwells everywhere. If one can attain freedom from passions and develop detachment in duties by completely surrendering oneself and one's actions to the Lord, one will get the credit of practising the Yogic practices also. What is important is complete faith in and loving devotion for the Lord.<sup>3</sup> Sūradāsa also emphasizes knowing one's own Self, the inward light by means of which even the blind can see everything. The Self (Ātmā) resides within us but forgetting it, we seek for it outside us just as musk-deer runs in a forest in search of the musk which dwells in its own navel.<sup>4</sup> What is, therefore, necessary is to search for our Self within us to abandon pride and to turn away from the worldly objects of enjoyment and to concentrate the mind on Hari.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sūradāsa : *Sūrasāgara*. Vol. I (Hindi), Skandha II, Verse 9, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Verse 19, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Verses 20-21, pp. 120-121.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Verses 25-26, pp. 122-123.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Verses 23-24. pp. 121-122.

## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

679

Sūradāsa holds, like his Guru Vallabha, that liberation consists in attaining identity (sāyujyatā) with Kṛṣṇa, living in the Goloka. The jīva's duty is to serve the Lord in the form of its lover; the jīva attains its pure state of supreme bliss only when it experiences itself as full of Kṛṣṇa everywhere. The Lord delivers it by showing His grace only when it realises Kṛṣṇa everywhere. Sūradāsa followed the S'uddha puṣṭi-mārga (शुद्ध पुष्टिमार्ग) of Vallabha and believed that such a prema-bhakti, loving devotion alone is sufficient to fetch liberation (mukti) for the soul. The S'uddha-puṣṭi-mārga states that there is not the need for knowledge but there is the need for surrendering all our objects of enjoyment, body, mind, and soul completely to the Lord by realising identity with Him.<sup>1</sup> The Advaita Vedāntins, being negativists, look upon the world as illusory, and experience the light of the Brahman outside the world. But Sūradāsa depicts his prema-bhakti in a different manner. It is not his aim to absorb the changing (kṣara) world into the immutable (akṣara) Brahman, but he makes the changing world (kṣara) dependent (āṅkita) upon the immutable (akṣara) Brahman. The Kṛṣṇa of Sūrasāgara is of manifold forms and He gives satisfaction to different persons in different ways by assuming the necessary forms. He satisfies all persons in their own different ways. In the final state of liberation, everything becomes one with Kṛṣṇa and one enjoys the supreme

<sup>1</sup> Vajpeyi Nandadulare : *Mahākavi Sūradāsa*, pp. 101, 102.

bliss by participating in the eternal sport (līlā) of Kṛṣṇa. This is the speciality of Sūrasāgara.<sup>1</sup>

### Mīrābāī

Mīrābāī appears as one of the most brilliant stars in the galaxy of the medieval saints. Mīrābāī shines with her own light and she pours down her own brilliance in the sky of the bhakti schools. Mīrābāī possessed originality in developing her ardent devotion to the Lord Kṛṣṇa. She did not belong to any definite sect of the devotees. She did not establish any cult of devotion (bhaktipantha). She carried on her devotion of God independently, though occasionally she visited the famous shrines. Mīrābāī is known for her extremely ardent devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Mīrābāī possessed a female heart and she directed all her emotions of love and respect to her Lord Kṛṣṇa or Giridhara; her love-songs are, therefore, full of profound love and the most intense devotion. She led a life of loneliness and isolation since she had lost her mother in her early childhood and became a widow soon after her marriage. She had lost the two important centres of her love and so, her life seems to be filled with excessive disappointment, pathos, and melancholy. She lived in the 15th century from 1498 to 1546 A.D.

Mīrābāī's life is from the beginning to the end full of pathos and depression. She was bereaved, in the earlier period of her life, of her two dearest relations, her mother and her husband. She suffered

<sup>1</sup> Vajpeyi Nandadulare : *Mahākavi Sūradāsa*, pp. 109, 110.



from a sense of deprivation and separation, and therefore, every line of her poems is soaked with the pangs of loneliness and dissatisfaction. As her husband died considerably early, she could not enjoy her married life properly; as a result of that she developed depressive tendency and melancholia. Because of her highly emotional bent she felt, every now and then, the heart-rending and deep depression. Life was unbearable to her in the absence of a loving support; she made it good by transferring all her emotions of love (priti) to God Kṛṣṇa, and thus, purified them by their sublimation. The result was that Mīrā turned the most ardent and keen devotee of the Lord Kṛṣṇa, and became a spiritual person possessing the angelic purity and divine thrill like Caitanya.

Mīrābāī was given to the love of *Giridhara Gopāl Kṛṣṇa* right from her childhood. She came across an idol of Giridhara in her childhood; she was highly fascinated by that idol and craved for securing it from a renunciate who was carrying it. But it is reported that the renunciate came to know in his revelation in dream that the idol was really meant for Mīrā and he was asked to hand it over to Mīrā. At the instructions of the Unknown that person handed over the idol to her, and Mīrā loved it most ardently throughout her life.

Mīrā believed in general that the *samsāra* or the worldly life is ever-changing and so it is not everlasting (anitya). The body which we love so much is nothing but a product of the earth, and it returns

to earth at death. It is futile and unwise to develop attachment and pride for such an evanescent thing. She believed that the worldly life is like (chahar kī bāji) or the sport of sparrows which comes to an end with the advance of the evening shadows. The Lord, Bhagavān, alone is eternal and He can end the miseries of the worldly life by stopping for ever rebirth and the Karma. Hari, the Lord, is eternal (avināśī) and that He survives the destruction even of the sun, the moon, the earth, wind, water, and the sky; and hence stable love can be developed only for such a person.<sup>1</sup> He is beyond all finite things (atīta), and therefore, incomprehensible (agama). He is an ocean of good attributes (guṇasāgara), while she is full of many inauspicious attributes (avagūṇa). She is devoid of good attribute (niguṇī) while He possesses all attributes.<sup>2</sup> She addresses the Lord as her lover (Pritam, Pyāra, Piyā) and believes that the Lord can be loved as her lover. The all-pervading Lord is the Lord of heart also. She says that there is no difference between herself and the Lord; they are inseparable being related as the rays of the sun and the sun itself. She thus maintains a relation of part and whole (aṁś'a, aṁś'in) and an identity of a peculiar kind between the two.<sup>3</sup> She further holds that the Lord is approachable by means of complete surrender of the jīva (s'araṇāgata) and that He is extremely

<sup>1</sup> Chaturvedi Parashuram : *Mīrābāīkī Padāvalī*, Poem 20, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 113, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 115, p. 41.

## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

683

kind and compassionate and can help her to cross the ocean of saṁsāra.<sup>1</sup> If He be approached by His devotees with proper preparation, with the sense of humility and sincere devotion, He delivers them by showing His grace.

Although Mir regarded Kṛṣṇa as her Lord, the ideal of worship, she did not hate other Gods. She addresses the Almighty in different ways by the name of Rāma also. She believes that liberation (mukti) cannot be obtained without the name of the Lord Rāma (Rāmanāma).<sup>2</sup> She thinks it improper to join the company of the traditional Sādhus, wherein the Lord may even be adversely criticised; however, she believes in the efficacy of offering oneself to a good preceptor (sadguru) to reach the final state.<sup>3</sup> Mīrā is doubtful about the efficacy of the traditional ways of devotion (bhakti), the vidhibhakti, where too much importance is attached to the external forms of purity and observances. She says that it is of no use to observe the external signs of bhakti or devotion without purging the heart of the passions like desire, greed, anger, and pride. The mind must not indulge in these desires and must detach itself from the objects of enjoyment. What is important is an inner sense of detachment (vairāgya) and not merely the external abandonment of the objects of desire. One must effect a natural detachment from within honestly.<sup>4</sup> She

<sup>1</sup> Chaturvedi Parashuram : *Mīrābāīkī Padāvalī* (Hindi), Poem 114, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 160, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 160, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 162, p. 56.

does not favour also the Yogic practices for the attainment of salvation. She says that the Yogin has not grasped the real truth of devotion to God; the physical postures and anointing the body with ashes does not bring liberation; and who is destined to attain it, he alone attains it.<sup>1</sup> The only remedy and reliable way of the attainment of liberation is, according to her, the muttering of and contemplation of the name of Rāma. Rāmanāma is sufficient to destroy all the sins of all the births and the devotee secures complete identity with the Lord.<sup>2</sup> Mīrā describes the joy of her union with Lord. She says that she is full to the brim with the joy of the union of the Lord, and her body and mind are filled in every particle with the bliss of the Lord. She has achieved full satisfaction through her five sense organs and has welcomed the Lord. All her past pains are forgotten and desires are satisfied for ever. Her beloved Rāma, the Lord, an ocean of bliss, has arrived at her place today.<sup>3</sup> Mīrā experienced a kind of superb and inexpressible joy when she felt her union with her Lord. When she received her Lord (piyā) she felt so much overjoyed that she could not contain the joy in her body.<sup>4</sup>

Mīrā loved her Lord with the ardent fervour of the Chakora for the moon and Patanga for the lamp. She was all her life restless for her union with the

<sup>1</sup> Chaturvedi Parashuram : *Mīrābāīkī Padāvalī* (Hindi), Poem 186, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 200, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 142, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 148, p. 51.

Lord and found it difficult to live without her Lord just as a fish finds it difficult to live without water. The sight of the Lord is to her a love-dagger that pierced through her and she lost the consciousness and understanding of her body and herself in her union with her Lord; His love had occupied her body and mind through and through and she was His sincere and devoted servant.<sup>1</sup> Mīrā says that their love is not newly formed but is very old, continuing for a number of births.<sup>2</sup> She has accepted her Lord as her only Lord (Bhratāra) for ever and her mind does not deviate even a little from Him to any other man.<sup>3</sup> He is the full Brahman and that He should give her the everlasting place near Him; she was suffering from the separation from Him, and therefore, her request was to Him was that He should take her in His charge.<sup>4</sup> She was drunk with the love of her Lord and she danced in the moments of her ecstasy of love for the Lord, caring not in the least, for the shame of the people.<sup>5</sup> She had offered herself totally to the Lord, body and mind, without any reservation, and wherever she saw Rāma she served Him with all her fervent devotion, and wherever she put her step she used to dance in the passion of His love. She had worn the body of the five colours as a covering for her soul (jiva), and she became one

<sup>1</sup> Chaturvedi Parashuram : *Mīrābāīkī Padāvalī* (Hindi), Poem 176, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poems 17, 46, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Poem 126.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Poem 129.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Poem 14.

with the Lord by abandoning the physical garment of her body the moment she obtained realisation; in the world she was playing various sports (līlā) with the Lord. She has depicted her Lord as the most handsome young man and the sports played with Him were even of the amorous type. However, her love for Him was pure.

The devotion of Mīrā to the Lord is understood as the Madhura-rasa-bhakti (मधुर-रस-भक्ति) or sweet-devotion in which the devotee experiences servitude (dāśya-दास्य), friendship (sakhya-सख्य) or affection (vātsalya-वात्सल्य) for the object of his love. According to Madhura-rasa, a devotee looks upon the object of his devotion as his sole ideal and the intimacy of their relation can reach its climax only by imagining to be the beloved wife of the Lord; as to a man the most intimate and closest relative is his wife. The object of the Madhura-rasa is supra-mundane, and hence, though it assumes amorous forms of sport, in fact, it is a supersensuous (indriyātita) experience of sweet madness for the object of love. Such a kind of love is free from the physical enjoyment and the attachment to the body and the passions (kāma-vāsanā); on the contrary, it reaches its culmination in a completely selfless surrender to the Lord to experience identity (tadātmya) with Him by totally negating the narrow ego-hood of the worshipper. Mīrā strove to attain the supersensuous joy of identity with the Lord experiencing the 'Gopibhāva'; the experience of being a close companion of the Lord, sporting and dancing for ever with Him.

Mirā possessed a genuine loving-heart of a woman and sought to behave like wife and a faithful servant to her Lord. She felt overjoyed by the beautiful and loving looks of her Lord, developed attachment for him, and sported with Him in all possible ways, including even those, which appear to be amorous. She imagined Him to be her actual husband and hence, she adopted all the ways of sporting with Him to gratify her desires. She felt the most heart-rending sense of separation from Him and she was burning with the fever of separation like a married woman that feels for her beloved husband due to their separation. She led a life of a renunciate (vairāgya) by becoming indifferent to the objects of worldly enjoyment.<sup>1</sup> But her spiritual nature did not allow her to degenerate; on the contrary, it purified her more and more and ultimately burnt the elements of physicality, and lifted her for ever, to the Divine realm of Kṛṣṇa. She sublimated her sentiments and adopted the path of the saints to cultivate a superior spiritual character (S'ila vrata), cultivated virtues of courage, forgiveness, truth, good intentions, generosity, contentment, and illumination by knowledge.<sup>2</sup> She developed a highly moral and pure character and enhanced her spiritual ardour of love for the Lord by disregarding the lowly pleasures of the body. All the amorous descriptions of her sport with

<sup>1</sup> Chaturvedi Parashuram — *Mir. bāṅkī Padāvalī* (Hindi), Poem 44, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Poem 192, p. 65.

the Lord are not to be literally understood. They are symbolic of her supersensuous participation in the Divine sports of the Lord. It is believed that Mīrā once said that she regards that there is only one male person in the universe and that is her Lord Kṛṣṇa. The men (male persons) on the earth also are like females to Kṛṣṇa. Her love for Kṛṣṇa was highly sublimated and spiritual, and hence, it was free from passions and sexuality. It is pure and supersensuous. Mīrā had that singularity of devotion and profundity of love which finally lifted her to the realm of Kṛṣṇa. She experienced that thrill and excitement of love for the Lord which Chaitanya had. Mīrā ultimately secured identity with the Lord by means of her powerful and pure love for Him. She is reported to have finally disappeared in her Lord in her final trance.

### Narasimha Mehta

During the medieval ages every province produced great saints who were most powerful personalities, devoted to God, and who attained liberation on the strength of their faith in and devotion to God. In the galaxy of such reputed saints of India, Narasimha Mehta shines with his own brilliance which was original in him. Narasimha Mehta was a famous Gujarati saint and poet; he was born in the 15th century in the year 1414 A.D. and died at the age of 66, in the year 1480 A.D. His birth date is not still out of controversy, however, it is certain that he lived in the 15th century and was contemporary of Mīrā and Caitanya.



## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

689

Narasimha was born in a high-bred family of Nāgara Brahmin, but he did not avail much of higher training in the classics. He was, however, original and he developed his philosophy of his own accord. He had to undergo numerous serious trials in his life and he failed in them; and as a result of desperation he gave up the practical life and took to Kṛṣṇa-bhakti or devotion of Kṛṣṇa. He had also the inherent urge for the realisation of God and it fostered in his early youth.

Narasimha was a devout Vaiṣṇava and the object of his devotion and worship was Śrīkṛṣṇa (श्रीकृष्ण). Narasimha believed in the efficacy of bhakti or devotion as the only sure and practicable means of attaining salvation. Narasimha, like Tulasidāsa, Sūradāsa and Mīrābāī believed that the ultimate Reality is not nirguṇa, but it is saguṇa, possessed of attributes in so far it is related to the devotees who can communicate with it only in its saguṇa form. His Lord Kṛṣṇa is the all-pervading and infinite Reality. He is present in each and every object of the world; He is immensely vast and is present in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end. He is existent in the sun and the moon and He expands to those realms where the eye does not reach. He is ever-shining and is incomprehensible as He is often described as 'not this', 'not this'. He is the upholder of the earth and the Lord of the crores of Brahmāṇḍas; the crores of the Brahmāṇḍas form only a pore (roma) of His body. His nature is both Nirguṇa and Saguṇa (possessed of attributes). He

Ā 44

is not different from the universe but His power is all-pervading. He is all-good and full of bliss (ānandamaya), and the beautiful Rādhikā is his devotion.<sup>1</sup> Thus, like Kabir he also holds that the Lord or God is attributeless (nirguṇa-निर्गुण) and still manifests Himself in a concrete form of attributes (saguṇa-सगुण). He is infinite and immeasurable. His immensity and expanse are beyond our understanding. In another song Narasimha says "Who is that roams in the sky and says 'That I am', 'That I am'. He is very charming and the intellect cannot understand Him. He is both insentient (jaḍa) and sentient (caitana); He has to be known by actual experience. He shines in the crores of the suns. He is saccidānanda (existence, consciousness, and bliss) that sports and rocks in the beautiful cradle of gold. He shines with his own eternal brilliance without the help of wick, oil, and flame. He sees without eyes and is recognised without form, and He tastes the supreme drink without the tongue. He is free from change and is immutable and imperishable (avināśi). He is all-pervading, and he can be comprehended only by the subtle thread of love."<sup>2</sup> He is immeasurable (agaṇita) and it is futile to know Him by calculating and connecting together His separate manifestations. As He is spread all over, He is also in the heart but one does not know Him inside himself. One, whose mind bathes in His formlessness (nirākāra), his delusion that the world is different from Him

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṃgraha* (Bhakti songs), Song 49, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 39, p. 484.

disappears.<sup>1</sup> Narasimha further gives out his experience of transcendental illusion when he says that when he awakes in knowledge, he finds that there is no world; the human mind (individual soul) and the Brahman or Lord (caitanya) are identical, the Brahman lives with the Brahman. The five elements are born of the Brahman; flowers and fruits are to be understood as belonging to the tree; a branch of it cannot exist apart from it. The Vedas say and the Śṛiti and Smṛtis testify that there is no difference between the gold and earrings prepared from gold; name and form are to be seen after the gold has been given a particular form; but at last it is all gold and gold only. Similarly, the distinction of jiva and the Śiva has been due to our desire and we have formed the fourteen worlds and the saṁsāra or prapañca; Narasimha says 'That thou art', 'That thou art'.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Narasimha seems to oscillate between Kevalādvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita, sometimes regarding the world illusory and sometimes regarding the world and the jiva real effects, modifications or vikāra of the Brahman, the latter being its upādāna kāraṇa. The world and the jiva are one with the Brahman in their causal condition (kāraṇāvasthā). He expresses the same idea elsewhere. He says "In the whole Brahmāṇḍa there is only one Śrihari who appears in infinite forms; He is there in the body, fire, void, wind, and water; He is the earth and is

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṁgraha*, (Bakti songs), Song 38, p. 484.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 42, p. 486.

flowering by means of becoming the tree; He has assumed the form of the soul (jīva) to experience the numerous experiences.<sup>1</sup> Thus, God is the infinite cause of all and is beyond all distinctions; He is the same for all and above all castes and groups.<sup>2</sup> God is present everywhere, wherever the eyes are turned. He is simultaneously seen in different places, outside the door, in the lane, and where not? He accompanies and sits by the devotee at the meal-time and shares the bed of the devotee. When He begins to love a devotee He loves him too much and gives him perfect joy of His company. He does not leave the devotee for a moment even; He lives in the heart of the devotee.<sup>3</sup> Such an all-pervading and infinitely great Kṛṣṇa can be also easily included in a pitcher of curds and thus he assumes even such a small form.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the Lord is the subtle principle that is all-pervasive and is the final cause of the whole material universe and the jīvas. Everything is His manifestation. The world is his sportive creation. The Lord has intentionally got Himself entangled in the meshes of Māyā by being incarnated on the earth in order to forward the cause of bhakti; He can be pleased and won only by (bhakti), it is no use torturing the body.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever happens in the world happens at the will of God. Naught happens without Him. All

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Bṛhat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 2, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 22, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Song 21, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Song 27, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṁgraha*, Song 37, pp. 483-484.

actions are being done through men by God Himself. The jiva is not the real agent of actions (kartṛ). Narasimha clearly states that the sense that 'I do the action' is clearly indicative of nescience (ajñāna); it is a false sense in the same way as a dog walking under a running carriage feels as if it itself drags the carriage. The universe is a system and it works according to certain set laws; we wrongly attribute the actions to ourselves.<sup>1</sup> One gets what he deserves. One has to experience whatever has been destined for him.<sup>2</sup> All the actions are wrongly attributed to us as the doers. In fact everything is determined by the actions in the past birth. Everything happens according to the chain of causes and effects and according to the doctrine of Karma. What one experiences is not a matter of his choice. The soul being governed by ignorance revolves on the wheel of births and deaths and continues to revolve so long as it is not delivered by the grace of the God.<sup>3</sup>

Narasimha held that liberation or mukti could be achieved only by muttering the name of the Lord with sincere devotion and profound love for Him. Narasimha does not dogmatically say that mere faith or devotion without knowledge can bring about the final release. However, he holds that philosophical deliberation without genuine faith and wholehearted devotion to the Lord is incapable of bringing about

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Bṛhat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 1, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 1, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Song 19, p. 24.

release (mukti). The pondering of paddy does not give the real taste of it, similarly merely scholastic study of the scriptures does not give us the real knowledge of the Lord. The knowledge of all sciences and the scriptures is not sufficient to effect liberation unless the ego (ahamkāra) is destroyed.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he very sharply criticises those who adhere to the external forms and rites and rituals of religion without the proper understanding of the Self and the Brahman. He says, "What is the use of taking sacred bath and carrying on worship, of besmearing the body with ashes and growing hair on the head, of visiting the shrines and wearing the necklace of the Tulsi-leaves, of drinking the sacred waters of the Ganges, of learning grammar and knowing the six systems, all these being the means of earning livelihood in the worldly life (prapañca), if one has not realised his innermost Self?"<sup>2</sup> At the same time he condemns the simple muttering of the name of the God mechanically without knowing the real nature of Him. He holds that bhakti without knowledge of the Lord is as futile as is a cradle in a house without a child; one's hunger cannot be satisfied by simply speaking about it; without the knowledge of Hari how can one become of Hari?<sup>3</sup> Thus, it becomes clear that Narasimha has not overvalued either bhakti or knowledge at the cost of either; both have value for

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor): *Brhat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 3, pp. 29-30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 6, pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor): *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṃgraha*, Song 38, p. 484.

the achievement of release in their own ways and proportion. The knowledge of God can lead to God but it cannot ensure the actual living experience itself; it has to be actually felt. Love unites the two objects in one single whole, and hence, the real experience of union with the God cannot be attained by knowledge which only points out the object of knowledge just as one can take the horse to the water but cannot make it drink. The realisation of God, thus, depends on a living emotional experience of one's uniting with Him by subduing one's ego, losing pride, and assuming humility before Him.

But it is not exactly release or *mukti* that Narasimha seeks from God. He asks not for everlasting liberation for the soul by absorbing the individual soul into the Lord or Brahman, but he asks for eternal service and eternal vision of the Lord by constantly singing the songs of praise for Him. And this becomes possible by means of *bhakti* or devotion which is not obtained in the whole of the *Brahmāṇḍa* except on the earth. This devotion or the experience of *bhakti* is not known by all; a very few select persons like Śaṅkara, Śuka, Yogins, and some Gopīs from Vraja can know its real essence.<sup>1</sup> *Bhakti* is thus the actual experience of love (*premarasa*) that a woman bears for her beloved husband. Such an experience of real *bhakti* has been the rare possession of only some Gopīs, the female companions of Kṛṣṇa. Narasimha says that the man who does not possess

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvyaśaṁgraha*, Song 1, p. 469.

such pure and elevating bhakti, and who does not sing in the praise of God leads an inauspicious and dejected life (sutakī).<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Narasimha entreats the God to give him bhakti and to lead him through, knowing that he is weak; he requests the Lord to remain with him, day and night.<sup>2</sup> The devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa do not seek after mukti, but they seek after everlasting bhakti or devotion to the Lord Kṛṣṇa. Narasimha expresses his desire not to seek after Vaikunṭha and mukti but to have permanent residence in the Vṛndāvana. He says that the Vṛndāvana is more precious and beautiful, and therefore, he does not desire to go to the Vaikunṭha. He does not want to dwell in the Vaikunṭha where he has only to sit silently and to simply gaze and where he will not gain the joy of eating and drinking like the one in the Vṛndāvana.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Narasimha does not want to be a passive spectator and witness by overcoming all the sensuous experiences in the Vaikunṭha but he wants to participate actively by eating and drinking in the pleasures of the Vṛndāvana and live a more lively and happy life in the Vṛndāvana more freely. What he seeks is the liberation from the three kinds of pain and transmigration, and positively he seeks the everlasting company of the Lord so that he can serve Him without interruption.

Narasimha imagines that the relation of a wife and her beloved husband is similar to the relation between

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Br̥hat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 6, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 19, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Song 20, p. 10.



the soul (jiva) and the Lord, and holds that the joy of union of the soul with the Lord is exactly as intense as that of the union of an earnest wife with her beloved husband. He describes all their amorous sports including kisses and sharing common bed with the desire that the night of their union should not end. He imagines as if they are rocking on a swing in their ecstatic joy and where the Lord plays all kinds of sweet mischiefs with the jivas who adore and worship Him.<sup>1</sup> Narasimha describes the joy of the soul in meeting its Lord as the happiest occasion by calling it 'Divāli' when the houses are illumined as an expression of unending joy. The Gopis manage to supply sufficient oil and long wicks to the lamps; they also protect their burning flame from the gusts of wind so that the light may remain steady and unending. The Gopīs look upon such event as the happiest one as if the aim of their lives is to enter into an everlasting union with the Lord Kṛṣṇa, and they desire to bind Him permanently to their bosoms by the delicate threads of their love for Him.<sup>2</sup> Going further, Narasimha holds that those who obtain the birth as females and get such a chance of loving so ardently and so intensely the Lord and at last secure the supreme joy of union with Him, are blessed (dhanya) ones.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Narasimha extolls the soul's assuming the relation of a beloved wife

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṅgraha*, Songs 23, 24, 25, 26, pp. 448-449.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Songs 513-514, p. 417.

<sup>3</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Bṛhat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 1, p. 5.

to Kṛṣṇa and says that only in such a form can the jiva attain the highest and perfect joy and satisfaction.

The way to attain such a state of the highest joy and ecstasy is to contemplate the name of Kṛṣṇa. The uninterrupted recitation and contemplation of His name for all the hours of the day and night and the desire to serve him at last lead to Him.<sup>1</sup> By such a faithful and singular devotion the Lord gets bound to the Bhaktas or devotees, and then He is ever prepared to give any kind of satisfaction to them.<sup>2</sup> Such a bhakti or devotion that wins the Lord is accessible to all the people irrespective of their social status, colour, and caste. God looks on all the people with equality and does not disrespect any body. It is a sufficient qualification for one to reach God that he possesses a genuine love and devotion for the Lord.<sup>3</sup> Narasimha has absolute faith in the efficacy and goodness of bhakti, and therefore, he says "If others say that we are such and such, then we are like that. Even if others call us fallen and degenerated, we shall carry on the service of Dāmodara." He is prepared to admit the charge that he is a bad man, any body may call him any way he likes, but Narasimha is profoundly attached to Hari, and therefore, he does not care for the orthodox ways of behaviour.<sup>4</sup> God is accessible to all

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor): *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-saṃgraha*, Song 18, p. 476.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 20, p. 476.

<sup>3</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor): *Bṛhat Kāvya Dohana*, Song 22, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Song 23, pp. 25-26.

the eighteen castes by means of bhakti; bhakti is never exhausted and it cannot be controlled by the rulers nor can it be stolen by thieves; it is an unending wealth of the devotees.<sup>1</sup>

What then is necessary to realise what you are in reality? Why do you say 'This is mine', 'This is mine'? The body is not yours. You break your relation with it and assume new bodies; your love for your son, wife, and wealth acts as an impediment in your path; your beloved Lord is with you, why have you forgotten Him? <sup>2</sup> The external means of penance, like contemplation, etc., are not at all necessary: what is necessary is to participate with a heart full of love and admiration for the Lord in his sportive games and to sing his praise.<sup>3</sup> Human life, mind, act, and speech are futile if they do not cherish devotion for the Lord.<sup>4</sup>

Narasimha does not prescribe any special code of behaviour for leading such a life of the devotee of Kṛṣṇa. He maintains that what is necessary is to say always that 'Thou alone art', 'Thou alone art', and then one should mind his own usual work. One has to work with the constant remembrance of the Lord and to feel that he is none, and all that is and that acts is the Lord.<sup>5</sup> He describes such an

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor): *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kāvya-samgraha*, Song 13, p. 474.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Song 33, p. 482.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Song 56, p. 491.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Song 55, p. 471.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Song 15, p. 475.

ideal Vaiṣṇava as one who realises the sufferings of others, helps others, but is free from pride, prays to Him as present in all the things, speaks no ill of others, has controlled all his senses, has cultivated renunciation and abandoned all desires, has developed the sense of equality for all and loves the name of Rāma.<sup>1</sup>

Narasimha has depicted in his *S'rngāramāla* and *Surata-saṅgrāma* in a most romantic way the sport of the jīva with the Lord Kṛṣṇa by using the metaphor of the sport of a young couple of loving persons in their privacy. But it has to be understood only symbolically. Narasimha was a highly spiritually developed person. The amorous sports depicted in his songs are, therefore, the spiritual communications of the soul (jīva) with the Divine Lord. Narasimha was a mystic like other medieval saints and his experience of the communion with the Lord has been described as one of madhurabhāva, the tremendous love and devotion of the Gopis for the Lord Kṛṣṇa. The metaphor of Gopī and Kṛṣṇa was inevitably used to indicate the utmost intimacy of faith and love for each other. The way of the realisation of God is more agreeable and pleasing being freed of the austerity, rigor, monotony, and hardship which are usually the accompaniments of penance. Narasimha has shown a simple and more pleasing way of achieving salvation, and it could be practised by the people of all castes and even by those who were quite ignorant of the traditional philosophical

<sup>1</sup> Desai I. C. (Editor) : *Narasimha Mehtakṛta Kavya-saṅgraha*, Song 148, pp. 54-55.

## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

701

doctrines. He threw open doors of salvation to all the lowly persons and thus brought peace and blessedness to the ordinary and downtrodden strata of the society. He resisted the autocracy of the higher classes in the sphere of spiritual development even by writing the great philosophical truths of the past in the Gujarati language which could be easily followed by ordinary persons. His appeal to the social mind was deep and profound. He relieved spirituality of its orthodox rigidity and complexity and made the faith in God a more living principle of the social life.

### Caitanya

Prabhu Caitanya, otherwise also known as Lord Gauranga or Nimai was a very powerful and inspired Vaiṣṇava saint who flourished in Bengal between 1485 and 1533. He was a highly gifted person from his early childhood and was taken to be an actual incarnation of the Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. He had a fine, well-cut, fair, and shining figure. He possessed marvellous beauty and it is known from his biography that a light of a peculiar combination of the rays of the sun and the moon used to emit from his body. He had the heart-searching eyes and he possessed a mysterious power of evoking excitement of love in others simply by his loving looks. He possessed an unusual power of generating inspiration and spiritual zeal in other people by his maddening dances and fervent kīrtanas. He was called Kṛṣṇa Caitanya for, he possessed the unique power of inspiring love and devotion for Kṛṣṇa in

all those who happened to come in his contact. He possessed the power of throwing a peculiar spell on the minds of his associates and thus, thereby producing in them God-intoxication. He himself lived for the whole of his life-time a God-intoxicated person, and he used to fall very frequently into trances as a result of his mystical experiences of communion with the Lord Kṛṣṇa. Falling into trances, or in the states of swoons and unconsciousness was a peculiar feature of the personality of Caitanya. He also possessed the unusual power of communicating his spiritual joy and love to others by actually instilling in them new thrilling experience of joy. He would convert his opponents not by philosophical discourses and arguments but by his mere presence and loving gazes full of profound love and joy of the Divine. He possessed the miraculous power of winning over his opponents by means of his power to create quite a different atmosphere of love, faith, and a living presence of the Divine all around him. Caitanya spoke less, preached less, taught less; but he used to sweep his audience and associates by a storm of spiritual joy and faith by means of transforming their minds. He was a spiritual dynamo and he used to produce large quantities of spiritual enthusiasm and zeal in the people by his trances, powerful dances, and inspiring sounds of hunkārs and the Haribole (हरिबोल).

Caitanya as such has left nothing in writing behind him. All that we can know of him has to be known from his account given in the literary works

of his associates and devotees like Vṇḍāvan Das, Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj, the authors of *Chaitanya Bhāgavata* and *Chaitanya Charit Amṛta* respectively.

Caitanya was completely against the Vivarta-vāda or Māyāvāda of Sāṃkara as well as against the sūddhādvaita of Vallabha. He discarded the principle of Monism or Absolutism, according to which, the Brahman or the Self is all and the individual is a non-entity, a fictitious existence. Caitanya, on the contrary, being a devout devotee upheld the distinction of the two as real, and it was somewhat akin to the Madhvas, as he was a dualist. He has to be recognised as a dualist since he maintained the distinction between God and the jīva or individual soul. Caitanya does not deny the infinite, immeasurable and formless nature of the Lord Kṛṣṇa, but at the same time he holds that the Lord appears in a most beautiful and charming form for His worshippers. This theory is in accordance with the Bhāgavata, the source book of the Vaiṣṇavism. As Shishir Kumar Ghose states—“The bhaktas admit that there is such a thing as Brahmānanda, but they contend that a man has to destroy all his human feelings by Yoga to attain it. The *ananda* is derived by emasculating one's Self, and therefore, it can never be natural. That process is only natural which keeps a man as he is; and worshipping God by *Premānanda*, does this. If it were the intention of God that a man should ultimately merge in Him, He would have never given him a separate existence, etc., etc.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar : *Lord Gauranga*, Vol. II, p. 26,

Caitanya also did not go much out of the way and did not adopt unnatural and artificial methods to effect his spiritual realisation of the Lord Kṛṣṇa. Like other Vaiṣṇava Saints, Caitanya also held that the royal and the easiest way to attain deliverance from the evils of the worldly life of man is that of devotion (bhakti) and unshakable faith in the Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Bhandarkar, on the contrary, points out the philosophical position of Caitanya differently and likens him to Nimbārka. As he says the Supreme Self (Paramātman) is boundless and is full of intelligence itself. The individual soul is an atom having intelligence. They are necessarily connected together and this connection can never be destroyed. Kṛṣṇa is the support (Āśraya) and jiva rests on him (Āśrita). The relation between the two is one of identity as well as of difference. Thus, the Vedāntic theory of Caitanya's system is similar to that of Nimbārka. As the bee is distinct from the honey and the bee hovers about it, and when it drinks it, is full of it, i.e., is one with it, so the individual soul is at first distinct from the Supreme Self, seeks the Supreme Self consistently and continuously, and when through love it is full of the Supreme Self, it becomes unconscious of its individual existence, and becomes, as it were, absorbed in Him. Herein is described the ecstatic condition in which the individual soul becomes one with God, though they are really distinct. Kṛṣṇa is the lord of the power of delusion or ignorance (Māyā), and Jiva is the *slave* of it. When the latter cuts off its shackles, he distinctly sees its



nature and his true relation to God. Kṛṣṇa is to be approached and attained by Bhakti alone.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to make any decidedly conclusive statement about the philosophic system of Caitanya. His philosophy oscillates from one extreme of monism to the other of dualism. Only his leanings in partial forms can be pointed out. However, Carpenter also shares Bhandarkar's view. Carpenter says about Caitanya—"His metaphysic seems to have approximated most nearly to Nimbārka's though a modern interpreter has ranged him with Madhva. His protests against worldliness remind us of Kabīr. But his attitude to traditional pieties is less austere. He can worship before an image, and bathe in the holy waters. He is as devout in a temple of Śiva as in one of Viṣṇu. Whatever form or emblem had acquired sanctity served to remind him of the object of his love. This was not the result of crude pantheism. It was the recognition of the value conferred by the devotion of others on objects which had aided them to approach the Deity. A flower, a cloud, the light upon the ripple of the sea, displayed to Caitanya the love of God, and threw him into ecstasy. For him there was only one object of adoration known under different names as Brahman, Paramātmān."<sup>2</sup> Caitanya had no objection against other gods, however, the Supreme God or the God of gods was Śrīkṛṣṇa, according to him. He subordinates the other

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Ś'aivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Carpenter J. E. : *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 445,

gods like Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna as the manifestations of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa being caused by the latter from His Self-multiplying power (Vaibhavavilāsa); thus He creates the four Vyūhas out of Himself. According to the predominance of the quality of Sattva, Rajas or Tamas, Kṛṣṇa becomes Viṣṇu, Brahmadeva, or Śiva respectively. His eternal sports are carried on in the Goloka. Kṛṣṇa has three powers; the internal which is intelligence, the external which generates appearances, and the differentiated which forms the jīva, or individual soul. His chief power is that which creates dilatation of the heart or joy. This appears to be the power of love. When this love becomes settled in the heart of the devotee, it constitutes Mahābhāva, or the best feeling. When love attains to the highest pitch it constitutes itself into Rādhā, who is the most lovable of all and full of all qualities.<sup>1</sup>

The soul of man is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. The taṭastha power of Kṛṣṇa manifests differences (between the creator and his creatures)—just as a ray of the sun transforms itself into a flame of fire. Kṛṣṇa has by nature three powers: viz., the child, the life, and the illusion powers. When a creature forgets Kṛṣṇa he is occupied by the external things and so under the influence of illusion he undergoes the misery of being born in the world, now rising to heaven, now sinking to hell. One can get rid of illusion if he worships with full faith in Kṛṣṇa, who,

<sup>1</sup> Bhaudarkar R. G. : *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 85.

in his turn, has created the Vedas and the Purāṇas to remind His suffering creatures of Himself. The Vedas treat that the goal is the attaining of Kṛṣṇa, faith is the means of this attainment, the epithets are his names; love is the (supreme) need, the most precious treasure and the highest achievement of humanity. Madhura service is the means of joining Kṛṣṇa; by serving Him we can enjoy the relish of him.<sup>1</sup> The teaching of Caitanya was based upon the Bhāgavata, according to which, the nature of Kṛṣṇa is infinite, His powers are infinite, heaven and universes are the works of his powers and that He is the repository of essence, power, and work. By means of the three Sādhana, viz., knowledge, abstraction (Yoga), and faith, Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself in the three forms of Brahma, Ātmā, and Bhagavān.

The perception of God is full through bhakti and the one God assumes countless forms, of which the three are: (i) the swayam form, (ii) the tadekātmā form, and (iii) the āves'a form. In the first form He appeared as Kṛṣṇa, the cowboy of Vṛndāvan and as such He was perceived in two ways: (i) prabhāva, and (ii) vaibhava. In the former of these, His one body multiplies itself into many identical ones, as during the rāsa dalliance and the marriages with his queens. The variety of the multitude of His body and shape, under the influence of various passions, is called Vaibhava. Kṛṣṇa's

<sup>1</sup> Sircar Jadunath: *Chaitanya's Pilgrimages and Teachings*, pp. 252-253.

image is not changed; only his shape, colour, and weapons differ and so He gets a different name in each case. Kṛṣṇa possesses the Parabrahma S'akti (power) that pervades the universe and assumes a corporeal form by his wonder-creating power (Māyās'akti), though He is the soul of all. He possesses a self-multiplying power (Vilāsa's'akti) which manifests in two ways: (i) according to Prabhāva-vilāsa, the four Vyūhas—Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha are produced by Kṛṣṇa.<sup>1</sup> Thus, there are many details of the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa in a wide variety of details as found in the Bhāgavata and which was acceptable to Caitanya. It will be a digression to go into their details.

Caitanya, however, preached that faith and devotion are the powerful means of attaining salvation. No other means except ardent and singular devotion to Kṛṣṇa can rid a man from the pains of the worldly life. Caitanya further practised and preached the Madhura bhakti or Madhura rasa as essential for reaching God. In the Madhura rasa is a synthesis of the other four kinds of emotions known as the s'ānta rasa, dāsyā rasa, sakhyā rasa and vātsalyā rasa, and it becomes a unique fusion by the acquaintance with the true nature of God, His power, equality, frankness, and tenderness. The Madhura rasa represents an extraordinary fusion of all these attributes, and so it possesses wonderful deliciousness. When one is governed by the Madhura rasa, he is enlightened

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<sup>1</sup> Sircar Jadunath : *Chaitanya's Pilgrimages and Teachings*, pp. 252-257.

## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

709

and is full of profound love and tenderness and a deep sense of unity and freshness and universality of the spirit.<sup>1</sup> The rise of bhakti or loving devotion in the heart of a man is preceded by s'raddhā or unshakable faith in the goodness and omnipotence of the object of devotion, i.e., Kṛṣṇa. S'raddhā qualifies a person to become a bhakta or devotee. So also there are other qualities which mark a Vaiṣṇava; a real Vaiṣṇava is compassionate, spiteless, essentially true, saintly, innocent, charitable, gentle, pure, humble, a universal benefactor, tranquil, solely dependent on Kṛṣṇa, free from desire, quiet, equable, a victor over the six passions (ṣaḍguṇa), temperate, self-controlled, tender, friendly, learned, skilful, free from pride, and silent.<sup>2</sup> Thus, all the high ethical virtues are accompaniments of such a spiritual and divine life that a devotee adopts for and from Kṛṣṇa.

The tapasyā or sādhanā is of two kinds, external and internal. In the external form of penance the devotee, through his physical organs, performs listening (to chant) and chanting, while in his mind he imagines himself to be identical with his ideal Kṛṣṇa and thus serves Him. Withdrawing himself into his own mind, such a votary ever remains close to his object, the dearest Kṛṣṇa and thus serves Him incessantly. In the path of inclination (rāga) he takes Kṛṣṇa as the object of his chief emotion, viz., as master, comrade, child or sweet-heart. The view

<sup>1</sup> Sircar Jadunath : *Chaitanya's Pilgrimages and Teachings*, pp. 243-244.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 287.

of Bhāgavata is supported and actually adopted by Caitanya. Caitanya holds that first there arises taste (ruchi) for God, then a strong attachment for Him (āśakti) which further generates passion (rati) for Him which ultimately, when sufficiently deepened, culminates into constant love (prema). The constancy of love is sustained by unflinching faith or śraddhā in Kṛṣṇa. What Caitanya insists on is an unfading passion for always being in the company of the Lord Kṛṣṇa, and an unfailing experience of joy and calm which is never disturbed by the happenings of the world. As the devotee is steady and steadfast in his object of devotion he has no fear left to be afflicted by the usual sufferings of the world. The prema or love that gets deepened in the devotee takes progressively the forms of sneha, māna, praṇaya, rāga, anurāga, bhāva, and mahābhāva.<sup>1</sup> These higher stages of love ultimately make the devotee drunk with God and then he is no more for a moment without Him. He enjoys an everlasting fountain of love, joy, calm, freshness, and enthusiasm of the Divine. The communion with God brings an unparalleled peace with it. That communion, when it is successful, is followed by bliss (a bliss which has no parallel in the world), with the visible symptoms thereof, such as tears of joy, and at last a swoon. The man whose so-called communion with God does not bring him bliss may rest assured that he has gained very little by his efforts, and that communion for which he has striven, has not been brought about.<sup>2</sup> Thus, when a devotee is fully satisfied by

<sup>1</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar : *Lord Gauranga*, Vol. II, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

drinking God's love to the fullest extent he falls into swoon or in an unconscious state by totally forgetting his narrow individuality. Caitanya himself had such a long communion with Kṛṣṇa for a period of twenty-one hours and once he had become even breathless for seven hours but possessed the bodily heat.

Caitanya used to fall into swoons of ecstasy when he used to be overwhelmed with the love and joy of Kṛṣṇa. His love was completely devoid of any kind of impurity and no parallel to it could be shown in the world. As Shishir Kumar Ghose remarks, the love which Lord Gaurāṅga showed for God has no parallel either amongst human beings, or saints or Messiahs. No man or woman had ever loved his or her lover in the way Lord Gaurāṅga loved God. Messiahs have preached love for God, but Lord Gaurāṅga alone preached it, not only by words, but in practice.<sup>1</sup> Such was the unique love of Caitanya for Kṛṣṇa. His love was always followed by torrents of tear flowing from his eyes, and he used to be completely unconscious of any other thing of the external world. Their communion used to be perfect and Caitanya used to be completely forgetful of the external world when he used to be in his trance.

The Samādhi, according to the Prema Yoga, does not require the mortification of the body and senses but requires a complete conversion of them by enabling the soul (jiva) to obtain a view of its

<sup>1</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar : *Lord Gaurāṅga*, Vol. II, p. 250.

Great Partner and taste of His sweetness: the result is that the woman (soul), seeing that her husband (Kṛṣṇa) is incomparably more beautiful and sweeter than her gallant (the body), is led to forsake the latter and to cleave to the former.... In this union of the human soul with God it experiences Samādhi in which state all the external senses, one by one, refuse to perform their functions, and a new world opens to the senses of the mind.<sup>1</sup> The austerity of penance of the kind of premabhakti is not felt as a physical torture, on the contrary, before the sweetness and delightful presence of God the devotee naturally forgets his own existence, of body, senses, and mind; he is forgetful of his limited existence, and hence, there is no sense of martyrdom in him. Vaiṣṇavas become quite natural and believe that martyrdom is not possible, and that the man who really devotes his life to God is somehow or other protected by Him. They say that the so-called martyrs of the world were moved more by vanity and pride than by piety.<sup>2</sup>

According to Caitanya, the relation that a devotee has to bear to Kṛṣṇa cannot be one of a son to his father, but it is of a different type. It has to be understood simply metaphorically. Shishir Kumar Ghose describes the relation of the jiva (soul) to the Paramātmān or the Self most eloquently. That feeling which God, rather the Loving, the Personal, and the beautiful

<sup>1</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar: *Lord Gauranga*, Vol. II, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 134.



God Śrī Kṛṣṇa evokes in the hearts of men, can only be likened to that of a woman who is in love. A woman, who is in love, will forsake her children, husband, position, nay, brave scandal to possess her beloved. It is just the same with a soul which has fallen in love with Kṛṣṇa.<sup>1</sup> The peculiarities of this kind of love, analogous to that of the Gopīs for Kṛṣṇa, are chosen for the irresistibility of the influence of the call of the Lord over His devotees, just as the Gopīs, when they heard the sweet call of the flute of the Lord Kṛṣṇa, used to be so powerfully attracted towards it that they used to forsake their duties in which they used to be engaged; they used to forsake their husbands and even their children whom they were suckling. The call of the Divine is irresistible and the devotee never hesitates to forsake anything, howsoever dear and important to him, for the sake of the union with Kṛṣṇa; such a kind of love can be most approximately obtained in a pair of lovers, and especially in the woman fallen in love with her lover. Caitanya had assumed the role of Rādhā to experience this kind of intensity of love for Kṛṣṇa. He preached this way of love and bhakti (devotion) for the attainment of the highest supersensuous eternal bliss in mukti or liberation, which also cannot be accomplished simply by one's own effort, but which also stands in need of the descent of the Divine grace. What, therefore, gave Caitanya power over other minds was his impassioned religious consciousness, his

<sup>1</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar : *Lord Gauranga*, Vol. II, p. 43.

vivid sense of the personal presence of God, and his conviction that the whole world was the scene of the Divine Love.... He loved a being who could love him in return eternally.<sup>1</sup> Caitanya believed that the chanting of the name of God (Harināma) was quite sufficient to effect eternal deliverance, as the name of God possessed the power of wiping off the sins of men.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Caitanya showed by his own illustration that the Haribole, ecstatic dances and pure and unadulterated exclusive devotion to the Lord Kṛṣṇa could bring the highest possible bliss to mankind, and it is usually indicated by trances, swoons of unconsciousness, tears of love, peace, and sweetness; and it is possible to any one who professes profound devotion for God. Thus, Caitanya opened the gates of salvation even to the low-caste-men, ignorant and illiterate millions of persons. He sought to remove religion from the carefully guarded ceremonies of Brahmanical ritual and threw open its hope and privileges to men and women of every rank and caste, of every race and creed. It needed no priest, for the offering of love required no sacerdotal sanction, and the grace of God was in no man's keeping. He promoted the ideals of charity, gentleness, and sympathy and conferred new values on humanity.<sup>3</sup>

### Tukārāma

Maharashtra possesses a long chain of Vaiṣṇava saints that lived in the post-Jñānes'vara period.

<sup>1</sup> Carpenter J. E.: *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 445.

<sup>2</sup> Ghose Shishir Kumar: *Lord Gauranga*, Vol. I, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Carpenter J. E.: *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 448.

Nāmadeva is supposed to be a contemporary of Jñānadeva. Along with Nāmadeva the other prominent saints like Ekanātha, Tukārāma, Rāmadāsa possess remarkable achievements. It is a fact worth-noting that in Maharashtra saintly persons arose from all the different castes and thus the Bhāgavata religion which is characterised by the pure and sincere devotion of the devotee to God and the abolition of caste-distinctions in the sphere of spiritual devotion, came to be more firmly established and its roots were strengthened. The other well-known saints of Maharashtra from different castes are Gorā Kuṁbhāra (Potter-13th century), Visobā Khechar (13th century), Saṁvatā Māi (Gardener-13th century), Naraharī Sonār (Goldsmith-14th century), Chokhā (an Untouchable-14th century), Janābaī (Maid-servant of Nāmadeva), Senā Nhāvi (Barber-15th century), and Kanhopātra (a Dancing girl-15th century). Similarly the brothers of Jñāneśvara — Nivṛtti and Sopāna — and his sister Muktāharī also were saintly persons, and each has left behind some bhakti-songs.

Tukārāma lived as a very powerful and most ardent devotee of the God Viṭhobā of Pandharpur belonging to the Sholapur District. Tukārāma was born in a Kunabī family, and possessed his spiritual nature, inborn. He was not much conversant with Sanskrit, but he has written quite extensively in Marāṭhi. His songs are known as Abhangas and they exceed four thousand in number. Tukārāma, displays his genius in his writings, and what is peculiar

with him, is his honesty, and his simplicity, earnestness and sincerity of devotion. He has not cared much for a refined language, still his Abhangas possess liveliness and their own charm. Tukārāma has made the name of Pandharpur immortal, and his influence on the masses is tremendous and unfading. Tukārāma's poems are the most valuable Bhakti-songs and they reflect his frankness and sincerity.

Tukārāma believes in the one single ultimate Reality, which is God. His God is eternal, unborn, infinite, formless, devoid of the three attributes, all-pervading, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, unfathomable, immutable, unpolluted by defects, shortcomings, and pleasures of the world. Although He is attributeless He appears in personal form to His earnest devotees. He is extremely loving and profoundly compassionate. He bears profound love for His devotees and redeems His devotees by helping them in their spiritual penance by showing His grace. He is an embodiment of goodness and beauty. He possesses power to combat all evils of the world, and thus, He gives protection and security to His devotees. God is not different in essence from the world and the jivas. God is one with the world in stuff although His manifestations are numerous. He is as sweet as nectar and in His company devotees enjoy the supreme joy and everlasting peace. Tukārāma does not seek liberation or absolution but he seeks the supreme bliss and Divine joy in the company of God whom he chooses to serve for ever. It is a kind of supersensuous experience in which the

devotee enjoys all the joys of God. God's company gives him the sweetness of nectar and he becomes eternally free from karmas and rebirth. Such a state can be attained only by profound love, by singular and exclusive devotion to God, and by the destruction of egoity. Egoity is the cause of pain in the worldly life.

Tukārāma depicts his ultimate Reality—God, whom he addresses frequently as Viṭhobā, Viṭthal, Vithāi, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma. God is deathless and He persists in all the times. He looks upon God as his innermost soul and holds that He persists in all the three stages of his life and that He is deathless.<sup>1</sup> God is infinite, unembodied, inconceivable, incapable of falling, devoid of attributes, intelligent and Supreme.<sup>2</sup> He has neither form, nor name, nor place of abode. He is present wherever we go. He knows neither form nor change of form; He pervades the moving and immovable world. He is neither with nor without attributes.<sup>3</sup> Tukārāma holds, like Jñānes'vara, that God is not only devoid of the three attributes, but He transcends all dualities and distinctions. Going further he holds that God is extremely subtle, and hence, He is greater than the skies and yet the very centre of an atom.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. I, 172, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Vol. II, 1646, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1651, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1648, p. 153.

God is the spirit of the world and he assumes different forms in different ways, just as water takes on itself the nature of that seed which it enters.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of God is in all things; their final place is in the undivided Self, which is without blemish or partner. That Self changes into 'mine' and 'thine', but do away with these and it is all one again.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the same undivided Self, which is God Himself, differentiates into the infinite number of things and souls without undergoing any change in its essential nature. God deceives men by assuming infinite forms with the help of illusive power which cannot be fathomed.<sup>3</sup> However, Tukārāma holds that the world and the jīvas are identical with God as He is present in everything, and everything is His own manifestation. It is through ignorance that we feel the multiplicity and differences, just as we perceive a snake in a rope; but in actuality it is all God, just as necklace, the collar, the golden bee, which when melted are only gold and nothing else.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the same God appears in different forms but in essence He is all. God is identical with His creation. The world is to God as ripple on the ocean or as the cloth is to the threads. Tukārāma also holds that the world is only something that God has created only out of wit (vinoda); he is in God and God dwells in him; God speaks through his mouth and the two

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1655, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1656, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1656, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1654, p. 155.

are one.<sup>1</sup> Thus, God and the world are totally identical and the world is only a sport of God. God plays with the world which in turn is Himself; God thus plays with Himself. He plays with Himself by assuming various forms of the things by means of adjuncts (upādhi), just as the same space appears of different dimensions when enclosed in a jar and a house.<sup>2</sup> God is thus different from the adjuncts and beyond the adjuncts; He is immutable and He has no saṁsāra, the empirical life, and so, He is free from the botheration of the world.<sup>3</sup> He is so infinite and expansive in size that the Brahmāṇḍas fill only the small pores of his body.<sup>4</sup> God is everything in the world. Tukārāma falls into confusion and does not understand with what thing he should worship God. Whatever thing he approaches is nothing but God Himself. He asks how he can bathe God with water when water presents to him as nothing else but as God Himself, the fragrance of sandal and flowers is God Himself, the metal, food, and sound are God Himself, God is the grains of rice, even the flame of the lamp that he seeks to use in the worship of God; he does not understand what to offer to Him since there is nothing else but God Himself everywhere.<sup>5</sup>

1 Paṇḍitkar (Editor): *Tukārāmachi Gāthā*, 3494, p. 713 (Nirnaya Sagar Press).

2 Ibid. 3491, p. 712.

3 Ibid. 3484, p. 711.

4 Ibid. 3480, p. 710.

5 Ibid. 3501, p. 714.

The difference of the soul and God is only of form and not one of kind, unlike the Madhvas. Tukārāma describes his substantial identity with God by using the simile of salt and camphor. He says — “When salt is melted in water, what remains as a separate substance? Even so I am melted, I am lost in thee. When fire and camphor mingle, is any blackness left behind? My flame and thy flame, says Tukā, become one.”<sup>1</sup> God resides within and without him; God (Hari) is all-pervading.<sup>2</sup> Thus, although God is present everywhere in every object of the world Tukārāma does not preach pantheism and does not restrict God to the world. He does not identify Him with the world, but holds that God still transcends the world. God is both immanent in the world and still transcends it. God is immutable and He dwells away from the world although He pervades the world. He has no form, no size, no name, no end, no origin, no head, no feet, and no hands; He is non-conscious but has become sentient for the happiness of devotion.<sup>3</sup> Tukārāma's God is nothing but the Brahman which is attributeless; but it assumes the form of a personal God for the sake of the devotees that seek his support. God is like the Brahman; it becomes evident from the following poem... He creates, preserves, and destroys: various are the forms of His skill. He is neither very dark

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1679, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Paṇḍhikar (Editor) : *Tukārāmachi Gāthā*, 3474, p. 709 (Nirnaya Sagar Press).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 3477, p. 710.



nor blue; he is neither hard nor soft; He has none of the three attributes, yet He is endowed with great strength. He exists and does not exist in all things; He is incomprehensible by mind or reason; He is a sea of grace...<sup>1</sup> Thus, God is an abode of contradictory attributes and is incomprehensible by reason. He is beyond the capacity of the human mind. But although He is exactly like the Brahman, He has a personalistic nature. Tukārāma says in the same above poem "Though He pervades the world, there is somewhat left of Him, He stands at Pandhari, tempted by the bliss of devotion." Tukārāma gives importance to the eternal existence of God and as compared with Him he regards all the transient things of the world and the world, insignificant. He calls it illusory and false. He says—"False is the world; Hari alone is real: apart from Him all the senses are futile. Silence is futile, a deceiving dream; all is fugitive, save thoughts of Hari. Futile is any acquisition, save that of Hari; if you cling to Him, says Tukā, you will speedily pass to Vaikuṇṭha."<sup>2</sup> Tukārāma is not willing to make distinction between himself and God. He says "... God and his worshippers are not distinct.... Fuel becomes fire through contact with fire, a brook becomes the sea when it meets it."<sup>3</sup>

Tukārāma describes the oneness of God and the world in another poem. He says—"Sugarcandy

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1657, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1665, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1673, p. 161.

and sugar in grains; this is a difference of names only; if you try to distinguish their sweetness at table, you find they are the same essentially. Tell us, O, Pāṇḍuranga, whether you and we are different; the world is cheated by the words "I" and "mine" ".<sup>1</sup> Thus, Tukārāma holds that the unity of God and the world is more fundamental; and the differences have only secondary and phenomenal reality. Māyā is so indistinguishably mixed with the Brahman that they are inseparable. Most eloquently Tukārāma describes their union and identity in the following way — "Brahman and Māyā exist together, as the shadow follows the body. If you try to cut it off, you fail; if you try to destroy it, it has an existence of its own; if you cover it up beneath you, it is there, out of sight. When it is inseparable, why should you persist in calling it separate? We lead ourselves into a confusion of mind. Tukā says— The taller you grow, the taller it is; the shorter, the shorter; it varies with yourself."<sup>2</sup> Thus, Māyā exists for a person who is under ignorance and it ceases to exist for him who obtains the knowledge of God. Such God is the Self of a person and exists in his soul.<sup>3</sup> He hides Himself in the innermost recesses of the mind.<sup>4</sup> He is not contaminated by the evil qualities of the world; just as the Sun draws

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1671, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Vol. I, 177, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Vol. II, 1698, p. 168.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1758, p. 185.

to itself all fluids but no tint of their good or evil qualities cling to Him.<sup>1</sup>

God is an embodiment of omnipotence and perfection. He can do and undo things in the world at his desire. As compared with Him the individual soul is an insignificant creature like the gnat.<sup>2</sup> God is infinitely large and hence immeasurable. His magnitudes cannot be measured. Jiva is limited in knowledge, powers, and in all other respects. The jiva is finite. It enjoys pleasures and pains in the worldly life. It is affected by its Karmas; it acquires merit and demerit, pleasure and pain, good and evil and revolves on the cycle of birth and death while in saṁsāra. God, on the contrary, is unchangeable and He is free from all imperfections, and hence, from merit and demerit, from pleasure and pain, from good and evil. The actions of the jivas are determined by their past Karma, while God is independent and He acts according to His free will. The jiva is sinful and gets birth due to its past sins; and the nature of the worldly life is painful; it causes all kinds of pains.<sup>3</sup> The acquisition of body is due to the past Karma and suffering is caused by one's desires.<sup>4</sup>

The jiva is subject to various desires which ultimately cause in it evil qualities. In fact, the trouble

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1649, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1709, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1849, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1828, p. 205.

of the worldly life is caused by the evil qualities just as a scorpion's sting brings one trouble.<sup>1</sup> There is no pleasure in entering the world : one should not be filled with foolish greed. This world is a prison of sorrow; it has no means of contriving happiness.<sup>2</sup> In the body is a heap of filth and ordure; kindred are the acquisitions the mind makes for itself.<sup>3</sup> It is no use carrying on this bodily life in the world which is full of so many defects and evils. There is no everlasting peace in the world. Worldly life is full of attachments and their consequent sufferings. The world is hollow grain; the innermost reality is God. It is, therefore, better to forget all worldly purposes and remember the name of Viṣhoba.<sup>4</sup> Tukārāma does not feel interested in such a transient worldly life and its afflictions. The worldly pleasures fail to bring the final peace and contentment. He is tortured in this world, and therefore, he requests God to wipe off the source of birth and death.<sup>5</sup> He craves for freedom from such ever-repeating process of birth and death of saṁsāra. He is disgusted with the world, and therefore, craves for the grace of God who can redeem him of the saṁsāra forever. His merit and demerit may not be easily and early exhausted, and therefore, his hope for liberation can be fulfilled only by the mercy of God.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1821, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2328, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2338, p. 339.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 2339, p. 339.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 1844, p. 209.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 1846, p. 209.

## The Vaiṣṇava Saints of ....

725

To him the world appears arid and he most intensely desires to flee away from it.

Tukārāma being a Vaiṣṇava, believes that God can be reached only by devotion (bhakti) and sincere love for Him, and not by learning, sacrifices, Yogic practices, and by other means by retaining in tact one's attachment to the world and to one's ego. He holds that renunciation of one's personal belongings and that of ego are absolutely necessary for attaining the final union with God. Tukārāma says that he who would conquer Hari must renounce all. He must do away with the fascination of the world and with love, affection, and anxious care; he must burn off the very root of sensual desire. Fear of men, vain glory, pride, and envy he must banish. Peace, forbearance, and compassion he must make his hand-maids and send them to bring the wheel-handed (Cakrapāṇi) one near him. The pride of caste and learning must be shunned.<sup>1</sup> The real devotee of God must cultivate these qualities and conquer his senses and must not love any other thing but God only.

Tukārāma holds that there is no need for penance or self-subjugation; these are present in the preaching of Hari. These are present in its mystic union, and the Yogi's transfigured countenance; they will come to dwell there and liberation has its home with the saints.<sup>2</sup> Tukārāma believes that the name of Hari (God) alone can save the jīva and it can

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 2343, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1827, p. 204.

attain the final bliss by uttering God's name. He crossed the waters of the world in the boat of Hari's name; Hari's name is a horse and spear and he can pierce the burly world with His name. Through His name and its power His devotees are exalted high in the three worlds.<sup>1</sup> The desire for difference must be cast away and one must worship God by uttering His name. God delights in faith alone; He dwells wherever his name is uttered.<sup>2</sup> Hari's name alone can save men from the cycle of rebirth. The labour on wife, son, and wealth is wasted; where the seed is sorrow, the fruit is sorrow.<sup>3</sup> What is, therefore, necessary for reaching God, is bhakti or devotion. Tukārāma says— "There is no force strong enough to prevail over faith. It controls God Himself, and who is higher than God?"<sup>4</sup> The jīva must feel the most intense love and devotion to God just as a chaste widow feels to her just departed husband and she throws herself into the burning pyre of her husband; she then does not think of wealth, family, children.<sup>5</sup> Faith in Him alone is enough for God; that in itself will give the devotees a place at His feet.<sup>6</sup> God, if He is pleased with the sincere love and devotion of His devotee, shows mercy to him and simply by His mercy and grace He can bring to an

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1728, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1729, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1730, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 2034, p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 2040, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 2071, p. 266.

end his worldly life.<sup>1</sup> Tukārāma, therefore, holds that one can meet God simply by sincere love and tremendous and unshakable faith in Him. What is necessary is to throw the burden of deeds on God. In fact, the jivas falsely appropriate deeds to them. God is the real doer. God moves the strings as a puppet-player moves the strings of his puppets.<sup>2</sup> The jiva feels through mistake that it is the doer of actions. It is only an instrument of God to perform the actions. The devotee should overcome his egoity and realise that God is the real doer of actions. For that purpose it is necessary, on the part of the devotee, to surrender every thing of his to God to part with his store of merit, past and future. Then the sprouts of the seeds of action will be burnt off; and there will not be future birth any more. The devotee has to surrender himself to God body, mind, and soul.<sup>3</sup>

Tukārāma looks upon God as his closest relative. God is to him mother, father, brother, bosom friend, treasure, family, and darling of the soul.<sup>4</sup> Tukārāma does not seek liberation by completely submerging himself into God; on the contrary, he repeatedly seeks to maintain his distinction from God and desires to remain eternally as His servant. He says—"Cursed be that knowledge which makes

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<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 1846, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1806, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1845, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Vol. I, 215, p. 77.

me one with thee; I love to have precepts from thee and prohibitions. I am thy servant; thou art my lord; let there be still between us such difference of high and low.... Water cannot taste itself, nor trees taste their own fruit. The worshipper must be separate, thus alone, pleasure arises from distinction. The diamond looks beautiful in its setting; gold, when it is fashioned into an ornament.... After heat one enjoys shade; at the sight of her child the milk comes into the mother's breast—what delight there is when they meet each other! ... I am thoroughly resolved to desire liberation no more."<sup>1</sup> Tukārāma does not demand liberation; he wants to retain their distinction and to enjoy the joy of their union. He says—"O Pāṇḍuranga, grant me not liberation! Grant me future lives wherein I may serve thy feet.... We are happy in this land of death, happy as thy slaves, O Pāṇḍuranga!"<sup>2</sup> He asks God to grant him that "I" and "thou" may never pass away; he does not delight in the loss of their difference.<sup>3</sup> Tukārāma wants freedom from pain and suffering, freedom from rebirth but he does not want to be absorbed in God. He wants to remain separate and enjoy the supreme joy and love of God in His company forever. He desires to rejoice in singing the songs of praise of God.

Tukārāma imagines that he is a child and God is his mother. He says—"Thou art our merciful

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.) : *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. I, 211, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Vol. II, 1692, p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1690, p. 166.



mother, O Viṭṭhala, a shadow to that suppliant; the milk of love ever flows in thy breast, thy sight is pure and sweet as nectar. Thou canst discern the inward parts and sufferest not hunger or thirst, pain and weariness to vex us. Thou dost chase far away the thirst of desire and illusion; thou givest us a place to play in. Tukā says, Set me with the saints, where the hand of time cannot reach me.”<sup>1</sup> The mother Viṭhobā evades the child for a long time and then the child becomes too much impatient to get the mother for suckling. Tukārāma, being tired of the world, becomes very impatient to meet the Mother Viṭhoba. He says entreatingly — “Suckle me O mother, with the milk of love, run towards me with swollen breast.”<sup>2</sup> God is extremely sweet and has a very smoothening effect. God is full of love and peace. He says — “Thou art more loving than a mother, cooler than the moon, more yielding than water, a billow of love. . . . Thou madest the nectar sweet, yet thou art sweeter than nectar.”<sup>3</sup> He seeks a personal communion with God to enjoy to the fullest extent the joy of the company of God in a mystical way. Therefore, Ranade describes the form of his devotion of Tukārām as “Personalistic Mysticism”. Tukārāma describes his experience of union with God in the following poem—“I have found a sea of love, an inexhaustible flood; I have opened a

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.): *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. I, 312, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Vol. II, 1970, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2005, p. 250.

treasure of spiritual knowledge, it diffuses the lustre of a million suns, arises in thy worshipper's soul. I have now beheld him in whose sight is all goodness, a sea of happy augury, the supreme power of mystic words. I have attained him, whose name is nectar, whose nature is pure, intellect free from passion. The very joy of peace and compassion is found in this joy, that accompanies the knowledge of the being and knowing God.... Pandhari has unfolded the delight of infinite joy...."<sup>1</sup> Thus, Tukārāma enjoys the highest joy of God. He achieves unending satisfaction from the sight of Him. He says—"I have tasted a sweet taste, my stomach is filled, for his name suddenly occurred to me...." "All his desires are accomplished.... I have found peace and repose; my distress vanished when I remembered him.... God dwells in my speech, he never stirs from my side; within me I feel a stream of life.... The measure is filled and heaped up, and it overflows like the Ganges in flood."<sup>2</sup> Thus Tukārāma's heart overflows with the love and joy of God. All his distresses are ended and he is lost in the sea of love. God is the essence of the whole world, and he thus, attains the essence of all. He says—"My spirit is infused into this essential juice of all; my joy is unbounded; in him who pervades the world I have found father, family and bosom friend: I recognise them all under one name."<sup>3</sup> It is a kind of

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.): *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. I, 573, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 580-581, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 588, p. 198.

illumination and the light then never vanishes. The experience of union with God is indescribable.<sup>1</sup> It is a kind of supersensuous experience; for, Tukārāma says that he received all although nothing, he has been fed without eating anything, he speaks without speaking, hears without hearing, etc.<sup>2</sup> Tukārāma describes the effects of his union with God in the following manner—“While I utter his name, my throat is cooled; my senses forget their business. It is sweeter and more delicious than nectar; my soul has espoused its cause. The lustre of my body is heightened by nourishment of love; my limbs shake off the triple fever.... We need talk of disease no more; all will be satisfied.”<sup>3</sup> He describes his state during his union with God. He says—“Our throats are choked, our eyes are filled with tears; further there is an endless shower of joy. I shall enjoy the comfort of this blissful passion, leaving guilt and merit from me.”<sup>4</sup> To him everything is filled with Brahmā. He says that the mind becomes stable and the vital breath becomes stranded as he is thoroughly suffused with joy.<sup>5</sup> By the favour of Pāṇḍuranga all the intellectual hesitations have vanished. Tukārāma has slept in his own nature by himself.<sup>6</sup> Tukārāma built a house in God

<sup>1</sup> Fraser J. N. and Marathe K. B. (Tr.): *The Poems of Tukārāma*, Vol. II, 599, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 600, p. 201.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2106, p. 277.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 2107, p. 277.

<sup>5</sup> Paṇḍhikar (Editor): *Tukārāmachi Gāthā*, 3537, p. 721.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 3547, p. 723.

or in passionlessness and that he lived in the formless forever. He has become identical with the God in the land of disillusionment. His ego is mortified and he has become one with the eternal and pure.<sup>1</sup> In that state he obtained a new divine vision and the ideas of duality and identity vanished. All differences of space and time dropped away and the Self became one with the universe. The world existed no more and what was left was Parabrahman. He embraced the Brahman as himself. Tukārāma attained the joy of the Brahman by properly realising the meaning of "That thou art".<sup>2</sup> He becomes eternally free from rebirth as a baked seed does not sprout, and the sugar cannot be retransformed into sugarcane.<sup>3</sup> In the final state of union all ripeness is achieved; passions like desire, anger, greed vanish and the universe is filled with joy; all ideas of existence and non-existence are forgotten as he himself has become Pāṇḍuranga... There is no trace of merit and demerit, of happiness and pain; death is overcome while alive; the roots of saṁsāra are destroyed; all distinctions of caste and colour disappear and falsehood is forgotten forever.<sup>4</sup>

Tukārāma attained immortality as his death itself died;<sup>5</sup> he saw his own death with his own eyes and became free forever from the round of births

<sup>1</sup> Paṇḍashikar (Editor): *Tukārāmachī Gāthā*, 3548, p. 723.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3549, p. 723.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 3550, p. 723.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 3551, 3553, pp. 723, 724.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 3560, p. 725.

and deaths.<sup>1</sup> It is an experience of perfect and indistinguishable identity; just as water seems to be one with the sky reflected in it.<sup>2</sup> The devotee becomes completely forgetful of the objects of sense as he becomes one with God, just as the Ganga becomes one with the sea at their confluence.<sup>3</sup> Tukārāma obtained the final rest and he was free from all botherations and engagements of the wordly life. As all the wordly experiences come to an end, what ultimately remains there is the experience, experiencing the experience of God, only one joy filling the whole universe being left.<sup>4</sup> All had become God just as gur is sweet through and through.<sup>5</sup> All the illusions are overcome and the world is seen to be filled with Viṣṇu through and through, leaving no place for distinction.<sup>6</sup>

In the final state of liberation the jīva becomes one with God by losing all the separative individual consciousness just as a piece of salt should completely dissolve in water and become one with it without leaving any trace of its original nature behind or camphor should completely burn and disappear along with the fire.<sup>7</sup> Everything being offered to the fire of Brahman the jīva completely negates its body. What is

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<sup>1</sup> Paṇashikar ( Editor ) : *Tukārāmachī Gāthā*, 3559, p. 725.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3570, p. 727.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 3584, p. 729.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 3592, p. 737.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 3605, p. 733.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 3679, p. 746.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 3493, p. 713.

left then behind is nothing but Nārāyaṇa and Nārāyaṇa alone.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Tukārāma seems to lose himself in the Divine or God and enjoys the joy and peace of the Brahman. It is thus a unitive and supra-relational experience of a mystic in which all the differences vanish, and what remains behind is only the final Reality in itself in the form of God. In it nothing else remains but only God.<sup>2</sup> The senses also are filled with the joy of the Brahman and the love of God showers there.<sup>3</sup> The sweetness of the juice of Brahman (Brahmarasa) is obtained only by him whose passions have quieted down; it is pure and cannot be polluted by the adjuncts of passions. The mind becomes steady in it, and nothing lacks in such an experience.<sup>4</sup> Hari (God) makes him speak by his mouth, that the same Nārāyaṇa dwells in the hearts of all, and hence, one should not bear hatred and envy to others. Although Tukārāma desires to retain his separate individual existence in the final state of union with God, from his poems it becomes clear that he lives not as a separate individual apart from God but lives only in God by becoming God as God takes his possession inside and outside.

Thus, in comparison with the reality of God to him everything appears only illusory. He says—  
“They do not know how the Self is playing with Self; how the ocean has mingled with rivers. The seed now points to the seed: the leaf and flower

<sup>1</sup> Papashikar (Editor): *Tukārāmachī Gāthā*, 3511, p. 716.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 3617, p. 735.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 3657, p. 742.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 3684, p. 747.

are only an illusion." Further Tukārāma finds himself unable to describe the actual final experience. It is something which eludes all concepts and description; everything then becomes illusory. "God indeed is an illusion. The devotee is an illusion. Everything is an illusion. Only those who have got this experience, says Tukā, will come to know the truth of my remark."<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is not a matter of intellectual understanding but one can have such an experience only in a mystical vision of Him. He holds that God can be known only by those who actually see Him face to face in their intuitive experience, and feel Him actually inside and outside. The realisation of God is possible only in such a spiritual communion with Him. He says—"What is the use of those dry words? I want experience, and nothing else. You talk of knowledge but I know that you have had no mystical experience."<sup>2</sup>

Ranade looks upon him as a saint of a very high order because he was not a born saint like Jñānes'vara, but "he supplies us with a typical illustration of what we have called 'Personalistic Mysticism'. Tukārāma exhibits all the doubts and the disbeliefs, the weaknesses and sufferings, the anxieties and the uncertainties, through which every aspiring soul must pass before he can come into the life of light, spirit and harmony..... In Tukārāma,....we find these traces from the beginning to the end of his spiritual career. Jñānadeva

<sup>1</sup> Paṇashikar (Editor): *Tukāramachi Gāthā*, 3707, p. 751.

<sup>2</sup> Ranade R. D.: *Mysticism in Mahārāshtra*, pp. 344, 345.

is a light that dazzles too much by its brilliance. Tukārāma's light is an accommodative, steady, incremental light which does not glitter too much, but which soothes our vision by giving it what it needs. It is for this reason that we say that the humanistic and personalistic element is more predominant than in any other Saint."<sup>1</sup>

### **Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa**

Sri Rāmakṛṣṇa, formerly named by his parents after the divinity of their family, Gadādhara, was born on 17th February 1836 in a poor Brahmin family and he left the world in 1886. He was highly imaginative and a person of independent spirit and courage. He possessed a naturally rebellious trend. He had a dislike for academic study and a scholarly way of life although he had high intellectual powers of understanding and retention. He was interested in the creation of artistic things and in devotional music. The signs of his devotional nature were visible right from his childhood. He possessed a passionate longing and insatiable and most ardent spiritual craving for the Divine. With the most trying and torturous penances prompted by the most earnest and sincere craving for having a vision of God, he finally succeeded in gaining it, and since then, he lived always in God. He used to be drunk with the Divine love and used to fall occasionally into trances. He used to communicate intuitively with the Divine in his mystical experiences and he actually lived a Divine

<sup>1</sup> Ranade R. D.: *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, p. 355.



life. His union with the Divine was a living experience for him as his deity who acted as the power of the Divine. Although married, he never led his married life; he looked upon his wife as the Divine Mother, adored her as his Divine Mother and tested his spiritual fitness by overcoming his personal relations with her. He belonged essentially to the bhakti-school as he believed that bhakti or devotion is the most useful and powerful form of worship and that it serves as the only real means of attaining salvation or mokṣa.

Ramakṛṣṇa believed that there is only one Ultimate Reality from which everything is born, by which everything exists, and to which everything returns, at its end. Whatever exists is Brahman in essence. Brahman is his God. Brahman is without attributes, without motion, immovable, unshakable, firm as the mount Meru.<sup>1</sup> He addresses the Brahman as God or Lord and says that the Lord is the unseen cause of all things.<sup>2</sup> He dwells in all things as the inner essence of everything. He is present even in tiger, in wicked persons, in the ugliest things of the world but in various forms.<sup>3</sup> He exists in serpent, in poison, in the judge, and in the culprit. He exists in everything that exists. The existence of everything is due to Him; however, there are differences in His manifestation in them all. The

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Saying No. 837. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 37-40.

manifestation of S'akti (the Divine power) varies in varying centres of activity; for variety is the law, not sameness. God is immanent in all creatures. He is even in the ant. The difference is in manifestation only. God exists in all things in different degrees, from the lowest and meanest of the things to the most evolved ones. He exists in the body and is still different from it.<sup>1</sup> His name is Intelligence (Cinmaya): His abode is Intelligence; and He, the Lord, is All-Intelligence.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Brahman or God is not a material and insentient thing but is through and through constituted of intelligence. He is omnipotent, and therefore, nothing is impossible for Him. He is like the wish-yielding tree of the celestial world (Kalpataru), which gives whatever one asks of it.<sup>3</sup> Thus, God is the creator of all things and He possesses all kinds of perfections. He is all-pervasive and omnipresent as He lives in all the things for all the times. He is omnipotent, and therefore, lacks nothing. He is the perfection itself. Ramakṛṣṇa derives everything from the Brahman or God and logically attributes all things and qualities to Him. Although God manifests Himself in all the things, He is not identical with them. In case He identifies Himself with them totally He will be subjected to variations, modifications, and destruction by which the material things are characterised. In that case, He will be a transient

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Sayings Nos. 892, 894.  
Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 1058.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 1059.

thing among other worldly objects. But God is unborn and undying. He is eternal and everlasting. Rama-kṛṣṇa, therefore, describes Him as the Brahman that is above and beyond both knowledge and ignorance, good and evil, dharma and adharma. He is indeed beyond all dualities. He is beyond mind and speech, beyond concentration and meditation, beyond the knower, the known, and knowledge, beyond even the conception of the real and the unreal. In short, He is beyond all relativity.<sup>1</sup> He is, thus, the Absolute beyond all attributes; beyond whatever is connected with Māyā.<sup>2</sup> The Brahman or God is thus the final absolute Reality, and it is forever free from any particular characteristic although it manifests itself in all of them. It appears through infinite qualities but it does not share any one of the qualities exclusively. Ramakṛṣṇa further describes the Brahman as the absolute and unconditioned, and it is realised in Samādhi alone. Then it is all silence—all talk of reality and unreality, of Jiva and Jagat, of knowledge and ignorance, is hushed. There remains, then, only 'Is-ness' (Being), and nothing else. For verily the salt doll tells no tale when it has become one with the infinite sea.<sup>3</sup> Thus, he holds that the finite and particular souls are constituted of the same stuff of the Brahman, and the former is totally lost in the latter at the time of deliverance. As such, the Brahman or God can be known only partially and approximately so long as it admits

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Sayings Nos. 839, 840.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 841.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 846.

differentiation from the individual soul that knows it; but when the two become perfectly identical all distinction is lost and nothing can be said about it. It simply remains indescribable. Ramakṛiṣṇa says that after the vision of the Brahman a man becomes silent. He reasons about it as long as he has not realized It. If you heat butter in a pan on the stove, it makes a sizzling sound as long as the water it contains has not dried up. But when no trace of water is left the clarified butter makes no sound. If you put an uncooked cake of flour in that butter it sizzles again. But after the cake is cooked all sound stops. Just so, a man established in samādhi comes down to the relative plane of consciousness in order to teach others, and then he talks about God..... The bee buzzes as long as it is not sitting on a flower. It becomes silent when it begins to sip the honey.<sup>1</sup>

The Brahman is attributeless (nirguṇa) in its transcendental aspect but it becomes possessed of attributes (saguṇa) when it operates with its power and manifests itself in its active form. The God as the Absolute or the nirguṇa Brahman is not different from the Personal God. God the Absolute and God the personal are one and the same. A belief in the one implies a belief in the other. Fire cannot be thought of apart from its burning power; nor can its burning power be thought of apart from it. Again the sun's rays cannot be thought of apart from the sun, nor the sun, apart from its rays. You cannot think of the whiteness of milk apart from milk, nor

<sup>1</sup> Nikhilauanda Swāmi : *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 29.

of milk apart from its milky-whiteness. Thus, God the Absolute cannot be thought of apart from the God with attributes, i.e., Personal God, and vice versa. The distinction between the Brahman and S'akti is really a distinction without a difference. Brahman and S'akti are one, just as milk and the whiteness of milk are one. Brahman and S'akti are one, just as gem and its brightness are one. One cannot be conceived without the other....Wherever there is action, preservation, and destruction — there is S'akti. Water is water whether it is calm or disturbed. That one Absolute Existence-Intelligence-Bliss is the eternal intelligent Energy that creates, preserves, and destroys the universe....<sup>1</sup> The two are the two aspects of the same thing viewed differently. Thus, he regards that the actionless Brahman and the active S'akti are in fact one and the same. He further calls the Absolute Existence-Intelligence-Bliss as the All-knowing, the All-intelligent, and All-blissful Mother of the universe.<sup>2</sup> It is further said that the Brahman or God is the inactive Puruṣa and the active Prakṛti, both at the same time. Water is water whether it moves or is still. A snake is a snake whether it wriggles along or stays still and coiled up.<sup>3</sup> The two aspects Nitya (permanence) and Līlā (change) belong to the same God. In one form He is the Absolute, and in another the Līlā. Even though the Līlā is destroyed, the Nitya always exists.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 856, 857, 858.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 855.

<sup>3</sup> Nikhilananda Swāmi (Tr.): *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 819.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 784.

Ramakṛṣṇa further holds that the individual soul (jīva) is not different from God in essence. Their difference is apparent and it is caused by Māyā—the power of illusion. As a current of water seems to be divided into two when a plank of wood is placed against it edgewise, so the Indivisible appears divided into two, the Jīvātman and the Paramātman, due to the limitation of Māyā. The Jīvātman is the same as the Paramātman just as a bubble of water floating on it is the same as the water, the difference between the two being that the former is limited, temporary, and dependent and the latter infinite and independent.<sup>1</sup> God Himself plays in the form of man. He is the great juggler and this phantasmagoria of Jīva and Jagat is His great jugglery.<sup>2</sup> He compares the Jīva sometimes with a doll of sugar or salt which tries to understand the depth of an ocean, which is compared with God. Thus, his position is somewhat like the Advaita Vedānta regarding the Jīva or the individual soul. The finitude is due to the egotism which is caused by many upādhis or limited adjuncts. The Jīva falsely identifies itself with these external upādhis like the body, manas, senses, etc., and suffers from finitude and its consequent worldly miseries by forgetting its real nature. In fact, the Jīva is the Paramātman Himself, the Supreme Self and it is separate from the body it occupies just as the snake is separate from its slough which it occasionally casts off without being affected in the least.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 28, 30.

Man's bondage of the world is caused by the operation of *Māyā* which makes him forget his own real nature and shows him to be something else. *Māyā* is the deceptive power that distorts the real nature of Him. And this *Māyā* consists in Man's ego itself.<sup>1</sup> Egotism is like a cloud which keeps God hidden from our sight. It vanishes by the mercy of the Guru; God is perceived in all His glory.<sup>2</sup> *Māyā* acts as an impediment in the way of realisation of God by creating the false sense of egoism which is produced by the false identification of the Self with the body, with mind and the other external adjuncts by which the Self is encircled. Ramakṛṣṇa says that until one sees God, one cannot help believing that the soul is the same as the body. The idea clings to the ignorant man—to him who has not seen God, but not to the knowing one; to him it is plain that the soul stands apart from the body.<sup>3</sup> This sense of being separate from God continues as long as one feels that he is one with the body and that he is the agent (*Kartā*) of actions. But Ramakṛṣṇa holds that God alone is the real agent or doer of actions, and so the actions along with their results should be dedicated to Him. Men are only instruments in His hands, and He is the real inspirer, promotor, and doer of the actions. He says—The true devotee says—'Lord, I am the Yantra (machine), Thou art the Yantri (engineer); I am the room, Thou art the tenant; I am the chariot, Thou art the charioteer; I speak just as thou makest

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 10..

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 100.

<sup>3</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 828.

me speak : I act as Thou makest me act; I behave as Thou makest me behave.'"<sup>1</sup> Thus, man is totally governed and guided from within and without by God Himself. The existence of 'I'-the ego, is fictitiously created. He says that egoism is so injurious to man that as long as it is not eradicated there is no salvation for man. Freedom or salvation will come when one's 'I-hood' (egoism) vanishes and one is merged in the Divinity.<sup>2</sup> He further maintains that to think in terms of 'I' and 'mine' is ignorance, and true knowledge consists in thinking in terms of 'Thou' and 'Thine'. The true devotee regards God (Thou) as the real doer (Kartā) of actions and himself only an instrument in His hands.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the worldly bondage and sufferings come to an end with the cessation of egoism or 'I-hood'.

Māyā is further defined by Ramakṛṣṇa as the lust which forms an obstacle to spiritual progress; and hence, Māyā consists in the lust for 'woman and gold'. According to him, unless one overcomes the irresistible lust for woman and gold one cannot realise God; these two things are the causes of worldly bondage and its sufferings.<sup>4</sup> Thus, ultimately Māyā which creates the false sense of illusion of the Self is responsible for the worldly sufferings of the souls. Māyā resides in God Himself but it cannot deceive Him. Ramakṛṣṇa says—"The snake itself is not

<sup>1</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 389.

<sup>2</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 106, 107.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 109.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 68, 73, 86.



affected by the poison of its fangs, but when it bites, the poison kills the creature bitten. Likewise Māyā is in the Lord but does not affect Him, while the same Māyā deludes the whole world.<sup>1</sup> Māyā causes all actions and the jīva has to experience the consequences of the actions performed under the influence of Māyā. According to him, the Self is not attached to anything. Pleasure, pain, sinfulness, righteousness, etc., can never affect the Self in any way; but they can affect those who identify themselves with the body, as smoke can blacken only the wall, but not the space enclosed in it.<sup>2</sup> The Self or Paramātmā in His pure form is unaffected by these upādhis. He is never in bondage, He is eternally free.

According to Ramakṛṣṇa the Jīvātman attains liberation when it achieves God-realization. The state of realization of God is full of infinite and inexhaustible pure bliss. The Jīva ultimately becomes one with God by being totally absorbed in Him and so it loses the sense of distinction from Him. Then all becomes one. It is a state of ecstatic joy and unending peace. It is a state of perfect illumination, sweet joy, and profound peace. Ramakṛṣṇa says that the Ānanda, or the enjoyment of perfect bliss within is one of the signs of God-vision.<sup>3</sup> One who realises God becomes drunk with His love and joy, and therefore, he loses all his pains and sufferings. He is not conscious of his limited individual existence at all.<sup>4</sup> God

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 757.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 758.

is found in one's own heart and He is always present with the devotee. He further says that one who does not find God within himself will never find Him outside himself.<sup>1</sup> God is realized only when one becomes free from the sense of egoism. So long one's ego is not annihilated one cannot realise Him.<sup>2</sup>

The superb joy that one experiences in the union with God is inexhaustible. Ramakṛṣṇa says that God is like a hill of sugar; and the devotees are like ants who become ecstatic even with a little of a single Divine attribute. The inexhaustible joy of God can never come to an end.<sup>3</sup> After the attainment of God-realization one sees Him everywhere and in everything.<sup>4</sup> The Divine bliss which is enjoyed by an emancipated soul is like millions of the highest worldly pleasures solidified into one.<sup>5</sup> The emancipated soul is fully drunk with the Divine joy and experiences illumination everywhere when it attains the knowledge of God; it is like the midday sun, in which one looks around but finds no shadow of oneself. Similarly in the state of Samādhi one retains no shadow of egoism.<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is attained only in the Nirvikalpa Samādhi when one passes beyond

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<sup>1</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 739.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 894.

<sup>3</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 656.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 946.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 917.

the realm of relativity and where all dualities are overcome forever. The emancipated soul then leaves its nest of the body and roams freely in the infinite expanse of the sky of the Supreme Spirit.<sup>1</sup> So long as the jiva exists on the level of conditioned existence, it cannot know God. But God can be realised by the pure mind (*suddha manas*), which again is the same thing as the pure unconditioned spirit. He cannot indeed be realised by the finite reason, or by the finite, relative, and conditioned mind that has a sensuous nature due to its attachment to 'woman and gold'.... When freed from all the worldly tendencies, desires, and attachments, it becomes one with the unconditioned Spirit.... God is beyond mind and intellect so long as they are bound within relativity, but He manifests Himself to them when they are purified, and become free from ignorance.<sup>2</sup> The state of the highest *Samādhi* is indescribable. No one can say what it is;—it is the absolute transformation of one's own soul into God. The doll made of salt plunged into the ocean to measure its depth; but no sooner did it touch the water than it was dissolved. Who can then give the idea of the profundity of the Divine joy and perfection when the measurer himself is lost in it?<sup>3</sup> *Ramakṛṣṇa* had experienced such a *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* for a considerably long period, and from his own experience he says that knowledge finally culminates into such a highest *Samādhi* which has ineffable peace; its experience

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 290.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 924, 925.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 988.

is indescribable and incommunicable just as it is in the case of the Supreme joy which is enjoyed by a young lady in her union with her beloved husband and it cannot be properly described and understood externally by an unmarried girl.<sup>1</sup>

The way that Rāmākṛṣṇa advocates for the attainment of liberation is that of bhakti or exclusive devotion to the Lord. He believes that unless one cultivates the most earnest and intense craving for God one can never realize Him. The yearning for the union with God must be deep and profound. The love for God must be like that of a miser for gold, like the panting of drowning man for breath, like the love of a devoted wife for her beloved husband, and it should be singular by neglecting all other things of the world.<sup>2</sup> The devotion or bhakti that he preaches is not simply a blind surrender to God, but it is accompanied by perfect knowledge of Him. Rāmākṛṣṇa, therefore, identifies pure knowledge and pure love. God comes to help the devotees in attaining such realization if they surrender themselves totally to Him by renouncing all other things. God meets His devotees in the form of the Divine Mother. Knowledge finally leads to Love and bhakti, which when it reaches the highest pitch of intensity, attains His revelation.<sup>3</sup> But knowledge or jñāna never comes without renunciation of lust and possession. With renunciation is destroyed all ignorance, all Avidyā.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 619.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 619, 620, 623.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 799, 800.

<sup>4</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 786.

One cannot realize God until one becomes free from the attraction for woman and gold. Ramakṛṣṇa urges the necessity of cultivating selfless devotion to God by progressively detaching oneself from the worldly objects. He says that bhakti alone will wipe off all sins provided that it is sincere and exclusive.<sup>1</sup> When one has such a bhakti in his heart other things like visiting shrines and going on pilgrimage are unnecessary.<sup>2</sup> He values the path of bhakti as supremely important and useful for the realization of God. He says—“Bhakti-Yoga is communion with God, by means of devotion or Bhakti and Self-surrender. It is specially adapted to this age, Kali Yuga. It is the Yuga Dharma,—the way for the present age. It reduces Karma or work to a minimum. It teaches the necessity of prayer without ceasing.”<sup>3</sup> It is a rare thing. Such bhakti can arise only when there is a wholehearted devotion to God such as that of a chaste wife for her husband. In bhakti the mind and soul must be absorbed in God.<sup>4</sup> What is necessary is to offer everything to God, the work as well as its fruit, and work has to be performed with utmost earnestness, sincerity and longing for God. The worldly actions gradually come to be dropped off when the love of God swells up in the heart.<sup>5</sup> One gradually becomes indifferent to the worldly actions when one derives unusual satisfaction

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<sup>1</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 354.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 355.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 359.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 363.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 356.

from the contemplation of God. He says—“The more you come to love God, the less you will be inclined to perform action.”<sup>1</sup>

There are four kinds of jīvas or souls according to their respective conditions although they are the same in their ultimate nature. The four kinds of jīvas are Baddha or bound, Mumukṣu or struggling for liberation, Mukta or emancipated, and Nityamukta or ever-free.<sup>2</sup> A devotee may continue in the worldly life as long as the effects of his past actions whose resultant is the body, are fully exhausted. However, he can fully experience the joy and peace of the Divine mentally.<sup>3</sup> Such men may live like Jīvanmuktas who continue to live in the world even after attaining jñāna; they are like men living in glass-houses; they can see inside the house and outside the house at the same time, while others as if live in houses with walls of mud.<sup>4</sup> He further describes the emancipated soul in the worldly existence as one who lives in the world like the diver-bird. It dives into water, but the water does not wet its plumage; the few drops of water which may possibly stick to its body are easily shaken off when it once flaps its wings.<sup>5</sup> Thus, he does not outdo the possibility of such emancipated souls living in the world,

<sup>1</sup> Nikhilananda Swami (Tr.): *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 3534.

<sup>3</sup> *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 805.

<sup>4</sup> Nikhilananda Swami (Tr.): *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 776.

<sup>5</sup> *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 953.

although there are other possibilities of attaining liberation directly by the grace of God. A liberated soul is no more likely to be reborn to enjoy worldly life as a burnt seed no more sprouts.

Ramakṛṣṇa enumerates the requirements of spiritual life and says that Faith, Resignation to God, Truth, Abstinence, Discrimination, Indifference, Perseverance, Bhakti are absolutely necessary for concentrating the mind on God.<sup>1</sup> He also stresses the need of Yogic and spiritual practices like concentration and meditation for the final state.<sup>2</sup> He also preaches the necessity of experiencing God in all forms. He had realised the same identical nature of God in all religions, and therefore, he believes that in essence all the religions are similar and their God is the same although He is differently described.<sup>3</sup> God appears in infinite forms and He can be approached in any of these forms. In whatever form and name one may worship Him, through that he will realise Him. Thus, Ramakṛṣṇa relieved religion of the barriers of the orthodox religion and preached that any body can attain emancipation irrespective of his caste, status, religion, language, race, and colour provided that he cultivates singular and pure devotion to God by renouncing lust for worldly objects of enjoyment and fame.

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings of Shri Ramakrishna*, pp. 159, 164, 168, 169, 170, 173, 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 457, 458.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CONCLUSION

#### **(a) A synthetic account of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa in different systems**

It is necessary at the final stage to weave together all the different ideas of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa' scattered in all the different systems of Indian Philosophy, and to arrange them in an orderly way, and to trace a line of continuous development in them. So far, in all the previous chapters a detailed account of the ideas of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa' has already been given, and hence, it will be a monotonous repetition if they are again dealt with in their details. At the same time it is necessary to bring them together and to know them at a glance simultaneously and synthetically to understand the kind of evolution that these ideas have undergone. I propose now to take such a synthetic view of these ideas by bringing their broad features together, and by linking them properly.

It is a fact (as it has become evident from the discussion in the previous chapters) that no two systems hold identical view of Ātman and Mokṣa, and that their ideas have gradually evolved in



## Conclusion

753

different directions. In spite of the differences in the nature of Ātman (Self) and Mokṣa (Liberation), certain features concerning them have been held in common by the different Systems. It will be desirable to take a consolidated view of the changes in the characteristics of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa' and they will make articulate the lines of development. Certain lines of evolution in these ideas will be coming up and will become visible and articulate. I shall base my conclusion on a comparative study of the changes in their ideas under the following heads. Ātman, however, has appeared as the principle of sentience and intelligence, as the experiencer of pain, pleasure, desire; the moral agent of actions and the reaper of the fruits of those actions; the persistent entity that desires to attain liberation and enjoys it by undertaking the necessary efforts for it. It also appears as the principle of self-consciousness. It can be said broadly that Mokṣa (liberation) also repeatedly appears as freedom from pain and suffering, cessation of rebirth and Karma, and sometimes as the enjoyment of supersensuous happiness and the highest bliss, perfect knowledge and power, by becoming free from the bondage of ignorance and other worldly limitations, by means of knowledge (jñāna), work (karma), and devotion (bhakti) to God.

The soul in its pure, metaphysical, and transcendental aspect is known as the 'Self' and has been sometimes identified with the ultimate Reality or Brahman; while the 'Self' as standing in contra-

Ā 48

distinction to the body and as that which knows, feels and wills, experiences pleasure, pain, desires, will, which is the agent of actions and reaper of their fruits and that which is subject to illusion, ignorance, deception, the subject of all empirical experiences is known as the 'soul', and it is employed here in the sense of the Jiva. The terms liberation, release, deliverance, emancipation, freedom and redemption stand for the idea of 'Mokṣa'.

### (1) Soul—Its Nature

The term 'soul' is employed in the *R̥gVeda* as the principle of vitality (breath)—prāṇa, animation, and intelligence; as the body, initiator of actions and the owning and active principle that survives the death of the body, being different from the body. It is also used as the 'essence' of the body. Hiranyagarbha is employed in the sense of the cosmic-mind. The *Āraṇyakas* sometimes used it as the abstract and intelligent principle present in all the things in varying grades. The *Upaniṣads* do not propound any particular view of the 'soul' but represent a collection of many hybrid ideas about it. In the *Upaniṣads* the soul is identified with the material things like reflection in mirror, shadow, person in dream, body, natural agencies, food, sense-organs, prāṇa, manas (mind) and intellect. It is gradually freed from them and then is held to be an immaterial principle which is immortal, all-pervading, sentient, blissful, universal, omnipresent, infinite, eternal, devoid of attributes, imperceptible by sense-organs, the substratum and essence of all, the inner controller of everything,

## Conclusion

755

beyond comprehension but the ultimate Subject of all knowledge. About its size various opinions are expressed. Some hold it to be extremely subtle like oil in seed and butter in milk, like the one-hundredth part of the tip of a hair that is divided into hundred parts. Others hold it to be of the size of a thumb, others of a very wide expanse, and finally according to one view, it is infinite and immeasurable, being the same as the Brahman, that resides in the heart as well as everywhere in the universe. It is the Self of every thing. It is not affected by anything of the world. Thus, the Ātman has become gradually free from corporeality, limitations, concreteness, attributes, destruction, and has become immaterial, sentient, abstract, attributeless, infinite and eternal; it has become one with the Ultimate Reality itself which is the source, sustainer, and absorber of all things of the world. In *Cārvāṅkism* Ātman is nothing but the living body itself and it exists only so long as the body functions. It is mortal like the body. The *Sus'ikṣita Cārvākas* believe that it is separate from the body, and it enjoys pleasure and pain. *Buddhism* does not admit the existence of an entity like Ātman. Buddhism is an *ātmanavādin*. It holds that the Self is a fictitious name given to a series of the states of consciousness which are everchanging and which arise out of the five aggregates (*skandhas*). Everything being momentary, there exists nothing like a permanent individual soul nor a substratum of the states of consciousness. According to *Jainism* — Ātman is eternal,

sentient, infinite in number, all-pervading, the agent of actions and the reaper of their consequences, capable of expansion and contraction. It can be besmeared with Karmic matter, revolves on the wheel of birth and death, and it is possessed of infinite knowledge, infinite power, and infinite bliss in its pure form. The *Nyāya Vais'esika* systems believe that Ātman is the substratum of the states of consciousness and it is a substance, all-pervading, immortal, and infinite in number. Ātman is the same as the *Puruṣa* in the *Sāṃkhya* System. It is pure consciousness, the principle of subjectivity, devoid of any attribute, immutable, eternal, and infinite in number. The *Yoga* system admits the concept of the *Sāṃkhya*—*Puruṣa*, but it believes also in the Supreme Self (Paramātmān), the Self having perfect knowledge, perfect power, and perfect bliss. Both believe that the Ātman is self-illuminated. The *Pūrva Mīmāṃsakas* believe that the soul is immortal, doer of actions and reaper of their fruits; it is jada (insentient), according to the *Prābhākaras*, while it possesses potency of knowledge, according to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa; it is not self-illuminated and is known by inference. The souls are all-pervading and infinite in number. *Advaita Vedānta* of S'aṃkara holds that Ātman is the ultimate principle of consciousness. It is intelligence, pure, eternal, and free and is described as the Saccidānanda. It is devoid of attributes and is self-illuminated. It is the same as the Brahman itself. It is one for all and is the self of all. The plurality of individual souls (jivas) is illusory. The *Viśiṣṭādvaita*

## Conclusion

757

of *Rāmānuja* holds that Ātman is the principle of knowledge forming the body of the Brahman, and that the soul is a modification of the Brahman related as *viśeṣaṇa* (adjective) to the Brahman; souls are many, their differences are real, and they are atomic in size but become all-pervading due to the pervasiveness of their intelligence. It is immortal and capable of infinite knowledge and infinite joy in the state of liberation. God is its inner-controller (antaryāmin). *Nimbārka* is a Bhedābheda-vādin. He believes that the soul is identical with and still different from God like the waves of ocean and the ocean or the rays of the sun and the sun. It is atomic and the souls are infinite in number, dependent on God and the jīva's essence lies in sentience. It is capable of infinite knowledge and infinite joy in the state of liberation. It is the agent of actions and the enjoyer of their fruits. *Madhva* is a *Dvaitin* and holds that the soul is really different from the Brahman or God. It is solely dependent on God, is atomic and imperishable. It becomes all-pervading by means of its intelligence. The *Śuddhadvaita* of *Vallabha* holds that the soul is Brahman or God Himself, His one attribute ānanda (bliss) being obscured in it. It possess sat and cit. It is atomic and immortal. It possesses ānanda in its perfection or in liberation. The *Śaivas*, like the *Vaiṣṇavas*, believe in the personal ultimate Reality and it is S'iva; and they believe that the souls are His manifestations; they become pervasive and immortal in liberation; while in saṁsāra they are weak, bound

by Karma, and limited in knowledge, power, and joy. The *Śāktas* also hold that the souls are imperfect in knowledge and power and that they are the expressions of S'akti that is inseparable from S'iva, the highest Reality.

The *Medieval Vaiṣṇava Saints*, being the worshippers of God, believe that the ultimate Reality is not abstract, but it is concrete; and hence they believe in a Personal God like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Viṭhobā, Pāṇḍuranga, and Nārāyaṇa. *Jñānes'vara* believes that the soul is identical in essence with God like the waves with the ocean, lustre of jewel with jewel, and it can be fully absorbed in God as does salt in water, in Mokṣa. *Jñānes'vara* propounds Advaita-bhakti and gives more emphasis on Advaita or non-difference. *Kabir* believes that the ultimate Reality is attributeless and that the souls are parts of God like the sparks of fire and the waves of water; the souls are governed by Māyā and ignorance. *Tulasīdāsa* holds that Rāma is the highest Reality and He is all-pervading, and therefore, immanent in all things. He governs all the beings from within. Suffering is due to Māyā. *Tulasīdāsa* adopts a relation of servant and master between the devotee and God. *Sūradāsa* loves much the Līlā of Kṛṣṇa and His loving and merciful nature. *Mīrābāī* imagines herself to be the female beloved of God Kṛṣṇa who is her sole support and the only object of devotion and love. According to her, Kṛṣṇa is the only male person in the Universe. The concept of sex is sublimated in her mysticism. *Narasimha Mehta* believes

## Conclusion

759

in the essential identity of the soul and God but he seeks to maintain their difference to enjoy the Supreme happiness of the company of the Lord Kṛṣṇa. The jivas are the faithful servants of God and are like the Gopis to Kṛṣṇa. *Tukārāma* believes, like *Jñānes'vara*, that the soul and God (Brahman) are the same in their essence like the waves of the ocean and ocean, salt and sea-water. He adopts the relation of a child to mother and that of a servant to his master, to God, and also other relations like those of brother and friend. *Caitanya* believes in the difference of the soul from God. He mainly adopts the relation of Rādhā (jiva) to the Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Ramakṛṣṇa Paramahansa* also believes that the soul is identical with God (Brahman) and that their differences are due to Māyā, upādhis, and ignorance. He looks upon God as his mother. All the Saints believe in the relation of child and mother, of wife and husband, of servant and master, between the soul and God. They do not like to lose the jivas in God in Mokṣa.

**(2) Nature of Knowledge**

The *RgVeda* looks upon the soul as the intelligent principle. The *Upaniṣads* hold that the Ātman is essentially a sentient principle, consciousness being its essential nature. *Cārvākas* on the contrary hold that consciousness is an attribute of the living body that arises out of its reaction to the external world. *Buddhism* also believes that consciousness arises as a quality out of the interaction of five aggregates

(skandhas). *Jainism* holds that knowledge or consciousness is the essential nature of the soul, and it assumes perfection in the state of liberation. In *Nyāya Vais'eṣika* systems the soul is only the substratum of consciousness, and consciousness arises in it when it comes into contact with the external world through the sense-organs and the manas. Consciousness is its adventitious attribute. The *Sāṃkhya* system regards that the Puruṣa is constituted of pure consciousness. Its consciousness is stable and there are no changes in it. It reveals other objects by reflection. The *Mīmāṃsakas* also look upon the soul either as jada (insentient) or only possessing the potency for knowledge, consciousness being its separable and adventitious quality, as the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* systems maintain. The *Advaita Vedānta* holds that the Self (Ātman) is constituted of pure consciousness and remains so eternally. *Rāmānuja* holds that consciousness or intelligence is an attribute (guṇa) of the soul and soul is the knower. It is capable of expansion and contraction; he does not identify them like Śaṅkara. *Nimbarka*, *Madhva* and *Vallabha* also regard like *Rāmānuja* that consciousness is an attribute of the soul; it is like the light of a lamp which becomes visible when it comes into contact with the objects it reveals. Consciousness being an adventitious character of the soul, the soul remains devoid of it when it has no connection with the body, i.e., in the state of pralaya and liberation, although there remains a potency for knowledge. The *Buddhists* also believe that consciousness can be terminated for ever when the



aggregates do not combine. Consciousness is not lost in the state of liberation, according to the *Medieval Saints*, although the separative consciousness of particularity vanishes; but the consciousness of the Divine bliss remains.

### (3) The Soul—Doer of actions

The *Vedas* and *Āranyakas* hold that the soul does the actions good and bad, and reaps their corresponding results. The *Upanisads* also admit that the soul is the doer of actions. The *Cārvākas* do not believe in the existence of the soul as the moral agent; they do not recognise moral deeds; the soul does not survive to reap the fruits of those actions, although in the present life the soul (?) does the actions and experiences their results. The *Buddhists* do not admit the soul itself; therefore, there is no doer but only the deed; the deed acts as the doer and it is followed by its corresponding results. *Jainism* and *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* systems admit that the soul is the doer of actions. The *Sāṃkhya*s, on the contrary, hold that the soul (Puruṣa) is the *enjoyer* (bhoktṛ) of the results of actions but it is not the agent (kartṛ) of them since it is immutable. The *Mīmāṃsakas*, *Advaita Vedāntins*, *Rāmānuja*, *Nimbārka*, *Vallabha*, *S'aivas*, *S'āktas* and the Saints of the Bhakti school hold that the soul is the agent of actions. *Madhva*, however, regards that the soul is asvatantra and hence it does not act by itself; all actions are done by God. In fact, all the systems agree in believing that the soul is governed by God

and so God is the real agent; however, the soul identifies itself with its ego (ahaṁkāra) through nescience and regards itself the agent. The *Medieval Vaisnava Saints* and the *Saivas* also admit that the soul is the agent of actions and has the freedom to choose the good and to reach God by good moral actions and spiritual practices.

#### (4) The Soul — Enjoyer of Fruits

All those systems, i.e., Vedas, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Buddhism, Jainism, Nyāya-Weiṣeṣika, Sāṁkhya, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, Advaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Nimbarka, Madhva, Vallabha, Saivas, Śāktas and all the Medieval Saints admit that the soul is the enjoyer of the fruits of actions. The good actions are followed by happiness and evil ones by pain and suffering. The doctrine of Karma demands that the doer must reap the fruits of his actions, otherwise there will be the fallacy of Kṛtapraṇās'a and akṛtābhyāgama. The *Cārvākas* do not believe in the persistence of the soul; the soul is neither the moral agent nor the enjoyer of the fruits of its deeds. According to the *Advaitism* of Śaṅkara, the soul itself is illusory; hence as long as the soul does not recognise its identity with the Seli (Brahman) it regards itself as the kartā and the bhoktā due to nescience (ajñāna). The *Saints of the Bhakti-school* also hold that the soul is the kartā and the bhoktā as long it is ruled by egoity (ahaṁkāra) when the soul dedicates everything, every action, and every desire to God, it no more remains the agent and the enjoyer (bhoktr); nothing

pertains to it after the dissolution of *ahamkāra* in the state of *Jivanmukti* and *Videhamukti*.

The Soul experiences pleasure and pain which result from the actions that are performed by it. The soul in its empirical or worldly life (*samsāra*) enjoys pleasure and pain. In the state of liberation the soul becomes free from the physical body, and experiences happiness without the sense-organs. It is a super-sensuous happiness, that is enjoyed by them in the company of God.

### (5) The Permanence of the Soul

According to the *Vedas* the soul does not perish with the body, it survives the latter's destruction, and hence, it is more durable than the physical body. The soul that enjoys the heavenly happiness after the death has got to be permanent. Similarly the permanence of the soul is implied in the sacrificial rites of the *Brahmanas* and *Āranyakas*. The *Upaniṣads* also maintain that the soul is beginningless and imperishable. The soul that transmigrates on the wheel of birth and death must be permanent. The *Cārvākas* identify the soul with the living body and hence hold that it is impermanent. The *Buddhists* maintain that there is no such permanent entity like the soul; the permanence of the soul is felt only due to the continuity of the succeeding states of consciousness. *Jainism*, *Nyāya* *Vaiśeṣika* systems, *Sāṃkhya*, *Mīmāṃsā* and all the *Vedāntins* believe in the permanence and transmigration of the soul. Similarly the *Saivas*, *Sāktas* and all other *Vaiṣṇava Saints* of the

Medieval ages admit the permanence of the soul. According to all the systems, the jīva (soul) is said to be born and to die due to its associations with and separation from various bodies, in accordance with the karmas. Even after the karmas are exhausted the soul exists permanently, being free from the worldly limitations. The soul shines, according to them, in its transcendental nature and it being unborn exists permanently.

### (6) Pervasiveness of the Soul

The *Vedas* are silent over the pervasiveness of the soul. The *Upanisads* attribute subtlety and pervasiveness to the soul. *Cārvākaism* and *Buddhism* being anātmavādin deny its pervasiveness. Soul is strictly confined to the individual. *Jainism* holds that the soul is of the size of the body it occupies (madhyama Parināma), it is capable of expansion and contraction. The *Nyāya Vais'eṣika*, *Sākhya*, *Purva Mīmāṃsā*, and *Advaita Vedānta* systems hold that the soul is all-pervasive. While *Rāmaṇuja*, *Nimbārka*, *Madhva*, *Vallabha*, *Kabir*, *Mīrābāī*, *Caitanya* hold that the soul is atomic and becomes pervasive by its attribute of intelligence (cit) which is like light that spreads all over. *Jñāneśvara*, *Tukārāma*, *Narasimha Mehta* and *Rāmakoṣṭha Paramahansa* hold that there is an essential identity of the two, although the soul appears to possess limitations that are caused by temporary upādhis. The souls being immaterial and subtle can be all-pervasive without overlapping one another.

### (7) The Soul and the Body :

The body is supposed to be the vehicle and instrument of the soul; the body furnishes knowledge by means of the sense-perception to the soul. The soul depends for actions on the body for the knowledge by sense-perception. The *Vedas*, *Upanisads* and the *Āranyakas* and *Brāhmaṇas* look upon the soul as different from the body that it occupies. *Carvākas* identify the soul with the living body. *Buddhism* establishes a correspondence between the two series of mental and bodily states. *Jainism*, *Nyāya Vais'eṣika*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, *Advaita Vedānta*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, *Nimbārka*, *Madhva*, *Śuddhādvaita*, all the *Vaiṣṇavas*, *Śaivas*, *Śāktas* agree in holding that the soul and the body are different from each other. Souls obtain bodies which are suitable to them in accordance with their previous karmas, the body is perishable and some thing which is filthy. The senses are deceptive and being liable to temptation of sensuous experiences, the soul is dragged down and polluted by the body. The soul can control the body by knowledge and will. All the systems except *Carvākism* discard body and its pleasures and extol the value of the bodiless soul and its supersensuous happiness. The *Vaiṣṇava Saints*, *Śaivas*, *Yoga* and *Advaita Vedānta* seek to exploit the body for the purposes of the soul by purifying it with self-control and by dedicating it completely to God. Body is generally held as opposed to the soul as is darkness opposed to light, body being jada (non-conscious). The corporeal body does not exist in the state of

liberation except in the case of the Jīvanmukta. The *Cārvākās* alone look upon bodily pleasures as the highest pleasures. All others suppose that the body is the abode of all sufferings, and therefore they reject the bodily existence in all its forms. In Mokṣa the body ceases to exist, as it is subject to decay and destruction.

### (8) The Soul (Ātman), the Manas, and the Buddhi

The soul is sometimes taken to be the Intellect (Buddhi) in the *Vedas* and in the *Upaniṣads*, but later on a regular hierarchy of these means of knowledge came to be established. It is said in the *Upaniṣads* that beyond the senses is the manas, beyond the manas is the buddhi, and beyond buddhi is the soul. Manas attends to the percepts and governs the various mental experiences including affection, volition, effort, etc. The buddhi relates, compares, and discriminates. Both act as the subordinates of the soul. *Cārvākism* does not make much difference between the two. All other systems hold that the manas (mind) and the buddhi (intellect) are the most useful means of acquiring knowledge. Mind is that which attends to the sense-perceptions, organises the percepts, forms ideas and arranges them; buddhi abstracts, compares the similar and dissimilar elements, and forms universal generalisations. It is the principle of discrimination. It is only the *Sāṃkhya* system that holds a peculiar view about Buddhi which is made the cause of the whole world. According to the *Sāṃkhya*, buddhi is material in nature as it is a product of the Prakṛti; it is pure

## Conclusion

767

and transparent due to the predominance of the Sāttva-attribute in it; it reveals the objects of knowledge by reflecting the light (consciousness) of the soul (Puruṣa). All the changes in the mental states belong to the buddhi, the light of the Puruṣa being steady and permanent. Manas (mind) and ahaṁkāra (ego) are its evolutes. Buddhi or the manas is not the real knower (jñātṛ). Mind experiences pleasure and pain; but all the systems hold that the real jñātṛ and bhokṛ is the soul and not the manas and buddhi which although serve as the most useful instruments of knowledge.

## (9) The Soul and Adṛṣṭa

Adṛṣṭa — the unseen principle or the doctrine of karma means every action has its corresponding good and evil effects, and the doer of the action has to experience those effects in the succeeding birth. Rebirth takes place to experience the fruits of one's actions in the past life. One enjoys happiness if he has performed good actions in the past life and suffers pain if he has committed evil deeds. None can escape these results. This principle of moral retribution is admitted by all the systems except Cārvākism. *Cārvākism* does not believe in morality and Adṛṣṭa, and therefore, according to it, there is no rebirth. The death of the body is the final thing. *Buddhism* does not believe in the transmigration of the soul still it admits the Adṛṣṭa or the doctrine of karma. The soul transmigrates from one body to another and assumes another body for the fruition of karma that it has accumulated in its previous life, and the stock

of karma is carried by the soul through the subtle body (*sūkṣma śarīra*). *Cārvākas* do not believe in the permanence of the soul and hence there is no transmigration of it. The Buddhists reject the soul but explain the process of rebirth on the basis of the continuity of the series of the states of consciousness. *Adiṣṭa* remains operative as long as the body acts and the soul is attached to it. Rebirth does not come to an end until actions are completely given up and the old stock of karma is not exhausted either by knowledge of God or by religious rites or by sincere devotion to God. The freedom of the soul from the *Adiṣṭa* leads to liberation. All the systems of philosophy and the *Vaiṣṇava* and *S'aiva* cults of bhakti admit the validity of the *Adiṣṭa*.

#### (10) The Soul and Nescience (Aññāna)

Almost all the systems *except Cārvākism* are unanimous on the point of tracing the worldly life and its suffering to *aññāna* or nescience or ignorance. The *Upaniṣads*, *Buddhism*, *Jainism* and all other later systems including the *Vaiṣṇava Saints* and the *S'aivas* hold that *aññāna* (nescience) is the cause of worldly life and suffering. It is out of *aññāna* or nescience that the soul is wrongly supposed to be that which it is not and thus the attachment to those worldly perishable things under the false sense of soul, actions are undertaken, which bear their results which the soul has to experience in its succeeding lives. *Adiṣṭa* remains operative due to *aññāna* and as long as one is led by nescience, by the wrong knowledge of the soul, karma does not come to an end.



## Conclusion

769

The first creation is caused by God only for sport; but later on the *Adṛṣṭa* established the infinite chain of rebirths with the help of the actions which are performed under nescience Knowledge (*jñāna*), Karma (religious rites), Yoga (physical and mental discipline and penance), and sincere bhakti (devotion) to God remove nescience that results in the prevention of new rebirth and thus it leads to liberation (*Mokṣa*). According to *Advaita Vedānta* of Śaṅkara, the whole world is a product of *avidyā* (nescience) and therefore illusory. *Ajñāna* or nescience generally means not the absence of knowledge but the presence of wrong knowledge that distorts the perception of Reality. It possesses the two powers of concealment (*āvaraṇa*) and distortion (*vikṣepa*).

### (11) The Soul—Its Pure and Empirical Aspects

The *Vedas* do not develop an elaborate distinction between the two forms of the soul. The soul, according to the *Upaniṣads*, in its pure and transcendental aspect is infinite, all-pervading, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, the witness (*Sākṣin*), free from all worldly limitations and imperfections, and is therefore, characterised by *sat* (existence), *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss). It is pure, eternal, pure intelligence, eternally free; while the same Self becomes soul enveloped by nescience; it becomes the worldly soul that suffers from the worldly pains, limitations, and imperfections and revolves on the wheel of *saṁsāra*, does actions and experiences the fruits of them, good or bitter. It is deluded by *Māyā*. It has desires and is

ruled by passions. It is weak and finite in all respects. The *Cārvākas* do not believe in the soul, for them and for the *Buddhists* no problem remains; however, *Mahāyāna Buddhism* believes in the existence of the Dharmakāya which acts as the source, support, and end of all ideas and other mental states. It is the spirit that governs all the beings from within and acts as the ideal of perfection of knowledge, purity, and love. But it is more like God. *Jainism* admits the distinction between the pure Self and the empirical soul. The soul in its pure and transcendental form is infinite, all-pervasive, characterized by perfect knowledge, perfect happiness and perfect power. It is free from Karma-matter and enjoys in the highest degree the supersensuous happiness. The soul in the saṁsāra or in empirical life is governed by ignorance, and is besmeared with the Karmic-matter. It is fallible and it transmigrates in accordance with its Karmas. In saṁsāra it has to reap the sweet or bitter fruits of its actions. The *Nyaya-Vaiśeṣika* systems also admit such a difference and they identify the Supreme Self with God who is perfect, pervasive, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. The worldly soul is all-pervading, substratum of knowledge, and possesses actual knowledge when connected with the body, sense-organs and manas. In Mokṣa it loses all consciousness. It, transmigrates and is like the soul as in other systems in other respects. The *Sāṃkhya System* admits no distinction of the soul. According to it, there is one kind of soul (Puruṣa); all are constituted of pure consciousness, are eternal, all-pervading, immutable and self-

## Conclusion

771

evident. The Puruṣa is not the agent of actions (Kartā), but is supposed to be the enjoyer (bhoktṛ) of pleasure and pain. But in reality, all the changing experiences belong to the Prakṛti with special reference to buddhi and to egoity (ahaṁkāra). The soul is falsely supposed to be the transmigrating soul, but really it is unchanging and stands only as the principle of pure sentience. The *Pūro-Mīmāṃsā* system attributes all the relevant characteristics to the soul while it lives in the world. It is all-pervading; but it is not constituted of consciousness. Consciousness is its attribute which is absent in its pure state. It is jaḍa (non-sentient), according to Prābhākara, but it retains only the potency of liberation, according to Kumārila. Consciousness being its adventitious attribute arises in it only when it is connected with the manas and sense organs. The soul transmigrates as it is the agent (kartā), the enjoyer of pleasure and pain (bhoktā), and the knower (jñātā) while in the world.

The *Advaita Vedānta* holds that the soul is not different from the Brahman or the Self which is the self of all things. It is infinite, eternal, ever-free, pure and perfect. It is characterized as saccidānanda. It is the source, support, and end of all the particular things. The soul is really the Self but it appears in the form of the worldly soul that is the kartā and bhoktā, is governed by nescience, is finite due to the adjuncts (upādhis) which are stuck to it due to nescience. The soul in its pure nature is never born nor does it die. It

never enjoys pleasure nor suffers pain. It is unborn and immortal. It does not get rebirth and does not transmigrate. All these attributes are superimposed on it out of ignorance. It is the Brahman itself and it possesses perfection of all kinds. It is full of unfading ānanda. It is singular and common for all. The differences are due to the differences of the adjuncts of manas, buddhi, ahaṁkāra, body, and karma. The soul in its pure form (Self) is free from these things. Nothing sticks to it. It is the same as Nirguṇa Brahman (attributeless Brahman). *Rāmānuja*, *Nimbārka*, *Madhva* and *Vallabha* believe that the soul (empirical self), the jiva, is atomic and it maintains its different nature from God whose part it is. It becomes pervasive by means of its attribute of intelligence. It is kartā, bhoktā, and jñātā and it remains different from God in the state of Mokṣa. It is a modification of the Brahman (Brahmavikāraḥ) and is related like an adjective (vis'eṣaṇa) to God, according to *Rāmānuja*, while it is an aṁśa of God and bhinnābhinna with Him like a wave of an ocean or a ray of the sun, according to *Nimbārka*. *Madhva* holds that the soul is totally different from God (Brahman) and their difference is eternal. It is entirely dependent on God for all the eight states of its life. It is entirely governed by God. In other respect he agrees with *Rāmānuja* and *Nimbārka*. *Vallabha* holds that the soul, in its pure and perfect state (Self), is possessed of sat, cit, and ānanda; but the ānanda of the Brahman or God is obscured in its worldly life and so the soul possesses only sat (existence) and

## Conclusion

773

cit (consciousness). He agrees with Rāmānuja and Nimbārka in other respects. The *Śaivas* also hold that the soul and S'iva (God) are in essence identical in their nature and are related as part and whole, like the ripple of ocean and the ocean. It is subject to karma, pleasure, and pain in its empirical state; and, in its pure nature it attains identity with S'iva. The *Śāktas* further hold the same idea but believe that in the pure state (Self) the soul possesses Divine powers.

The *Vaiṣṇava Saints* identify the Brahman with God and depict personal relationship of the soul with God—like that of a child to mother and father, a friend, servant to master, and a beloved wife to her husband. The soul in its empirical state is subject to all kinds of limitations, imperfections, desires, temptations and it acts under ignorance which leads to future births. It is the *jñātā*, *kartā*, and *bhoktā*. It is subject to worldly afflictions and to transmigration. It is atomic in nature but is essentially one with God, according to Jñāneśvara, Narasimha Mehta, Tukārāma and Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa. They maintain that the soul is caused by fictitious *upādhis*, which in their turn, are produced by nescience. When nescience is destroyed the soul attains its infinitude, omniscience, and perfect bliss, which is inherent in it. The *Vaiṣṇava* saints are not prepared to lose the individual soul in God because thereby they lose the highest happiness that they derive in the company of God from His service.

## (12) Īs'vara (God)

Īs'vara or God is admitted by all the systems except those which are atheistic in nature. There is no place for God in *Cārvākim*, *Buddhism*, *Jainism*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Mīmāṃsā* systems on various grounds. All other systems except these admit the existence of God as the all-pervading, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent being. He is also supposed to be the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world. The *Cārvākas* deny the existence of God on the ground of not being perceived by sense organs. *Bauddhas* (Mahāyāna) admit something like God in the form of the Dharmakāya. God in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* systems is the governor and controller of the world; He distributes pleasure and pain in accordance with the adṛṣṭas of the souls. *Sāṃkhya* rejects the existence of God as unnecessary; the Reality is dual in it. *Mīmāṃsakas* believe in the supremacy and in the eternity of the words of the S'ruti; the deities to which sacrifices are offered are imaginary superior beings: but they deny the existence of God to maintain the final supremacy of the words of the S'ṛiti. *Śaṅkara* denies the existence of God as the Ultimate Reality; his Ultimate Reality is nirguṇa (attributeless) but he gives place to God in his system as the penultimate Reality, the saguṇa Brahman, Brahman—qualified by Māyā and possessing other attributes like omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinite love, and mercy and the power to combat the evil forces of the world. God too has a comparatively illusory existence, according to Him. *Rāmanuja* identifies the Brahman

## Conclusion

775

with God whose the individual soul is a modification. His God is Nārāyaṇa who possesses infinite number of auspicious qualities, is omnipotent, omniscient, full of infinite love and mercy for His creation, and He is eternal. He possesses the six main qualities like greatness, knowledge, etc. He manifests Himself in the form of the four Vyūhas. *Nimbarka*, *Madhva*, *Vallabha* also personify the Brahman and look upon Him as the ocean of love and mercy. *Ramānuja* with the *other Ācāryas* and the *Vaiṣṇava bhaktas* (the saints) maintains that God is merciful and all-loving and He can redeem his devotees by pardoning their sins and by showing them grace, even by supervening the adṛṣṭa; but generally he does not do it to keep Himself free from the charges of partiality and injustice. The *Śaivas* also describe their God in the same way as the *Vaiṣṇavas*; the *Śāktas* give more importance to the powers of God, which when absent, God becomes impotent. Kabir, Tulasīdāsa, Sūradāsa, Jñāneśvara, Tukārāma, Narsinh Mehta, Caitanya, Mirābāī and Rāmakṛṣṇa do not deny the God's being above attributes (nirguṇatva) but they all believe that the Brahman assumes personal form to meet and to save His devotees who are sincerely devoted to Him. Moreover, God can be worshipped and approached only by means of personal relation with Him. Frequently, the *Vaiṣṇava* saints regard themselves as the parts, expressions, and modifications of God, like sparks of fire, waves of water, rays of the sun, and so on. They also look upon God as their lover and regard the soul to be

the beloved wife of Him. They believe in one single ultimate God.

### (13) Liberation (Mokṣa)

All the systems agree in having the attainment of Mokṣa as the goal of life and knowledge. Knowledge is sought for attaining complete freedom from the suffering of the worldly life and from the cycle of birth and death by destroying the Adṛṣṭa forever. The *Vedic* idea of Mokṣa consists in the termination of pain and suffering of the worldly life and in the attainment of a more happy, full, and rich life here on the earth as well as in the heaven. It also consists in the attainment of immortality and in enjoying Divine happiness in the company of Gods. The *Vedas* also hold that it can be attained by sincere prayer and sacrifices. The *Upaniṣads* depict their Mokṣa as the attainment of immortality by means of self-realisation. It is an experience of identity of the soul with the Supreme Self. It is an experience of infinitude and supreme bliss. The soul experiences a kind of supersensuous happiness by overcoming the limitations and imperfections of the saṃsāra. It transcends duality and relativity. It is a unitive experience in which all distinctions are merged and soul is completely transformed into the Supreme Self. In Mokṣa the soul becomes completely free from all attachments and desires, from nescience, karma, and finitude. The mukta is free from deception and although he lives in the world he is not touched by the worldly afflictions; it is Jīvan-mukti; and in Videhamukti the jīva loses its body



## Conclusion

777

and all the three kinds of karma. *Cārvākim* does not recognise anything like Mokṣa. The death of the body is, according to it, Mokṣa. According to it the highest happiness that the soul can attain is the material and worldly happiness. *Buddhism* employs the term 'Nirvāṇa' for Mokṣa. It consists in the termination of all conscious experiences, of thought, will, pleasure and pain by the eradication of all desires by means of the knowledge of the evanescence of the world, by rigorous self-control, and by complete renunciation. This is the *Hinayāna* Mokṣa. The idea of the *Mahāyānist* Nirvāṇa is different. It is an absorption into and identification of the individual with the perfect Dharmakāya; it is not an experience of void of the *Hinayanists*. It is an experience of supersensuous bliss, perfect knowledge, and infinite love. The *Mahāyānist* concept of Nirvāṇa is positive in content as against the negativistic and nihilistic Nirvāṇa of the *Hinayanists*. The *Mādhyamika* Nirvāṇa consists in the attainment of the supreme condition which is free from all kinds of relativity; it is unique and indescribable. All the Buddhist schools agree in believing that Nirvāṇa can be attained by the removal of avidyā, by the proper knowledge of the world, by the complete eradication of all passions and desires, by renunciation and by the necessary Yogic discipline of the body and mind. *Jainism* too agrees in thinking of Mokṣa to be a state of freedom from all pains, limitations, and imperfections by making the soul free from the karma by removing ignorance with the

help of the proper knowledge of the soul and the world. The soul in Mokṣa enjoys its native infinite knowledge, infinite power, and infinite bliss. It is a bodiless state; all karmas being exhausted there is the eternal freedom from rebirth. It can be attained by gaining proper knowledge, perfect self-control, renunciation and by observing moral virtues like non-injury, truthfulness, self-control, love, forgiveness, contentment, etc. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* regard Mokṣa as a state in which the soul is thoroughly freed from the body and from consciousness. It is a state of painlessness as well as pleasurelessness. All states of consciousness come to an end in Mokṣa. The soul remains without any consciousness like a stone and as a substratum of knowledge. It becomes free forever from the three kinds of karmas and so from the wheel of birth. According to these systems, Mokṣa can be attained by destroying ignorance by the proper knowledge of the soul and of the world and by exercising strict control over the sense organs and by curbing all desires. The *Sāṃkhya* system holds that Mokṣa is a condition in which the three kinds of pain are absent, and in it the soul (Puruṣa) is completely separated from the Prakṛti and the Puruṣa enjoys its immutable state of isolation (kaivalya) by discarding all the changes of the Prakṛti. In such a state karma comes to an end, the wheel of rebirth stops forever. It can be mainly done by the proper discrimination between the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti and by detaching the soul from every kind of psychical experience, by means of strict self-control,

## Conclusion

779

by renunciation of desires, and by Yogic discipline. The *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* agrees in holding that Mokṣa consists in the complete cessation of the three kinds of pain, of karma, and of rebirth. According to them, the soul remains in its original natural state which is devoid of all conscious experiences of pleasure, pain, and knowledge. It is similar to the state of the soul as in the Mokṣa in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems. According to Prabhākara, the soul remains in a non-conscious (jaḍa) state; but according to Kumārila, though the soul is devoid of actual conscious experiences it retains its potency for knowledge; it cannot be lost. The soul remains only as the pure substratum of knowledge without any definite content of knowledge. Some old Mīmāṃsakas, however, believe that the soul enjoys the supersensuous heavenly happiness to the fullest extent which can be done by performing the sacrificial rites prescribed by the Śr̥tis. Prabhākara and Kumārila, however, believe that Mokṣa can be attained both by the knowledge of the world, and by performing the necessary religious prescribed rites. Śaṅkara in his *Advaita Vedānta* develops the highest idea of Mokṣa. To him Mokṣa means, like others, the cessation of all pains and suffering and the stopping the wheel of birth and death forever by realising the soul's identity with the Self which is the Brahman. According to him, Mokṣa consists in actually experiencing in the real sense the meaning of 'That art thou', 'I am the Brahman', and 'All this is the Brahman'. It is an experience of complete identity with the whole Reality by discarding all the limitations, distinctions,

dualities, relativity caused by the adjuncts which are produced by nescience. Bondage is caused by falsely identifying the soul with these adjuncts out of ignorance. When ignorance is destroyed the soul realises its original purity, eternity, consciousness, and freedom. The soul enjoys its forgotten infinitude, eternity, omniscience, and perfect bliss. This can be done by the knowledge of the Self, which is Brahman, by means of purification of mind by Self-control and Yogic practices. This is the most evolved idea of Mokṣa which is free from the personalistic defects of human being. *Rāmānuja*, *Nimbarka*, *Madhva* and *Vallabha*, however, regard that Mokṣa consists in becoming free from the painful worldly life and the round of rebirth and in the attainment of the everlasting supersensuous Divine joy by going to the kingdom of God (Vaikunṭha, Goloka, etc.) by means of intense and wholehearted devotion to Him. The liberated soul (mukta) enjoys the omniscience, omnipresence, and the supreme bliss of God but the powers of creation and governance remain reserved for God. According to them, the soul recognises its identity with God but still it maintains its distinction to experience the joy of the company of God and to serve Him. Those who sincerely surrender to God and undertake devotional worship of God know Him properly and attain Mokṣa, irrespective of their caste, colour, etc. They gave emphasis on upāsana and prapatti.

The *Vaiṣṇava Saints* also followed the footsteps of their Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and they hold that Mokṣa

## Conclusion

781

lies in enjoying the highest supersensuous happiness in the company of God through destroying the ego (ahamkāra) and by purifying one's body and mind by means of ethical virtues and indifference to the world of senses. They regard that in Mokṣa the soul comes to be completely united with the Self or God or Brahman like the union of a beloved wife with her husband or of the salt with the ocean-waters. Narasiṃha Mehta does not want the soul to be lost in God in its union with Him, but He wants to remain separate from God to enjoy the supreme happiness in His company like the Gopis who enjoyed the supreme happiness in the sweet company of Śrīkṛṣṇa. *Mīrābāī* too wants to meet God like her dear husband and to enjoy the unique joy of her union with Him forever. Although Vaiṣṇava Saints seek to maintain the difference of the soul from God, they cannot really maintain the difference because the Divine joy which they experience in Mokṣa is so overwhelming that the individual's separative consciousness is swept away in the huge tide of the love of God. S'āṅkara recognises the possibility of the Jīvanmukta while Rāmāṇja does not. *Madhva's* identity with God means the recognition by the soul of its absolute dependence on Him. Madhva being a dualist tries to maintain the soul as separate from God in Mokṣa. Vallabha holds that the soul attains its lost and obscured attribute (ānanda) in the state of Mokṣa and then the soul becomes one with God (sāyujya). *Rāmāṇja* holds that the soul attains the highest similarity with God but not perfect identity with Him. *Nimbārka*

holds that the soul loses all its adjuncts which are caused by nescience and it enjoys God Himself and the knowledge, bliss and the powers of God except those of creation and governance. *Jñanesvara*, *Tukārāma*, *Kabir*, *Caitanya*, *Ramakṛṣṇa* mean by Mokṣa, the perfect union of the soul with God (the Supreme Self) by the former's dissolution in the latter or perfect identity of the two. *Tukārāma* too like *Narasimha* says in one poem that he does not desire Mokṣa but desires the everlasting joy of the service of God. The *Śaivas* too mean by Mokṣa attainment of perfect identity (*sāyujyatā*) with God, which is expressed by means of (*sāmarasya*) indistinguishable mixture of the two by means of sincere devotion and knowledge by overcoming ignorance. The liberated soul becomes free from the bondage caused by ignorance by means of sincere devotion and surrender of the devotee to God and by God's grace. The *Vaiṣṇava* philosophers, Saints, and the *Śaivas* and *Śāktas* stress the merciful and loving nature of God and the importance of God's grace in attaining the final state of liberation. None can attain Mokṣa unless God shows mercy and grace to him. The *Śaivas* and *Śāktas* believe that the liberated soul becomes free for ever from the wheel of rebirth, from karma, body, and the worldly life and from its sufferings, and that it enjoys omnipresence, omniscience, and some of the powers of Lord *S'iva*. The *Śāktas* seek to identify themselves with the *S'akti* of God and to achieve some powers for themselves.

## Conclusion

783

The special contribution of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints and the S'aivas to the idea of Mokṣa consists in regarding that it can be attained by men of any caste and origin irrespective of their social status on the strong ground of sincere, earnest, and exclusive devotion (bhakti) to God. No other thing except the sincere uttering of the name of God is necessary, according to them, for the attainment of Mokṣa. Thus, Mokṣa became attainable by all the people of all the castes. Attainment of Mokṣa thus became more simplified and possible for many, and no more did it remain an exclusive possession of the higher castes. It no more required the scholarly knowledge of the S'rtis and the sacrificial rites. Mokṣa came to be universalised. It also lost the original negative and nihilistic trend and was turned into a positive experience of perfect knowledge, perfect bliss, and power. It no more meant freedom from pain and suffering only, but it meant later on, the enjoyment of the company of God with all His powers except that of creation and governance. S'amkara does not allow even this much distinction because he attributes all distinctions to ignorance and its adjuncts. He means by Mokṣa the highest freedom and the experience of infinitude, perfect existence, perfect knowledge, and perfect bliss by actually becoming identical with the Brahman itself. When it is attained, all the so-called worldly things and pains lose their reality.

**(b) Brief Comparisons of the Concepts of ĀTMAN and MOKṢA in Indian Philosophy with those of some Western Philosophers and of Islam and Christianity.**

**Self (ĀTMAN)**

It is desirable that the ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa in the Indian Philosophy be compared with those in the Western Philosophy in order to understand broadly the place of Self in the Reality and in human life and its significance. In the ancient Greek philosophy the soul came to be interpreted as the *logos*, a part of the universal fire which is the fundamental Reality. Logos is the part of the Divine Reason and it is produced like body from the first original principle of the world, the *Fire*, according to *Heraclitus*. In the Upaniṣads, the soul is compared with a spark of the Divine fire, but it only indicates the latter's forming a part of the Universal Self. On the contrary, it is held by the Upaniṣads that the Self is present in all the things of the world including fire. Heraclitus admits the intelligent nature of the soul. Similarly the idea of *Nous* of *Anaxagoras* is parallel to that of the world-soul Hiranyagarbha of the Veda, both forming the rational principles that control and guide the affairs of the universe intelligently. *Plato* looked upon the soul as the self-moving principle, it is immortal; it is connected with many bodies and it survives the deaths of the bodies. It is taken in the sense of the whole living personality and has the three-fold division according to its functions, i.e., the rational, sensitive and vegetative. The idea of the ideal soul



## Conclusion

705

is the rational soul which is free from the preponderance of the sensitive and the vegetative soul, they being equivalent to the sensuous experience and the organic cravings. The rule of the rational part over the other two is admitted by all the Indian systems but nowhere is there a tripartite division of the soul in the Indian Philosophy. *Aristotle* also accepts the immortality and rationality of the soul. The soul has these faculties: (i) nutritive, (ii) sensitive, (iii) appetitive, (iv) locomotive, (v) rational. The soul is present as the principle of life in all the living things, but in different grades, according to the preponderance of the respective functions. Soul and body are inseparable, the former representing the form, and the latter matter. The *Upaniṣads* and the *Advaita Vedānta* also admit the immanence of the soul in all the things differing in manifestation like Aristotle's soul, but the Self of the *Upaniṣads* and *Vedānta* is the Ultimate Reality, which is both immanent in transcendent over all the particular objects; and it remains unaffected by its manifestations. The *Stoic* soul is thoroughly rational, devoid of emotions, and is the lover of virtue. The *Epicureans* regard that the human soul is composed of a finer kind of atoms which are subtle like air, and the soul is rational, and is seated in the breast. The *Stoics* believe that the soul holds the body together, while the *Epicureans* hold that the body shelters the soul and hence, the latter comes to an end with the destruction of the former. The soul is mortal and there is no transmigration of it.

This view is analogous to the *Carvāka* view but only partially. *Philo* develops the idea of the Logos which corresponds to the Stoic concept of the world-soul as well as to the Platonic Ideas. The Logos is begotten of God and mediates between the world and God. *Plotinus* regards God to be the highest Primal Reality that is transcendent above being and rationality. The world is an overflow of the perfection of the One Supreme Reality, a beam sent forth from the Infinite Light. *Nous* is the first emanate of God and the world-soul is an image of the *Nous*. It is an image of image. The world-soul gives rise to individual souls, the plastic forces, which in turn give rise to the matter. It is a continuous series of emanations from the highest Light to the lowest darkness. Matter, being changeful, is the source of all-evil, as it is the principle of imperfection. Man is a compound of matter and the soul, which is immaterial and imperishable. It assumes births according to its actions in the previous life. The soul needs being purified by withdrawing itself from the influence of the matter. Plotinus agrees with the Vedāntic concept of the soul (*Rāmānuja's*) in so far they share in common rationality and the idea that the individual soul emanates from the Supreme Self. But the resemblance is too limited.

*St. Augustine* holds that the Soul is simple, immaterial and spiritual. It fills the whole body and so it is immaterial. It is not all-pervasive but it is only limited. It is mortal. It is the principle of energy and knowledge in the body. God is, on

## Conclusion

787

the contrary, immutable, eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, absolutely devoid of potentiality, and above all predicates and categories. The soul being perishable, there is no transmigration of it as in the Indian Philosophy. Like the Jains he holds that the soul fills the whole body.

*St. Thomas Aquinas* believes that the soul is the rational and self-moving principle in man. Self-motion is the chief criterion of the soul. There are vegetative, sensitive, and rational souls. The soul is intelligent, immaterial, extended all over the body but has several faculties like that of locomotion, vegetation, sensation (cognition), intelligence and appetite. It is incorruptible, immaterial, and so immortal.

In the modern period *Descartes* regards that the soul is the knowing-principle and that it represents the thinking substance—the mind. God is the primary substance that manifests itself in the form of the two secondary substances, the mind and the matter. The position of *Descartes* is somewhat analogous to that of *Rāmānuja* who also holds that the mind (*cit*) and matter (*acit*) are the modifications of God; but they differ in all other respects. *Spinoza*, on the contrary, holds that there is only one ultimate substance which is self-subsisting and infinite. It possesses infinite attributes out of which only two, the mind and the matter, are known. In fact, the substance is all-pervasive and indeterminate. The attributes also do not belong to the essential nature of it but they appear to the intelligence to belong

to the substance. The substance is the God and all finite things are its effects; but they cannot be understood apart from God. They become illusory when they are separated from God. Spinoza's philosophy is similar to that of Sāṃkhya in so far as both maintain the monistic and pantheistic nature of the substance and Brahman. The chief difference is that, according to Spinoza, the finite things become real when viewed synthetically in substance (God), but according to Sāṃkhya, the finite things and the world become illusory when one reaches the integral experience of the Brahman. According to Spinoza, the human soul is a mode of one attribute (mind) of God. The soul becomes unhappy and illusory when it thinks of itself as separate from God, but reaches blessedness and immortality when it realises identity with God.

*Leibniz* holds that the monads are the Ultimate Realities being centres of consciousness. In the case of human beings all knowledge comes from within. All things are spiritual but they differ in the degrees of intelligence. The soul reaches perfection by the contemplation of God. *Locke*, the father of Empiricism, holds that the soul is the substratum of ideas and of all the states of consciousness. It itself is not consciousness, but it is capable of receiving ideas and the other states of consciousness. The soul is perishable and it lasts only as long as the body exists. This soul is somewhat like the soul of the *Nyaya-Vaiśeṣika* and *Mīmāṃsā* systems, according to which, the soul is the substratum of the states of

## Conclusion

789

consciousness, consciousness being the soul's adventitious character. *Berkeley* denies the human soul and reduces all things and the soul to the various ideas of its qualities. He believes in God as the cause and source of all ideas and perceptions but reduces the human soul to an aggregate of ideas and perceptions. Berkeley's position is rather similar to that of the *Vijñānavādin* Buddhists. *Hume* also denies the existence of the soul as a substance of the mental states, and he reduces the material things and soul to a heap of impressions. *Kant* recognises two kinds of Self, the empirical and the transcendental; the former existing on the phenomenal level and it knows the world in manifold ways with the help of the a-priori categories possessed by it. The Transcendental Self is that which subordinates the changing empirical self. It is permanent and incomprehensible because the categories of knowledge are not applicable to it. It is known as the presupposition of all knowledge, being the ultimate subject of knowledge which cannot be objectified. This division of the Self is similar to that given by *Śaṅkara*. *Śaṅkara* recognises the two kinds of Self, which are the individual soul (*jīva*) and the Self (*Ātman*, Brahman). But he does not give final reality to the individual soul (*jīva*). He holds that the soul is nothing but the Supreme Self appearing under certain adjuncts. He holds that the Supreme Self (the Transcendental Self) is not the unknowable thing-in-itself, but it can be known intuitively as one's innermost Self which is also the inner reality

of the whole universe. It is characterised as the sat (existence), cit (consciousness) and ānanda (bliss). The Transcendental Self, according to Kant, is not blissful, but S'āṅkara holds it to be ānandamaya. To both, S'āṅkara and Kant, the world becomes illusory, but on different grounds. Moreover, Kant keeps them separate and does not speak of their essential identity. The empirical self of Kant does not merge itself into the Transcendental Self in the state of liberation as S'āṅkara holds. Kant does not hold that the empirical Self is unreal while S'āṅkara holds that the soul (jīva) is fictitious and unreal being caused by nescience (ajñāna). Moreover, S'āṅkara holds that the Self alone exists as a real thing, as against him Kant believes in the reality of the phenomenal world, of the empirical self, and of the thing-in-itself (matter), which also is unknowable because the categories of understanding cannot grasp its essential nature. According to S'āṅkara, the Self is all, it is the Brahman and nothing exists besides and outside it; it is the all-pervading and eternal Reality, and everything other than it, is illusory; on the contrary, the Transcendental Self is a part of the total Reality and it can be known intuitively. Kantian philosophy is often supposed to be exactly like the Advaitism of S'āṅkara, but the Ātman of S'āṅkara is very much different from the Transcendental Self of Kant. *Fichte* holds that the Ego is the Ultimate Reality and that its essence consists in will, activity, and knowledge. It posits the non-ego out of it to act upon it. The Ego knows with its

## Conclusion

791

reason what is morally good and seeks to realize its real nature by acting upon the non-ego with all struggles, and wins supreme joy by overcoming the evil and performing successfully moral duties. The Ego is the conscious subject which is the first condition and presupposition of all knowledge and Being. He denies the independent existence of the Kantian extra-mental thing-in-itself by making it dependent upon the Ego. The Ego is understood by man in his intellectual intuition as the free agent, that wills morally good actions. His position is somewhat analogous to that of S'aṅkara who also holds the Self to be the supreme and final Reality; but unlike S'aṅkara, Fichte gives emphasis on the volitional nature of the Ego and makes its realisation dependent on the moral activity. S'aṅkara does not look upon the world and the moral ideals as real, but they are illusory. He does not, therefore, hold that moral actions are necessary for the realisation of the Self; on the contrary, he holds that the intelligent and blissful nature of the Self can be known only by the real knowledge of the Self by becoming one with it.

*Hegel* is an Absolutist and believes that the whole universe and the souls are the evolutes of one single principle, the spirit, reason, mind, which is spiritual. The whole world is an evolutionary product of the final Absolute Reality. The primary thing is the Spirit or Mind which evolves itself as the knowing and willing souls and as the material things, having a correspondence between the abstract idea

and its concrete material form. The Mind is higher and more elaborate evolute of the Spirit, its essence being freedom of willing and consciousness. He holds that a grand evolution of the nature is constantly going on and the human soul is the latest evolutionary product of it. The individual soul grows rich and attains its independent character only by its interaction with the external world. Its content is formed by its interaction with the not-self and with other souls. The highest Self, however, acts as the substance and substratum of all the mental acts. The basic reality of the universe is rational and intelligent. Such an evolution of the world and souls out of the Brahman is found in the *Upaniṣads*, and *Rāmānuja* also holds that the soul and matter are real and are evolutionary modifications of the Supreme Self, God. But *Rāmānuja* nowhere expresses the triad of the stages of development of Hegel, i.e., the thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The *Upaniṣadic* account of the evolution from the Brahman (Ātman) is different from the Hegelian evolution.

*Royce*, a modern metaphysician holds that the soul has an internality and it is separate and peculiar in virtue of its purpose, will, and ideal. Every soul is unique and works with its own free will; but at the same time it works out the plan of God. Every individual soul has its unique place in the divine scheme and every soul works out the ideal or purpose of God in and through God by acting freely and willingly as His expression. The individual attains his reality by realising his dependence on



## Conclusion

793

and identity with God. *Bosanquet* holds a similar view but says that the particulars are the real manifestations of the Absolute only when they realize their inseparability with the Absolute and when they realize through them the universal will, which is their real will. *F. H. Bradley* regards that the self is an appearance as it has a relational and relative existence; it exists in contradistinction with the not-self and it is not self-subsistent. It is also a changing thing, since, its content is not the same. Bradley's Absolute is the whole unitive experience of the reality. It is always united with the whole and in it every particular part is retained without the loss of its individual distinction. The Absolute lives in and through the changing objects of the world. The *Neo-Realists* and the *Dialectical Materialists* hold that the primary reality is material though extremely subtle and fine, and consciousness is its evolutionary product that has arisen to make successful adaptation of the human life to the environment.

## Liberation (Mokṣa)

The concept of Mokṣa is peculiar in Indian Philosophy and it has no exact correspondence either in the Western Philosophy or in Islam and in Christianity. However, their ideas about the ideal and highest happiness may be compared. The concept of liberation or salvation is different from that found in the Western Philosophy. However, certain ideas of some ideal life which is free from the worldly imperfections and sufferings are obtained in

some places in the history of the philosophical thought in the West. The concept of Mokṣa is a peculiar feature of the Indian Philosophy and of the Hindu religion. All knowledge and the metaphysical inquiries were guided in the ancient and medieval India by the desire to attain Mokṣa, which is variously known as liberation, deliverance, emancipation, redemption, release, freedom, salvation or the life of blessedness after death. It is mainly a religious concept, and means in Indian Philosophy and Hindu religion, liberation from rebirth, karma, pain and sufferings of the worldly life, and sometimes it means the attainment of blessedness and blissful Divine life that is supersensuous and it can be attained through the knowledge of the Brahman and Self or by faithful performance of the religious rites, prescribed by the scriptures, or by sincere and wholehearted devotion (bhakti) to God, and by practising Yogic discipline of body and mind. It is frequently believed that the attainment of liberation is dependent on the favour and grace of God. All the systems agree in holding that the attainment of Mokṣa is facilitated by practising renunciation of the worldly life of sensuous enjoyment and by overcoming ignorance. The *Stoic* ideal of life is one of enjoying the highest happiness by practising the virtues of a highly moral life which are dictated by the rational nature of man, in accordance with the general law of nature which is at its base, the law of reason. The *Stoic* idea of ideally happy life is leading a thoroughly *rational life* by subjugating all emotions and passions which have

## Conclusion

795

a seducing effect on the rational nature of man. The *Epicureans*' ideal life is one of attaining highest happiness by employing prudence, discrimination, self-control, and wisdom in choosing enduring happiness which is also free from accompanying pains. By properly balancing pleasure over pain the highest happiness is sought. It consists in properly harmonising the various urges and emotions rather than in suppressing some parts of it entirely. They were refined hedonists and their ideal of life is the highest *happiness of the wise*. They tried to live a natural life and did not overemphasize any one part of it.

The highest Good is happiness, according to *Plato*. According to Plato, the highest happiness can be achieved by contemplating the world of Ideas and the Good, and thus, to free oneself from the bonds of flesh, from the trammels of the body in which the soul is confined, and by means of virtue and wisdom to become like God, even in this life. This can be attained in a mystical intuitive experience. Plato gives an emphasis on the subjugation of the animal passions and impulses. *Aristotle*, on the contrary, thinks of the highest happiness which is of the *eudæmonistic* nature. In this happiness, of course, he gives predominance to rationality but he does not neglect the emotions and passions, which Plato did. His reason does not grow at the cost of emotions. He tries to harmonize all the aspects of the human life and seeks to achieve an all-round development of human life as guided by the superior element of human life, i.e., by reason. His ideal is not

supramundane. *Philo* aimed at the mystical ecstasy obtained in the union of man with God by means of the Divine Wisdom which results from contemplation which is above reason. It can be done by freeing the soul from the trammels of the body and the world of sense. He regards that the highest happiness of man consists in the ecstatic union with God. He places confidence in God rather than in action. His ideal is analogous to the Vaiṣṇava ideal of union with God. *Plotinus* too aimed at a mystical ecstasy in the union of the soul with the one by means of the contemplation of the intellect which is an emanation of God. The soul retires into itself and is rapt in ecstasy and is reunited with the One from which it emanates, receives a special light from intelligence by means of contemplation. His position is somewhat like that of the Advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvara, in so far as he seeks absorption in the One. According to *St. Augustine*, the goal of human life is the mystical union of the soul with God in the future life. It is full of blessedness and it can be attained by contemplation and love of God and by the discharge of moral duties as prescribed by the Divine Law. The earthly life is preparatory to the future achievement and so it should be treated as a pilgrimage of the soul. One should love God alone and reject all others. The *Mystics* of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries revolted against the excessive intellectualism and believed that God could be attained by sincere prayer, asceticism, and attachment through emotions to God. Their approach is

## Conclusion

797

partly similar to that of the *Medieval Vaisnava Saints* of India, who too sought to reach God by emotional attachment and surrender to God, through prayer, and worship and a mystical union with Him. According to *Spinoza*, the aim is the moral emancipation of the human mind which consists in the attainment of the intellectual love of God and of immortality. For that one has to subdue the emotional and sensitive part of our nature and to maintain and enhance the rational part. In the final state body disappears and the soul attains eternality (deathlessness or immortality) by experiencing itself to be integral with the substance (God). It is the highest unity with God, but in this union the distinction between God and soul is not obliterated, but is rather accentuated. It is a state of blessedness. *Spinoza* does not favour the absorption of the soul in God like *Saṅkara* but he is nearer to *Rāmānuja* and *Nimbārka* is so far as the individual retains his distinction and still experiences its essential unity with God. *Kant* was opposed to any kind of happiness for he looked upon emotions as a part of the lower nature of man. His highest ideal is discharge of moral duties dictated as the categorical imperative by Reason. *Fichte* also, being a moralist, does not think of the attainment of happiness. He regards the disinterested discharge of one's moral duties as the highest good. According to *Hegel*, the highest ideal is to realise identity of the individual soul (the subjective mind) with the infinite Spirit, the Idea, the Reason from which it has evolved. The highest freedom consists in the experience

of the infinitude of the Spirit by realising identity with it and by looking upon every other thing as a manifestation of the infinite Spirit. *Schopenhauer* was a thorough-going pessimist giving more stress on pain rather than on pleasure. According to him, life consists in the will to live, and egoity is the source of pain. As long as there is the consciousness of one's narrow ego, suffering is inevitable. He, therefore, advocates *art* (music) in which one forgets oneself, *sympathy*—in which one transcends one's narrow egohood, and the negation of the will-to-live by means of indifference to self-preservation and renunciation as the means of deliverance from the bondage of the worldly life. His standpoint is similar to the Buddhist Nirvāṇa which also is the deliverance from the sufferings of the worldly life. *Royce*—being an Absolutist—holds that the freedom of the individual is experienced in the real sense when the individual realises his inalienable union with and dependence on God. In the final union with God the individual is not lost, but he is retained in the wider being of God. The finitude of the individual is lost as the personality attains infinitization. The individual no longer exists as an entirely separate entity but he acts and lives as an inseparable organic part of the whole and realises the infinite nature of the Absolute which realises itself in and through the finite centres. The Absolute, being above all spatio-temporal existence and its changes, is not affected by them. The individual enjoys the highest freedom and the joy of liberation when he experiences

## Conclusion

799

indissoluble union with the Absolute. *F. H. Bradley*—another Hegelian and Absolutist—thinks like Royce and believes that the Absolute is one single and all-inclusive experience, which expresses itself in every part of the diversity-in-concord. He holds that all the particular parts live in harmony in the whole without any contradiction. The individuals in their union with the whole disappear as separate entities; but they are permanently united with the Absolute having secured their complete fulfilment and fullest satisfaction. The Absolute is an experience of one and many together; it is that experience which is free from finitude and pain, and in it the particulars are experienced in an immediate and indissoluble union the whole without obliterating the finite parts.

In the Indian Absolutism of *Śaṅkara* the individual soul is not regarded as real, therefore, its retention in Mokṣa is impossible. Moreover, the universal, the Absolute is perfect and infinite. The unitary Self alone is real and all other things are illusory. Moreover, the Absolute of Bradley and Royce, which lives in and through the changing objects of the world, is in a way dependent on the particulars in and through which it exists. The Absolute of *Śaṅkara*, on the contrary, is self-subsistent, completely self-dependent, and perfect. It is eternally what it is; all change is illusory. The individual souls are retained in the state of perfection in the God of *Rāmaṇuja*, as the parts of the whole in the Hari of *Nimbārka*, as separate entities but entirely dependent on God (Kṛṣṇa) in the Dvaita philosophy

of *Madhva*, and as parts and companions in the divine Līlā of Kṛṣṇa in the S'uddhāvaita of *Vallabha*. Complete identification with the Supreme Self by submerging and dissolving of soul in it is not existent anywhere in the Western Absolutism, as we find it in the Absolutism of S'aṅkara and to some extent in Jñānesvara. The *Neo-Realist* and the *Materialist* view that consciousness, mind, and intellect are the evolutionary products of matter is similar to the *Cārvāka* view which regards that consciousness is an attribute of the body.

*Bergson* in general believes in the 'Creative Evolution' of life which is indesignate and it assumes definite forms of manifold nature in the course of the evolution for a mutual and successful adaptation of its various forms among themselves. The new forms which emerge are not predetermined by any body or by any supernatural agency. Those forms which suit properly for the onward movement of Life become stable and others are eliminated. There is a complete indeterminism in the Bergsonian Creative Evolution; consciousness, sensibility, mind, and intelligence are the progressive evolutes of life. *Lloyd Morgan* believes in the 'Emergent Evolution' and holds that new elements evolve in the course of the evolution of nature. There are no set and definite directions in which the evolution is taking place. *S. Alexander*, however, believes in a 'Teleological Evolution' of the universe and believes that the Self is not a fixed thing; its content is under a change; the Self is a changing entity which includes in it body and egoity (the sense of 'I' and 'mine'). It increases in its



## Conclusion

301

contents with a person's increasing range of appropriation of things and of emotions and thoughts. But he believes that the evolution of the world is directed to the realisation of the Deity (God). The Self is an intermediate stage in the process.

*Edward Caird* believes that the evolution of religion has first taken place in the outward, then in the inward, and then in the upward direction towards Godhood or Divinity. His remarks are justifiable and highly valuable since it is a fact that during the whole history of human civilization man first tried to conquer external nature and tried to seize everlasting happiness and peace from it, but failing in it, he turned inward and sought for happiness and peace in his own mental and spiritual experiences. Failing even in that he turned his eyes upward and sought to attain everlasting peace and joy from the company of God. He then found the joy of fulfilment of his whole life in the attainment of God or Divinity.

*Herbert Spencer* describes evolution as the passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from simple to complex, and from indefinite to definite. It is difficult to pick up any definite line of evolution in the ideas of a particular thing. Religious ideas are influenced by the philosophical systems which precede them or are contemporary with them.

According to *Islam*, the soul is different from the body and it has a spiritual nature. It is the agent of moral actions and it remains in contact with this world as well with the other superior world.

It possesses the power of perception and intelligence. It has an inherent tendency towards the angelic world. The souls are of three kinds—(1) Too feeble soul. It remains confined in the limits of the region of sense and imagination. It cannot perceive the spiritual. (2) The souls of the other class are carried by reflective movement and a natural disposition to a spiritual intelligence. They can enter into a state of contemplation which results in ecstasy. This is the intuition of the Saints (Auliya). (3) The souls of the third class are created with the power of disengaging themselves from their human bodies in order that they may rise to the angelic state where they become like angels. These souls get the direct revelation of God.<sup>1</sup> The *Koran* gives a full description of God that is omnipotent, omniscient, all-good and benevolent, merciful, loving, lover of righteousness and the redeemer of the believers in Him.

The *Christian* view is that the individuals are like children of God. The individual souls are sinful in nature and their degradation is due to their sinfulness. They are intelligent, and capable of enjoying supreme bliss with God. They are finite and limited in their powers. They are often subject to earthly temptations, and so are more likely to be increasingly sinful. God, on the contrary, is infinite, all pervasive, omnipotent, benevolent, extremely loving, merciful, lover of peace and tranquillity, the destroyer of the satanic beings and evil, and the redeemer of the humanity. The soul is an arena

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<sup>1</sup> Sell Edward : *The Faith of Islam*, p. 152.

of the holy spirit and the satanic powers. God gives deliverance or salvation on the day of judgement to the souls on the basis of their morally good actions. The regeneration of the soul is conditioned by the moral nature of the actions of the soul. The souls are morally free, and hence, bear the responsibility of preparing themselves for the final deliverance by means of morally pure and good actions to make themselves worthy of the divine mercy and grace.

*Islam* is a monotheistic religion and God is extremely loving and graceful, according to the Islam. God loves virtue and faith and He admits to His heaven or paradise the believers in Him and bestows on them all the pleasures of heaven. On the day of judgement God takes a total stock of the merit and demerit of the souls in their lives on the earth and distributes rewards among them as they deserve. The pious persons are immediately admitted to the paradise and the infidel persons are thrown in the hell fire. The paradise is watered by rivers; its food is perpetual and its shade also. Therein are rivers of incorruptible water and rivers of milk, the taste of which does not change. There are rivers of pleasant wine and of clarified honey, and abundance of fruits of all kinds. The unbelievers, on the contrary, will be thrown in the hell fire and will be subjected to all sorts of tortures. *Mokṣa* or salvation (*najāh* or *khataṣ*) means not so much escape from the power of sin in this life as escape from its punishment, hereafter. The believers have to observe the prescribed five duties strictly. Islam assures liberation even

to the infidels but they have to pass through a long series of sufferings and tortures. Ultimately all are delivered by God as He is merciful. The Islamic concept of liberation is rather akin to the *Vedic* idea of the life in paradise after death as both believe that unending pleasures of all sorts are obtained in the paradise.

*Christianity* recognises the phenomenon of salvation or redemption which is similar to Mokṣa, but in a different sense. According to Christianity, the ideal to be attained is enjoyment of life in the Kingdom of God. God is addressed as the Father in heaven and He bestows peace, happiness, and joy on his children on earth out of love and mercy for them. The souls have too acute a sense of their sinfulness and they seek to liberate themselves from the sins by leading a morally perfect and pious life. The removal of sins can be acquired by faith and devotion to God with all humility. God is extremely loving to the souls like a father but He shows his love to those who deserve it by practising highly moral life. God is met by direct and immediate communion with Him, and when such an experience is attained, the liberated soul enjoys Divine peace and joy. The soul does not win such peace and joy only for itself but it spreads it around to all its brethren who suffer from sin and imperfection. Christianity makes moral elevation of the soul a necessary condition for such a final experience of salvation. God proclaims His decisions on the day of judgement and distributes rewards in accordance

## Conclusion

805

with the deeds of the souls in their life on earth. God helps the striving souls to win over the satanic forces and the evil, and thus, the morally elevated souls acquire the Divine nature, though partially. The redeeming power of God is shown to those who have perfect faith and trust in Him. Moral regeneration transforms the erring and fallible human soul into a higher spiritual being. The liberated souls enjoy forever the divine company of God and His supreme bliss and peace. The Christian concept of salvation is near to the concept of Mokṣa of *Rāmānuja*, *Nimbārka*, *Madhva* and some other *Vaiṣṇava* poets who seek companionship with God, His bliss and peace.

### (c) A few words about the ĀTMAN and MOKṢA

It will become evident from these broad comparisons that the Western philosophers are not familiar with the exact concept of Mokṣa as we find in the Indian Philosophy and the Hindu religion. However, it is at the same time a fact that some elements of Mokṣa, like dislike for the worldly life and its sufferings, finitude, the sense of vanity of sensuous pleasures, and a desire for immortality, blessedness, supersensuous joy, and union with God are present in almost all the systems, except a few. The concept of Mokṣa as the deliverance from the round of birth and death, karma, ignorance, and as a positive experience of infinitude, omniscience, omnipotence and divinity, by attaining Godhood itself is peculiar to the Indian Philosophical systems and the Hindu

religion. Some of the systems like the *Buddhism* and the *Nyaya-Vaiśeṣika* seek only eternal freedom from pain and from all the states of consciousness; they aim at a void and a state of the absence of consciousness. Nowhere else do we come across the highest ideal of Mokṣa of the Advaita Vedānta which consists in experiencing oneself as the Brahman, the highest Ultimate Reality which is eternal, infinite, all-pervading, free from all imperfections, immutable, eternally free, and full of perfect knowledge and perfect bliss, and which is above all spatio-temporal determinations, above dualities of good and bad, and above all sorts of relativities. It is the highest experience of bliss and knowledge of the Absolute, and it is the most evolved idea of Mokṣa. There cannot be an idea still higher than that. It contains all the elements of the concepts of Mokṣa of the other systems and still positively it possesses its own unique nature. It is the supreme state of eternal illumination. Śaṅkara's idea of Mokṣa, of attaining immortality by entering into an indistinguishable unity with the Brahman is superior to all others as it is the attainment of immortality by the infinitisation and universalisation of the finite soul. Nay, Śaṅkara never admitted that there exists anything like a real finite soul different from the Supreme Self or the Brahman. His Brahman, being the only Reality, alone exists in truth, although, it appears in various particular forms due to the adjuncts (upādhis) caused by nescience. His thesis is that there never was and is any finite thing in reality other than the Brahman. The world is illusory,

## Conclusion

807

so all the pains and imperfections of the worldly life are illusory; they are caused by the false identification of the Self with the things which are finite and unreal. To one who realises the highest, infinite, eternal, self-revealing and blissful Brahman, the world and its pains become illusory. He lives as the all-satisfied-Brahman itself. Mokṣa, for S'aṃkara, is the realisation of the state of Brahman by discarding all other finite worldly experiences. The moment one realises it, perfect happiness is at his hand. He does not hold that the perfect state would be attained in the future as a further stage of evolution. Mokṣa is Brahman itself which is permanent and present even now. Anybody can attain this kind of Mokṣa (liberation) by acquiring the real knowledge of the Self, which he himself is.

*Sri Aurobindo* rejects the Māyāvāda of S'aṃkara and believes in the Spiritual Evolution of the whole Reality. He believes that the same Self (Ātman-Brahman) is undergoing evolution, and it is gradually manifesting itself in the progressively higher forms of organisation. The Self is immanent in the world and still transcends it. The Self is undergoing the evolutionary changes without losing its pure and immutable nature. The evolution is its self-actualisation. The same Self which contains in it the whole universe potentially, in an unmanifest form, has passed through insentience, the physical, vital, and mental planes and its next stage is the supra-mental plane. The end of the teleological evolution is the realisation of the Supreme Self in its perfection as

the perfect existence (sat-सत्), perfect knowledge (cit-चित्), and perfect bliss (ānanda-आनन्द) in an integral experience. S'aṅkara does not believe in the reality of change. He regards all change illusory, and therefore, any evolution is illusory, according to S'aṅkara. S'aṅkara's reality is the eternal, imperishable, infinite, immutable, self-illuminated Ātman which is evercontented and free from all kinds of imperfections. The state of perfection is attained forever, according to S'aṅkara, and the end of human life is its realisation. According to him, nothing new and more than that is to be achieved. Such highest state of perfection (Mokṣa) is existing forever, according to S'aṅkara.

S'aṅkara's concepts of the Self and Mokṣa are the most evolved ones and are of supreme eminence. The whole humanity is striving for the satisfaction of the Self; but due to the wrong concepts of the Self, in spite of the refinement of the material civilization and the multifarious means of pleasures and happiness, both physical and mental, humanity has not succeeded in becoming free from the basic discontent. As the material and psychical means (including science, art, literature, philosophy, and religion) of satisfaction have failed to remove the deeprooted discontent and the sense of frustration, it is gradually becoming evident that the Self that seeks satisfaction in and through the activities of the humanity is not the physical body, the sense organs nor the mind and its various desires and aspirations; the Self is not even the mind; but it is something different



## Conclusion

809

and beyond it; it is unique in itself and cannot be reduced to anything other than itself. The satisfaction of the Self thus comes only from itself by realising its true nature, which is the same as the whole reality (Brahman) and not by regarding itself to be something else like the senses, the vital principle (prāṇa), the manas (mind), the intellect (buddhi), but by properly understanding and realising its unique nature, which is similar to nothing besides itself. The Self cannot, therefore, be understood in terms of any other thing but itself, since nothing is similar to it. The Upanisads, therefore, describe the Self as that which is beyond the senses, beyond the manas (mind), beyond the buddhi, (intellect) and it is the final principle of knowledge as it is the light of consciousness. S'āṅkara upholds it and contends that the Self is beyond all these. Similarly, another Upaniṣadic text says that beyond the physical sheath (annamaya kośa) is the mental sheath (monomaya kośa), and beyond that is intellectual sheath (vijñānamaya kośa), and beyond all these is the sheath of bliss (ānandamaya kośa). S'āṅkara fully supports it and states that the Self is none of them and it is beyond all these levels; it is the highest principle of existence (sat), consciousness (cit), and bliss (ānanda). In fact, S'āṅkara says that all is Brahman, everything is in essence the same Self (Ātman) and all the differences that appear are only its various illusory manifestations caused by the unreal adjuncts. The underlying Reality of all the things of the world is the same Self and

so, the fundamental attraction of things to the souls is nothing but the attraction of the Self to itself, to realise itself in and through its manifold manifestations. As *Aurobindo* says, it is a game of hide and seek of the Self with its own disguised forms. It is a kind of *Līlā* (लीला-sport) of the Self. The truth of the saying of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is highly significant in this respect. As Yājñavalkya says "all this is dear for the sake of the Self itself." Thus, the real meaning of the attractions of the worldly objects and their attachments is to be understood as the Self's desire to find itself, and to reunite with itself as expressed in the infinite number of objects of various names and forms. All this finally leads to the necessity for the understanding of the proper nature of the Self that seeks satisfaction in the various forms, but fails to secure it because of its wrong approach. The real and perfect satisfaction can be reached when the Self finds itself or when humanity attains the realisation of the Self to the fullest extent in the real sense. As long as the Self does not find itself or there is no real self-realisation, all the numerous efforts of the present civilisation to secure everlasting peace, happiness, and satisfaction for the humanity by multiplying the external physical and psychical means of happiness are bound to meet with failure. Sāṃkara's concept of Mokṣa is nothing else but the enjoyment of the perfect bliss, the perfect knowledge, and the perfect freedom by realising the infinite nature of the Self which is nothing else but the whole Reality. When

## Conclusion

811

one feels that one is all and whatever seems to exist outside oneself is nothing but oneself, that one is the whole Reality, the perfection itself, for such a one all limitations disappear. Such a person experiences eternal satisfaction as all his desires are fulfilled forever; his narrow egohood and its resulting urges vanish and he enjoys the supreme joy of perfection by the feeling that he is all and nothing exists outside himself to be desired. He alone enjoys the highest freedom and everlasting satisfaction. Hence the present civilization requires a careful understanding of the concept of Mokṣa of Sāṅkhya.

The Indian thinkers have carried on a ceaseless pursuit of the knowledge of the Self and the world, and have made valuable contributions to the thought of Ātman and Mokṣa. Mokṣa is not an external thing to be acquired, but it consists in the inner transformation of the individual and in raising oneself to a higher level of consciousness. Moreover, according to all of them, Mokṣa is not attainable by the simple process of getting knowledge as the Western Philosophers may think. But the attainment of Mokṣa requires, in addition to the proper philosophical knowledge of the Ātman, the moralisation and spiritualisation of one's habits and inner psychic being. Mokṣa implies not only a change in the rational understanding but a complete change of the mode of life, inner and outer, and a transformation of the human into the Divine. Mokṣa cannot be attained by any person who simply has the verbal and theoretical knowledge of the Ātman, but it can be

attained only by those who have qualified themselves by carrying out all the prescribed instructions and have prepared themselves for the reception of it. It can be attained only by the adhikārins who are already disposed to receive that kind of experience. Any faithless, raw, unprepared and uncultivated person cannot attain it. The fitness (adhikāritva) is conditioned by the past deeds of the individual.

The special feature of such a liberated (mukta) individual is that amidst all the changes, temptations and sorrows of the worldly life, the jīvanmukta, the man of spiritual realisation stands firm like a rock, resolute, calm, unruffled and unaffected by the worldly imperfections and afflictions. To him the external world and the change of various magnitudes going on in it matter little. He stands above all the erring and suffering worldly men and his inner calm and poise remain undisturbed in all kinds of external circumstances. He is ever satisfied and depends on nothing besides his Self (Ātman) for his contentment, inner calm, poise, and joy. The material civilization of this world may enrich the environment, but a mere satisfaction of the physical appetites, desires, and aspirations does not possess the power to fetch unending satisfaction to the inner spirit of man. The realisation of this inner Spirit, the real Self alone which is beyond the body, the mind, and the intellect can bring the unending joy of satisfaction to man. The bliss, that is brought by self-revelation, is not the temporary satisfaction of this or that desire, but it can be

secured only by remaining steady on the unchanging Ātman by acquiring the inner poise. It cannot be attained by prudently harmonising the various desires so as to yield greater pleasure and less pains, as the Epicureans and Rational Hedonists might think. Attainment of Mokṣa is not thus an escape of a timid man from the worldly life but it is the victory of a brave person over the temptations of the sensuous life of the world and his triumph over the deceptive world. It is a unique and rare achievement. The Indian concept of Mokṣa may thus defeat the madness of the present material civilization and may offer a new solution, a new way of life for the reorganisation of the future life of humanity.

### **The Metaphysical Concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa are Psychological sublimations of the respective Philosophers and Saints to a certain extent**

In the Modern Psychology we get a new approach to the understanding of an individual by means of his 'unconscious' or 'subconscious' mind, according to the Psychoanalytic school of Sigmund Freud and his followers. According to Psychoanalysis, every individual is a frustrate, in the sense that some of his urges (which are predominantly sexual in nature) and desires are suppressed for various reasons on various occasions; but these urges, being living forces, cannot be annulled; although they are denied satisfaction in an explicit form, they remain repressed in the subconscious mind and they seek their satis-

faction in various other forms or disguises which are not prohibited, which are not objectionable, and which are socially recognised. The redirection of the original urges and desires into other forms and getting satisfaction under other socially approved forms is known as the 'Psychological Sublimation'. The repression of urges or desires causes psychological 'tension' in the individual, and he suffers from mental abnormalities. Sublimation usually takes place in those ways of behaviour which have been socially recognised and approved as 'good'. The motivations of many socially good acts are quite manifold and they happen to be the unconscious psychological sublimations of the individual. A woman who has failed to beget a child for herself takes to such a profession as that of nursing and derives satisfaction of her maternal instinct by nursing the children of other people with great care and affection. Or a person who has failed in some aspects of his life miserably, wins fame either as an artist, or a social reformer or a political agitator and so on. Thus, as Freud lays down his thesis, every individual's thoughts and actions are influenced by the subconscious forces of his mind of which he remains unconscious. He sublimates them in different forms and thus secures a psychological relief from the tension from which he was suffering.

The Metaphysical concepts of the Reality and of the Self of the different philosophers may thus, be properly understood, in terms of their unconscious psychological sublimations. The *Vedic* thinkers depicted

## Conclusion

815

the picture of their heaven as full of those most refined and superb happinesses which they could not enjoy on the earth which is full of all kinds of imperfections. The idea of their heaven must have been prompted by their unfulfilled desires on the earth. The *Cārvākas* must have been thoroughly satisfied with the material and physical pleasures, and hence they depicted their highest satisfaction as consisting in the carnal pleasures. Their denial of life after death and interest in material pleasures as the highest aim must have been due to their real satisfaction by means of the material pleasures. The *Hinayāna Buddhists* and the *Nyāya Vaiśeṣikas* had too much an oppressive sense of suffering and sorrow of the worldly life, and hence they did not desire any more such a miserable worldly life; they looked upon Mokṣa (Nirvāṇa and Apavarga) as a permanent escape from pain and suffering and consciousness. The *Mahāyānist* concept of Nirvāṇa is coloured by their profound sensitiveness to others' sufferings and a philanthropic urge of service and martyrdom to others. The *Sāṃkhya* metaphysics seems to have been coloured by the aversion for change and transience of pleasant experiences. The unconscious of them seems to desire to become aloof from the everchanging nature and to experience an unperturbed state of peace and tranquillity. The *Jaina* philosophical ideas seem to have sprung from their urge to offer security and protection even to the animals from the Vedic sacrifices; it is more philanthropic in nature like the *Mahāyāna* Buddhism; the Jain Mokṣa is a result of their fear of pain in the worldly life.

Such psychological sublimations cannot be shown to be entirely responsible for the philosophical speculations of the master minds; it would be too sweeping a statement to assert so, but from psycho-analytic study of the human mind, it will not be dogmatic to say that the sublimations must have played a part in the theorizing even by the best minds. My attempt here is to show, from this point of view, that the Philosophic Theories might have evolved in their shapings as per psychological sublimations of those Philosophers. Sāṃkara, Plato, Plotinus, Hegel, Spinoza possessed a strong intellectual bent of mind, with an urge of curiosity, hence they theorized in favour of 'Intellectual Idealism' and 'Absolutism'. Their abstractionist tendencies developed the Universal at the cost of the particulars. They sought for their highest happiness in the intellectual satisfaction which could be derived from such abstract metaphysical speculations. Those in whom was the predominance of the sex instinct and the feelings of parental, filial, mating love and an urge for sociability, sublimated them into the worship of God through Love (devotion-bhakti). Such were *Rāmānuja*, *Nimbārka*, *Madhva*, *Vallabha* and the *Vaiṣṇava* and *Śaiva saints* of the Bhakti cult. Their Psychological Sublimations probably tended either to the transformations of the urges into Metaphysical Idealism and Absolutism or into Bhakti cult and Idolizations of some affections as Realities. They transferred their feelings to God from the worldly objects, and sought supreme satisfaction by idolizing and concretising the abstract and impersonal Reality.



## Conclusion

817

*Kabir*, who was neither purely a Hindu nor purely a Mohammedan, was disgusted with their quarrels about the name and nature of God and hence, he depicted his Reality — Rāma — as Nirguṇa (Brahman), beyond these distinctions, being the same for both, partial to neither and bearing different names. His condemnation of the scholastic religious tradition may be due to his own illiteracy and inability to study the original classics. His doctrine of Bhakti (devotion) as a means of attaining Mokṣa might have been a result of the denial to study the original scriptures due to his anomalous social position; he must have therefore thought it necessary to open the gates of Mokṣa to the persons of all castes and creeds, irrespective of their origin and social status, by means of only sincere devotion. Similar episodes are known from the life-histories of *Tulasidāsa* and *Sūradāsa*. It is said that *Tulasidāsa* was too much attached to his wife and that she scolded him harshly and asked him to direct his attention to God when he had gone to meet her when she had been on a short visit to her parents. Since then *Tulasidāsa* renounced everything, and sublimated his love for his wife into exclusive devotion to Rāma. *Sūradāsa* also turned blind on a peculiar occasion. A lady had scolded him for casting on her his sinful sight and so she had asked him to concentrate his mind upon God rather than look at her, so that he would attain blessedness. As a result *Sūradāsa* destroyed his eyesight and became a profound devotee of Śrīkṛṣṇa. He had

Ā 52

sublimated his sexual urge and transformed it into the Puṣṭibhakti of Kṛṣṇa. Mirābāī was a widow and was deprived of the enjoyment of her normal married life. She directed all her female feelings of love, adoration, service, and enjoyment to God (Kṛṣṇa) and worshipped Him as her beloved husband and imagined her highest happiness to be the most intense union with God; but it was completely free from sensuousness. *Caitanya* was highly emotional, charming, delicate and he too sublimated his feelings of love and transferred them to God (Kṛṣṇa), himself assuming the role of Rādhā. *Narasimha Mehta* and *Tukārāma* too had to pass through very critical periods of life. Tukārāma was terribly shaken by the awful sight of a famine and he experienced failures in business (mercantile) and became unable to satisfy the needs of his family members. He turned desperate and suffered from a sense of loneliness and helplessness. Tukārāma sought the shelter of God (Viṭhobā) as his mother and sublimated all his urges and worshipped God as his mother and other close relatives. His deep sense of helplessness, loneliness, and impracticality in the worldly life made him sublimate his urges and transfer them to God. *Narasimha Mehta* was harassed in his worldly life and suffered from a sense of negligence and indifference shown to him by his sister-in-law (his brother's wife), as a result of which he transferred all his love to God and sought for final peace and reliance from Him. Thus it becomes evident from the life-histories of the Philosophers and the Saints that

**Conclusion****819**

their metaphysical concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa are to a certain extent motivated by their previous experiences and are their Psychological Sublimations, and that they are governed by their individual bents of mind and likes and dislikes.

**(d) The Lines of Evolution**

From a synthetic survey of the various concepts of the Self (Ātman) as expressed in the different systems of Indian Philosophy it appears that the evolution of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa has tended to be in the following directions on the whole though one cannot say that the progress is in a straight line.

**ĀTMAN****(1) From Material to the Spiritual nature of the Ātman**

The material view of the Ātman as the living body (Cārvākas), as the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether), the food, as the vital principle (Prāṇa), as relatives and one's belongings, as the sense organs, the mind (manas) and its various states, the intellect (buddhi) has undergone a change from the former to the latter, as expressed in the above series. Finally, it came to be looked upon as the all-pervasive, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, extremely loving and merciful, an ocean of infinite number of auspicious qualities, an embodiment of all perfections and blissfulness — Supreme Self (God,

the Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Paramātmān); but the idea of the Self (Ātman) reaches its final culmination in the most evolved concept of the Nirguṇa Brahman of S'aṁkara, who supposes God to be the penultimate Reality, the qualified Brahman (Saguṇa Brahman). The Nirguṇa Brahman, the attributeless Brahman (Absolute) is still a higher Reality. It is eternal (nitya), free (mukta), pure (Suddha) and conscient (buddha), all-pervading (vibhu), infinite, the substance—the source, support, and end of all worldly objects, immutable, unaffected by change, subtle and characterized by perfect existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). It is the only Reality and nothing other than it exists. It is the essence and truth of everything. It is singular and all external forms of existence (nāma-rūpa) characterized by the three attributes and change are illusory being caused by adjuncts (upādhis) which are caused by nescience (ajñāna). Thus, S'aṁkara's concept of the Spiritual Self (Ātman) as the Absolute is the most evolved concept of Ātman. The concept of Ātman underwent an intermediate change when it is looked upon as the substratum of knowledge, as in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* and the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* systems, which do not make consciousness the essential nature of the Ātman as the Sāṅkhya and Advaita Vedānta do; the former make consciousness an adventitious character of the Ātman.

## (2) From Pluralism to Monism (Absolutism)

The Buddhists are anātmavādin as they deny the existence of Ātman; but Cārvākism, Jainism, Nyāya-

## Conclusion

821

Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, Viśiṣṭādvaita Systems, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, all the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇava Saints believe in the reality of the plurality of the souls; but Śaṅkara denies the reality of the plurality of the souls thinking them to have been caused by unreal adjuncts. Śaṅkara believes that there is only one really existing thing and that is the Brahman (Ātman), and every thing other than it is unreal. Rāmānuja admits the final monism of the Brahman in the form of monotheism, but he still admits the reality of the plurality of souls as God's (Brahman) modifications; Nimbārka looks upon the soul as the *aṃśa* (part), Vallabha as the partially revealed form of the Single Brahman. The individual souls are retained even in the state of Mokṣa by Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints except Jñāneśvara, the Śaiva, Jaina, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga and the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. According to Śaṅkara, there is only one Reality (The Absolute), the Brahman which is eternal and nothing besides it exists. The Sāṃkhya system also tried to arrive at a complete Absolutism, but it finally ended into the dualism of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. So far as the material world (insentient matter) is concerned, it reached an Absolute in the form of the Prakṛti. But it posited the Puruṣa as the final principle of consciousness and came to look upon the Puruṣa and Prakṛti as completely exclusive of each other, mutually irreducible and independent Ultimate Realities. Its dualism cannot be bridged over, and hence although it

indicates an advance from pluralism to dualism, it did not finally succeed in establishing the perfect Absolutism. It is an intermediate stage between Pluralism and Monism or Absolutism. The concept of the Self (Ātman) finally culminates into the absolute Monism or Absolutism of Śaṅkara. The Absolute of Śaṅkara is spiritual in nature. Though logically the culmination of the philosophic thought is reached in Śaṅkara's Idealistic Absolutism, it is not the only evolution; it is not the only culmination of the linear and historical evolution, since other offshoots and regressive concepts also are noticeable. But in general, the tendency of the progress of the philosophic thought seems to have logically evolved the Absolute of Śaṅkara which, according to him, can be realized by knowledge (jñāna).

Another line of progress of the philosophic thought seems to have concurrently evolved towards Mysticism or Personal Bhaktivāda. Another alternative evolution towards Absolutism ends in the Personalistic Monism (monotheism) of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, and the other Medieval Vaiṣṇava Saints and the Śaivas. Śaṅkara's Absolute is devoid of any personality, whatsoever. But the Absolute of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Vaiṣṇava Saints and of the Śaivas possesses celestial personality, infinite number of auspicious and the best qualities, love and mercy for the devotees, and God (He) liberates them out of mercy with His grace. Their Personalistic Absolute is approachable by love and devotion (Bhakti). He (God) can

**Conclusion****823**

be realised by means of mystical union with Him. In this line there is a persistent tendency towards Mysticism.

**(3) From Finite to the Infinite**

The soul is finite, according to Cārvākism, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, and the Vaiṣṇava Saints and the S'aivas, it being atomic (aṇuṇat); while according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya Yoga, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta the soul is infinite and all-pervasive. According to Sāṃkhya, its finitude is fictitious and phenomenal being caused by the adjuncts which result from nescience. Its finiteness is caused in the case of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā systems by its association with the individual adṛṣṭas, minds, and sense organs. The soul is atomic according to Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, and the Vaiṣṇava Saints; but it becomes infinite and pervasive by its intelligence which pervades like light and fragrance. The soul becomes infinite after it is freed from Karma, mind, and sense organs, according to Jainism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, Jñānes'vara and some S'aivas. According to Sāṃkhya, it is inherently and eternally infinite and it is never in bondage, in the real sense. In its real nature it is free from all conditions and limitations.

**(4) From External to the Internal**

The Self (Ātman) no more remains an entity similar to the external concrete things like reflection,

elements, sense organs, nor to mind (manas) and intellect (buddhi); it cannot be reduced to anything other than itself and also it cannot be reduced to its functions. Finally, it comes to be understood as one's innermost reality, the essence of oneself and of the whole world, according to the Upaniṣads, Sāṃkara, and the later Vedāntic schools of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints. The Śaiva admits it to be one's inner Reality, but in a modified form. According to the Upaniṣads, the Ātman is present in everything as is butter in milk, oil in seed, and water in riverbed. It can be properly known only in one's intuitive experience. It finally becomes the principle of pure, immutable, and eternal consciousness which is also full of bliss. It becomes the internal reality of the human beings, and of all the things of the world.

## MOKṢA

There has been a persistent change in the concept of Mokṣa (liberation), similar to that of Ātman. The former is dependent upon the latter. The trend of evolution of the concept of Mokṣa seems to have tended to be on the following lines :

### (1) From the Negative to the Positive Nature of Mokṣa

Mokṣa has been mostly negative in its connotation in Cārvākism, Buddhism (Nirvāṇa-Hinayāna), Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā systems. It means for them an escape or freedom from pain, suffering, karma and from rebirth in the



## Conclusion

825

worldly life (*saṃsāra*). The Nirvāṇa of the Hīnayāna Buddhists is an experience of utter void and extinction and of the cessation of the states of consciousness. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Pūrva Mīmāṃsā systems look upon Mokṣa as one which is free from pain, pleasure, and all the states of consciousness. Mokṣa appears in a *positive* form in the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Jainism, Advaita Vedānta and in the philosophies of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the S'aivas and S'āktas and the Vaiṣṇava Saints. According to Jainism, the Ātman enjoys infinite knowledge, infinite bliss, and infinite power in Mokṣa. According to the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas, Saints, and the S'aivas, it means the enjoyment of the Divine joy, omniscience, infinitude, and of other godly powers except the two powers of God, i.e., the power of creation and governance of the world. It means for them the experience of the supersensuous joy in a mystical union with God. For S'aṃkara, Mokṣa is a positive experience of infinite and eternal freedom and perfect bliss. Mokṣa means the attainment of immortality, infinitude, and perfect bliss, according to the Upaniṣads. The Vedic concept of Mokṣa is less refined than the Vaiṣṇava Mokṣa as it implies material gains. S'aṃkara's idea of Mokṣa is the most evolved and the highest. It means an experience of identity with the whole Reality. The Sāṃkhya and Yoga ideal of 'Isolation' (Kaivalya) is rather negative than positive in meaning.

## (2) Change in the Means of the Attainment of Mokṣa

There is a general change from the Vedic Ritualism to Jñāna (knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion).

Although all the systems agree in holding that Mokṣa can be attained by the right knowledge of the world and of the Brahman and Ātman by the removal of ignorance or nescience, yet the Vedas and the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā system give much emphasis on ritualism and sacrificialism (karma) considering them necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. According to Yoga, Mokṣa has to be attained by practising the Yogic disciplines of the body and the mind. Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya hold that knowledge alone is sufficient to bring about the final emancipation although highly moral life and Yogic discipline help it to a great extent. Rāmānuja and his successors, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, S'aivas, S'āktas and all the Vaiṣṇava Saints hold that Mokṣa can be attained primarily by sincere devotion (Bhakti), complete surrender to God (prapatti), and by the grace of God; knowledge enjoys a secondary position in their systems. The S'aivas and all the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints believe that worship is necessary as a means of concentration on God and for the purification of the body, mind, and intellect. All the systems give equal importance to a highly moral and virtuous life which implies withdrawal from the world of sense, conquest of sense organs, and directing the mind exclusively to the object of worship and devotion. The Yogic method is more rigorous and austere in self-control. The Buddhists and the Yogic school try to forcibly curb and annihilate the senses; but the aim of S'āṅkara, of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints and of the S'aivas is not the

## Conclusion

827

uprooting of the human urges and desires. They, on the contrary, aim at sublimating the human urges in more desirable forms. They aim at psychological sublimation and spiritual regeneration. They do not disregard and annihilate the sense organs but they seek to make them instruments in the hands of God. The Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints follow not the path of annihilation but of sublimation and divination of the lower physical and mental life.

**(3) Mokṣa becomes accessible to the persons of all castes irrespective of birth, vocation, colour, creed and social status,** according to the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Advaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints and S'aivas. Buddhism and Jainism also revolted against the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic aristocracy of the higher (Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya) castes, and believed that Mokṣa can be attained by the persons of all castes.

These are the broad lines along which the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa have tended to evolve gradually passing through various stages and ultimately culminating into the highest ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa. S'aṅkara has evolved such grand and unique ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa, although they were already present in their rudimentary forms in the Upaniṣads. S'aṅkara has logically and systematically developed them and made them elaborate. It is difficult to assert dogmatically any linear evolution of these concepts; however, from a comparative study of all these concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa in the different systems of Indian

Philosophy these lines of evolution strikingly and prominently come up and become articulate. There are also some other offshoots and even regresses. The logical culmination in the Advaita Vedānta is not necessarily linear and historical. But broadly, the evolution seems to have tended to culminate into the Idealistic Absolutism of S'aṃkara and in the Mysticism and Personalistic Absolutism and Bhaktivāda of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints. These concepts seem to have been the psychological sublimations of the respective philosophers. I modestly submit that evolution in the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa has taken place in the directions mentioned above.

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831

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835

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## INDEX

*[Names of Authors, referred to in the footnotes and listed in the Bibliography, except those discussed in the book, have not been included in the Index.]*

### A

- Abhangas, 716
- Abhedabhakti, 646
- Absolute, 29, 92, 443, 446, 478, 483, 485, 539, 652, 739, 798, 799, 820, 821, 822
- and particular, 793
- and the world, 531
- as an all-inclusive experience, 799
- as Brahman, 629
- as existence intelligence, bliss, 741
- as one and many together, 799
- , knowledge of the, 806
- , personalistic, 822
- Absolutism, 816
- , Idealistic, 820, 821, 822, 828
- , Indian, 799
- , Personalistic, 828
- , Western, 800
- Absorption of individual soul, 263, 264
- Abstinence, 400
- Acaryas, Vaiṣṇava, 822, 825, 826, 827
- Action, 98, 163, 432, 473, 493, 639, 791
- Activities, 430, 459, 461, 493, 494, 497, 505, 600
- Adhyāsa, 449, 498
- Adjuncts, 47, 347, 348, 449, 450, 451, 468, 473, 480, 488, 493, 503, 505, 719, 771, 772, 780, 782, 783, 806, 820, 821
- and Self, 743
- , external, 624
- , fictitious, 485, 486
- , influence of, 498, 504
- , limiting, 457, 458, 461, 469, 473, 507
- , of passions, 734
- Adjustment between Prakṛti and Puruṣa, 335
- Adṛṣṭa, 76, 80, 287, 288, 373, 382, 483, 525, 527, 579, 626, 768, 769, 774, 775, 823
- Advaita, 436, 588
- bhakti, 510, 644
- systems, 626
- Vedānta, 760-762, 820, 825, 826, 827, 828

- Agent, 408, 429, 461  
 — , active, 493  
 — , moral, 632  
 — , real, 399  
 — , transcendent, 156  
 Ahaṁkāra, 47, 60, 317, 327, 345, 346, 347, 349, 353, 361, 374, 376, 380, 471, 493, 494, 514, 524, 762, 767, 781  
 — , tripartite division of, 348  
 Ajāmīla, 674, 677  
 Ajīva, 226, 227, 229  
 Ajobbāgaḥ, 6, 8  
 Ajñāna, 630, 768, 769, 820  
 Akṛtābhyāgama, fallacy of, 276, 762  
 Ālambanapratyaya, 146  
 Ālayavijñāna, 148, 149, 150, 188, 189, 198, 200  
 Alexander, S., 800  
 Amṛta, 38, 54, 316  
 An, 6, 7, 9  
 Ānanda, 438, 439, 447, 703, 769, 784, 820  
 — as sign of God—vision, 745  
 Ananyabhakti, 643  
 Anarchy, moral, 527  
 Anātmavādin, 755  
 Anattā, 117, 135  
 Anaxagoras, 784  
 Antaḥkarana, 325, 349, 470, 471  
 Antarātmā, 35, 36, 38  
 Antaryāmin, 43, 47, 51, 544  
 Apavarga, 214, 266, 308, 315, 316, 350, 367, 815  
 Apparatus, psychic, 349  
 Apūrva, 373  
 Āraṇyaka, 24, 26, 754, 761, 762, 763, 765  
 — , Aitarēya, 25, 26  
 Arhat, 198, 214, 216  
 Aristotle, 785, 795  
 Ascent of the individual, 92  
 Asceticism, 796  
 Asmitā, 397  
 Aspects of the world, eight, 571  
 Āśrama, 339, 505  
 Āsrava, 226  
 Asu, 6, 10  
 Asuras, 48, 100  
 Athmen, 7  
 Atheism, 321, 333  
 Atman, (see also 'Self') 6, 8, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 39, 40, 49, 52, 59, 98, 113, 114, 126, 180, 365, 373, 446, 449, 475, 486, 498, 508, 511, 629, 630, 632, 648, 755, 756, 757, 805, 809, 811, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 826  
 — as Brahman, 447, 756, 789  
 — as breathing, 52  
 — as essence, 447  
 — as eternal, 447  
 — as immanent and transcendent, 447  
 — as immutable, 448  
 — as innermost reality, 452  
 — as limited in power and size, 461

## Index

839

- as principle of sentience, 753
- as puruṣa, 756
- as saccidānanda, 756
- as supersensuous, 448
- as unattached, 53
- as underlying reality, 462
- as witness, 448
- , characteristics of, 753
- , concept of, 819, 827
- , knowledge of, 511
- , presence, 583
- , pure, 447
- , qualities of, 54
- , unity of, 631
- Ātmavimarsa, 617
- Atoms, 105, 268
- Attachment, 168, 180, 306, 367, 382, 388, 479, 505, 602, 638, 639, 670, 682, 747, 770
- Attributes, 271, 450
  - , extraordinary, 582
  - , three, 324, 340, 350, 381, 390, 402,
- Austerity, 41, 255, 256, 400, 405
- Authority, Vedic, 322
- Āvaraṇa, 769
- Avidyā, 162, 163, 169, 209, 450, 462, 476, 477, 485, 507, 533, 636, 777
  - as beginningless, 479
  - as non-existent for Brahman, 477
- Āvirbhāva, 590
- Aviveka, 366, 373, 398
- Avyakta, 361

## B

- Beatitude, 230
- Becoming, 122, 180, 196
- Being, 40, 180, 196, 492, 626, 649, 668
  - as plenum, 446
  - , emancipated, 568
  - , heavenly, 107
  - , pure, 199
  - , supreme, 668
- Benevolence, 400
- Bergson, 800
- Berkeley, 146, 150, 789
- Bhagavān, 707
- Bhāgavata, 625, 707, 708
- Bhagavadgītā, 625, 629
- Bhairava, 616
- Bhakti (see 'Devotion' also), 507, 546, 547, 624, 647, 667, 669, 694, 749, 762, 777, 817, 825, 826
  - mārga, 665, 667
  - songs, 716
  - Yoga, 749
  - as means of Mokṣa 582,
  - , madhura, 708
  - , three kinds of, — 619
- Bhaktivāda, 822, 828
- Bhāskara, 569
- Bhedābheda-vāda, 555, 630
- Bhinnābhinna relation, 556
- Bhoktrbhāva, 334, 335
- Bhūtātmā, 45, 59
- Birth, 14, 212, 229, 230,
  - and death, cycle of, 54, 97, 275, 315, 372, 376, 456,

- 598, 632, 633, 693, 724, 756,  
776, 779  
— , cause of, 85
- Blessedness, 545, 701, 794,  
796, 797, 817
- Bliss, 8, 20, 37, 76, 210,  
230, 234, 250, 261, 418, 447,  
452, 511, 538, 557, 628, 637,  
647, 653, 690, 710, 726  
— , divine, 561, 603  
— , enduring, 362  
— , eternal, 460, 659  
— , fragmentary, 572  
— , highest, 76, 533, 538  
— , ineffable, 669  
— , infinite, 78, 484, 756, 777  
— , perfect, 492, 555, 585,  
806, 808  
— , pure, 745  
— , supersensuous, 495, 713  
777  
— , suprem 79, 512, 716,  
802  
— , unique 78
- Bodhisattva, 183, 217
- Body, 31, 43, 47, 102, 200,  
282, 297, 302, 306, 308, 317,  
325, 339, 342, 343, 400, 408,  
410, 417, 433, 434, 435, 456,  
469, 473, 474, 495, 497, 511,  
533, 553, 658, 660, 661, 681,  
685, 699, 724, 731, 733, 750,  
763, 765, 775, 777, 781, 782,  
787, 797, 800  
— and soul, 273, 302, 785  
— as last appendage, 499
- as vehicle of the soul, 765  
— , celestial, 603  
— , dissolution of, 473  
— , essential properties of,  
413  
— , gross, 379, 474, 600  
— , mortification of the, 711  
— , purification of the, 89,  
506  
— , subtle, 268, 377, 378,  
379, 474, 475, 476, 485, 519,  
531, 533, 555, 598  
— , trammels of the, 796  
— , unreality of the, 494
- Bondage, 29, 65, 161, 187,  
230, 234, 242, 244, 246, 262,  
267, 311, 365, 367, 369, 372,  
392, 400, 476, 485, 491, 493,  
503, 505, 509, 534, 545, 562,  
565, 632, 658, 674, 743, 744,  
753, 780, 781, 783, 800, 823  
— by nescience, 487, 503  
— of ahaṁkāra, 510  
— , elimination of, 497  
— , ignorance as cause of,  
624, 635, 637, 641  
— , imaginary, 535  
— , kinds of, 240, 241  
— , knot of, 505  
— , soul under, 599  
— , unreal, 487
- Bosanquet, B., 793
- Bradley F. H., 92, 799
- Brahmā, 25, 663, 666
- Brahmajijñāsā as upāsānā, 582



## Index

841

- Brahman**, 13, 29, 30, 32, 34, 51, 55, 69, 73, 77, 97, 99, 202, 373, 443, 444, 447, 449, 450, 451, 452, 456, 462, 463, 466, 474, 475, 478-80, 482, 485, 486, 488, 492, 499, 502, 508, 509, 511, 515, 536, 539, 540, 545, 548, 554, 556, 566, 569, 570, 592, 609, 631, 632, 634, 636, 637, 644-646, 648, 721, 731, 734, 737, 741, 753, 754, 755, 762, 771, 779, 780, 792, 806, 809, 821, 826  
 — and God, 626, 740, 773  
 — and jīva, 733  
 — and śakti, 741  
 — as all-satisfied, 807  
 — as beyond all duality, 630, 639  
 — as beyond all relativity, 630  
 — as cause of the world, 517, 570  
 — as constituted of consciousness, 491  
 — as creator, etc., 508, 626  
 — as immanent and transcendent, 556  
 — as internal reality, 519  
 — as 'not this, not this', 466  
 — as puruṣottama, 515  
 — as saccidānanda, 590, 772  
 — as saviśeṣa, 515, 517  
 — as svatantra, 557, 570  
 — as universal self, 470  
 — , akṣara, 30, 679  
 — , attainment of, 506  
 — , attributeless, 720, 740  
 — , becoming one with, 490  
 — , bliss of, 485, 552  
 — , characteristics of, 83  
 — , cognition of, 470  
 — , conditioned, 96  
 — , continuous, 468  
 — , experience of, 506  
 — , growing into, 492  
 — , highest, 453, 514  
 — , in personal form, 626  
 — , knowledge of, 49, 94, 97, 474, 482, 489, 495, 496, 507, 554, 581, 794  
 — , modes of, 521  
 — , nirguṇa, 668, 672, 817, 820  
 — , partless, 407  
 — , pure, 30  
 — , qualified, 515  
 — , qualityless, 503, 514  
 — , soul's identity with, 493  
 — , sportive expression of, 630  
 — , three forms of, 517, 599  
 — , unconditioned, 30  
 — , unique joy of, 648  
**Brāhmaṇas**, 24, 97, 215, 406, 827  
**Brahmānanda**, 691, 703, 716  
**Brahmadeva**, 533  
**Breath**, 6, 7, 31, 39  
 — , regulation of, 399  
 — , vital, 10  
**Brihaspati**, 77  
**Buddha** as redeemer, 212

Buddhi, 188, 294, 295, 296,  
303, 325, 345, 346, 348, 349,  
361, 367, 384, 469, 470, 472,  
473, 476, 760, 761, 763, 770,  
771, 809, 815, 824  
— , purification of, 504

## C

Caird, E., 801  
Caitanya, 231, 627-628, 701-  
714, 759, 764, 765, 775, 782,  
818  
Cārvāka, 100, 112, 126, 224,  
554, 759, 761-764, 766-768,  
770, 774, 777, 800, 815, 819,  
820, 823, 824  
— , Dhūrta, 101  
— , Suśikṣita, 101, 103, 106  
Cat-theory (Mārjara Nyāya),  
551

Categories, 218, 226, 314  
Chokhā, 715  
Christianity, 784, 802, 804  
Cidvilāsa, doctrine of, 629  
Cit, 453, 769, 790, 820  
Citta, unintelligent, 385  
Civilization, 801, 808, 812  
Concealment, 593, 769  
Communion, 399, 711  
— , direct, 489, 804  
— , spiritual, 735  
Concealing (Āvaraṇa), 477  
Concentration, 86, 386, 388,  
390, 399, 477, 504, 505  
Consciousness, 101, 102, 105,  
116, 120, 124, 146, 228, 230,  
231, 272, 273, 274, 278, 292,

316, 319, 325, 367, 374, 384,  
390, 421, 447, 454, 464, 490,  
518, 555, 629, 638, 759, 760,  
767, 768, 770, 771, 778, 789,  
793, 800, 809, 820, 821, 824  
— , eternal, 271, 459  
— , extinction of, 157, 825  
— , mass of, 463  
— , modes of, 271  
— , relativity of, 545  
— , separative, 503, 659  
— , substratum of, 290  
— , ultimate, 471  
Contemplation, 89, 401  
Contentment, 76, 397, 400,  
434, 778  
Creation, 350, 371, 511, 653,  
662  
Cult of bhakti, 768, 816

## D

Dances, maddening, 701  
Death, 14, 29, 54, 118, 119,  
177, 213, 230, 233, 338,  
682, 732  
Deathlessness, 797  
Degeneration (Adhamāgati),  
660  
Dehātma-vādin, 101  
Deity, 10, 705  
— of worship, 620  
— , realisation of, 801  
— , the highest, 622  
Deliverance (See Mokṣa, Eman-  
cipation, Freedom, Libera-  
tion, Redemption, Release,  
Salvation), 305, 308, 316,

## Index

843

- 373, 541, 619, 620, 639, 661,  
676, 677, 704, 739, 752, 798,  
803  
— , bodiless, 372  
— , final, 372
- Delusion, 380, 478, 479
- Demons, 579
- Descartes, 787
- Descent of the Divine, 92
- Detachment, 371, 386, 387,  
504, 505, 512, 683
- Determination, moral, 475  
— , Spatio-temporal, 806
- Devas, 42, 55, 77, 96
- Devayāna, 502
- Divinity, 801
- Devotees, 509, 512, 539, 548,  
550, 552, 566, 581, 587, 594,  
602, 603, 605, 628, 645, 660,  
673, 692, 698, 703, 706, 710,  
712, 716, 720, 725-27, 733,  
735, 746, 750  
— and God, 744
- Devotion ( see 'Bhakti' also ),  
400, 509, 510, 515, 550, 551,  
599, 601, 602, 605, 628, 629,  
637, 638, 640, 641, 643, 644,  
646, 680, 683, 685, 688, 689,  
693, 698, 704, 705, 708, 715,  
720-26, 737, 753, 794, 816,  
817, 822, 825, 826  
— and grace of God, 572  
— as premarasa, 695  
— as premabhakti, 602, 605  
— as puṣṭibhakti, 601, 602  
— , cult of, 680
- , exclusive, 534, 551,  
714, 717, 783  
— , forms of, 619  
— , loving, 678, 679, 709  
— , path of, 667  
— , unbroken, 646
- Dharma, 128, 137, 186, 195,  
201, 219, 345, 374, 376  
— and adharma, 432, 441
- Dharmakāya, 162, 188, 192-  
195, 200-207, 223, 770,  
774, 777
- Dharmabbūtajñāna, 530
- Dharmamegha, 403
- Differences ( Bheda ), 342,  
463, 485, 526, 529, 559, 570,  
591, 595, 596, 598, 643, 668,  
718
- Discipline, Yogic, 549, 826
- Discontent, basic, 808
- Discrimination, 374, 375, 384,  
403, 504, 637, 639, 795
- Distinctions, 571, 572, 581,  
627, 728, 733, 740, 780, 783  
— , beyond, 653  
— , eternal, 524  
— , five, 572
- Divine, 80, 373, 651, 659,  
736  
— bliss, 746  
— grace, 89, 713  
— joy, 661  
— light, 88  
— love, 589, 714  
— love, lake of, 671  
— mother, 737

- power, 619
- , bringing the, from heaven to earth, 620
- , call of the, 713
- , communion with the, 626, 627
- living presence of the, 702
- , potentially, soulas, 249
- , surrender to the, 581
- union with the, 737
- Divinity, 801
- Dogmatism, Vedic, 111
- Dravya, 231, 232, 267, 268
  - , Bandha, 240
- Dream, 43, 48, 451, 479, 481, 585
- Duality, 485, 631, 645, 665, 776, 780
  - , beyond, 493
  - , realm of, 747
  - , sense of, 401, 662
- Dualism, 69, 85, 657
- Dynamo, spiritual, 702

## E

- Ecstasy, 401, 660, 661, 698, 796, 802
  - , mystical, 796
- Ego, 125, 205, 345-46, 354, 359, 373, 425, 427, 461, 498, 694, 695, 725, 744, 767, 781, 790, 791
- Egohood, 284
  - , consciousness of, 632
  - , narrow, 798, 811
  - , sense of, 635

- Egoism, 87, 281, 301, 509, 588, 603, 744, 746
  - „ annihilation of, 191
  - „ narrow, 659
  - „ sense of, 506
- Egotism, 742, 743
  - , dross of, 671
- Ekāgra, 390
- Elements, 122, 137, 155, 349
  - , five, 473, 819
  - , gross, 347, 349
  - , hybrid, 508
  - , seventeen, 475
  - , subtle, 349
  - , thirty-six, 633
  - , twenty-five, 379
  - , ultimate, 101
- Emancipation (See Mokṣa, Deliverance, Freedom, Liberation, Redemption, Release, Salvation), 93, 586, 751, 754, 788, 794
- Empiricism, 788
- Enjoyment, 461
  - , objects of, 639, 683
  - , physical, 108
  - , sensuous, 638, 794
- Enjoyer, 228, 232, 429
  - , real, 399
- Enlightenment, 181, 190, 194, 217, 311
  - , intellectual, 166
- Ennoblement, 191
- Epicureans, 813
  - , ideal of the, 795

## Index

845

**Equality**, 493, 553  
**Equanimity**, 81, 403, 646  
 — , perfect, 363  
 — , transcendent, 498  
**Essence**, 6, 10, 24, 824  
**Eternal**, 29, 230, 231, 373  
 — knower, 66  
 — subject, 66  
**Evil**, 29, 70, 494, 506  
 — , root cause of, 306  
**Evolution**, 352, 365, 752, 753, 792, 801  
 — from external to internal, 823  
 — from finite to infinite, 823  
 — from material to spiritual nature of the Ātman, 819  
 — from pluralism to monism 820  
 — of Prakṛti, 352  
 — of the world, 33  
 — as not linear but cyclic, 352  
 — as self-actualization, 807  
 — , concept of, 824  
 — , emergent, 800  
 — , Hegelian, 792  
 — , illusory, 808  
 — , lines of, 819  
 — , process of, 360  
 — , spiritual, 807  
 — , stages in, 807  
 — , teleological, 800, 807  
 — , Upaniṣadic account of, 792  
**Excellence**, 586

**Existence (sat)**, 493, 629  
 — , conditioned, 653  
 — , everlasting, 319  
 — , individual, 451  
 — , momentary, 114, 269  
 — , ocean of, 666  
 — , perfect, 808  
 — , principle of, 463  
 — , relational, 793  
 — , transmigratory, 461, 470, 472, 538  
 — , unconditioned, 657  
**Experience**, 59, 461  
 — , integral, 808  
 — , intuitive, 532, 546  
 — , mystical, 661, 702, 736  
 — , positive, 783  
 — , spiritual, 801  
 — , supersensuous, 686, 716, 731  
 — , synthetic, 479

## F

**Fetters (pāśas)**, 611  
**Finite to Infinite**, 823  
**Finitude**, 365, 510  
**Flux**, 118, 124  
**Freedom (See Mokṣa, Deliverance, Emancipation, Liberation, Redemption, Release, Salvation)**, 78, 84, 230, 394, 531, 545, 824, 825  
 — , absolute, 485  
 — , eternal, 510, 825  
 — , everlasting, 541  
 — , final, 350  
 — , human, 531

- , permanent, 433
- , unhindered, 535

## G

- Gandharva, 55, 76, 99, 235  
 Gauranga (Nimai), 701, 711  
 Giridhar (Kṛṣṇa), 680, 681  
 God, 20, 29, 39, 88, 107, 134, 264, 286, 288, 289, 320, 333, 351, 392, 393, 406, 499, 508, 509, 511, 531, 534, 541, 581, 587, 588, 626, 627, 638, 640, 641, 643, 647, 649, 651, 653, 657, 658, 659, 662, 664, 667, 668, 673, 680, 688, 692, 693, 698, 703, 705, 711, 718, 719, 720, 723-726, 728, 731, 734, 735, 738, 739, 747, 751, 759, 772, 774, 780, 783, 787, 789, 796, 798, 799, 801, 805, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 826  
 God intoxication, 93, 702
- and phenomenal significance, 483
  - and relative existence, 482
  - as bhaktavatsala, 675
  - as close as relative, 727
  - as creator, 381, 441
  - as dearest (priyatama), 551
  - as destroyer, 802
  - as divine mother, 748
  - as doer of actions, 509
  - as doer and enjoyer, 593
  - as extremely subtle, 717
  - as father in heaven, 804

- as ignorant of finitude, 626
- as immanent, 738
- as immanent and transcendent, 654, 720
- as inactive puruṣa, 741
- as indescribable, 652
- as infinite cause, 692
- as inner controller, 574
- as inspirer and promoter, 573, 743
- as intelligence, 738
- as juggler, 742
- as Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Viṭhobā, Viṭhāl, Viṭthal, 717
- as lover, 775
- as lower Brahman, 483
- as master, 551
- as means to kaivalya, 395
- as merciful, 551
- as moral governor, 289, 463
- as Nārāyaṇa, 774
- as neither with nor without attributes, 717
- as nirguṇa, 658
- as one single ultimate, 776
- as penultimate reality, 820
- as personal, 541, 716, 720
- as phaladātā, 579
- as preraka, 579
- as puruṣaviśeṣa, 394
- as saguṇa (qualified) Brahman, 481, 501, 502
- as spirit of the world, 717, 718
- as supreme, 543, 705
- as unity of the world, 722

## Index

847

- as upādāna kāraṇa, 570  
592
- , communion with, 651,  
729
- , companionship with,  
805
- , contemplation of, 750,  
788
- , creation by, 769
- , creative powers of, 480
- , delightful presence of,  
712
- , dependence on, 798
- , devotion to, 627, 629,  
684, 804
- , emanation of, 796
- , essential unity of, 797
- , existence of, 442, 482
- , experience of, 652
- , final realisation of, 549
- , grace of, 551, 572, 583,  
587, 600, 673, 693,  
714, 724, 751, 782, 794
- in Christianity, 802
- in Islam, 830
- in Koran, 802
- in Yoga, 393, 394
- , intense craving for, 788
- , kingdom of, 553, 780,  
804
- , mercy of, 724
- , multiple forms of, 593
- , name of, 628, 663, 694
- , necessity of, 542
- , omnipotent, 289, 542,  
573, 609, 626
- , omniscient, 551, 626
- , perception of, 707
- , plan of, 792
- , powers of, 825
- , realisation of, 566,  
628, 689, 695, 700,  
735, 743, 749
- , reality of, 482
- , redeeming power of,  
805
- , śakti of, 782
- , surrender to, 509,  
780, 797
- , sweet nature of, 23
- , three forms of, 707
- , transcendent essence  
of, 568
- , union with, 731, 734,  
746, 805
- , unique power of, 481
- , vision of, 736
- , worship of, 509
- Goddess, forms of, 623
- Godhood, 805
- Goloka, 706, 780
- Good and evil, beyond, 92,  
263, 640
- Good and right, 506
- Gopībhāva, 686
- Gopis, 695, 697, 700, 713,  
759, 781
- Gorā Kumbhāra, 715
- Gotama, 265, 270, 271, 274
- Govind, 673
- Grace, 638, 683
  - , divine, 587, 588, 803
- Guṇa, 45, 47, 290, 404

Guṇabhūtajñāna, 529

Guṇas, three, 326

Guṇātīta, 629, 640

Guru, 663

— , grace of, 582

## H

Habit, moralization and  
spiritualization of, 811

Happiness, 234, 304, 309, 442,  
637, 647, 762, 801

— , attainment of, 797

— , divine, 606, 776

— , eternal, 62

— , eudaemonic, 795

— , everlasting, 305

— , heavenly, 763

— , highest, 794-95, 816

— , material, 17

— , perfect, 308, 671

— , physical, 639

— , physical and psychical  
means of, 810

— , sensuous, 437, 438

— , supersensuous, 437,  
753, 770, 776, 781

— , supreme, 437, 781

— , unending, 315, 555, 661

— , wordly, 777

Hara, 56

Hari, 570, 604, 605, 654, 656,  
673, 677, 678, 682, 694, 698,  
721, 725

Haribole, 702

— , ecstatic dances of, 714

Harmony, 191, 735

— , perfect, 656

Heaven, 14, 17, 20, 22, 23,  
27, 39, 98, 113, 230, 409,  
428, 669, 815

— , blissful region of, 26

— , pleasures of, 803

Hedonists, 108, 813

Hegel, 791, 792, 797, 816

Hell, 22, 230, 670

— , fire, 803

Heraclitus, 116, 653, 784

Heritage, 640, 641

Hīnayānists, 127, 141, 144,  
181-83, 187, 189, 190, 196

Hinduism, 443

Hiraṇyagarbha, 9, 12, 13, 17

— as cosmic mind, 754

— as world soul, 784

Humanity, reorganisation of,  
813

Hume, 789

Humility, 669

Hunkāra, 702

Hymns, Vedic, 3, 10, 22, 111,  
441, 637

## I

'I am Brahman', 485, 499,  
503, 645

I-consciousness, 418-19, 424

Iddhi, 216

Ideal, Stoic, 794

— , Vaiṣṇava, 796

Idealism, intellectual, 816

Ideas, world of, 795



## Index

849

- Identity, 71, 83, 451, 468, 485, 501, 545, 614  
 Identity as sāyujyatā, 585, 679, 686, 781  
   — as tādātmya, 686  
   — , experience of, 776  
   — , state of, 648  
 Idol, 544, 651  
 I-experience, 452  
 Ignorance (see also Nescience, Ajñāna, Avidyā), 60, 76, 140, 160, 162, 163, 209, 246, 374, 388, 398, 423, 490, 503, 535, 536, 561, 605, 624, 634, 635, 646, 674, 678, 704, 722, 753, 754, 772, 777, 778, 780, 782, 783, 794  
   — , veil of, 200  
 I-hood, 140, 283, 300, 452  
 Illumination, 88, 91, 190, 325, 354, 356, 438, 488, 489, 731  
 Illusion, 397, 494, 624, 733, 735, 754  
   — , influence of, 706  
   — , magical, 481  
   — , transcendental, 691  
 Illusoriness, doctrine of, 514  
 Immanence, 39, 41, 88, 463  
 Immortality, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 29, 38, 93, 113, 193, 316, 318, 499, 646, 732, 776, 797, 806  
 Imperative, Categorical, 797  
 Imperfection, 586, 769, 776, 777  
 Impermanence, 114, 124, 269, 455  
   — , universal, 149, 455  
 Impurity, 431, 614  
 Impressions, 390, 473, 497  
 Indeterminism, 800  
 Indifference, 370, 387, 397, 504, 505, 548  
 Individual, 346, 358, 550, 812  
 Individuality, 402, 475, 492, 561  
 Individuation, 343, 345, 347  
 Indra, 26, 48  
 Infatuation, 61, 85, 300, 639  
 Infinitisation, 507, 798  
 Infinitude, 805  
 Infinity, 229  
 Influence, divine, 544  
   — , spiritual, 511  
 Inhibitions, psychic, 507  
 Insight, philosophical, 445  
   — , spiritual, 629  
 Intellect (See Buddhi, Intelligence also) 36, 85, 306, 353, 374, 377, 415, 498, 800, 819, 824  
 Intelligence (see Buddhi, Intellect also), 26, 230, 453, 454, 471, 472, 492, 594, 754, 788, 796  
   — , contraction of, 528  
   — , degrees of, 788  
   — , expansion of, 528  
   — , perfect, 492, 555  
 Intellectualism, excessive, 796  
 Intuition, 485, 489, 501, 538  
 Islam, 793, 801, 803  
 Islamic cult, 650  
   — culture, 650

Isolation, 329, 336, 337, 371,  
404

— , life of, 680

Īśvara (see also God), 391,  
529, 539, 550, 553, 582, 583,  
584, 774

## J

Janābāi, 715

Jasu, 677

Jīva (also see Soul), 6, 226,  
227, 228, 231, 233, 235, 239,  
244, 250, 260, 278, 279, 286,  
343, 357, 384, 469, 480, 484,  
511, 571, 575, 597, 599, 623,  
624, 627, 632, 635, 636, 712,  
718, 723, 727, 745, 779, 789

— and ignorance, 596

— and jagat, 742

— as agent, 526, 560

— as āśrita, 704

— as atomic in size, 571,  
574, 594

— as enjoyer, 526, 561

— as eternal, 576

— as knower, 522, 560

— as manifestation of  
Īśvara, 579

— as minute, 595

— as mode of Self, 531

— as paratantra, 570

— as part of Brahman,  
519, 521

— as pervasive as Brahman,  
595

— as samsārin, 234, 238

— as siddha, 234, 239

— as similar to God, 596

— , classification of, 235,  
236

— , forms of, 580

— , kinds of, 238, 239,  
564, 580

— , size of, 232

— , Surrender of, 550

— , Sufferings of, 634

— , transmigration of, 472,  
576

— , two upādhis of, 574

Jīvanmukta, 99, 216, 218,  
222, 371, 486, 497, 498, 499,  
553, 620, 624, 648, 649, 750,  
763, 766, 776, 812

Jīvātmā, 40, 45, 745

— and Paramātmā, 742

Jñāna (see also Knowledge),  
231, 345, 405, 510, 550, 750,  
822, 825

Jñānayoga, 445, 508, 516,  
547

Jñāneśvara, 510, 627, 628,  
630, 633, 634, 636, 715, 735,  
764, 773, 775, 796, 800, 821,  
823

Joy, 401, 511

— , divine, 604, 702, 716,  
780, 781, 825

— , ecstatic, 745

— , supreme, 748

Judgement, day of, 803, 804,

## K

Kabir, 627, 628, 649-665,  
705, 764, 774, 782, 817

## Index

851

- Kaivalya, 316, 331, 365, 379,  
 386, 395, 405, 825  
 Karma, 172, 173, 174, 177,  
 179, 185  
 Kaṇāda, 265, 271  
 Kāṇhopātrā, 715  
 Kant, 789, 790, 797  
 — and Śaṅkara, 790  
 Kapila, 320, 321, 322  
 Karma, 47, 82, 84, 98, 123,  
 133, 168, 172, 174, 212, 218,  
 230, 232, 233, 243, 247, 260,  
 262, 307, 315, 333, 372, 379,  
 425, 431, 435, 436, 472, 473,  
 476, 486, 494, 495, 509, 528,  
 530, 537, 538, 546, 550, 552,  
 553, 568, 587, 598, 628, 769,  
 777, 782, 794, 823, 826  
 — force, 216, 276  
 — matter, 239, 240, 248,  
 249, 252, 257  
 — particles, 240, 241, 251  
 — , doctrine of, 113, 132,  
 170, 211, 275, 405,  
 428, 455, 578, 579,  
 693, 762, 767  
 — , exhaustion of, 315  
 — , kinds of, 242, 258,  
 499, 778  
 — , law of, 532  
 — , prārābdha, 372, 553  
 — , sancita, 372  
 Karmakāṇḍa, 25  
 Karmāśraya, 475  
 Karmayoga, 508, 510, 546,  
 547  
 Kaṣāya, 242  
 Karuṇā, 182, 191, 203, 205  
 Katharsis, 88, 91  
 Kāyagupti, 253  
 Kevalādvaita, 593, 668, 691  
 Kevalī, 237, 253, 258, 261  
 Khandhas (Skandhas), 122,  
 123, 124, 132, 176, 215  
 Khatas (Najat), 803  
 Kleśas, 163, 189, 214  
 Knowledge, 76, 161, 296, 355,  
 367, 377, 403, 408, 411, 413,  
 420, 423, 507, 511, 534, 562,  
 629, 646, 648, 769, 776, 788  
 — and Karma, 569  
 — as attribute, 421, 522  
 — as worship and medita-  
 tion, 439  
 — , abode of, 297, 408  
 — , analytic, 479  
 — , categories of, 789  
 — , direct, 103  
 — , external means of, 501  
 — , false, 503  
 — , fire of, 83  
 — , fragmentary, 572  
 — , higher, 492  
 — , infinite, 234, 756  
 — , location of, 297  
 — , mechanism of, 471  
 — , nature of, 759  
 — , objective, 416  
 — , perfect, 470, 753, 808  
 — , right, 477, 535  
 — , sāttvika, 402  
 — , supersensible, 466

## 852

## Ātman and Mokṣa

— , trinity of, 478  
 — , wrong, 470, 769  
 Koran, 651, 802  
 Kośa, 37, 809  
 Kramamukti, 503,  
 Kṛṣṇa, 560, 563, 567, 589,  
 595, 636, 644, 645, 663, 664,  
 671, 672, 673, 674, 679, 680,  
 681, 683, 689, 692, 698, 701,  
 704, 705, 706, 707, 709, 713  
 Kṛtaprapāśa, 276, 762

## L

Leibniz, 788  
 Liberation (see also Mokṣa  
 Deliverance, Emancipation,  
 Freedom, Redemption,  
 Release, Salvation), 65, 78,  
 82, 83, 84, 86, 91, 96, 97,  
 107, 110, 169, 266, 267, 299,  
 307-311, 315-319, 322, 337,  
 360, 365, 370, 376, 378, 381,  
 386, 399, 404, 431, 432,  
 434-35, 437, 439, 440, 454,  
 475, 486, 492, 493, 507, 509,  
 510, 519, 531, 533, 544, 554,  
 565, 574, 575, 584, 596, 611,  
 612, 615-624, 627, 637, 638,  
 643, 645, 646, 648, 650, 659,  
 663, 669, 676, 677, 679, 683,  
 684, 693, 695, 713, 716, 724,  
 725, 727, 728, 733, 745, 750,  
 751, 753, 754, 760, 766, 768,  
 769, 776, 782, 793, 794, 798,  
 807  
 — as indescribable, 500  
 — by identity with Śiva, 614

— by Sāyujyatā, 599  
 — , attainment of, 361, 532  
 — , direct, 503  
 — , eternal, 534, 535  
 — , final, 468, 553  
 — , idea of, 486  
 — , path of, 84, 311, 551  
 — , perfect, 485  
 — , preparation for, 84  
 — , prerequisite of, 440  
 — , progressive, 96, 502,  
 503  
 — , state of, 317, 363, 367,  
 500, 506, 524, 536,  
 544, 571, 586, 757

## Life, 133, 554

— , divine, 709, 794  
 — , earthly, 304  
 — , egoistic, 222  
 — , end of, 27  
 — , enrichment of, 506  
 — , moral, 277, 506, 826  
 — , movement of, 800  
 — , phenomenal, 448  
 — , previous, 106  
 — , spiritual, 554, 709  
 — , sufferings of, 538, 632,  
 776  
 — , virtuous, 826  
 — , wheel of, 46, 56, 307,  
 639  
 — , worldly, 363, 538, 632,  
 638, 640, 670, 682,  
 694, 724, 750, 772,  
 776, 782

## Līlā, 810

— , divine, 800  
 — , eternal, 604

## Index

853

- Līlāvāda, 672  
 Līnga, 618, 619  
 Līngāyat, 616  
 Locke, 788  
 Logos, 784, 786  
 Lokāyata, 100, 110, 211  
 Love, 539, 628, 655, 660  
   — as haunting passion, 603  
   — as purified and ennobled, 193  
   — dagger, 685  
   — , ecstasy of, 685  
   — , forms of, 710  
   — , fountain of, 710  
   — , intellectual, 534  
   — , profundity of, 688, 717  
   — , sea of, 729  
   — , sincere, 726  
   — , spring of, 193  
   — , tears of, 714  
   — , universal, 191, 192, 205, 255  
 Low caste, 650, 714  
 Lust, 164, 744, 751

## M

- Madhurabhāva, 700  
 Madhurarasa, 708  
   — bhakti, 686  
 Madhva, 28, 40, 342, 513, 569-589, 627, 703, 705, 720, 760-762, 764, 765, 772, 775, 780, 781, 800, 805, 821-827  
   — as a Dvaitin, 569  
   — , monism of, 571  
 Mādhyamika, 142, 150, 151, 152, 154, 155, 188, 198, 205-207, 209, 481  
 Mahat, 29, 327, 344  
 Mahāyāna, 127, 141, 145, 153, 181, 182, 198, 204, 218, 222  
 Mahāyānist, 121, 183, 188, 190, 222  
 Mahāyānism, 191, 195, 198, 200  
 Manas (See Mind also), 6, 14, 62, 200, 237, 264, 296, 297, 325, 360, 408, 467, 471, 809, 824  
 Manifestation (āvirbhāva), 593, 672  
 Manogupti, 253  
 Maryādābhakta, 604  
   — puruṣottam, 664  
   — vāda, 664  
 Materialists, 101  
   — , crude, 211  
   — , dialectical, 793  
 Matter, 322, 323, 786  
   — , influx of, 250  
   — , insentient, 230  
   — , karmic, 244, 756  
   — , primary, 148  
 Māyā, 29, 209, 449, 450, 479, 481, 484, 485, 488, 508, 511, 591, 630, 634, 658, 666, 668, 670, 671, 675, 677, 704, 742-745, 769, 774  
   — and Brahman, 722  
   — as energy of Īśvara, 480, 613

- as Mahāmohinī, 674
- as mother of the world, 637
- as neither real nor unreal, 480
- as non-entity, 430
- as phantasmagoria, 211
- as power of Śiva, 623
- as wonderful power, 516
- , adjuncts of, 483
- , removal of, 659
- Māyāvāda, 514, 589, 703, 807
- Measure of bliss, 77
- Meditation, 399, 440, 526, 534, 545, 547, 548, 552
- Melodies, 656, 662
- Memory, 90, 293, 294, 414, 471
- Mercy, divine, 803
- Merit, 229, 431, 649, 727
  - and demerit, 275, 276, 283, 288, 297, 307, 316, 398, 415, 423, 424, 431, 434, 653, 723, 724, 732, 803
- Messiahs, 711
- Mind (See Manas also), 33, 35, 36, 39, 267, 280, 283, 290, 292-297, 342, 347, 349, 353, 367, 374, 383, 384, 388, 391, 395, 414, 415, 417, 418, 427, 465, 469, 470, 472, 476, 548, 634, 660, 662, 663, 678, 683, 712, 724, 734, 751, 766, 781, 788, 791, 792, 797, 800, 823, 824
- and matter, 623
- as atomic, 415
- as internal organ, 454, 471
- , cessation of, 399
- , distraction of, 400
- , functions of, 384
- , human, 691
- , inherent tendencies of, 477
- , necessity of purifying the, 504, 506
- , peace of, 396
- , qualities of the, 396
- , restraint of the, 389
- , subconscious, 813
- , tranquillity of the, 670
- Mīrabāī, 627, 628, 680-688, 758, 764, 775, 781, 818
- Misapprehension, 289, 299, 300-302, 310, 312
- Mithyājñāna, 305
- Mokṣa (See Liberation, Eman-  
cipation, Deliverance, Free-  
dom, Redemption, Release,  
Salvation), 20, 29, 54, 82,  
84, 107, 157, 207, 225, 226,  
239, 246, 249, 251, 255, 257-  
259, 262-264, 299, 308, 316
  - accessible to all castes, 507, 628, 650, 700, 751, 783, 827
  - as higher level of con-  
sciousness, 811
  - as apavarga, 432
  - as experience of infini-  
tude, 783

## Index

855

- as in the Vedas, 18
- as not an external thing, 811
- as not verbal and theoretical knowledge, 811
- as supersensuous, 501
- as under the control of Īśvara, 583
- as transformation of the human into the Divine, 811
- by prapatti, 561
- , absolute, 507
- , attainment of, 572
- , characteristics of, 753
- , concept of, 754, 819, 827
- , penance for, 546
- , sportive and romantic picture of, 606
- Monism, 657, 821, 822
  - and dualism, 705
  - , absolute, 629
  - , principle of, 703
  - , spiritual, 665
- Monotheism, 12, 657, 821, 822
- Moral(s), 87, 107, 376
  - actions, 91
  - authority, 12
  - governor, 12
- Morality on phenomenal level, 507
  - , highest, 506
- Muktābāī, 715
- Mukta, 81, 360, 431, 584, 585
- Mukti (see Mokṣa) 54, 261, 316
  - , Sāyujya, 604
- Mullahs, 651
- Mumukṣu, 545, 565, 584
- Music, unstruck, 656
- Muskdeer, 659, 688
- Mystic, 796
  - al intuition, 66
  - al trance, 81
- Mysticism, 822, 823, 828
  - , intellectual, 641
  - , personalistic, 729, 735
- N**
- Nāgārjuna, 154, 156, 157, 206, 208, 210
- Nairātmya, 114, 135, 150
- Najah (Khatas), 803
- Nāmarūpa, 123, 480
- Nāmadeva, 627, 715
- Nārada, 547
- Nārāyaṇa, 518, 538, 539, 541, 573, 734
- Naraharī Sonār, 715
- Narasimha Mehta, 688, 689, 691, 693, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 758, 764, 773, 775, 781, 782, 814
- Nature, laws of, 497
- Naya, 233, 235
- Nectar, 20, 647, 661, 663, 716, 729, 730
- Negation, 317, 455
- Negative, absolute, 190
- Negativism, 142, 208

Neo-Realists, 793, 800

Nerve, suṣumnā, 568

Nescience (see also Ignorance)

246, 248, 450, 469, 473,

478-80, 484, 486, 488, 497,

507, 509, 511, 512, 526, 528,

530, 534, 537, 552, 553, 635,

637, 647, 648, 667, 674, 693,

762, 768, 769, 771, 773, 780,

782, 790, 820, 826

— as sense of distinctions,  
477

— , creation of, 504

— , doctrine of 163

— , removal of, 485

'Never more becoming', 195

Nibhāṇa, 80, 81, 159, 217

Nidānas, twelve, 163

Neitzsche, 92

Nihilists, 142, 151, 205, 443

Niḥśreyasa, 54, 266, 299, 309,  
313, 316

Nimbārka, 28, 513, 555, 569,

627, 760, 762, 764, 765, 772,

775, 780, 781, 799, 805,

821-27

Nirālambanavāda, 147

Nirguṇa and saguṇa, 673

— without saguṇa, 667

Nirguṇatva, 775

Nirjarā, 255, 257, 260, 266

Nirodha, 386

Nirvāṇa, 113, 141, 157, 159,

164, 166, 169, 172, 179, 180,

184-90, 192, 194-96, 203,

206, 214, 216, 218, 219, 221,

262-63, 316-17, 454, 777,

798

— as positive entity, 204

— , positive nature of, 191

— , Anupādhiśeṣa, 219

— , definition of, 221

— , Mādhyamika, 208, 777

— , Mahāyānist, 192,

777, 815

— , materialistic, 189

— , upādhiśeṣa, 219

Nivṛtti, 715, 729

'No more becoming', 196

Non-being, 195, 207

Non-difference, 559

Non-discrimination, 366,

367, 373, 398, 405, 637

Non-ENS, 206

Non-violence, 253, 254

Nous, 13, 784, 786

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, 265-319

## O

Obscuration (Tirobhāva), 672

Optimism, 205

Order, Cosmic, 558

Organs, 62

— , external, 437

— , internal, 525

— , motor, 347, 349, 430

— , sense, 347, 349, 353,

360, 367, 374, 380,

408, 430, 433, 437,

438

Origination, dependent, 152

## P

Pain, 82, 108, 131, 158, 305,

310, 319, 364, 365, 366, 423,

433, 584, 753, 769, 777, 779



## Index

857

- , absence of, 435
- , freedom from, 495, 728, 806
- , three kinds of, 361, 676, 779
- Painlessness, 309
  - and pleasurelessness, 309, 434, 439, 778
- Pandhari, 721
- Pāṇḍuranga, 722, 728, 731, 732
- Pantheism, 11, 720
  - , crude, 705
- Pāpa, 226
- Para, 543
- Parābhakti, 646
- Parabrahman, 732
- Paradise, 220, 317, 803, 804
- Parama puruṣa, 646
- Paramārtha, 208
- Paramātmā, 279, 389, 481, 516, 534, 565, 582, 586, 587, 589, 628
- Paraśiva, 614, 618
- Parāvidyā, 60
- Paripāṃavāda, 515, 613, 636
- Parinibbāṇa, 196, 217, 218, 219
- Parivrājaka, 96
- Pāṣāṇavat, 185, 317, 318
- Passion, 189, 604, 686, 795
- Passionlessness, 732
- Paśu, 609-612
- Paśupāti (Śiva), 609
- Path, eightfold, 213, 214
- Peace, 362, 437, 701, 714, 725, 730, 801, 805, 815
  - , absolute, 179
  - , divine, 511, 804
  - , everlasting, 495, 724
  - , final, 677, 818
  - , ineffable, 747
  - , perfect, 218
  - , supreme, 404, 512
  - , undisturbed, 405
  - , unending, 512
- Penance, 64, 536, 642, 643, 699, 700, 725
  - , external forms of, 709
- Penetration into the being of Paramātmā, 585
- Perfection, 79, 90, 93, 186, 363, 440, 447, 484, 627, 738, 799, 808
- Perfectionism, doctrine of, 664
- Person in dream, 49
  - echo, 50
  - ether, 50
  - lightning, 50
  - mirror, 50
  - moon, 50
  - sun, 50
  - thunder, 50
  - , divine, 63
  - , ignorant, 714
  - , illiterate, 628
  - , inner, 46
  - , lame and blind, 350
  - , male, 688
  - , supreme, 634
- Personality, 128
  - , universalization of, 191

- Phaladānakriyā, 579, 580  
 Philo, 776, 786, 796  
 Philosophers, Vaiṣṇava, 782  
   — , Western, 805, 811  
 Philosophy :  
   — , dualistic, 322, 555  
   — , Indian, 784, 794  
   — , Western, 784, 793  
 Piety :  
   — , Hindu and Moslem  
     means of, 651  
 Plane, phenomenal, 450, 461,  
   474, 478, 48+, 506  
 Plato, 784, 795, 816  
 Pleasure, 108, 131, 139, 304,  
   334, 335, 398, 433, 438, 537  
   — here or hereafter, 43+  
   — , earthly, 552  
   — , heavenly, 439  
   — , material and physical,  
     815  
   — , pursuit of, 109  
 Pleasure and pain 48, 239,  
   293, 303, 382, 411, 418, 488,  
   497, 528, 531, 634, 638, 723,  
   774, 795  
 Pleasurelessness, 309  
 Plotinus, 208, 786, 795, 816  
 Pluralism, from, to Monism,  
   820, 822,  
 Plurality, 534, 553  
 Polytheism, 11, 12  
 Posture, 401  
 Potency, 272, 386, 558  
 Power, divine, 581, 733, 738  
   — , infinite, 234, 756  
   — , intellectual, 553  
   — , miraculous, 612  
   — , self-multiplying, 706,  
     708  
   — , supramental, 620  
   — , supreme, 587  
   — , unique, 591  
   — , wonderful, 556  
   — , wonder-working, 708  
 Prabhāva 707  
 Practice, Yogic, 395, 405,  
   583, 587, 678, 684, 725  
   — , Yogic and spiritual,  
     751  
 Pradhāna, 526, 706  
 Prajāpati, 26, 48, 55, 97, 99  
 Prajñā, 32, 50  
 Prajñānaghana, 44  
 Prajñātman 31  
 Prakṛti, 45, 320-323, 325,  
   332, 344, 345, 347-350, 352,  
   359, 360, 362, 367, 368, 375,  
   380, 381, 404, 509, 526, 547,  
   556, 573, 636, 639, 761, 771,  
   778, 821  
   — as extremely subtle, 354  
   — as substratum, 327  
   — as devoid of intelligence  
     362  
   — , evolution of, 360  
   — , forms of, 374  
   — , influence of, 371, 498  
   — , insentient, 341, 350  
   — , modifications of, 380  
   — , mutable, 632  
   — , nature of the evolu-  
     tion of, 362  
   — , products of, 325

**Index****859**

**Pralaya**, 314, 557, 760  
**Prāpa**, 6, 7, 9, 30, 31, 103, 234, 235, 754, 808, 819  
**Prāpāyāma**, 89  
**Prapanca**, 591, 598  
**Prapatti**, 550, 568, 569, 780, 826  
**Pratītyasamutpāda**, 153  
**Pratyabhijñā school**, 616  
**Pratyabhijñāśāstra**, 614, 615  
**Pratyāhāra**, 89  
**Prayer**, 749, 776, 796, 797  
**Premabhakti**, 676  
**Premalakṣaṇābhakti**, 673  
**Progress**, 819, 822  
     — , spiritual, 744  
**Psychoanalysis**, 813  
**Pudgala**, 143, 228, 229, 230, 233  
**Punya**, 226  
     — , and pāpa, 340  
**Purāṇas**, 625, 707  
**Purge, moral**, 212  
**Pūrṇayoga**, 510  
**Purpose**, 352  
**Puruṣa**, 6, 9, 33, 320, 322, 333, 347, 353, 356, 358, 359, 363, 366, 368, 370, 373, 374, 375, 376, 378, 381, 385, 391, 395, 396, 404, 629, 761, 767,  
     — and prakṛti, 350, 351, 361, 365, 369, 379, 385, 404  
     — as devoid of qualities, 328  
     — as immutable, 328, 632

    — as inactive, 328, 353  
     — as infinite in number, 344, 404  
     — as witness, 370  
     — , characteristics of, 357  
     — , discrimination between Prakṛti and, 778  
     — , duality between Prakṛti and, 331, 508, 821  
     — , isolation of, 403  
     — , plurality of, 337, 342, 343, 344, 347, 356  
     — , proofs for the existence of, 329  
     — , reflection of, 353, 368, 403  
     — , vicinity of, 326,  
**Puruṣārtha**, 101, 108, 441  
**Puruṣottama**, 514, 574, 603, 604, 634  
**Pūrva Mīmāṃsa**, 406-442  
**Puṣṭibhakti**, 601, 602, 618  
**Puṣṭimārgīyas**, 602, 605

**Q**

**Qualities**, 45, 46, 47, 463, 543, 583  
     — of God, 775  
     — and objects, 458  
     — , auspicious, 514, 534  
     — , eight, 519  
     — , evil, 722, 723, 724  
     — , infinite, 517, 518, 534, 739  
     — , moral, 581

## R

- Rādhā, 706, 713, 759, 818  
 Rādhikā, 672, 690  
 Rahim, 664  
 Rāma, 650, 652, 654, 655,  
 657, 661, 663, 664, 665, 666,  
 669, 670, 683, 684, 685  
 Rāmadāsa, 627, 715  
 Rāmākṣṣa (Paramahansa),  
 736, 751, 759, 764, 773, 775,  
 782  
 Rāmañuja, 457 510, 512,  
 515, 555, 627, 760, 761, 762,  
 764, 772, 773, 774, 775, 780,  
 781, 786, 787, 792, 799, 805,  
 821-827  
 — and Spinoza, 797  
 Rāmabhakti, 663  
 Rajas, 46, 325  
 Rbhus, 20, 21  
 Realisation, spiritual, 704  
 Realism, pluralistic, 266  
 Reality, 434, 734  
 — , absolute, 791  
 — , material, 793  
 — , noumenal, 469, 484  
 — , primary, 793  
 — , supreme, 30  
 — , transcendental, 461  
 — , ultimate, 87, 207,  
 456, 462, 482, 737  
 Reason, 36, 500  
 — , cosmic, 13  
 Rebirth, 56, 57, 106, 174,  
 177, 251, 287, 376, 412, 424,  
 437, 473, 485, 638, 732, 753,  
 767, 768, 772, 778, 794  
 — , cessation of, 432  
 — , chain of, 769  
 — , freedom from, 728  
 — , round of, 780  
 — , wheel of, 782  
 Redemption (see also Mokṣa,  
 Deliverance, Emancipation,  
 Freedom, Liberation, Rel-  
 ease, Salvation), 242, 262,  
 754, 794  
 — in Christianity, 804  
 Regeneration, moral, 805  
 — , spiritual, 827  
 Reflection, 47, 385, 634  
 — ism, 630  
 — in buddhi, 354  
 — theory, 356  
 Relativity, 478, 776, 780  
 — , domain of, 95  
 Reality, metaphysical, 545  
 — , principle of, 188, 209  
 — , realm of, 747  
 Release (see also Mokṣa,  
 Deliverance, Emancipation,  
 Freedom, Liberation, Red-  
 emption, Salvation), 65, 300,  
 307, 488, 504, 534, 535, 536,  
 545, 554, 627, 695, 754, 794  
 Religion, 107, 604  
 — , evolution of, 801  
 — , Hindu, 65, 650, 794,  
 805  
 — , institutional, 651  
 — , Vaiṣṇava, 628  
 Renunciation, 504, 505, 582,  
 583, 639, 640, 653, 700, 725,  
 748, 778, 794, 798

## Index

861

Rest, eternal, 217  
 — , final, 677  
 Restlessness, 388, 493, 660  
 Retribution, principle of, 767  
 Revelation, 93, 748  
 Rewards, 317, 341, 455  
 R̥gveda, 3, 6, 10, 11, 14, 759  
 R̥ta, 10, 12  
 Ritual, Brahmanical, 714  
 — , mechanical, 504  
 — , Vedic, 506  
 Ritualism, 407  
 — , Brahmanic, 100  
 — , Vedic, 110, 545  
 Royce, 792, 798, 799  
 Rudra as ultimate, 609  
 — in Mahābhārata, 609  
 — in Śaivism, 608  
 Rūpakāya, 123, 124

## S

Saccidānanda, 595, 647, 690  
 Sacrifices, 5, 22, 96, 100, 409,  
 428, 431  
 — , Vedic, 815  
 Sacrificialism, Vedic, 224, 445  
 Śaḍāyatana, 163  
 Sadguṇa, 652, 709  
 Sahajasthiti, 648  
 Saints, 782, 783  
 — , Indian, 627  
 — , Vaiṣṇava (Medieval)  
 758, 761, 762, 763, 765, 768,  
 773, 780, 781, 816, 821-827  
 St. Augustine, 786, 796  
 St. Thomas Aquinas, 787

Śaivas, 761, 762, 763, 765,  
 768, 773, 775, 782, 783,  
 821-827  
 Śaiva Siddhānta, 608  
 Sākṣātkāra, 547  
 Sākṣin, 66, 354, 370, 463, 769  
 Śaktas, 820, 621, 761, 762,  
 763, 765, 773, 775, 782, 825,  
 826  
 Śakti, 544, 620, 621, 738, 773  
 — as aspect of reality, 621  
 — as mind and matter, 623  
 — as mother, 622  
 — as potency, 621  
 — , asādbhāraṇa, 557  
 — , Cidrūpiṇī, 622  
 — , invisible, 621  
 Salvation (see also Mokṣa,  
 Deliverance, Emancipation,  
 Freedom, Liberation,  
 Redemption, Release), 29,  
 160, 184, 210, 213, 367, 505,  
 506, 670, 684, 700, 701, 714,  
 737, 744, 793, 794, 803, 804  
 — , Christian concept of,  
 805  
 Samādhi, 89, 401, 711, 712,  
 739, 740  
 — , asaṃprajñāta, 402  
 — , conscious, 402  
 — , four forms of, 402  
 — , nirbīja, 402  
 — , nirvikalpa, 746, 747  
 — , saṃprajñāta, 401  
 Sāmanjasya, 664  
 Śaṅkara, 28, 91, 360, 444,  
 445, 510, 512, 627, 760, 762,

- 774, 779, 781, 783, 790, 791,  
800, 816, 821-823, 825-827
- Sāṃkhya, 148, 161, 320, 325,  
331, 333, 335, 341, 347, 351,  
369, 377, 381, 320-405, 554,  
760, 761, 762, 764, 765, 766,  
770, 774, 778, 815, 820, 821,  
823, 824, 826, 827
- Samsāra, 29, 61, 83, 186,  
187, 222, 230, 233, 304, 373,  
381, 386, 431, 462, 468, 473,  
484, 518, 528, 531, 537, 538,  
552, 561, 598, 657, 681, 719,  
724, 732, 769, 825
- Saṃskāra, 122, 163, 168, 169
- Samvara, 226, 252
- Samvatā Māli, 715
- Śaraṇāgata, 676, 677, 682
- Sarvāstivādins, 142, 184
- Sarvātmabhāva, 603,
- Sarvavaināśika, 205
- Sat, 769, 790, 820
- Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, 14
- Satkāryavāda, 323, 324
- Sattva, 45, 326, 392, 554, 767
- Sautrāntika, 142, 144, 183,  
187, 188, 189, 192
- Schopenhauer, 798
- Scripture, 230, 548, 552, 582,  
628, 651, 794, 817
- Self (See also 'Ātman') 6,  
10, 33, 37, 41, 42, 44, 45,  
46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 55,  
57, 59, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70,  
105, 113, 114, 117, 118, 123,  
124, 127, 129, 130, 132, 134,  
135, 154, 155, 169, 170, 186,  
192, 211, 251, 311, 357, 373,  
446, 447, 449, 452, 453, 456,  
457, 460, 463-465, 467, 472,  
476, 490, 504, 509, 510, 523,  
527, 550, 556, 572, 573, 633-  
635, 638, 659, 678, 718, 725,  
732, 745, 753, 755, 769, 771,  
776, 781, 789, 793, 799, 800,  
807, 808, 809, 810, 819, 820,  
822, 823
- Consciousness, 347,  
397, 453, 457, 755
- Control, 434, 566, 778,  
780, 795
- as enjoyer, 43, 459
- as immortal, 39, 65, 76
- as immutable, 42
- as incorporeal, 42, 49
- as infinite, 499
- as invisible, 42
- , Buddhist, 227
- , denial of, 120, 136
- , empirical, 46, 61, 459,  
787, 790
- , experience of, 489
- , higher, 32, 45, 60, 61,  
470, 523
- , highest, 538, 547, 792
- , inner, 38, 473, 490
- , lower, 61
- , moral, 119
- , omniscient, 523
- , realization of, 246,  
439, 791, 810
- , spiritual, 149, 820
- , supreme, 279, 288,  
389, 469, 472, 523,

## Index

863

- 531, 537, 541, 548,  
551, 555, 557, 578,  
630, 637, 638, 641,  
646, 704, 742, 770,  
776, 819  
— , transcendental, 46, 60,  
61, 358, 789, 790  
— , transmigrating, 211,  
473  
— , ultimate, 472  
— , universal, 44, 45, 47,  
61, 784
- Senā Nahāvi, 715
- Senses (Sense organs), 42,  
85, 86, 237, 290, 292, 294,  
296, 297, 298, 306, 327, 414,  
417, 420, 469, 476, 632, 638,  
684, 765, 766, 773, 781, 819,  
823, 824, 826
- Sentience, 316, 341, 361, 367,  
379, 463, 771
- Sheaths (Kōśas) 37, 809
- Sin, 11, 435, 588, 669, 670,  
804
- S'iva, 189, 608, 612-615, 617,  
620, 621, 622, 663, 706, 773  
— and power, 617  
— and soul, 615  
— without S'akti, 621  
— as creator, 621, 622  
— as immanent and trans-  
cendent, 616  
— as Rudra, 607, 782  
— as ultimate reality, 607,  
616  
— , force and fury of, 628
- Skandhas (See 'Khandhas'  
also) 122, 143, 172, 755
- Sorrow, 113, 114, 138, 140,  
158, 159, 434  
— , cessation of, 164, 179
- Sorrowlessness, 218, 563
- Soul (see also jīva) 9, 15,  
16, 25, 26, 31, 35, 48, 173,  
228-231, 233, 234, 238, 249,  
262, 266, 270, 271, 275, 276,  
280, 281, 284, 290, 291, 294,  
297, 302, 305, 314, 318, 323,  
339-341, 343, 346, 357, 358,  
366, 371, 378, 380, 384, 385,  
389, 398, 405, 408-411, 414-  
418, 421, 423, 424, 425, 426,  
427, 430, 434, 435, 436, 440,  
442, 447, 452, 453-461, 464,  
466, 493, 494, 502, 519, 522,  
527, 529, 532-534, 541, 546,  
553, 556, 558, 561, 563, 564,  
571, 575, 581, 633, 647, 651,  
657, 670, 685, 692, 693, 706,  
711, 713, 730, 739, 750, 754,  
755, 758, 768, 776, 778, 779,  
780, 781, 784, 785, 787, 792,  
795, 796, 802, 803  
— and body, 411-413, 425,  
521, 534, 754, 755, 765,  
801  
— as doer of actions, 428,  
430, 460, 754, 761  
— as enjoyer, 386, 460,  
564, 762, 767  
— as immaterial, 426  
— as immortal, 456

- as imperishable, 454, 455
- as infinite, 457, 459, 510, 806
- as modification of Brahman, 757
- as omnipresent, 425, 428, 457
- as passive, 367
- as permanent, 454, 763
- as prāṇa, 754
- as presupposition of knowledge, 419
- as supreme, 518, 546
- as unmoved mover, 429
- , atomicity of, 458, 459, 519, 529, 561, 595, 757, 764
- , Buddhist notion of, 755
- , consciousness of, 536, 563
- , denial of, 101
- , empirical, 461, 632, 773
- , eternal, 519
- , finite, 48, 264, 511, 541, 554-556, 627
- , ideal, 784, 785
- , immutability of, 356, 428
- , individual, 46, 47, 59, 347, 442, 461, 465, 467, 468, 469, 470, 472, 484, 485, 492, 499, 501, 509, 518, 528, 531, 533, 544, 555, 572, 611, 657, 668, 723, 742, 754, 756, 757, 792, 802
- , knowledge of, 439
- , liberated, 95, 314, 362, 379, 485
- Space, 39, 635, 644, 719
- Spanda School, 616
- Sparsa, 163, 168
- Spencer, H., 208, 801
- Spooza, 208, 787, 788, 797, 816
- Spirit, 9, 14, 58, 238, 322, 323, 324, 325, 336, 338, 349, 365, 370, 383, 391, 392, 791, 792, 798, 812
- Sports, amorous, 686, 697, 700
- Śraddhā, 111, 709, 710
- Sri Aurobindo, 807
- Śrīkṛṣṇa, 689, 818
- Śruti, 443, 444, 482, 483, 500, 512, 513, 601, 691
- State :
  - of perfection, 627
  - of supermorality, 507
  - after death, 17
  - , disembodied, 493
  - , dream, 490
  - , happy, 220
  - , lifeless and unconscious, 318
  - , natural, 434
  - , saṁsāra, 493
  - , superconscious, 402
  - , waking, 481, 490, 524



## Index

865

## States :

- , fourteen 263
- , mental, 396
- Subject and object, 477
  - of experience, 353
  - , eternal, 454
- Subjectivism, 150
- Subjectivity, 464, 489
- Sublimation, 681
  - , psychological, 814, 816, 819, 827, 828
- Substance, 226, 267, 268, 269, 270, 317, 319, 647
  - , material, 349
  - , spiritual, 280, 349
- Sūdhādvaīta, 590, 593, 672, 703, 765, 800
- Suffering, 114, 301, 305, 307, 309, 422, 494, 762
  - , cause of, 302
  - , cessation of, 179
  - , seed of, 310
  - s , series of, 804
- Śūnya (See 'Void' also) 151, 153, 156, 209
- Śūnyata, 153, 208
- Śūnyavādins, 151, 206
- Sūperimposition, 449, 476, 559
- Sūradāsa, 627-628, 671-680, 758, 775, 817
- Suṣupti, 43
- Suttas, 196, 197, 198, 201, 215, 221
- Svabhāva, 151
- Svarūpapratiṣṭhā, 405
- Symphony, 656, 657

## T

- Tādātmya, 240, 591, 686
- Tamas, 46, 326
- Tanmātra, 45, 327, 347, 360
- Tāntrika, 620
- Tapasyā, 709
- Tathāgata, 183
- Tathatā, 199
- Tattvamasī, 559
- Teleology, 352, 482
- Tendencies, abstractionist, 816
- Tension, psychological, 814
- 'That art thou', 536, 588, 596, 779
- Theism, 540, 587, 626
  - , Indian, 627
- Theos, 627
- Thing-in-itself (Kantian), 789, 790, 791
- 'Thou art His', 588
- 'Thou art That', 468, 485, 491, 503, 532
- Tirobhāva, 590
- Tirodhānaśakti, 613
- Tīrtbankara, 245
- Titikṣā, 566
- Tman, 6
- Trailokyavilakṣaṇa, 653, 654
- Trance, 688, 702, 714
- Tranquillity, 82, 168, 179, 215, 300, 405, 437, 438, 495, 504, 815
- Transiency, 140, 158, 218
- Transmigration, 173-175, 190, 231, 275, 277, 297, 376, 377, 624, 669, 696, 767, 785

## 866

## Ātman and Mokṣa

Transmutation, 80  
 Trikalābādhitā, 449  
 Tṛṣṇā, 163  
 Truth, 114, 662  
   — , absolute, 627  
   — , transcendental, 199  
 Tulasīdāsa, 627, 628, 663-  
   671, 775, 817  
 Tukārāma, 627, 628, 714-736,  
   759, 764, 773, 775, 782, 818

## U

Union of soul with God, 712  
   — , direct, 501  
   — , mystical, 725, 797  
 Unity, 457, 463, 631  
   — with the Brahman, 534  
   — , metaphysical, 461  
   — , transcendental  
     apperception of, 545  
 Universalism, 210  
 Universe, 655  
   — , creation of the, 656  
   — , mother of, 741  
   — , Lord of the, 484  
   — , sport of the, 661  
 Upādhi (See Adjuncts also)  
   61, 74, 344, 348, 462, 475,  
   525, 637, 640, 742, 745, 773,  
   820  
 Upaniṣad(s), 24, 28, 108, 110,  
   202, 208, 320, 407, 443, 445,  
   513, 625, 759, 761-764, 765,  
   766, 768, 769, 776, 784, 785,  
   792, 809, 824, 825, 827  
   — , Aitarāya, 29  
   — , Bṛhadāraṇyaka, 29,

38, 39, 42, 51, 53, 55, 63,  
 64, 66, 67, 70, 71, 73, 74,  
 75, 85, 91, 93, 98, 99, 456,  
 810  
   — , Chāndogya, 40, 48,  
 49, 51, 55, 57, 62, 78, 81,  
 90, 95  
   — , Īśa, 63  
   — , Kaṭha, 29, 32, 42, 47,  
   50, 54, 62, 64, 73, 84, 92, 93  
   — , Kēna, 29, 63  
   — , Kauṣṭhiki, 30, 36, 41,  
   72, 97  
   — , Maitrāyaṇi, 29, 43-45,  
   56, 58, 59, 64, 82, 89  
   — , Māṇḍūkya, 29, 44  
   — , Muṇḍaka, 29, 42, 46,  
   60, 62, 63, 64, 73, 74,  
   87, 88, 91, 93  
   — , Praśna, 29, 32  
   — , Svetāśvatara, 29, 41,  
   47, 49, 54, 58, 66,  
   67, 76, 609  
   — , Taittirīya, 29, 33,  
   37, 78

Upāsana, 547, 581, 780

Utensils, sacrificial, 15

## V

Vaḍagalais, 551  
 Vairāgya, 386, 387  
 Vaikunṭha, 519, 539, 696, 721  
 Vaiṣṇava, 709, 765, 773, 775,  
   780, 782, 783  
 Vaiṣṇavism, 512, 555, 608,  
   793

## Index

867

Vallabha, 28, 513, 589-606,  
627, 671, 760-762, 764, 772,  
775, 780, 781, 821-827  
Vargāśrama-dharma, 507, 569  
Varuṇa, 11, 12, 15, 22  
Vāsudeva, 523, 673  
Vedas, 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14,  
16, 23, 224, 265, 321, 373,  
410, 443, 625, 641, 653, 673,  
691, 707, 761, 762, 763, 765,  
766, 769, 776, 826  
Vedānta, 28, 161, 244, 245,  
267, 271, 313, 337, 343, 426,  
443, 469, 655, 658, 665, 679,  
763-765, 767, 771, 779, 785,  
796, 806, 824  
Vibhavaṭṭā, 220  
Videhamukti, 218, 372, 376,  
379, 499, 568, 763  
Vidibhakti, 683  
Vidyēśvaras, 611  
Virtues, 213, 230, 254, 340,  
345, 403, 507, 566, 583, 640,  
781, 803  
Vision, divine, 732  
— , mystical, 735  
Viṣṇu, 20, 599, 607, 608,  
653, 666, 733  
Visobā Khechar, 715,  
Viṭhobā, 715, 724, 729, 818  
Vivartavāda, 555, 613, 630,  
703  
Void (See Śūnya also), 122,  
154, 156, 162, 179, 190, 209,  
317, 492, 825  
Vyūha, 543, 560, 708, 775

## W

Will, divine, 577  
— , universal, 793  
Wisdom, 214, 569, 795  
— , divine, 796  
Witness, 463, 633  
World, 95, 451, 477, 496,  
633, 636, 679, 718, 721, 725  
— soul, 12, 13, 786  
— and Brahman, 591  
— and God, 483  
— as Brahman, 593  
— as illusory, 451, 503,  
659, 679  
— as manifold, 630  
— as one with God, 592  
— as sport of God, 719  
—s , three, 726  
— , angelic, 802  
— , creation of, 657  
— , creation of, for sport,  
593  
— , evolution of, 801  
— , external, 86  
— , extra-mental, 144  
— , originator of, 442  
— , panorama of, 451  
— , phenomenal, 790  
— , transmigratory, 475  
— , visible 630, 631  
Worship, 440, 569, 584, 650,  
797  
— , forms of, 651

## Y

Yādava, 569  
Yādavaprakāśa, 512

Yājñavalkya, 38, 39, 54, 55,  
59, 64, 66, 68, 70-72, 74, 75,  
90, 99

Yama, 14, 15, 20, 400

Yāmunācārya, 512

Yoga, 166, 214, 379-405, 508,  
545, 612, 639, 645, 646, 769,  
821, 853, 824, 826

— , eight limbs of, 399,  
549, 671

— , integral, 510

Yogācāra, 142, 145, 147,  
149, 150, 188, 189, 198

Yogic discipline, 90, 826

— practices, 505

Yogin, 89, 639, 643, 651,  
655, 684, 695

Yugadharma, 749

Yuj (Yug), 389

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