

## **PHIL5B07- Systems of Indian Philosophy**

**90Hrs/5week**

**Total Credit 4**

**Module –I Introduction:-** Orthodox and Hetrodox Systems- Norm of Classificationand Differnece

**Module- II Non Vedic Systems:-**

- 2.1. Carvaka-Theory of Perception, Matterialism
- 2.2. Jainism –Jiva- Ajiva- Syadvasa, Anekanta Vada, Triratnas
- 2.3. Budhism- Four Noble Truth, Eight Fold Path, Prathithyasamutpada, Kshanikavada, Nirvana

**Module-III Vedic System:-**

- 3.1 Nyaya Vaisesika- Categories, Pramanas, Apavarga
- 3.2 Samkya Yoga- Purusha and Prakriti, Eight Limbs of Yoga
- 3.3 Purvamimasa- Ritualism, Arthapathi, Anupalabdhi, Sabda
- 3.4 Vedanta-
  - 3.4.1 Advaita- Brahman Maya Realisation
  - 3.4.2 Visistadvaita- Brhaman Wrol and Jiva
- 3.5 Dvaita- Brahman and Five Bhedas

# Module I

## Introduction

The word Indian philosophy is known as 'Hindu philosophy' it would be a true only the word taken from the geographical sense of 'Indian'. But nowadays the word Hindu means the followers of a particular religious faith known as Hinduism. Indian philosophy which is testifies to its unflinching devotion to the search for truth. Though there were many different schools and their views differed sometimes very widely, yet each school take care to learn the views of all the others and did not come to any conclusion. Etymological meaning of the word philosophy is 'love of knowledge'. The Sanskrit terms for philosophy are 'darsanas' and 'tattva', which means 'vision of truth and reality'. 'See the self' (āt̄mā vā are draṣṭavyah) is the key note of all Schools of Indian Philosophy. And this is the reason why most of the Schools of Indian Philosophy are also religious sects. Annihilation of the three kinds of pain – ādhyāt̄mika (physical and mental sufferings produced by natural and intra-organic causes), ādhibhautika (physical and mental sufferings produced by natural and intra-organic causes), and ādhidaivika (physical and mental sufferings produced by natural and extra-organic causes) – and realization of supreme happiness is the end, and sravaṇa (hearing the truth) manana (intellectual conviction after critical analysis) and nididhyāsaṇa (practical realization) are the means – in almost all Schools of Indian Philosophy. According to the Hindu tradition, the various philosophical ideas that were developed in the philosophical systems originated in the Vedas, a body of text that were composed possibly around two thousand years before Common Era (B.C.E). In Indian philosophy, it is rich and varied including such contrasted standpoints as those of materialism and spiritualism, pluralism and monism, realism and idealism, theism and absolutism.

The Vedas are the earliest extent literary monument of the Aryan mind. The origin of Indian philosophy may be easily traced in the Vedās. The name 'Vedā' (knowledge) stands for the Mantras and Brāhmaṇas. Mantra means a hymn addressed to some god or goddess. The collection of the mantras are called 'Samhitā'. There are four Samhitās – Ṛk, Sāma, Yajur and Atharva. These are said to be compiled for the smooth performance of the Vedic sacrifices. The

Brahmanas unlike the mantras, are written in prose. They are the elaboration of the complicated ritualism of the Vedas. They deal with the rules and regulations laid down for the performance of the rites and the sacrifices. Their name, 'Brahmana' is derived from the word 'Brahma' which originally means a prayer. There is little philosophy in these, though some philosophical ideas flash here and there in the course of some speculative digressions. The appendages to these Brahmanas are called Aranyakas mainly because they were composed in the calmness of the forests. The Aranyakas mark the transition from the ritualistic to the philosophic thought. We find here a mystic interpretation of the Vedic sacrifices. The concluding portions of the Aranyakas are called the Upanishads. These are intensely philosophical and spiritual and may be rightly regarded as the cream of the Vedic Philosophy. The hymns are the creation of the poets, the Brahmanas are the work of the priests, and the Upanishads the meditations of the philosophers.

The schools of Indian philosophy are divided into two types they are āstika (orthodox) and nāstika (heterodox). The nāstika which means (*na asti* 'it is not') those which neither regard the Veda as infallible nor try to establish their own validity on their authority. These names, however, are relative, for what is orthodox to one may be heterodox to another. As applied to the schools of Indian philosophy, 'orthodox' means 'acceptance of the authority of the Veda' and 'heterodox' indicates 'non-acceptance of that authority'. Very often the distinction between the orthodox and the heterodox is nominal. Many of the so-called orthodox schools accept the Vedic authority only in name. And, some of those schools which are called heterodox are profoundly influenced by the Upanishads most of which constitute the concluding portions of the Veda. The orthodox systems are usually numbered as six, and the heterodox systems as three. Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta are the orthodox systems, Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism are the heterodox systems. These are only broad divisions of Indian philosophy, and are by no means exhaustive. Philosophy in India did not begin with these systems.

**Sāṃkhya** system is propounded by Kapila and the yoga sutra is attributed by Patanjali so it is also called Patanjali yoga sutra. The general metaphysical position of these two systems with regard to soul, nature, cosmology and the final goal is almost the same, and the difference lies in this that the Yoga system acknowledges a god (Īśvara) as distinct from Ātman and lays much importance on certain mystical practices (commonly known as Yoga practices) for the achievement of liberation, whereas the Sāṃkhya denies the existence of Īśvara and thinks that

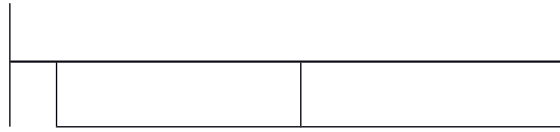
sincere philosophic thought and culture are sufficient to produce the true conviction of the truth and thereby bring about liberation.

Vedanta and mimasa are the direct contribution of Veda. The vedic traditions have two sides ritualistic and speculative (karma and jana). The mimasa holds that ritualistic aspects and Vedanta emphasise speculative aspects. The Pûrva Mîmāmsā is a systematized code of principles in accordance with which the Vedic texts are to be interpreted for purposes of sacrifices. The Vedic texts were used as mantras (incantations) for sacrifices, and people often disputed as to the relation of words in a sentence or their mutual relative importance with reference to the general drift of the sentence. There were also differences of view with regard to the meaning of a sentence, the use to which it may be applied as a mantrā, its relative importance or the exact nature of its connection with other similar sentences in a complex Vedic context. The Mîmāmsā formulated some principles according to which one could arrive at rational and uniform solutions for all these difficulties. Preliminary to these its main objects, it indulges in speculations with regard to the external world, soul, perception, inference, the validity of the Vedas, or the like, for in order that a man might perform sacrifices with mantras, a definite order of the universe and its relation to man or the position and nature of the mantras of the Veda must be demonstrated and established. The sūtras of Mîmāmsā are attributed to Jaimini, and S'abara wrote a bhāṣya upon it. The two great names in the history of Mîmāmsā literature after Jaimini and S'abara are Kumārila Bhatta and his pupil Prabhākara.

The Vedānta sūtras, also called Uttara Mîmāmsā, written by Bâdarâyana, otherwise known as the Brahma-sūtras, form the original authoritative work of Vedānta. The word Vedānta means "end of the Veda," i.e. the Upanisads, and the Vedānta sūtras are so called as they are but a summarized statement of the general views of the Upanisads. There are different views of Vedanta, mainly focused only Advaita, Visistadvaita and Dvaita

The Nyâya sūtras attributed to Gautama, called also Aksapâda, and the Vais'esika sūtras attributed to Kanâda, called also Ulûka, represent the same system for all practical purposes. They are in later times considered to differ only in a few points of minor importance. So far as the sūtras are concerned the Nyâya sūtras lay particular stress on the cultivation of logic as an art, while the Vais'esika sutras deal mostly with metaphysics and physics.

# Indian Schools of Philosophy



Schools Rejecting Vedic Authority (Heterodox or

Schools accepting vedic authority (Orthodox or astika)

Nastikae.g. Carvaka, Buddhism and Jainism)



Schools directly based on Vedic texts

schools based on independent grounds(Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisesika)



Schools emphasizing The ritualistic aspects Of the veda (Mimasa)

school emphasizing the speculative aspects of the veda (Vedanta)

## **Module II**

### **Non Vedic Systems**

#### **Cārvāka**

The word Cārvāka generally stands for materialist school. Materialism in India seems to be very old and it had been shown in the early Buddhist literature. Bṛhaspāti is the founder of materialism and he is also known as heretical teacher. The word 'Cārvāka' is not a proper name but it is a common name given to a materialist school. And it signifies a person who believes in enjoyment like- 'eat, drink, and be merry (the root 'carv' means to eat) or a person who eats up his own words, or who eats up all moral and ethical consideration. And also the person who is 'sweet-tongued'(caruvak) and therefore whose doctrine is superficially attractive. Another synonym of carvaka is Lokayata which means a commoner and therefore by implication, a man of low and unrefined taste. Nāstik- shiromani or an arch- heretic is another name for materialist. No original work of this school is extant with the single exception of a much later work, tattvopaplavasimha of Jayarashi Bhatta, published by the Oriental Institute of Baroda in 1940. It is therefore very difficult to have a correct idea of it. Our chief source of information are given in the works of the other schools. The arva-darshana-sangraha gives a summary of this

In the second act of the allegorical play called Prabatha chandrodaya, Krsnapati Mishra sums up the teachings of materialism thus Lokayāta is the only sāstra, perception is the only authority, earth, water, fire and air are the only elements enjoyment is the only end of human existence, mind is only a product of matter. There is no other world, death means liberation. Some of the important sutras of Brhaspati which are quoted in the various philosophical writings maybe gleaned as follows.

- (1) Earth, water fire and air are the elements
- (2) Bodies, Senses and objects are the results of the different combinations of elements
- (3) Consciousness arises from matter like the intoxicating quality of wine arising

from fermented yeast.

- (4) The soul is nothing but the conscious body
- (5) Enjoyment is the only end of human life
- (6) Death alone is liberation

The materialistic ideas are scattered here and there, they may be systematized and conveniently presented under three chief heads they are epistemology, Metaphysics and ethics.

### **Theory of Perception**

Indian schools are similar to only one concepts that is pramānās. The word prāmāna signifies the essential meaning is valid knowledge or prama. The object known is described as parameya; and the knower, pramata. The important pramanas are three- pratyakṣa or perception, anumāna or inference and sabḍa or verbal testimony. The values of the first two of pramānās is recognized by all except cārvāka. Here discussing about cārvāka perception or theory of knowledge.

Carvaka epistemology is discussing about knowledge. The main problem of cārvāka epistemology are: how far can we know reality? How does knowledge originate and develop? What are the different sources of knowledge? Carvaka perception is the knowledge of reality or valid cognition is called prama and the source of such knowledge is called pramāna. The cārvāka holds that perception is the only pramana or dependable source of knowledge. It rejects all other prāmāna including inference. Inference is said to be a mere leap in the dark. We proceed here from the known to the unknown and there is no certainty in this, though some inference may turn out to be accidentally true. The reason assigned for rejecting inference is that there is not sufficient warrant for believing in the truth of the inductive relation or vyapti which forms its basis. Vyapti therefore is the nerve of all inference. Perception doesnot prove the vyapti. But inference, testimony are prove the vyapti.

The shunyavada Budhisam and Advaita Vedanta also rejected the ultimate validity of inference. But there is radical difference between the carvaka view on the one hand, and the sunyavada and the Vedanta view on the other. The Carvaka accepts the validity of perception and thereby upholds the truth of the means of valid knowledge, though he rejects all other means of knowledge is invalid. But Shunyavadin and Advaitin rejects the ultimate validity of all means of knowledge as such including perception, though the insist on the empirical validity of all means of knowledge. The distinction between ultimate and empirical knowledge is unknown to the

carvaka. To accept the validity of perception and, at the same time and from the same standpoint, to reject the validity of inference is a thoughtless self-contradiction.

**Materialism:-** the carvaka admits the existence of four elements- earth, water, fire and air- only and he rejects the fifth, the ether, because it is not perceived but inferred. Similarly, soul and God and the Hereafter are rejected. Everything which exist, including the mind, is due to a particular combination of these four elements. The elements are eternal, but their combinations undergo production and dissolution. Consciousness is regarded as mere product of matter. Given the four elements and their particular combination, consciousness manifest itself in the living body. Matters secretes mind as liver secretes bile. The so called soul is simply the conscious living body. One identifies the soul with the gross body (Sthūla Sharīra); another with the senses (indriya); another with vital breaths (prāṇa) and the last with the mental organs (manas)

## 2. Jainism

The word Jainism is derived from 'jina' which means 'conqueror' – one who has conquered his passions and desires. It is eternal, and it has been revealed again and again in everyone of the endless succeeding pends of the world by innumerable thirthankaras. The first thirthankaras was Rsabhadeva and the last or 24<sup>th</sup> thirthankara was Vardhamana Mahavira. All thirthankaras have reached moksha at their death. They are two sets of Jainism they are svetambaras (wearing white cloths) and Digambaras (the naked).

The jains bring the whole universe under the two everlasting categories. The two classes of things are respectively described as Jiva and ajiva , i.e conscious and unconscious or spirit and non-spirit- the latter including not merely matter but also time and space. The terms show clearly the realistic and relativistic stand point of Jainism.

### Jiva and Ajiva

The notion of jiva in general corresponds to that of atman or purusas of the other schools of Indian thought. But as implied by the etymology of its name-'what lives or is animate'- The number of jivas is infinite, all being alike and eternal. The whole universe is brought under the



two everlasting, uncreated eternal and co-existing categories which are called jiva and ajiva. Jiva means the conscious spirit and ajiva means the unconscious non spirit. Jiva, in their empirical form they are classified in various ways, such as those that have one sense, two sense and so forth.

Ajiva includes not only matter which is called 'Pudgala'. but also space, motion, rest and time. Spirit, matter, motion, rest and space are described as asti-kaya dravyas or substance which possess constituent parts extending in space, while time (kala) is the only anastikaya dravya which has no extension in space. Time is anastikaya because it does not extend in space. It is infinite like time, space is also infinite, eternal and imperceptible. Dharma and Adharma are used here not in their popular sense of merit and demerit, but in the technical sense of the conditions of movement and rest. Like space and time, they also are eternal and imperceptible. Matter is called pudgala which means that which is liable to integration and disintegration.

## **Syadvada**

It is the conception of reality as extremely indeterminate in its nature that is the basis of what is as syadvada- the most conspicuous doctrine of Jainism. The word syat is derived from the Sanskrit root as 'to be' being its form in the potential mood. It means 'may be', so that syadvata may be rendered in English as the doctrine of 'may be'. According to Jainism represent to understand the whole truth and reality must be characterized by both 'is' and 'is not'- to the well-known ones of 'is' and 'is not'. The jains think that reality is so complex in its structure that while every one of these views is true as far as it goes, none is completely so. Syadvada which is also called saptabhangi-nyaya is the theory of relativity of knowledge. Supta-bhargi-nyaya means 'dialectic of the seven steps. The jaina logic distinguishes seven forms of judgment. Each judgment, being relative, is preceded by the word 'syat'. This is syadvada. The seven steps are as follows.

- (1) Syadasti, maybe, is
- (2) Syadnasti, maybe is not
- (3) Syadasti, nasty, maybe is and is not

- (4) Syadavaktavyam may be, is unpredictable
- (5) Syadastica avaktavyam, may be is and is unpredictable
- (6) Syadnastica avaktavyam may be, is not unpredictable
- (7) Syadastica, nastica avaktavyam, may be, is not and unpredictable

## **Anekantavada**

The Jain metaphysics is a realistic and realistic pluralism. It is called Anekantavada or manyness of reality. Matter and spirit are regarded as separate and independent realities. There are innumerable material atoms and innumerable individual souls which are all separately and independently real. And each atom and each soul possesses innumerable aspects of its own. A thing has got an infinite number of characteristics of its own. Every object possesses innumerable positive and negative characters. It is not possible for us, to know all the qualities of a thing. Is to become omniscient. Human knowledge is necessarily relative and limited and so are all our judgments. This epistemological and logical theory of the Jainas is called 'syadvada'. Both Anekantavada and Syadvada are the two aspects of the same teaching realistic and relativistic pluralism. The metaphysical side that reality has innumerable characters is called Anekantavada, while the epistemological and logical side that we can know only some aspects of reality and the therefore all our judgments are necessarily relative, is called syadvada.

## **Triratna**

According to Jainism right knowledge is the cause of liberation. This right knowledge is produced by faith in the teachings of the omniscient Tirthankaras. Hence faith is necessary and it is right conduct which perfects knowledge. Right knowledge dawns when all the karmas are destroyed by right conduct. Hence right faith, right conduct and right knowledge all the three together form the path of liberation which is the joint effect of these three. Right faith, Knowledge and conduct are the three jewels of Jainism . they are inseparably bound up and perfection of one goes with the perfection of the other two.

## **Buddhism**

Buddhism was founded by Gautama, the Buddha. After attaining the Enlightenment Buddha left the Bodhi tree and went to Kashi. At Saranath in Kashi, he delivered his first sermons before his five disciples. These sermons are known as "Dharmachakra Pravartana Sutra". And Lord Buddha sent his disciples to different parts of the world in order to propagate his teachings. R. Puligandla observes; "From then until his death in 483 BC, at the ripe old age of eighty, Gautama travelled untiringly, teaching his message to men and women, irrespective of caste, colour and station in life. In course of time, The Buddha's message gave rise to Buddhism as religion and philosophy which spread far and wide, to Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, China and Mongolia in the north."

### **The Four Noble Truths**

Although Buddha was a man of penetrating intellect, the overall emphasis of his teaching is on the practical matters of morality and conduct leading to the conquest of sufferings, rather than on abstract philosophical inquiries. Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and not a metaphysician. For Buddha, the most urgent task is to lead man out of suffering and illness. So in Indian tradition Buddha is often described as a "great physician". According to Buddha the duty of a philosopher is not a discussion about the pain of human beings but an attempt to heal the pain. If a man is struck by a poisoned arrow and writhing in pain the first thing for us to do is to alleviate his pain by pulling the arrow out of his body, not to insist on eliciting information as to the origin and nature of the arrow, the man who shot the arrow, or the man struck by the arrow before we can pull the arrow out and nurse the injury. Similarly if the poisoned arrow of suffering is embedded in humanity it would be non sense for men to preoccupy themselves with such metaphysical questions as ; is the world eternal ? is it infinite or finite? Is there a God? etc.. Inquiry into these questions, says Buddha, is not in the least conducive to solving the immediate and pressing problem of suffering. For Buddha, anyone who indulges in metaphysical inquiry is either blind to the fact of suffering or wasting his time by hoping to cure men of suffering by making them swallow metaphysical medicines. We shall now present the Buddha's analysis of the problem of suffering and his solution to it. The teachings of Lord Buddha make a mention of four of great truths. They are:

1. (Duhkha ) There is suffering
2. (Duhkha-samudhya) There is a cause of suffering.
3. (Duhkha- nirodha) Ther is a cessation of suffering.
4. (Duhkha- nireodha-gamini pratipat) There is a way leading to this cessation of suffering

All the teachings of Buddha centre round theses four great truths. We can start our discussion about the four great truths,taking the first great truth.

### **The first Noble truth about suffering**

According to Buddha life is full of misery and pain. Birth is attended with pain, decay of painful, desire is also painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. Even the so- called pleasures are really fraught with pain. That there is suffering in this world is a fact of common experience. Poverty, disease, old age, death, anger hatred, quarrels are rampant in this world. That life is full of misery no one can deny. For Buddha, Impermanence is the basic trait of reality as we experience it with our senses and mind. And wherever there is impermanence there is bound to be suffering. The first Noble truth is that existence is Dukkha (impermanence) out of which arises all suffering

### **The second Nobile truth about the cause of suffering**

Though the fact of suffering is recognized by all Indian philosophers, The diagnosis of this malady is not always unanimous. The origin of life's evil is explained by Buddha in the light of his special conception of natural causation. According to Buddha everything has a cause. Nothing comes out of nothing "Exnihilo nihil fit" . The existence of every event depends up on its causes and conditions. Everything in this world is conditional, relative and related. Suffering being a fact, it must have a cause. So it must depends on some conditions. Suffering is not due to chance but brought about by certain conditions which constitute the warp and woof of existence itself. If suffering is uncaused, then there can be no way of eliminating it. The whole of

existence, as we experience it, is a vast caused nexus. This fact is expressed by the formula “This arising that arises; this ceasing to be that ceases to be” or this phenomenon is depend upon that phenomenon. Nothing exists unconditionally and absolutely; everything is depends up on something other than itself. The doctrine that everything depends upon other things is known as the Doctrine of Dependent origination or “*Pratīyasamutpāda*”. In the light of the Doctrine of dependent origination, the second noble truth may be stated thus; suffering has a cause. The various conditions which produce suffering are expressed by Buddha in the form of chain of cause and effect made up of twelve links. The twelvefold chain of causation is another name for the doctrine of dependent origination

### **The third noble truth about the cessation of suffering**

Having understood the cause of suffering, the next thing to do is to eliminate it. This brings us to the third noble truth. The third noble truth may be stated thus; Since suffering is caused, it can be eliminated by eliminating its causes, what is it, then, has to be removed in order for pain, misery, sorrow and suffering to cease? It is clear from the twelvefold chain that ignorance is the fundamental condition of suffering. That’s why ignorance is to be removed in order to gain freedom from suffering. But how is ignorance to be conquered? According to Buddha man can conquer the ignorance by clearly comprehending the truth of the nature of existence and acquiring perfect insight and wisdom leading to non –attachment, tranquility, freedom- in short by attaining Nirvana. Then what is the path to Nirvana. The answer to this question is the fourth noble truth.

### **The fourth Noble truth about the path to Liberation**

The path to Nirvana is the Eight fold path or *Aṣṭāṅgika mārga*. The perfect blending of Knowledge and conduct. Followers of this Eight fold path will attain Nirvana. The Path recommended by Buddha consist of eight steps or rules and is therefore called the eight fold noble path. The eight fold noble path this gives in a nutshell the essentials of Buddhist Ethics. This path is open to all, monks as well as laymen.

## **Eight fold Path**

The Eight fold path contained in the fourth Noble truth of Buddha. The Buddha said, “there are two extremes, O monks from which he who leads a religious life must abstain. One is a life of pleasure, devoted to desire and enjoyment; that is base unworthy, unreal, and unspiritual. The perfect one, O monks, is removed from both these extremes and has discovered the way which lies between them, the middle way enlightens the eye, enlightens the mind, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvana”. These words of Buddha are the base of eightfold path. The eight fold path consists of the following disciplines.

**Right view :** As ignorance with its consequences, namely wrong views about the self and the world, is the root cause of our sufferings. It is natural that the first step to moral reformation should be the acquisition of right views or the knowledge of truth. So this is the discipline which enables one to see the true nature of the world of experience as being sorrowful, impermanent etc. Right view reveals the four noble truths.

**Right mindedness:** This refers to the right motivation. Removing all prejudices and evil intentions from one's thoughts, one must cultivate a friendly attitude towards all sentient beings. One should cultivate benevolent thoughts, thoughts of compassion, thoughts of sympathy etc.

**Right speech:** Right speech is kind and truthful, speech, that is less speech. Buddhism preaches, “Better than a thousand utterances composed of meaningless words is one sensible word hearing which one becomes peaceful”

**Right action:** Evil deeds should be avoided. Right deeds do not result in sorrow. One should practice restraint and virtue and one should commit no wrong

**Right livelihood** The means of living that one adopts should be in agreement with the laws of morality. One should avoid such cruel means of living as that of being a butcher or a huntsman

**Right effort:** According to Buddha, self effort is the utmost necessity. Through right efforts, passions should be controlled without right effort one cannot gain enlightenment.

**Right Thought :** This literally means good memory, not merely the faculty of remembering the past, but also being alert in minds being watchfull and in complete self –possession. It is through right mind fulnes that one can controlones acts, feelings and thoughts

**Right Concentration:** This is the practice of meditation resulting in the final wisdom. Sense culture should enable one to become discerning and sharp so that one may not be carried away in the storm of sensual pleasure. This should lead one to the development of the power of concentration. Mediation is the way to Nirvana .

### **Pratitya Samutpada**

The Doctrine of Pratitya Samutpada or the theory of Dependent origination is the foundation of all the teachings of Buddha. It is contained in the second noble truth which gives us the cause of suffering and in the third noble truth which shows the cessation of suffering. Suffering is samsara; cessation of suffering is Nirvana. Both are only aspects of the same reality. Pratiyasamudpada, viewed from the point of view of relativity is samsara; while viewed from the point of view of reality, it is Nirvana Why do we suffer from old age and death? Because we are born. Why we are born? Because there is a will to be born, why should there be this will? Because we cling to the objects of this world. why do we have this dinging? Because we crave to enjoy the objects of this world. Why do we have this craving? Because our contact with sense objects. Why do we have this contact? Because of the sense organs. Why do we have sense organs? Because of the psycho-physical organism. Why do we have this organism? Because of the initial conscious of the embryo. Why do we have this consciousness? Because of Karma. why do we have this Karma? Because of ignorance. Hence ignorance is the root cause of all suffering. Thus we have the 12 links of the causal wheel of dependent origination

1. Ignorance
2. Karma
3. Consciousness
4. Psycho-physical organism

5. Sense –organs
6. Sense –object contact
7. Sense experience
8. Thirst for enjoyment
9. Clinging to enjoyment
10. Will to be born
11. Birth
12. Old age and death

Of these twelve links, the first two are related to past life. The last two to future life and the rest to the present life. This is the cycle of birth and death. Death is only a beginning of a new life. This cycle can be destroyed only by Right knowledge. So knowledge is the sole means of liberation

### **Ksanikavada**

The theory of momentariness (Ksanikavada) is a corollary of dependent origination. Because things depend on their causes and conditions because things are relative, dependent, conditional and finite, they must be momentary..... Say that a thing arises depending as its cause is to admit that it is momentary, for when the cause is removed the thing will cease to be. The theory of No-ego (Nairatmyavada), the theory that the individual ego is ultimately false is also based on this doctrine. When every thing is momentary and therefore relative and false.

**Nirvana:-** the ideal saint of both schools of hinayana is the Ahat who has simply blown himself out of existence by annihilating all desires and passions. The ideal is said to be a negative cessation of all earthly miseries. It is given in the third Noble Truth about the cessation of suffering. The word nirvāṇa means blowing out. It is the dissolution of the five skandhas. It is the cessation of all activities (chittavattinirodha) and of all becoming (bhavaniroda). Here the real teachings burst forth breaking the outward covering of the Hīnayān. nirvana is identified with positive bliss. It is said to be the highest and the indestructible state.



## UNIT III

### VEDIC SYSTEMS

#### 3.1. Nyaya-Vaisesika

The sage Gotama is the founder of Nyaya school. Nyaya means argumentation. Nyaya is a system of atomic pluralism and logical realism. It is allied to the Vaisesika system. Which is regarded as Samanatantra or similar philosophy.

#### **Pramanas**

Perception, inference, comparison or analogy and verbal testimony are the four kinds of valid knowledge.

#### **Perception**

Gotama defines perception as ‘non-erroneous cognition which is produced by the intercourse of the sense-organs with the objects, which is not associated with a name and which is well-defined. This definition of perception excludes divine and yogic perception which is not generated by the intercourse of the sense-organs with the objects. Perception is a kind of knowledge and it’s the attribute of the self. Ordinary perception presupposes the sense-organs, the objects, the manas and the self and their mutual contacts. The self comes into contact with the manas, the manas with the senseorgans and the sense organs with the objects. The Naiyayika maintains two stages in perception. The first is called indeterminate or nirvikalpa the second, determinate or savikalpa. They are not two different kinds of perception, but only the earlier and the later stages in the same complex process of perception quoted above. Perception is ‘unassociated with a name’ which means ‘determinate’ and it is “well-defined” which means determinate. Perception, again, may be ordinary (laukika) and extra ordinary (alaukika) when the sense- organs come into contact with the objects present to them in the usual way, we have laukika perception. And if the contact of the sense-organs with the objects is in an unusual way, i.e, if the objects are not ordinarily present to the senses but are conveyed to them through an extra ordinary medium, we have Alaukika perception. Ordinary perception is of two kinds-internal and external. In internal perception, the mind which is the internal organ comes into contact with the psychical states and process like cognition, affection, conation, desire, pain, pleasure, aversion etc. external perception takes place when the five external organs of sense came into contact with the external

objects. It is of five kinds- Visual, auditory, tactual, quotatory and of factory, brought about by the sense-organs sight, sound, touch, taste and smell respectively when they come into contact with the external objects. Extra ordinary perception is of three kinds-samanya laksana, jnana laksana and yogaja. Samanyalaksana perception is the perception of the Universals. An individual belongs to a particular class because the universal of that class inheres in it. Thus a cow becomes a cow because it has the universal cowness inhering in it. We perceive particular cows but we do not perceive a universal cow. Hence the Nyaya maintains that the universals are perceived extraordinarily. Jnanalaksana perception is the 'complicated' perception through association. Here an object is not directly presented to a sense-organ, but is revived in memory through the past cognition of it and is perceived through representation for example, I look at a blooming rose from a distance and say. I see a fragrant rose'. Here the visual perception of the rose revives in memory the idea of fragrance by association which was perceived in the past through the nose. Yogaja perception is the intuitive and immediate perception of all objects, past, present & future, possessed by the yogina through the power of meditation.

### **Inference**

It is defined as that cognition which presupposes some other cognition. It is knowledge (mana) which arises after (anu) other knowledge. Invariable concomitance (Vyapti) is the nerve of inference. The presence of the middle term in the minor term is called pakṣadharmata. The invariable association of the middle term with the major term is called vyapti. The knowledge of pakṣadharmata as qualified by vyapti is called paramarsha. And inference is defined as knowledge arising through paramarsha i.e. The knowledge of the presence of the major in the minor through the middle which resides in the minor and is invariably associated with the major. We know that smoke is invariably associated with fire and if we see smoke in a hill we conclude that there must be fire in that hill. Hill in the minor term, fire in the major term, smoke is the middle term. Inference is generally regarded as of two kinds svartha (for oneself) and parartha (for others). Gotama speaks of three kinds of inference purvavat, sesavat and samanyatodrsta. When we infer the unperceived effect from a perceived cause we have purvavat inference eg. When we infer future rain from dark clouds in the sky. When we infer the unperceived cause from a perceived effect we have Sesavat inference eg when we infer past rain from the swift muddy

flooded water of a river. When inference is based not on causation but on uniformity of co-existence, it is called samanyatodrsta eg when we infer clovenhoofs of an animal by its horns.

### **Comparison**

It has been defined as the knowledge of the relation between a word and its denotation. It is produced by the knowledge of resemblance or similarity for example, a man who has never seen a gavaya or a wild cow and does not know what it is, is told by a person that a wild cow is an animal like a cow, subsequently comes across a wild cow in a forest and recognizes it as the wild cow, then his knowledge is due to upamana.

### **Verbal testimony**

It is defined as the statement of a trustworthy person and consists in understanding its meaning. Testimony is of two kinds- vaidika and secular. The vaidika testimony is perfect and infallible because the Vedas are spoken by God. secular testimony, being the words of human beings who are liable to error, is not infallible. Only the words of trust worthy persons who always speak the truth are valid, others are not.

### **Vaisesika**

The founder of this system is Kanada. The word is derived from 'Vishesa' which means particularity or distinguishing feature or distinction.

### **Padartha**

A category is called padartha and the entire universe is reduced to six or seven padarthas. Padartha literally means ' the meaning of a word' or the 'the object signified by a word'. All objects of knowledge or all reals come under padartha. Originally the vaisesika believed in the six categories and the seventh, that of abhava or negation, was added lateron. The seven padarthas are

1. Substance(dravya)
2. Quality(guna)
3. Action (Karma)
4. Generality(Samanya)
5. Paricularity(Vises)
6. Inherence(Samavaya) and
7. Non –being(abhava)

### **Substance or dravya**

Substance or dravya is defined as the substratum where actions and qualities in here and which is the co-existent material cause of the composite things produced from it without substance, we cannot have qualities and actions for they cannot hand loose in the air, but must be contained some where. Substance is the basis of qualities and actions. The nine substance are (1)earth, (2) water(3)fire(4)air (5)ether (6)time(7)space(spirit) and (9) mind or the internal organ.

### **Guna**

Unlike substance, it cannot exist independently by itself and possess no quality or action. It inheres in a substance and depends for its existence on the substance and is not a constitutive cause of anything. It is called an independent reality because it can be conceived, thought and named independently of a substance where it inheres. They are a static and permanent feature of a substance. Kanada mentions seventeen qualities to which seven more are added by prashastapada. These twenty four qualities are recognized by the Nyaya- Vaisesika school.

### **Karma**

Like quality, it belongs to and inheres in a substance and cannot exist separately from it. But while a quality is a static and permanent feature of a substance an action is a dynamic and transient feature of it. Action is said to be of five kinds (1) Upward movement (2) downward movement (3)Contraction (4) Expansion (5)Locomotion.

### **Samanya**

It is class-concept, class-essence or universal. It is the common character of the things which fall under the same class. It is the universal by the possession of which different individuals are referred to as belonging to one class. It is called eternal, one and residing in many. There is the class- essence of the universal, of man, called 'man-ness' or 'humanity' which inheres in all individual men.

### **Vishesa**

It enables us to perceive things as different from one another. Every individual is a particular, a single and a unique thing different from all others. It has got a uniqueness of its own which institutes its particularity. Generality forms the basis of assimilation, particularity forms the basis of discrimination.

### **Samavaya**

Inseparable eternal relation is called 'inherence'. It is different from conjunction or Samyoga which is a separable and transient relation and is a quality. Samavaya is an independent category (Padartha). Kanada calls it the relation between cause and effect. The things which are inseparably connected are these. The part and the whole, the quality and the substance, the action and the substance.

### **Abhava**

Kanada does not mention it as a separate category. It is added afterwards. Abhava means non-existence. Non-existence is of four kinds. (1) antecedent nonexistence (Pragabhava) (2) Subsequent non-existence (Pradhvaism Sabhava) (3) mutual non-existence (anyonyabhava) (4) absolute non-existence (atyantabhava). The first is the non-existence of a thing before its production. The second is the non-existence of a thing after its destruction. The third is the non-existence of a thing as another thing which is different from it. The fourth is a pseudo-idea.

### **3.2. Samkhya-Yoga**

Tradition regards kapila as the founder of this system. The system is predominantly intellectual and theoretical. Right knowledge is the knowledge of the separation of the purusa from the prakrti. Samkhya is dualistic realism. It is dualistic because of its doctrine of two ultimate realities, Prakrti and Purusa. Prakrti is regarded as the root-cause of the world of objects. All worldly effects are latent in this uncaused cause; it is the potentiality of nature, 'the receptacle and nurse of all generation'. As the uncaused root-cause, it is called prakrti, as the first principle of the universe, it is called Pradhana, as the unmanifested state of all the effects, it is known as Avyakta, as the extremely subtle and imperceptible thing which is only inferred from its products, it is called Aumana, as the un intelligent and unconscious principle, it is called jada, and as the ever, active unlimited power, it is called Shakti.

### **Prakrti**

Prakrti is said to be the unity of three gunas held in equilibrium. The three gunas are sattva, Rajas and Tamas. They are the constituents of Prakrti and through it of the world objects. Being subtle and imperceptible their existence is inferred from their effects –pleasure, pain and indifference respectively. Although they are called gunas, yet they are not ordinary qualities or attributes like the Nyaya-Vaisesika Gunas. They themselves possess qualities like lightness, activity, heaviness etc. they are extremely fine and ever changing elements. They makeup Prakrti which is nothing apart from them. They are not the qualities which Prakrti, the substance, possesses; on the other

hand they themselves contribute prakrit. Sattva literally means real or existent and is responsible for the manifestation of objects in consciousness. It is called goodness and produces pleasure. It is light and bright, buoyant and illuminating. Its colour is white. RAjas, which literally means foulness, is the principle of motion. It produces pain restless activity; feverish effort and wild stimulations are its results. It is mobile and stimulating. Its colour in red. Tamas, which literally means darkness, is the principle of inertia. It produces apathy and indifference. Its colour is dark. These three gunas which constitute prakrti are never separate. They are imperceptible and are inferred from their effects. All things are composed of these three gunas and their difference are due to the different combinations of these gunas.

### **Purusa**

The other of the two co-present co-eternal realities of Sankhya is the purusa, the principle of consciousness. Puresa is the soul, the self, the spirit, the subject, the knower. It is neither body nor senses nor brain nor mind nor ego nor intellect. It is not a substance which posses the quality of consciousness. Consciousness is its essence. It is itself pure and transcendental consciousness. It is the ultimate knower which is the foundations of all knowledge. The Samkhya puts forward several arguments to establish the existence of puresa. (1) The agregate of things must exist for the saka of another. This world, which is an assemblage of the five elements, is for another's use, there is a self for when enjoyment this enjoyable body, consisting of intellected and the rest, has been produced. (2) All knowable objects have the three gunas, and they presuppose a self who is their seen divide of the gunas. (3) there must be a presiding power, a pure consciousness which co-ordinates all experiences. (4) since prakrti is non-intelligent, there must be some one to expenence the products of prakrti (5)there in the striving for liberation (kaivalya) which implies the existence of a purusa with qualities opposed to those of prakrti.

### **YOGA**

Patanjali is the traditional founder of the yoga system. The word 'Yoga' literally means 'union'. According to Patanjali, yoga does not mean union but spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of the body, senses and mind and through right discrimination between Purusa and Prakrti. The Yoga system is closely related to the Samkya system. Yoga system accepts the epistemology and the metaphysics of the Samkya with its twenty five principles, but unlike Samkya system it admits the existence of God. Yoga system gives special interest in the practice of Yoga as a means to the attainment of vivekajnana or discriminative knowledge. Samkya

system also considers vivekajnana to be the essential condition of liberation. The definition given for yoga is cessation of the modification of chitta. The Yoga system points out that, to get rid of suffering, control over the body and the senses are necessary. For this it does not want to kill the body but it recommends its perfection. For the purification of the citta or the mind or for attaining perfection the Yoga gives us the eightfold means. It is what is known as the eight limbs of yoga or Astanga yoga. They are yama (abstentions), niyama (observances), asana (posture), pranayama (control of breath), pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses from their objects), dharana (fixed attention), dhyana (meditation), and Samadhi (concentration). Among these eight steps the first five are said to be external aids and the last three are internal aids to yoga. The first two steps of yoga namely yama and niyama are the ethical basis of yoga and they points to certain negative and positive virtues.

### **Astanga yoga**

1. Yama: - Yama consists of five negative rules they are (a) ahimsa or abstention from all kinds of injury to any life (b) satya or truthfulness in thought, speech and action (c) asteya or non-stealing (d) brahmacharya or control of the carnal desires and passions and (e) aparigraha or non acceptance of unnecessary gifts from other people or disowning of possessions. A Yogin must strictly follow all these negative rules. The body and mind of a man can be sound only if he controls his passions and sexual impulses. A man cannot concentrate his attention on any object when his mind disturbed by the evil thoughts. So the Yogin who is eager to realize the self should be away from all evil thoughts and actions.

2. Niyama or observances:-The second step of Yoga namely Niyama includes five positive rules or it consists in the cultivation of good habits, they are (a) saucha or purification of the body by washing and taking pure food- which is bahya or external purification and purification of mind by cultivating good emotions and sentiments such as friendliness, kindness, cheerfulness for the virtues and indifference to the vices of others- which is known as abhyantara or internal purification. (b) Santosa or contentment- it is the habit of being content with what comes of its without undue extension. (c) Tapas or austerity- it consist in the habit of enduring cold and heat etc and observing austere vows. (d) Svadhyaya or study it consists in the regular habit of study of religious books and (e) Isvara pranidhana or devotion meditation of God.

3. Asana: - The third limb of Yoga namely asana stands for steady and comfortable posture. This is the discipline of the body and consists in the practice of steady and comfortable postures.

Various kinds of asanas are prescribed, such as padmasana, virasana, bhadrasana, sarasana etc. The point that one should always keep in mind is that, these asanas can be properly learnt only under the guidance of a guru. For the attainment of concentration the discipline of both body and mind is necessary. If the body of a man is not healthy, it is very difficult to attain concentration. So the Yoga prescribes certain rules for keeping a healthy body and making it a good medium for concentrated thought. It is believed that the asanas or postures prescribed in it are effective means by which the body can be kept to an extent free from diseases.

4. Pranayama: - pranayama means control or the regulation of breath and consists of regulation of inhalation (puraka), retention (kumbhaka) and exhalation (recaka) of breath. The respiratory exercises are useful for strengthening and improving the functions of heart. This fact is recognized by medical people. When breathe is suspended, the mind is in a state of undisturbed concentration, so by practicing the control of breath, the Yogin can suspend breathing for a long time and in that way prolong the state of concentration.

5. Pratyahara: - Pratyahara is control of the senses and consists in withdrawing the senses from their external objects and keeping them under the strict control of the mind. Our senses have a natural tendency to go to outward objects. They must be checked and directed towards the internal goal or object of meditation. When the senses are controlled by the mind instead of following their natural objects they follow the commands of the mind itself. The mind of a man who has attained this state is not disturbed by sights, sounds, smell etc. Coming through the eyes, ear and other senses. This stage is similar to the mind of a stithaprajna or stable minded person, prescribed in Bhagavadgita. It is very difficult to attain this stage but it is possible of attainment. It requires long practice to gain control over one's senses. As mentioned earlier, yama, niyama, asana, pranayama and pratyahara are regarded as the external aids to yoga – bahiranga – sadhana. The last three disciplines are said to be internal aids to yoga –antaranga-sadhana because they are directly related to some kind of Samadhi or yoga. They are dharana, dhyana and Samadhi.

6. Dharana or attention: - It is a mental discipline which consists in holding or fixing the mind or citta on a desired object or it is the concentration of the mind in some object, internal or external. Then object concentrated may be a part of one's body like one's navel, the middle point of the eyebrows etc (internal) or it may be object like, moon, the idoles of Gods etc. The ability to keep



one's attention steadily fixed on some object is necessary for entering on the next higher stage of yoga.

7. Dhyana or meditation: - It is the next step. It consists in the undisturbed flow of thought about or round about the objects of meditation or the object of attention. One can say it is the steadfast contemplation of the object without any disturbance. At this stage the yogin at first have a clear and distinct representation of the object by parts. Later by prolonged meditation the mind can develop the partial representation of the object into a full presentation of object. So this stage reveals the reality of the contemplated object to the yogi's mind

8. Samadhi: - It means concentration and it is the final step in the practice of yoga. Here at this stage the yogi's mind is completely absorbed in the object of meditation, it loses itself in the object and has no awareness of itself. In dhyana the act of meditation and the object of meditation remain separate, but here at this state they become one. So at this stage only the object of thought exists in the mind and the yogi does not even know that there is a process of thought in the mind. Samadhi is of two kinds – conscious or samprajnata and super conscious or asamprajnata. In the former consciousness of the object of meditation exist, in the later it is transcended. In the samprajnata Samadhi the mind continues to function, though it is completely absorbed in the contemplation of a particular object. In asamprajnata Samadhi objective consciousness also disappears and the mind ceases to function. Patanjali expressed the view that the last three stages namely- dharana, dhyana and Samadhi are more direct aides to spiritual experience.

It is believed that a yogin is able to acquire certain extraordinary powers by the practice of yoga in its different stages. For example it is believed that they can have knowledge of past, present and future. But the yoga system asked people not to practice yoga with an intension of acquiring those powers. One should practice Yoga for the attainment of liberation. A true yogin will always aim at Kaivalya or liberation.

### **3. 3 Purva-Mimamsa**

The word 'Mimamsa' literally means 'revered thought' and was originally applied to the interpretation of the vedic rituals which commended highest reverence. The word is now used in the sense of any critical investigation. The schooling Mimamsa justifies both theses meanings by giving up rules according to which the commandments of the veda are to be interpreted and by giving a philosophical justification for the vedic ritualism. Purva-Mimamsa regards the veda as

eternal and authorless and of infallible authority. It is essentially a book of ritual dealing with the commandments prescribing injunctions or prohibitions. The aim of the Mimamsa is to supply the principles according to which the vedic texts are to be interpreted and to provide philosophical justification for the views contained therein.

The earliest work of this system is the Mimamsa Sutra of Jaimini which begins with an inquiry into the nature of Dharma. Shabarasvamin has written his great commentary on this work and his commentary has been explained by Prabhakara and Kumarila Bhatta.

### **Arthapatti**

It is presumption or postulation or implication. It is the assumption of an unperceived fact in order to reconcile two apparently inconsistent perceived facts. If Devadatta is alive and he is not in his house, we presume that he is elsewhere. 'Being alive' and 'not being in the house' are two perceived facts which appear to be inconsistent. Their apparent inconsistency is removed when we presume the fact of 'being elsewhere'.

### **Anupalabdhi**

Anupalabdhi or Non-apprehension is a means of knowledge with reference to the object negated. When we say "there is no jar in this place" we cognize the absence of the jar. Absence cannot be apprehended by perception, which stands in need of sense-contact with a present object, which is not possible in the case, nor can non-existence be apprehended by the other pramanas. We perceive the vacant space, remember the jar that is absent, and then we have the knowledge of the absence of the jar, which has no reference to the act of perception. Apprehension of non-existence is through anupalabdhi.

### **Sabdha or Verbal testimony**

The aim of the Mimamsa is to ascertain the nature of dharma. Dharma is not a physical existent, and so it cannot be apprehended through the senses. So Sabdha-pramana has got the greatest importance in Mimamsa. Testimony is verbal authority. Mimamsa divides testimony into personal and impersonal. The former is the testimony of the trustworthy persons. The latter is the testimony of the Veda. It is valid in itself. It has intrinsic validity. But the former is not valid in itself. Its validity is inferred from the trustworthy character of the person. The Veda is eternal and authorless. Veda deals with dharma and the objects denoted by it cannot be known by perception, inference, comparison or any other means of valid knowledge. Hence the vedic

injunctions can never be contradicted by any subsequent knowledge. Hence the vedic testimony is valid in itself.

### **3.4. Vedanta**

#### **General Introduction**

The Vedas are the sacred scriptures of the Hindus. They are believed to be eternal and generally considered as emanating from god himself. Each of the Vedas has four sections. The first is known as the samhitas. The second known as Brahmanas, comprises prose passages explaining the significance of sacrificial rites and ceremonies. The third is the aranyakas, the forest-text. These sometimes overlap the Brahmanas. The fourth section of the veda is known as the Upanisads and properly constitutes the essentials of the Vedanta philosophy. The term Vedanta literally means ‘ the end of the Vedas(veda +anta)’. The word ‘anta’, as the English word end, means both termination and aim. Both these meanings are applicable to Vedanta for they are actually the Upanisads, which are the concluding or end portions of the Veda. And also the ideals of the Vedas in its finest form are found in them; it is the flowering of the Vedas. Thus we may say in the Upanisads the aim of the Vedas are achieved. In the popular sense of the term by Vedanta we mean the later interpretations and explanations on the ideas of the Upanisads and the consequent various philosophical schools based on the difference in the interpretation of Upanisadic ideas. The Upanisads are not systematic treatises. The tasks of systematizing their teachings are undertaken by Badarayana in his Vedanta-sutra (400 B.C). Badarayana by no means is the first one to weave a system out of the Upanisadic texts. He himself mentions the names of several teachers who preceded him. But his is the earliest work on Vedanta that has come down to us. This work is known as other names also: Vedanta-sutra, since it is the aphoristic text on Vedanta, Sariraka-sutra, since it is concerned with the nature and the destiny of the embodied soul; Bhiksu sutra, since those who are most competent to study it are the bhiksus or monks or sanyasins. Since the Vedanta-sutra are different interpretations and different schools of Vedanta. Each school of Vedanta has interpreted it in its own way and each commentary has a series of sub commentaries. Each school maintains that is faithful to the text.

## **Different Schools of Vedanta**

In the Upanishads we find statements about the identity and distinction between world, soul and Brahman. The first problem to solve for anyone who is attempting to systematize the teaching of the Upanisads is accordingly to harmonize these two sets of statements. But as Badarayana in his Brahamasutra, tried to harmonize the Upanisads one would have thought that the Vedanta schools would teach one and the same doctrine. But such is not the case. There are five main schools of Vedanta: KevalAdvaita vada (popularly called Advaita) or strict monism of Sankara, Visistadvaita-vada or qualified monism of Ramanuja. Dvaitadvaita-vada or dualism-monism of Nimbarka, Dvaita vada or dualism of Madva, and the Suddha-Advaita-vada or pure monism of Vallabhacarya. The chief point where they are divided is the relation between unity and plurality between God and the world. According to Sankaracarya there is absolute non-difference; Nimbarka admits difference and non-difference and gives equal stress on both; according to Madva, the world is absolutely different from Brahman; and according to Vallabhacarya, the world is real and non different from Brahman.

## **Advaita Vedanta**

Sankara is the founder of Advaita School. He was born in the 8<sup>th</sup> century (788-820 A.D) at Kalady in Kerala. He wrote several works on Vedanta, established monasteries in different centers and spread the doctrine of Advaita. Among his major works are the great commentaries on Upanisads, Bhagavad-Gita and Brahma-sutra and such independent manuals as the Upadesasahasri, the Vivekacudamani and the Atmabodha. He was instructed in the Vedic and Upanisadic philosophy by Govinda one of the pupils of the famous Vedantic philosopher Gaudapada. Although Sankara was the first great consolidator of Advaita he was not the first to teach Advaita. The great work 'Mandukya-karika' by Gaudapada may be regarded as the first available systematic manual of Advaita.

**Central Teaching of Advaita:-** According to (the current and common interpretation of) Advaita nothing is real apart from the absolute spirit which is referred to by such terms as Brahman and Atman. The fundamental teaching of Advaita is therefore, the non-dualism of spirit. Sankara puts the entire philosophy of Advaita in half a verse where he says: 'Brahman is real; the world is an illusory appearance; the individual soul (jiiva) is Brahman alone, not other (Brahma satyam jagan mithya jivo-Brahmaiva napara). The non-duality of Brahman, the non-reality of the world, and

the non-difference of the soul from Brahman- these constitute the teaching of Advaita. The Name “Advaita”:- Sankara recognizes, in the Upanisads, there are two streams of thoughts: one which affirms the identity of Brahman, self and world and the other which denies their identity. But he thinks that one of them, that which affirms the reality of diversity, is only a concession to empirical modes of thought. All diversity being thus only conditionally true, the only teaching of the Upanisads, according to him is that of unity. Since, however, there can be no unity apart from variety, he does not describe his teaching as monism but only as “non-dualism”(Advaita; a-dvaita= not two). Strictly speaking it is therefore wrong to say, as it is now too common to do, that Sankara teaches bare unity. But he only denies the many but does not affirm the one. The reason for this is that no positive attributes can be predicated of reality. If we affirm it as monistic we are predicating attribute to the ultimate reality and that will be a limitation to the absolute; only negatively we can describe the ultimate reality.

### **Realisation or Criterion of Truth**

The Satta-traya(three reals) is the hierarchical differentiation of the reals or existence that Sankara makes. He recognizes three grades of reality:

- (1) Prathibhasika-satta(Illusory reality),
- (2) Vyavaharika-satta(Empirical reality),
- (3) Paramarthika-satta(Ontological reality).

Illusions, dreams and the like are illusory existences. The world in space and time, which is subject to causality, is the empirical reality. Brahman is the ontological reality.

### **The Pratibhasikasatta (The Illusory or Phenomenal Reality)**

Sensory illusions such as mistaking a rope for a snake, a conch for silver, a stump of a tree for a chair, etc., are to be taken not as totally unreal or nonexistent like a hare’s horn or a barren woman’s son because: a) The illusions give to the ignorant man the impression(prathibhasa) of reality until they are corrected by proper sense experience. This knowledge can be sublated to its higher realm of knowledge when we recognize the reality.

b) The above mentioned visual deceptions have their substratum in such things as rope, shell, tree, etc. that is to say, in this kind of illusions there is a reality(which is not illusion but real) which causes the illusion, for eg. Rope in rope snake illusion. Thus, we must note that Sankara ascribes, reality, even to illusory objects (of course relative and lower degree of existence);

because they are not absolute non-existent being such as hare's horn. (For example, snake in the ripe snake illusion is not absolutely unreal)

### **The Vyavaharikasatta (Empirical or Practical or Pragmatic Reality)**

All the objects experienced in our normal waking consciousness are accorded the vyavaharikasatta. While sensory illusions and dream objects are peculiar to particular individuals and last only for a few seconds, our common experience of waking have an abiding reality, they certainly belong to a higher order of reality. The world which is the scene of all our activity cannot, therefore, be dismissed as a momentary illusion. The world is real for all practical illusory experience (with the help of the rope-snake example).

### **The Paramarthikasatta (The Ultimate or Final or Transcendental Reality)**

Brahman alone is paramarthikasatta. This unique reality is unsublatable through all times. This is the ultimate reality of everything.

### **Sattatrayas as the Criterion of Truth**

When the theory of 'three grades of reality' or 'satta-traya' that we have mentioned above is seen from the epistemological point of view we may consider them as the 'criterion of truth'. True or valid knowledge is defined as that knowledge which has for its content what is unsublated and unestablished by any other means. Unsublatability or non-contradiction and novelty are the characteristics of truth. Judged by these characteristics, nothing other than Brahman-knowledge can be true. Brahman-knowledge arises by sublating all other Brahman, and the absolutely true knowledge is the knowledge of Brahman. To the facts of the empirical world belong only relative reality; and empirical knowledge is but relatively true. In other words empirical knowledge is taken as true only till Brahman-knowledge is the knowledge that pertains to such fanciful objects as those of dream and delusion. Thus reality or truth is said to be threefold: absolute (paramarthika), empirical (vyavaharika) and apparent (pratibhasika).

### **Maya**

These three terms are interchangeably used in Vedanta. That is to say all the three has somewhat same meaning. But there is slight difference in their emphasis. These are the principle by which the existence of anything other than Brahman is explained; for advaitins Brahman alone is absolutely real and it is the absolute. World is only appearance. If so, how the appearance takes place? This question is answered with the help of Maya, avidya and adhyasa. The term Maya is

often translated as “illusion”. This is the principle that makes for the world. It is significant only from the relative(vyavaharika) standpoint and not from the standpoint of the absolute(paramarthika). The word ‘Maya’ literally means ‘that which (ya) is not(ma). The concept of Maya is best clarified by setting forth its epistemological and ontological meanings.

From an epistemological point of view, maya is our ignorance (avidya) of the difference between appearance and reality. It is a lack of knowledge. It is not knowing the real and also thinking that appearances are real. Due to avidya we mistake what is sublatale as unsublatable and vice versa. The point to be noted here is that maya is not only lack of knowledge but positive wrong knowledge

Human mind wrongly ascribe qualities to the sublatale appearances which belongs to unsublatable reality and vice versa. From an ontological point of view, maya is the creative power of reality(Brahman) by virtue of which the world of variety and multiplicity comes into existence. It is the potency of Brahman by which it becomes the manifold world. It is considered as the ability of Brahman to be conditioned and to appear in the form of the universe.

### **Maya and Avidya**

The same reality considered under epistemological point of view is termed as ignorance(avidya) and its ontological point of view is maya. Thus maya is the term for the cosmic dimension and avidya is of the individual dimension of the same fact. From a logical point of view maya and ignorance are coeval, in that there be the one without the other. However, from an epistemological point of view, ignorance may be regarded as prior to maya, in that the latter presupposes the former, that is ignorance is the necessary condition for maya. This also means that maya vanishes as soon as ignorance is overcome by knowledge of the real. These two terms- maya and avidya concealment and projection. The real nature is concealed in maya and it is the negative aspect of projection which is something positive. It is a kind of unveiling or appearance and it is called viksepana. It is by this power Brahman appears or projects itself as the world. Some of the Advaitins consider the veiling function (avarana) as ignorance or avidya and the other unveiling function (viksepana) as maya. Whether maya is called the cosmic and positive power of projection and avidya the individual and negative ignorance both the terms are used synonymously. Now let us consider adhyasa. The term also is used in the same sense of maya and avidya by advaitins. The literal meaning of adhyasa is “superimposition,” which Sankara define as “the apparent presentation in the form of remembrance to consciousness of something

previously observed in some other thing.” As an act, superimposition is our thinking mistakenly that an object has certain attributes which in fact it does not have. As we have seen already the human mind in its ignorance (avidya) has the tendency to mistake what is real for unreal and vice versa. But in this process it happens that certain qualities which are present in the real are wrongly ascribe to the unreal; thus we consider what is real as unreal and vice versa. This specific aspect of ascribing wrong qualities could be vaguely considered as the specific application of the term adhyasa. But we must know this is not a process apart from maya and avidya but all the three signifies a single process.

The classic illustration of maya, avidya and adhyasa is the rope snake example. A man steps on a rope in the dark and thinks it is a snake. Here the rope is what is immediately present to consciousness, the snake is an object of past experience, and superimposition is the person’s mistakenly attributing the remembered qualities of the snake to the rope. The snake-like experience cannot be had in the absence of the rope. The capacity of rope to appear as snake may be understood as maya; anyway rope has a capacity(potency) to appear as snake, for we do not perceive, for example, a jack fruit as snake. The lack of knowledge in the person who has misperceived the real nature of what is presented is avidya. When one brings a lamp and discovers that what one has stepped on is only a rope, one’s snake like experience is recognized as being illusory. In a similar, manner, the empirical world arises as a result of maya. Which involves avidya and adhyasa. Just as under superimposition the rope is experienced as a snake, so also under the superimposition of name and forms reality, which is beyond names and forms, is experienced as the world of appearances. On attaining knowledge of reality, ignorance, maya, and the world of appearance vanish away simultaneously. The magician’s trick bests illustrates this point. Suppose a magician makes one thing appear as another or apparently produces something out of nothing. Sankara’s point here is that it is we, being ignorant of the magician’s trick, who mistake appearance for reality. Here is the case of ignorance. For the magician himself, as the master of the trick, there can be no illusion. But once we discover the trick by which the magician make things appear, disappear and reappear, we no longer fall victim to illusion but recognize the magician’s performance for what it is. Magician’s ability to do magic by making one thing appear as another or producing something out of nothing may be understood as maya. The ignorant viewer out of his ignorance and due to magician’s capacity



wrongly ascribes certain qualities of reality to what is being produced out of magic. Just as the magician's by his power of manipulation creates in us illusions, so also reality(Brahman) by its creative power, namely, maya produces in us illusions of the phenomenal world of variety, multiplicity, and diversity. One ignorance is overcome by knowledge of real, one is no longer held captive by maya. One might now ask. How is ignorance produced? To answer this question, we turn to a consideration of Sankara's concept of adhyasa. From what is being said it is clear that Maya is not pure illusion. It is not only absence of knowledge. It is also positive wrong knowledge. It is a cross of the real and the unreal. In fact it is indescribable. It is neither existent nor non-existent nor both. It is not existent(real) for the existent is only the Brahman. It is not non-Existent nor both. It is not existent (real) for the existent is only the Brahman. It is not-existent (unreal) for it is responsible for the appearance of the Brahman as world. It cannot be both existent and non-existent for this conception is self-contradictory. It is called neither real nor unreal. That is it is anirvacaniya. It is false or mithya. But it is not non-entity like hare's horn. It is potency in the positive sense. It is to be emphasized that when Sankara talks about the phenomenal world as maya in the sense of illusion, he is not saying that the phenomenal world is unreality, but that it is an appearance which has its foundation in reality. Appearance, unlike unreality is sublatale. For this reason, there can be no such thing as pure illusion. Every illusion is grounded in reality. It is clear then that when Sankara says that the phenomenal world is an illusion, he is not saying that it is nonexistent and unreal. Quite the contrary, he is affirming that the phenomenal world, like illusions, is not an independent reality but grounded through in the sole reality of Pure Being.

### **The Ultimate Reality: Brahman**

The two terms frequently employed in the Upanishad to indicate the ultimate reality are Brahman and Atman. The usage of these two terms as synonymous implies that the supreme spirit is the same as the self. The ultimate reality of the objective cosmos and the ultimate reality of the subjective self are one and the same. Brahman is that which is great (brahat) than which there is nothing greater. This does not mean that there are other reals which are less great. What it reality, thus it is the absolute, all powerful, all knowing and all encompassing. The Brahman which is ultimate reality must be spiritual in nature. Because if it has to be the ultimate source of every other reality it has to be spiritual for there are non-material realities also of which Brahman should be the source. Brahman: The Absolute If Brahman is the absolute fullness of everything

we can attribute no qualities to him for any attribution becomes limitation to him, for we are limiting Brahman to human categories of knowledge, but Brahman is beyond all these. Thus Brahman cannot be defined in terms of any category. Its nature is indicated by 'via negative'(negative way) as neti,neti, (not this, not this). This Brahman is beyond any cosmic frame work of space, time and causality. Thus it is a cosmic or nisprapanca. This does not mean however, that Brahman is nothingness or a countless void. It is the plenary being, the sole reality. In some text of the Upanisad positive expressions are also employed with reference to Brahman terms like satya, jnana, and ananda(sat,cit,ananda): existence, consciousness and bliss. But these too are designed for making us understand the real by telling us what it is not; i.e. that it is not non-being, not what is inert, and not that which is related to sorrow. To define a thing is to limit it, to finitize it. The infinite and the ultimate cannot be characterized in terms of finite categories. Brahman is nirguna, without characteristics. Even to say that it is one is not strictly true, for the category of number is inapplicable to the absolute; and therefore the term Advaita, no-dual instead of monism. It is true that there are in the Upanisads passages which characterize Brahman as the cause of the world and as the home of all auspicious qualities. But how are we to reconcile the two view – the view of Brahman as the absolute without characteristics, and the view which characterizes it as the world ground? For solving this problem, Sankara postulates two standpoints: the absolute (paramarthika) and the relative (vyavaharika). The supreme truth is that Brahman is non-dual and relationless. It alone is there and there is nothing beside it. But from our stand point, which is the empirical, relative standpoint, Brahman appears as god, the cause of the world. There is no real causation; the world is an illusory appearance in Brahman even as the snake in the rope. This doctrine is known as vivartha-vada(the theory of phenomenal appearance) which is to be distinguished from parinama-vada (the theory of transformation). To say that the Brahman is the cause of the world is as to say that the rope is the cause of the illusory snake.

### **Brahman: God or Isvara**

Brahman the ultimate reality, as we have seen, is unconditioned, without attributes and without qualifications. But it is the same reality that is called God or Isvara when viewed in relation to the empirical world and the empirical souls. Brahman the same, as nirguna(attributeless) and as saguna(with attributes). There are not two Brahmans as wrongly alleged by some of the critics. Even when God is referred to as the lower (apara)Brahman, what is meant is not what Brahman

become lower in the status as God, but that God is Brahman: Brahman as-it-is-in-itself and Brahman as-it-is-in-relation-to-the-world. The former is the unconditioned Brahman the latter is Brahman as conditioned and is subject to configuration and change. Thus Brahman reflected in or conditioned by maya is called Isvara or God. Isvara is the personal aspect of the impersonal Brahman.

## **Visistadvaita Vedanta**

### **Introduction**

We can divide the whole Vedanta broadly into two: absolutistic and theistic. Advaita is absolutistic for the ultimate reality according to it is 'the absolute' the attributeless Brahman. Visistadvaita and dvaita are theistic because for them the ultimate reality is God to whom qualities can be attributed and is the subject of devotion. The attempt to combine personal theism with absolutism took three main lines- Vaisnavism, Saivism and Saktism, according as the personal divinity was identified with Visnu or Siva or Sakthi. The vaisnavas, the saivas and the saktas all have their different sacred literature called the Agamas. The agamas of vaisnavism, saivism and saktism are respectively called the Pancaratra Samhita, the Saiva Agama and the Tantra. The Sakthas practically allied themselves with the saivas. But there was a long struggle between the vaisnavas and the saivas. Both Ramanujaa and Madhva belong to vaisnava tradition. As opposed to the absolute and unqualified non-dualism of Sankara's Vedanta, Visistadvaita Vedanta is qualified non-dualism. According to tradition, Ramanujaa was the founder of Visistadvaita Vedanta. Born in A.D. 1017 of Brahmin parentage, at Sriperumbudur in South India, Ramanuja studied under such great acaryas(teachers) and alvars(poet-saints) as Yadava Prakasa, Yamuna, Periamambi, and Gosthipurna, all of whom held a theistic personality interpretation of Vedanta. Ramanuja considered Sankara's Absolute as an arid and bloodless abstraction not only unwarranted by scriptures but also incapable of fulfilling man's genuine religious aspiration. Therefore Ramanujaa set himself the task of providing an interpretation of Vedanta that would at one preserve the identity of a difference between Atman and Brahman between man and God. To this end, Ramanuja composed several works, the most important of which are Sribhaysya and Gitabhaysya, commentaries on the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavad – Gita, respectively. As a theistic Vedantin, Ramanujaa worship God as Vishnu, established many temples of Visnu and converted many to Vaisnavism. He died in 1187.

### **Tattva-traya: Isvara (god), Cit (soul) and Acit(matter)**

Ramanuja recognizes three things as ultimate and real. They are known as tattva-traya. These are Isvara (god) cit(soul), and acit (matter). Though all are equally real, the two are absolutely dependent on God. Though they are substances in themselves, yet in relation to god, they become his attributes. They are the body of god who is their soul. Whatever is, thus the body of God and he is the soul not only of inorganic nature but also of souls or jivas. The chief difficulty in interpreting the Upanisads, as we know, is in reconciling statements that identify Brahman with the difficulty in interpreting the Upanishads, as we know, is in reconciling statements that identify Brahman with the individual soul and with the physical universe and with those statements that distinguish it from the same. The manner in which Ramanuja harmonizes them is unique. He points out that , as shown by common linguistic usage, we often identify things that are distinct. Thus we say that rose is red. The “rose” which is a substance and “redness” which is a quality cannot be the same; but yet we speak of them as if they were, because usage permits it. Similarly one may say “I am a man,” identifying a surviving soul with the mortal human form in which it appears. Such usage, how ever, is not found in the case of all distinct things. We cannot, for example speak of a man and his coat or his staff in this manner, but have necessarily to say that he has a coat on him or a staff in his hand, thus indicating clearly their distinction by our mode of speech. Contrasting these two forms of usage, Ramanuja comes to the conclusion that the relation in the two former cases should be different from and more intimate than that in the latter which obviously mere conjunction. But the relation of the former type is inseparable and it is found only between (1) substance and attribute, and (2) body and soul that is, between two substances of which one is necessarily spiritual. This intimate relation is termed by him aprthaka-siddhi, which literally means “inseparability.” It connotes that one of the two entities related is dependent upon the other in the sense that it cannot exist without the other also existing and that it cannot be rightly known without the other also being known at the same time.

To illustrate this point more clearly let us take another example. A person, namely Davis who was once a child, once a youth and is now old, may be regarded as one and the same person when we mean by it the soul as embodied previously in childhood, a youthful, and now in an

aged, bodily frame is one and the same. But at the same time we know there is a difference between child Davis, young Davis and old Davis. That is qualified non-dualism; unity with difference. To put the whole matter briefly, it is the qualified or the embodied that is one, while the factors qualifying or embodying it are quite distinct, though inseparable, from it.

There is no doubt that Ramanuja successfully overcome the difficulty which the Upanishads present. The statements found in the Upanisads where they distinguish the world or the self from Brahman, is true as they give expression to what is a matter of fact. Where they identify them, they only mean that they are inseparable in the sense explained just now, and not that they are identical. The final import of the statement is that though the world and the individual souls are real and distinct, the absolute in which they are included is one. Thus, for Ramanuja, Brahman is the unity of the different selves and material objects of the phenomenal world. Brahman as the identity of these different constituents is the underlying substratum. It should be pointed out that, correctly speaking; Ramanuja's concept of unity is not unity but union; for from a logical point of view it is only union and not unity that can be thought of as being constituted of ultimately distinct and separate parts. This is the same as saying that individual selves and object are real qualities and modes of Brahman. Individual selves and material objects are related to Brahman as parts to a whole. Each part is separate and yet not different in substance from the whole. Just as qualities are real but cannot exist independently of substance, so also the selves and objects are as part of ultimate reality but cannot exist independently of it. It is for reason that Ramanuja's Absolute, unlike Samkara's, is not unqualified identity but identity in difference. Hence Ramanuja's Vedanta is known as Visistadaita (qualified nondualism).

Ramanuja's view is Visistadvaita or non-dualism qualified by difference. The absolute is an organic unity, an identity which is qualified by diversity. It is a complex whole (visista) which consists of the interrelated and interdependent subordinate elements which are called 'visesana' and the immanent and controlling spirit which is called visesya. According to Ramanuja God is the central principal of both the individual soul and the physical world. The three entities-soul, world and god- are all real and distinct from one another. Thus the final Upanishadic teaching, according to Ramanuja, is that while Brahman, the soul and the physical world are all different and equally different, although they stand in a peculiarly close relation to one another. What is meant by describing the doctrine as Advaita(non-dualism) is not that the complex of these three

elements is a synthesized unity of differences but only that Brahman as embodied in or inspiring the souls and matter is one. The latter, viz. souls and matter are not identical with it or with one another. If we like, we may interpret the term “Visistadvaita” as signifying that there is nothing outside this embodied whole.

### **Concept of God**

In Ramanuja’s account of God, we may notice three points of importance. First, God is identified with the absolute. He is Brahman and Brahman must be a savisesa or a qualified unity. God stands for the whole universe and matter and souls form his body, he being their soul. As the absolute, the ultimate unity-in-and through=trinity, the concrete whole, god may be viewed through two stages-as cause and as effect. During the state of dissolution (pralaya), God remains as the cause with a subtle matter and unembodied souls forming His body. The whole universe lies latent in him. During the state of creation (srsti), the subtle matter becomes gross and the unembodied souls(except the nitya and mukta souls) become embodied according to their karmas. In the effect state the universe becomes manifest. The former state is called the causal state of Brahman and while the latter state is the effect-state of Brahman. Secondly, god is considered as the immanent inner controller (antharyami), the qualified substance (visesya or prakrti), who is in himself changeless and is the unmoved mover of this world-process. In his essence he does not suffer change which is said to fall to the lot of his attributes or modes only.

Ramanuja makes no distinction between attributes and modes. They are absolutely dependent on god and are inseparable from him. They are his body and he is their soul. Just as in the case of an ordinary individual only the body undergoes change while the soul is changeless, similarly it is only body of god,ie. the matter and the individual souls that undergo changes and not God himself who is their soul. Hence god is the unchanging controller of the all change and limitation of the finite souls do not affect the essence of god. Thirdly, God is also transcendent. He is the perfect personality. He has a divine body. Embodiment is not the cause of bondage. It is karma which is the cause of bondage. Hence it is theistic conception of God. God as the perfect personality is devoid of all negative qualities and possesses all merits. God is considered as the srsti-sthithi-samhara- creator, preserver and destroyer. The principle thus enunciated help us to understand what, according to Ramanuja, the meaning of the Upanishadic statement “That thou art” (Tat tvam asi) is. Here the word “That” finally denotes God having the entire universe as his

body; and “thou” , God having the individual soul as his body. The import of the proposition, as a whole, is accordingly the identity of the embodied one- God-in both.

### **Individual Soul**

We now consider Ramanujas conception of cit or the individual soul. It is described as a prakara-mode-of God, by which is meant that it is an accessory to him, and not that it is a mode in the sense of being a transformation of him, and not that it is a mode in the senses of being a transformation of him. It is looked upon as God’s “body” in as much as God is immanent in, upon and guides it from the inside. It is a spiritual substance in itself and is absolutely real. It is an eternal point of spiritual light. It is beyond creation and destruction. In the state of creation it is embodied according to its karmas, while in the state of dissolution and in the state of liberation it remains in itself. Though it is eternal, real, unique, uncreated and imperishable yet it is finite and individual, being only a part or a mode of god. Hence it is regarded as atomic (anu) in size. Though it is really subjected to earthly existence and to the various imperfections, defects and miseries which the worldly life implies yet these do not affect its essence. the soul is different from its body, sense organs mind, and even cognition. In samsara it wrongly identifies itself with these due to ignorance and karma. The soul is a self-luminous substance as well a self-conscious substance.

It manifests itself without the aid of the knowledge and it is also self-conscious. It is the substance of Dharma-bhuta jnana. The souls are many; and unity is predicated of them anywhere in the Veda, it is because all of them alike are of the nature and therefore forms one and the same class. Thus they are qualitatively homogenous and only quantitatively different. They are intrinsically happy but transmigrate and are subject to suffering, as a result of their past karma. The jivas are of three types;

- (a) Those that were never in bondage, and have therefore always been free (nitya-mukta),
- (b) Those that have passed through the ordeals of life and have, through successful self-discipline become free (mukta) and
- (c) Those that are still in the process of transmigration (baddha)

### **Matter (acit)**

According to Ramanuja, acit or unconscious substance is of three kinds: prakriti or misra-sattva, nitya vibhuti or suddha-sattava, and kala or sattvasunya. Prakriti:- Prakriti is ordinary matter which makes samsara. Prakriti is conceived very much as in the Samkhya Yoga, the only

important difference being (i) that it is not regarded here as independent of spirit, here prakrti is absolutely dependent on god and (ii) that sattva, rajas and tams are taken to be its attributes and not its constituents. That it is not independent of God is shown by our description of it as the body of God. Nityavibhuti or suddhasattva is made up of pure sattva and is called ajada or immaterial like dharmabhutajnana. The ideal world and the bodies of God and of eternal and liberated souls are made of this stuff. Kala or time is another unconscious substance and is given in a separate status.

## **Dvaita Vedanta**

### **Introduction**

Dvaita, Vedanta, as its very name indicates, rejects Sankara's non-dualism as well as Ramanuja's qualified non-dualism and upholds though going dualism between the world and Brahman. The school of Dvaita Vedanta was founded by madhva. Born of Brahman parentage in A.D.1199, at Billigram in south western India, Madhva began his philosophic studies under Achyutapreksha. But, dissatisfied with his teacher's non-dualistic interpretation of Vedanta, Madhva left Achyutapreksha. After several years of independent study and reflection, he produced his own interpretation of Vedanta which developed into the school of Dvaita Vedanta. He was the author of thirty seven works, among which the most important are Madhavabhasya and Gitabhasya, commentaries on the Brahmasutra and the Bhagavad-Gita, respectively. Madhva died in 1278. The philosophic foundation of Madhva's dualism in his theory of perception and knowledge. According to Madhva, Genuine knowledge is the articulation of perceived differences between things as well as between things and the perceiving self. Consequently, to deny difference to deny the very possibility of knowledge; those who affirm identity but deny difference, argues Madhva, are in the absurd position of claiming knowledge by rejecting its very foundation. The gist of the argument is that perception necessarily implies the perceiver and the perceived as distinct existents; and knowledge, too in that it is based on perception, analytically implies the knower and the known as distinct existents. It should be obvious from the foregoing that Madhva is both an epistemological and an ontological realist: not only do we perceive the world as constituted to different selves and material object, but in reality it is so. In short, the empirical world is real and pluralistic. Further, according to Madhva, Brahman, the creator and Lord of the world, is distinct from the world.

### **Pancabheda: The Theory of Difference**



As we have said above, for Madhva, genuine knowledge is the articulation of perceived differences between things as well as between things and the perceiving self. Madhva's philosophy is thus through and through a philosophy of differences are, distinctionism. He recognized five fundamental and absolute distinctions. These are known as Pancabheda. The difference are: (1) between Brahman and individual selves, (2) between Brahman and matter, (3) between matter and individual selves, (4) between one individual self and another, and (5) between one material object and another. Madhva divides the universe into independent and depended being. Brahman is the sole independent being; selves and material object depend upon Brahman for their existence. Brahman is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. To the question how Brahman as a distinct being can be omnipresent without being limited by the equally real selves and material objects, Madhva replies that the latter, being dependent upon Brahman, lack the power to resist and limit Brahman.

### **God**

For Madhva, reality then consist of three eternal, absolutely real, and irreducibly distinct entities, namely, Brahman, selves, and matter, although the last two are absolutely dependent on the first. True to the spirit of distinctionism, Madhva regards Samkara's Nirguna(unqualified) Brahman not as reality but as an empty and absurd concept, and takes Samkara's saguna(qualified) Brahman as the ultimate reality. Madhva teaches that Brahman is God, the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world(selves and material objects) and is the Lord of karma, God creates the world only in the sense that by his will he brings into existence the world of variety and multiplicity. At the time of dissolution of the world, God transforms all material objects into homogeneous primordial matter, and selves into disembodied intelligences. It is important, however to not that even in the state of dissolution, there remain the distinction between selves, matter, and God, according to Madhva, is a person, whose essence is reality, consciousness, and bliss (sat-cit-ananda). He is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe (srsti-sthithi-samhara). He possesses all positive qualities in infinite perfection. He is both transcendent and immanent.

### **Soul, Bondage and Salvation**

Selves are eternal, plural and atomic; consciousness and bliss are intrinsic to them. But owing to their past karma, selves become entangled with bodies and suffer pain and misery. God endows selves with free will; consequently, each self is wholly responsible for its state of existence. Evil

in the world is thus not traceable to God, who possesses all and only positive perfections. Madhva divides souls into three kinds; eternally free(nityamukta), freed(mukta), and bound(baddha). Though god controls the soul from within, yet it is real agent and a real enjoyer and is responsible for its acts. Like Ramanuja, Madhva recognize total devotion and self-surrender to God as the only means of salvation. It is defined as the eternal love for God with a full sense of his greatness. Accordingly bhakti yoga is the sole path to liberation. We may note here that in the entire Indian philosophical religious tradition Madhva is alone in teaching the doctrine of eternal damnation.

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