

**VEDANTA THROUGH
SHRI SHANKAR'S
PRAKARANS**

by
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INTRODUCTION

It is a matter of delight for the Mahesh Research Institute of Vedāntic studies to present this booklet (which is, in fact a preface to the Institute's 'PRAKARAṆADVĀDASĪ') penned by no less an authority on Vedānta than Svāmī Maheśānanda Giriji, Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara, the pontiff of the Dakṣiṇāmūrti Maṭha (Varanasi) and the founder President of the Institute. Although the author presupposes that the reader will go on to read the presented texts, yet the fact that innumerable directives are found in this preface for a research scholar, lured the Institute into publishing it as a separate booklet.

Svāmiji is the head of the Dakṣiṇāmūrti tradition, being the direct and prime disciple of Svāmī Nṛsiṁha Giri Mahārāja, a revered Paramahansa saint of the century. Moreover, Svāmī Maheśānanda Giriji is not only an adept in Vedānta and other Indian Philosophies, but has also a keen knowledge of the various Western ones. Be it Plato, Kant or Gurdjief, he has fathomed with all deliberateness the depths of their ideologies. Fortunately for us, the lack of linguistic communication between the present, which actually is now centred in the Euro-American culture and the past, which is one of the prime reasons for the backwardness of present Indian thought is conspicuous by its absence in the writings of Svāmiji. Not only is the gap between the two bridged, but by studying the past in the light of the present, the framing of the future is advised in a commendable manner. The tradition set forth by Śaṅkara and Ṣureśvara is truthfully followed by Svāmiji in his views regarding the acceptance of facts as found out by modern science. Truth is not to be kept in a glass-case, sheltered from the onslaught of fact and reason. It is, rather, to be seasoned by alternate exposure to both of them. Vedānta does not claim its belief as Truth; it believes *in* Truth. 'Vedānta is pure philosophy in the sense that it does not accept the authority of the scriptures unless it can be rationally harmonized with the totality of experience, says Svāmiji (p., 19). In this creation of Māyā, no recognition of a fact and its explanation is final. Experience alone is the finale of rationale. Thus, if modern physics proves the identity of all matter and energy by reducing it to terms of electro-magnetic waves, Vedānta is happy to accept the fact because its work becomes considerably reduced; all manifest differences have been removed and only the unity of the knower, knowledge and the

known remains to be proved. It is the firm conviction of Svāmījī that 'Truth will not change, interpretations will later follow the great ācāryas in their methods' (p., 26). This is not mere logic, needing a fertile brain, it is dexterously manipulating to explain the Truth from any possible angle, needing complete realization.

An important factor to be borne in mind is that Svāmījī does not propose to bring back the old order : 'The flow of time is only in one direction. The ages can never come back. Back to (the) past is a meaningless dream of the lazy ones. Onwards to (the) future is the Vedāntic message (p., 26). Neither does he want an imitation or an amalgamation. This view is different from all reformists of the present times. He wants us to understand the fundamental co-ordinates of (absolute) culture and then deduce the various cultures from them. Therefore, 'Vedānta needs to be comprehended in its purest form, bereft of all the *dust* it has gathered in its *religious moorings* of the last several hundred years' (p., 2). Thus here, spirituality does not encompass rituals of any form—traditional or modern (i. e. religious or secular).

This brings us to the reason why he has taken such great pains to publish authentic editions of Śaṅkara's works with the best of commentaries. He is sure, that the revitalization of Hinduism 'can come only through the drinking of ambrosia of knowledge, churned out of the ocean of Vedānta by its greatest exponent, Śrī Śaṅkara' (p., 3). As tradition, belief and custom do not find a place of any importance in the minds of people today, to revive any culture, religion or philosophy, it must be put forward in reasonable terms, for reason alone is the yardstick of truth in the present times. This is exactly what Vedānta does. Vedānta is not the name of any text, but as Physics is to be read in the book of nature so is it to be read in each experience. Studying the Truth, understanding or realizing it, practising and then preaching it is the true worship of God, according to Svāmījī. The fruits of our actions have to be offered to the Lord, not more apples and apricots. 'We insist that Kṛṣṇa must be studied and followed if we claim to be Vaiṣṇavas' (p., 20). On the contrary, not studying Him is a sin. Svāmījī strikes at those who remain contented in merely offering flowers in no uncertain terms : 'To hide the hideous sin of *गुरुहृद* killing the spirit of the Great Master, they have taken to establish His images and temples' (p., 21). The situation is deplorable, 'Let us save him from such fate at least, if we have decided to throw him in the dustbin of history' (p., 21).

This does not at all mean that traditions and customs are not to be followed. 'The behaviour of a man of realization will be according to the manners of the civil behaviour of the Particular country, age and culture' to which he belongs (p., 8). All rules are equally meaningless or meaningful when seen from the plane of the Absolute. Thus, the code of conduct laid down for a Saṁnyāsī by Sadāśiva in his Kārikā makes Svāmījī complain 'This indicates how the medieaval mind was engrossed in *inconsequential* details, as compared to the vastness of Śaṅkara' (p., 58). Even Ānanda Giri has said that distinction, based on caste are unnecessary for the aspirant and the wise (p., 52), making it clear that all social factors have only a relative value. But the very fact that Śaṅkara asked the pariah to clear his way (p., 48), tells us that relative value is not being value-less. As far as behaviour with the ignorant ones goes, one must try to follow the norms followed by them and not create a rigmarole in their minds by acting in a different manner. Even the Gītā bars the wise from creating unsettlement in the ignorant.

'The problems and solution are the same, only the presentations of the problems are different, and so the presentations of the solutions have to be different' says Svāmījī elsewhere. This is the *spirit* of tradition. By shedding such illuminating light on the texts and framing the co-ordinates for plotting the ancient tradition in modern terms, Svāmījī has increased the value of the work of the Institute. We humbly thank him for writing for us such a scholarly, inspiring and exhaustive preface.

S. Śubrahmaṇya Śāstrī

Director

MAHESH RESEARCH INSTITUTE

P R E F A C E

ब्रह्मानन्दस्वरूपप्रदर्शनद्विकते दिव्यशक्त्या शरीरी
भूत्वा श्रीशङ्कराख्यो यतिकुलतिको निर्मलानुद्धिर्धुः ।
कृत्वा भाष्यज्ञभीरं कलिमलविकलान् तत्र दृष्ट्वा विनेयान्
कारुण्याद्योऽद्वितीयप्रकरणमलिखत्सम्प्रपद्ये महेशम् ॥

Philosophy is the study of the universe, both internal and external. The study may be either to build a structure of the basic co-ordinates, or to find the basic dynamism to rebuild it. Western philosophy is mainly of the first type, and Hindu of the second type. Dynamism is inherently practical, and since both the understanding of the laws and the external-internal environment are limited, the technique of application is bound to be relative, and basically evolutionary. Religion in Hinduism is thus relative, whereas the Absolute alone is real. I called it *basically* evolutionary since a study of the History of Hinduism clearly shows the periods of advancement and decay; but after each decay it rises to a higher height than the preceding one. The last few hundred years have been the dark night, notwithstanding the few sparkingly bright stars, and so we seem to be on the threshold of a new rising. The way communication between different cultures and understanding of the laws of external and internal nature have deepened, as a result the superstitious boundries of humanity must crumble, and a universal structure must emerge. We definitely do not expect either the imitation of one culture by others, nor an amalgamated or an evolved pattern followed by all; but we certainly feel that a new co-ordinate will be there which will make differences not only meaningful but necessary. Just as the Theory of General Relativity is the basis, and the Theory of Special Relativity its application to our Universe, similarly different cultures will be just the special application of the general principles. Vedānta is the only philosophy which has tried this method, and our intimate familiarity with all cultures has convinced us that all existing ones are deducible by its laws. As is true of all technology, the

applications seem more real than the pure principles to an undiscerning eye, similarly the Hinduism, particularly its decaying present, seems to represent Vedānta not only to foreigners, but also to Indians. But as any true seeker knows that atom bomb is no reflection on the great discovery of detoning the two categories of matter and energy, nor even the fruitful energy production its justification. Utilitarians of all ages have denied the values of pure knowledge, yet their own utility is taken to be unquestionable. Utility for whom, is a question always parried by them. Even such dogmatism as the greatest good for the greatest number is contentless, because both the *good* and the *number* are indeterminates. And if human being is superstitiously accepted as the determinant, even then what is its utility, except again the selfish aggrandizement. Thus Vedānta needs to be comprehended in its purest form, bereft of all the dust it has gathered in its religious moorings of the last several hundred years. Śaṅkara's writings being the last, yet not the least, presentation of the tenets, encompass the total development that took place from the moment of the first *Man* to his times. As a result all that must have existed prior to him was lost in the originals, since he as the greatest mystic philosopher of all times made them unnecessary by his novo-presentation. In addition he was also the greatest intuitive poet of religion that the world has ever seen. His prose is also poetry. In the midst of logic chopping the great mystic suddenly lapses into a vision and one wonders whether he is reading the same book. Thus his works became the foundation of Vedānta though undoubtedly built by the worthy stones of the previous structure. Since Vedānta is the only practiced religion of India to-day, he is called by western savants as the founder of Neo-Hinduism, or Christ of the Hindu New Testament. But one must not be led away by these analogies, since Śaṅkara revealed the true spirit, rather than founded; and redelivered rather than testified the eternal message of the spirit. Hence we have been feeling for a long time that a deep study of his work alone can re-vive not only Hinduism but all the world religions. Since Sanskrit words have changed their Vedic connotations in the last millenium, because of the rejection of vedic rituals, both external and internal, Śaṅkara's writings always need a guide to understand them by a beginner. Hence we have decided to present all his works with at least one commentry, and more than one where needed. In due course the plan envisages the authoritative translations in English, Hindi and other Indian and non-Indian languages. We hope this will be the offering we will be able to make at His feet by 1980, the beginning of the thirteenth century of His Advent. It is entirely due to him that the revived Hinduism, after its near complete eclipse by the rationalism of Buddha, could withstand the onslaught of Islām for several hundred years, preserving the spirit and body both in a fit enough condition to survive the stealthy submarine attack of Christianity. The defeat of the Hindu kings meant not only the positive loss of protection, but a positive vulnerability to a proselytising religion, which in both the cases stopped short of nothing—absolutely nothing—to destroy both its structure and spirit. Sword, economics, service facilities, even food; medicine, clothes, to those whose poverty was created out of their own actions, were used to draw the blood out of the veins of Hinduism. But inspite of all these travails he was the great beacon light of advaita and its prophet of absolute renunciation, smiling on the ephemeral, that kept the spirit alive. Hinduism, it seems, will have the last laugh, for it alone sees the appearance as unreal. Standing on the support of the immutable Brahman, nay, knowing the fearlessness which comes out of a deep

mystic non-dual experience of it, Hinduism is not only living but ready to give transfusion to those very blood-suckers, when they are in need of it, unable to face the unbridled bull of modern science, which is trying to uproot in its tempestuous course all that is beautiful and good resting on the blind faith of material objectivity. But to do this, Hinduism needs its own revitalisation, which can come only through the drinking of ambrosia of knowledge, churned out of the ocean of vedānta by its greatest exponent Śri Śaṅkara. The present is an attempt towards this goal.

Non-Hindu religions in general present a God who is more satanic in appearance than like God. They make people mortally afraid of God. The concept of prayer, more often than not, means beging for favours, or worse, to avoid the terror lest he be antagonised. Punishment for disloyalty and disobedience is the main stick by which the herds are kept in the barn. He gives life and then kills His own creations, has his favourites and being omnipotent need not follow any definite rules, showing miracles to dumbfound us. This popular conception of God has entered even the common Hindu mind, and hence we have a number of Gods or pseudo-Gods parading all over the country and abroad. The spreading of gospel of such a God is at the root of indifference, or even antagonism, towards Him in all thinking men. Unfortunately the Brahman-Ātman concept of God, which was popular even in the villages of India, manifesting itself in such idioms 'as' Ātma so (is) Parmātman or 'you' Ātma is also in him is becoming a rare knowledge in the educated city-dwellers, who form the industrialist-beurocrat-politician triad of exploiters. Though of Indian origin, they are foreigners to their own culture, and worse, are proud of being so. The only way that all this can change is through Total Revolution. But all revolutions must first start in the minds of men. We feel sure that a thorough study of Śaṅkara is bound to bring a thorough change in our mental attitudes. All this is made clear so that it is not taken as one more dead weight of the ancient heritage.

Before taking up the magnum opus of the Master viz the trilogy of the Bhāṣyas on Upaniṣads, Brahmasūtras and Gītā, we thought it proper to introduce the culled thought expressed in his simpler works. These works are technically called prakaraṇas i.e. works dealing in detail, some specific problem of the philosophy. But actually many of them introduce the subject matter in a way that can be understood by the beginner, and generally one will not find it easy to comprehend the postulates without them. We have here selected twelve works from the pen of the Great One, and all of them have been commented by the great teachers covering a span of more than a thousand years. Thus a discerning reader will not only be able to trace the history of Vedāntic thought, but also see how the fundamental concepts were moulded to suit different situations, and ages. This is necessary, for without this the dynamism of Vedānta can never be understood, nor one gets the mastery over moulding the form to suit the ideal in different situations. Vedānta is more interested in giving its followers the tools with which to handle oneself and one's environment, rather than hand down a set of rules numbering five or ten. This is inherent in the relativity concept (*Māyā*) upheld by Vedānta.

The commentators presented here, include two of the greatest direct disciples, Sureśvara and Padmapāda, who were reputed scholars of their time, and gave the Vedāntic movement a new content by moulding to suit two different temperments. One propounds the theory of

the universe as a Real Image, and the other as an Imaginary Image. Thus Realistic Idealism and Idealistic Realism, both of which suit different aspirants are taken into account. If one attracted the active type of aspirants, the other equally appealed to the emotional type. But one must always remember that both do not exclude each other. Hence a Vedāntic devotee neither becomes callous to his fellow beings, nor inattentive to his duties. A Vedāntic activist never loses contact with God-vision both inside and outside. The ideal of perfection is a harmonious whole, and is never partial in Vedāntic outlook. Both the disciples are said to have had some differences, and yet both received Śaṅkara's appreciation and acclamation for their works and approach to Vedānta. Hence the view of some modern scholars that their thoughts are incompatible with that of the Master is to be totally ignored. They are complementary to Śaṅkara. We have included Padmapāda's annotation on Ātma-Bodha, or self-realization, a treatise on the means of attaining the ultimate experience. The reader will be able to see and comprehend Padmapāda's approach even in this small work. Padmapāda was the first to be initiated, and was installed as the Chief Organiser of the Eastern wing of the order. He was taught Brahma-Sūtra three times, which perhaps means that the Great Śaṅkara taught the work himself thrice and Padmapāda was present everytime. It shows the great respect and humility he had for the words of his guru. He has named his annotation as Vedānta-Sāra or the essentials of Vedānta, which undoubtedly it is. His comments on Brahma-Sūtra, which forms the basis of the Vivaraṇa School are similarly named Pañcapādi or discussion of the five essentials. We are sure the present work in publication, unavailable as yet in print, though has been easily available in manuscript, will help to give an insight into the Master's Mind.

Sureśvara, the other great disciple upon whose shoulders Śaṅkara placed the organisation of Southern India, is represented here by Pañcīkaraṇa Vārtika on the Pañcīkaraṇa of the Master. Sureśvara has named all his annotative works as Vārtika, for it is said that Śaṅkara himself ordered him to write Vārtika on his voluminous commentary on Bṛhadarāṇyaka Upaniṣad, which is perhaps the first complete collection of Advaita teachings of a single Master the great Yājñavalkya. Yājñavalkya was a very early revolutionary, revolting against the statism and ritualism of Vaiśampāyana. In the Sanskrit terminology, vārtika is a treatise which points out the mistakes of the original work, in addition to explaining and supplying the missing links. The very fact that Śaṅkara asked Sureśvara to do so, clearly indicates the dynamism of Vedāntic attitude. It is evident that he did not want to inculcate the spirit of infallibility even in himself. This view of eternally opening up new vista of Reality as perfection, is the only view that can appeal to a rationalist age. The fact that Sureśvara was authorised to do so, indicates, the great faith, in his understanding of the tenets, that Śaṅkara had. It may be pointed out as an aside that Sureśvara, with all his humility and respect for the guru, pointed out some inconsistencies in the work, and also gave the amended consistent view as the corrected tenet, even as Śaṅkara himself had done with respect to Bādarāyaṇa and others. This tradition is important even to-day. A thorough study of even the present work will reveal what is so beautifully put forward in a verse in the Vārtika. It is enunciated that any means that helps a person to view the Perfect is the real means, and not a dogmatic view that hinders the attainment of the vision. We feel this

catholicity is absent in the so-called religions of to-day. Religions are used more for hampering the dynamic development of man, rather than giving it a greater impetus. Truth, and even its means, are believed to have been encased in a book of knowledge or faith. It is forgotten that Physics or Chemistry is not the name of theory or a text book, but it is to be read in the book of nature by its observation. Texts are only the records of how someone read and comprehended the book of Nature. They are certainly helpful, but a scientist has to read the real book, and reveal to himself the reality. Every scientist is bound to read somewhat differently than the others. Similarly, God has to be read in the revelations of one's own self and its nature both external and internal. God can not be read in a Bible or a Koran. They reveal to us the readings of the inner self as read by Christ or Mohammed. They only help us to read ourselves. But each one of us will read in a slightly different way.

Now one very important point is to be noted. Śaṅkara asked Sureśvara to write Vārtika. Śaṅkara lived a very short span of thirty two years. And yet he considered that times have changed enough to present an amended version of the fundamentals. For it is one thing to have slight individual variations which are really personal, and quite another to present an amended public version, which implies perceptible change. We talk of the generation-gap to day. We feel times are changing fast, hence it is difficult to keep cultural and other changes moribund, yet our general feeling is that it is all not very well for the society. Deep within, we want to stop this change as much as possible. And here the established Churches and Maulawis try their best to hinder the onward flow. But the prophet of perfection is entirely of a different build. He wants his disciples to be the heralds of new thoughts, new revolutions, showing the new paths, even before the general people become familiar enough with the old, to get bored. A Vedāntic teacher does not *follow* the revolution, he *creates* them. It is not that he adjusts to changes in sciences and social outlook, but he changes the presentation ahead of them. Hence, as a philosopher, he is not just in tune with the present, but in his understanding of the present, he comprehends the direction of the movement, and is thus anticipating and presenting the future. This gospel truth was followed by all the great Śaṅkarites even up to the present day, though in all fairness we must admit that the recent past has been fumbling on this issue. One of the main reasons has been the lack of linguistic communication between the *present*, which actually is now centred in the Euro-American culture, and is lack of its presentation in the Indian languages. A minority of two percent English knowing exploiters want to keep it to themselves. The past rooted in the Indian culture has been recorded in Sanskrit. But as the saying goes "the spirit willeth but the flesh faileth" so the spirit to guide is not lacking; but what lacks is the means to understand the fundamental dynamism of the modern age. In India we come to know of these changes in *man*, when it has already become a *past* and gone through the seed stage to become the tree, to produce the next seed. Hence we are unable to give the lead. This at times gives a false notion that Vedānta is not willing to herald a total revolution.

Sureśvara's work presented here is his shortest treatise, a mere sixty-four verses in all. His magnum opus contains twelve thousand verses, which is half of Vālmiki's epic. If we remember that he is not writing a biography or a story, but unadulterated,

philosophy we will realise the volume of his output. But even in this small span his masterly presentation awes us. This work is dedicated to contemplation. All the hints to the means of realisation are given here. It is a complete guide to nididhyasana, the development of will, which is one of the three approaches to Reality, the other two being śravaṇa the acquiring of knowledge, and Manana, actively participating with all our being in making the knowledge our own and developing it in the process, in light of our own experience. It is Upadeśa-Sāhasrī of Śrī Śaṅkara presented here that represents Śravaṇa, and Siddhanta-Bindu the Manana.

Next in importance to Sara and Vārtika though not historically, amongst the books presented here, is Siddhanta-Bindu. It is a commentary on the ten meaningfully pregnant verses of Śrī Śaṅkara, but has become a classic of vedānta in its own right. The writer Madhusūdana Sarasvatī belonged to the early sixteenth century of the Christian era, thus separated by about eight centuries from the great master. But Madhusūdana was a colossus who ever walked on the face of this earth. His penetration in the logical philosophy is equally matched by his devotional mysticism presented in some of his poems of supreme melody. In an age when devotion versus philosophy was as real as capitalism versus communism to-day, it is to his credit that both claimed him as their leaders. Even to-day the sectarians maintain this ambiguous attitude towards him, as they do about another vedāntic giant, an elder contemporary Appaya Dikṣita. It is also interesting to note that in an age when Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites were at logger heads, Appaya was considered a Śaiva and Madhusūdana a Vaiṣṇava, while in fact they both were nothing but vedāntis, more or less during the same period of history. This clearly gives the lie to the often repeated charge that vedānta is non-devotional or even anti-devotional, in spite of the fact that the majority of the hymns recited in the liturgy of the Hindus were written either by Śaṅkara or one belonging to his school.

Though the idea was to present the comments on the original texts of Śaṅkara, we had to make an exception in the case of Nyāya-Ratnāvalī, which is a commentary on Siddhanta-Bindu. But any student of Vedānta will know that no apology is needed for this.

Gauḍa Brahmananda Sarasvatī is perhaps the last of the Vedāntic giants of the titanic age, which saw the completion of Vedānta presentation in the neo-logicistic (navya-nyāya) language. Just as Śrī Harṣa with his Khaṇḍana put a stop to the old logical theories, Brahmananda succeeded in putting an end to the new logical approach started by Gaṅgēsopādhyaya. Raghunātha, the last and the greatest commentator of Cintamāṇi after writing Didhiti, turned a Vedāntin, by commenting on Khaṇḍana. Nyāya to-day exists only as an introduction to the Mādhwā school of dualism. Nyāya Ratnāvalī was thus necessary to complete manana portion. It is the last work of Brahmananda. Brahmananda as is well known belonged to the early nineteenth century.

Thus we see Upadeśa-Sāhasrī is the Śravaṇa Text, Siddhanta-Bindu the Manana text, and Pañcīkaraṇa the Nididhyasana text in the present volume, completing the totality of approach. These three cover three hundred and seventy two pages out of a total of six hundred and eight or about sixty-one percent of the total. The rest are supplementary texts, important from one point or the other, to give a glimpse of the whole.

Aparokṣānubhūti has been commentated by the great Vidyāranya; the founder of Vijayanagar Empire, who was also the first prime minister. He was also the general editor of the great commentary Vedārtha-Prakāśa covering the five Śākhās of Vedas, their Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, Sūtras and accessory literature. This is the only available guide to the Vedic literature, and as Maxmuller says that though he differed from that commentary at many places, he could not have made any entry into the original, without the guidance it provided. Just as Madhusūdana is the acclaimed leader of Devotion, Vidyāranya is the accepted leader of Activity (Karma). Thus in him we can see how a Vedāntist looks at an action while conducting it. In him we find an illustration of Manu's dictum that a man of Vedānta knowledge can rule the earth without any difficulty. Vidyāranya himself says so in his Pañcadaśī. He represents Vedānta of the thirteenth century, just five centuries after Śaṅkara, and four centuries earlier than Madhusūdana.

Śataślokī is an important work of the Master, for in it he handles the Vedas in general. It gives us a clue to the penetrative outlook, one must develop if one wants to understand the vision of the Ṛṣis. Fortunately Swāmī Ānanda Giri, who has annotated practically all Śaṅkara's works, has given a very thorough detailed analysis of each Verse. But for this, most of the work would have remained an independent treatise for lack of our mastery of the Vedic lore. The ease with which Ānanda Giri gives the mantra references, makes us look with wonder at the prodigious memory, for these mantras are scattered all over the Vedas in both Mantra and Brāhmaṇa portions. One has to assume that oral tradition must have existed at the time of Giri, connecting the verses with the relevant Vedic references. Śataślokī is an important work which answers some modern accusers that Śaṅkara, though a philosopher, was not deeply drunk with the saṁhitā or the mantra divisions of Vedas. Specially those who consider only the mantras as the Vedas, often claim superiority on this score. It also gives the needed kick to those wise ones who claim that Vedas do not, in their earlier parts, contain Vedānta; and the Upaniṣads are not the essence, but contradiction of the earlier parts. Even though the text has appeared in several editions and even translations. Due to non-availability of the manuscript easily, they have not been able to do justice to the content. Long back Mysore edition of the Śaṅkara's works did contain a commented edition, but it was a very superficial one, and not of much use. Hence we are sure this, alongwith Ānanda Giri Tikā on Upadeśa-Sāhasrī, Ātmajñānopadeśa-Vidhi, Swarūpa-Nirūpaṇa, Vākya-Vṛtti and Tripurī will be appreciated by scholars interested in comparative study. Though we are conscious of the fact that they do not contribute much in the thought content, since the original are quite simple by themselves, in the course of study one will find a few special noteworthy points.

Tripurī is a very simple and small work, but forms a good introduction to Adhyāropa-Apohana system of thought. The five elements in their (ādhyātmika) physical and (ādhidāivika) divine causality, are first taken as the base of the individual and cosmic experience, and then analytically reduced to the advaitik experience.

Maniṣā and Updeśa, each having merely five verses, are included for historical reasons. Both contain two commentaries each, not because text needs much elucidation, but because unless read between the lines, mere text does not convey the great revelation. Maniṣā-pentad

was uttered by the Master when confronted by a pariah to answer the behaviour of avoiding his contact. At a moment's notice Śaṅkara realised the greatness of the experience attained by the pariah, and eulogised him, specially mentioning that Advaitik realisation even in a pariah makes him as worthy of devoted respect as his own Guru.

The tradition puts it beautifully by saying that Śaṅkara saw Viśwanātha Sadāśiva there, for Śaṅkara is an incarnation of Śiva, so he was, so to say, the reflection and the pariah, the reflected. This shows that though the behaviour of a man of realisation will be according to the manners of the civil behaviour of the particular country, age and culture, he himself is not bound to them, and his vision of non-dual Brahman remains unaffected by the differential behaviour he indulges in, for the sake of the uninitiate. This also shows that Vedānta is not a theory of social reform, but total revolution. Reformers only change one set of rules and substitute others instead. The man of realisation sees them all to be equally meaningless or meaningful. It is true that he welcomes any change that leads to cosmic unity, but he is not against diversity, taking it to be normal for the people in ignorance. He will be the last person to make the life of ignorants unnecessarily difficult. Thus *maniṣā* is important historically.

Upadeśa-pentad is traditionally believed to be the last utterance of Śaṅkara. Though simple, it indicates the same tranquility as the last message of Kṛṣṇa to Uddhava. Here we find in a nutshell the philosophy of life he preached and lived. One is surprised to see how all that is needed from childhood of the soul to its complete fulfilment can be conveyed so thoroughly, leaving nothing out, and yet in the most beautifully simple language. One almost feels a palpable Guru guiding us in an old mature age. It is just then that we suddenly remember that Śaṅkara was merely 32 when he passed away. Here like Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti the founder of the order he becomes mauna. The whole pentad is a commandment, and every follower of advaita must know it both verbally and ideologically. Hence two simple comments have been included.

Ātmajñānopadeśavidhi is presented with the comments of Ānanda Giri, for it is a good introduction to the way an aspirant should discriminate between the seer and the seen. Giri's comments are masterly, clear, and expository. He gives references to the original texts, and it is refreshing to read his comments. Swarūpanirūpaṇa and its comments by Giri are also similar in nature. Some of the verses are beautiful adaptations of the Upaniṣads, and provide good means for meditative reading. Vākya-Vṛtti is an important text quoted by such authors as Vidyāraṇya and Brahmānanda. Its Vivaraṇa by Ānanda Giri is presented here, like others, for the first time. It deals mainly with an analysis of the word-import of the so-called Great Sentence. The Text is self-explanatory, hence the comments are brief, but to the point.

Thus we can say that this volume represents a fairly exhaustive spectrum of Advaita literature. In short Updeśasāhasrī represents the clear enunciation of advaita by the pen of the Great Master Himself; Siddhanta-Bindu-Nyāyaratnāvalī, its presentation in the most logical way, by the latest exponent; Pañcīkaraṇa, Aparokṣānubhūti and Ātamabodha present the spiritual and practical aspects helping the Nididhyāsana. The two pentads help to understand the emotional and historical colour of the man, that was Śaṅkara. Tripurī, Ātmajñānopadeśa-Vidhi, Swarūpanirūpaṇa, and Vākya-Vṛtti present the great Master of Intellectualism in a

role of propagandist for Vedānta, presenting small tracts for the uninitiate to comprehend the truth. It seems as if the tall tree is bending to the earth-level, so that the children can eat the ripe fruits. One feels almost numbed to see the greatness of Śaṅkara's compassion. Śatasloki is more like an aside which sees him in a lighter mood of reflection on certain Vaidic passages. Thus we feel that the volume will be a complete guide, and will be used as an eternal companion by the seekers of truth.

Having viewed the general nature of this selection, we shall try to see the subject matter of each of the books in some detail.

1. Upadeśa-Sāhasrī

Though it is called a thousand teachings, it does not contain either one thousand verses, or one thousand topics. Hence the sense seems to be 'a complete teaching'. Sāhasra also means complete or whole. And that actually it is complete, there is no doubt about. This is an independent work about which one can definitely say that it is from the pen of Śaṅkara, since Sureśwara quotes from this work a number of verses. The writer himself calls this work an Upaniṣad, suggesting that he wanted it to be studied with the same attention that one gives to the scriptures. It also suggests that it gives his experience directly, which he may not have found easy to give while commenting on the triad of Upaniṣads-Gītā-Brahmasūtra. The presentation here is topic-wise. Sureśwara's Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi and Sarvajñātma's Saṅkṣepa-Śāriraka, along with this work are known as the mini-trilogy of Vedānta. The book has a number of commentaries, out of which Rāma Tīrthā's Padayojanā has been published from Poona and Bombay earlier. It is an exhaustive treatment of the work, but perhaps too lengthy. Ānanda Giri's Vivṛtti is published in print for the first time. It has the same brevity and depth which characterises his great comments on the Bhāṣya-trayī and Vārtikas. There is nothing that is left out which is needed to comprehend the text, but nothing more is added to burden the reader. Mallinātha's dictum of *Nāmūlam Likhya*, not writing anything which is not in the text, seems to be Giri's motto. Since he has commented on all the important works, he is the natural guide to understand the Master's mind, for he had thoroughly acquainted himself with it. We intend to publish all his available annotations on Śaṅkara's works.

Ānanda Giri calls this a compendium of the essence of the meaningful teachings of all the Upaniṣads. Thus it can be compared to Kṛṣṇa's Bhagavadgītā, though Arjuna, and the aspirant here, are of different nature. But we can be sure that the topics dealt are similar though Gītā, appearing in the epic, has an epic-presentation, and Sāhasrī, a philosophic presentation. Gītā is diverse, and the Sāhasrī concise. It needs a laborious search to find out the Gītā-view on a specific topic, scattered as it is all over the text, but Sāhasrī takes up each topic and deals it completely before going to the next one. The epic treatment of the Gītā has lent itself to contradictory interpretations, making an uninitiate in Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā and Vyākaraṇa to decide what is Kṛṣṇa's message. The treatment in Sāhasrī has no such contradictions. Thus it points out a straight path of spiritual discipline and vision, which even

an ordinary sādḥaka can follow. In times to come it is bound to have a greater appeal to spiritual seekers than it has yet had.

The work starts with a discussion on the comparative utility of rituals and wisdom for attaining the supreme end of life. It is clearly proved that it is wisdom which liberates and not rituals. Rituals are based on the ignorance that one is a body-mind complex, whereas the wisdom is the dawning of the knowledge that one is the eternal witness; not in any way associated with this complex. Though one can deny everything else, one can never deny one's own-self, since denial is the affirmation of the denier. This existential validity entirely confounds the nihilist and agnostic. The great Master then identifies God with this witness, thus making atheism impossible. Other religions prove God, but Vedānta makes it an experiential truth. It is prior to all the presuppositions and all the means of knowledge. Thus to meditate on God, love Him, and work for Him, all become natural from the very beginning. We move and have our being in Him. He is the first concept that becomes perceptually real. If God is not-self, it will be non-self, a contradiction.

From this identification metaphysically the search starts about the real nature of the self, who is God. First Śāṅkara takes up the issue whether this realisation will obliterate the perceptual personality, and answers that there is no inherent contradiction between the experience of advaita and perceptual dvaita. This is one topic which comes up again and again. The question is that if one realises God as self, limited self must cease to exist. Śāṅkara, and all the realised Vedāntins, have asserted repeatedly that there is no such antagonism between the limited self and unlimited God. Actually God exists even before we realise Him, and if it co-existed *then*, it will co-exist *now* also. Moreover, even after realisation, the limited self (in other Buddhis) will continue to exist. Actually transcending the lower is not contradicting or destroying it. Jīvanmukti or the liberation while in body, is the main reason why God-experience is not post-mortem like heaven, hell, or retribution of virtue and vice. That is what makes it verifiable and scientific, which dharma can never be. Śāṅkara asserts that this knowledge, as soon as it starts dawning, brings the joy and peace, just as eating does with each morsel, unlike a ritual which can bear a fruit only at the end.

The Great Master then throws a challenge to the ritualists that being afraid of losing their noble castes, and attached vested interests, they do not like to benefit from this knowledge, because it equates them with all. They are proud, less realising that the intellect etc., of which they are proud, are not really their own. They shine only in the reflected glory, while forgetting themselves to be the light that shines everywhere. Hence it is the ego etc. which are to be renounced, for it is only by getting attached to them, that non-discrimination leads to misery. Then in an extremely emotional tone and mellowing words, which can even melt a stone, he presents a monologue with the mind. It is in the interest of both that the mind realises its own nature. At the end of the work he will again resort to the same way of presenting the topic.

After showing the dissolution method of meditation, in which the grosser and less pervasive, is thought of as identical with the subtle and more pervasive, one reaches finally to the subtlest and most pervasive viz. self. The text goes on to say that being thus the cause

of all, from the creator to a blade of grass, I, as the self, remain uncontaminated by anything. He further asserts that the universe is my body and it is the ignorants who see me in one body-mind complex. This identity of effect with the cause is a fundamental doctrine of Vedānta. Kaṇāda asserted that the effect is a new product, while Kapila took effect to be a transformation of the cause. Buddha considered an assemblage more than the assembled. Thus it is only the advaita which accepts the non-difference of the cause and effect. A greater part of the second quarter of the second chapter of Brahma-sūtra is devoted to these different theories, and their critique. Eventually it establishes the appearance theory as the final one. Here, of course all that is taken for granted, though references to the topic are not wanting.

In the tenth chapter the process of meditation, directly on the absolute, is dealt with. Praṇava is the symbol which is used as the means for this meditation. A good student will find it a boon to memorise it, for it is a concise presentation. Here he mentions his own affirmations of the final beatitude and realisations, as in fact he does at several places in this work. Fortunately Giri, in his comments, clearly points them out as the experiential statements of the master. He asserts that while being externally active, one who does not feel for a moment as an actor, is the wise one. One who seeks external inactivity is not wise. He uses an apt illustration. Even while awake the one who does not see as in deep sleep and while experiencing both the sleep and the waking realises the identity of both these experiences, is the one who really understands the real. Having attained this wisdom one becomes stainless, no matter how much he acts; and goes beyond life, death, sorrow and ignorance. The author changes the meter in this chapter to suit the mood of the topic.

Taking series of illustrations from the Upaniṣads he takes up the treatment of Virodha-parihāra, i. e. refutation of possible arguments against the identity of the self and the non-Self. In a beautifully worded warning he says that the one who wants to be both an actor and an enjoyer, as well as Brahman, loses both the worlds. The idea is, he who tries to combine both the ways viz. action and wisdom loses both, because he is not able to do justice to either. Thus combination of the two leads one to become a nihilist. Thus he gives a clarion call to the wise, not to bungle, because the wise one sticks to wisdom that makes him free. He sums up by emphasising that attachments are to be renounced, for without making oneself bereft of all impressions, good and bad, it is not possible to have the vision of the self. It is easy to do so, for our very nature is pure. In the twelfth chapter the illuminative aspect of consciousness is discussed in detail. Knowing oneself to be the illuminating principle, both by the scriptures and logical evidence, one cannot be ordered around. Wisdom takes one beyond the scope of injunctions, and prohibitions.

Then Śāṅkara takes up how the self is not associated with the activities of the senses and the mind. Thus, whether (samādhi or vikṛpa) contemplatively absorbed or humanly active, the self remains the same. Until wisdom dawns, all duties are real, but after the attainment of wisdom, even samādhi cannot be ordained for the wise, for it is the self upon whom all meditate and by knowing it they attain liberation. Being the source of liberation, such a wise one cannot tinker for it. The author further asserts that by knowing the self as identical with God and Guru,

one becomes a R̥ṣi, Brāhmaṇa, Yogi, or Siddha. This is the purport of the Vedas according to Śaṅkara's realisation. Hence this secret doctrine is to be conveyed to those who are tranquil aspirants and have renounced their ego. The emphasis on the plural use of the aspirant is important, for the master ordains us to spread the message to many a people, and not keep it confined within our own limited beings. To use a term of Mīmāṃsā, it is *niyama*, not *parisamkhyāna* that is to say, one must deliver the message to the desirous and deserving souls, rather than that one *must not* deliver to the undeserving. Even though the gross meaning is the same, the psychological and the social implications are vastly different. The former is full of compassion for the ignorant, while the latter considers it an avoidable headache.

At the beginning of the fourteenth chapter a beautiful analogy is used. On the basis of this analogy, the great Madhusūdan builds up his famous theory of devotion in his now famous classic *Bhakti-Rasāyana*. Just as the molten copper, poured in the format, taken the specific form of the mould, the mind-stuff also transforms according to the object it comes in contact with. Similarly, Madhusūdan laid down, that the mind melted by the love of God form (a form conceived as God) will become of that form, and according to the dictum that whatever form mind takes one becomes, so the devotee attains the Supreme. Since love always needs a peg, form becomes necessary. Thus *Bhakti* or devotion becomes a path to attain knowledge—*nay* an enjoyment even for *Jivan-Mukta* though it adds nothing to him. *Vairāgya* or detachment is necessary so that the mind is taken away from the non-self. Since God is self, it will not come in the way of the supreme attainment. Moreover since the mind has become naturally attuned to that form, *vairāgya* will be natural. Earlier *Vidyāraṇya* laid down the difference between *kṛtopāsti* or one who has experienced a God-form; and *akṛtopāsti*, one who has not. The former attains perfection by *śravaṇa* and *manana* alone, while the latter needs *nirguṇa-upāsanā* i. e. *Nididhyāsana*. The fact that the foundation of it was laid down by Śaṅkara himself is very clear in his works. We have digressed on this topic because some people have tried to paint Madhusūdan as a man of double nature, and some have gone to the extent of claiming that he was only a pseudo-Jñānī. But for a student of Vedānta it is clear that *upāsana* forms a great part of *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā*, *Brahmsūtra* and Śaṅkara-Bhāṣyas. The important difference is that *advaita* emphasises *upāsanā* of God and not gods. Thus Madhusūdan is only extending the concept, and giving it a more logical base. His magnum opus *Advaita-Siddhi* is a similar attempt. We shall deal this again under *Siddhānta Bindu*.

Immediately after the mould-analogy, Śaṅkara gives an alternate analogy of light. Just as light takes the form of the object it enlightens, mind takes the form of the object it knows. This analogy is developed by *Vidyāraṇya* in his *Pañcadaśī*. A discerning eye will immediately see the main difference between the two illustrations. The first is a more or less permanent transformation, while the second, a momentary one. The suggestion is clear. Since in the very next verse we find reference to dream and memory, there does not remain even a trace of doubt that the *Acārya* is clarifying that love, whether false (attachment) or real, is the differentiating principle between two transformations. Thus we find that the text is pregnant with realised truths, which were taken up by the later *acāryas* and developed further.

After dealing the topic of all-pervasive self, the text says that if even after self-analysis there remains a feeling of acceptance and rejection, one must take it that the self has vomited him out. Without the likes and dislikes the self can't be ordained by the scriptures, for they only show the way to attain or avoid, what is considered pleasure or pain by the enquirer. Even the so called daily duties can not be laid down on him. When even the one who has attained the experience of not being the body, but the identification, with vital energy cannot be ordained to do the daily ritual of *sandhya* etc, how can the one who has transcended all the relations be thus ordained. If it be said that at least let the mind be ordained to meditate on the self, it will also be the view born out of ignorance. One who sees the self everywhere need not think of it only in the ordained way. Later on it will be made clear that for a realised soul all sense experiences are but a sacrifice, performed for him by the mind-sense complex. Thus it is not that the self is to be conceived as non-different from God, but that God is non-different from the self, for if it were not so, it would cease to be self-evident, and become an object of negation.

If any one thinks that he can make or become an enemy of the wise, he might as well think of cooling the sun. Thus it is laid down that he will always be friendly to all, for Śaṅkara uses the word 'non-friend' instead of 'enemy' in this context. Since all that is natural to the wise must be practiced with effort in case of an aspirant, it is clear that Śaṅkara refuses any other alternative in the inter-personal behaviour than friendship. It is in the light of Vedānta that such dictums as 'love thy neighbour as thyself' become metaphysical truths, rather than being a religious dogma or ordinances of the Most High.

Pilgrimage is an integral part of religious rituals. Since it is ordained for a *paramehansa* to move about, let him at least do pilgrimage, is a natural suggestion. But the master will not allow the least sense of duty to the wise. He says that the wisdom is the real place of pilgrimage, because all the gods, and scriptures become pure by merging in that mental state. Hence one must bathe in that state, and not in the so called purifying tanks and rivers. Since self is neither in time, nor in direction, nor in space, nor in a special occasion, it is to be thought always without any fear of it being in a contaminated state. These are illustrative, rather than limiting examples. Śaṅkara is not against any particular ritual or tradition. He is against all of them as far as the duty-boundness is concerned, but he will allow the natural flow of all of them in a given cultural, temporal and civil co-ordinates in which the body-mind complex acts. Thus, it is not substitution of one way of action with another, but transcending all of them in the experience of reality. On the plane of body-mind activity, Vedānta will allow all activities which do not contradict the basic unity of individual and cosmic consciousness. It will allow all human weaknesses to be taken into consideration, and the path of development laid down for each of them, both individually and collectively, on a rational basis, taking full advantage of the ways laid down by the scriptures, and traditions. Since the goal to be achieved is clear, it will not allow any of them to obstruct the path to wisdom, no matter how ancient and sacred they are. On the concept of wisdom being the highest no compromise is allowed.

The fifteenth chapter begins with the analogy of a painting on the canvas, which is the source of a full detailed chapter in *Pañcadaśī*. In *Gītā*, *Kṛiṣṇa* calls *Vasudeva* i. e. his own body born out of *Vasudeva*, and the fig tree equally his manifestations. Similarly a wise one

realises all the bodies as his own. Just as the canvass is seen as the man and his cloth, worshipper and the worshipped, so does the self appear as all. Self is the fire; intellect, the firewood; ignited by ignorance, desire and actions, the flame goes out through the senses like ears etc. This flame takes the objects as sacrifice (havi) and thereby increases. This state of waking is called the gross enjoyment state of the self. If at the time of perception, it is remembered, that the sacrifice is taking place in the fire of self, no attachment, and repulsion is felt, and then the waking state does not bring any stain on the self. Though this is taken from puruṣa-vidyā of Mahanarayana, as clarified in Gita, the reader will note that Śaṅkara has made it much more practical, clear, and changed it from one of the sacrifices to purify the mind, into the sacrifice to keep the mind pure. Thus, all actions and behaviours can be changed into a sacrifice according to him. One doubt can be raised, whether unethical actions can be thus indulged. It will be answered in a later chapter that ethical behaviour is natural, and unethical due to ignorance and desires. Since both are absent in a man of knowledge, it is impossible even to think of its possibility. The aspirant also, acting in the image of the wise, will scrupulously avoid all that is guided by ignorance and selfish desires. This conception of sacrifice was later developed by Somananda, Abhinava Gupta and others. Thus realising through the scriptural teachings, and rational thinking, if one confirms it through experience, one attains liberation without any doubt.

The sixteenth chapter again gives the illustration of a lamp as the witness. Senses, sense-objects, intellect etc are dancers. The lamp remains unaffected whether the dancers etc. remain or go away. This illustration again has been dealt in detail by Vidyāraṇya. Actually such coincidences indicate that Upadeśasāhasrī was one of the daily meditative readings of the aspirants. Even today it is one of the best manual for liturgy.

After showing the defects of Kapila, Kaṇāda, Jaimini, Buddha, Mahāvira etc. both logically and experientially, it is laid down that the aspirant for spiritual perfection should devote himself to the meditation of the Upaniṣads. Having attained the knowledge one should devote his entire life to the propagation of the Advaita to those worthy souls who desire it. No gain is more valuable than the gain of one's own self. Being the self of every human being every one is entitled to it. One must not feel that there is any work greater than this. Śaṅkara seems to echo Kṛṣṇa where he says that the spreading of the great message is the real supreme devotion (Parā-Bhakti), and nothing pleases self or Paramātmān more than this. Śaṅkara goes on further to assert in the next chapter that all the Vedas, its ordinances, traditions and their observations are only for the purpose of the supreme attainment of wisdom. Where these show to fulfil the mundane desire to reproduce, earn etc., even there the object is to show the way to self-fulfilment, since at that level these are taken to be one's own self. Similarly when mind is taken to be the self, devotional and meditative exercises are laid down to attain mental peace. But once the aspirant really wants to know, or realise what the supreme truth is, the scriptures tell him that it is his own pure self, uncontaminated by any adjuncts. And there the mandatory nature of all scriptures end. Since only in a clear mirror one sees a clear image, and since mind is the mirror where the image of the self is seen, it has to be purified. Control of bodily activities, performance of one's daily duties, and concentration of mind are the means of this purification. This is the supreme austerity.

The question arises, how can one see the self when it is not an object of mental or sensuous perception? The analogy of the eclipse is given. Rāhu is a planet, according to ordinary understanding, which covers the moon at the eclipse. Though Rāhu, being a dark planet is not seen otherwise, it is seen along with the moon. Similarly self can be seen in relation to the pure mind, though imperceptible by itself. The text asserts that if it be objected that according to learned astronomers, Rāhu is nothing but a shadow, then we say that for a realised soul even this self that is perceived is unreal. Since it is at the root of all perceptions, it remains unperceived as ever. Referring to Upaniṣadic teachings it is made clear that not to realise the true nature of the Self, or to take the body as the self, is the sign of being an asura or demon. Realising this, one goes beyond all mandates, just as a sannyasin goes beyond all the mandates of impurity due to death etc. Giving another illustration it is laid down that just as butter churned out of milk even if placed in the milk, never again becomes one with it, similarly after the wisdom is attained, even while staying and acting through the body-mind complex, the wise one never gets attached to it. Since he has attained the identity with the self or all, even Brahma, Viṣṇu need not be prostrated out of any fear of a calamitous result. A wise needs neither action nor knowledge any more.

The eighteenth chapter deals with the purport of the Vedas, which is to teach the self to be the supreme reality or the non-duality of the soul and God. Since this is the main topic, this chapter is by far the largest. First of all the view of meditationists is taken for an analysis. It seems during the seventh and the eighth centuries synthesis of Vedānta and Yoga was tried by some scholars. But Śaṅkara, Sureśvara and others saw the pit-fall of this synthesis. Knowledge needs proper means and an object of knowledge. To see a pot one needs proper lighting, proper angle and distance from the eye, proper eye etc. Once seen the pot is known, and remains known. Similarly if the Absolute is really real, all we need is proper means of knowledge and proper conditions to make it known. Since it is beyond the senses and the mind, the perception due to the senses is ruled out. That is the very reason that the mind can not be the means of knowledge. Self, being the knower of the mind, can never be known by the mind. This is the other reason for mind not being the instrument. Hence Vedas are the only means of knowing it, though knowledge takes place in the mind. The eyes see the object, but by that very seeing, a realisation of the power of the eye to see is also known by the mind. Similarly the consciousness, which knows the mind, can itself be known while the mind is being cognised. That this power is the supreme is known by the dictum of the Vedas. Just as a woman, having heard about the beauty of her husband, seeing a man of that beautiful appearance in front of her, still needs someone to tell that this man is the husband, similarly the self indicated by reason and analysis still need to be proclaimed as the absolute. Once it is known neither any activity, nor even meditation is needed to make it one's own or become identical with the Absolute. Similarly if wisdom dawns, it needs nothing more to supplement it to attain liberation. If a thing is realised due to meditation it is not a knowledge, but an effect of meditation, and thus can never be eternal. Hence Vedānta can not be synthesised with yoga as far as the wisdom is concerned. Just as logic or nyāya is needed by the aspirant to analyse, interpretative laws are Mīmāṃsā is needed

to comprehend scriptural Texts, devotion is needed to attain detachment, similarly yoga is needed to attain mental tranquility. But they are all needed for the wisdom to arise, and not directly involved in producing wisdom, much less to keep it. Thus, Śaṅkara does not want Vedānta to be confused with religion, which does not rest on realisation, or direct perception of the reality as it is. In short Vedānta is the science of reality as it is really, viz. Being, as compared to yoga or other religions which are interested not in Being what is, but in Becoming i. e. changing it into something else. Once we know what the Being is, the Becoming seems an appearance. An appearance that approaches Being, is nearer to the truth, no doubt, but is not Being. This is the fundamental difference between Vedānta and all the churches and faiths of the world, Until the dawn of wisdom, Śaṅkara will allow the existence of all the varied religions and their practices, but nothing after that. Hence he totally rejects the view that to keep up the wisdom one must stick to meditation.

There is another dimension to this view. If even after the dawn of wisdom, the wise one is tied down to protect it, how will the world, the ground from which he arose, be watered by this wisdom. Since wisdom releases, the wise one is free to water the sources. Having attained all that he had to attain, he can give his best to the world at large, for nothing remains to be done for his own self. Ince his energies are inexhaustible, he can really do the needed and the desired. Śaṅkara himself is the greatest illustration of this. Uninitiate often feel that non-injunctive life is a life of unethical mode. They don't seem to realise that injunctions are necessary until the ignorance is present. To say that a great artist does not follow the rules of art really means that having mastered them he transcends them. His natural expression is going to be laid down as the rules for future artists. It is due to ignorance that the omnipresent self in all beings is deflected by desires from the path of oughtness. Ethics and ordinations are to correct these deflections. But once this basic ignorance of self, being identified with the body-mind complex, goes away, deflected desire will not be present to misdirect the following actions. Hence his whole life will be nothing but the expressions of the highest code. But since without the dawn of wisdom, one can't visualise this state of absolute self-abnegation, others seeing the active self, go on attributing the selfish motives etc. to the wise man. Thus they are unable to grasp the full meaning of his life. This is called by the scriptures the inability to receive the grace from the wise even while in his presence. Generally as schizophrenic attempt is made to understand him some of his actions appear to be divine, some others superhuman, some others humane, compassionate and kind; but at the same time some appear to be partisan, humanly selfish, even foolish. Generally those directed towards themselves appear to be of the former type, and towards others, as of latter types. Thus, instead of devotion and surrender, a love-hate relationship comes into being. It is often found that religious giants receive the attention due to them, after their demise. This is mainly because only then we see them as an illustration of the principle that they were. They are no more judged by the mundane acts which were necessary accompaniments of their lives. But by this we miss the attainment of wisdom by a hair's breadth, so to say. For as the text points out, it is the realised soul who can liberate one with his gracious blessing and teachings, if only one can devotedly surrender to him. Thus,

Śaṅkara points out that neither the yoga, nor the repeated meditations, but it is the surrender and the devoted action that leads to wisdom.

As it is well known, Vacaspati, the writer of the great commentary called Bhāmati on Brahma Sūtra Śaṅkara Bhāṣya, tried to impose this synthesis again in a different way but it did not succeed. Later on Vidyāranya took the clue, and developed it as an alternate mode of attaining wisdom. He however emphasised that it can not lead to liberation while alive. All this shows, that in any historical period, there will be but few who can really attain the direct experience. There will always be a very large number, who do not have the proper requisite to attain it. But they want to tread the path. That is exactly why both saṅga upāsana, and nirguṇa upāsana are laid down in the Upaniṣads, and discussed in Brahma-Sūtra. Vedānta is not against any of them. But it wants to make a clear distinction between wisdom and religion. Since, as Vidyāranya points out, the company of a wise one is rare, even the meditation on ego as self is to be preferred to any other religious practice, for the one who wants the highest. If not Jivanmukti, it will lead to Mukti. In the same light, in the last chapter of the prose-section of this work, this topic will be dealt by the Ācārya himself. We may add that the company of the wise is rare in many cases due to one's own psychological rejection of his divinity as Śrī Kṛṣṇa points out. The people see him a mere man. We must be careful not to make this mistake. The great Ācārya says that the torch, or the firewood is present along with the heat or the light. If we search fire without the adjunct, we will never find it anywhere. Similarly wisdom will be in a vehicle of a body-mind complex, and if we go on rejecting the adjunct we will never find it. Often desiring to see our image, we miss the real. Hence the Ācārya warns us not to make that mistake. He gives, further on, an apt illustration that just as gold grains cannot be boiled, but since scriptures ask them to be boiled, we have to just boil the water while they are there, and not expect them to become soft like rice, similarly we must not expect body-mind to become Brahman as that is impossible, but to attain the Brahman-jñāna while in body-mind complex.

There is no other way to attain the absolute state of painlessness and joy. This is the experience of self as the absolute. That which is beyond both knowing and un-knowing cannot be known in any other way. When the scriptures clearly indicate that it is so how can any other mandate apply after it is known. The doership and non-doership cannot exist at the same time, and locus. But this should become an unshakable conviction, as unshakable as body-ego identification prior to enquiry. Until then tranquility, control of senses, meditation and rational contemplation of scriptures must go on. Even the aspirant, being unattached to the joys of the senses, does not indulge in sensuous enjoyments, then how can one who has gone beyond it be suspected of it. When even a hungry person does not eat poisonous food, should we suspect a well-fed man to indulge in it merely by being near it? Thus, a man of wisdom even though appearing to act, hence giving the impression that he has desires, is actually acting out of his fullness and predestined acts of God rather than his own desires. Thus, a monk of the Paramahansa order does not follow any ritualistic or social injunctions. While a student (vidiṣu), he engages in the duties ordained by the Guru, including study and contemplation, and after the wisdom is attained (vidvat), he obeys

physically and psychologically the same orders, but is always conscious of his absolute non-activity. In Vedānta, Guru and God being identical, Śaṅkara rounds up this most important section by offering his obedience to the Guru in the same way as he began the chapter.

In the last chapter, again, a dialogue method is used by addressing the mind. There is no new addition of the concepts, but a melodious presentation of them.

PROSE SECTION

Even though Rāma Tirtha has taken the prose section to be the former part, and verse section to be the latter part, Ānanda Giri clearly states that prose-section is latter. There is one internal evidence to support Ānanda Giri. The thirteenth verse of the fifteenth chapter is quoted in the hundred and thirty fifth paragraph of the first chapter of this section, introducing it as 'it has been said'. Moreover the way of dealing here of the different schools presupposes an earlier exhaustive treatment. The repetitive end also signifies the end of the work, which is found only in the prose-section, even in Rāma Tirtha's version. This section is divided into three chapters, the first is enquiry into scriptures or śravaṇa, the second is rational analysis or manana, and the last, absorptive meditation or nididhyāsana. The beginning suggests that this might have been a manual for those who wanted to propagate the wisdom, after acquiring it themselves, through the earlier section.

The section starts with clearly formulating the qualities of the aspirants, who will be fully able to absorb this knowledge. It also lays down how an aspirant, not fully endowed with these qualities, should be guided to attain them. It will be noticed that the great master is particular that the aspirant must not be made to do any thing that contradicts the path of knowledge. Thus Giri points out that hard austerities, pilgrimages, etc. are ruled out. Special mention is made of the collection of qualities in the Gītā beginning with amānitwa in the XIII chapter.

Then the qualifications of a Guru are laid down. Here Śaṅkara mentions that a guru must be capable of foreseeing the disciple's doubts and answering them. He must have the desire, as well as the perseverance, to remove the afflictions. He must have received the knowledge through tradition, but should have converted it into direct experience, must be clean in body and mind, and bereft of all actions unworthy of a decent personage. He must be absolutely bereft of all selfishness, and must be one who acts only out of kindness to others. This last aspect is clearly for the teacher himself to judge his own firmness.

One must start the teachings by introducing the student to clear Upaniṣadic passages where the truth is laid out. Thus, independent enquiry into the Truth is avoided. The idea is, we must move from the known to the un-known. Since enquiry can start only after *prima facie* problem exists, one cannot start an enquiry about the Absolute out of the blue. Since it is not an object of perception, we can't describe it in terms which refer to an experience. Hence we must first refer to the scriptural texts, or traditions which are based on experience: Having thus understood the data, we may analyse to find out whether they

are rational or not. They should support other knowledge and its means, and be supported by them, and not contradicted by them. That is why even now the tradition is to peg the discourses on to a text, rather than an independent discussion. That has been the main reason why even the greatest of Vedānta scholars wrote commentaries, or sub-commentaries, even though they could have easily dealt the subject quite independently. Even the so called manuals generally deal with selected passages from the scriptures. All this leads some people to assert that Vedānta is not a philosophy. As against this, there are other orthodox views which assert that Vedānta is too logistic, and hence does not rely entirely on the scriptural authority. Both of these views are due to misunderstandings. Vedānta is a philosophy based on the rational approach to reality, which includes the experiences and revelations of sages as well. No philosophy can be based without the datum supplied by senses, mind etc. That will be mere day-dreaming. If experience is to be the datum, why should we scrupulously avoid the datum provided by religious texts? More so because reality is beyond sense perceptions. Hence extra sensual perceptions must be analysed. But Vedānta is pure philosophy in the sense that it does not accept the authority of the scriptures, unless it can be rationally harmonised with the totality of experience. Thus, we feel that approach of Śaṅkara is the only true philosophical approach to the Absolute Reality.

Having laid the scriptures on the table, the teacher should use the direct method of teaching, i. e. ask existential questions, and analytically bare the disciple's preconceived notions. Śaṅkara has inherited this technique through an unbroken tradition from the Upaniṣads, where it is presented in its pristine purity. One must be intelligent, tolerant, and psychologically fit to undertake this method. One should see that the drift continues towards the self during the discussion, and not be way-laid by side tracking. Another point is that the disciple must not be just cornered logically, but made to see the rationality of the great truth. Words must be sweet, and endearing. This relationship of love between the two is important, though the teacher has affection, and the disciple, respect. The very first question posed is who the disciple is. In our own times, Ramaṇa of Aruṇācala had made this enquiry famous. Naturally the disciple answers that he is a person of such and such caste and station of life. The teacher points out that after the death of the body the disciple will not remain the same. Thus the analysis slowly moves on, the master directing the enquiry towards the self, by slowly pointing out the different view points in the scriptures, and eventually leading to the supreme self.

But the student points out, that no matter what the scriptures may say, after all the description of God does not tally with his experience of his own self, and he must please God by dedicated devotion etc. Then it is pointed out that the proof of God, and all the duties towards Him are based on the authority of the scriptures. The scriptures themselves point out self to be beyond all this, then why must one cling to one's previous ways of thinking. It is the scriptures who laid down all the rules of duties and initiations, and it is again the scriptures who prescribe their renunciation. This is the fundamental beauty of Vedānta.

All other religions lay down new rules, and leave it there. Vedānta frees one from the duties, laying down nothing new. Basically all thought-revolutions come out of rejecting the old. The old being never founded on the anti-rules, it always produces a new order, which again becomes an established church to be revolted against, in future. Vedānta, though born out of Vedas, does not formulate new rules. Having rejected all the rules on a metaphysical plane, it leaves the anti-rule in an ephemeral ethical value form. An aspirant is free to follow them until the wisdom dawns. The wise need no rules. Hence the Hindu society was never disconnected from its roots, no matter how revolutionary the changes were. It is true that this procedure has left some archaeological pieces in the show windows, but Hinduism has been saved from the pangs of seperation, which each soul feels during the religious revolutions. It has allowed us to comprehend the history, not only of Hinduism, but of religious movements all over the globe. A Hindu has the key to open the secrets of the most undeveloped tribal Negro religions, as well as the most developed world religions like Christianity and Buddhism. It has made the Hindu also tolerant to others' views. We can not deny that this tolerance, in his own home base, has meant statism and widespread uncritical ignorance. But that is more due to the neglect of Śaṅkara's dictum that untruth tolerated is untruth practised. He has clearly said that by uncritically following any doctrine one goes astray and to one's own downfall. But the laziness on the part of the participants of this movement, as well as the vested interests which are deeply entrenched in any society, are the real causes of such widespread ignorance; rather than the desire to preserve the unbroken tradition. It is evident in our own age, when the so-called religious leaders are merely interested in preserving a totally ruined social structure and certain rituals, and want us to believe unconfirmed theories and myths. On the other hand they are keeping mum on the preachings of Śaṅkara, claiming that they are not meant for the present generation. One is astounded by such assertions particularly when they claim to be his apostolic messengers. There can be nothing more astounding than the preacher, claiming to belong to a particular tradition, announcing that the founder is irrelevant today. A major part of Śaṅkara's, and earlier, Kṛiṣṇa's works were devoted to preach the wisdom as against rituals. But the Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas both seem to be once again in the grip of the same disease. Hence we insist that Kṛiṣṇa must be studied, and followed, if we claim to be Vaiṣṇavas, and Śaṅkara must be studied, and followed, if we want to be Śaivas. And we certainly do not want them to study Kṛiṣṇa and Śaṅkara, as Naiyayikas and Sāṅkhyas studied Vedas. Having decided their beliefs or theories they search out stray passages to support these, just so that they may boast to be Vaidikas. Śaṅkara has condemned in clear terms such attempts. Similarly a few stray passages, and sometimes even a resort to some works of doubtful, or unconfirmed authorship, cannot be said to represent his views. We have to study the trilogy of the Bhasya, and base our views on the humble study of his views. Having understood his message, we may accept or reject it. Śaṅkara is too much of a liberator to bind us, or blind our intellects. But let no one claim oneself to be his follower, and yet spread a message which has been rejected by him. It is doubly unjust to do it in his own name. We have digressed because the danger of dumping the revolutionary message of Śaṅkara seems to be imminent by the so-called followers and pontifs, bearing his own name. To hide the hideous sin

of (gurudroha) killing the spirit of the great master, they have taken to establish his images and temples. The magister ludi of Vedānta is beyond such temporary temptations of name and form. He always stood firm on the fundamental doctrine of the name and form being not real. Hence, he always pointed out the locus, the substratum, the adhiṣṭhāna, as his real self, which he really was. Let us also realise him, not in the unreal and imaginative form, but in the fundamental locus. This will revolutionize the whole spiritual fibre of Hinduism, and open the flood gates of Hinduism into the whole world, benefitting it as the other scientific attainments have done. Making him another God of the Pantheon is as good as killing him spiritually. The nation will thereby lose another chance of religious survival. I shudder at the very idea of some āstika śmārta saying that the Śaṅkara of Daśāśwamedha-Ghāt is more powerful than the Śaṅkara of Hanumān-Ghāt; or even worse, less powerful than the monkey-god of Sankatamocana. Let us save him from such fate at least, if we have decided to throw him in the dustbin of history. We will rather prefer that he be at least allowed a quiet oblivion, than such grossifications.

On being answered, that the scriptures have laid the rules for the ignorants, and the scriptures themselves free the seekers of truth from these very rules, the student echoes the question which arises in every aspirant. The direct perception of pain and pleasure is not scripture-ordained, hence even if we deny the other duties on the authority of the scriptures, what can we do about these direct perceptions? Slowly and patiently the teacher analyses the experience, and shows that the locus of pain is the mind, and not the witness. It is due to indiscriminateness that the identity is felt where none exists. This indiscrimination should be removed by analysis.

The second chapter deals with this analysis. First superimposition is discussed in detail. The dealing in the Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya-Bhūmikā is scholarly and comprehensive. Here the Guru seems to have come down to the level of the aspirant, and though thoroughly analytical, is yet simple, and to the point. This-ness and I-ness can never be one on analysis, and yet in every experience we confuse the two. 'My body is fair' and 'I am fair'. Here clearly my body=I, which is impossible because body has this-ness. Similarly, 'my eyes are blind' and 'I am blind', 'my mind is not comprehending' and 'I am not comprehending', 'My ignorance' and 'I am ignorant' etc. are common usages. On analysis it is clear that they are not just two ways of saying the same thing, but two different feelings. One of them is certainly false. Thus the teacher takes the disciple through the labyrinths of three states of consciousness to the final goal of the experience of liberation, and the disciple asserts that he has got the import of the teachings. This section contains very few scriptural quotations, showing that discriminative analysis should be purely logical and rational. Śaṅkara points out that the truth can be shown through pure rationality also. This section gives the lie to the often repeated allegation that Vedānta is anti-rational; just as the first section, bristled with quotations from Upaniṣads, disproves the equally false allegation that Vedānta is a-Vaidika.

The text rounds off by showing the path to those, who are unable to attain wisdom due to one reason or the other, and yet want liberation, and do not desire any thing except that. It is a small section, clearly showing the way to an aspirant. He is asked to follow a specific way of

feeling and thinking when the senses and their objects come in his contact. Non-self and self have to be discriminated. And all Upaniṣads must be meditatively studied again and again. Here again it is clear that those who are not wise, but students of wisdom, need not get into a ritualistic, or mental practices, other than those prescribed here. As Śaṅkara points out one does not give his daughter in the wedlock to kill the son-in-law. Similarly what contradicts non-duality, and non-actorship, cannot be the path to Self-knowledge.

Siddhanta-Bindu

The work is based on the famous ten verses each ending in the affirmation that ego (Aham) and Śiva are identical. Each verse denies the non-self in the first and second hemstich, gives a specific logical reason in the third hemstich, and asserts the truth of this identity by maintaining that having renounced the adjunct what remains has to be adjunctless.

The first verse denies the five objects of perceptions and the senses or their congregations as the Self, since they change while the Self remains the same. This is proved in deep sleep when the object and senses are totally absent but Self is existent. Hence beyond these adjuncts I alone am the supreme Śiva.

The second verse denies the selfhood to the Castes, life stations, their conducts and duties, process of meditation and Samādhi. They all have their locus in the mind, which is non-self, and since ego and mineness being super impositions have ceased to be, I am the Śiva.

Since in deep sleep the mother, father, gods, heavens, scriptures, sacrifices, pilgrimages totally cease to exist, while the Self the Śiva alone shines, hence they all are unrelated to the Self.

Neither Kāpila, nor Śaiva, nor Vaiṣṇava, nor Jain nor even ritualistic Veda convey the Reality of Self, they all convey adjuncted Self, while Reality is adjunctless Śiva shining as the eternal witness.

Being whole and all pervasive like the space, high, low, middle, out, in, sideways, east, west, etc. are meaningless concepts as far as the Self is concerned, hence Self is Śiva.

Self is neither white, black, red, yellow, curved, flabby, short, or tall for it is formless and conscious light which is identical with Self that is Śiva.

Reality is not actually in the conception of teacher, scripture, disciple, teaching, thou, I this world though the destruction of these concepts cannot be categorised as real or unreal, the fact remains that it happens in the wake of self-knowledge and then Śiva alone shines as the self.

The waking and the awake, the dream and the dreamer, the sleep and the sleeper are all due to ignorance. One who recognises their continuity alone is Śiva shining as the Self.

While denying all the states one must not, and cannot deny one's own reality. Self is all-pervasive, object of all our endeavours, self-evident, needs no support though supporting all. All that is non-self in the universe is of no value without Śiva who is Self.

We can neither posit oneness about the self, nor can there be twoness, because it will be identical with it. It is neither only nor not only. All these are super-imposed as much as the fact

that it is not, or it is not that it is not, are super-imposed on Śiva as Self, the words fail to convey what is evident to a man of wisdom, who has mastered Vedānta.

This in short is the main text. As any student of Philosophy will easily perceive that here Śaṅkara is giving his experience in a brief form. The ideas are pregnant with thought so deep, that they can be taken as the pegs to hold the whole philosophy. It is no wonder that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī chose this work to be the corner-stone of his neo-Vedānta i. e. Vedānta presented in the language developed by the logicians starting from Cintāmaṇi and ending with Didhāti. Sarasvatī clearly states this at the end in a verse. He says my comments are deep with measuring but brief in words like the great Cintāmaṇi. The work is based on Śaṅkara who along with Sureśvara presented the Vedānta even without claiming to tie them up as Vyāsa did though did not fully succeed in his attempts, due to brevity of words which lent his text to antagonistic views. Madhusūdana alone can be so audacious to say that I bow not to Vyāsa, but to the Śaṅkara Sureśvara duet.

Fortunately Siddhānta-Bindu got a commentator of Gauḍa Brahmānand's stature. He realised the greatness of Madhusūdana's attempt, and made the work the peg on which he hung, as he himself says all that was of worth in his Laghu-Candrikā the greatest work in Discursive Vedānta (Vādaprasthāna), and something more of his important knowledge not covered there. He claims that the rector Śaṅkara's words are as deep as ocean, and it is only due to the teachings of his Gurus that he has been able to dive deep to bring out a garland of logical gems out of it. We have quoted all this to show that it is not a chance that the work was imposed on Ten-Verses, or as some claim it can be taken to be an independent work. The fact is to a trained eye seed is the tree, but to an untrained eye it becomes tree only in the tree-form. Madhusūdana and Brahmānanda perceived and expressed the verses, whereas we still can't see the necessary sequence of development.

Madhusūdana in this benedictory verse offers prostration to Ācārya Śaṅkara, who is none other than Lord Viśveśvara Himself as the world teacher. Thus he accepts according to Purāṇas that Śaṅkara was an incarnation of Śiva.

But he considers him to be the latest incarnation using the word 'navāvatāra. Brahmānanda makes it plain by saying that this form is newer than Rāma's and Kṛṣṇa's forms. Since the text will prove that incarnations are of Parameśvara, and not of Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. in the tradition of Vedānta distinction between Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as that of Viṣṇu etc. are irrelevants. Another important statement of Brahmānanda is that Śaṅkara is the root of all Guru-traditions. Incarnation is again defined as identification. Hence 'I am Śiva' being repeated again and again out of this identification is really the metaphysical proof of the incarnation. Further it is laid down that the purpose of this incarnation of Śaṅkara is to liberate all souls. Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc., came with the specific purpose of destroying certain demons, and protecting a few devotees, but Śaṅkara has come to destroy the ignorance of all, thereby protecting all souls. Other incarnations took away their Cakra, Dhanus etc. back with them, but Śaṅkara left the armaments of logical reasoning that can be utilised again. Thus, from a practical point of view this is the greatest of all incarnations.

After such preliminary introduction the text enters into the subject matter. First the problem of (adhyāsa) superimposition is discussed, for this is the foundation on which the great edifice of Vedānta is to be built. Tīkā clearly enunciates that scriptures are both purposive and not covered by any other means of knowledge. It is pointed out that though for a liberated one, who after attaining wisdom realises the world as unreal shadow while exhausting his preordained destiny, and sees them all as his own self-manifestation the scriptures are useless, still until the wisdom dawns, scriptures are needed to understand this. It is a joke to say that just because these ideas are talked about all have attained wisdom.

Then the concept of the destruction of ignorance is discussed. If it be real the non-duality is contradicted, and if unreal ignorance will come into being. It is asserted that destruction of ignorance is to be defined as the non-location in the following moment of perception in the locus of wisdom movement. I have purposely given this definition to show how correct the definitions have to be logically, and how difficult to translate them in a foreign language. The idea is that absence of rise of sense of perception of duality after the moment of attainment of wisdom is really the destruction in this case.

Having defined this the topic of desire for wisdom is taken up for people prone to desire joy or absence of pain, and not knowledge. The answer is that whose presence is definitely required for happiness is also an object of desire. Since Self is such, it can be desired. The author further states that, actually in Vedānta Self is identical with joy. The so-called objects only manifest it. Whatever covers it, is desired to be removed to manifest it. Thus, object of desire is to uncover Self. Thus toffee being unrelated to Self is a covering on Self. As soon as the tongue contact uncovers it, the identity of the Toffee-Self and Ego-self is attained, and it is this identity that uncovers the Self and manifests the joy. Now all these are limited coverings, and are removed by virtues fructifying. But the primal ignorance is the total covering. By wisdom thus the Supreme Bliss is uncovered. Thus, desire, generally considered to be a necessary pre-requisite of joy is bypassed. In any other view pain-pleasure dichotomy can never be transcended. Tīkā goes on to further state that in his view even in the liberation, joy like knowledge though not involved in the self is the indicator (Upalakṣaṇa) and thus may even be directly the cause of desiring the wisdom. Thus Brahmananda differs on many issues and boldly proves his point. From here the author takes up the problem of absence of bondage after wisdom, supporting liberation while alive. Since even while enjoying the fruits of destiny he knows them to be illusory, like the seeing of the face into a mirror (even knowing it to be illusory is seen) it cannot be called a bondage. He is always certain of the reality of God, and unreality of the world including his body and mind.

Vedānta is the instrument of knowledge, and mental modification accordingly is the destroyer of ignorance. In this context Tīkā formulates that the type of ignorance experienced until the rise of Vṛtti, is destroyed by it, since about the same object simultaneous knowledge and ignorance are not possible in the same locus, hence one can't destroy the other. The perception of an object thus is of its not being limited by the objectivity of ignorance. So the perception of consciousness is also really not being the object of ignorance. If we say it is of the form of mere consciousness, even before wisdom one should feel that Self is Śiva. If it be said merely to be not object of ignorance, pot will be always perceived, since it never is the object of ignorance.

After thus clarifying the purpose of Vṛtti for direct perception, necessity of knowing the meaning of component words of a sentence prior to the dawning of meaning of the sentence is discussed in detail. Since that and this are pronouns, and Brahman a technical word like Yūpa, āhavanīya etc. the meanings can be known only through scriptures. Here again a possibility is concerned whether just one or the other passage will suffice from the Upaniṣads to grasp the meaning of the words leading to wisdom of identity born out of the great sentences. According to Brahmasūtra's Samanvayādhikaraṇa it is suggested that one has to grasp it from all the different contexts, else only partial ignorance about Brahman will go, and wisdom will not dawn. Thus creator, preserver and destroyer indicated God, and awake, dreamer and sleeper indicated soul are identical is the knowledge attained. Similarly other passage are to be understood. The text refers here to the highest Samādhi where the wisdom dawns. Tīkā gives a detailed analysis of the state. For scholars there is a tantalising reference by Brahmananda where he quotes from Bhāṣya on Maitrāyaṇī-Upaniṣad, who this Bhāṣyakāra is? Did the Great Śāṅkara write a Bhāṣya on it? Will a great writer of Brahmananda's standing refer to any other's work as Bhāṣya? But the answers have to wait further researches. Anyhow here the annotation is very exhaustive for a practical aspirant. Having got rid of sleep and day-dreaming when the mind is conscious of nothing but the witness, it is the final realisation, the absolute knowledge. This particularity of mind in the subtle stage allows the witness to experience bliss as to be its own native. During other experiences of joys since the mind is not bereft of duality, the joy is not pervasive, but here it is so. Brahmananda is very clear in pointing out that this is only the pure individual self or soul, and not the identity of soul and God that is experienced. But it alone leads to the knowledge of the identity by the great sentence of the Upaniṣads. Tīkā goes on to discuss this problem in detail from a logical point of view. It is pointed out that only after this realisation one really attains the dispassion for body etc., and thus really desires nothing but pure Self. Here he takes cudgels against Sadānanda, the author of Vedāntasāra, who maintains that even after beatitude is attained samādhi continues. We shall see that just as here he has dealt the soul principle from a practical stand-point, in the eighth he will deal with the God principle from a practical point. The question is raised that if in the state of highest samādhi the pure knowledge is attained, Vedānta can't be a producer of new knowledge (Apūrva). It is answered that the ignorance that God is not directly perceived, and soul is not bliss remains in spite of the attainment of Samādhi. The knowledge of identity alone can remove it. The idea is that the joy attained in Samādhi will always seem to depend on the effort of Samādhi, and not the natural state. Since God is Bliss one feels that it is not directly perceived, for lack of mind there, and that is not perceived as the creator of the world. Thus, Vedānta texts alone can produce the knowledge to destroy the ignorance of duality. Samādhi can only give the pure knowledge of the individual.

Tīkā goes on to discuss the ways of understanding the sentence etc. in different schools of ritualistic interpretation of the scripture and logicians, and finally establishes the Vedānta view. The discussion is highly technical and shows Brahmananda in his true colours of a formidable exponent of the Vedānta. He quotes from Cintāmaṇi in a way that shows the astounding mastery of that text of Nyāya. He concluded by establishing that the side glances attained by words like true, knowledge, joy are also important, and it is possible to have knowledge of a pure

absence, and pure pervasiveness. The pure potness and its pure absence both are cognised. He makes a beautiful synthesis between the views of Sarvajñātma and Amalananda by suggesting that these different statements about Brahman may differentiate the concept given by them by the inferential meanings rather than by direct meanings. He suggests two contradictory readings of the text in this passage Vachyartha-bhedavabhasat and Vachyartha-abhedavabhasat, and justifies both. This shows that by his time the great work of Madhusūdana had already become so popular that it was not easy to determine the exact text at certain points. Anyhow the main purpose of the side glance is established by showing that without them liberation will not be an object of desire, renouncing such joys as attaining heaven etc. Moreover the concept of God will not be clear without them. Thus they serve two-fold purpose of showing the desirability, attainability etc. of the Wisdom, and the understanding of the concept of true God-head Madhusūdana is clear in enunciating that for a knowledge of dual sense (Vikalpa) the words must have a similar import, and non-dual one a non-dual (nirvikalpa) import. I am Brahman, objects are unreal for unreality is an adjunct of objects etc. is dual knowledge because objects as qualified by unreality is conceived. But 'I am Brahman', 'objects are imagined in Me' is non-dual because here the self does not have to be conceived merely by adjuncts, but also unconnected by adjuncts. Brahmananda has to answer the logical view interpreter Prakāśātman in what may seem to a novice an atrocious way. He says the word Jivan-Mukti i. e. liberated in life should be made to mean an aspirant for liberation. This is pointed out to show a fundamental view of Vedānta often lost sight of. It is not merely in the text interpretations that Vedānta gives freedom, but in the life itself. Times change, and with that the views in Society change. At the time of early Vedānta, ritualists were the important dominant minority in society, hence the approach was turned to their frequencies, later on it was the Kapila's followers, Buddha's followers etc. who were to be dealt with, and the approach had to change. Still later the great Śri Harṣa dealt with logicians, Madhusūdana dealt with Mādhwa Vaiṣṇavas and their foundations of navya nyāya and other devotional schools. Last century saw the dawn of modern age and Vedānta again gave a calmer call of popular approach as witnessed in the preaching approach and lingo tests. The present age is a scientific age, hence our approach has to be based on that premise. Vedānta is a true knowledge, hence not bound by external limitations of a particular style. If we cannot convey the truth, we have to see the weaknesses in our approach, rather than blame the Society. The flow of time is only in one direction. The ages can never come back. Back to past is a meaningless dream of the lazy ones. 'Onwards to future' is the Vedāntic Message. We have to give new interpretations, new messages to herald the dawn of the new age. But always the truth must go on shining. Truth will not change, interpretations will later follow the Great Ācārya in their methods, rather than make them our bondage, who were our liberators. We may point out that after giving the audacious interpretation, Ācārya goes on to prove even the text as it is, but eventually gives his view as 'Really speaking'. He goes on to establish the knowledge attained by implication (lakṣhaṇa) and here again he is in his true colours of a formidable opposition to Mīmāṃsā. His mastery of ritualistic philosophy is equally astounding as to that of navya-nyāya. He goes on further to differentiate between the Bhaṭṭa's and logicians' views. Then the cārvāka and Buddhas, Jains are taken up. Thus in a short tense way a reader is introduced to all the views of different schools and their contradiction with the Vedānta. Truth clearly pointed out. Text lays

here the views about the soul of all the prevalent philosophies of the time, and Tīkā discusses them in detail. Amongst Vaidikas Kanāda is the lowest, and Gautama somewhat better. Gautama accepts the identity of soul and God for meditation purposes. Ritualists though indirectly indicate that they really accept the Absolute Self, but do not reveal it due to the fact that duties will lose their import for the uninitiate, yet in discussing Kumārila accepts an amalgamated conscious-unconscious and Prabhākara merely accepts soul as the locus of consciousness, and they are lower in ladder to Kapila. Patañjali is superior because he accepts God, which Kapila does not. Thus the ācārya lays down a gradation amongst Āstikas.

After such an extravagant introduction, the verse analysis is started. First the views of the materialists are contradicted. The Tīkā discusses a new solution of problem raised in Laghu candrikā. A clear reference is made to the views of Laghucandrikā, which, the mature author now feels is not fully satisfactory. The problem is when we talk of 'two kapālas in a pot' we do not refer to the potness, but to the dual-kapalaness. Hence, even when we say 'pot is' we may mean 'pot identical with existence' which will be a true knowledge, but we may also mean 'potness different from existence', and both may mean a quality of something else—the pot—in that case we will be wrong. An object of difference in appearance is not limitation, for if it is accepted then an object of destruction in appearance will also have to be accepted in the same way. By very close analysis it is established that self is never the counter-part of any 'absence'. All else are such objects. Hence, by the power of ignorance all that is perceived is superimposed on the self-evident illumination. This is the heart of the Upaniṣads. The Tīkā contradicts the view of the tārīkas in holding, that quality and matter are related in a new relationship. He further proves the self as a witness. The text, then takes up the theory of reflection. Many views are considered about what should be considered as the material cause of the universe. In his masterly way, Brahmananda lays down that in whichever way we may look at it, whatever in any theory is postulated as the witness, becomes the material cause, for it is the substrate that appears as identical with the super-imposed, being its illuminator. Thus Sureśwara, Padmapāda, and Sarvajñātma are reconciled. The possibility of reflection of a formless in a formless is discussed. It has to be accepted because of the appearance in both ways. 'I am wise' and 'the wisdom' is mine. The scriptures are of course clear in supporting this view. The tīkā points out that if one doubts it like Vācaspati, one has to doubt even the scriptures themselves. Again both the real-reflection theory of Prakāśātman, and false reflection theory of Sureśwara are harmonised, since both accept and explain the experience in the same manner. Even in the false reflection theory the identification with the substrate is what makes the ego conscious.

Next the super-imposition is discussed as a rational hypothesis. The śruti lays down the absolute, and experience dictates the relative. Nothing else, but superimposition theory can reconcile both, hence it has to be accepted. It is defined and explained, which reminds one of Advaita-Siddhi, where the problem is dealt with exhaustively. But the tīkā goes on to assert that absolute non-existence (alika) is indestructible. Universal objects always appear in identity with existence. Hence they are not non-existent. Even Buddha did not accept the identity of non-existence and existence. Thus destruction is an indicator of the super-imposed.

Direct perception is discussed threadbare by Brahmānanda. The text discusses bliss as self, followed by grades and varieties of super-imposition. Grades indicate the degree of desirability. Consciousness merely covered by ignorance is desired most, and pure consciousness will be the object of real love.

In a wholistic perception, parts, as adjectives play no part, in spite of their not being accepted by Udayana and Vardhamāna. Their own statements contradict such a position. This is proved to show that 'Thou art That' will lead to a wholistic perception, rather than relational experience. A very thorough discussion of the topic of indicated knowledge is taken up. Both the indications are accepted by the ācārya. If the ego is to be totally given up, we have rejective indication in the identity sentences, and if it is to be utilised, we will have partite indication. Actually there are two psychological views about the ego. Those who love God, want to lose their ego to experience Him as real but those who are attracted towards reality, want it to become their real ego. Since both approaches are possible both views are to be accepted. Thus again we see another example of the broadness of Vedānta, where the emphasis is on harmonising the experience with reality, and not just imposing a view. If God is more real than ego, 'God is I', and if I be more real, than 'I am God'. These are two assertions of the same experience—the identity of soul and Brahman. Taking this occasion as an excuse, the text gives all the different views about soul and God prevalent in the Vedānta. A serious student may find a more thorough treatment in Siddhāntaleśa of Appaya Dikṣita. The ṭikā gives an alternative interpretation of Vācaspati. The Kalpataru says, that the material cause of the universe is Brahman, because it is the object of ignorance which is located in the soul. The efficient cause is the ignorance as it causes a fault in the perceiver. Brahmānanda says that the soul itself may be taken as the material cause, for it is the locus of the ignorance which transforms as the cosmos. Thus, though the soul is not the object of ignorance, yet it can be considered the cause. If it be said that it will contradict scriptural texts that declare God to be the material cause, the answer should be given that the material cause is the object of ignorance, which is located in the soul, who is thus called the material cause. In such a view the Taitirīya definition of God as the creator should be supported to mean the identity of soul and God. Thus, Bhamtī is brought nearer to the established view that it is one consciousness that is both the material and the efficient cause of the world phenomena.

But, Madhusūdana does not leave us in any doubt about his own conviction that the theory that there is only one soul, is the most logical, based as it is on the views of both the direct disciples, Padmapāda and Sureśwara. It is refreshing, for generally in such a discussion Vedāntins do not postulate their personal preferences. Even in Advaita-Siddhi Madhusūdana has asserted the one-soul theory. But as a true Vedāntin he immediately hastens to add that all the theories about soul, God, world, etc. are equally valid, for the purpose is realisation of advaita, and not finding explanations. The ṭikā goes on to add that Śāṅkara himself has accepted the alternative of five cases and five body-parts in interpreting the 'five' clearing the path for us to differ in unessentials. As a side issue, the ṭikā defines right knowledge, knowledge, self-evidence of knowledge and the transitivity of the verb 'to know'. The discussion is highly illuminative, but too technical.

Soul, being under the cloud of the adjunct becomes transmigratory, while God, being its wielder, remains omniscient and omnipotent, is the common view of all the Vedāntic thinkers. The question may arise that, are the specific things, like actions, and their fruits, of a particular individual, and the means of knowledge, and objects of knowledge etc., also born out of ignorance? The answer is that the question asked is about the specific mind-stuff, which being only a result of ignorance is definitely specific. Ignorance has parts that are specific, hence no intercrossing (Śāṅkara) takes place. Actual ignorance is seen, inert, limited, transitory and indescribable. Though it does not stand up to analysis, it perceptually has two powers, the covering and the manifesting. A thing neither is, nor appears, is the experience of the covering power. Appearance of space, time object is the manifesting power. Though limited, it is able to cover the unlimited self. It is something like a finger covering the appearance of the sun. If it be said that the finger covers the eye, then the question arises how can the finger be seen if the eye is covered? Hence covering is the preliminary stage of Manifestation. Ignorance, after covering the Self, transforms itself as the universe, according to the past impressions, and actions of the soul. This is beginningless. Ignorance is the locus of reflection of the Self, and becomes indistinguishable with it. Hence the experience 'I am ignorant' is universal, and never the experience. 'This is ignorance'. Thus ignorance, identified with the self, manifesting the universe in all its effects, is always interpenetrated with the self. Since Self, like a lamp, naturally illumines (knows) all that is in its contact, it knows everything without any intermediary means. Thus, Self as the material cause of the universe is always omniscient. Hence no explanation is called for, there. This is necessary only for the limited souls. But in this case also, since the specific mind comes at a particular moment, with a specific object, and since a soul is limited by that mind, there is no crossing between the souls. The ṭikā takes all the three different schools of vārtika, vivaraṇa and Vācaspati and explains all of them. In the first case, since the reflection of self in ignorance is the base of the universe, that reflection is the witness, and illumines the world. Even though reflection is unreal, yet being identified with Self, it acts as the consciousness, like the reflection of the sun in a mirror becomes the source of illuminating a dark spot. In the view of Vivaraṇa, the modification of ignorance being accepted, the present is known by direct perception, future by inferential perception, and past as memory. Thus God's omniscience is explained. Vācaspati means by omniscience of God, his not being the subject of ignorance about any objective knowledge. Then, the text describes, with a beautiful analogy, the way the mind stuff, flowing through the canals of senses, reaches and takes the form of an object, like water takes the shape of a field. The need of this mental modification is to uncover the consciousness by removing the ignorance in its limited adjunct like pot. If it be doubted that virtue and vice in such a case should be directly perceived because they are in direct contact, with the self having their locus in the minds, the answer is, that consciousness does not come in contact with them because the mind is incapable of taking their forms, hence they are always unknown. The ṭikā points out, quoting Advaita-Siddhi, that wherever there is super-imposition of an object of perception (Dṛṣya), there is knowing and not that, in an object having knowability—there is superimposition.

Thus a soul cannot by itself, have contact with the objects, and mental modification (formation) is necessary to establish a relation. Thus, we find that a clear, but covered, object is known by a mental transformation, uncovering the object. Uncovered yet unclear is known

through nescient transformation, as in nacre-silver. Uncovered and clear are directly perceived, so they need neither mental, nor nescient transformation. Examples for these are joy and sorrow. Brahman, though it knows everything, is called covered because of being the object of ignorance of the mind-limited consciousness called Jiva. Thus, ignorance without the instrumentality of mental modification, due to a means of knowledge, creates the feeling of non-existence and non-cognition in an existing cognition. This peculiarity is called covering. Once such mental modification comes into being, even, the existing trace of ignorance is not potent enough to cover Brahman. The study of the Upaniṣads is really needed to attain this. Actually like Śaṅkara in Brahma-Sūtra, Madhusūdana points out that it is one's own experience that clinches the matter. The text goes on to explain the two types of covering, one causing the non-existence of an existent entity, and the other causing the un-knownness of a known entity. Thus, indirect experience will destroy the first type, and the direct experience the second type. Thus in an inferential knowledge, that 'fire is on the hill', it is the covering "fire is non-existent" that is destroyed. But in a perceptual knowledge "five is un-known" is also removed. Similarly Brahman can be known directly or indirectly. In the indirect knowledge there is no contact of sense and its object, hence knowledge is only mental. The direct knowledge is caused by both the object and sense coming in contact. Hence produced by both the subject and the objects, it also exists in both the object and the mind. It is interesting to note, that Brahmānanda in his bigger work has postulated the third type of cover, i.e. the feeling of unblissfulness in the blissful. Thus, concluded Madhusūdana, atman of the form of knowledge, being present in deep sleep, and body-mind complex not being present there, can not be identical. Moreover the body-mind complex is an object of perception, while the atman is its subject, which makes it doubly impossible that they be identical. Hence those of dull intellect try to feel, or prove, something that is impossible. While the view of the followers of Upaniṣads remains undaunted.

Thus the first verse and its introduction covers practically sixty six percent of the total texts of Nibandha and Tikā both taken together. Subjectwise also, it is the major part.

In the second verse, the introduction takes up the opponent's view, that if Atman be absolutely bereft of all qualities, including the doership etc., the Vedic Ordinances like, a Brahman should do worship etc. will be unauthoritative. This is because the concept of Brahman is not an authoritative one. Atman, by itself, without being an actor and enjoyer, cannot do anything. Thus if the Veda is unauthoritative, even the Brahman, being proved by Veda, will remain unproved. Hence, for accepting Brahman, one must accept the doership of Atman also. The ācārya answers that the problem is a non-starter. Does the opponent assert, the unauthoritativeness of Veda, as a means of knowledge, prior to Ātmajñāna, or later than that? Prior to Ātmajñāna the authority is accepted in all its details by Vedānta. Later on the authoritativeness is unnecessary. The light is useless after the perception of an object, or a news-paper, after its reading. Thus, after the destruction of 'I and mine', along with its material cause the ignorance, all transactions cease.

The third verse carries forth the argument, and completes the discussion about the soul. From the fourth, the text starts to explain the Vedāntic view of God. Nārāyaṇa Tirtha's comments

are also included in this publication here, for there are some issues more specifically detailed than Brahmānanda. Readers may recollect that Nārāyaṇa Tirtha was the Guru of Brahmānanda. God according to Vedānta is the cause of the world. Hence all the causes are taken into consideration. Sāṃkhya believe Prakṛti to be such. Śaivās take Paśupati the efficient cause. Here Nārāyaṇa discusses the Vaiṣṇava allegation, that Śiva is Jiva, and rejects it on the basis of Vedic quotations, which assert Śiva to be the final cause. The illusion arises because at some places in Purāṇas Rudra and Śiva are confused. Vaiṣṇavas accept Viṣṇu, Vasudeva, as the final cause. They accept the generation of the soul. Thus, the soul being generated is eternally different from the generator, Vasudeva. Then the view of Jainas and Daṇḍis is taken up. Ritualists do not accept the creator, and postulate, that a non-existing God is to be meditated upon, to gain liberation. Logicians infer God as an efficient cause, accepting atoms etc. to be the material cause. Bauddhas, and Pātañjalas use the word God, without accepting him as the creator. Finally the Advaita concept of God as non-dual, Supreme Bliss, the true essence of the soul, omnipotent, material as well as the efficient cause of the world, is enunciated. Both Nārāyaṇa and Brahmānanda deal with the different schools in a cursory manner, showing the contradiction in their views, and specially being antivedic. Here the tikā discusses Mīmāṃsā in a somewhat detailed manner, specially taking the later Mīmāṃsā works belonging to the Bhāṭṭa School. Purport issuing forth from the words of the text, and the meaning of those words, are both discussed. Khaṇḍadeva is the last of the Bhāṭṭa school discussed. With him Bhāṭṭas ceased to exist as a different school, and now mainly it is the Vedānta which has kept the Mīmāṃsā alive, as a study of philosophy. The masterly way the tikā sums up, this topic, harmonising all the conflicting philosophical positions, does credit not only to Brahmānanda, but is a valuable illustration of the way that all Vedāntists should strive to bring harmony between conflicts. Vedānta is the final synthesis of all the previous thesis, and anti-thesis. In spite of the last twelve hundred years' history of continuous attempt by some of the greatest logical philosophers, to turn Vedānta into a thesis, the attempt has failed. Vedānta has been able to synthesise, or harmonise, the very schools in its own texture. It applies equally to the Devotional Movement of the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Śakta and Nirguna aspects, as illustrated by Rāmānuja, Mādhwa, Caitanya, Śrīkaṇṭha, Śrīkara, Siddhānta, Māheśvaras of Kāśmīra, Rāmaprasāda, Kabira, Nānaka, Dādu, Jñānadeva, Tukārāma, Mīrā and host of others; as well as to the Activist Movements of Dayānada, Rāmamohana Roy, Tīlaka, Rānāde, Gāndhi and others. Madhusūdana represents the former amalgamation at its apex, and Vivekānanda, Rāma Tirtha, Ramaṇa, Bhārati Kṛṣṇa represent the later. Thus Brahmānanda represents the harmonious attitude which found its best exponent in the Great Śaṅkara himself. He takes the illustration, 'See the deer is running' from the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, where the master grammarian lays down that the meaning of the sentence is the object of seeing, and thus qualifies it. The idea is that 'deer is running', though as a sentence can not be the object of the transitive verb 'see'; yet the meaning conveyed by the sentence can. Thus, the meaning of the sentence qualifies the act of seeing in its capacity as an object, since two meanings can qualify each other, while the words and meanings can not be interrelated, except the direct meanings of the word. This is accepted by all. The difference is that according to Grammarians 'Running' which is the root meaning of the verb is qualified by deer etc., while the Logicians hold that the nominative deer has the import of running etc. as its adjective. Ritualist accept 'running' as the

instrumentive import, which is the objective adjective to the import of the instrument of seeing. Thus in all the schools, the imperative is caused by an ordination sentence. And really speaking the instrumentiveness is the desirability in the ordination.

This desirability is again due to praise worthiness. Not producing a more powerful undesirable result is the real implied meaning of praiseworthiness. Since the knowledge attained by the identity-promulgating sentences produce the most desired result, the eternal bliss, it is to be accepted as the highest praiseworthy information given by the scriptures. Ritualists generally accept that apart from ordinations, the other information is only an auxiliary to it, for they do not produce results. We assert that ordinations are superior not because they ordain us to do something, but because they give knowledge that can bear fruits. Hence the knowledge of identity, being capable of producing a result, though not asking us to do anything, is yet authoritative by itself. Actually all other ordinations and prohibitions are but for partial attainment of joy, but identity causing the complete attainment of bliss, is really the main import, and all the rest are auxiliary to it. All rituals lead to mental purification, a necessary step to the spirit of discriminative life.

After dealing with the next three verses in a cursory manner, and establishing the Brahman as all pervasive, and bereft of all qualities, the question is asked who is it whom the knowledge is to be given? One cannot teach Brahman to the unconscious, non-existing, and non-Brahman, neither can Brahman be taught, for it is already Brahman. The answer is whether the question is from the real stand. point, or the apparent point of view. Gauḍapāda is quoted in support of the view that the question is inconsequential from the absolutely real point of view. From an apparent view, until apparent is real, we can't talk as if real is apparent. Hence, until the realisation of the real, all appearances including the soul, teacher etc., will continue. Such an apparent soul is taught by an apparent teacher.

The eighth verse, both as regards to the text, and the *ṭikā* is important. We have accommodated relevant comments by Nārāyaṇa Tirtha to make the discussion on devotion more exhaustive. The text starts with giving the categories of Vedānta. There are only two major divisions, the seer and the seen. All the imaginary categories of different schools of philosophies belong to either of these categories. Even though the seer is one in reality, it takes three forms due to adjuncts. The three forms are Maheśwara, Soul and the Witness. Maheśwara has the adjunct of causal Nescience. Mind and its impressions are the adjuncts of the soul. Consciousness, that is pervading both soul and Maheśwara, is the witness.

According to Sureśwara, the witness is non-different from Maheśwara; according to others it is the reflected image of consciousness. Maheśwara is again of three types, depending on the type of activity as the cause. Creative causal nescience, associated with Maheśwara, is Brahmā, its preservative aspect associated with Maheśwara is Viṣṇu, and annihilative causal nescience associated with Maheśwara is Rudra. From Paurāṇik and Smarta point of view sattva association is Viṣṇu, raja association, Brahmā, and tama association is Rudra. Hiranyagarbha is not Brahmā, because it is caused by, and is not the cause of the fundamental elements; even though Purāṇas call it so because of his being the cause of gross elements. Maheśwara, similarly,

though one Indivisible, has many forms, as his adjuncts, like Four Faces, Four Hands, Five Faces etc. in male forms, and Śrī, Bhārati, Bhawāni etc. as the female ones. All the incarnations are also the manifestations of Maheśwara. This is his play for his devotees.

The *ṭikā* deals the subject thoroughly. Objector puts up the common-sense point of view, that four faced form should be Brahma's manifestation, four-handed one Viṣṇu's, and five faced one Rudra's; similarly Lakṣmi could be of Viṣṇu etc. Why should they all be called manifestation of Maheśwara? The Vedānti answers that four-faced one is not merely Brahma's manifestation, because in that form he does not restrict himself to one act of creation. It is the same with all the mentioned forms. Moreover, even in protecting, the four-handed form destroys the demons, which is Rudra's act. Destruction of Tripura leads to the protection of the world, which is Viṣṇu's act. Hence the Vedāntic view is that all these are forms of one Maheśwara.

From this concept, Brahmānanda goes to the concept of defining devotion as any activity that pleases Maheśwara, done through body, mind or voice. This devotion has its locus in the devotee. This is again divided in nine divisions in ascending order. Lord being the soul of all souls is always, even unknowingly, the object of their desire. But the study of scriptures leads to its realisation. Whatever was heard previously, spoken even by sons and wives, was hearing about the Lord, for he is all. Scriptures tell about Lord directly. Hearing this is the first stage of devotion. This may be either hearing about the qualified aspect of Lord, or his absolute aspect. Having heard, one speaks about it to others, this is the second stage. Om is the best of his names, according to the scriptures. This is called Kirtana or reciting, though the word is now used for a specific ding-dong repetition without any consideration of conveying the meaning. By giving this definition Brahmānanda warns the novice from such plagiarism. On speaking a lot about the lord, his memory becomes normal. Serving the Paramahansa Saṁnyasin, or Images is the service aspect of devotion. Worship is all that is pleasing to the Lord. Making prostration to images etc., offering of all the activities as his free service, is attending on him. According to Bādarāyaṇa, God's pleasure is the form of virtue. Serving parents or Guru, taking them to be the Lord, also is attending the Lord. Friendship is the developed stage, where the Lord's work is done as one's own work. Similarly in this stage one becomes sure that the Lord will attend to one's good, just like the confidence one feels in a friend. Whatever one likes in taste etc. one offers to the Lord. One can't bear the maligning of the Lord, just as one can't of one's friend. A devotee, here, will argue, with all the athiests, and protect him, against them, as a dear friend. In the last stage called dedication, one stops thinking of one's own gains and preserves. Just as one does not worry about the cow that has been sold away, one does not worry even about one's own body. This is the real state of a Paramahansa, no matter whether one has donned the robes, or not. Uncontaminated witness as one's own nature, is the experience of dedication. One may practise these modes of devotion individually, collectively, or groupwise. Here again the *ṭikā* classifies friendship as both the instrumentive and resultant form of devotion; dedication as the resultant devotion, is of the form of identity between the soul and God. In this, devotion to Maheśwara and knowledge, become identical. The others are all mere instrumental devotion. If devotion is practised for the sake of knowing Him, the attitude is pure; if for attaining objects, powers etc., it is impure; but if it has anger, showing-

off, competition etc. as the motives, it is demonic. Nārāyaṇa, after distinguishing the authorised gods from incarnations, asserts that their actions, done like other beings, are due to their mercy, for the others. This is to show the right path of action. Their godliness is ever shining. In Guṇavāṭāra, all the powers ever shine, just as they do in Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. Amśāvātāra is where only partial manifestation of power is witnessed, as in Mastya. But in both of them, it is the omnipotent God himself, who is incarnated. Maheśwara is called Paramaśiva by Śaivas, Paradevatā by Śāktas, and Parameśwara by Smartas. A student of comparative philosophy and religion, is bound to notice that Nārāyaṇa is again bringing the concepts and categories of the Bhāgawata sect, and amalgamating them with the Vedāntic view-point. The prevalence of Bhāgawata cult, in that century, necessitated this amalgamation; and the great harmonious masters were not missing, who recognised, and delivered the goods. He accepts three types of devotion. First is the devotion mixed with the ritual. The ritual and knowledge both simultaneous with devotion comprises the next. The last is the knowledge, mixed with devotion. Three divisions are well-known in the Bhāgawatas. Again he sub-divides each of them. The best devotion is that in which a devotee sees all beings as the manifestation of the self, which is of the nature of the Lord. The average devotee loves Maheśwara, befriends other devotees, shows mercy to ignorants, and ignores his enemies. The lowest devotee worships with faith only the idols, without ever paying attention to other devotees, and unlearned ones. The prohibited devotion is also discussed. He also points out that the ritual-mixed devotion of nine types is for the householder, ritual-knowledge-mixed devotion is for the recluse, and the knowledge-mixed devotion is for vidviṣu Bhikṣu. Pure devotion is for all, and pure knowledge for Paramahansa. Thus we see a very thorough treatment has been given by the author here. It is practical, concise and philosophically sound.

The soul is divided into three types, referring to the adjuncts in waking, dreaming and sleeping. Māṇḍūkya is the basis of this division.

External world is discussed in detail, for though it is not absolutely real, it is of utilitarian value, which differentiates it from dream. It is also necessary for meditative purposes. The causal adjunct is of three types. Unmanifest, Unformed and Formed. Nescience associated with Maheśwara, who is reflected as an image in it, is the powerful seed of both, the unformed and formed world, and this is called (Avyākṛta) the unmanifest. Though not an effect, it is annihilated by the consciousness of the identity of soul and God. The power of the unmanifest is divided into three: (a) the impression of the past, actions of the soul, and inanimate material; (b) its subtle state; (c) and covering and manifesting powers located in the ignorance. Unmanifest is the adjunct of Maheśwara. Even though inert, being illumined by the reflection of Maheśwara in it, it creates five elements with their qualities, being induced by the activities of souls done in successive lives. Each element becomes the new adjunct for Maheśwara to produce the next element. Thus Vedānta does not accept an inert cause at any stage. Maheśwara is not only the prime mover, but the mover of all the later movements as well. This becomes the popular concept of gods controlling the natural phenomena. We have both, a *God* as well as *gods*. God controls everything, but the gods, only the specific duties allotted to them, by God. Another important point which is to be noted here is the realisation that change of adjunct necessarily

implies a change in the mode of reflected consciousness. Unmanifest, being the totality of causes, is naturally the first and foremost. Soul, God, differentiation between the two, ignorance, its relation, power of covering and manifesting, the impressions of activities of soul, matter, and the results of the soul's actions not yet fructified are all collectively called the Unmanifest. In certain passages Nescience and Unmanifest are used synonymously, taking advantage of the maxim that a part can be used as a whole.

Madhusūdana here takes up cudgels with Kaṇāda, for they don't accept darkness as a material, while the Vedānta does. They accept darkness as mere absence of light. But in experience we find that during sudden lightning, it clearly goes and comes. It is of the nature of a cover on the power of the eye, and is destroyed by light. Kaṇāda questions the reason for the non-inclusion of in any of the list of creations in the Vedas. Madhusūdana answers that since it is not a part of the material for the human body, it is overlooked as unnecessary. Though one may raise the same question about space, the ingestion of food, and drinks, as well as inhalation is clear proof of the existence of space in the body. The same is not true of darkness. Here Madhusūdana enunciates a very significant theory. The Vedas deal with human life, specially as it relates to its cycle of birth and death, and not with world in general. Hence, though exhaustive in religious and spiritual matters, one need not search in it other material sciences, which are the objects of direct sense-perception. Thus Vedānta is supreme where spirituality is concerned, but sciences are supreme in their respective fields. Thus is laid the foundation of a harmonious relationship between the two. Direction like East, West is a mere reference, to, and from a point, and really refers to space. Time is nothing but nescience. For it is the ground of all becoming, which is the definition of nescience. Time as an abstract principle (Mahākāla) is just a superstition. Now, afterwards, before etc. are the only experiences of time, or it is a reference of the happenings like sunrise, moon waning etc. Nescience identified with time is actually Iśwara. Hence time associated with the reflection of God is so-called abstract time (Mahākāla).

The five elements in subtle stage are unformed, and have the qualities of illumination, activity and inertia. When the illumining section of these subtle elements is compounded, their inherent aspect of knowledge and action creates a very clear substance of a variegated nature. The knowledge side is called the mind-stuff, and active side is called the vital stuff. The important point to be noted is that both are one substance. Sureśwara illustrates it by the example of a mirror, which is indivisible, yet one-side receives the image by reflection, and the other does not reflect. But the two sides cannot be separated, without the mirror ceasing to exist as a mirror. Similarly one side knows, and that is the mind; the other side acts and that is vital. But the two are always inseparable. The Mind-stuff is again divided into two. Intellect and Emotion. Intellect is the element that decides. It decides about both, 'I' and 'non-I'. The first is called ego, the other is generally called the decisive-faculty. Similarly the emotive aspect is also of two types. Doubt etc., which are mainly due to past impressions, are called mental; and desiring etc., which are mainly due to the power of the will, are called willful. Similarly the vital aspect is divided into the activities in the heart, anus, naval, throat and generalised organs. Similarly, from each

individual element, an organ of knowledge, and an organ of action is produced consecutively by the illuminative and active aspects respectively. The guiding principles everywhere being, that the causal element is the object of the sense caused by it. Each of them are again controlled by their respective gods. Though there is much similarity in this analysis with the logicians and saṅkhyas, both being Vaidikas, yet there are certain variations. For example Vedānta accepts both the eye and the ear as reaching out to the object, while the logicians accept this only in respect to the eyes. Unformed creation, thus, is an effect, and both in its individual and cosmic aspect, it is an adjunct of the soul. Thus the gods are also souls, who have attained that position due to knowledge, ritual, and austerity. All knowledge is presided by the Hiraṇyagarbha, and all actions by Sūtrātma. The effect is never an adjunct of Maheśwara.

For creating gross physical bodies, for the souls to enjoy, as well as the objects of enjoyment, the inert material is mixed, so that fifty percent belongs to the main element, and twelve point fifty percent each belongs to the other four elements. Thus the visible air contains half air, one eighth earth, one eighth water, one eighth fire, and one eighth space. This is evident because in the body we find them all mixed up. This is known as grossification. The illuminative principle predominates in godly bodies, the active principle predominates in human beings, and the inert one in the animal and inert bodies. Similarly their abodes also have respective predominant elements, more than in the rest. This universe is the form of virat, and is the formed universe. This is the theory and procedure of creation according to the Upaniṣads. The presently available Purāṇas, though basically follow this, are not consistent with it or with themselves.

The three states of consciousness are described next. Dream, according to the text, is produced materially by ignorance, and cognised also by its modification. Soul, the consciousness associated with the mind, is the substratum of dream. There is an interesting and elaborate discussion about this topic. To clarify certain points, we have accommodated Narāyaṇa's comments as well. In deep sleep, according to Madhusūdana, there are three modifications of ignorance. One, of the form of joy, the second of the form of the witness, and the third of the form of the particular experience of ignorance. Lack of ego will not allow one modification comprising all the three. In total dissolution, even these modifications are absent. Thus the text suggests that the ego is responsible for the integration of experience. From the point of view of an aspirant this is important. Presence of the ego hinders the perception of the raw objective experience, by integrating it with other experiences, as well as past impressions and future expectations. By losing it, we gain the view of the real as it is. The text further analyses the concept of memory, doubt, misconception, etc. They are all in the Sākṣhī. Since they are not of the form of new knowledge, ignorance is their direct cause. Hence the scholars of Vedānta accept the indirect misconception caused by the sentence of an unauthoritative person, also as a modification of ignorance though the mind is present, because the right knowledge is not being produced. We are led to this conclusion. In the meditation of the name as God, the superimposition is intentional, hence it is different from both the knowledge and the non-knowledge. Meditation is as much a mental modification as a desire. Reasoning is similarly a mental modification. Thus 'Listen, Reason and Experience' are commands of the Vedānta to be followed. The method

pursued is the discrimination between the seer the and seen; the witness and the witnessed; the temporary and the permanent, pain and the absolute joy. These are respectively discussed in the chapters of harmony, non-contradiction, means and fruits of Brahma Sūtra.

After a discussion on the witness as being non-dual, even in the transactions of every day life, and the impossibility of pain in sleep, the text goes on to establish the bliss as the very nature of the soul. The unreality of the world is denied in the last verse. What is denied is the reality of the duality, by Sureśwara. To posit the reality is impossible, for it is beyond words and their meanings. Thus denial is the ascertainment in Vedānta. Even though Self is not the object of words, they remove the ignorance. This is the Vedānta now established.

Siddhānta-Bindu, we find, is one of the most important treatises in the reflective literature of Vedānta. The text printed earlier from Varanasi and Madras were extremely defective and deficient. It was Paṇḍitarāja Rajeśwara Śāstri Drāviḍ's copy which helped the present editor. We hope the scholars will scrutinise it, and suggest better readings where necessary.

Shatasloki

The work starts with eulogising a Guru as greater than even a touchstone, for it changes iron into gold, but does not change it into a touchstone. But a Guru changes the disciple into his own form. The disciple spreads the knowledge, cooling the parched souls. The division of wisdom in 'I am Brahman' and 'all is Brahman' is made clear. Experience and Rationality are equally emphasised. Then the body, its relations etc. are described. How the silk-worm is the cause of its own death is emphasised.

Witness remains unattached even while in the body, just as an actor remains unidentified with his role. The Vedas lay down, like a mother, various paths of realisation, for the aspiring souls. Then the author described the pure self as the real object of love. The path of pleasure and the path of bliss is distinguished. Renunciation is discussed both for a householder and a monk. Passion, anger, and lust are discussed as the main gateways to hell. Charity, forgiveness, faith and truth are described as the four pillars of the wisdom. Charity is defined as all that is done with an attitude of dedication; forgiveness, as never getting angry; faith, as the belief in the ultimate reality; and truth, as the identity of God with it. The commentator refers to the Sāmaveda Śetugāna as the authority of this verse.

Attending to guests, and making an offering to God is emphasised before taking food. A clear reference to fire-worship with the vital air as the symbol is made. In this context Rgveda is referred by Giri. Offering of the food brings fullness to the offerer. It also creates non-enmity. Friends also must be entertained. If friends be not fed in a house, it is not to be considered as a house, but a forest. Thus Śāṅkara lays a great emphasis on food distribution to all, and sharing of our things with others as the fundamental doctrines of value.

Wisdom is compared to a sacrifice. In the fire of the non-dual experience, the whole world is sacrificed. It is annihilated by the fire of Brahman, just as the snake by the rope-perception. Nāśadiya of Rgveda is taken up next, and it is surprising that Giri does not comment on it as such. The concept of the world, as neither different, nor indifferent, from the truth, is

discussed in this verse, as a prelude to creation. Bondage and liberation are non-existent from Brahman's viewpoint, just as the day and the night do not exist for the Sun. Desire or Will is pointed as the first cause of the universe. Again in the twenty sixth verse a reference to Rgveda is mysteriously missed by Giri, where ignorance is described as a beautiful damsel. In the next verse Śaṅkara identifies the existence, with the identity of God and soul. It is a beautiful amalgamation of philosophy and religion. The story of Subandhu in Rgveda is cited, as the proof of the self surviving, while it is the mind that transits. After describing the nature of Self and movements of the soul in the din of desires, the covering power of the ignorance is described, by illustrating it with the cloud and the sun, an analogy often used by Śaṅkara. The loss of a kingdom in dream is not a disturbance. Śaṅkara points out that a similar attitude towards the waking world, which is equally real, should be cultured. The dream illustration is carried on in a number of verses. One important point is noted, that at times, an act of dream, results in an event of the waking state, like the loss of semen. The fact that the dream will not have repercussion in the waking state, is disproved by this experience. Similarly, even for a liberated one, the effect of ignorance continues, until the body is exhausted.

Detachment is discussed as the next topic. Just as the fire burns the wood which is dry, and not the one which is soaked in water the knowledge dawns in a detached mind, and not in the mind attached to rituals, wealth etc. The snake covers the rope due to ignorance, similarly the apparent world covers Maheśwara. However, if we cover the world with Maheśwara, world ceases to be a bondage. The removal of the appearance makes reality, which is bliss, shine forth, and making us blissful. Further on the liberation in life, as well as that after it, is laid down. The attainment is by practice, reflection, and grace of the teacher. Practice is both, mental and physical, Worship, posture etc. are the physical practices and absorption in Maheśwara, is the mental practice. By destroying the desires, acquired in innumerable lives, and renouncing the ego in the body, one leaves off frivolity and attains continual remembrance of the Self. Then one reaches the head-centre, which is of various hues, and from which flows the nectar that gives the bliss of the Self. In the next stage one sees the self always everywhere, and goes beyond all the attachments and sorrows. All the eight supernatural powers become manifest, and the aspirant loses his own will. Forgetting all that is gross and subtle, transcending virtue and vice, one attains liberation while alive. Thus, in a nutshell, all the disciplines are laid out for the aspirant. A famous Rgveda verse, often used to offer apparel to Śiva, is utilised for explaining this state.

Having described the first type of liberation, the bodiless state is taken up. Desirelessness, except the desire of the Self, fulfils the life's purpose. Such a soul, not having any propulsion, migrates not but is absorbed here itself, as the brine is dissolved in water. His mind is absorbed in the moon, speech in the fire, eyes in the sun, and every other organ in its cause.

The inner-controller is described by giving the illustration of butter and milk. The body, being inert, is moved by the Self. The mind also, being inert, knows by the light of the Self. Just as cloth is nothing but weaved thread, so the world is unknown Brahman. All the different designs are really only the threads. Similarly the mountains, the city, the animal are all really Brahman. The soul is a reflection of the Self in the mind. By his own power of illusion,

it is enunciated by Vedas, Indra takes many forms to emphasise this, another Rgveda verse is cited in this context.

The three types of Self are postulated. Brahman is both inside and outside the intellect. The Self is covered by the intellect. The Soul is its image in the intellect. Space is both inside and outside water. It is also covered by water, and reflected in it. This illustration makes it clear. By realising the Brahman, the reflection ceases. Next Śaṅkara takes up the illustration of a puppet show. Made of wood, hence unconscious, they dance, sing, play instruments etc., Controlled by the threads. Similarly all the three worlds dance, controlled by Sūtātman. Giri refers to a similar Rgveda verse.

Brahman is described as the Truth of truths, and as the abode of all the gods and elements. It is eternal, having neither a beginning nor an end. Since all that is untrue shines as true, it is clear, that all the world has truth as its base. The pure water, poured by a cloud, becomes sour in the lemon, sweet in the grape, bitter in the gourd and so on. Similarly due to the difference in adjuncts, Brahman shines differently. The pot and space are discussed in the same vein. Eventually, it is emphasised, that even during the experience of objects, it is the consciousness, that shines for a wise one. An example is taken from music also. The sound of the beating of a drum, and its resounding sound are two different sounds. But the ear cannot perceive the difference, yet the musician knows that they are not identical. Similarly Brahman and nescience appear simultaneously, yet by concentrating on the Inner Self one realises their difference. Once Śiva is thus realised as the ground of all experiences, as the Supreme as well as the inner controller, all the things start shining as appearances, on the real substrate of knowledge, of one's identity with the Absolute. The wise remains in that stage, bereft of any desire for ever.

Giri explains the coupling of Indra with his wife, in an extremely metaphorical way, as the ego in the right eye, and vision in the left one. Both enter in the heart during dream, and at the end of coupling enter the solid state of bliss. The idea is, that each sense has two aspects while knowing; one, the internal and the other external. The mind brings the preconceived view-point to bear on the object, which is called the subjective side of the experience. Senses report the objective side of the experience. In dream the subjective and objective become one in coupling. After which they enter the causal state, bereft of both the aspects of the couple. As students of Rgveda will recall that there are many passages of dialogues between Indra and his wife. Some of the Western savants have interpreted them in a vulgar way. Here Śaṅkara gives the authoritative version, and thus shows the path of interpreting Vedas in a spiritual way. For the next verse Giri not only quotes Rgveda verse, but quotes from the famous commentary on it by Rāvaṇa. Giri further asserts that this spiritual meaning of the Veda is accepted by Śaṅkara, Śāyaṇa's Bhāṣya, as following the ritualistic interpretation, is mentioned separately. Thus, at a comparatively earlier age, it was clearly held that Śaṅkara stood for spiritual interpretation of Vedas. Rāvaṇa Bhāṣya is available only in parts at present. According to this view happiness necessarily refers to the self-happiness, and the so called sense pleasure is only a type of pain. Yaska records that Paramahansas stood for the spiritual interpretation of the whole Veda, since after trying for all the sense pleasures, a person is tired, and craves for the happiness

of self in the sleep. All desires lead to exhaustion, even when fulfilled, more so, if unfulfilled. Giri quotes from Agnirahasya to show that this is the reason why Vedas prohibit waking anybody from sleep. The abandon of lovers after a long separation also illustrates this state of sleep.

Liberation and sleep annihilate the objective consciousness, and senses; along with it there is attainment of joy. Though this is their common feature, yet after sleep they are rejuvenated, while there is a complete destruction of them, and their impressions in liberation. This distinguishes the two. The same Rgveda verse is referred in the seventy second verse, giving Indra as a synonym of the moon, referring to it as the controller of the senses. A number of verses in this chapter almost seem to be written after the famous Amaru. It is a matter of research to conclusively establish the identity of the authorship of these two works.

After establishing the joyful nature of sleep, the text describes the unreal nature of the world. The famous illustration of dream is utilised to convey this. Similarly the false appearance of nacre-silver is also considered. The objective world, being a perceptible one, has to be false, is the conclusion; for objectivity in nacre-silver, or objects in dream, and objects in waking is the same.

The author takes up the concept of action in the next chapter. In the world, the cause of joy and sorrow is only one's own action. Fools unnecessarily regard friends or enemies as the cause. But action and its result, being inanimate, need a conscious cause, to connect them and that cause is Maheśvara. Other fools make a mistake in taking inanimate action itself as an independent cause. Just as the tree is cut by an axe, only if a conscious woodcutter wields it; food causes satiation only if a conscious person eats it, not if filled in a corpse; similarly Maheśvara, the witness of action, induces nescience to fructify the actions, performed by a living body, identified with mind and consciousness. Even though many divisions of duty are laid down for separate castes and stations of life, yet Vedas lay down that they are all for pleasing Maheśvara. Just as by satisfying the nose, eyes, feet, etc. the soul is satisfied; or by pouring water in the root, the whole tree becomes fresh; so by pleasing other deities, Maheśvara is also pleased, for they are his limbs. One who does not know the Self as Maheśvara, exhausts his actions in the end, and is reborn again in this miserable world. But if one knows Self as Maheśvara he does not exhaust them, and attains higher enjoyments and the eight forms of supernatural powers.

The self-illuminating power of the self, is the real light, even behind the light of the luminaries, like the sun. The ṭikā quotes a famous Samaveda verse to authenticate it. The sun can not illuminate the sun, but the self illuminates the self. This clearly shows that the self alone is self-illuminated. The vital activities are discussed next. The famous Gāyatri Mantra is analysed in the ṭikā to illustrate this. Any one who realises the identity of the soul with Maheśvara is liberated in life. By the text 'any one', Giri points out, that Śaṅkara implies that caste, age, high or low birth, male or female are no criteria for wisdom. By "person" it is meant that one's effort, manifested through the service to Guru and hearing etc., are the only direct causes of wisdom. The wisdom dawns only due to the grace of the teacher. Realisation is attained when all the adjuncts are negated, and the self, as the substrate, is understood as Śiva. The same strain is continued in other verses with different examples. Once this state is attained, the body lasts as

long as the results of the fructified actions last. This is because they are the causes of the body. But the wise remains unattached, beyond dualities, bereft of ego, its associations, ever satisfied, steady in mind, transcending nescience and in Brahmānanda. Having been once destroyed, nescience is incapable of covering Śiva, even while projecting the universe. Just as a man drinks the coconut milk, and throws away the shell, the wise rejects the world-forms, after taking in the nectar of Śiva. All his actions are burnt away, doubts are removed, and the knot of animate and inanimate cut asunder for ever.

The book ends with a description of the world, as a tree, and refers to the self as the Acyuta Vāsudeva, whose memory destroys all evils. This tree has birth and death as its fruits; action its root, misconception, pride, joy and sorrow etc. its various leaves; passion, anger etc. its branches; son, wife, animals, daughters, its nestling birds. It is to be cut by the sword of detachment. The self is always to be remembered as the cause of the world. The ṭikā gives Vā-asudeva i. e. always the controller of senses, as the meaning of Vā-sudeva.

Thus we see that it is a good text for the use of an aspirant. The verses are beautiful and concise. Practically all topics necessary for an aspirant's life are laid down. But this seems to be a work produced in a lighter mood, for one misses the intellectual flashes, so prevalent in other works like Upadeśasāhastri. It has a more direct approach to the Vedic lore to compensate for this. The ṭikā is a very important guide, though we miss Anandagiri's exhaustiveness, specially in those verses which he leaves out completely. Perhaps our manuscript was faulty, and we request anyone possessing a more complete manuscript, to help us produce a better second edition. The lack of Śaṅkarabhāṣya's references, even where they are available and commented by Ananda Giri, and the insistence of depending on Sāyaṇa, is surprising. Perhaps it was an earlier work of the great author. The style also is clearly different. But it certainly is produced by a great mind.

Panchikarana

This is the manual of meditation for the Paramahansa order. Even in the compendium of Upaniṣads produced by Adyar Library, Madras, its text is given as an Upaniṣad emphasising its importance. Most Upaniṣads prescribe Om as the best, symbol most pleasing to Brahman, both in its Saguna and Nirguṇa aspect. It is a universal symbol. Śaṅkara uses the so-called annihilative method of meditation.

The cosmic gross universe, the waking state and the waker in both are equated with 'A'. The subtle body in its cosmic and individual aspects, the dream state, and the dreamer are equated with 'U'. The cause of both is nescience which is called the causal body. Along with the state of deep sleep and the sleeper, it is equated with 'M'. 'A' merges with U, U with M, M with Om, which is me. Thus all is annihilated, and then identified with the self. I am the witness, pure consciousness, eternally pure, wise, free, true, supreme bliss, non-dual, the innermost being. Brahman is to be meditated thus, with all one's being, until one attains Samādhi. This is to be buffered by constantly thinking of the Upaniṣad's, which proclaim the identity of the self with Śiva. Intellectually one should reason, and logically certify the truth. Thus one attains the supreme realisation.

This is a very small work. Sureśwara's comments are further elucidated by Nārāyaṇanandendra Saraswati. The elucidator was a great scholar, and his exposition is quite exhaustive. It is surprising that though Ānanda Giri wrote a separate independent annotation on the work, left the Vārtika untouched. Rāma Triṭha, a very famous annotator of many Vedānta works, has commented upon the Vivaraṇa, thus making it a complete work by itself. We have included both of these, and we are sure it will help to gain a working knowledge of the meditative life of a monk of the Śāṅkara's order. Maṇḍūkya was the treatise, used by the monk of the non-dual Paramahaṅsa order, before these helps were available.

Sureśwara says that the aspirants for liberation must use this text for concentrating the mind. Nārāyaṇa makes it obligatory to be a monk for practising it. This seems to be an effect of later Smṛtis, where the use of Om was restricted to monks only. But Sureśwara does not suggest it in any way. Giri suggests renunciation of action, but does not use the word monk, making it mean either the Saṁnyāsa, or the detached action. Gitā has defined Saṁnyāsa in both the alternative ways. Nārāyaṇa gives detailed reasons why Om is preferable to other words or even the great sentences. It is short, and obligatory to be used before any recitation of the Veda. Thus its importance is well established. Even if repeated without concentration, it destroys sins, and helps mind-concentration. There seems to be a very specific reason not mentioned in these texts. Om in a very early age became the accepted symbol of the Absolute in the philosophical schools, for it was a very vague symbol, and a common one for all Vedas. Later Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Bauddha, Jains all accepted it as such. It is not surprising that later on Brahmos, Ārya Samājis, Sikhs, etc. also accepted it. The Vaiṣṇava schools, on the whole not belonging to the philosophical schools, chose Rāma, or Kṛṣṇa as the term for the supreme. Thus Om represents the common Hindu philosophical symbol for the God-head. This perhaps was the very reason why Vaiṣṇavas rejected it for God. As for the Śaivas, OM is but a special symbolic way of writing the two dimensional cross sections of the Śivaliṅga and Jalahari. Thus they stuck to it, even for the religious symbology of God. It is also well known that all the Vaidika Philosophers followed Śaivism as their religion. And this is true even of the so-called atheistic schools, like the ritualists. Buddhists and Jainas were also offshoots of the different branches of the Philosophical schools. The main difference being, between them that whereas the philosophical schools did neither contradict, vaidic ritualism, nor tried to create new ritualism; the avaidika schools both contradicted vaidic rituals, and created new ones. That both did not consider ritual as the real religion was a common bond between them all. Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas later on accepted the Vedānta, as their philosophical school in the same spirit. By then, Purāṇas had accepted the new rituals of Pañcaratna as efficacious. Thus we see this common bond was further strengthened by Śāṅkara. This was another great contribution of Śāṅkara in bringing the harmony of Hinduism in focus.

Aparokshanubhooti

This is a short, but a direct presentation of the philosophy, specially meant to be used, as a manual for the aspirants after attaining the beatitude, Vidyāraṇya's comments are quite exhaustive, and simple, befitting the style of the text. Vidyāraṇya is one of the profounder original contributors to the whole spectrum of Hinduism. He has presented Vedānta's metaphysics

and epistemology in his famous Vivaraṇaprameya Saṁgraha. Vārtikasāra and Anubhūtiprakāśa are his most important works, presenting his deep experience of the final truth. Pañcadaśī is a popular introduction to Vedānta, and is perhaps the best and the most complete book of liturgy even for a scholar. Jīvanmuktiveka is more or less a collection of Vasiṣṭha and other thinkers of yore on the methods of conquering past impressions and mind; though presented as a commentary on the Paramahansaopaniṣad. It is refreshing to find a man of his standing advocating the entry of sudras and females into the highest order, though without the external symbols, in that remote age. His voluminous comments on Parāśarasṁṛti has been the guide of the Hindu law of the Vaidikas in South India, until Ambedkar's Hindu code was imposed on the Hindu society, by the enemies of the Vaidik religion, who were, and are still, the rulers of India. His comments on several Upaniṣads, called Dīpikā, are very illuminating and original. Thus Vidyāraṇya brings a mature mind to interpret Aparokṣanubhūti. His method of interpretation is more experiential, synthetical and factual, rather than logical and analytical. His stress is always on the epistemology, ethics, and psychology, along with hints on aesthetics and sociology of Vedānta. Though the work is too concise and technical to show all the facts of Vidyāraṇya, it still gives a bird's eye-view of the great scholar.

The text starts with the identification of the preceptor with God, in both his manifest and unmanifest forms. In a beautifully constructed verse the author prostrates to his Guru, who taught him the pathway to the Supreme Bliss, and who is both the inner-controller Hari and the creator Iśwara. His true form is the knowledge that pervades all and every experience. Thus Śāṅkara lays down the fundamentals of Advaita in the benedictory verse itself, and Vidyāraṇya utilises the occasion to discuss the whole philosophy.

The benedictory verse of Vidyāraṇya gives us an independent interpretation of the original verse. After showing the supreme Godhead as the selfilluminating principle, which is of the form of direct experience (aparokṣanubhūti) and joy, he further lays down that it is itself divided as God, Guru and soul etc., being the substratum of all the transaction. In this form (vyavahāra) it is the adjuncted self. This is the chosen deity of the Advaitins. By using this term Vidyāraṇya harmonises the popular conception with the metaphysical one. He has done the same at the beginning of Ṛgveda, commentary, by specifically mentioning that the Indra, Yama, Varuṇa etc. are the names which we use for the highest being. The annotator then clearly specifies the purpose of his annotations. He says that the text is so clear that the purpose is not to merely explain it, but by meditatively explaining it, all the obstacles to self-realisation due to previous sins, will be destroyed, leading to the knowledge of the self becoming manifest in the mind, destroying the ignorance, the ultimate cause of the transmigrations. Thus the feeling that 'I am different from Śiva' will be removed. He goes on to express his humility by stating that he is a mere torch-bearer, while Śāṅkara is a Sun, and so he is unable to throw any light on Śāṅkara's works, yet being his devotee he dares to do it. The pun is on the word Dīpikā, i. e. lamp, given to his comments. In a temple or in front of Sun, a devotee shows lamp, though Śiva or Sun can not be lighted, similarly he dares to do the same. But by this act of devotion Śiva is pleased, similarly Śāṅkara will be pleased by his effort.

The comments start with dividing the world into two categories of the self and the non-self. Self again is divided as God and soul. Each of them is divided as pure and impure. God has Māyā as its impurity, and soul ignorance. Bereft of impurity they are identical, but associated with impurity they are different. Non-self is again of three types : causal, subtle and gross. The misapprehension of the self and non-self as identical is the bondage, and the apprehension of the self and Śiva as identical is the liberation. Thus Vidyāranya lays down the essence of Vedānta at the very outset. Giving several alternative interpretations of 'Śrī Hari' he points out the way in which an aspirant should identify the words referring to a form of personal God with the impersonal principle, making the religious ideas transcend into a metaphysical one. One of the great synthesis that Śāṅkara and his followers have been constantly working upon is the transformations of the popular religious ideas and their Gods, totems, superstitions into metaphysical symbolism. In their own way, some of the modern Vedāntic thinkers have even tried to re-interpret Buddhism, Islam and Christianity in a way that makes them a stepping stone towards the Vedāntic realisation. We are pointing it out so that such attempts need not be considered as a novel way, or even a modern development, but taken to be a fundamental approach of Vedānta. The great Gauḍapāda has also said that for the average sādḥaka it is necessary to lay down meditation, and since individuals vary, and the particular sects vary, their object and mode of meditations also varies. When the sādḥaka comes to a real Guru, he is already loaded with many impressions. But since Brahman is the substrate upon which all superimpositions are made, they are immaterial, for all of them can be equally sublated by the initiation into Brahman wisdom. That is why Vedānta is never a sect in the sense that it is to be used by a particular aspirant of a particular mode. All the sects can use it as the ideal, and their specific methodology of rituals, meditations, deities etc. the means to purify the mind, provided they are not unethical. Scholars of Vedānta have been providing the help to all such movements. Śāṅkara in his own works has done the same for Yogis, Pāñcarātra or Bhāgavatas, Śaivas etc. The process has been continuing to-date, and all the paurāṇic and tāntrika worship has been allowed to be a stepping stone for Viveka. It is this liberality that has allowed the growth of Hinduism as a federal, rather than a unitary form of religion. Vidyāranya's contribution in this field of Vedānta is very important. Hence we have digressed to show how even in such a small and simple work he does not lose a chance to mention it.

Explaining the name of the text, Vidyāranya says that merely by reading once, an aspirant endowed with proper qualifications attains directly the identity of Brahman and the self. The meaning of a good person, according to him is a person endowed with discrimination, dispassion, control of the body-mind complex and desire to attain the truth. Thus the annotator supports the Vārtika view that listening to the Mahāvākya is the direct means of liberation. But he is equally clear that those who are fit only for ritual or devotion cannot attain the direct perception until after attaining the purity, which results from following these methods. But listening must be so continual that even bodily needs like hunger do not disturb the aspirant. Listening is not reading according to the annotator. Thus the relationship of the earlier part of Vedas to Vedānta is that of the means and the end. The earlier part deals with the ritual, ethics and devotion. By practising these the power for discrimination is attained. Once this is achieved, one can enter the temple of Vedānta. The

underlying principle is that God is pleased when we follow His commands. It is due to this beatitude that our mind can contemplate on His Glory. As long as desires turbulate in our minds, contemplation on Divine is impossible. But when once even the highest throne of Viṣṇu is considered as worthless as the defecation of a crow, it is Supreme alone that becomes the focus of our mind-mirror.

After enunciating the prerequisite for the Vedānta in somewhat detailed manner, the text goes on to deal with the manner of enquiry that leads to knowledge. Often our questions are wrongly framed, hence the answers that are obtained are also out of focus. So out of compassion, the great Master frames the questions for us, and then goes on to answer them in detail. The main thing is to find out the nature of the self, the world and its controller. On analyses one finds that consciousness itself expands into all these three due to ignorance of its own nature. Ignorance of the infinite nature of the self creates duality, where there is none. Just as it is the clay that is utilised in manifesting all its forms, jar, bucket, etc.; the consciousness is utilised to manifest all its forms, knower, known etc.

One of the few passages where Śāṅkara has discussed life after realisation occurs in this text. It is clearly proclaimed that for the realised, there is no duality of body and the self. Hence there is no determinant (Prārabdha) as far as he is concerned. But for those who are still ignorant, the duality exists; and they cannot help but see the seer's body and seer as different entities. Hence they also postulate a determinant for him. Out of compassion for them Veda, Gītā, and Brahmasūtra lay down the residual ignorance even in the seer. In this context Vidyāranya is at pains to suggest that the phenomenon is of three varieties : scriptural, cognitive and experiential. They correspond to really real, really unreal and appearance (unreally unreal) feelings of the experiencer. By Śravaṇa the feeling of the really real is lost. by Manana even the sense of really unreal is lost; but until the body-mind complex is transcended, either by its dismemberment or asamprajñāta, the appearance is bound to last. To transcend this the text lays down fifteen stages of nididhyāsana. It is a complete manual for the aspirant. Though basically it is the same as the third chapter of the prose-section of Upadeśāsāhasrī, it is more elaborate and systematic. The author names it as Rājayoga, in contrast to Patañjala system which is Haṭhayoga, which according to him can be resorted to by a beginner incapable of practising the Rājayoga. He points out obstacles for attaining the highest along with the remedies. But he clearly states that those who are devotees of the preceptor or Iśwara encounter no obstacles nor do they need practicing Haṭhayoga.

Thus we find here a very simple, yet complete, manual for the aspirant of Vedānta. by the pen of the great Master himself.

Atmabodha

The first disciple to be initiated by Śāṅkara, into the order of Paramahansa was Pādmapāda. Hence his name ends in *pāda* like the earlier ones of Gauḍapāda, Govindapāda and Bhāgawatpāda. He was also first to be appointed as the ācārya of the eastern wing, assigning him the protection of the first Veda i. e. Rgveda. East, in the Vedāntic tradition is the first direction.

Thus his importance is unquestioned in the interpretation of the tradition. It is no wonder that his magnum opus, Pañcapādikā, and its commentary Vivaraṇa, have been generally followed by all the great Vedānta scholars to this day.

Padmapāda first lays down that this work is meant for those of dull intellect; hence incapable of mastering the major works. Śāṅkara himself, out of compassion for them, has laid bare the treasury containing the wealth accumulated in the Upaniṣads. Thus those aspirants, who are full of faith and have attained purity of heart, but yet lack the intellectual apparatus, need not be barred from attaining the Wisdom.

The possibility of achieving liberation, by any other means than Wisdom, is stoutly refuted in the beginning itself, so that no aspirant is misled into doing something else for this end. The adjunct is analysed well so that the adjunctless Self can be clearly grasped. Once thus analysed the Mahāvākyas of the Upaniṣads bring about the dawn of wisdom. When this is meditatively repeated, it becomes Vāsanā i. e. second nature. This is the great tonic which destroys the disease of ignorance. For this meditation a quiet spot and a pure mind, is all that is needed. All the seen should be melted into the seer, by the definitive knowledge that there is only one reality i. e. consciousness, upon which all the other objects are superimposed. Since without consciousness nothing can exist, or even appear to exist, all is identical with it, like the snake is identical with the rope, on which it is superimposed.

The great master then goes on to suggest the analogy of sacrifice. Ignorance is the animal to be sacrificed. Once 'I' and 'Mine' are destroyed, the whole universe is seen as one's own self. Here the spiritual interpretation of Rāmāyaṇa is given—Just as in Upadeśasahasrī it was stated that Rāma did not need any other means than the sentence that 'you are Viṣṇu' to attain Viṣṇu, for he already was that, Ātmā also does not need any other means than the Vedic dictum that 'Ātmā is Brahma' to attain Brahma. Similarly here it is suggested that crossing the ocean of ignorance, and killing the demons, Rāga and Dveṣa, Ātmā, of the form of Rāma, attains the Tranquillity, which is of the form of Sītā. After attaining it one never strives for the external joys. He is taken to be a fool by those who are after such joys. But actually even Brahmā and Viṣṇu have only relative joys, whereas a wise one has the absolute unparallelled Bliss.

Anything becomes a source of joy when related to the Self. This is the clearest proof that it is the self that is really the bliss itself. Even though there is nothing that is not different from Self, it is perceived only by the one who has attained the eye of wisdom, and not by those who have the eye of ignorance. Here one is definitely reminded of the two types of eyes in Gītā viz. Divya and Carma. All was seen at one point in Virāṭ by Arjuna when he attained the Divya eye. Similarly all is seen in self, once the wisdom eyes are attained. Padmapāda refers to the relevant Gītā verses. The work ends with a hit on the pilgrimages. The Lord is neither in a particular country, direction or time. He is the remover of all the pains like cold etc. He is the source of eternal joy. The pilgrimage on the contrary confines him to a place. It also increases the incapacity. It is undertaken at a particular time, and causes cold etc. Hence the annotator points out that a Paramahansa must not resort to any external ceremony, like pilgrimage, for removing the obstacle to realisation but be devoted to the self within. Śāṅkara thus is clear in enunciating

that it is the inner spiritual life that is to be attended to, even by a beginner, rather than the external ritualism. Padmapāda gives two interpretations to two words Hṛṣīkeśa and Rudra. Ru=inauspicious. Dra=destroys. Thus the Destroyer of all inauspiciousness, the eternal self, is really Rudra. Hṛṣīka=all the senses. Īśa=controller or guide. Thus the controller or guide of the senses, the inner self is Hṛṣīkeśa. Thus we find that even the earliest Ācārya identified the Paurāṇic gods with the inner self. This is how the semblance of polytheism was transmuted into monotheism, and eventually to monism. Thus Ātmabodha is a nice compendium of the Vedāntic truth.

Tripuri

Beginning from this tract we have included five of this type for one reason or the other. Śāṅkara was a monolith. He was as much a philosopher as a saint, as much an organiser as a religious leader, as much a poet as a logician. The last thirteen hundred years have yet not exhausted all that was sown by him. One is astounded to find a great writer like him bend down to the level of a novice, to initiate him in the simplest conceptions of the Vedāntic truths. But for the inimitable style, and the commentaries of the great ones, one will not be inclined even to believe that it is the master himself who is writing these tracts.

Tripuri is not a very well known work these days. But Vivaraṇa of Ānandagiri is exhaustive, thus hinting the popularity of the work in an earlier age. It does not appear even in the Śringerī edition of the complete works of Śrī Śāṅkara. But the reader will see that it is a gem of an introduction to Vedānta. The physical, psychical and causal bodies are the three cities (tripura). The owner of them is the tripuri, and the destroyer is the Tripurari (a name of Śiva). The tantras use Tripuribālā as an epithet of the Divine Mother. Śrī Vidyā is also connected with this. But the present work makes it clear that Vedānta has nothing to do with all this. The later day tantrikas have tried to identify Śāṅkara as a Śākta, and some of the pontiffs of his order, out of a desire to be popular, have condescended, just as some others have made him into a Vaiṣṇava. But the present work gives absolutely no hint to it.

The work gives a beautiful description of the categories of Vedānta, distinguishing it from the Sāṅkhya. Ānandagiri says, 'creation merely means becoming utilisable'. Ignorance makes Brahma appear as utilisable objects. The emphasis thus is on the physical body, for in its absence all the other categories remain unutilisable. The body thus is both unreal, because it is sublated by knowledge, and real, because it is of the form of substrate.

The senses are defined as the power of cognition and action. Thus the definition is substituted in place of just counting them as is often done. There has been some objection to the counting of senses as five, for touch seems to be a conglomeration of various different senses like heat, softness, radiation etc. Similarly embrace etc. seems to be left out of the five senses of action. But the definition given here is a fit reply to these objections, for it is the numerologist (Sāṅkhyā=number) like Sāṅkhyā that are perturbed by such objections, and not the Vedāntin.

The mind is separated from the other faculties of the inner organ. Ānandagiri, though generally a follower of the Vivaraṇa school, gives the reason of this separation. He says that the mind is a sense. Perhaps the necessity of prior mental activity to the movements of the senses

is what is being suggested by Śāṅkara. Commentary thus will mean, that the mind contains in it the senses, rather than that mind itself is a sense organ. Following the author, the commentator defines vital air (prāṇa) as that which makes all actions possible. When knowledge pre-dominates the presiding deity is Hiraṇyagarbha, and when the action predominates it is Sūtrātmā. Thus these are not the inert categories like those of the Sāṅkhyā. From the Vedāntic view-point the meditation should be on the identity with Hiraṇyagarbha at the time of cognising, and with Sūtrātmā while acting.

The third body, the causal body, is similarly not inert like Pradhāna or Prakṛti. Ignorance, with consciousness reflected in it, is the causal body. The commentary makes it clear that it is dependent on the consciousness. Thus Īśvara is the presiding deity here. Śāṅkara identifies Īśvara, Karma and Daiva in this context, suggesting that what mīmāṃsakas and nāṅatrikas call as the determining agent is really God Himself. Ānandagiri similarly suggests that the deity of procreation is really the parental form taken by Virāṭ. Thus even in the process of enumerating the text, and commentary, show originality of approach.

The sound etc. know neither the self nor each other. This is the clue for separating self from that which is superimposed. Self knows everything effortlessly and without ego. Thus even while experiencing the three states, one realises himself to be beyond these.

Manishapanchaka

The great master was tested by Śiva, in the form of a pariah, at Varānasi, to show that it was not a mere statement, but a realisation that Śāṅkara was Śiva, seeing all the variety as Śiva's own self. Both the commentators are of this view. Sadaśivabrahmendra's commentary is somewhat exhaustive, coming as it does from the pen of a realised scholar of the seventeenth century, who has to his credit a ṭīkā on Brahma-sūtra, and Yoga-sūtra along with a number of tracts. His comments relate the work to yogic practices according to Patāñjali, modifying them to suit the aspirant of Vedānta. Bālagopāendra also belongs to the order of Paramahamsas like the Sadaśiva-brahmendra. He relates the work to the Vedāntic essence of the identity as revealed in the four Vedas. Thus the two comments complement each other. Bālagopāendra's other works are not yet known. But if Jagannātha, his preceptor, is the same as Jagannātha Āśrama referred by the famous Nṛsiṃha Āśrama, the preceptor of the great Appaya, he must be a sixteenth century writer, and in the successive apostolic succession. Thus having received the tradition without a break, his comments cannot be taken lightly, as some moderners have tried to do. It seems the great master wanted to emphasise that all the Vedas point only to Advaita in different ways. Actually the very name, the pentad of meditative conclusions, indicate that the work was specifically written to convey something deeper than the superficial meaning. The comments convey it clearly.

Madhu-mañjari is a precise annotation. He makes it clear that the knowledge is known to all, though there may be differences in its specificity. As he beautifully puts it, 'though the moon is not known by all as the eye of Śiva, it is known as a planet in the sky by all'. He goes on to point out that once the knowledge in its all-pervasive aspect is understood, accident of birth loses its significance. As long as the world-appearance shines forth, the behaviour is bound

to follow a pattern practised earlier, the illusion never holds one down anymore. Since it is generally not possible for a cāṇḍāla to attain the knowledge, the first behaviour is dictated by entrenched reflexes; but once it is realised that the knowledge has dawned, the behaviour towards him changes, for knowledge purifies all. Veda also lays down that a wise one is to be worshipped, and Gītā supports it by saying that the wise is the very form of the Lord.

In the story-part the verse 'pratyagvastuni' is in reverse in Mañjari and Dīpikā. Mañjari emphasises the two schools of Vedānta viz., Vācaspati and Prakāśātman, whereas Dīpikā discusses the possibility of reflection of the formless. Thus the two commentaries complement each other. Dīpikā clearly states that by the supreme knowledge even a pariah is purified. It further discusses and rejects the Bhaṭṭa and Bauddha view of knowledge. Dīpikā also clearly lays down the reasons for rejecting the view that the jiva's natural state is bondage. He seems to have written a work called *Ratnadīdhiti* to which he refers in his comments where the possibility of both the seer and seen as superimposed is rejected.

In the third verse Śāṅkara clearly mentions that it is the word of Guru that gives conviction, thus clearly stating that the direct means of knowledge is the Word. But he is equally emphatic that after attaining the knowledge one must dwell on it. Dīpikā discusses the subject in great detail, answering the objections raised by activists (Karmakaṇḍis) who refuse to accept the doctrine of Saṁnyāsa. He goes on further to discuss the problem of mind-destruction and impressionlessness, thus making the work a short but comprehensive treatise for an aspirant. The greater details can be had in Vidyāranya's Jivanmuktiviveka, or Vāsiṣṭha. A wise one remains free of the fruits of all his actions is clearly enunciated.

Thus with the two commentaries the work is a small, but complete guide to Vedānta. Even if the stories connected with it are not historical, the book will ever remain a lighthouse showing the path to the aspirants in words that vibrate with resonance of the experience of the Greatest Non-dualist.

Atmajnanopadeshavidhi

This seems to be a shorter edition of the prose section of the Upadeśasāhasri. But Ānandagiri's comments here are much more exhaustive and refreshing. On a number of topics he throws new light. He also clearly states that the work is from the pen of Bhāṣyakāra himself. But he feels that the name of the work is only Ātma-jñāna. The book is considered by him as the essence of all the Upaniṣads. He begins by indicating the meaning of 'now' in the text along the lines laid down by Bhāṣyakāra in Brahma-sūtra. This particular style is followed all along. Teaching is defined as that which is received by the teacher from an unbroken succession. He clearly enunciates, basing himself on the firm foundation of Āpastamba, that abhyudaya is only a shadow of puruṣārtha.

The text goes on to teach the discrimination between the knower and the known. Giri beautifully illustrates the similarity of fire and ātmā by calling attention to the fact that in both cases their association with adjuncts make them useful. 'While the master is awake, the soldiers cannot sleep is another analogy from this text taken verbatim by Sureśwara, and further elaborate 1

by him. At the end of the first chapter Giri condenses the whole chapter into a small verse, and this practice is followed in the successive chapters.

The second chapter starts with the question about the nature of Ātmā. Ācārya answers it in a very exhaustive way. Different from all that is seen, and experienced as five sheaths, Ātmā is the all-pervasive, innermost, subtlest, eternal, partless, qualityless actionless, egoless, desireless, self-effulgent being who is witness of all the minds, and is situated in the heart. A more concise definition cannot even be imagined. Giri explains each one of them with gusto. Text itself also, after giving the nature of ātmā thus in a nutshell, discusses the inner relationships, and also answers certain objections. Between the text and comments the answer is as exhaustive as it should be. For example the text merely says that the mind and consciousness are related. Commentary makes it a point to point out that the relation is only a superimposition, since both do not belong to the same category of existence. The next question is 'how can actionless cause action'? The answer is given by the illustration of a magnet. Just as magnet makes iron pieces behave as magnets, without itself changing or acting; similarly Ātmā makes ego, senses, etc. behave as conscious beings without in anyway itself acting or changing. Mere presence is all that is needed.

The third chapter analyses the three states of consciousness. The definition of deep sleep is quite enlightening. The text defines it as 'the Mind devoured by the consciousness'. Giri explains 'the consciousness' as 'unknown consciousness' i.e. consciousness covered by ignorance. Scholars will see how necessary the comments become at such crucial points. Without this explanation liberation and sleep may seem to be identical.

The fourth chapter deals with the problems that it is the mind that goes through the three states, and not the self. These states only clearly demonstrate the purity of the self. Here Śāṅkara clearly states that even the scriptures only remove the superimposition, the wisdom dawns by itself. Śāṅkara adds that the grace of Guru is the only direct cause of the removal of ignorance. Giri maintains that this is the method of teaching (paddhati) inherited by Śāṅkara, from Govinda. This is a very important statement, and shows why this text was selected by Giri for such an exhaustive dealing, and also why it was not publicised much, for the paddhati according to the orthodox traditions must be received orally. Giri goes on to point out that even the man of this age will attain salvation through wisdom. Also that no more need be taught for attaining the knowledge of Brahman. He again asserts that all the scriptures have been dealt here in a nutshell, and by mastering this work one knows the secret of all the scriptures.

Thus we find that this is one of the most important works of the Great Master.

Upadeshapanchaka

Forty steps are laid out before the aspirant to climb the highest. First thirty-two deal with the pre-wisdom stage, and the last eight are to be climbed by the wise one. The verse comments of Sadaśiva, and the versatile comments of Bālkrṣṇānanda Saraswati are both highly illuminative, and complementary. Vāsudevānanda Saraswati, the preceptor of the author of Kiraṇāvali is the famous author of Vāsudevamananam, one of the most suitable compendium of Vedānta for

a beginner. Sadaśiva seems to be a householder, though a realised soul, since he mentions Ramendra Saraswati as the Guru who gave him the knowledge of identity. His verses are simple, but at times quite profound, though it must be admitted that he is fond of quoting the ancient savants without even hinting that it is a quotation. Kiraṇāvali is definitely more penetrative and scholarly.

Text lays down the first step as the study of Vedas. Recitation purifies the mind, learning the meaning illumines the heart, and meditative introspection leads to wisdom. Being fond of Yogic practices Sadaśiva says that silence may be practised as an auxiliary. He says Veda really means God. All the dharma is really to lead one to nivr̥tti. Thus devotion to study of Veda will stop one from unnecessary talking and thus help one attain silence. He discusses the three types of ordinations: limiting, directing and dictating. He points out the importance of the first even in Dharmamīmāṃsā, much more so in Brahmamīmāṃsā. He elucidates the practical side of desireless action, devotion, renunciation etc. Both the commentators go into great detail about the possibility of action leading to realisation, but reject it on sound grounds. But actions must be done as the worship of Śiva. Kiraṇāvali makes a stunning statement that pūjā does not mean ritualistic worship, but offering of the fruits of action. He goes on to support the view, first enunciated by Sureśvara, that even Kāmya i.e. action ordained to fulfil certain desires, can be done by an aspirant in the spirit of worship. Kārikā of course sticks to the orthodox view that Kāmya and prohibited are both to be shunned by an aspirant. Sureśvara's view is of great practical importance in the modern times. Most of the works done today are of Kāmya type, since varṇadharma, to maintain oneself, has become well nigh impossible. If the Kāmya can't be transformed into worship, the scope of action gets limited to more or less ritualistic actions, and thus Vedānta in earlier aspects of Sādhana becomes non-different from other paths like yoga, bhakti etc. The beauty of Vedānta has been to utilise even the mundane actions of maintaining oneself and the family into worship, thus accelerating the speed of Sādhana without hindering the social responsibility. According to Sureśvara this is possible even when one is not doing varṇa-assigned activities for one's maintenance.

The text says that one should get out of the house, which implies saṁnyāsa. But it must be clearly understood that this does not refer to the fourth order or āśrama-saṁnyāsa. This is followed by prescription of devotion and renunciation of action. If saṁnyāsa had been attained, these would have preceded, rather than followed. If at all in some cases it is accepted it may merely mean smārta saṁnyāsa, which is taken for attaining Brahmāloka, and allows devotion with certain rituals. In Śāṅkara's view it can be only auxiliary, for he accepts Paramahansa Saṁnyāsa as the only Vaidika Saṁnyās, and that is always after renouncing the desire for Brahmāloka, and in which no action of any type, or devotion, or even yoga is permitted. For a Paramahansa only Śama, Dama, etc. along with śravaṇa, manana etc. are ordained. The third or fourth verse will refer to this saṁnyāsa. So here it means something else. It means renouncing the total commitment to the duties of a householder. Kiraṇāvali makes it clear by pointing out the use of vi in vinirgamana. Sadaśiva specifically mentions that renunciation does not consist merely in becoming a recluse. He further states that continual meditation on Guru, repetition of his name and bodily service are the best means to wisdom.

After discussing the sentences of Vedas that convey the identity of God and soul, the text lays down that one should not indulge in logic chopping. Sadāśiva specifically mentions that one should not discuss with Madhwa, Rāmānuja etc. and Kiraṇavali says in a general way that since Śruti is supreme, one should not pay attention to Smṛtis. Manana is thus rational thinking, rather than logic chopping. The great master goes on to lay down that neither should one be proud of having attained the wisdom, nor try to argue with others to pull them down. All such actions arise in a mind which is not sure of the unreality of the world. And an indulgent student will only increase in his mind the sense of reality of the world. Hence the prohibitions regarding the unnecessary discussions. But it does not mean that one should not convey the knowledge to a receptive soul, or discuss with one of the same path.

Kārikā gives a code of conduct which is akin to smṛtis. Perhaps he is referring to the smṛta saṁnyāsins here. It is interesting to read the discussion whether medicines should be taken by a Saṁnyāsīn or not. These indicate how the mediæval mind was engrossed in inconsequential details, as compared to the vastness of Śaṅkara. One is reminded of a similar fate of the Buddha by later day Buddhist Vinaya scholars. Text ends on a highly emotive topic of liberation in life, and both the commentators deal with the topic quite exhaustively. The topic has been dealt in Sūtrabhāṣya, and Saṁkṣepaśāriraka in detail. Advaitasiddhi also deals with it. All of the important arguments are concisely stated here. In spite of Sadāśiva's affiliation to yoga practices, he is very definite that yoga can not solve the problem of prārabdha. But he says that it is of no use to argue about it. In fact it is the very soul of Vedāntic thought that Wisdom is here and now (whose fruit is seen), and any compromise on this issue will bring the confusion in the concept of religion and sophism.

Kārika gives the historical version at the end, and Kiraṇavali in the beginning. But both convey the same story that it is last utterance of Śaṅkara. Both also name the work as Pañcaratna. With both these commentaries it is really a complete guide to living.

Swaroopanīroopana

The main object of the tract is to indicate to an aspirant the mode of remembering the Advaita-Ātmā. Once the ideas are grasped, one needs a peg on which to hang, all his thoughts throughout the waking state. The present work is just such a peg. Sahasranāma fulfill this function for the devotional aspirants. Though it is true that Upaniṣads contain all these ideas, yet they are scattered all over them, and hence are not very handy. Conciseness is another quality of the present work. Naturally in a work like this one must not expect any logical explanations for the thoughts expressed. It is to be used at the last stage when meditative study and understandings have had their day.

The commentator points out that the caste distinction is unnecessary both for the wise (vidvat) and the aspirant (vividīṣu). The former knows himself to be all pervasive, and later continuously denies the body-association. Hence all the social factors of Varṇa and Āśrama are meant only for the totally ignorant ones, addicted to body and the world.

It is a beautifully written work, and almost one is lulled into the Turiya state by the force of the flow of words. It seems as if the incarnation of Advaita is swinging on his eternal

experience, and pouring out his immortal speech. It can easily be used as a morning liturgy by the aspirants of Advaita.

Vakyavṛitti

This is a work written mainly to indicate the way of interpreting the sentence conveying the identity of soul and God. We know of another work called Laghu Vākya Vṛtti, and some have postulated a Brahmad Vākya Vṛtti, But the present work is the only one on which Ānandagiri has commented. Though he seems to suggest a reference to Brhad Vākya Vṛtti, the fact that Śaṅkara never refers to his another work makes us wonder whether Giri is not simply referring to the great commentaries where the problem has been dealt with. As such it seems to us that perhaps some other later authors might have written these two works. Apart from Ānandagiri's commentary the fact that at least eight verses have been quoted from this work in Pañcadaśī by Vidyaraṇya as quotations from Bhāṣyakāra, is a clinching proof that it is an original work by the great master himself.

The text is a dialogue between the teacher and the student. There is a familiar ring of modern times for the student enquires a way to liberation in which there is no exertion. Śaṅkara replies that the wisdom arising out of the sentence, which conveys the identity of God and soul, is the only means. Reader will note that Śaṅkara clearly states that wisdom is attained as a result of the knowledge arising from the word, without any intermediary like the meditation; and he further indicates that it is easiest of all the paths. Both these ideas can never be overemphasised in the modern age. The rest of the work is to explain the identity.

After defining the self as of the form of bliss, and consciousness that enlighten both the mind-stuff and its modifications, the text gives in twelve successive verses a detailed analysis. First a distinction is made between the seen and the seer, and then by this analogy self is distinguished from body, senses, mind etc. Later on by another analogy the self is proved as bliss. We all experience that for which a thing is loved is even more an object of love. If the friend of a son is loved, it is because he is the friend of the son. Hence son is loved more than the friend. Son is in turn loved for the self. Thus self is proved as the ultimate object of love, and hence is bliss. In the eight verses God is indicated by different Upaniṣadic passages, which are pointed out by Giri. Twenty-one such references are collected here in a way that makes the list quite exhaustive. Then the Ācārya discusses the concept of indicated meaning where the manifest meaning contradicts experience, and lays down *part-indication* for the identity sentences. What he means is that the non-contradictory part should be identified, while the contradictory part should be given up. Here the consciousness and bliss are the non-contradictory parts, and the controller and the controlled are the contradictory ones. But it is not possible for wisdom to dawn all of a sudden. Hence Śaṅkara lays down that one should practise listening to Guru along with observing a controlled way of life, until one is firmly established in the sense of identity. Śaṅkara clearly refers to both the possibilities of liberation within and without the body, applicable for different aspirants. Some, whose life is nearing the end, attain liberation of the bodiless state; while others enjoy the same doing good of others by preaching the wisdom to deserving and blessing others to attain it, along with fulfilling the desires of devotees until all their remaining actions are exhausted.

Conclusion

Thus we find that the collection presented here is very exhaustive from all points of view, and aspirants will do well to keep it as book of liturgy, and do its repetition (pārāyaṇa). Śaṅkara is the incarnation for this age. By meditating or even repeating his thoughts verbally his grace descends. By the grace alone we are liberated. His works are his image, and their study is his worship. Thus for a Śaṅkarite no external ritualistic worship is needed, nor he is bothered by visual imageries. We have experienced his grace at every moment of our lives.

We bless in his name the editor, and all his associates, to attain the grace of Śri Śaṅkara.

Maheśhananda Giri
Ācārya Māhāmaṇḍeśwara

श्रीशङ्कर