THE VISION OF ĀTMAN
(YĀJNAVALKYA’S INITIATION OF MAITREYI INTO THE INTUITION OF REALITY)
By
SRI SRI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI SWĀMIJI

ADHYĀTMA PRĀKĀSHA KĀRYĀLAYA
HOLENARSIPUR
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(See the inside of the book cover)
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SWĀMIJI

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PUBLISHER’S NOTE

(First Edition)

This is a revised version of the lectures delivered by Swāmi Satchidānandendra Saraswati Maharāj during the S’āṅkara-Saptāha celebration at Tarikere in the year 1968. Readers will welcome it as an elucidation of an important subject which has evoked differences of opinion from different interpreters of S’āṅkara.

We are grateful to Swāmiji for having entrusted the sole right of publishing this work as he has done before with regard to several of his writings. Our warm thanks are due to Sri G. Viswanātha Rao, No. 654, ‘Laxminārāyaṇa Kripa’, Viyāli Kāval, Malleswaram, Bangalore-3, whose generous contribution has partly met the printing expenses of the book.

Y. Narasappa
Chairman, A. P. Karyalaya.

(Second Edition)

As there was an increasing demand for this enlightening work which is out of stock of Swāmiji, of revered memory, we have pleasure in bringing out this edition.

Holenarsipur, 23-4-1995.
A. Thandaveshwar,
Chairman, Mg. Com., A.P. Karyalaya.
INTRODUCTION

The Subject-matter of the Work

Perhaps there is no other point of Śāṅkara’s interpretation of the Upanishads which has given rise to so many differences of opinion from his own followers as well as adverse critics, as the immediate Vision of Atman and its direct means. (1) Is the so-called vision a sort of immediate realization achieved through meditation and Samādhi or is it the resultant knowledge that dawns directly from the teaching of Vedāntic texts about Atman? (2) What is Sravana? (3) Is Manana (Vedāntic Reasoning) of the same type as reasoning employed in discussions regarding empirical phenomena, or is it something totally different in kind? (4) Why do Śāṅkara and other Advaitic Vedāntins repudiate Tarka (ratiocination) and yet indulge in reasoning about Atman themselves? (5) Is Nididhyāsanam a sort of meditation (Upāsana) on the Atman as taught by the Upanishads or something of a different nature? (6) Does this last means lead to Samādhi (Trance) wherein the true nature of Atman is directly realized, or is the so-called Vision of Atman altogether different from that achieved in Samādhi taught by Patanjali or other Yogic Systems? (7) Are all the three means to be practised in succession before the Vision of Atman is attained, or can any one of them lead to
the vision itself? (8) What is Moksha or Immortality to be achieved by this Vision of Atman? Is it an end to be reached in this very life, or is it an eschatological result? These and other questions have puzzled many a scholar who has studied the various interpretations of S'ankara. The controversy among the followers of S'ankara cannot be supposed to have subsided even to-day, for the view of Pandits of Vedantic lore depends on the branch of S'ankara's interpretation—such as the Vivaraṇa and the Bhāmatī—on which each one of them relies as more authoritative. Such is the subject-matter of the work now presented to the reader. Yet it is not to be discarded as merely of academic interest. For, it concerns the very sumnum bonum of life to attain which every earnest enquirer into the teachings of Vedānta aspires.

The Attitude of the Present Writer

As a firm believer in the truth of S'ankara's Vedānta I have taken the proclamation of the Kathaka S'ruti at its face value:-

यदा सर्वं प्रभिह्यते हदयस्ये ह गया्य: ।
अय मयोयृतो भवत्येतावञ्च नेशासनम् ॥ का. ६-१५.

"When all the knots of the heart are untied, then and there the mortal man becomes immortal. This is the whole teaching."

Kā. 6-15.
Yajnavalkya also winds up his teching by declaring ‘एतावलं खल्विदमुत्तमम्’, ‘Only so much, my dear, is the teaching conerning Immortality.’ I am fully convinced that Yajnavalkya was speaking the eternal truth according to his conviction. He was referring to a universal truth when he said ‘आत्मनि खल्लो दृष्टे सर्वं विदितम्’, ‘When, my dear, Atman is seen, heard about, reflected upon and contemplated on, all this universe becomes known.’ (Br. 4-5-6). I have, therefore, stuck to the teaching of S’aṅkara when he says that when any person is concerned with the enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the universal Self, he has to rely on Vedāntic texts, not as an authority to be believed in, but to be verified by intuition also supported by Vedāntic Reasoning (न केवलं श्रुत्यादयं एव प्रमाणम्; किंतु श्रुत्यादयोनुभववादयश्च यथासम्भवं प्रमाणम्।)

The Method Adopted in this Work

As in my recent work ‘S’aṅkara’s Clarification of Certain Vedantic Concepts’, I have not only defined and explained what Dars’ana, S’ravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana mean according to the Upanishads as interpreted by S’aṅkara, but also quoted directly from S’aṅkara, mostly from the Sūtra-Bhāshya, for my interpretation of the Upanishadic teaching regarding Intuition of Atman and its means.

I have also shown where and how the sub-commentaries are not only in conflict with one
another, but also in direct opposition to S’aṅkara, by producing necessary vouchers from S’aṅkara’s classical works and the respective sub-commentaries. The line of argument adopted appeals not only to the original writings of these commentors as compared with the Bhāṣya, but also to reason based upon universal intuition.

The Contents

The Table of Contents would convince any critical reader, I hope, that I have fairly exhausted all the important points that deserve to be discussed in connection with the teaching regarding knowledge of Ātman. The last section is expected to recapitulate all the relevant teachings of the Upanishads which would enable the enquirer who would be eager to have a constructive view of S’aṅkara’s System on the subject.

Conclusion

The Copy-Right of the work has been made over entirely to Adhyātma Prakāsha Kārālāya Committee, Holenarsipur as usual. My Nārāyaṇa Smaraṇams to all those that have co-operated in making the production a success, and especially to Adhyātma Prakāsha Press and Sri Śwāmi Bhrahmānandendra Saraswati and Sri K. G. Subrāya Sharma, Private Secretary, for their assistance in reading the proof-sheets.

SWĀMI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI
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THE VISION OF ĀTMAN

SECTION ONE

THE INTRODUCTORY EPISODE

Yājnavalkya’s Renunciation

1. There was a time when all over this country there were eager souls filled with seething enthusiasm for the acquisition of knowledge of Truth and Reality. There were hungry seekers prepared to go to the very ends of the earth if need be to find a wise teacher who could initiate them into the mysteries of God, the soul and the world. Learned men thronged at the courts of kings who delighted in arranging for discussions and debates concerning Reality. Kings and emperors humbly sat at the feet of wise sages whose company was found to be edifying and inspiring.

It was on one of such eventful occasions that Yājnavalkya, a great sage, decided to renounce all his wealth and pomp of mundane life to retire into solitude. He had won the covetable prize set apart for the best of knowers of Brahman in a contest of debate organized
THE VISION OF ÂYMAN

by King Janaka of Videha, who was a royal sage greatly renowned for his interest in Vedanta. Yajnavalkya’s laurels won at that contest consisted of a thousand cows decked with gold of five Padas on each of the horns. The sage had two wives Maitreyi and Kātyāyani. He was a great Kulaṇaī teaching a number of students of Veda under his care. But in his estimate, contemplation on Brahman in solitude was worth more than all the wealth and comfort that worldly life could promise, and so he chose to enter the order of Paramahamsa-Parivṛṣikas. The Maitreyi-Brahmaṇa depicts the episode and the dialogue between this great seer and his wife Maitreyi.

Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi

2. The introductory portion of the narrative is significant and quite in fitting with the seriousness of the subject-matter discussed in the Brāhmaṇa. The sage proposes to arrange for a partition of property between his elder wife Maitreyi and her co-heiress Kātyāyani before going to homelessness. But that worthy spouse asked him whether she could hope to become immortal even if the whole earth filled with its wealth came to her lot. “No”, replied Yajnavalkya, “you could settle yourself comfortably like any other person commanding all the accessories to an easy life. As for immortality,
you have no chance of having it through acquisition of wealth.” “Very well, then, what shall I do with that through which I could not become immortal? Please do instruct me in that wisdom in which your revered self is well-versed”.

Yajnavalkya was immensely pleased with this reply, and said, “You have become dearer than ever to me by offering such an agreeably surprising reply; come on then, sit beside me and try to understand what I expound to you regarding this matter”.

Significance of the Narrative

3. What is the purpose of this introductory narrative inserted at the very commencement of the Brāhmaṇa? Evidently the Upanishad wants us to know that there is one thing worth knowing whose worth is more than all the wealth stored up in this world. Wealth acquired here can give us a comfortable life and we can hope to get to the highest heaven by virtue of sacrifices performed with the help of wealth. But for immortality, the knowledge of the supreme Ātman, renunciation and direct vision of Ātman alone would help us and nothing else. That Yajnavalkya is ready to give up all his wealth for the sake of gaining contact with Ātman is one
incontestable evidence to show that renunciation of the idea of possession is a proximate means to the highest goal of human life. And that Maitreyi rejects her portion of wealth and prefers the knowledge of Ātman, and that Yājnavalkya imparts that holy wisdom to a woman who is not qualified to perform any Karma (ritual), is another indication that renunciation and dispassionateness both qualify a person to look inward and see Ātman of all.
SECTION TWO

ĀTMAN TO BE SEEN

The Dearest of All

4. It is very interesting to find how skilfully Yājnavalkya begins with the topic of conjugal affection most familiar to the man of the world and deftly leads his wife to an analysis of the notion of the individual self which all human beings instinctively love most of all.
The above-cited passage shows how one’s own self is naturally dearer than anything else. It is well-known that a wife is ready to sacrifice everything else for the sake of her **husband**, whom she naturally calls her dearest. But yet, the sage calls Maitreyi’s attention to the fact that the husband is dear to the wife, not because she loves him most, but only because he happens to be *her* husband and she loves her own self more than even her husband whom she usually styles her ‘dearest’. The husband in his turn calls his **wife** his most beloved, and this is so only because she happens to be *his* wife; and he loves her only next to himself. The wife of course cannot be dearer to him than himself.

Then the **sons** that one considers dearer than all other things, are dear because they are the offspring of that couple, more especially because they are one’s own children, the children of the father or the mother as either of them would view the matter. In this case also one’s own self is dearer than the children or even one’s spouse. Next to the children comes the **wealth** that one regards as his own and holds dearer than other things. It goes without saying that wealth comes only
next in rank to the family for whose benefit it has been acquired. The family would be prepared to sacrifice all this precious wealth if such a sacrifice were needed to save the interest of the members of the household; and the family itself, as we have already seen, is dear only next to one’s own self. Then the cattle are dear only because they are necessary for one’s own family and wealth, and much less so than one’s own self. One’s superior caste such as Brāhmaṇa-hood or one’s Kshatriya clan dearer as it is than other castes, is dear only because it is one’s caste which qualifies one to perform certain religious rites. The other worlds which one aspires to reach and reap the benefits of the religious works which one has performed here, are dear because they are the privileges of one’s own caste, and the gods whom one is very particular to please through sacrifices for the sake of attaining the heavenly worlds, are similarly dear for one’s own sake and not for the sake of the gods themselves. Even the very Vedas according to whose injunctions the gods are to be worshipped are not dear for their sake, but obviously for one’s own sake. Nor are any other beings from the highest Brahma (Hiranṇyagarbha) down to the lowest tuft of grass, dear for their sake, but only for the sake of one’s own self. In a word, everything that one
holds dear, counting from the most distantly related down to the nearest kith and kin, is dear not for its sake, but for one’s sake. It is clear that man has clean forgotten and neglected his own self while he is immersed in the thought of external beings and things.

Atman Alone is Worth Seeing

5. Having drawn Maitreyi’s attention to the most lovable nature of the self, Yajnavalkya exhorts her to make an earnest effort to see her own all-important self:

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिश्यासितव्यः;
मैत्रेयात्मनि खल्वरे दृष्ट श्रुते पते विज्ञाते इदं सर्वं विदितम्

Atman alone, my dear, is to be seen. He is to be heard about, reflected upon and ascertained O Maitreyi, Atman having been seen, heard about, reflected upon and known, all this becomes known.”

The true import of this piece of advice has to be exactly understood before we proceed further; for, upon correctly understanding it alone one would be able to follow the subsequent argument. In the first place, what exactly is meant by the statement ‘Atman alone is to be seen’? And who is that Atman that is exhorted here to be seen? Is it the well-known ‘self’ as understood by the common man, or even the self that is taught by the
ritual portion of the Vedas, or some one else? In any case, how is that Atman to be seen?

**The Problem**

6. This question is of the utmost importance because Yajnavalkya has declared at the very beginning that Atman is to be seen in order to attain immortality, and he has further maintained that by the knowledge of this Atman, all this, the whole objective sphere of knowledge becomes known. This, to say the least, is very puzzling. For, how can one expect to attain immortality by knowing himself? And further more, how can the knowledge of the knower, the subjective knowing self, help one to know all that is objective as well?

**Which is the Atman to be Seen?**

7. On the face of it, the knowledge of the self as known to the common man, can never lead one to achieve either of the above-mentioned results. It is too well-known that the common man has too vague an idea of his self. He believes no doubt that he exists and has something he calls his self, but he has never bestowed any thought upon the true nature of that self; from birth to death, he is absorbed in the thought of objective phenomena with some one which he identifies himself
from moment to moment, except for temporary torpor or deep sleep. It is obvious that Yājnavalkya never for a moment thought of this fancied self when he said that by the knowledge of the Ātman everything else becomes known.

8. It seems plausible, however, that he may have had the Vedic transmigratory self in his mind, when he asked Maitreyi to know the Ātman in particular to attain immortality and be able to know everything else. This *prima facie* view has been put forward in the *Vakyānvaya-Ādhikaraṇa* (Topic taken up for discussion in 4-19 of the first chapter of the Vedānta-Mīmāṃsā p. 169). The individual self could very well be meant here, because it is well-known in common life that everything else is dear to us for the sake of one's own self. The statement that everything becomes known by the knowledge of the Ātman, may be explained away as merely figurative, since objective things may well be considered to have been known by the knowledge of their experiences to whom they are subservient. But this view is not tenable either, because nowhere do we find it stated that by the knowledge of the individual self immortality can be attained, nor is it possible in the primary sense of the expression that by knowing the
individual self everything becomes known. And it is not proper to take words in a figurative sense where the primary sense is available. As a matter of fact we do know from S’rutis and Smṛtis that immortality is attainable only through the knowledge of the supreme Atman.

**Brahman as the Supreme Atman**

9. Moreover, we are obliged to admit that the Brahman or the Highest Atman alone is meant here, by a glance at the very next Kandika here. For it reads thus:

ब्रह्म तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानो ब्रह्म वेद श्रेष्ठं तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानो ब्रह्म वेद लोकांस्तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानो ब्रह्म वेद वेदांस्तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानो ब्रह्म वेद श्रुतानि तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानो श्रुतानि वेद सर्वं तं परात्मानो यत्प्रात्मानं: सर्वं वेदेदं ब्रह्मोदं क्षत्रमिच्छे लोकाः देवाः इमेऽ वेदं इमे वेदाः इमानि श्रुतानिं सर्वं यदयमात्मा।

"The Brāhmaṇa caste rejects him who thinks that the Brāhmaṇa caste is other than Atman; the Kshatriya caste rejects him who thinks that the Kshatriya caste is other than Atman. The heavenly worlds reject him who thinks that the heavenly worlds are other than Atman. The gods reject him who thinks that the gods are other than Atman. The Vedas reject him..."
who thinks that the Vedas are other than Atman. Creatures reject him who thinks that creatures are other than Atman. Everything rejects him who thinks that everything is other than Atman. This Brāhmaṇa caste, this Kshatriya caste, these heavenly worlds, these gods, these Vedas, these creatures, this everything is what is (really) Atman.”

4-5-7.

This passage clearly means that what is commonly thought to be other than Atman is really Atman alone and nothing else. It is this Atman whose knowledge according to Yājnavalkya results in the knowledge of the reality underlying everything.

Can Atman be Seen at all?

10. But how is Atman to be seen at all? That is the most crucial question. Yājnavalkya says that Atman having been seen, heard about, reflected upon and ascertained, everything here becomes known inasmuch as he considers that there is nothing other than Atman. But what is meant by saying that Atman is to be seen? The word ‘Atma’ means one’s own self. If so, how can any one see, hear about, reflect upon and ascertain the true nature of one’s own self? Surely the subjective self cannot become its own object? This doctrine of non-duality of the subject and object seems so palpably self-conflicting that Vedāntins of the other schools say that it is absurd to think Brahman has to know itself to
attain the highest goal, and therefore maintain that the
Upanishads do teach some sort of dualism according to
which the individual soul has to know Brahman and
devoutly meditate upon God who is distinct and different
from the devotee to attain salvation. We have therefore
to see what solution the non-dualists have to offer to
obviate this seeming difficulty.

The Doctrine of Direct Vision

11. Teachers who believed in the perfect identity
of the individual self in the state of release and the
Supreme Self, propounded the doctrine of direct vision
(साक्षात्कार) long before the time of Śaṅkara.

Bhartrprapāchā, for instance, whose doctrines are
frequently criticized in the Brhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya,
stood by this doctrine. In his explanation of a passage
(Br. 4-2-4) this teacher in discussing the possible meaning
of the sentence ‘अभयं त्वा गच्छतादाः ज्ञातवत्क्ष यो नो भगवन्मयं
वेद्यस’ (May fearlessness come to you, O Yājnavalkya,
to you, revered one, who have taught us fearlessness!),
poses the question ‘How is it that Janaka prays for the
attainment of fearlessness by his teacher, who must have
already attained fearlessness inasmuch as the sage has
135) by the remark  

Fearlessness has been attained indeed by Yājnavalkya, it is not unattained; but it has not been directly visioned).  

12. Writers of sub-commentaries on S'āṅkara's Bhāshya firmly believe in this tenet that it is not enough to know the meaning of the Upanishadic text teaching the identity of the individual and the Supreme Atman, but over and above that knowledge it is quite necessary to have direct experience of that identity. The author of the Pañcha-pādikā, for example, writes as follows:—

Here by the word Avagati (in the Bhāshya) is meant direct experience; but Jñāna (mere knowledge) is also possible in the case of what is remote and not within the range of direct experience. Even in the case of what is proximate, when the object is regarded as improbable, we have already remarked that judgment is inconclusive.”

1. This is one of the numerous excerpts from Bhartṛ-prapañcha interspersed in Ananda-Giri's Tīka on the Bhādārānyaka Vārtika.
[It is worthy of note that this writer apprehends that even direct experience may sometimes be questionable.]

And Vāchaspāti Mis'ra in his Bhāmati, the sub-commentary on the Sūtra-Bhāṣya, writes:-

(२) न केवलं ज्ञानम् इत्यते, किं तु अवगति साध्यत्कारं
कुर्वत् अवगतिपरंतं सत्याव्यव्यया इच्छाया: कर्म ∥

वा. भा. पा. ७७.

"Not mere knowledge alone is desired but that which leads to Avagati or Sākṣaṭkāra (direct experience). That which culminates in Avagati is the object of the desire denoted by the suffix san”

[This is the explanation of the Sūtra-Bhāṣya which reads
अवगतिपरंतं ज्ञानं सत्याव्यव्यया इच्छया: कर्म ∥

SB. 1-1-1

Vision of Atman According to the Sūtra Bhāṣya and the Vārtika

13. Is this view of Atma-dars'ana (Vision of Atman) correct? We have to carefully sift out the true and the false not merely on the evidence of the S'ruti and trustworthy authority, but also by an appeal to universal intuition and reason based upon it. Even today, there are many great Vedāntins of repute who affirm that the knowledge of Atman based upon Vedic texts is only mediate, and that it cannot be final until it is raised to the level of what they call ‘realization’.
The Genuine Atman

14. Let us revert to a consideration of the true nature of Atman, for, that would be of great help in deciding the question, whether or not Atman can be seen directly. We have seen that the Upanishads declare that the true Atman is only one, and distinct from the individual Atman who is the object of the notion of I (अहंप्रत्ययविषयः) and who is experienced by each one of us in our body. The true Atman is untouched by this individual Atman and the psychic set seemingly owned by it. None of the Pramāṇas (valid means of knowledge) can objectify even the familiar individual self, for the simple reason that it is Atman who uses the means to ascertain the nature of anything objective. As S'āṅkara says:-

न ह्रात्मा आगङ्तुकः कस्यचित्तस्वयंसिद्धवत् । न ह्रात्मा आत्मनः प्रमाणपेक्षाय सिद्धति । तस्य हि प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणान्यप्रसिद्धप्रमेयसिद्धेः उपादीयते । न ह्राकाशादयः पदार्थः प्रमाणनिरपेक्षा: स्वयंसिद्धः केनचिदयुक्तगत्वे । आत्मा तु प्रमाणादिव्यवहारश्रयतवात् प्रागेव प्रमाणादिव्यवहारात् सिद्धति । न चेदूषश्च निराकरणं संभवति । आगङ्तुकः हि वस्तु निराक्रियते, न स्वरूपम् । व एव हि निराकर्ता, तस्य तस्य स्वरूपम् । न ह्रामेनरूपश्चित्तमिनि निराक्रियते । तथा 'अहंप्रेतान्नानि जानामि वर्तमानं वस्तु, अहंप्रेताति तत्वतीतितत्रं च ज्ञातर्श्चित्तमि' इत्यतीतानागतवर्तमानेच्छन्वावान्यथाभवत्यपि ज्ञातव्ये न
"Atman, as is well known, is nothing extraneous to anyone, for he is self-established. Atman indeed, does not become known to himself depending for his knownness on any Pramāṇa; for, it is for him that perception and other means of knowledge are employed for establishing the existence of an object unknown. No one supposes that ether and other things are self-proven without the help of the means of knowledge. Atman, on the other hand, being the basis of the idea of means of knowledge etc., is presupposed even before the idea of means of knowledge etc. Nor is the denial of such an entity possible; for, only something extraneous can be denied, but not one’s own essential nature. For, the very person who would be the denier, is verily his essential nature. Surely, the essential nature of fire cannot be denied by fire itself? Also, as one thinks ‘It is I that now know something in the present time, it is I myself that knew something in the past and something in the remoter past, and it is I myself that will know something in future and something in some more distant future’, there is no change (conceivable) in the knower even when the knowable changes as past, future or present; for, the knower is of an eternally present nature. So also even when the body is reduced to ashes, there is no destruction or change in nature conceivable in the case of Atman.”

SBh. 2-3-7, p. 268.

1. It would appear that the reading of the original could be construed without difficulty if there were no second in this sentence.
Atman as Self-existent

15. The self-existent nature of the genuine Self as distinct from the body and the psychic set and its un-objectifiability, is thus revealed in the S’ruti :

“Then Ushasta, the son of Cakra asked him, ‘Yajnavalkya’ said he, ‘explain to me the Brahman, actually immediate, that which is the innermost Self’. ‘This is your Atman, the innermost of all.’ ‘Which is this innermost of all, Yajnavalkya?’ ‘Who breathes out with the Prāṇa, He is your Atman, the innermost of all; Who breathes in with the Apāna, He is your Atman, the innermost of all; who functions in all directions with the Vyāna, He is your Atman innermost of all; who breathes up with the Udāna, He is your Atman, the innermost of all. This is your Atman, the innermost of all.’”

Br. 3-4-1.
That Ushasta, son of Cakra said, 'you have spoken of it as one might have said', 'such and such is an ox', 'such and such is a horse'. Explain to me the actually immediate Brahman itself, the inmost Self', 'This is your Ātman inmost of all'. 'Which is he, Yājñavalkya, the inmost of all ?', 'You cannot see the seer of the sight; you cannot think the thinker of thinking; you cannot hear the hearer of hearing; you cannot understand the understander of understanding. This is your inmost Self, everything else than this is perishable!' Thereupon Ushasta, son of Cakra, kept quiet.”

Br. 3-4-2.

In the second of these texts, it is stated in the clearest terms possible that the innermost Self of everyone is that which objectifies even the organs of sight, hearing, thinking and understanding. It is evident then that the Supreme Self whose knowledge leads to immortality, cannot be seen, heard, reflected upon, or understood in the ordinary sense of these words.

**Ātman as Witness**

16. We may now turn to another text which throws abundant light on the intrinsic nature of the Self:

(3) एकाकार्मांच्छ: सर्वभूतात्मिकाः साश्चरी चेता केवलो निर्गुणाः

श्रे. ६-११
"The one Deva (Shining One) hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the inmost Self of all creatures, the superintendent of actions, the in-dweller in all beings, the Witness, the conscious one, alone, without any qualities."

Sve. 6-11.

We learn here that this Atman is देव: ‘Deva’, self-resplendent and is ‘One’ common to all creatures (सर्वभूतात्मा), not only to all men. Yet he is गूढ़: ‘hidden’, as it were, till one succeeds in knowing him immediately. He is सर्वव्यापी all-pervading, not restricted to any one spot or any particular point of time. He is not only in all creatures, but also सर्वभूतात्मा, ‘the inner Self of all creatures’. He is not the same as the seeming self which is an agent of actions and experiencer of the fruits of actions; He is कर्माचार्यः, the superintendent of actions, the dispenser of the fruits of actions to the empirical agents who are bound by their several actions and results thereof. He is सर्वभूताधिवासः, the in-dweller in all the bodies of creatures, unaffected by the defects or good features of those bodies. He is साक्षी, the eternally changeless Witness of all changeful things, good, bad or indifferent, high or low, happy or miserable, ever unaffected by those features of these creatures. He is चेताः, the conscious one unlike the not-selves. Nay more, he is केवल, the One without a second, for, the objective
things witnessed are no more than appearances of which he is the one real substrate. He is निर्गुण, devoid of any qualifying adjuncts and therefore not liable to any change in his essential nature.

The Interpretation of S'rutis
Which Teach the Vision of Atman

17. We now arrive at the crucial question. How are we to interpret the S’ruti texts which teach that Atman is to be seen, heard about, reflected upon, or to be ascertained as he is? How can there be a subject-object relation within an entity which has no conceivable parts whatever? Here is S’ankara’s reply to this question:

(१) आत्मनोप्रच्युतात्मभावस्यैव सत: तत्त्वावपरायणनिमित्तो
मन्यथैव देहादिवसात्मस्वात्मत्वनिश्चितो लौकिको दृष्टः। तेन
देहादिष्कुस्तस्यांस्यनोपि आत्मा ‘अनविष्कृतवेष्टन’‘, ‘अलब्यो
लब्धव्यः’, ‘अश्रुतः श्रोतव्यः’, ‘अमतो मन्तव्यः’, ‘अविज्ञातो
विज्ञातव्यः’- इत्यादिभेदविपदेश उपपद्यते। प्रतिविध्यत एव तु
परमार्थतः सर्वज्ञातू परमेश्वराद्यो द्रष्टा श्रोता वा ‘नान्योत्तोस्विति
द्रष्टा’ (बृ. ३-७-२३) इत्यादिना। परमेश्वरस्तविधा-
कलिपतार्चार्यारतु, कर्तुर्भोक्तुर्विज्ञानत्वाक्षरादन्तः। यथा
मायाविन्दश्रृंखलायाद्वारः सूत्राणाकाशमधिरोहत: स एव मायावी
Atman, even while not swerving from his Atman-nature, is seen in ordinary life to be mis-conceived by people to be identical with body and other not-self objects, owing to want of correct knowledge of his true nature. To Atman himself who has thus become identified with body and other not-selves, it is conceivable that Atman is spoken of, in terms implying difference of the subject and object, as ‘unsought and to be sought’, ‘unattained and to be attained’, ‘unheard about and to be heard about’, ‘not reflected upon and to be reflected upon’, ‘unascertained and to be ascertained’ and so on. From the standpoint of Reality, however, a seer or hearer other than the omniscient Supreme Lord is negated in texts like ‘There is no seer besides this’

(Br. 3-7-23)

“The Supreme Lord, however, is other than the embodied agent and experiencer super-imposed by Avidya, known by the name of Vijnānātman (the knowing self). This is in the same way that other than the (apparent) magician ascending up the sky by a rope with a sword and shield, there is the same real magician standing on the floor; or in the same way that other than the jar-space limited by an associating adjunct, there is space unlimited by any associating adjunct.”

SBh. 1-1-17, p. 39.
Unlike the Advaitins belonging to the pre-S'āṅkara and post-S'āṅkara schools, S'āṅkara discusses the doctrine of seeing, hearing of, reflecting upon and knowing the true Ātman without any assumption that there is any actual seeing, hearing of, reflecting upon or knowing of Ātman as an object. According to him, the distinction of the Jīva from Brahman as well as the enquiry into the true nature of Ātman is only in the empirical sphere projected by Avidyā.

18. We shall now quote from the Upadesa-Sahasri, a few verses which disclose what S'āṅkara the author of that work, has to say with regard to Anubhava or direct intuition of Ātman:

(1) 

“The seeing Ātman himself could be intuited by himself as He is of the nature of intuition. The birth of the modification of the mind with its semblance, is called His Anubhava (intuition of the self).”

Upa. 18-195.

[Since everything is known through the light of Consciousness which is the very stuff of what should be called ‘anubhava’ in the strict sense of the word, there can be no
intuition of Intuition itself, in the same way as no other light can be imagined to show light to itself. Empirically speaking however, the modification of the mind which makes its appearance when one says ‘I have now known my real self’, is metaphorically called ‘intuition’ by Vedántins.

(2) इतोऽयोसनुभवः कश्चिदात्मनो नोपपद्यते ।
अविज्ञातं विज्ञातं विज्ञातारमिति श्रुते: ॥

उप. १८-२१०.

“No direct experience of Atman other than this, is conceivable. For, the S’ruti says ‘It is unknown to those who know it (objectively)’ (Ke.2-3) ‘With what, my dear, can one know the knower?’ Br. 4-5-15”

Upa. 18-210

[These two texts declare that Atman can never be objectified by knowledge. Hence the only intuition of Atman, is to know that we are the unobjectifiable Atman whose changeless essence of consciousness lights up everything else.]

(3) दृश्यश्चाया यदाद्वाय दुःखच्छायेव दर्शने ।
पश्यस्तः प्रत्ययं योगि दृष्टं आत्मेति मन्यते ॥
तं च मूढं च द्वादशं (यो ह्यं ?) प्रत्ययं वेति नो दृष्टे: ।
स एव योगिना प्रेषो नेतरः स्यान्त्र संभवः ॥

उप. १२-६, ७.

“The Yōgin who sees the concept in which the semblance of Atman is reflected, very much like one’s own image in the looking-glass, thinks that the Atman is seen there. He who knows him as well as the delusive concept to be no other than the Seeing Witness, that person, verily, is the best
of Yōgins and not the other one. There is no doubt about this.”

Upa. 12-6, 7.

[The Yōgin who believes that he has realized the Atman in a particular modification of the mind, does not know the truth. The fact is that the knower as well as the known, is a semblance of Atman in the modification of the mind. Both are superimpositions on the Witness, and are essentially that Witness and nothing else.]

(४) विज्ञातेऽर्थस्तु विज्ञाता स त्वमित्युच्यते यतः ।
स स्वातन्त्रभवस्तस्य ततोस्योऽस्ंभवो मृषा ॥

उप. १२-८.

“’That one art thou, who is the understander of the understanding’ so says the S’ruti (Br. 3-4-2). Since this is so, that alone is the intuition of the Atman; any intuition other than that, is false.”

Upa. 12-8.

[Any understanding through a faculty of the intellect can be only that of the not-self; it can never be that of the real Self. To intuit one’s Self as the witness of understanding, is the only intuition worth the name.]

(५) योऽहुहृतरमात्मां तथा वेत्तारस्मेव च ।
वेत्ति नात्मं एवासि योन्यायाः स आत्मविवृत् ॥

उप. १४-२४.
"He who thinks that the Atman is the ego, and the knower, is no knower of Atman at all. He who knows otherwise, is the (true) knower of Atman.”


[The self which answers to the notion of the 'I' and is the knower of objects, is not the real Atman at all. He is the real knower who knows that Atman is neither a knower nor an agent of any action.]

(6) बोधात्मज्योतिषा दीप्ता बोधमातमनि मन्यते ।
बुद्धिन्योगस्ति बोधेति सेयं भ्रातिति धीगता ॥
उप. १६-६०.

"Enkindled by the light of consciousness of Atman, the intellect imagines that it has consciousness within itself, and thinks that there is no other knower. Now this delusion belongs to the intellect.”

Upa. 16-60.

[Consciousness is no attribute of Atman, but is essentially the nature of Atman himself.]

19. The foregoing quotations suffice to show that according to S'āṅkara's tradition Atman cannot be known by any one of the faculties of the mind or directly visualized. Atman is of the very essence of consciousness which is in no need of being lighted up to be seen. To intuit this, is to see Atman.
SECTION THREE

REFLECTION AND REASON

The Real Self is One’s Own Self

20. We have so far discussed the meaning of the term *Vision* (दर्शन) of *Atman*. It is no ordinary seeing with some one of the faculties of the mind, but directly intuiting the Self by oneself as the Self. It is just what another text (Br. 4-4-23) recommends thus:

"Therefore one who knows thus, shall become self-controlled, with his senses tamed, free from all outward activity, enduring pairs of opposites and tranquillized, and see his self in the (real) Self alone."

Br. 4-4-23.

21. The meaning of *श्रोतव्य*: (to be heard about), is now clear. *Atman* being one’s very self, one needs only to be told so, and at the very instant of the teaching of the S’ruti or the preceptor about its nature, one sees the Self in himself, giving up all other delusory notions that one is something else. As S’aṅkara says:"
The mere reminder of one’s being the non-transmigratory Self, would be fruitful by wiping off the delusory notion that one is an individual self suffering from the ills of mundane life, in the same way as reminding one that a particular phenomenon is only a rope and not a serpent, would be effective in dispelling all fear due to the delusion.”

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 13.

Of course even such a reminder would not have been needed, if the human mind had not been naturally oppressed by an obsession which compelled it to look outwards for the solution of every problem of life.

**Manana or Reflection**

22. We may now pass on to consider the significance of the exhortation मनव्यः (should be reflected upon). The root मन (‘mun’) means to think; and like the English verb, the Sanskrit word may be used at least in two different senses. When one says ‘I think he will come soon’, he means to say that he supposes so, that he is of that opinion. But when he says ‘Think over it, and come to your own conclusion’, he advises the person addressed to reflect upon the matter.
It is in the latter sense that the word *Mantavyah* is used here. When one has not grasped the meaning of the text directly on hearing it, one will have to ponder on the nature of the thing taught and verify his conclusion by repeated reflection till one is free from all doubt or misconception.

23. And what is the nature of this thinking in this particular case? In his Bhāshya on Sūtra 1-1-2, S’āṅkara remarks:

> "While there are Vedāntic texts teaching the cause of the origin etc. of the Universe, inference also (अनुप्रायामिष) unopposed to Vedānta texts, where it becomes a means of valid knowledge (प्रमाणं भवत) for the sake of a firm grasp of their meaning, is not ruled out. For, the S’ruti itself recognizes reasoning (तर्कम) as an aid. Accordingly the S’ruti ‘(He is) to be heard about and reflected upon’ (Br. 4-5-6), as well as the text ‘The scholarly and intelligent person would reach the country of the Gāndhāras alone.’ Similarly in this case, a
person who has an efficient teacher would know the truth" (Ch. 6-14-2) shows that it recognizes the assistance of human intelligence.”

SBh. 1-1-2, p. 8.

**Tarka or Reason**

*According to Post-S’āńkaras*

24. The words अनुमानम (inference) and तर्क: (reason) used in the Bhāṣya in the above excerpt, have been the occasion of various interpretations, on the part of different sub-commentaries. And we cannot be sure of what exactly Yājnavalkya means मन्तव्य: (should be reflected upon) till we have determined the full import of the above-cited extract from S’āṅkara.

(1) Thus the *Pancha-Pādikā* explains S’ravāṇa and other means of knowledge as follows:-

"And accordingly *S’ravāṇa* (hearing) is enquiry into the meaning of the texts and the study of the *Sārīrakā* (the science
of Vedānta as systematized by Bādarāyaṇa). Manana is the investigation (of the significance) of the illustrations like those of the ‘drum’ etc., the origin, sustentation and dissolution (of the world), the fact of the effect being a mere play of words—these and other rational eulogistic statements desiderated by texts purporting to teach the existent entity, as also the revolving in mind the significance of the inferences unopposed to the meaning of the texts. Nididhyāsana is staying steadily in the purport of texts supported by Manana; for, the enjoined meditation synonymous with Upāsana, is of no avail here. and Dars’anam is the direct experience of the unity of the Pure Consciousness devoid of all differences resulting from steady staying.”

PP. p. 1170.

[Here evidently S’ravāna defined as enquiry into the meaning of the S’rutis as well as the study of the Sārīraka, is ill-suited to the context of the dialogue between Yājnavalkya and Maitreyi for the simple reason that Maitreyi was not qualified for such enquiry and study, and further the Sārīraka was not in existence at all during the Upanishadic age.]

And Bhāmati, another sub-commentary, has the following to say on the subject :

(२) अन्त्र चागमाचार्योपदेशाय चतुर्ध्य प्रयणम्, अत्यागमा-विरोधविषयायनवेशन्म मननम् ॥

वा. भा. २७९.

“Here S’ravāna (hearing) is learning the truth through the teaching of Agama (Vedas), and one’s preceptor. And Manana is adding reason unopposed to Agama.”

VBh. p. 279.
(2) Vāchaspati Mis'ra, the author of this Bhāmati, writes in more express terms elsewhere:

(3) अनुमानं वेदान्ताविरोधि; तदुपजीविच इत्यापि द्रष्टव्यम्।
शब्दाविरोधिया तदुपजीविन्या च युक्त्या विवेचनं पनन्तं। युक्तिश्च
अर्थपतितिनुसारं वा ॥

Anumāna is what is unopposed to Vedānta; 'and depending upon it' it may be added. Investigation (of truth) with the assistance of reason unopposed to the Word and depending upon it, is reflection. And this reason is either presumption or syllogistic inference.” VBh. 1-1-2, p. 89.

(3) The Paṅca-Padikā, however, distinguishes Tarka from syllogistic inference:-

(४) क्य तथि तर्कस्योपयोगः ? विषयासंभवास्मापि
तथानुभव- फलानुत्पत्ती तत्संभवप्रदर्शनमुखेन फलप्रतिबिंबविगमे ॥
पं. पा. ५००

“Where then is the use of reason (Tarka)? When a fact is considered improbable and direct experience is not born, (reason is useful) in showing the probability of the fact and thus removing the obstacle to the resultant experience.”

PP. p. 500.

This sub-commentary has an other utility also to attribute to the employment of reason:-
Even correct knowledge which has dawned, does not attain stability; for, its object may be be-clouded by suspicion of its improbability. That is why a man is not confirmed in his belief of the existence of a thing about which he has a strong impression that its existence is inconceivable in a particular place and time, even when it accidentally happens to be found there and he himself actually sees it, unless and until he follows it up with reason supporting its probability. So even correct knowledge of an object becomes unstable as though it were not attained. Hence it demands the aid of reason for its stability. This is why those proficient in logic say that *tarka* is that which supposes a valid means of knowledge.”

It is surprising that this writer goes so far as to fear that even the direct intuition of Advaita (non-duality) may happen to be doubted as though doubt can possibly
be entertained in a state where there are no two things at all!

**Manana According to S’ankara**

25. We may now go back to S’āṅkara himself to see how he explains his statement that even the S’ruti may sometimes require the assistance of reason called ‘Manana’ as distinguished from reason of the other type bearing that name.

(१) यदपि श्रवणव्यतिरिक्तेन पननं विद्याधिक्षेर्त्वं एव तर्क-प्रवाहायत्वं दर्शनयति-इत्युक्तम्। नानेन मिलेण शुक्लतर्कस्यात्मात्मलाभः संभवति। श्रवणुत्तरित्वं एव हुत्र तर्कोऽनुपवाक्तलेनाश्रयते।

स्वप्नात्मबुद्धायोऽरुङ्ग्योपितोत्तरायितव्यस्थितिरार्थचारादात्मतनोऽन्वयागतत्वम्, संप्रसादे च प्रपज्ज्वपरित्यागेन सदात्मना संपर्सिन्ज्ञाप्पर्सदात्मत्वम्, प्रपञ्चस्य ब्रह्मप्रभवत्वात् कार्यकारणान्यत्वायेन ब्रह्मात्मिनितमः।

— इत्येवज्जातीयकः।। सू.भ.। २-१०६, पा. १८८, १८९

“As for the statement (by the Sāṃkhya) that the Vedic word enjoining *Manana* in addition to S’ravana, itself shows that reason also has to be given a place (here), we reply that dry reason cannot gain access here under this cloak. For, reason proffered by the S’ruti itself alone, is accepted as subservient to intuition; reason of the type, for instance, which argues that Ātman is not tainted by the Avasthas since both waking and dream are each absent when the other obtains and that the empirical self is essentially of the nature free from all plurality since it shakes off all the dual world and becomes
one with the Ātman as Pure Being in deep sleep; and also reason of the type that since the pluralistic universe arises out of Brahman, it cannot be other than Brahman on the principle of non-distinction of the effect from the cause.”

SBh. 2-1-6, pp. 188-189

Vedāntic reason is distinguished from the other types of reasoning, in that it rests upon direct intuition and is no mere speculation based upon empirical logic.

26. The following verse from the Upades’ a Sāhasri states the nature of Vedāntic reasoning succinctly :-

(2) अन्तवन्यतिरेकौ हि पदार्थस्य पदस्य च ।
स्यादेतदहमित्यन्त युक्तिरवाक्यारणे ॥ उप. १८-९६

“Constant continuance and variability of the word and the thing denoted by it respectively, would be the reason in deciding what is meant by the term I.” Upa. 18-96.

While in common parlance the word ‘I’ is applied to the body, the senses, the vital principle, the mind and the intellect as the case may be, yet it is clear that the notion of ‘I’ continues even when the not-selves disappear altogether, thus compelling us to conclude that the entity corresponding to this notion is none of these.

That this is so is proved by an appeal to the experience of deep sleep in the next two verses :-
"In the statement 'I saw never a whit in sleep', one does not negate the seeing (nature of the self), but negates only the concept."

(Here this Purusha) is self-luminous' (Br. 4-3-9, 4-3-14), 'There is no destruction of the sight of the seer at all' (Br. 4-3-23). The S'āstra has (thus) declared the existence of consciousness and its unchangeability (on the one hand) and the disappearance of the concept on the other, thus distinguishing the concept and the consciousness.

The idea is that the Witnessing Consciousness alone should be regarded as indicated by the word 'I', when we refer to the intuition of deep sleep, since there is no question of any concept continuing to thrive there. The S'ruti expressly refers to both the self-identity of the Witness thriving there and the absence of the concept. This is the Anvaya (constant continuâtion) of the word 'I' together with the entity meant by it as also the Vyatireka (the absence of) the not-self wrongly presumed to be denoted by it in common life. Thus by observing this constancy and the fleeting nature of 'Padārtha' and Pada, as testified by intuition, Vedānta determines the reality and unreality of things and not by syllogistic reasoning or dry speculation.
SECTION FOUR

NIDIDHYĀŚANA AS CONTINUED PRACTICE OF S'RAVĀṆĀ AND MANANA

Relation of the Sequel to the Previous Section

27. We have so far discussed the meaning of S’ravāna (hearing) and Manana (reflection) as means to Dars’ana (intuition) of the Self. Grasping the teaching regarding the real nature of Ātman, is S’ravāna and reflecting upon the nature of Ātman with the assistance of Vedic-reasoning based upon intuition with a view to determine the exact teaching without any impediment, is Manana. We shall now turn to the discussion of the nature of the advice ‘निदिध्यासितव्यः’ (should be contemplated) offered by Yājnavalkya; for, like the other three concepts (vision, hearing and reflection), Nididhyāsana also has been differently understood by different schools of Vedanta.

The Prasamkhyāna Tradition

28. Among the ancient Advaitins belonging to an earlier school called that of the Prasamkhyāna-Vāda, there was a theory that repeated meditation of the
meaning of the Vedantic text teaching the nature of Atman, could effectively wipe off all Avidyā. Suresvaračārya refers to them thus:

(1) एवमुप्सांहते केचित् स्वसंप्रदायबलावश्चम्भादातुः—"यदेतदेवदातवायाद्यन्ति विज्ञानं समुप्साहते, तद्वैर्ज्ञानाध्यात्मिकात्रेणायं निरस्यति; किं तर्भिः अहिंस्यन ग्राधीयसा कालेनोपासीनस्य सतो भावोपचयातु न्ति:श्रेष्ठज्ञानम् अपगच्छति, 'देवो भूत्या देवान्येति' (ब्र. ४-१-२) इति श्रुते: इति।

"At this conclusion, some supported by their own tradition, aver that this knowledge of the form 'I am Brahman' arising out of hearing the Vedantic Text, does not remove ignorance at all at its very inception; but, by this same being meditated upon day by day for a long time, is wiped off all ignorance without a residue as a result of accumulated intense feeling, for the Sruti says - 'One becomes a god and is then merged in the gods' (Br. 4-1-2)." Nai. 1-67.

And S'āṅkara refers to the doctrine of a similar school in his Sūtra-Bhāṣya:

(२) भवतु नाम साध्यफले| प्रत्येकावृति:, तेषांवृत्तसाध्यस्यतिशयस्य संभवात्; यस्तु परस्तविविषय: प्रत्येको 
नित्यशुद्धबुद्धिमुक्तस्वामेवात्मपुरुष पर ब्रह्म समर्प्यय, तत्र किमयथा 
आवृत्तिरिति? सकृत्य तौ च ब्रह्मात्मत्वप्रतीत्यनपत्तेऽरावृत्तिः 
इति चेत्; न, आवृत्तावपि तदनुपाते। यदि हि 'तत्त्वमसि'
“The repetition of the concepts may be of use in the case of results to be achieved by meditation, inasmuch as it is possible that some intensity is effected in them by repeated practice. But in the case of the knowledge of the Higher Brahman which reveals Brahman that is the very self of the seeker, eternally pure, conscious and free, what purpose would be served by its repetition?

“If it be said that the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and Atman is not born by listening to the text merely once, and hence its repeated meditation is held to be necessary, we reply that this cannot be; for, the result is not conceivable even in the case of repetition. (To explain:) If hearing the Vedantic text of the type of ‘That thou art’ once, does not produce the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and Atman, where is the hope that the same repeatedly heard, would produce that knowledge?”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461

Mandana and Others

29. There were Vedāntins who maintained that a constantly repeated practice of meditation of Atman after gaining knowledge through ‘hearing’ and ‘reasoning’, was effectual in removing ignorance. Mandana, for instance, says :-
(1) योद्ध श्रवणमन्नपूर्वको ध्यानाध्यायः:
प्रतिष्ठानिकलयप्रेयद्वारणां स एव नेतिनेत्यात्मनि, स व्यक्तेन
भेददर्शनप्रतियोगी तत्तत्वत्त्तिति। स च सामान्यं भेददर्शनं प्रविलापयनं
आत्मनापि प्रविलोयते । ... यथा पयः पयो जरयति, स्वयं च
जीयति; यथा च विरं विषाणात्र शांतिः, स्वयं च शांतिः॥


"Now this repeated practice of meditation subsequent to
S'rávana and Manana, negating all sorts of differences in
Atman described as 'This is the Atman taught as not this, not
that', this practice being evidently opposed to the experience
of differences in general, removes it and dissolving as it does
all idea of difference, dissolves itself also, in the same way as
water drunk digests water and is itself digested, or in the same
way as poison taken in, digests another variety of poison and
is itself removed."


(2) जातेक्षणि तत्त्वदर्शनि, अनाहिते च पदै संस्कारे इर्षीयसि
च मिश्यादर्शनं संस्कारे निष्ट्या अपि मिश्यार्थं भवति । यथा
दिक्'पूढ़ास्यानुसारिहातपतवचः, प्राणिव्रृत्तिदर्शनात् । तथा
प्रमितरजुभावाया अपि रुख्वा: प्रमाणानुसन्धाने सर्भापान्त्या
भयदर्शनम् । तस्मात् जातेक्षणि प्रमाणात् तत्त्वदर्शनि अनार्थिक्ष्या-
दर्शनाध्यायान्तिनियोगस्य इर्षीयसि: संस्कारस्याभिमावह, उच्चदाय
वा, तत्त्वदर्शनाभ्यं पन्छने । तथा च 'मनय्यो निष्ट्यासित्यः'
इत्युच्ते । शामदन्त्रश्राधार्ययज्ञादिसाधनाविधानं च । अन्यथा
कस्थुपदेशार्थः?

Br. S. pp. 35
“Even when the knowledge of truth has dawned, but a sufficiently strong impression of it has not been stored up, while the impression born of false knowledge is stronger, even correct notions may present false objects, as for example in the case of one who is confounded with regard to the cardinal directions, but does not keep up the memory of the testimony of a friend; for, he is found to proceed in the wrong direction even then as before. This is the case also with regard to a rope ascertained to be such, which is found to give rise to fear through a misconception that it is a snake, in case one does not keep up the memory of his correct knowledge. ..... Therefore even after true knowledge has dawned by the help of the right means of knowledge, the repeated maintenance of correct knowledge, is deemed to be necessary for the purpose of overcoming or destroying the stronger impression that has arisen out of continued repetition of false perception. That is why the S'ruti says ‘(Atman) is to be reflected upon and meditated’, (that is why) control of the mind and the senses, and the performance of sacrifices and other practices of discipline, are also enjoined. Otherwise, what purpose would their teaching serve?”

Bṛ.Ś. p. 35.

Mandana’s Theory

30. It is evident that Mandana considers that S’ravaṇa or the study of the text, is incomplete and inefficient in bringing about the knowledge of Atman without Manana. That is why he writes श्रवणमन्नयुर्वको ध्यानाभ्यास: (Repeated meditation with a presupposed combined practice of S’ravaṇa and Manana). Obviously
he is a *Samuccaya-Vadin* (one who recommends the combined practice of all the three means of knowledge, *Sravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana*).

31. Both Mandana and the author of the *Pancapādikā*, think that even after the dawn of knowledge of Atman there is a possibility of its being obstructed by some external factor—impressions of wrong knowledge according to Mandana, and suspicion that it is not probable or some misconception according to the author of *Pancapādikā* (see p. 32). It is clear that this fear, while applicable to empirical knowledge, can have no place in the case of knowledge of the Non-dual Atman since there is no scope for any ‘external obstructive cause’ in the state of this knowledge. Witness the S’ruti quoted often and often by S’āṅkara ‘यत्र त्वस्य सर्वपालैवापूतं तत्केन कं पश्येतु ... तत्केन कं विजानियात्’ (Where to this enlightened one everything has become Atman alone, there one could see whom and with what, ... there one could know whom and with what ?) which emphatically denies the distinction of knower, knowledge and the knowable in that state.

**Mandana’s Argument for the Combination of Means**

32. This, however, is only by the way. For the present we are concerned with Mandana’s view that
knowledge arising from S'rvana and Manana, does require repeated meditation also in order to become stable. The following extract would further elucidate his view in this respect :-

(१) ननु विद्यारूपं ब्रह्मव, न विद्या ब्रह्मणोद्वया ; तच्च नित्यम्, अकार्यम्। तत्र कथं किं निदापेष्येत् ? उच्यते — यथा उपज्ञानित्वोहितरुपस्वतिमस्वस्वानापकर्षण स्वरूपाविविहितेऽपेष्यते, तथेवथिप ब्रह्मव।। ब्र. सि. पा. ३७

(Objection) :- The essential form of knowledge is Brahman itself. Knowledge is not something other than Brahman; and that Brahman is eternal and not an effect. This being so, how could anything else be desiderated here?

We reply: 'In the same way as a crystal desiderates the removal of the associate for the manifestation of its real nature, so also one should understand the present case. Br.S. p. 37

**Criticism of This View**

33. As we have already stated, this argument is not sound, because knowledge of Brahman abolishes all duality and leaves no scope for further employment of factors co-operating with knowledge. And even granting for argument's sake that the illustration of a crystal holds good, it has no point of comparison so far as knowledge of Atman is concerned. While it is true that the conditioning associate should be removed to
reveal its bright colour, such an act is not always necessary to know that it is essentially bright always. As S'āṅkara observes:

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(2) \text{यथा शुद्धस्य स्फटिकस्य स्वाच्छचं शौक्ल्यं च स्वरूपं प्राणिवेकस्य ग्रहणादृ रक्तनीलात् शुद्धिधिपतिरनिविकंतकमिव भवति; प्राणान्यजनित्वेकस्य ग्रहणातु राक्षिस: स्फटिक: स्वाच्छचेन शौक्ल्येन च स्वेन रूपेणाभिभिन्निष्ठयत इत्युच्यते प्राणपि तथैव सन्, तथा देहाहुपाध्यजित्वितस्यैव सतो जीवस्य — शृंगारकं विवेकविज्ञानं शरीरार्तु समुद्यानम्, विवेकविज्ञानार्तु स्वरूपेणाभिभिन्निष्ठिति: केवलात्मस्वरूपः वागविति: || सू. भा. १-३-१९, पा. ११३
\]

“Just as the transparency and whiteness of a crystal, being its essential nature, appears as though it were indistinguishable from the redness, blueness and other conditioning associates before it is distinctly grasped; but after it is distinctly grasped with the help of discrimination born through valid means of knowledge, the crystal is spoken of as having attained its true nature of transparency and whiteness while it was exactly such even before that, so also in the case of the Jīva who appears as though he were indistinguishable from the conditioning associates such as the body, the discriminatory knowledge due to the teaching of the S'ruti, is his rising up from the body and the result of this discriminatory knowledge, is his attainment of his own nature.”

SBh. 1-3-19, p. 113

[It is clear that just as there is no real change affected by the removal of the conditioning associates in the case of the crystal, there is no real effort needed to make the intrinsic
nature of Atman manifest there being need only of the discriminatory knowledge.]

34. The doctrine of the necessity of repeated practice of conjoined S’ravaṇa-and Manana, has been rejected by S’aṅkara in the following extract:

(१) अथोच्येत, न केवलं वाक्यं काज्ञिदर्थं साक्षात्कर्तु शाक्तिः; अतो युक्त्येष्वं वाक्यू अनुभावविष्यति ब्रह्मात्मलच मिति; तथाया- वृत्तान्तन्यक्येव ! सापि हि युक्ति: सक्स्म्ब्रवृत्तैव स्वर्गर्तमनुभावविष्यति॥

“It may be said that a text alone cannot produce direct experience of anything, and that hence the text in conjunction with reason, may produce the experience.

“Even so, repeated practice would be certainly useless; for, even that reason employed only once, could well produce the experience.” SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461

35. And there were followers of other schools, or it may be followers of the school already mentioned, who further clarified their position. Their doctrine is stated and refuted in the following excerpt :-

(१) अथापि स्याद, युक्त्या वाक्येन च सामायविष्यर्भेव विज्ञानं क्रियते, न विशेषविषयम् ! यथा ‘अस्ति मे हदये शूलम्’ इत्यतो वाक्यात्, गात्रकपय्यदिलिङ्केच्य शूलसंब्रावसामान्यभेव परं प्रतिपद्यते, न विशेषम् अनुभवति, यथा स एव शूली ! विशेषानुभवविज्ञानविद्या निवर्तकः ! तत्स्तदर्था आवृत्तिरिति (चेत); न ! अस्कृद्पि तावमात्रे क्रियमाणे विशेषविज्ञानोत्पत्त्यसंभवात्।
"Perhaps it will be maintained that reason and text can only produce a general idea of what they convey, but not the direct experience of that particular fact. For instance, from the statement ‘I have a pain in my heart’ as also on the strength of seeing the shaking of the body and other symptoms, another person could gather only that there is the ache but not direct experience of that particular ache like the person suffering from the ache himself. Now direct experience is what removes Avidyā and hence, for attaining it, repeated practice is necessary.

“We reply: ‘No; for, the production of direct experience, is impossible even by repeated practice of that much. The particular state which one has not experienced by a single employment of hearing Śāstra and reasoning, could never be experienced by making use of them even a hundred times. Therefore whether by a conjunction of Śāstra and reason, the particular state is experienced or its general nature only, in either case, they can both produce their effect by being employed but once and so repetition is useless.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461

A Further Argument Against Repetition

36. There is a further reason against those who insist upon the continued repetition of both S’ravaṇa and Manana :-
Nor can it be urged that as a rule Sāstra and reason employed but once, cannot produce direct experience in any one; for, those that can understand things possess different levels of intellect.

Moreover, repeated practice may be granted to have some use in the case of an empirical object which has many features both general and particular, since by one effort of attention one feature may be determined and another by another, as for instance in the case of studying a long chapter. But in the case of Brahman devoid of all specific features, and of the nature of Pure Consciousness without any distinction of the general and particular in itself, it is not proper to expect the need of any repetition for the dawn of correct knowledge.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461.

Vacaspāti Mis’ra’s View of the Matter

37. Vacaspāti Mis’ra very closely follows in the foot-steps of Mandana even while explaining many a passage in S’aṅkara’s Sūtra- Bhāshya. With regard to this particular doctrine, he writes thus :-
"The mind endowed with the ripeness resulting from the meditation on the meaning of the text free from all doubt, can reasonably lead to the experience of identity of *Twampadārtha* the self denoted by the word ‘thou’ and the entity denoted by the word ‘that’ by negating the various conditioning associates. Nor is this latter experience of the very nature of Brahman in which case it could not be produced; it is only a particular modification of the mind having Brahman for its object."

Vbh. 1-1-1, p. 57

It will be noted that Mandana asserts that realization of Brahman, is a manifestation of the same which results from removing the wrong impressions, and so it need not be an effect of same means employed, whereas Vācaspati obviates the difficulty by admitting that *Anubhava* is also an effect since it is only a modification of the mind. The real *Anubhava* for him, however, is Brahman itself and it only manifests after the modification also disappears along with the dual world. So his teaching is Mandana’s, slightly modified in this instance :-
“Moreover there are four kinds of knowledge with regard to Brahman. The first variety arises out of the mere listening to the text in the Upanishad, which they call *Sravaṇa*. The second is born out of the same Upanishadic text aided by enquiry (*Mimamsā*); which they call *Manana*. The third is of the nature of a continuous stream of thought, which they call *Nididhyāsana*. The fourth is of the form of a modification of the mind which entails immediate experience, which results in immediate *Kāivalya* (or Release).

It is obvious that Vācaspati sticks to Mandana’s school in holding that *Nididhyāsana* is a continuous meditation or rather creative imagination based on the knowledge obtained *Sravaṇa* and *Manana* conjoined. Only, he postulates a modification of the mind attended with *Anubhava* or *Sākṣāt-kāra*, on whose appearance alone actual *anubhava* or direct experience of *Ātman* is possible:
"The very nature of the repetition of ascertained knowledge is such that it removes even the beginningless false idea whose dense impression is deep-rooted." VBh. p. 40.

Sures'vara had anticipated and rejected this theory of Vāsanā or Samskāra of Avidyā as an obstacle to the dawn of permanent enlightenment:

बाधितत्वादविद्याया विद्या सा नैव बाधते ।
तद्वासना निभितत्वं याति विद्यास्यतेधुवम् ॥ नै. १-३८।

"Avidyā having been already sublated, can never sublate Vidyā. The impressions of that Avidyā would surely give rise to the memory of Vidyā."

If this firm stand of Sures'vara be kept in mind, insistence of Mandana an Vācaspati following him, on repetition of S'ravaṇa and Manana even after the dawn of right knowledge, will be readily seen to be a fight with one's own shadow.

S'āṅkara's Dictum

38. S'āṅkara's final judgment in the matter resting as it does on both universal intuition and reason based upon it, may now be stated here :-

(१) एष्य व्यावृत्तसर्वसंसारार्थम्कोऽनुभवात्मको बह्सन्नजः -
कस्तत्पदार्थो वेदात्माभियुक्तान्य प्रसिद्ध: । तथा लक्षिपुष्पि
प्रत्येकात्मा श्रोता देहान्तर्भ्य प्रत्येकात्मत्या सभाव्यमान-
"This entity called Brahman free from all attributes incidental to Samsāra, and of the nature of intuition itself, is well-known among adepts in Vedānta to be what is meant by the word ‘that’. And the meaning of the word ‘thou’ also is the inner Ātman, ‘the hearer’ (the enquirer), who may possibly be taken to be (the not-selves) beginning with the body, but is ultimately ascertained to be of the nature of Pure Consciousness. Now, in the case of those for whom these entities denoted by the words (‘that’ and ‘thou’) are obscured by the obstacle of ignorance, doubt and misconception, the text ‘That thou art’ cannot produce correct knowledge with regard to what it propounds, for the knowledge of the import of a proposition presupposes the knowledge of the meaning of the terms of which it is composed. And so in their case the repetition of S’āstra, (S’ravana) and Reason is desirable for the purpose of discriminating the meaning of the terms.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.
"While it is true that the Atman to be known has no parts, yet many parts have been superimposed on him such as the body, senses, mind, the intellect and perception of objective things. And one of these components is removed by one act of attention and another by another act; and so it is reasonable that knowledge has to be acquired gradually. But this is only previous to the final knowledge of Atman."

SBh. 4-1-2. p. 462.

(३) येषां पुनर्निपणमतीनां नाज्ञानसंशास्त्रविन्यासः पदार्थ-विषयः प्रतिबन्धोद्धसितः, ते ज्ञातवतिं सकृद्धक्षेत्रं तत्तत्परत्वाध्यायः-प्रमुखविन्यास: तान् प्रत्यावृत्त्यान्ध्यायक्यमिश्रः ते सकृद्धप्रश्नः स्हात्तप्रतिपत्तिरविद्यां निर्वर्त्यतीति नात्र कष्टिद्यां क्रस्योक्ष्युप्यायते॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२.

"In the case of those, however, who have a keen intellect which has no impediment of ignorance, doubt or misconception to overcome with regard to what is meant by the terms, they can certainly intuit the entity intended to be conveyed by the proposition ‘That thou art’ uttered even once; and so the futility of repetition (of S’ravāna and Manana) is quite acceptable to us in their case. For, the intuition of Atman obliterates Avidya as soon as it dawns and no gradual unfoldment of knowledge is admitted here."

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.

**S’āṅkara’s Unequivocal Dictum**

39. The following conclusions have to be drawn from the above extract with regard to S’āṅkara’s position
touching the relation of S’ravana and Manana, as well as repeated practice of these two mental acts of discipline in conjunction :-

(1) The intuition of the identity of Brahman and Atman is quite possible for those who have a correct notion of what the terms of the proposition ‘That thou art’ actually mean. They stand in no need of anything more than a first hearing of the teaching.

(2) The repetition of both S’ravana and Manana is necessary for those who have not comprehended the meaning of these terms.

(3) The only obstacle to the correct understanding of the meaning of the terms, is ignorance, doubt or misconception of the meaning of these terms.

[S’ankara’s Vedānta is quite innocent of the doctrine of Positive Avidyā—the ‘Mūlavidyā’ as it is called by the sub-commentators, especially the followers of Vivarana school by which modern Vedāntins are very much influenced.]

(4) There is nothing more to be done for the acquisition of intuition or freedom from Samsāra for those who have understood the meaning of the proposition.

S’aṅkara expressly proclaims this :-
(5) The Prasamkhyaana-Vadins insist that a repeated active thinking of the meaning of the proposition (That thou art) along with Manana (or reason) is absolutely necessary to ward off all wrong impressions. This teaching supported by Mandana and Vācaspati Mis’ra also (who insists that Bhāvana is quite necessary), has been anticipated and totally rejected here when Saṅkara says in so many words (न तु पूर्वस्थलप्रतिपत्ते: - All practice or order of its steps is only before the dawn of the knowledge of Atman through Sravāṇa and Manana.)

(6) The doctrine of Prasamkhyaana-Vāda is seen to be discarded in Saṅkara’s Bhāshya in 1-1-4 also :-

“As for the argument, again, that inasmuch as the injunctions of Manana and Nididhyāsana also seem to have been enjoined subsequent to Sravāṇa, Brahman must be subservient to an injunction, and cannot be self-sufficient, we say ‘No’. For, Manana and Nididhyāsana are (also) for
intuition. (To explain:) If Brahmān already intuited were utilized for some other action to be done (such as Manana or Nididhyāsana), it could be right to suppose that Brahmān is ancillary to an injunction. But it is not so since Manana and Nididhyāsana also are meant for intuition like S'rávana."

SHh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

40. A considerable portion of the eighteenth chapter of the Upades'ā Sāhasri is devoted to an elaborate exposition and refutation of the doctrine of Prasāmkhyāna. It is really a matter for surprise, how in the face of all this, the Post-S'ānkara including some of the commentators on the Sūtra-Bhāshya itself, happened to come forward boldly to support this irrational doctrine again.

1. We have quoted above S'ānkara's express declaration in the Bhāshya that an aspirant of the highest rank can know Ātman by a single act of S'ravana (श्रवणमनानाद्ध्यासनसाधनानवातः). Yet in the Brhadāranyaka Bhāshya we find this statement; एव हासा दृष्टा भवात श्रवणमनानाद्ध्यासनसाधनानवातः। यदकत्वमतान्यपगतान तदा सम्बद्धां बहुकत्वावशयं प्रसीदति नानाया श्रवणात्मान्या॥ (Br. Bh. 2-4-5, p. 760). All the three means combined culminate in the Vision, and not mere S'ravaṇa. Is it possible that S'ānkara contradicted himself on this vital point, or have we to suppose that the two S'ānkaras are different?
SECTION FIVE

MANANA FURTHER EXPLAINED

Nature of Manana

41. We have seen that Nididhyāsana recommended by Yājnavalkya, cannot possibly mean the compulsory repetition of the combined practice of S’ravaṇa and Manana. S’ravaṇa or listening to and ascertaining the meaning of the texts which suggest the nature of the Self, is quite enough in the case of the highest grade of seekers. Manana or Vedic reasoning may be, however, needed for aspirants of the second grade.

This reason is not of the syllogistic type, but only reasoning based upon intuitions of the nature of the Self. It may also be aided by a consideration of the empirical illustrations which an adept preceptor may cite in order to suggest the invariable dependence of the not-self (or empirical phenomena) on the Atman.

The Illustration of Genus and Species

42. In this particular case, Yājnavalkya illustrates how everything else, the whole array of phenomena comprising actions, acting agents and other constituent
factors of actions and the results of actions in the universe, depend upon \textit{Atman} for their being while they last.

\begin{quote}
\textit{स यथा दुनुभेहिन्यमानस्य न बाह्राज्ञवदक्षुयादः}\textit{ श्रहणाय दुनुभेस्तु}\textit{ ग्रहणेन दुनुभेयादस्त्रेय वा शब्दः}\textit{ गृहीत: \textit{॥}}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textit{स यथा श्रानिः ध्रायमानस्य न बाह्राज्ञवदक्षुयादः}\textit{ श्रहणाय श्रानिः तु}\textit{ ग्रहणेन श्रानिः}\textit{ शद्वृङ्गः}\textit{ वा शब्दः}\textit{ गृहीत: \textit{॥}}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textit{स यथा वीणाय बाद्यमानाय न बाह्राज्ञवदक्षुयादः}\textit{ क्षुयादश्रहणाय वीणाय तु}\textit{ ग्रहणेन वीणासदस्त्रेय वा}\textit{ शब्दः}\textit{ गृहीत: \textit{॥}}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Br. 4-5-8, 9, 10.}

"In the same way as while a drum is being beaten one cannot know the sounds as distinct entities, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the drum or to the beating of the drum, is the sound grasped as such; in the same way as while a conch is being blown one cannot know the sounds as distinct in themselves, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the conch or to the blowing of the conch, is the sound grasped as such; in the same way as while a \textit{Viṇā} is being played on, one cannot know the sounds as distinct entities in themselves, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the \textit{Viṇā} or to the playing on \textit{Viṇā}, is the sound grasped as such."

\textbf{Br. 4-5-8, 9, 10.}

That is to say, as particular sounds produced can be recognized as inseparable from their genus, so also the phenomena of the world can be known only as depending on \textit{Atman}. There is no phenomenon
whatever which can be grasped as an entity distinct from Pure Consciousness which is their Atman. Since there is no distinction of genus and species in Atman, this illustration should be supposed only to suggest that empirical phenomena have no independent being of their own inasmuch as, metaphysically speaking, being can be only one and Atman is Pure Being itself.

**The Universe a Manifestation of Brahman**

43. The next illustration is meant to suggest that the whole universe spontaneously springs up from Brahman at the time of creation:

> स यथासः स्वागन्नेर्भावस्तितस्य पृथ्विःस्मा विनिष्ठारन्येवं वा अरेर्स्य महतो भूतस्य निश्चितमेतद्वद्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो-स्थवर्तिक्रस इतिहासः पुराणं विद्या उपनिषदः इत्यादिः सूत्राण्यनुवाक्यायानां भावतानाग्नीष्ठुतमार्गित पाठितमयं च लोकः पश्च त्वा कर्मः सर्वाणि च भूतात्मस्यवैतानि सर्वाणि निश्चिताणि।

बृ. ४-५-१२, पा. १४२.

“In the same way as from a fire kindled with wet faggot diverse columns of smoke issue forth, even so, my dear, are the following the exhalation of the Supreme Being: the Rgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāma Veda, the Atharvāṅgirasas, the Itihāsa (traditional story), the Purāṇa, the Vidyā, the Upanishads, the S'Tōkas, the Sūtras, the sub-commentaries, the commentaries,
the sacrifice, the oblation of food, drink, this world and the next world and all the beings—all these are verily the exhalation of this Supreme Being.”

Br. 4-5-11, p. 942.

The whole world differentiated by names and forms, is said to be produced here out of Brahman without any effort whatever like the exhalation of a person.

The Dissolution of the World in Ātman

44. And every phenomenon in the world is dissolved into Ātman in the end. This is taught through the illustration of the sea :-

स यथा सर्वसामयां सपुष्प एकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां स्मर्षानां त्वगकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां गम्भ्रानां नासिकेऽ एकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां रसानां जिह्वाकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां रूपाणां चक्षुरकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां श्वेतानां श्रोत्रमेकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां सृष्टिपानां मन एकायनेऽवं सर्वसां विद्यानां हृदयमेकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां कर्मणां हस्तावेकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां प्राणनामध्यामुपपस्य एकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां विसर्गानां पायुरेकायनेऽवं सर्वेषायथावनां पादवेकायनेऽवं सर्वेषां वेदानां वागेकायनम् ॥

ब्र. ४-५-१२.

“Just as the ocean is the one ultimate goal for merging in for all streams, even so, for all varieties of touch, the skin is the one goal. Even so, the nostrils are the one goal for all odours; even so, the tongue is the one goal for all tastes; even so, the eye is the one goal for all colours; even so, the ear is the one goal for all sounds; even so, the mind is the one goal for all varieties of willing (or imaginations); even so, the intellect
is the one goal for all actions; even so, the hands are the one goal for all actions; even so, the generating organ is the one goal for all pleasures; even so, the anus is the one goal for all excretions and even so, the legs are the one goal for all movements; even so, the speech is the one goal for all the Vedas.”

Br. 4-5-12.

Here the dissolution of the objects in the corresponding organs of sense, should be understood to have been intended as implicative of the final dissolution of all phenomena into Atman as Pure Consciousness. For instance, when it is said that all varieties of touch are dissolved in the skin or the organ of touch, the implication is that all particular varieties of touch dissolve themselves into the genus ‘touch’ and that genus into the genus of ‘Sankalpa’, and that genus in its turn into the intellect and that finally into Brahman which is Pure Consciousness in its essence. Similarly the organs of taste or those of sight etc., should be traced to their respective organs, the mind, the intellect and finally Pure Consciousness. The conclusion is that just as all phenomena take their rise from Brahman, and continue to have their being in Brahman, so also they all merge in and become one with Brahman in the end. That is why Yājnavalkya began with the proposition that there is nothing apart from Brahman (Vide p. 8) and
therefore the world of phenomena is verily Brahman itself.

This is one species of Vedic reasoning or Manana, the reasoning that the world being the effect of Brahman as the cause, does not exist apart from Brahman (प्रपन्धस्य ब्रह्मप्रभवत्वात् कार्यकारणान्यायत्वायेन ब्रह्माव्यतिरेकः: Vide SBh. 2-1-6, p. 189).

That the whole universe takes its rise from Ātman or Pure Consciousness and dissolves itself again into that Ātman, can be verified from one's intuition of deep sleep where the world as an appearance is nought as it were, and so soon as one awakes, the world divided into the interior and the exterior, makes its spontaneous appearance (see Br. 2-1-20). The Vedāntic reasoning involved in this reference, however, is not within the reach of beginners.¹

The Three Varieties of Dissolution

45. The S'āstras speak of three species of dissolution, diurnal, natural and the absolute. Diurnal dissolution takes place in deep sleep when everything

¹. Enquirers interested in the Avasthaic method (method of Reasoning based on the intuition of the states of consciousness), may study with profit 'Vedānta or the Science of Reality', published by the Adhyātmā Prakāsha Kāryālaya.
is dissolved into Atman. The natural is when the whole world is merged in Brahman at the end of each *Kalpa* or cyclic age. Both these are temporary, empirically speaking; for, sleep and world dissolution occur as a result of *Karma*, individual or collective, and though from the highest stand-point of Reality the souls along with the rest of the world, are really one with the real Atman during these states, the Jivas do not know that they are one with the Supreme Self there. As the Chāndogya S'ruti says :

(१) इपा: सर्वः प्रजा: सति संपंड्य न विदुः सति संपद्यामहं इति ॥

“All these beings, having come from Pure Being, do not know that they have become one with Pure Being.” Ch. 6-9-2.

(२) इपा: सर्वः प्रजा: सत आगम्य न विदुः सत आगम्यामहं इति ।

“All these beings, having come from Pure Being, do not know that they have come from Pure Being.” Ch. 6-10-2.

Even while every being high or low, is really one with Reality for ever and there is really nothing else than Reality, and even while every being without exception sheds its apparently distinguishing adjunct, or *Upādhi* in the shape of body, senses and mind whenever deep sleep or universal dissolution comes on, and
consequently there is not even the semblance of individuality in these states, yet creatures of all ranks, beginning with the lowest to the highest, are so prepossessed in favour of their identity with their circumscribing associates in waking, that they are barred from reflecting upon their innate nature as Reality. This ignorance no less than the predilection for their preconceived individuality in waking, is what is called Avidyā in Vedānta. When they have the good fortune to secure the sound advice of an adept teacher, they do reflect on their real nature and at once come to know that they have been always the one Reality without a second. This time their ignorance is effectively wiped off by enlightenment and the enchantment of the reality of the conditioning associates - the body, senses and mind - is dispelled for good. This is what is known as the Atyantika Pralaya - Absolute Dissolution.

46. Yājnavalkya is now introducing Maitreyī into the notion of the Absolute dissolution :-

स यथा सैन्यवधनोनन्तरोर्भाहः कृत्स्नो रसघन एवैवं एव
अर्धयमात्या अनन्तरोर्भाहः कृत्स्न: प्रज्ञानघन एवैतेष्यो भूतेष्यः
समुद्याय ताम्यावानुविनश्चति न प्रेत्य संज्ञास्तीत्यरे ब्रवीमीति होवाच
याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

बृ. ४-५-१३
"Just as a lump of salt is entirely saline throughout, devoid of any within or without, even so, my dear, this Atman is entirely Pure Consciousness throughout, devoid of any within or without. Having emerged out of these elements, He vanished along with them and after transcending them there is no more consciousness (of anything else), 'So say I, my dear', said Yajnavalkya."

Br. 4-5-13.

The above is a description of how the Atman has taken shape, as it were, as an individual self owing to Avidya, but on the dawn of enlightenment, loses his individuality. The illustration of water shaping itself as a lump of salt for a time and resuming its intrinsic form on being immersed in water, is intended to convey the idea that just as its solidification is due to the mixing of foreign matter, individuality is due to the five elements set up by Avidya. Failing to catch this point quite, Maitreyi misinterprets the sage's statement and puts forward her objection thus: -

सा होवाच मैत्रेय्यान्वेव मा भगवान् मोहान्तमीपिप्पन्न वा अहमिमं विजानामीति स होवाच न वा अरसः मोहं ब्रह्मविविनाशी वा अरेस्यमात्मासुचिनितिर्मयां॥

Br. 4-5-14

"That Maitreyi exclaimed, 'Just here Your Reverence has led me into a point of confusion. I do not understand this at all!' He said 'I am certainly not saying anything confounding.}
Deathless, indeed, my dear, is this Ātman of an indestructible nature.’”

[The Madhyandina version of the Upanishad adds मात्रांसंसर्गस्वस्य भवति (only there will be no contact of the particles of the elements) thus clarifying the sage’s position. The meaning is that there is only this difference in the two states. While ignorant the Jīva imagines that he is an individual owing to the limiting condition of the body &c. projected by Avidyā, whereas when he has known the truth he realizes that he was never bound by these shackles fictitiously created by Avidyā.]

47. Bādarāyaṇa in his Vedānta Sūtras, sets forth three different views of three different sages with regard to the relation of the individual self and the Supreme Self. He is there discussing the question: ‘How is it that Yajnavalkya begins with a description of human love for one’s own petty self even while he has started to propound the nature of the Supreme Self transcending all mundane life?’

प्रतिज्ञासिद्धेर्लिङ्गाश्मरण्यः १-४-२०.

(1) Here As’marathya admits some sort of causal relation between the two selves and say that the aspect of identity of the two selves, is meant to be stressed here; for, there is the initial proposition that ‘Ātman being known, all this becomes
known’. According to this sage there is an aspect of difference also between the two selves. SBh. 1-4-20.

(2) Audulomī postulates the difference between the individual self and the Supreme Self in the present life. But by dint of the practice of Jñāna (knowledge), Dhyāna (meditation) and other acts conducing to freedom, the individual self becomes merged in the Supreme Self.

SBh. 1-4-21.

(3) Kāś’akṛtsna, however, opines that the real Self unchanged is now and here the Jīva, who is only apparently the limited self.

SBh. 1-4-22.

Reality is the Only Atman

48. It is Kāś’akṛtsna’s view that S’aṅkara holds to be the only correct view. That this is right, is endorsed by Yājnavalkya himself. For he says:

यत्र हि हृदतमिव भवति तदितर इतरं पश्यति तदितर इतरं जिग्राति तदितर इतरं रसयते तदितर इतरं विश्वेत्तकेन के पश्येत्तकेन के जिग्रातु के तत्त्केन के रसयेत्तकेन कमयिवदेत्तकेन के श्रुयात्तकेन के पन्यीत
“For where there is duality, as it were, there one sees another, there one smells another, there one tastes another, there one talks to another, there one hears another, there one thinks of another, there one touches another, there one understands another. But where to this (person), all has become Ātman alone, whom’ could one see and with what, there whom could one smell and with what, there to whom could one talk and with what, there to whom could one touch and with what, there whom cold one know and with what? With what could one know Him through whom one knows all this?”

Br. 4-5-15.

It is evident that when absolute dissolution has taken place upon the dawn of enlightenment, there is no question of any Vyavahāra or human dealings (thinking, talking or acting) whatever; for, the Absolute is the One without a second. It is to this state what Yajnavalkya referred when he said न प्रत्य सज्जास्त (there is no consciousness of another there.) While it is true that empirical consciousness is absent as a matter of course

1. In these sentences केन कम has been translated ‘Whom and with what?’. But it could be translated as ‘What ... and with what?’ with equal propriety; only we should have to understand the word ‘पदाधयम’ after कम्.
in deep sleep and other kindred states, and the Jīva becomes one with the Absolute, that *Satsampatti* (union with Pure Being or the Absolute) is threatened with a break in these states, for one may return to the waking state subsequently, yet in the Absolute Dissolution which is gained through enlightenment, one realizes that he has always been the Absolute Ātman without any vestige of empirical consciousness or action. This point has been clarified by S'āṅkara in his Bhāṣya on the Vedānta Sūtras (4-2-8 and 4-4-16).
SECTION SIX

NIDIDHYĀSANA, UPĀSANA AND YÖGA

The Relation of the Sequel

49. It has been seen that a repeated practice of S'rvana and Manana combined, may be necessary for a large number of aspirants for Dars'ana or intuition of Atman though that practice is not what S'ankara, the author of the Sūtra-Bhāṣya, recognizes to be Nididhyāsana, as some Vedāntins preceding and succeeding him have supposed it to be. What exactly is this Nididhyāsana then according to him? The Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa itself closes with reason or Manana, and the Bhāṣya thereon does not precisely define what Nididhyāsana is. In his introduction to the next Brāhmaṇa, the Bhāṣhyakāra says:

...
“It has been enunciated that Atman being known, all this becomes known and that Atman is dearer than everything else. Therefore Atman is to be seen. And the ways of seeing Him have been stated (in the statement) ‘He is to be heard about, reflected upon and contemplated’. Here, He has to be heard about through Agama (or S’ruti) and preceptor, and He is to be reflected upon by means of reason. And the reason adduced for the enunciation ‘All this is Atman’, was that Atman alone is the one genus (that is common to all) that all is born of Atman alone and that everything ultimately dissolves in Atman. Now this reason of Atman being the one genus, the one source of origin and the one final goal of dissolution, may be thought to be not established. So this Brāhmaṇa is begun to ward off this objection. .... Or rather, it may be that after adducing reason-to the effect that everything originates, is sustained by and dissolves in - Atman for the general enunciation that All this is Atman, the original proposition enunciated is again concluded by the Madhu Brāhmaṇa, which makes general statements mostly in accordance with tradition.”

Br. Bh. 2-5-1, pp. 769, 770.

**Brihadārnyaka Bhāshya on Nididhyāsana**

50. It is strange that the Brihadāranyaka Bhāshya never states exactly what Nididhyāsana is even in the context where it has to be discussed. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the author of the Bhāshya, does imply
that Nididhyāsana is not merely a combined practice of S'ravana and Manana as the Prasamkhyaṇavādins aver, but something over and above both (cf. दर्शनप्रकाराः उक्त:, the three ways of seeing have been stated). The following extract is an additional piece of evidence on this behalf:-

अन्येयाख्यातमू 'अ दुतुमिद्विषाणांत्रिकत्वार्थ्यासागरचनम्, प्राक्कपुष्पायाणान्तर्त्वार्थ्यासामुपपतिप्रदर्शनिन् । मधुब्रह्मणेन तु
निदिह्यासनविधिरुच्यतं इति । सर्वेधारी तु यथा आगमेनवाधारितम्,
तर्कानितेत्यद मनत्वम्; यथा तर्कतो पतं तस्य तर्कामपेप्यां निष्ठितस्य,
तथाव निदिह्यासं निक्षात इति पृथवी निदिह्यासनविधिरुच्यतं एव॥

ब्र. भा. २-५-१, पा. ७७०

'Others explain that up to the illustration of the drum, the subject-matter of S'ravana has been stated by Āgama, by the portion preceding Madhu Brāhmaṇa the subject-matter of Manana has been set forth by adducing reason and by the Madhu Brāhmaṇa is presented the Vidhi (injunction) of Nididhyāsana. However the matter may stand, one has to reflect upon the subject-matter exactly in accordance with the conclusion by Āgama and it is in accordance with the reflection alone, the thing determined by reason and Āgama, will have to be conducted the practice of Nididhyāsana also. A distinct injunction of Nididhyāsana is therefore certainly useless."

Br. Bh. 2-5-1, p. 770.

The view criticized here is that of Bhartṛprapanca. For the present it is sufficient to observe that that
commentator also is looking for Nididhyāsana or contemplation where not a trace of it is to be found.

Sures vara in his Vārtika writes in this connection as follows:

निदिद्ध्यासनसिद्धान्तेऽकेचिन्द्रचाचक्षते परम् ।
मधुबालावेततून युक्तं श्रवणात्वं न किं तत्संवेदनात्मस।।

त्रुत्त आगमतो योजनस्तरकेणापि समयितं ।
स एवार्थस्तु निधातो निदिद्ध्यासनपुच्छते ॥

प्रास्नालायानुपरनेतृत्वमथिया समयितं ।
ईदौलक्यस्मक्तापो निदिद्ध्यासनपुच्छते ॥

ब्र. वा. २-५-१४, १५, १६.

"The next Madhu Brāhmaṇa is taken by some to be begun for the sake of enjoining Nididhyāsana. But this does not seem to be proper. For what has been heard about and supported by reason also, that very conclusion is what is known as Nididhyāsana. That which has been attained through Sāstra, Acārya and intuition and has also been supported by reason-such is the kind of knowledge regarding the unity of Atman that is called Nididhyāsana." Br. V. 2-5-14, 15, 16.

[For Sures'vara, Nididhyāsana is the resultant knowledge and not meditation.]

**Nididhyāsana According to the Sūtra-Bhāṣya**

51. The *Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, however, regards Nididhyāsana also to belong to the category of mental
acts as means to the attainment of knowledge. This Bhāshya is nowhere seen to identify Nididhyāsana with the resultant knowledge as Sures'vara's Vārtika does. On the other hand, we find express statements declaring it as a *Kriyā* (an act) to be performed.

(1) “श्रोत्वयो प्रत्ययो निदिद्ध्यासित्वयः’ इत्येवांजातियोऽहासक्रुदुपदेशः प्रत्ययावृत्ति सूचयति ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-१, पा. ४६०.

“Repeated teaching of the type ‘He is to be heard about, reflected upon and contemplated points to the repetition of the concepts.” SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(2) दर्शनंर्पवसानानि हि श्रवणादीन्यावर्त्यपानानि दृष्ट्यार्थानि भवन्ति ॥

सू. भा. ४-४-१, पा. ४६०.

“Sravana and the practices proposed for culmination in vision, would yield results to be actually experienced only when they are repeatedly practised.” SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(3) अपि च ‘उपासनम्’, ‘निदिद्ध्यासनं च’ इत्यन्तर्णात्वरुतिगुणेषु क्रिया अभिधीयते ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-१, पा. ४६०.

“Moreover, by the words ‘Upāsanam’ and ‘Nididhyāsanam’ is denoted an act exclusively implying repetition.” SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(4) तत्र यानि तात्तु सम्यगदर्शनार्थन्युपासानानि, तात्त्वधातादिवतु कार्यपर्यवसानानीति ज्ञातेवैणामावृत्तिपरिमाणामूः न हि सम्यगदर्शने कार्यं निष्पने चलातरं किष्ठिच्छासितुं शक्यम्॥

सू. भा. ४-१-१२, पा. ४७१.
"Now, with regard to Upāsanas intended for right-knowledge, the extent of their repetition is self-evident since they are to culminate in the production of their effect just like pounding of paddy; for, no further exertion can be urged (in their case) after right-knowledge, their effect, is produced."¹

SBh. 4-1-12, p. 471.

The above extracts must suffice to convince the reader that the author of the Sūtra-Bhāshya not only regards Nididhyāsana as a mental act serving as a means to produce the Vision of Atman, but also actually calls it by the name of 'Upāsana' as well.

The Meanings of the Words Upāsana and Jñāna

52. This circumstance, however, should not lead any one to conclude that S'āṅkara actually identifies the processes of Upāsana and Nididhyāsana, for, the word 'Upāsana' is used in the S'rūtis and Smṛtis in three different senses. The following citations will vouch for this statement:

(1) स एष इह प्रविष्ट आ नखारोभ्य यथा क्षुर: क्षुरानेस्वाहित: स्थादिश्रम्भरो वा विश्रम्भरकुलाये ते न पशयति.

¹. The injunction 'He shall pound the paddy' (तीहीनवहन्ति) demands the pounding up to the point of the separation of the husks from the rice grains and can serve no purpose after the separation.
"Now this One has entered here up to the tip of the nails in the same way as a razor may be enclosed in a razor-case, or as the all-pervading fire may be concealed in a source of fire. They do not see Him; for, He is not the whole. Only when he breathes he is Prāna (the living soul); while speaking, the speaker; while seeing, the seer; while hearing, the hearer; while thinking, a thinker. These are only names due to his functions. So one who thinks of each of these aspects singly, he knows not; for thus viewed singly he is not the whole. One should think of him (‘Upāsīta’) as Atman alone, for here alone all these become one."

Br. 1-4-7.

It is obvious that the word उपासीत Upāsīta (One should regard him) एककुमुपास्ते (thinks of these singly), cannot be translated as ‘one should meditate’, ‘he who meditates on Him’ etc. The context is that of knowledge, not of meditation.

(2) सर्व खलिवंद ब्रह्म तज्ज्ञलानिन्ति शान्त उपासीत। अथ खलु क्रतुमयः पुरुषः यथाक्रतुरसिंहलोके पुरुषो भविति तथेतः प्रेत्य भविति स क्रतुं कर्भित।।

छां. 3-94-9.
"All this, indeed, is Brahman; for it is *Tajjātan* (originating, merging, and breathing in it.) Therefore one should calmly meditate upon it. Now, man is made up of thoughts. Just as one thinks in this life, so also he becomes after departing from here, he should resolve.” Ch. 3-14-1.

Here, obviously, ‘उपासीत’ (*Upāsita*) is used in the sense of ‘one should meditate’; for, the result one’s *Kratu* (resolution or continuous stream of thoughts) here, is said to transform one into a corresponding state in the next.

### Difference Between Jnāna and Upāsana

53. It is necessary for students of Vedānta to be able to distinguish between Jnāna and Upāsana in their restricted sense as technically used by S’āṅkara and his followers; for, as we have seen above, both the words are used in either of these senses. The following extracts from the Chāndogya Bhāshya and the Sūtra Bhāshya will clarify S’āṅkara’s view in the matter:-

(१) स्वाभाविकस्यात्मन्यविविधक्रियेतद्विषार्धोपत्तयः कन्त्रिदिकारकः
क्रियाफलभेदविज्ञानस्य निर्विराजप्रभुतविज्ञानम्।
रज्ज्वादविव
सर्वद्वाध्यारोपलक्षणानस्य रज्ज्वादिस्वस्यविज्ञानस्य:
प्रकाशानिमित्तः।
उपासनं तु यथाशास्त्रसम्पर्पणं किंत्रिकालम्बनमुपादाय
tिंष्टसनुरणा
समानचित्तत्वसिद्धंतान्तरणं तत्दविलक्षणप्रत्ययान्तरितम्
इति विशेषः॥

छां. भा. अव. पा. ३५२।
“The knowledge of non-duality (अद्वैतविज्ञानम्) is the remover of the natural (wrong) knowledge of (the distinction) of the doer and other factors of action, action and the result of action, super-imposed on the changeless Ātman, just like the ascertainment of the real nature of a rope etc. superimposed on the rope, etc. Upāsana is taking up some object proposed by the S’āstra and setting up a stream of ideas corresponding to it, but not interrupted by any idea dissimilar to it. This is the difference.”


[This is further clarified in the next excerpt.]

(२) ध्यानं चिन्तनं यद्यपि मानसस्य, तथापि पुरुषेण कर्तुम्, अकर्तुम्, अन्यशा वा कर्तु शाक्यम्, पुरुषतन्त्रत्वात् । ज्ञानं तु प्रमाणज्ञानम् । प्रमाणं च यथाभूतवस्तुविषयम् । अतो ज्ञानं कर्तुमकर्तुम्प्रणयम् वा कर्तुम् अशक्यम् । केवलं वस्तुतन्त्रमेव तत्; न चोदनातन्त्रम्, नापि पुरुषतन्त्रम् । तस्मात्, मानसलेभ्य ज्ञानस्य महद्वैलक्षण्यम् ॥

सू. भ. १-१-४, पा. १८.

“While Dhyāna or Cintana (meditation) is mental, yet it can be done, not done or even done in some other way; for it depends on the will of a person. But Jñāna (knowledge) is born out of some means (of right knowledge) and objectifies a thing just as it is; hence, knowledge cannot be done, not done, or done in some other way. For, it is solely dependent on its object and not on any injunction or on the will of a person. Therefore Jñāna (knowledge), though mental, is altogether of a different species.”

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 18.
[In short, Upāsana (Dhyāna or Cintana) or meditation, is a mental act, while Jñāna (knowledge) is a mental idea born corresponding to a thing.]

54. The names, 'Upāsana' and 'Dhyāna' are also sometimes given to Nididhyāsana. The latter, however, is a psychological process of a quite different kind. It consists in a sustained effort to concentrate the mind upon any minute thing in order to know it as it is. The effort made by a scientist, for instance, when he uses a microscope to find the suspended impurities in water, or when he uses a telescope to ascertain the nature of a distant object may be likened to Nididhyāsana. Only, the latter is used for introspection to ascertain the nature of the Self, and has that further distinctive feature of thinning the mind till it finally becomes one with the Self. We shall now quote a few instances where the word or its equivalent refers to this mental process.

This very word is used in the passage which describes Yājñavalkya's response to Maitreyi's request to be taught the means for immortality:

(१) हन्त तथः भवत्वेतव्याख्यात्यायः ते व्याच्चाक्षाणस्य तु मे निदिद्धासर्वेति॥

"Very well then, my dear, I shall explain this to you, but concentrate as I go on explaining."

बृ. ४-५-५, पा. ९४०.
The word निदियास्नान obviously means 'employ all your attention upon what I say'.

The second example is from Bādarāyaṇa’s Sūtra (Vs. 3-3-14)

(२) आध्यानाय प्रयोजनाभावात् ॥ ३-३-१४.

"The detailed enunciation of the series, is only for Adhyāna, for it serves no other purpose." Vs. 3-3-14.

S’aṅkara’s Bhāṣya on this runs as follows :-

(३). आध्यानायेति । आध्यानपूर्वकाय सम्पदर्शनायेत्यथः । सम्पदर्शनार्थेः होमाध्यानमुपदिष्टेते, न लवाध्यानमेव स्वप्रभानमम्॥

सू. भ. ३-३-१४, पा. ३८६.

"The word आध्यानाय (for contemplation means for the purpose of achieving right vision through contemplation; for, contemplation is here taught as a means to right vision (of the Ātman) and not for the sake of contemplation itself."

SBh. 3-3-14, p. 386.

Samādhi for the Vision of Ātman

55. Like the word ‘Dhyāna’, ‘Samādhi’ also has misled even great sub-commentators to go astray and fuse Vedānta and Pātanjala Yoga into one system in their explanation of S’aṅkara’s Bhāṣya. Thus Vācaspati Mis’ra explains the meaning of the Sūtra (3-3-39) समाध्यावाच्च (And for the reason that there could be no
‘Samādhi’ at all, the individual self must be considered to be an agent) in these words:

(1) समाधिरिति संयममुक्लश्यतिः धारणाध्यायनसमाधयो हि संयमपदवेदनीयः। यथाः: ‘त्रयमेकक्रं संयम:’ (यो. सू. 3-4) इति। अत्र ‘श्रोतवणो मनवणो’ इति धारणोपदेशः। ‘निदियासितवणो’
इति ध्यानोपदेशः। ‘द्वस्तवणो’ इति समाधेतुपदेशः। यथाः:-
‘तदेव ध्यानमध्यमान्त्रनिर्भृतेः स्वस्वरूपशून्यन्यिव समाध्योः’ (यो. 3-3)
इति। सोऽयमिह कर्तर्त आत्मा समाधावुपदिश्ययमान आत्मनः
कर्तंत्रमवैति-इति सूत्रार्थः। वा. भा. २-३-३९, पा. ६१५।

“By the word ‘Samādhi’, the author of the Sūtra implies Samyama also; for ‘Dhāraṇa’, Dhyāna and Samādhi, are all the three of them together denoted by the word Samyama. So say the Yogsins: (Ys. 3-4) ‘The triad concentrated at one and the same point is Samyama’. Here (in this S’ruti), ‘To be heard about and to be reflected upon’ teaches Dhāraṇa; ‘To be contemplated’ teaches Dhyāna; and ‘To be seen’ teaches Samādhi. For so has it been said ‘This same Dhyāna revealing only the object, and appearing as though it had not essential nature, is (called) Samādhi (Ys. 2-3). Now this same agent who is taught the Samādhi looks upon himself as an agent. This is the meaning of the Sūtra.”

V.Bh. 2-3-39, p. 615.

It is passing strange that Vacaspati Mis’ra, imbued with his Yogic ideas (for, he has commentated upon Yoga Bhāshya also), can discern Yogic terminology even in Vedāntic passages which do not even smell of any
such admixture. We have seen that Yājnavalkya never went beyond S’ravaṇa and Manana in his teachings and Maitreyi was able to attain immortality only by so much teaching. And yet this writer with his Yogic microscopy finds a loophole for this terminology in the one word ‘Samādhi’ in the face of the Sūtrakāra’s express summary rejection of the Yoga system in a single Sūtra एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः: ‘By this (repudiation of the Sāmkhya), Yoga also may be considered to have been refuted.’ (Vs. 2-1-3)!

And S’āṅkara says in so many words :-

(२) यत् दर्शनमुक्तम् तत्कारणं ‘साम्भ्ययोगाभिप्रत्यर्पम्’ इति, वैदिकमेव तत्र ज्ञानं ध्यानं च साम्भ्ययोगश्चाध्यायांभिलप्ते प्रत्यासतेतिरित्ववगतत्वम् ॥ सू. भा. २-१-३, पा. १८२.

“As for the S’ruti cited above, ‘That cause attained through Sāmkhya and Yoga’, it must be understood that Vedic Jnāna and Dhyāṇa alone are denoted by the words Sāmkhya and Yoga; for, these are more proximate to the context.”

SBh. 2-1-3, p. 182.

56. And Prakāśhātman, in whose name the Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa School has attained so much popularity among modern pundits, has been also tempted to call in the aid of the Yoga School to defend this vision of the Advaitic Ātman. He writes :-
(1) न नु ब्रह्मामावासवाहितदार्शनोऽशु तस्ति: साहित्यमुच्यते । न वर्य साहित्य बूमः । कदाचिदं स्मर्जतात्मकव्यद्वारानु: कदाचिदार्थवर्मापस्याधिकायन्तीभूततदार्शनेचेति ॥ पं. वि. पा. १२४०।

“(Objection :-) How is it that the intuition of Brahmatman and perception of duality, are made to be simultaneous here?

“(Reply :-) We do not say that both of these are simultaneous, but only that in Asamprajnata Samadhi (the Samadhi of the unconscious state), the vision of the one Atman is attained at one time, but at another time, duality is perceived owing to the empirical consciousness projected by fructifying karma.”

Of course this is in direct opposition to S’aṅkara who says in emphatic terms:

(2) न च चायं व्यवहारामावासवस्थाविशेषनिबद्धोस्मिष्ठिता
इति युक्ते वक्तुः ‘तत्त्वमः’ इति ब्रह्मामावस्थानस्त्वाविशेष
निबंधनल्लात् ॥ सू. भा. २-१-१४, पा. १९८।

“Nor can this absence of all Vyavahara (human procedure of knowledge, speech, and action) declared in Br. 4-5-15) be reasonably said to be due to a particular state; for, the nature of Brahmatman taught by the S’ruti ‘That thou art’ is not due to any particular state.”

SBh. 2-1-14, p. 198.

Samādhi Referred to by Bādarāyaṇa

57. This is not to say that neither Bādarāyaṇa nor S’aṅkara, recognizes any Samādhi state at all. For Bādarāyaṇa has the S’ruti:
Moreover (Yogins see the Atman devoid of all specific distinctions) in the Samādhanā state, for so say the Śrutis and the Smṛtis.” VS. 3-2-24.

And S'āṅkara quotes the Kathaka (4-1) and the Mundaka (3-1-8) Upanishads in conformation of what the Sutrakāra has said, and observes that the seeming difference implied here between the devotee and Brahman contemplated upon, is due to Upādhis, but intrinsically there is non-difference alone. (SBh. p. 367)

Does this mean that the Vedantic doctrine of Reality relies on the mystic-experience of Samādhi for its verification? By no means. The following excerpt from the Sutra-Bhāshya shows how the genuine doctrine of S'āṅkaras tradition, assesses the evidence of this state.

(२) यथा हि सूपुतिसमाध्यादाविष तत्यां स्ववाभविक्षायम्
अविभागप्राप्तौ मिथ्याज्ञास्यानमोतितत्वात् पूर्ववत् पुनः प्रबोधे
विभागो भवति, एवमहापि भविष्यति। श्रुतियान्त्र भवति – ‘इमां:
सर्वा: प्रजा: सति संपद्य न विदु: सति संपद्यामह इति। त
इह् व्याघ्रो वा सिंहो वा बुको वा वराहो वा कीठो वा पतझो
वा दंशो वा मशको वा चहाजवति तदाभवति’ इति। तथा वहिपागेधिनि
परमात्मनि मिथ्याज्ञाप्रतिविद्धो विभागव्यवहारः.
“For in the same way as in deep sleep, samādhi etc. natural non-distinction accrues, and yet on waking, distinction reappears as before on account of the non-removal of mis-conception, so also it may very well be here (in the case of dissolution). In the same way, indeed, as even in the case of the Supreme Atman devoid of all distinction empirical distinction does obtain in the state of sustentation un-impeded as in dreams, owing to misconception, so also in the case of dissolution, potentiality of distinction may be inferred as due to the self-same misconception.” SBh. 2-1-9, pp. 191, 192.

It will be noted that S’āṅkara considers the distinction between Samādhi and resumption of (the normal state of) waking, to be on a par with the distinction between deep sleep, and other states of unconsciousness (like swoon where non-duality is experienced) and waking, whatever be the degree of normality assigned to these states of unconsciousness by the common man. The fact that these states of non-duality are experienced by man, leads to the indubitable conclusion that experience of duality is not the inalienable nature of one’s self. That is why Bādarāyaṇa as explained by S’āṅkara, refers to deep sleep no less than to the state of release, when he explains that either of these states is meant whenever S’rūtis speak
of the utter absence of empirical consciousness. The Sūtra referred to is

\[ स्वायत्तेशस्यस्यनिष्ठाध्यक्षाधिपतिः हि \ll 4-4-16. \]

“This (absence of consciousness) refers to either of the states of deep sleep and absolute merging in Brahman; for, this has been revealed by the S’rutis only in that context.”

V.S. 4-4-16, pp. 509, 510.

**Yoga in the Upanishads**

58. In fact we do see the term Yoga used in the Upanishads themselves for Nididhyāsana as a means to the vision of Ātman. Thus in the Kathaka Upanishad we find the following statement:

\[ (१) तं दुर्दर्शिः गृहमनुष्ठितः गुहाहितं गद्वर्षङ्गुराणम्।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमनं देवं मत्ता धीरो हर्षशोकोऽहाति।।
का. २-१२. \]

“That Deva (Shining One) of yore hard to see, has entered into a secret place, is concealed in the cave (of the heart) and dwells in a spot fraught with many a risk. Knowing Him by the attainment of Adhyātma Yoga, the wise man is freed from both elation and grief.”

Ka. 2-12.

\[ (२) गृह्यमनुष्ठितं नाचिकेतोऽत्थ लघ्वा
विष्णुपैतृथ योगविधि च कृत्तम्। \]
“Naciketa having got this wisdom taught by Mrtyu (Yama, the God of Death) and the entire process of Yōga, attained Brahman and became free from all the impurity (of virtue and vice) and from death. Any one else also who knows this pure Adhyātma (inmost Reality), will become such.”

Ka. 6-18.

Both of the above-cited texts expressly tell us that Adhyātma- Yōga is conducive to the knowledge of Ātman.

59. The Modus operandi of this Vedic Yōga as distinguished from the Patanjala and the other varieties of Yōga, is also set forth, in the Kathaka Upanishad. S’āṅkara refers to this Yōga in these terms :-

(1) एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गृहोत्तर्तमा न प्रकाशते, दृश्यते त्वांध्रया बुद्ध्वच सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिति: (का. ३-१२) इति वैष्णवस्य परमप्रदस्य दुर्वल्गमयुक्तवा तद्वल्गमार्थ योग दर्शयति - यच्चेद्राजामनस्यात्रास्तद्याचेच्छान्त्य आत्मनिः। ज्ञानयात्मनिः महति नियम्चेत्याचेच्छान्ति आत्मनः’(का. ३-१२) इति।

एतद्वकं भवति – वाचं मनसि संयचेत्; वागादिवाहेत्रियव्यापस्यमत्स्य मनोमान्त्रणावति; एतं विश्वाविकल्पाभिमुखं विकल्पदेशदर्शिनं ज्ञानशाब्दोदितायां बुझै
The S'rutī says in the following text that the highest heaven of Vishnu is difficult to comprehend: 'This Ātman hid in all beings, does not shine forth, but he can be seen by those who are in the habit of discerning subtle entities by means of one-pointed and subtle Buddhi' (K. 3-12) and sets forth the details (of the technique) of Yoga meant for the realization of that Ātman. 'One who can discern should first control and fix the speech in the mind and that he should fix [Jñānatman] in the knowing Self. (That) Jñānatman must be fixed in Mahān Ātman and that Mahān Ātman again in the tranquil Ātman.'

(Kā. 3-13)

The import of the text is this:-

'Speech should be controlled in the mind; that is to say, one must renounce the functions of the speech and other external senses and should take his stand as the mind alone. And this mind also, when it inclines to revolve the objects, should be fixed in Buddhi (intellect) denoted (here) by the word Jñāna (the faculty) of determination, by noting the evils of revolving things in the mind. And that Buddhi should be fixed in the Mahān Ātman (the Great Ātman), the experiencing Self; or it may be, in the first born (Cosmic) Buddhi (of Hiraṇyagarbha) by making it more refined; and the Mahān Ātman in its turn must be firmly fixed in the Śānta Ātman.
(The Tranquil Ātman), the Supreme Purusha, the final goal, in whose context (this Yōga is being taught)."

SBh. 1-4-1, pp. 147, 148.

It is clear that Ādhyāna and (Adhyātma) Yōga are both terms interchangeable with Nididhyāsana, or even Upāsana recognized by S’aṅkara as the means of  
Samyagdars’ana (Right Vision) of Ātman (यानि 
सम्यगदर्शनार्थान्युपासनानि SBh. 4-1-12). This same Ādhyāna (contemplation) or Yōga is seen to be explained at some length in the Bhagavadgītā at the end of the fifth chapter and in the sixth chapter. There also it is taught that withdrawing from the senses, the mind, and the Buddhi leads to the vision of Ātman.
“The Muni (contemplative person) who has controlled his senses, Manas and Buddhi and is intent on release, and who is always free from desire, fear and wrath, is surely free.”

G. 5-28.

“Little by little one should withdraw by Buddhi controlled through fortitude. One should fix the mind on Atman and think of nothing else. In whatever direction the wavering and unsteady mind stirs out, from each such object he should restrain it and bring it under his direct control. To this Yogin, indeed, whose mind has dissolved (into Atman) the highest bliss accrues, for his (delusion and other) distressing factors have been destroyed and he has become Brahma and free from all taint.”

G. 6-25 to 27.

“One whose inner organ has been quieted by Yoga, sees the same (Reality) everywhere and sees Atman in all beings and beings in Atman.”

G. 6-29.
60. This view of S'ankara, is in perfect contrast with Bhartr-Prapanca's exposition of Dhyāna. The latter describes the process thus:

"One should merge one's self in the Supreme Akshara, and think of that Atman as the hub and the whole Universe of gods etc. as the spokes and should go on meditating and become permeated by this continuous thought. Thus meditating without break, the aspirant becomes one with that Atman like a smelted piece of metal never to return (to the mundane life), and the nature of (the Atman) meditated upon without any trace of the nature of the meditator is also reached. While this wheel of Brahman, is within all beings, yet they do not experience it because they are not aware of it."

Bhartr. on Br. 2-5-15.

1. This is one of the numerous excerpts from Bhartr-Prapaśca’s Vṛtti on Brhadāraṇyaka that one finds scattered in Anandagiri’s Tīka on the Bhāṣya and Sures’vara’s Vārtika thereon. A collection of these would throw abundant light on most of the Vedāntic views held by the tradition of that commentator.
Obviously Bhārtṛ-Prapāṇca takes Nididhyāsana here as an act of creative imagination which depends on the practicant’s will. He does not seem to be ready to admit that a mere study of the meaning of Vedāntic texts (teaching the nature of Brahma) and verification of it by reason based upon intuition, can possibly lead to the Vision of Atman.
61. We now arrive at a critical question. Are S'rávana and other means of Vision enjoined by the Veda like the other Upāsanas, or are they merely given as directions to seekers of Reality? The answer to this question obviously depends on what we mean by Dars'ana, S'rávana, Manana and Nididhyāsana. We have seen in the previous sections of this work that different Vedāntins of different schools, have defined these practices in different ways. It is only S'aṅkara and with him Sures'vara the author of the Brhadāanyaka and the Taittirīya Vārtikas, that stand alone with their doctrine that atman as the self-established Self of all beings, desiderates no active effort to be seen other than that required for the removal of Avidyā. All others, whether antecedent to S'aṅkara or subsequent to him and even some of the followers of S'aṅkara who postulate a positive Avidyā enveloping Ātman's real nature, insist as a rule that the enquiry into the nature of Brahman
itself started in the Brahma-Sūtras, presupposes this injunction. A particular section of Vedāntins, however, like the followers of Maṇḍana Mis'ra and Vācaspati Mis'ra, have maintained that Sākṣātkāra or direct experience of the Ātman, is possible only on the complete removal of Avidyā and its deep impression on the mind by some Bhāvana or practice of continuous creative imagination even while they admit that the means in question are not enjoined by the Śruti.

We shall briefly record the different views held by different Vedāntins according to the different systems they have attempted to bring out of the teachings of the Upanishads.

Details of Different Opinions

62. First of all, we shall see what Sures'vara says:-

(१) अतोष्पत्तृत्त्रात्मात्मप्पज्जाने विविषिष्टेत्।
अन्वयवाचिक्या त्वस्य तत्त्रत्वाविष्टियते॥
श्रवणं मनं तथात्मया शमदमादि यत्॥
पुमानू शक्तोति तत्कर्तु तस्मात्तदष्टियते॥

बु. वा. २-४-१२२, १२२, पा. १०५॥

"Therefore self-knowledge not depending on the will of a person, there can be no injunction with regard to it. Anvaya-Vyatireka (the act of reason) based on continuance and variability being dependent on it, is enjoined. S'raṇa,
Manana, as also control of the mind and to the senses etc., a person can do (according to his will), and therefore these are also enjoined.”  

Br. V. 2-4 121, p.1053.

(2) The author of *Panca-pādikā* considers S’ravana and other means as merely eulogistic :-.

(2) क: पुनर्ज्ञाव: इदम न: प्रस्तृतम् – क्रियाकारक-फलात्मकात् संसारात् विरक्तायैैं मैत्रेयैैं मुमुक्षृवे मोक्षसाधनमात्यजानं प्रतिपिपादिष्यनू ‘न वा अरे पत्युः कामाय पति: प्रियो भवति’ इति पत्यादरीपिततवं प्रतिषिध्य आत्मनं ईप्सितमत्तमाहः। ननु नैवात्मनं ईप्सितमत्तमुच्यते; किन्तु पत्यादीनाये कार्य-तयोपिततमुच्यते ‘आत्मनस्तु कामाय पति: प्रियो भवति’ इति। मैत्र, न हि तस्मिन्निष्ठे तदर्शिन्ह भवति। तस्मादनेनोपनायेनात्मनं एवेपिततमुक्तम्। ईप्सितक्षेत्र ‘ह्रैय्यः श्रोत्वः’ इत्येषोर्ष्यावः। प. पा. पा. ११७९।

*(Question:-)* What is the eulogy here ?

*(Answer :-)* This is the context here: To Maitreyī who is free from all attachment to mundane life of the nature of action, means of action and result thereof and is intensely longing for release therefrom, Yājnavalkya proposes to teach the knowledge of Atman as a means to release and says that Atman is the most cherishable object in life and denies the cherishability of one's husband and the like in these words : ‘Not for the husband’s sake, my dear, is the husband held dear.’
"(Objection :) Ātman is not held out here as the most cherishable; on the other hand one's husband and other things themselves are said to be cherishable for the sake of Ātman.

"(Reply:) Not so; for, if a particular thing is not cherishable some other thing cannot be desirable for its sake. Therefore by using this device, Ātman alone is commended as the most cherishable. If Ātman is (this) most cherishable 'He (alone) is to be seen, and heard.' This is the eulogy intended here."

(3) Prakāśātman says that all the three means are enjoined here; only the first is primary and the other two are ancillary to it insofar as they help it to conduce to the desired end:-

(3) 'आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्व प्रियं भवति' इत्युपक्रमात्

From the commencing statement 'everything becomes dear for the sake of Ātman' the enquirer becomes dispassionate about everything else and desires to attain immortality, and from the concluding statement 'Ātman being known everything becomes known', 'This is all, my dear, about immortality', 'The enquirer infers that ब्रह्मव:', (Ātman is to be seen) states that Vision of Ātman is the means to immortality.
and to attain that (Vision) S'ra\=vana (hearing about \=At\=man) the principal means is enjoined along with the auxiliary means Manana and \=N\=id\=dhy\=\=a\=sana conducive to the result."

PV. p. 29, 30.

(4) V\=ac\=as\=pati Mis'ra, is of the opinion that these are well-known to be means to knowledge and therefore they need not be enjoined:

(४) प्राप्ता एव हि भ्राणादयो विविधस्वते पूर्वार्थायनुपन्ते ।

न चानुवादोऽप्रयोजनः प्रवृत्तिविशेषकर्तवात् ॥

वा. भा. १-१-४, पा. ११७३

"S'ra\=vana and other means, indeed, being already known, are repeated here by means of sentences in the form of injunctions. Even this repetition is not useless; for, it serves the purpose of engaging the seeker in a particular sort of activity."

Bh. 1-1-4, p. 1173

**S'\=\=a\=n\=k\=a\=r\=a\=r\=a's Verdict on the Matter**

63. We may now turn to what S'\=\=a\=n\=k\=a\=r\=a\=r\=a himself has to say with regard to this question. In the course of his lengthy refutation of the \=Dh\=yan\=a-\=N\=i\=y\=o\=g\=a-\=V\=a\=d\=a (the doctrine of an aspirant being urged to meditate upon Brahman), he states his position thus:-

(१) या तु प्रसिद्धेः ग्रावादग्रुङ्गः, न सा चोदनात्मा, नापि पुस्मत्तन्त्रा; किं तत्त्फः प्रत्येकाविषयवस्तुत: ज्ञानेवैतत् कहयै ।

एवं सर्वप्राप्ताविषयवस्तु: वेदित्वम् । तत्त्वं सति
"As for the notion of fire with regard to the well-known fire, it is not dependent on an injunction or on a person's will, but being dependent on the nature of an object of perception, it is only Jnāna (knowledge) and no (mental) action. This applies to objects of all (other) means of knowledge also. This being so, knowledge having for its object Brahman as it is, is not dependent on any injunction. Forms of verb ending with *lin* (forms ending in potential and other moods), having none to be urged and no action in which one has to be urged to engage himself, become blunt like a keen-edged razor etc. applied to a stone etc. For, the object (Brahman, in this case) can neither be shunned nor taken up."

1-1-4, p. 19.
“(Objection :) For what purpose then, are passages like ‘Atman alone, my dear, is to be seen, heard about’ (Br. 4-5-5), (passages) resembling injunctions?

“(Reply :) We answer – ‘For the purpose of turning one’s back on the objects of natural proclivity’. (To explain :) Whosoever has a proclivity to go to external objects thinking ‘May I get what I like, may not what I dislike happen to me’, but gains no absolute good there, it is such a person who is in quest of absolute good, that texts like ‘Atman alone, my dear, is to be seen’ turn back from the objects of the natural proclivity of the aggregate of the body and senses, and cause him to set up a continuous stream of thought towards the inner Atman. And to him who has engaged himself in instituting a search of the Atman, is taught the true nature of Atman by texts like ‘All this is really this Atman’ (Br. 4-5-7), ‘When, however, everything has become this Atman to this knower, then what could one seen and with what? .... then whom could one understand and with what? With what my dear, could one know the knower?’ (Br. 4-5-15), ‘This Atman is Brahman’ (Br. 2-5-19).”

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 19.

Interpretation of S’aṅkara’s Refutation of Seeming Injunctions

64. To S’aṅkara, दृष्टव्य: (He is to be seen), श्रोतव्य: (He is to be heard about) and other texts which resemble injunctions, are only directions to the seeker of truth to
look inwards; the seeker does not know where to look for the means of absolute good, and he is told that the knowledge of Atman leads him to the goal. S’ravāṇa or hearing about the true nature of Atman, is understanding the meaning of texts like ‘अयमात्म्या ब्रह्म’ (This Atman is really Brahman).

The sub-commentaries therefore, are off the track when they begin to discuss whether or not S’ravāṇa and other means are enjoined and which of these three is the principal means. It would be interesting to see how the author of the Vivaranā, tries to twist the above-cited extract from S’ārkara in favour of his own theory of injunction:

(१) नू विद्विपरत्वे वेदान्तानां तत्त्रिष्ठतया ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य सिद्धान्तदीर्घप्रसङ्गन्तानां श्रवणादिविधानमिति भावाभ्यक्तःपरे दर्शितम्। सत्यम्, ज्ञानविधितस्य निराकृतः, न श्रवणादिविधिः; तत्त्रोक्तदीर्घप्रसङ्गभावात् ॥ पं. वि. पा. ३४.

"(Objection :-) But the author has shown that there is no injunction of S’ravāṇa and other means inasmuch as the Upanishadss would merely purport to lay down an injunction and would lead to repugnant conclusions such as the non-establishment of the existence of Brahman?"

"(Reply :-) True, but there the injunction of Jnāna alone has been refuted and not the injunction of S’ravāṇa etc. since
there the repugnant conclusions referred to, do not exist.

PV. p. 34.

Tattvadeepana, a commentary on Vivaraṇa, supports this doctrine by remarking ‘ब्रह्मणि महातत्त्वयम्; विषैल तत्त्वान्तरतत्त्वयमिति न विरोध इत्यथः’ (pp. 35,36).

"The Upanishads have their principal purport in teaching Brahman, but a subordinate purport in injunction is admitted. Hence there is no contradiction. This is the meaning of the Vivaraṇa passage." But where do we find any hint in the Bhāshya supporting such a 'have the cake and eat it also' interpretation?
SECTION EIGHT

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE THREE MEANS

The Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa

65. The two wings into which the sub-commentaries on S'āṅkara, are mainly divided - the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa Prasthānas as they are called, both agree that S'ravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana should all be practised in succession before the final Vision of Atman dawns. Only there are two points on which they differ with regard to these practices. The Bhāmati school insists, as we have already seen (p. 96), that these means are already known to be conducive to knowledge, and are only enumerated here in sentences which resemble injunctions. The Vivaraṇa school, on the other hand, persists in holding that all the three are serious injunctions. According to this school, moreover, S'ravaṇa is the principal means enjoined here, the other two being helpful to it in precipitating the resultant knowledge.

S'āṅkara Interpreted by Bhāmati

66. S'āṅkara’s personal view in this matter may be gathered from the following extracts:-
It is clear that S'āṅkara means to say that listening to the Vedāntic teaching with a view to determine its purport, is self-sufficient and can give intuition of Atman without desiderating any assistance by inference and other means of proof. Vācaspati Mis'ra, however, construes the statement as follows:-

"The conclusion of enquiry is the destruction of the two Avidyās (Causal and effective) together with their impressions; for, from that alone is possible the accomplishment or manifestation of the direct experience of Brahman."

[V Bh. p. 89.

[This twisting of the statement is necessary for Vācaspati because the doctrine of direct experience (Sākshātkāra) is peculiar to his school. The Pañca-pādikā and the Vivaraṇa, of course, lay emphasis on the Vedāntic S’ravaṇa and that is what S’āṅkara also seems to do here.]
Again, as for the contention that Manana and Nididhyāsana also being enjoined subsequent to S'raṇaṇa, Brahman must be subservient to an injunction and not self-sufficient, we reply 'No'. For Manana and Nididhyāsana are for the purpose of intuition. (To explain: If Brahman already intuited were used for some other purpose, then, perhaps it might be considered to be subservient to an injunction. But it is not so, for, Manana and Nididhyāsana are also intended for intuition just like S’raṇaṇa.”SBh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

Here evidently, S’āṅkara means to say that S’raṇaṇa can itself lead to intuition of Brahman, and in the case of those that are not able to intuit Brahman by that means alone, the other two may also be severally in demand for the same purpose. Vācaspati, however, twists this statement also and explains it thus:

‘ब्रह्मासाक्षात्कारोऽवगति:; तद्दृढ्यं मननिनिदिध्यासनयोगन्य-व्यतिरिक्तसिद्धम् इत्यथ:। अथ कस्मान्मननानिनिदिधिशेषेव न भवतीत्यत
आह – यदि ह्रावगतिमिति।’

va. bh. pa. 153.
“Brahmasākshātākara (immediate experience of Brahman) is what is called ‘Avagati’ here. The meaning is that Manana and Nididhyāsana are for Avagati since they are known to be such by inference by applying the principle of continuance and variability. And why should Manana etc. be not deemed to be actually enjoined? The reply to this is in the sequel.”

[In his explanation of the rest of the Bhāṣya Vācaspati explains why these are not enjoined. Of course the Bhāṣya is quite innocent of all this.]

(३) च्यां पुर्णिन्युक्ततीनां नात्मानसंशयविविधवलम्ब्यन्: पदार्थ-
विषय: प्रतिबंधितस्त, ते श्रुत्वति सक्रुद्धत्वेऽवत तत्त्वमसिवाक्यार्थ-
मनुष्यवितुमिति तानू प्रत्यावृत्तान्तवक्यबिमिष्ठेव। सक्रुद्धत्वश्रेय ह्यात्म-
प्रतिपत्तिविद्या निर्विर्यतीति नात्र कष्ठिद्यथ रोपोऽथ्युपगम्येऽ।।
सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२।

“In the case of those, however, who have a keen intellect which suffers from no impediment of ignorance, doubt or misconception, with regard to what is meant by the terms (of the proposition), they can certainly intuit the entity intended to be taught by the proposition ‘That thou art’ renounced even once, and so the futility of the repetition of Sāstra and reason is quite acceptable to us in their case. For the intuition of Atman obliterates Avidyā as soon as it dawns and there is no order of enlightenment deemed necessary.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.

This is obviously in direct opposition to the theory of both the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa; for these
RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE THREE MEANS

sub-commentaries insist that all the three mental acts of discipline, should be undergone before the Vision of Atman makes its appearance. Bhāmati, for instance, says:

(7) यस्तत्त्वमसीति सकृदुक्तमेवेवति । - श्रुत्वा मत्वा क्षणानवधाय प्राम्भवीयात्मासामातात् संस्कारात् इत्यतः ॥
ता. भ. ४-१-२, पा. ९३३.

"The Bhāshya sentence 'Who is able to experience (the meaning of the proposition 'That thou art') enunciated but once' means, having heard about, reflected upon and meditated for a moment, (is able to experience it) on account of the impression born of the repeated practice in a previous birth."

V. Bh. 4-1-2, p. 933.

[This view is imputed to Prasamkhyaṇā-Vādins and refuted in Upades'a Sāhasri Ch. 18-9, 10 etc.]

(1) ततु पूर्वसुप्पेयात्मप्रतिपत्ते: साक्षात्कारवत्या: । एतदुष्टं भवति - वाक्यायर्थश्रवणावनोत्तरकाला विशेषणत्रयवती भावना बहुसाक्षात्काराय कल्पत इति वाक्यायर्थप्रतीतितयि साक्षात्कारस्य पूर्वसुपपमिति ॥
ता. भ. ४-१-२, पा. ८३०.

[Here the Bhāshya refers to the gradual manifestation of enlightenment in the case of those who have to remove superimposition of the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect and experience of external objects etc. (द्वेक्षत्रपनोबुद्धिविषयप्रवेदनालक्षणम्), and concludes that all this effort at removal of the superimposition, is only before]
understanding the meaning of the proposition. But in the Bhāmati, the Bhāshya is twisted and stretched to mean something else (by taking the word ‘Pratīpattēh’ as a genitive instead of an ablative, and is interpreted as follows:—)

"This is only the previous form of the experience of Ātman, the immediate experience. What is said here amounts to this: The meditation qualified by its three characteristics, which is practised subsequently to S'ravaṇa an Manana, becomes effective in producing immediate experience; and so, the understanding of the meaning of the proposition, is the previous form of Sākshātkāra or realization."

V. Bh. 4-1-2, p. 830.

There is absolutely no reference to Sākshātkāra in the Bhāshya, but yet the sentence which says that ‘the repetition of S'ravaṇa and Manana is only previous to the understanding of the proposition’ is forced in the Bhāmati to mean that understanding the meaning of the sentence, is itself the previous form of Sākshātkāra.

S'aṅkara as Interpreted by the Vivaraṇa

67. As for the author of the Vivaraṇa, it is needless to go into details in order to prove that he almost deliberately diverges from S'aṅkara's express statement that the Dharma-jijnāsa (enquiry into the nature of Dharma) and the Brahma-jijnāsa (enquiry into the nature of Brahman) have two disparate topics to deal with and
that Brahman cannot be made subservient to any injunction by any subterfuge. He has devoted his entire Bhāshya on the Samanvayādhikaraṇam (1-1-4) to ward off all sorts of efforts to connect Brahma-jijnāsa with injunction-Vidhi or Niyoga that may be supposed to be necessary for enquiry into the nature of Brahman, and has boldly declared that all talk of Upāsana (meditation) even in relation to Brahman, is only in the state of Avidyā. (तत्त्वज्ञानवाच्यां ब्रह्मण उपासोपासकालिक्षणः सर्वं व्यवहारः - सू. भ. १-१-११, पा. ३५). These statements in the fourth Adhikarana (topic for discussion), and elsewhere are worthy of note here:

(१) एवंभूतस्य ब्रह्मणस्त्रज्ञानस्य वा न कथाविद्युक्तवाए कार्यानुप्रवेशः कल्पवित्तम्।। सू.भ. १-१-४, पा. १६।

"No reason can be adduced to suppose that such Brahman or its knowledge, can be connected with any sort of action."

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 16.

(२) तस्मातः प्रतिपतित्विविषयविषयत्या शास्त्रप्रमाणकत्वं ब्रह्मणः संभवतीत्यतः स्वतन्त्रमेव ब्रह्म शास्त्रप्रमाणकम्, वेदान्तवाच्यसमव्यात् इति सिद्धम्। एवं च सति 'अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा' इति तद्हित्यः पृथक्षास्त्रार्जन उपपद्यते।।

सू. भ. १-१-४, पा. २३।

"Therefore we conclude that since Brahman cannot be possibly known through the Sāstra as subservient to the injunction of meditation, Brahman is only independently
known through the S’āstra, the valid means of its knowledge, inasmuch as the Vedānta texts purport to teach it exclusively. And it is on this supposition alone that the commencement of a separate S’āstra beginning with the Sūtra ‘Then therefore the enquiry into (the nature of) Brahman’ dealing with it, can be justified.” SBh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

(३) वस्तुमात्रपर्यवसायीनि हि. ब्रह्मावक्यानि न नियोगोपदेशी-नीत्येतद विस्तरेण प्रतिष्टापितं ‘ततु समन्वयात्’ इत्यत्र ॥

सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६१.

“That texts regarding Brahman, are self-complete by teaching the nature of a thing, and do not urge one to engage himself in any action, has been established after a long discussion in the Samanvaya-Sūtra.” SBh. 3-2-23, p. 361.

(४) द्वृत्त्यादिशवद्य अणि परविद्याभिधकारपिठताः, तत्त्वाभि-मुखीकरणप्रक्षानाः, न तत्त्वावबोधविधिप्रशानां भवति ॥

सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२.

“Texts like ‘He is to be seen’ in the context of the knowledge of Brahman, are solely meant for directing the seeker’s mind towards Reality and are not particular about enjoining knowledge of Brahman.” SBh. 3-2-21, p. 362.

In the face of such emphatic assertions of S’āṅkara, the Vivaraṇa stresses again and again that enquiry into the nature of Brahman is begun in Sūtra 1-1-1, to consider an injunction :
Having in view such an enquirer aspiring for the goal of human life, the revered Bādarāyaṇa composed the Sūtra ‘Then, therefore, the enquiry into the nature of Brahman’ in order to determine by reasoning, the three pre-requisites (the person qualified, the subject-matter, and the fruit resulting) of the S’ruti enjoining enquiry into the meaning of Vedāntic texts conducive to knowledge of Brahman, the only means to release, this enquiry being enjoined for one who is equipped with the fourfold qualification. (This Sūtra aims at determining all this by means of reasoning) although it has been already revealed in the S’ruti; for, harmony between the S’ruti and the Sūtra, is desirable. We shall show in the sequel how Manana and Nididhyāsana are auxiliary to S’ravaṇa.”

PV. pp. 31, 32.

The critical reader will readily notice the striking difference between S’aṅkara and Prakāś’atman in respect of their introduction to Bādarāyaṇa’s first Sūtra. S’aṅkara says that all the Upaniṣhads primarily intend to teach the knowledge of the unity of Ātman in order to destroy Avidyā (अस्यानन्दश्वहः: प्रहाणाय,
The Vision of Atman

आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्ति सर्वं वेदान्ता आरब्यन्ते). How this is, can be seen by a reference to the Sārīraka-Mīmāṃsā (the investigation into the nature Sārīraka or Jīva who is really Brahman), as will be explained by S'āṅkara hereafter: यथा चायमथः सवषा वदान्ताना तथा वयमास्या शारीरकप्रीमांसायां प्रदर्शविषयां:। The first Sūtra, according to S'āṅkara, means यथावक्तसाधन (चत्वत्त्र) सपत्त्वतनतर बहुमिज्जासा कत्वचाया. After acquisition of the fourfold qualification (discrimination, non-attachment to enjoyment, calmness etc. and desire to get release), one should enquire into the nature of Brahman. There is no inkling of investigation into any injunction whatever here.

According to the Vivaraṇa, however, the Sūtra wants to determine the purport of the S'ruti enjoining S'ravana, and therefore Bādarāyana wishes to decide who is qualified to hear, what it is that S'ruti enjoins the hearing about, and what the resulting fruit of this S'ravana would be. The disparity is too obvious to require any further explanation. We refrain from further quoting Vivaraṇa passages with regard to the injunction for fear of prolixity.
SECTION NINE

RETROSPECT AND CONCLUSION

Yajnavalkya’s Teachings

68. We have arrived at the close of the Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa. There is only one more Kandika to be discussed. It is therefore time for summing up the teaching of Yajnavalkya. So we shall enumerate briefly the results of these teachings according to Śaṅkara free from the admixture of later accretions.

(1) No one can hope to purchase immortality with all the wealth one can possibly acquire in this world.

(2) Everything in the universe that one loves, is dear for the sake of Atman, one’s own self. So Atman is the dearest of all.

(3) The Atman alone is worth seeing through hearing about, reflecting upon and contemplating upon. When He is thus seen, everything becomes known.

[This does not mean that one’s individual self has to be known; for, it is already known through the teaching of the revelation dealing with the ritual portion of the Veda. One who has studied the Vedas and performed the religious works enjoined therein, knows very well that one’s self answering to the notion of T, is distinct from the aggregate of the body]
and the sense-organs. Every believer in his own religion, believes in such a self perhaps. Yājñavalkya however, refers to the Witnessing Self of each one of us."

Knowing this Self is quite unlike the objectification of any empirical phenomenon by means of a concept. As S’āṅkara puts it in his Upades’a-Sāhasri, it is the highest kind of intuition vouchsafed to man:

\[ \text{चेतन्यभास्यतात्मस्वाद्यसंतुराँ} \]

\[ \text{इंद्रभूषणनि परः सोऽनुभवो भवेतु} \]

"Since the ego is revealed by Consciousness, and it is itself dependent on It, by destroying this objective factor that highest intuition of the Self would accrue." U.S. 5-5.

(4) The teaching that Ātman being known everything becomes known, should not mislead one to suppose that something else exists side by side with Ātman. There is absolutely nothing else. Ātman is all that is.

S’āṅkara’s interpretation of the teaching of the S’ruti texts that Ātman is to be known, is that the Natural Avidyā which separates one from one’s real Self, has got to be wiped off by Vidyā. The common man who naturally superimposes the body and the senses upon the real Ātman, transfers by mistake the properties of the not-Self to the Self, and vice versa. So long as he is
under the influence of this nightmare, he conceives the genuine Atman as something to be known, and presupposing this Avidyā for the purpose of teaching, the S’rūtis teach that Atman is to be known and immortality attained by means of that knowledge.

(5) S’ravaṇa according to S’aṅkara, is only listening to and trying to understand the teaching of the S’rūtis and of the teacher about the real nature of Atman. Neither the S’ruti nor the teacher can command the seeker to understand Atman; nor can they point out or objectify Atman by describing him as such and such. This is true even in the case of the knowledge of empirical things.

“Even when one has directed his attention towards the object to be known, its knowledge dawns sometimes, and sometimes not. Therefore, one who wishes to impart knowledge to another, has only to direct his attention towards
the object of knowledge, and when that is done, knowledge appears of itself in conformity with the nature of the object and the means of knowledge. Even if one is urged (by the S'rutī), knowledge of a thing cannot arise in contradiction of what its nature has been ascertained to be through some other valid means of knowledge. If, however, one should think it to be otherwise than what it actually is, on the score of his being directed (by the S'rutī) to do so, that can be no knowledge but only a mental act (of meditation). If the knowledge to the contrary should arise of its own accord, it would be only an illusion." SBh. 3-2-21, pp. 362, 363.

In the case of Brahman, of course, S'ravanā removes the intercepting misconception, and nothing further is needed to produce the knowledge of the self-shining Atman.

(6) Manana is the use of reason based upon partial intuitions as adduced by the S'rutī itself or by the preceptor, or reasoning by the seeker himself in harmony with the Vedic reasoning. This reasoning may be of the nature of noting the continuity or persistence of Atman and variability or evanescent nature of the not-self, or reflection upon the relation of Atman to the phenomena during creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world (SBH. 2-1-6). Manana has nothing to do with syllogistic reasoning or dry speculation.
(7) *Nididhyāsana* (also known by other names such as *Adhyāna* and *Adhyātma Yoga*), is a special kind of concentrated contemplation upon Ātman which culminates in the merging of the mind in, and the direct intuition of the Universal Ātman. It has nothing to do with creative imagination (ordinarily known by the name of *Upāsana*, or the *Patanjala Yoga* (intended for the suppression of the modifications of the mind, as a prelude to Samādhi or dissociation of the Ātman from the mind).

(8) Bādarāyana refers (VS. 3-2-24) to a state called *Samrādhanā* or worshipful mood in which the devotee sees even the transcendental Ātman. This has nothing to do with the *Patanjala Samādhi*. The word used by the author of the *Vedānta Sūtra*, means the practice of devotion, deep meditation, and concentrated contemplation and other kindred mental acts of spiritual discipline.

There is another *Sūtra* of Bādarāyana समाध्यभावाच्च (2-2-19) (*Samādhyabhāvāccca*), which is meant for giving a reason for holding that the individual self is an agent of action. S’āṅkara explains the meaning of the *Sūtra* by a statement that the *prima-facie* view is that even according to the Upanishads the Jīva must be
considered to be an agent, as otherwise the Samādhi enjoined in the S’rutis would become purposeless. Here according to the author of the Bhāshya, the word Samādhi is a variant for Samādhānam (staying the mind on Atman) by means of S’ravaṇa, Manana and other means. It goes without saying that there is absolutely no inkling of the Patanjala Yoga in this Sūtra, though some recent Vedāntins have been misled by the word Samādhi.

One important corollary, however, emerges out of the Bhāshya on this Sūtra. Since all the means of knowledge indicated by the words Drashtavyah (to be seen), S’rōtavyah (to be listened to), Mantavyah (to be reflected upon), Nididhyāsitavyah (to be contemplated upon), have been explained here as implying Samādhi (staying the mind exclusively on Atman), the meaning of all these, may be subsumed under the act of being attentive. This is the same as what is denoted by the word Pranidhānam in the following sentence from the Bhāshya:

लोकेष्पि 'इदं पश्य', 'इद्माकर्षणय’ - इति चैवज्ञातीयकेषु निदेशेषु प्रणिधानपात्रं कुरु इत्युच्च्यते, न साक्षात्ज्ञानमेव कुरु -
इति ॥ सू. भ. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२.
"Even in common usage in directions like 'Look at this', 'Listen to this', one is directed to give a concentrated attention to the particular fact, and not to perform the act of knowing itself."

SBh. 3-2-21, p. 362.

(9) S'raṇa alone is quite sufficient for the achievement of the intuition of Ātman in the case of competent enquirers who are able to grasp the exact signification of the terms involved in the proposition 'That thou art'. But in the case of those that are not able to intuit the identity of Brahman and the self on the very first listening, repetition of S'raṇa and Manana may be necessary to remove the different misconceptions concerning Ātman (SB. 4-1-2).

This repetition of the combined practice of S'raṇa and Manana, however, should not be taken to be the same as Nididhyāsana as some have misconceived it.

(10) While S'rutis recommending S'raṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana, do use verbs and participles that seem to imply injunctions, these means do not admit of being enjoined, and as we find no context in the S'ruti in which any particular person undertook to perform these functions in response to an injunction, we need not take any notice of the serious contention of some recent Vedāntins who suppose that Bāadarāyaṇa's S'ariraka
Mīmāṃsā was undertaken to determine the person qualified, the subject-matter and the result accruing to one who undergoes these items of discipline. These seeming injunctions are simply meant, as Śāṅkara says, to direct the attention of the seeker inwards:–

\[\text{Qualifications Necessary for Enquiry}\]

69. It will be remembered that only the three direct means to vision (Śravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana), have been mentioned and discussed here. The four indispensable qualifications including Nityānitya-Viveka and Vairāgya, are of course implied in the character of Maitreyi. The introductory narrative also implies that even women, even though not qualified to perform Vedic rituals, may attain knowledge of the true Ātman under a competent preceptor’s guidance, provided they are otherwise qualified.

70. Is there anything else remaining to be known or else done after the Ātman has been intuited? Yājnavalkya has answered this question in the most unequivocal language:–
"This is the Atman described as 'not this, not this'. He is ungraspable, for, He is never grasped; undecaying, for, He never decays; unattached, for, He is never attached; unfettered, for He never feels fear, and is never injured. With what, my dear, could one know the knower? O Maitreyi, you have been given the teaching. Only so much, my dear, is immortality. So saying, Yājnavaalkya departed (to homelessness)."

After knowing Atman the Absolute, there remains nothing more to be done to attain immortality; for, to know that Atman as Pure consciousness the Absolute, is to be the Absolute.

_Om Tat Sat_
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