Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta
(Secrets of Adhyaasa & Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya revealed)

D. B. GANGOLLI

ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARYALAYA
BANGALORE
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Encouraged by the good response to our earlier publication — "The Essential Adi Shankara" — we have endeavoured to bring out yet another jewel of Vedanta within a short space of eight months. Being another useful handbook on this terse subject of pristine pure Advaita Vedanta, this treatise reveals many a profound secret unknown to the generality of preachers as well as practitioners and is sure to benefit both immensely, particularly a true seeker.

One of the most important and fundamental tenets of Adi Shankara was that "In order to be able to reconcile many apparent contradictions with which all the Upanishadic lore is replete, the genuine student should invariably understand the real purport of the traditional methodology of teaching which utilizes the twin viewpoints, viz. the Vyaavahaaric and the Paaramaarthic, implicit in and through the whole gamut of the scriptural texts". It was given to Shri Shankara to resuscitate and rescue this time-tested Saampradaayic methodology from the ravages of alien schools of philosophy as they had already made inroads into pristine pure Vedanta. This good work was kept up for a few decades after Shri Shankara by his true direct disciple, viz. Shri Sureshwara, but history repeated itself, so to speak, when in the post-Sureshwara period once again concepts, which smacked of Dvaita Darshanas like Saankhya and Yoga, were dubiously interpolated in the mainstream of Vedantic lore.

It is the bane of our times that few preceptors, professing to propound genuine Shaankara Vedanta, themselves know or have understood the distinctive features of the central traditional methodology of Advaita Vedanta based on the axiom of Adhyaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya, a corollary of which is this teaching of the twin viewpoints. In fact, their effective applications enable us to solve many a riddle of mundane life and suggest proper means of making our lives purposeful. Unfortunately, most of the present-day half-witted Vedantins have cast their dragnet of vain dialectics far and wide in these days of rabid professionalism and unhealthy commercialization, with the result the unwary, gullible laymen have become easy victims to their subtle gimmicks. Faith, without which humanity cannot live, if not directed and controlled properly, gets degenerated into 'blind faith' to bring untold miseries and utter ruination.

Shri Satchidanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of reversed memory, carried on a one-man campaign, as a matter of fact, to rid Shaankara Vedanta of many of these harmful alien theories and concepts and
to help the genuine seeker and student steer clear of the mushroom pitfalls in the Vedanta teachings in vogue today. This handbook, which is a free transliteration of the Swami Ji’s Kannada gem — “Vedantaarthasaara Sangraha” — stands out as a glorious tribute to his yeoman service in cleansing Advaita Vedanta of all the dross it has accumulated over centuries of decadence.

This treatise, though small in size, has great merit in that it points out the grossly distorted sub-commentaries and helps the true seeker resolve many a confusing anomaly, on the one hand, and propounds the genuine Vedantic principles, based on the steadfast and strong foundations of Intuitive experience (Anubhava) and logical deliberations in consonance with that plenary Intuitive experience (Anubhavaanga Tarka), on the other.

Yet another salient feature of this handbook is to bring into focus the profound truth that in the Adhyaasa Bhaashya, which Adi Shankara wrote as a preamble to his Brahma Sootra Bhaashya, the whole gamut of genuine Vedantic tenets are made explicit. Further, how off and on these very traditional teachings were revealed in many ways in the latter Bhaashya in a bid to reconcile all apparent contradictions and controversies is exquisitely elucidated to carry conviction.

We are glad that Shri D. B. Gangolli, a dedicated student of pristine pure Vedanta as propagated by our revered Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, has once again, as is his wont, taken great pains and meticulous care to render this free transliteration of Swami Ji’s Kannada book for the benefit of those who are denied the knowledge of this regional language. We wish to congratulate him on achieving this onerous task in providing another valuable treatise on Vedanta. May the Lord Almighty shower His benign grace on him and bless him to continue this excellent work for many more years to come.

We sincerely hope that all serious students of pristine pure Advaita Vedanta will draw all the inspiration from this unique handbook, which, we are sure, will go a long way in guiding them on the right path to Beatitude.

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Quotations adduced are taken from the books indicated below and are English translations of:

1. Principal Upanishads with commentaries of Shri Shankaraachaarya;
2. Brahma Sutra Bhashyam;
3. Bhagavadgeeta;
4. Upadesha Sahasri of Shri Shankaraachaarya — all these published by Advaita Ashram, Calcutta, and Shri Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

Quotations from Svetaaashwatara and Jabaala Upanishads are from “The Principal Upanishads” by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

References

1. Eight Upanishads — Part I & II — By Swami Gambhirananda,
2. Chhaandogya Upanishad —do-
3. Bhagavadgeeta —do-
4. Brahma Sutra Bhashya —do-
5. Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad — By Swami Madhavananda
6. Upadesha Sahasri (A Thousand Teachings)
   — By Swami Jagadananda
BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR ALREADY PUBLISHED

1. The Scientific Approach Of Advaita Vedanta
2. The Principal Teachings Of Bhagavadgeeta
3. The Magic Jewel Of Intuition
4. The Relevance Of Vedanta In This Modern Age Of Civilization
5. A Broad Outline Of Vedanta
6. The Reality Beyond All Empirical Dealings
7. Deliberation On The Ultimate Reality Culminating In Intuitive Experience
8. Brahmavidya Or Knowledge Of The Ultimate Reality
9. The Quintessence of Pristine Pure Vedanta
10. The Philosophical Science Of Vedanta
11. Vedanta: The Only Consummate Spiritual Science
12. The Essential Adi Shankara
CONTENTS

I. Introduction ..... 1

II. Shankara's Bhaashyas alone are the Principal Means to Determine the Spiritual Teaching of Vedanta ..... 7

III. The Importance Given to Adhyaasa Bhaashya in Shaankara Prasthaana ..... 20

IV. The Essential Nature of Adhyaasa and the Mundane Transactions Caused by it ..... 22

V. Division into Vidyaa and Avidyaa and Avidyaakritya ..... 37

VI. Saarvatrika Anubhava ..... 46

VII. Brahman as the Cause of the World and Ishwaratwa ..... 57

VIII. Ishwara and Jeevas ..... 76

IX. Jeeva's Vyavahaara ..... 85

X. Avastha Vyavahaara ..... 100

XI. Bandha Moaksha Vyavahaara ..... 107

XII. Moaksha Saadhana Vyavahaara ..... 112

XIII. Conclusion ..... 125
"All the dualistic phenomena of the waking state in its entirety, including the Aadhidavitika Prpanchsya, (Divine Plane) should be taken as an adjunct to the Witnessing Self (of the essential nature of Pure Consciousness). By this Intuitive identification with one's own innermost Self one can sublate or falsify the waking state and thereby realize the non-dual nature of Atman and, at the same time, see all the creatures in Him and Himself in all the creatures. This type of non-dual essence of Being which is described in the Upanishads (Isha 6) and Geeta (6-29) will be realized only by taking the Self or Witnessing Consciousness as conditioned by the adjunct of the whole phenomenon of the waking state. Then only this right vision (Intuition) of non-dual Realization takes place. It is on this supposition alone that Atman can be identified as Brahman in the ultimate analysis, the conditioning universe being shown to be only a superimposed false appearance. Otherwise if we entertain the view that the Self is separate in each body, then we will come to the erroneous conclusion of the Kapila Saankhya Darshana, which is truly a dualistic philosophy. If we do so, Advaita Siddhaanta, which is expounded with unanimity in all the Upanishads, will come to grief." — (Maanddokya Bhaashya — 3).
“Unity amidst diversity” — is a succinct axiomatic truth revealed to all humanity by the Upanishadic texts, which are mostly the end portions of the Vedas and hence are called ‘Vedantas’. This unitary Spirit, which is the Ultimate Absolute Reality called Brahman or Atman in the Upanishads, pervades all duality and diversity of this wonderful universe of ours. The Knowledge of this all-pervasive Spirit is the very substratum, fountainhead of all other mundane empirical knowledges and sciences amassed and accumulated by Man from time immemorial. Evidently, this Spiritual science going by the popular name of ‘Vedanta’, is to be given the pride of place over and above the other empirical sciences, if only we wish to reckon the true import of the profound pronouncement of all Upanishads that — “By knowing that unitary, non-dual Reality behind and beyond all this world of duality, all else, worth knowing, is discerned.”

Having been steeped in the Upanishadic Knowledge and its highly esoteric Intuitive approach, handed down traditionally from the teacher to the taught for ages, Shri Shankara Bhagavatpada, the spiritual colossus of our era, gave to humanity an immaculate and impeccable methodology of teaching which can never be faulted or felled by any logical or dialectical system — past, present or future. This is true for all times and climes because Intuition is at the very root of all human knowledge, be it empirical, religious or spiritual, and hence no intellectual knowledge, or for that matter science, can outreach or outstretch Intuition and sublate or falsify it. In fact, Intuition pervades and subsumes all intellectual pursuits and perspectives and is the core of Being of everything in this multi-spangled celestial universe of ours.

This all-consuming Intuitive approach taught in and through the Upanishadic lore was revealed by a long line of dedicated seers and sages, but it stands to his credit and glory that Shri Shankaraachaarya expounded this perfect traditional and time-honoured methodology in such unequivocal and convincing terms and manner that his Intuitive approach has been reckoned to be infallible, never to fail to deliver the goods, so to speak. But since the Absolute Reality of Vedanta is non-dual, beyond all categories of time-space-causation as also outside the purview of all percepts and concepts, the genuine seeker of this Reality of Atman has necessarily to have certain sterling qualities and excellences of head and heart so as to be fully receptive and be guided properly to Intuit his own Self beyond, and subtler than, his ego. In truth, it means that one has to give up his deep-seated ‘egoism’ and Intuit his Self.
In order to remove the great confusion which prevailed at the time and which had been caused by several renowned preceptors who had missed the mark, so to say (they had misunderstood the real import of the Upanishadic texts and had misinterpreted the prime purport or goal of Vedanta Shastra). Shri Shankara appeared on the Indian spiritual firmament as a resplendent star which drove away the darkness that had enveloped the minds of scholars and scholastics alike.

Shri Shankara’s extant Bhaashyas on the three canonical texts of the ten principal Upanishads, the Bhagavad Geeta and the Brahma Sootras expounding Advaita Vedanta have an aura of their own and his perfect methodology clinches the issue by resolving all kinds of doubts and anomalies. That is so because it is entirely based on universal and plenary Intuitive experience (Saarvatrka Poorna Anubhava) which is the unfailing touchstone of all human endeavour. Hence, the first fundamental teaching of Shri Shankara’s Vedanta is that — ‘All deliberations on the Upanishadic tenets must necessarily be based on this universal Intuitive experience alone’ — which is truly ‘the be all and the end all’ of human existence (Purushaarttha). With a view to focussing the attention of the true seeker on this subtle but all-pervasive Intuition, which is the very substrate of everyone’s ‘I’ notion (ego), Shri Shankara bestowed upon the spiritual world his unique teaching pertaining to ‘Adhyaasa’ (misconception, of the nature of delusion) on which he elaborated in his introductory Bhaashya on Brahma Sootras.

It is one of the most important secrets of Shri Shankara’s Vedanta that this Adhyaasa is at the very root of all mundane transactions of Man and that by means of Intuition alone one can go beyond and conquer this delusory Adhyaasa, which is termed as ‘Avidyaa’ by the Pundits. In fact, this Adhyaasa as depicted and delineated by the great teacher leads to the ‘Bondage of Samsaara’, and by means of Intuitive experience (termed Saakshhti Anubhava or Avagatti in Vedantic parlance) alone one can get himself released or liberated from this Bondage. Since this Intuitive experience happens to be everyone’s everlasting essence of Being, Shri Shankara teaches that — “Being under the spell, or in the grip of this delusory Adhyaasa (Avidyaa) is itself ‘Bondage’ and attaining to the Intuitive experience which is the very core of our Being is itself ‘Liberation’.”

Yet another great secret of Shri Shankara’s Vedanta is that this fundamental Adhyaasa brings about in its wake not only all secular or mundane transactions but also the religious and spiritual transactions; and unless and until the true seeker undergoes an intensive ‘spiritual education and training’ under a vigilant and versatile preceptor satiated with the traditional methodology based on Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya (aphorism of Deliberate Superimposition and Rescission) adopted in and through the Upanishadic lore, he will not be able to
discern and divine the real purport of Vedanta. This revelation about this traditional methodology implicit in all the Upanishads is the second fundamental teaching of the Great Master.

This study leads the seeker to three corollaries of these two rudimentary teachings, and they are: (i) To distinguish between this plenary intuitive experience (Saakshi Anubhava or Avagati) and the mundane but universal experiences of percepts (Pratyaya or Pratyaksha Anubhava) and concepts (Vedana Anubhava); (ii) to distinguish between the Shastraic or Paaramaarthic (intuitive) viewpoint and the Vyaaavhaartic (empirical) viewpoint — this aspect is dealt with in some detail in this treatise and it helps to reconcile many an apparent contradiction in the Upanishadic doctrines; (iii) to distinguish between what is within the purview of the agent of an action (Kartru Tantra) and what is pertaining to a real entity, but not in the control or purview whatsoever of this agent of action (‘I’ notion) — (Vastu Tantra).

In this treatise, which is published close on the heels of “The Essential Adi Shankara” as its ‘companion volume’, an earnest attempt has been made to unravel all these profound secrets of Shaankara Vedanta so as to equip the ardent seeker with a master-minded methodology which never fails to resolve and reconcile any apparent contradiction that may crop up anywhere in the Upanishads (in fact, all of them are replete with apparently confusing and contradicting statements and even apparent anomalies). Under the circumstances, it need not be gainsaid that to an uninitiated and immature student these esoteric Upanishadic teachings sound like ‘the ramblings of an unsound mind’ or ‘weird figments of imagination’ Indeed, for that matter, many Indian and foreign ‘philosophers’ and scholars could not make out the head or the tail of these spiritual texts and have written mutually conflicting and confusing commentaries to augment the already-existing chaos. And so, it is truly a marvel of our 20th Century — which has taken such stupendous leaps both in the intellectual and the scientific spheres — that despite the predominant materialistic — nay anti-religious, nihilistic or sceptic — outlook of our age and its multiplying new wants and creature comforts, Vedanta alone provides the panacea for all human ills and failings as well as the master-key to universal prosperity and peace.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Adi Shankara, the world teacher, and Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, my spiritual guide, who treaded in the footsteps of Shri Shankara and, just like him, cleared a great deal of morbid moss that had grown around pristine pure Advaita Vedanta. Founder of the Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya at Holenarsipur, Hassan District, Karnataka State, in the late thirties and later its branch at Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028. Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati rendered yeoman service to the spiritual
world by culling out and collating the above-mentioned five ‘magic jewels of Intuitive Knowledge which were implicit in the original Bhaashyas of Shri Shankara but hidden from the perfunctory gaze of many a seasoned scholar or Indologist. Fortunately, those original Bhaashyas on the Prasthaana Traya are still intact and extant in their genuine form throughout the length and breadth of our country.

The SwamiJi who dedicated his life to the study and practice of Advaita Vedanta as taught by Adi Shankara did yet another good turn by pin-pointing the attention of academicians and anchorites on the subtle distinctions between the two technical Vedantic terms of ‘Avidyaa’ and ‘Maayaa’, which have caused most of the confusion among the present-day Vedantins. Shri Shankara has never equated the two terms; in fact, he has taken all the pains and has left no stone unturned, as it were, to bring home the distinction between the two which are akin to ‘cause’ and ‘effect’, respectively. and he is very emphatic, and meticulously cautious, always to qualify Maayaa by the adjectival phrases of ‘Avidyaakrita’, ‘Avidyaa-Kalpita’, ‘Avidyaa(ss)tmaka’, ‘Avidyaapratyupasthaapita’ etc. throughout his Bhaashyas. Totally oblivious of these profound distinctions, the two terms have been interchanged and mixed up by the post-Shankara Vedantins who gave logic more importance than Anubhava to cause a great deal of confusion and distortion of the original works and their real import. So much so, a persistent belief that — “Shri Shankara was a giant of a logician and his brand of Vedanta which is highly dialectical in its approach and treatment is beyond the comprehension of the ordinary students and seekers” — lurks in the minds of lay men. However, it was sheer divine dispensation, as it was given to SwamiJi, of revered memory, to cleanse Shaankara Vedanta of this accumulated dross and put it back on the high pedestal where it deserved to be.

Many important controversies which are taxing the minds of true seekers are examined and resolved in this handbook, which is a free transliteration of SwamiJi’s Kannada jewel — “Vedaantaartha Saara­ sangraha”. The relevant original Sanskrit Bhaashya excerpts (which are quite often mentioned partly, for the purpose of substantiation) should be thoroughly studied from the English translations of the Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas published by the Shri Ramakrishna Mission monks. However, the purport or gist of these long Bhaashya portions are given succinctly so that their real importance and relevance are brought to bear on the minds of the uninitiated or immature students. Readers should remember that the word ‘Aatman’ occurs in this book thousands of times. It is spelt - ‘Atman’ with single ‘a’ for convenience sake; in the same way, the word ‘Vedanta’ is spelt with a single ‘a’, though it is pronounced with a long sound as in the former word. But both the words, when used in a Sanskrit Bhaashya quotation, are used with two ‘a’s.
I would like to record here my sincere gratitude towards the Publishers, Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028, for all the encouragement, patronage and unstinted co-operation that they have given me in bringing out this book. I have also to express my thanks to the Printers — Verba Network Services, 12th Cross Road, off 8th Main, Malleswaram, Bangalore - 560 003, who have once again done a perfect job.

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INTUITIVE APPROACH
OF
SHANKARA’S VEDANTA

(Secrets About Adhyaasa And Adhyaaroapa-Apavaada Nyaaya Revealed)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Question: What is meant by Vedanta?

Answer: ‘Veda’ means that Shaastra or science which expounds extra-sensory phenomena not within the ambit or purview of perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumaana) and such other empirical means of knowledge (Loukika Pramaanas). In that Shaastra it has been mentioned that a person should perform certain Karmas or actions, rituals or rites in order to attain certain good invisible fruits or results as well as that he should not perform certain other Karmas so as to be able to avoid or parry certain undesirable fruits or consequences. In this manner that part of the Veda which is of the nature of injunctions (Vidhi) and prohibitions (Nishedha) is called in religious parlance ‘ShaastTa’. Thus Shaastra means: ‘It should be done in this manner’ and ‘It should not be done in this manner (Shaastt Iti Shaastram’). However, there is, in addition, another part in the Vedas which expounds the Ultimate or Absolute Reality (Paramaartha Tattwa) also. Because this latter part expounds the Reality (Tattwa), it is also called ‘Shaastra’ (‘Shinashtli Iti Shaastram’) alone. Because of the reasons that: (i) It determines the Reality expounded or enunciated in the Vedas; (ii) and that textual portion is to be found at the end of Aaranyakas, which are also a part and parcel of the Vedas themselves — those Vedic portions or texts which expound the Ultimate Reality are themselves called ‘Vedantas’ only. Because those texts contain the secrets of the Ultimate Reality which is beyond the purview of the senses as well as the mind, those texts have been given another conventional name of ‘Upashads’ also.

2. Q: Which is that entity which is called ‘Vedaantaartha’?

A: ‘Artha’ or the entity that is enunciated in the Vedanta is that ‘Paramaartha’ or Ultimate, Absolute Reality which is the very essence of Being of the whole universe. That Reality has been called in
the Upanishads by various names like 'Atman' (the essence of Being. Self), 'Paramaatman' (the Ultimate Reality or Being ) 'Brahman' (That Absolute Reality of the essential nature of eternally Pure, eternally Conscious, eternally Free, i.e. Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswaroopaha, and the Immutable Entity, i.e. Aparichhinna), 'Akshara' (That Entity without any special qualities or characteristics and indestructible), 'Purusha' (That Entity which pervades everywhere). 'Satyam' (Really existing Entity) etc. In a manner of speaking, all the phenomena or entities that have been taught or expounded in Vedanta Shaastra or the spiritual science of Vedanta are fit to be called 'Vedaantaarthaa' indeed. Behind all those phenomena or objects, that prime principle which is the very substratum for them all is Intuition, and hence the title of this book has been based on It so as to suggest that Intuition (acting as the very locus or basis for all-genuine Vedantie teachings of Adi Shankara) is itself the basis for all deliberations mentioned herein.

3. Q: Who is qualified to listen to the spiritual teachings or precepts of Vedanta?

A: Those who wish to listen to and learn this spiritual science and attain thereby its profound fruits or benefits should necessarily possess four qualifications of: (i) Nitya-Anitya Viveka; (ii) Iha-Amutra Artha-bhoaga Viraagaha: (iii) Shama-Dama Aadi Shat Sampat; (iv) Mumukshutwa.

To explain:

(i) Nitya-Anitya Vivekaha: Means the steadfast belief which is the resultant of a Viveka or Intuitive deliberation to the effect that whatever fruit or benefit that is got as a result of some mediatory means of action (Kritaka) is truly Anitya or non-eternal. Whatever is achieved in this world (Loaka) is, in truth, Anitya indeed, for every now and then all those achievements or acquisitions are dissipating, degenerating (Kshayaswabhaavaha): in a similar manner, whatever happiness to be enjoyed in other worlds herefore to be acquired as a result of 'Dharma' or religious deeds or merits here in this life is also dissipative and hence impermanent alone. In this Nitya-Anitya Viveka the unique teaching that — "For the sake of such non-eternal, transient happiness whatever Saadhana or effort is put in — howevermuch firm and strong it may be — that resultant benefit will be, at best, proportionately lasting or durable, but can never be ever-lasting, eternal", — is implicit.

(ii) Iha Amutra Artha Bhoaga Viraagaha: That high sense of renunciation (Vatraagya) in mere enjoyment — born as a result of the above-mentioned Viveka in (i) and by getting rid of any kind of hankering after achieving or acquiring any particular thing or
objective either in this present world of this birth or any other world of the next birth and enjoying it — is called Iha Amutra Artha Bhoaga Viraagaha.

(iii) Shama Damaadi Shadsampat: One who practises the six physical and psychic disciplines or human excellences like: Shama (Control over the inner instrument of the mind). Dama (Control over the external instruments of the five senses), Uparati (Introvertedness), Titeeksha (Forbearance), Shraddha (One-pointed dedication) and Samaadhaana (Equipoise of the mind) — he alone will be able to attempt to Intuit or cognize the Ultimate Reality of Atman with all steadfast dedication.

These six disciplines are very essential for any Saadhaka or seeker to undertake the next higher and profound spiritual practices which will enable him directly to Intuit his essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman. Here in this context the seeker should remember that since Atman is his eternal Being and not a resultant product or fruit of any physical or mental action, all these disciplines are meant, in the ultimate analysis, for the cleansing of his psyche of all its dross in the form of desires, distractions, aims and objectives in this mundane world, nay in other worlds too. From this standpoint, the six disciplines will acquire some extra meaning and significance like: Shama means controlling the mind so as not to allow it to stray out in thinking about objects or phenomena in the external world; Dama means keeping the five senses too in check accordingly; Uparat means giving up all attempts and actions to acquire external objects or seek any objective by the subtle practice of introvertedness; Titeeksha means the capacity to withstand or bear with the suffering posed by the pairs of opposites like cold and heat, pleasure and pain etc.; Shraddha means the unflinching or unstinted faith to the effect that: Surely and certainly the path of attaining the final goal of human existence (Purushaarthas) will accrue with the aid of the scriptural sentences (Shastra Vaakya); Samaadhaana means the capability of maintaining the equipoise of the mind without allowing it to get perturbed or disturbed by external, environmental conditions or situations. Getting a mastery over all these six disciplines alone is called here the ‘Shadsampat’ or the six-fold wealth or asset of all human beings.

(iv) Mumukshutwa: One who has an innate desire to perform Karmas and to enjoy their fruits — such a person keeps on performing Karmas over and over again and unavoidably gets repeated births in order to reap the relevant fruits and enjoy them. Thereby he becomes fully bound by this vicious circle of Janma Karma Bandha. A burning desire of the type — “How best can I get rid of this Bondage?” — alone is termed here Mumukshutwa.
And one who has acquired these above-mentioned spiritual disciplines called ‘Vivekaad Saadhana Chatushtaya’ alone is the fit person for Vedanta Shravana or listening to the Upanishadic teaching which is of an esoteric essence indeed.

4. Q: Then, in that case, those who do not possess these ‘Saadhana Sampat’ will not be able to cognize or comprehend the real purport of the Vedanta teachings, is it so?

A: It is possible to know as to what has been propounded in the Upanishads by determining the meaning of the sentences. But those who undertake to comprehend the word-meaning (literally) in that fashion may stop their deliberation at that stage itself just like those who read the newspapers with all curiosity or eagerness. However, to those who do not try to cognize what has been listened to from the scriptures so as to culminate in their Intuitive experience, the benefit which has to accrue from the Vedantic teaching (instruction) will never be attained. For, such people, instead of attempting to determine or discriminate about the essential nature of Reality behind the universe, will be ever hankering after the sensual enjoyments in the external world. In this regard a scripture says: “Paraachaha Kaamaanuyant Baalaaste Mrityoaryant Vitatsya Paasham: Atha Dheeraa Amritatwam Viditwaa Dhruvamadhruweshwila Na Praarthayante.” Meaning: “Only those who are devoid of Viveka or discrimination pursue desires or pleasures in the external world; they are like (innocent) children who are becoming a prey for Death which has cast Its net everywhere. Therefore, those who are blessed with the ability to discriminate (Intuit) that Immortal Reality (which happens to be everyone’s Self of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness, Intuitive experience) remain without hankering after anything in this Samsaara or transmigratory existence. knowing full well that nothing here that can be acquired is eternal.” — (Kaathaka or Katthoapanishad 4-2).

5. Q: Is it true that to obtain Jnaana or Intuitive Knowledge accruing from the Vedantic teaching, listening (‘Shravana’) to the Upanishadic precepts alone is enough?

A: Although for those Uttamaadhikaaris or the superior, highly qualified (evolved) persons, who are infinitesimally small in number, exclusively the exercise of listening to the Upanishadic teachings alone may be sufficient, for the numerous aspirants that kind of listening to the scriptural texts like Bhagavad Geeta and Brahma Sootras in addition and then to collate and cogitate so as to find complete agreement in all their spiritual teachings will become necessary. For, the Upanishads are the fundamental Shaastra Prasthanas, meaning.
a scientific system of approach: the Geeta is a Smriti Prasthaana or a system based on memory adopted to explain the subtle purport or secrets of Intuitive Knowledge implicit in the Upanishads; and Brahma Sootras comprise the Nyaaya Prasthaana or logical system adopted to establish or determine the real purport of the Vedantic teaching by means of dialectics. Intuitive reasoning or ratiocinations etc. Thus true Vedantic Jnaana has per force to be determined on the strength of this triad of authoritative scriptural texts called Prasthaana Traya.

6. **Q:** Then is it that anyone, whosoever he may be, can listen to those Prasthaana Trayas and determine the real meaning or purport of Vedanta?

**A:** For those qualified people. who are independently sagacious and Intuitive in their reasoning and who have carried out Vedaadhyaayana or study of the scriptural texts in the required traditional or conventional manner, these three Prasthaanas alone are sufficient. But in the case of those who are not sufficiently qualified to discern and determine the subtle import of the Shaastras will do well to grasp, comprehend the purport in accordance with the traditional methodology as propounded by Shri Shankaraachaarya in his extant and extensive Bhaashyas (commentaries).

7. **Q:** It seems that like Shri Shankaraachaarya there are other Vrittikaaras or commentators also. Neglecting or brushing aside all of them, why this compulsory insistence on determining the subtle meaning or purport of Vedanta exclusively on the strength of his teachings alone is stressed?

**A:** It is true that, prior to and contemporaneous with Shri Shankaraachaarya, with a view to determining the purport of the Vedantic texts many had written their own Vrittls or commentaries. But as a matter of historical fact, the veracity of this statement about other rival commentators having been in existence prior to or during Shri Shankara’s time can be ascertained solely from this great Aachaarya’s own reference and analysis or refutation of such works: for, none of them is available today. Therefore, it has become inevitable to ascertain the opinions of these ancient Vrittikaaras exclusively from such considerations and deliberations of their tenets found in Shri Shankara’s extant Bhaashyas.

8. **Q:** In recent times it is to be seen that many post-Shankara commentators have been clamouring that their respective commentary alone is ‘Saampradaaayic’ or traditionally the genuine one and, in addition, they have been refuting Shri Shankara’s
teachings! Will it not be proper to utilize their opinions too in our effort to determine the real purport of the Upanishadic spiritual teachings?

A: It has already been pointed out that unfortunately such opinions of other commentators either prior to or contemporaneous with Shri Shankara have to be ascertained only from the latter's Bhaashyas themselves. Shri Shankara has proved, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that all the defects existing in the various kinds of Vyaakhyaanas or commentaries of those rival commentators are correct. Further, although those post-Shankara commentators and critics have been claiming that their own theories alone are Saampradaayic or traditionally authentic and authoritative, the ancient original canonical texts which they adduce in their works are not at all available (to wit, such authoritative works seem to be imaginary and are a clever ruse to hoodwink the gullible and unwary students); it is also a hard fact that those (fictitious) variants of Vedantic Siddhaanta which these zealots have brought out have not been referred to and considered either by Adi Shankara himself or other Darshanakaaras (spiritual preceptors) who were his contemporaries. Hence one who considers this matter dispassionately with an unbiased mind will inevitably have to say that — 'In order to conclude that those spiritual teachings or theories have come down to us from time immemorial in a traditionally acknowledged method of pedagogics' — merely their 'pledge' to that effect is the support or proof.

Q: Is it not true that the rest of the commentators too, just like Shri Shankara, have established their respective tenets on the strength and support of scriptural statements and logical arguments and have further adduced proper logical arguments to show that the spiritual teachings of Shri Shankara himself are opposed to the genuine scriptural teachings as well as logic?

A: It is true indeed that the present-day commentators (Bhaashyakaaras) claim that they have examined the Prasthaana or method of approach adopted by Shri Shankara and then only they have refuted his teachings. But we have to thoroughly analyse the fact whether they have truly examined and refuted the Siddhaanta propounded by and implicit in Shri Shankara's original Bhaashyas. Here in this context what is actually true is: These so-called Bhaashyakaaras of the modern times have mistakenly believed and taken to be true those very Vyaakhyanaa Prasthaanaa or methodologies found in the later post-Shankara commentaries written by certain so-called Advaita Aachaaryas, advocating non-dualism, who have been professing that they are genuine followers of Adi Shankara, to be the real Siddhaanta.
of that great teacher: and only after establishing the true methodology of Shri Shankara the student will be able to discern clearly that the post-Shankarites have expounded their respective tenets on the basis of very inept and unsustainable logical means and devices. For this reason too, it becomes quite essential to comprehend the real essence of the genuine Shaankara Siddhaanta after an in-depth examination of the true Shaankara Prasthaana or the genuine, original methodology implicit in those original Bhaashyas alone.

10. Q: In that case, how can we discern the secret purport of Shri Shankara's Prasthaana and on what basis?

A: The answer to this query will be dealt with in full detail in the next Chapter.

II. SHANKARA'S BHAASHYAS ALONE ARE THE PRINCIPAL MEANS TO DETERMINE THE SPIRITUAL TEACHING OF VEDANTA

11. Q: How can we determine, and on the strength of which authoritative sources, the genuine spiritual teachings (Siddhaanta) of Vedanta which have been propounded and proved to be true by Shri Shankaraachaarya in accordance with his traditional school of philosophy?

A: First and foremost, the sincere seeker or aspirant should deliberate upon the Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas, which are acknowledged by many as having been authored by that eminent Aachaarya. Even then, he should give the pride of place to the Sootra Bhaashyas, over and above all, as the supreme authority for the purposes of judging and then utilize the other two Bhaashya teachings so as not to be in conflict with or contradiction to the former conclusions. For, Sootra Bhaashya is evidently a 'Nyaaya Prasthaana' or an edifying and extremely rational or logical approach: to wit, it is a Bhaashya or explanatory commentary which has been undertaken with the prime and sublime purport of determining the Upanishadic teachings after discerning the genuine interpretations of the Vedanta Vaakyas or Upanishadic sentences based on select Nyaayas or axioms (This in itself is a profound pedagogic method — a highly esoteric one at that — of training imparted to only those who are properly qualified for it and fully equipped psychically and morally, to boot. In other words, it should be treated as more sacro-sanct and systematic indeed).
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

12. Q: The rest of the Aachaaryas too have declared that their respective commentaries have been formulated with a view to determining the Vedantic Siddhaanta alone on the strength of dialectics, is it not? In that case, why should we opt for Shri Shankara's school of philosophy with such bias in this regard?

A: The other Aarchaaryas present before the aspirants, at the outset, those Pramaanas or authoritative sources which they have acknowledged. Then they enforce constraints on the aspirants asking them to accept wholeheartedly that the Upanishadic sentences are, in the main, the most authoritative ones among all Pramaanas as they are ‘Apourusheya’ or not of human origin but of divine dispensation. Further they have accepted only those Yuktis or dialectical devices in keeping with the Upanishadic sentences. In this regard, they undertake to refute the opinions of the followers of other rival schools of philosophy on the strength of Vaakya Pramaana or Upanishadic statements or sentences as being sacro-sanct as also Yuktis in consonance with them. Thus those various Bhaashyakaaras keep on quarrelling among themselves, opposing one another by forwarding various Pramaana Vaakyas as well as Yuktis! Not only are those schools of philosophy opposed to one another but also the methods adopted by them for the purpose of refuting Shri Shankaraachaarya’s methodology as envisaged in his extant Bhaashyas are also different in each case. It being so, since all these rival schools of philosophy have altogether put up numerous hurdles and hindrances in the matter (or path) of systematization, equitable and rational, of Vedantic Siddhaanta and have unwittingly contributed to the rampant confusion with regard to the burning question — “Which is the true methodology adopted in and through the Upanishadic lore?” — it becomes quite evident that their mutually contradictory Bhaashyas are not at all helpful in arriving at a convincing solution of the present problem.

13. Q: In that case, because Shri Shankaraachaarya’s Bhaashyas too are neither in agreement with any other Bhaashya nor are acceptable to the rest of the commentators, it is tantamount to saying that the Siddhaanta acknowledged to be that of Shri Shankara also is rendered unacceptable universally indeed! Then what special merit can it profess to have or claim?

A: It has to be emphasized that Shri Shankaraachaarya has reiterated that while the purport of the Upanishadic teachings is being determined, not only the sentences of the Shruti (Upanishads) and such other canonical texts but also everyone’s ‘Anubhava’ or Intuitive experience should be treated as a valid means of determination or proof (Pramaana); further, he has accepted the subtle but unfamiliar truth
that any Pramaana or valid means of knowledge, whatever it be, should necessarily engender the 'Anubhava' or correct knowledge of its exclusive object (Prameya) and then, and then alone, it is fit to be accepted as a genuine Pramaana. Therefore, it amounts to saying that that spiritual teaching alone which has been founded on the support and strength of universal (that is, everyone's) Anubhava becomes eligible to be called 'the universally acknowledged Siddhaanta', and not otherwise.

14. Q: When Anubhava too differs from person to person, what special significance can be adduced to Anubhava?

A: Because Anubhava which is different for different persons is essentially Valyyaktika or individualistic, such Anubhava being rendered indeterminate or uncertain is true indeed. For example, it cannot be guaranteed that the dream that one person has experienced can be experienced by another. But the Saarvatrīka Anubhava or the universal intuitive experience, which is exclusively granted by divine dispensation to all human beings everywhere and at all periods of time without any exception whatsoever, of having the dream experience in general is uniquely one and the same and hence universal; and further, because it exists without any restrictions imposed by time, space or any other object or entity whatsoever, there can never arise any dispute or controversy whatsoever about that universal experience or Anubhava. Therefore, everyone, irrespective of his personal affinity towards, or conviction about, a particular school of philosophy, will have to per force acknowledge the Siddhaanta in accordance with the Shrutis (Upanishads) and Anubhava (intuitive experience — which is universally and inviolably true and convincing) which this great Aachaarya has propounded in and through his Bhaashyas (which are, fortunately for all of us, extant, intact and readily available).

15. Q: If so, how come there have arisen so many different opinions with regard to Shri Shankaraachaarya's Siddhaanta? Because of the reason that it has given rise to so many controversies, you too are advocating for determining as to what exactly is his Vedantic teaching, is it not?

A: True. Total negligence of the fact that — "For his metnoology (Prasthaana) the one prime support and foundation is Saarvatrīka Anubhava alone" — by these disputants is the one prime cause for giving rise to many different interpretations and opinions about Shri Shankara's methodology. Therefore, first and foremost we have to determine whether Shri Shankara has, in truth, relied for the purposes of formulating his unique Siddhaanta, solely and exclusively on the firm
and founding support of *Saarrvatraika Anubhava*. Even if it is so, how is it that till today this paramount truth has not dawned on the minds of the disputants? — is another question which we have now to thoroughly examine; only then we will be able to determine once for all without giving any room for doubt or misunderstanding as to what exactly is the essential nature and feature of this *Siddhaanta* which is fully in consonance with universal Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*).

16. Q: If it is true that Shri Shankara has primarily and unequivocally advocated the importance of *Saarrvatraika Anubhava* alone, how can it be explained that he, just like the rest of the Aachaaryas or spiritual preceptors, has been championing the concept that — "For the Intuitive Knowledge (*Jnaana*) of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman (*Paramaarrtha Tattva*) the validity (*Praamaanya*) of the Vedanta Shaastra alone is the true means of knowledge"? Where was the necessity for him to write his own (differing) *Bhaashya* to the principal *Upanishads*? And what is the reason for his attempt in writing, side by side, *Bhaashyas* on the *Geeta* and the *Brahma Sootras*?

A: (i) The rest of the *Vrittiukaaras* (commentators) had not acknowledged the hard truth that — "In the *Upanishads* it has been one-pointedly taught as their ultimate purport that 'Atma Jnana' (Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization) is attained by means *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) alone."

Therefore, it becomes evident that the *Upanishadic* sentences do not become *Pramaana* (valid means of knowledge) merely on the solitary ground of their being sentences. Under the circumstances, it became quite necessary for Shri Shankara to stress with all the power and perspicacity at his command that — "For rightly interpreting and imbibing the subtle purport behind those esoteric sentences in the *Upanishads*, Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) too is essential and inevitable."

It also became equally necessary for him to write his *Upanishadic Bhaashyas* so as be acceptable to all Vedantins.

(ii) In the *Bhagavad Geeta* the quintessence of the meaning and purport of the *Vedantas (Upanishads)* alone is presented; in order to expound that — "In the *Geeta* too *Tattva Jnana* has been enunciated with the aid of *Yuktis* (logical devices) in consonance with *Anubhava* alone" — as well as its corollary that — "In the *Geeta* spiritual disciplines and practices (*Saadhanas*) in consonance with the above tenet have been taught" — Shri Shankara was compelled, so to speak, to write his *Bhaashyas*. Similarly, in order to determine and demonstrate as to — "How can one discern the truth that for the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Geeta* this very prime purport is common?" — on the strength
Shankara's Bhaashyas are the Principal Means

of dialectics (Yuktis) he had to write his Sootra Bhaashyas. For, many commentators, prior to and contemporaneous with Shri Shankara, had written their respective commentaries (Vrittis) to demonstrate that — "Both in the Upanishads and the Bhaagavad Geeta the Jnaana that is taught is essentially ‘Upaasanaaroopa’ or of the form or nature of mental meditations alone." In such a confused and chaotic state of affairs in Vedantic circles it became all the more important and expedient to refute their erroneous tenets and to establish the truth on the unflinching and fundamental strength of logical devices fully in consonance with universal Intuitive experience (Anubhava, which is Absolute, beyond the realm of the senses and the mind; on the one hand, and outside the purview of time-space-causation categories, on the other) that — "In the Upanishads it has been propounded that Jnaana of ‘Atma Vastu’ or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Reality of the Self (Pure Consciousness) alone is the ‘Hetu’ or means — in its ultimate purport or perspective — for ‘Parama Purushaarthta’ or the final, ultimate destination (Beatitude) of all human existence and endeavour" — and as a secondary teaching that — "For the sake of the middle and low grade aspirants, both the psychic meditations (Upaasanas) and the physical rites and rituals (Karmas) have been enunciated in the Shaastras."

17. Q: In that case, it is tantamount to saying that because of the reason that Shri Shankara has demonstrated the truth that — "Vedantic sentences must and should be in consonance with Yukti and Anubhava" — Shaastra is rendered to be merely ‘Anuvaadaka’ or explanatory repetition or reference to what is already mentioned (to wit, it is analogous to any portion of that Brahmana which comments on, illustrates or explains in detail a ‘Vidhi’ or direction or stipulation previously laid down and which does not itself lay down any new directions or stipulations; in other words, it is corroborative in nature) and not by itself independently a Pramaana, is it not?

A: Because the Vedanta Shaastra by itself instructs or propounds that — "Parabrahman or the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. Atman, which is the really real Transcendental Truth of all existence. can be Intuited or cognized both by means of Anubhava (Saarvatrika Anubhava) and Yukti in consonance with this universal Anubhava" — it amounts to saying that — "Shaastra alone is the exclusive Pramaana with regard to that subject-matter (of Parabrahma Tattwa)." In this unique Vedanta Shaastra or spiritual science par excellence teaching the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of Atman, Shri Shankara, as is his wont.
has not at all exemplified or illustrated ‘Valiyaktkka’ or individualistic Yuktils or Anubhavas: purposefully indeed he has mentioned Saarvatrkika Yuktils and Anubhavas at the Intuitive level (to wit, at this esoteric, supramental level one invariably goes beyond all dualities of the empirical world as also all conceptual or ideological dualities and uncertainties indeed). Therefore, by these fallacious and fallible arguments or doubts raised by the opponents there is no danger or harm whatsoever posed to this Shaastra’s ‘Praamaanya’ or validity or authority as a canonical text: in fact, is it not true that because all Pramaanas of Knowledge give rise to an Intuitive Knowledge (Anubhava) of their respective objects or phenomena quite spontaneously and as the latter are entities in esse (Yathaartha), they are called ‘Pramaanas’?

Besides, because of the paramount reason that Shri Shankara has proved, beyond doubt, in his commentary bristling with a mass of ‘Sootras’ or aphorisms called ‘Vedanta Meemaamsaa Shaastra’ that — “All the Vedantas or Upanishads have the ultimate puport (Taatparya) of bringing about the final (Intuitive) fruition of ‘Aatmakatwa Jnaana’ or the unitary, integral or plenary Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure, Non-dual Consciousness” — and, in addition, the sentences which teach Upaasanas are also having the ‘Parama Taatparya’ or the final culmination in that very ‘Jnaana’ in the ultimate analysis” — it becomes evident that ‘Shaastra Praamaanya’ is established on a sound and steadfast foundation.

18. Q: If, as you have argued out, deliberation on the Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas alone is enough for determining the essential validity and veracity of the Siddhaanta of this profound science of Vedanta, why did Shri Shankaraachaarya write certain other ‘Prakarana Granthas’ or personal treatises dealing with specific topics enunciated in the Vedanta Shaastra? Is It not proper to treat those Prakaranas too as equally valid (Pramaanas) in the matter of determining the Tattwa or the Ultimate Reality?

A: It is true that among several Vedantins there is a conventional, deep-seated belief rampant to the effect that Shri Shankara has authored several Vedanta Prakaranas. It is also true that all at once we cannot affirm that there is no substantiating support for such a belief. Even so, it is certain beyond any doubt that there is no sufficient and convincing proof to categorically say that all those Prakaranas which have come into existence in his name and popularly known to be his works are truly written by him. For, at present many a time people are clamouring among themselves that two or three treatises with one and the same name are the works of Shri Shankaraachaarya. For example, the fact that under the one single title of — ‘Prashnoattara Ratna Maalika’ — several treatises being published in Shri Shankara’s name
has come to light. Not only such dubious Prakaranas contain certain Upadeshas or doctrines which in certain circumstances and contexts are mutually contradictory, but also are convincing evidences to conclude that they are not at all the great Aachaarya's works; at certain other times, quite contrary to the principal and prime spiritual teachings in his original Bhaashyas there exist texts which present and affirm those very topics and tenets in a different manner altogether. Under such a confusing state of affairs, it is enough if we discard totally those controversial, though popular, Prakarana Granthis and rely entirely and exclusively on the sound support and strength of his Prathaana Traya Bhaashyas.

19. Q: In addition to Shri Padmapadaachaarya and Shri Sureshwarachaarya, who were famous as the direct disciples of the Bhaashyakaara (Shri Shankaraachaarya), there are also Vyakhyaanakaaras (post-Shankara commentators) who have been acknowledged by the present-day scholars and academicians as great erudite Vedantic preceptors; besides, Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who has become famous as a dedicated research scholar in several schools of philosophy like Saankhya, Yoga, Meemaamsaa, Nyaya etc., is one among them. Can it be said that efforts (in the form of his works and commentaries) of such an eminent scholar of recent times to determine the purport of Shri Shankaraachaarya's Sootra Bhaashya are not helpful for guidance here in this context?

A: The fact that all Vyakhyaanakaaras (post-Shankara commentators or glossators) were the direct disciples of Shri Shankaraachaarya has not yet been established. For instance, to conclude that Shri Padmapadaachaarya, who is popularly accepted and is famous as Shri Shankaraachaarya's direct disciple, was himself the genuine author of the controversial text called 'Panchapaadika', which is reputed to be the glossary on Shri Shankara's Sootra Bhaashyas, neither in that treatise itself nor in its later sub-commentaries by scholars going by the name of 'Vivaranakaaras' there is to be found any reference or mention at all. Further, a medieval scholar by name Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who had written a sub-commentary (Vyaakhyaana) by name 'Bhaamati' on Sootra Bhaashya, had not only written a commentary on Shri Mandana Mishra's 'Brahma Siddhi', a Vedanta Prakarana Grantha, but also it has been found that he has scrutinized and adopted in his glossary of 'Bhaamati' some theories of Mandana Mishra. It being so, if we rely on the support or help of a Vyaakhyaana Grantha for our deliberation, it will amount to inviting the risk and danger of placing ourselves up against all kinds of hurdles and hindrances in our arduous task of determining Shri Shankara's pristine pure Siddhaanta.
20. Q: Nevertheless, these sub-commentators are undoubtedly ancient scholars who had unflinching respect and reverence for Shri Shankaraachaarya. Can it ever be disputed that if we take into account their opinions and examine them while determining the great Master's Siddhaanta, it will not be helpful in any way at all? Is it not quite rationally true also that it is better and more advantageous, though marginally may be, to seek guidance from those works of Vyaakhyaanakaaras who were very near to the Aachaarya's times and had the better facility of determining the Siddhaanta in a scientific manner than the present-day Vedantins who are far removed in time and are trying to determine it quite independently?

A: Not so. If only the Vyaakhyaanakaaras had followed the original Bhaashyas of Adi Shankara literally and had attempted to elucidate the secret and subtle meanings and purports of those texts, or, in the alternative, if they had attempted to seek and show as to which of the Bhaashya excerpts had been adduced to substantiate and support their own independent conclusions as and when such tenets had been presented before the general followers or readers, then in that event as suggested by you their sub-commentaries would have been invariably helpful in deciding the correct Siddhaanta in full agreement with the original Bhaashyas. But unfortunately that is not the real state of affairs at all. In support of this conclusion a few glaring examples are mentioned below:

(i) These post-Shankara glossators have, instead of accepting and interpreting the simple and straightforward meaning of the Bhaashya portions even where they are very evident and indubitable, distorted the original Bhaashya sentences and have attempted to show that they have different (i.e. their own misconceived) meanings for them.

(ii) They have surreptitiously introduced and interpolated such theories which have not even been suggested or mentioned anywhere in the Bhaashyas, and thereby they have strengthened the erroneous belief that quite different from the traditional and time-tested 'Bhaashya Prasthaana' is the present-day, highly-speculative 'Vyaakhyaan Prasthaana'.

(iii) These post-Shankara Vyaakhyaanakaaras have projected their own doctrinaire or dogmatic theories quite contrary to the Siddhaanta which Shri Shankara had vociferously and vigorously propounded and have unwittingly brought about contradiction or abrogation of the very methodology which they have themselves acknowledged earlier.

(iv) Not only have these post-Shankara sub-commentators have argued out amongst themselves mutually opposing one another's
Shankara’s Bhaashyas are the Principal Means

Prasthaanaas but also if one wishes to determine what exactly is their opinion he has per force to take recourse to other Upavyaakhyaaanas or sub-commentaries. More often than not, those sub-commentaries too are, in certain circumstances or contexts, quite opposed to their own respective sources or original authoritative treatises.

(v) So much so, for the present chaotic trend of the alien Bhaashyakaaraas (opposed to Shri Shankara and who are rabid, chronic critics of his — ever ready to pick holes in the latter’s methodology and teachings) to have been invariably deluded to think that merely by refuting any one of these defective Vyaakhyaanas written by these post-Shankara commentators they have succeeded in condemning or refuting Shri Shankara’s Prasthaana and Siddhaanta themselves — these numerous mutually contradictory Vyaakhyaanas have become solely responsible.

21. Q: All right. As per your above list of allegations and conclusions, can you give at least one apt illustration for each one of the five allegations for our edification?

A: (I) Example for distorting the meaning of the Bhaashya excerpt even in a context where its meaning or purport is indubitably evident and clear and further trying to show that there exists quite a different meaning for it:


Here in this context, it is crystal clear and unambiguously evident that the literal meaning of this Bhaashya statement is: “Although Atman and Anaatman (Self and not-self, respectively) and their respective Dharmas or characteristic qualities are extremely different and distinct, because of the reason that the one is not distinguished from the other by means of discrimination (Itaretaraavivekena), as a result of Mithyaajnaana or misconception, people in general have been transacting in their workaday world in the forms of ‘I am this’, ‘this is mine’, and such transactions are quite natural and innate (Natsargika).”

Even so, it is distorted in the manner: The word ‘Natsargika’ means ‘Pratyakchaitanyasattaamaatraanubandht’ — meaning, that phenomenon which is conjoined to the Pure Being or Existence of the internal Pure Consciousness; further.
‘Loakavyavahaaraha’ (which, literally speaking, means — "routine, mundane transactions carried out by the common run of people) is distorted to mean — ‘Loakahil Vyasahara, Manushyotsam Ityabhitmaanaaha’ — meaning, the feeling or thought entertained by the people to the effect — ‘I am a human being’: ‘Mithyaajnaananimittha’ — meaning, ‘Mithya Tadajnaanam Cha Mithyaajnaananam....... Tannimittha Tadupadaanaaha’ — meaning, Ajnaana or non-comprehension which is false (Mithya) and indefinable (Anirvachaneeya) which is itself the ‘Nimitta’, that is, material cause (Upadaana Karana) — (Panchapaadika pp 84-88). Thus one Vyaakhyaanakaara has distorted the original Bhaashya sentence and drawn his own conclusions and his is very clearly a naive attempt to squeeze into the Bhaashya the alien concept or theory of ‘Avidyaa Upadaana’ (Avidyaa itself treated as a potential force which is the material cause for the world of duality) — suitable to his own queer but erroneous Siddhaanta.

(ii) Example for evolving and projecting theories or concepts nowhere to be found in the original Bhaashyas:

The Bhaashyakaara’s Siddhaanta is: “By means of ‘Samyaajnaana’ or Intuitive experience of the Self one’s ‘Mithyaajnaana’ or misconception is totally removed and the Jnaani (Self-Realized one) gets convinced that never in the three tenses of time his essential nature of Being was of the forms of ‘Kartru’ or an agent of action or ‘Bhoaktru’ or an enjoyer.”

Quite contrary to this Bhaashya interpretation some post-Shankara commentators have written in their treatises like ‘Ishta Siddhi’ and ‘Vivarana’ etc. that: “Till the fall of the physical body an ‘Avidyaa Lesha’ (a remnant of nescience or non-comprehension), meaning, a ‘Samskaara’ or a latent impression and its remnant invariably exists.” Some others have even gone to the extent of imagining that, in the contexts where it is said that the sea-shell (nacre) and rope etc. are misconceived to be silver and snake, respectively, etc. an indefinable silver (Anirvachaneeya Rajata) and an indefinable snake (Anirvachaneeya Sarpa) etc. are born actually as effects of the causal Avidyaa and then have foolishly proceeded to adduce peculiar but puerile Yukuts to uphold their own whimsical, untenable opinions.

(iii) Example for projecting their own conceptual theory quite contrary to the one teaching specifically reiterated by the Bhaashyakaara:

Although Shri Shankara in his (extant, original) Bhaashyas has stressed that ‘Adhyaasa’ or misconception is ‘Anaadl’ or
Shankara's Bhāṣyaśas are the Principal Means

beginningless (to wit, without a cause, as it is not an effect of something and hence a natural phenomenon in everyone's empirical experience: further, it can be, in a manner of speaking, equated with 'Āvidyā' or nescience, ignorance or non-comprehension, but not with Maayaa). some post-Shankara commentators have (erroneously and totally oblivious of the traditional methodology) projected that for this Adhyaasa a new formulation called 'Āvidyāa Shakti' or potential force of nescience is the cause: and Āvidyāa and Naamaroopaatmaka Maayaa (illusory phenomena of the nature of names and forms — mainly referring to the empirical world of duality) are both one and the same. Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who had earlier propounded that the Adhyaasa (misconception born out of mutual superimposition) between Atman (Self) and Anaatman (not-self) is itself Āvidyāa, has later on stated that 'Avyaakrita' or unmanifested seed form of the world of duality (which is really nothing but and synonymous with Maayaa, according to Shri Shankara) is itself Āvidyāa and this latter is said to be manifold, one for each Jeeva or soul — quite contrary to his own earlier statement as well as to the Bhaashya (which he has declared he has followed and commented upon by way of elucidation). Further. he has opined that Adhyaasa and Jeevatwa are, like the axiom pertaining to the seed and the sprout, mutually a cause for the other — this doctrine too is quite contrary to Shri Shankara's Bhaashya.

(iv) Example for the various exponents of Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana disputing mutually amongst themselves as also for the sub-commentaries on these Vyaakhyaanas being contradictory to their original sources:

(a) Thinking that Vaachaspati Mishra, who is the author of Bhaamatee Vyaakhyaana, has opined that — 'Jeeva is of an essential nature quite separate from the Antahkarana (Mind) and that between Jeeva and Paramaatman (the Supreme Self) there exists a relationship just as that between Ghataakaasha or pot-space and Mahaakaasha or huge open space, Shri Prakaashaatma, who has written a sub-commentary (Vivarana) on Panchapaadika (popularly believed to have been written by Shri Padmapaadachaarya, a direct disciple of Shri Shankara), has enumerated some Yuktics (logical devices) to establish his own exclusive Prasthaana or methodology by propounding afresh that - "Jeeva is a Pratibimba or reflection of Brahman in Avidyaa."

(b) In the original source, viz. Panchapaadika, for his sub-commentary, although it has been stated therein that the sentences advocating that 'Shravana', 'Manana' etc. have to
be practised are ‘Arthavaada’ or of secondary importance alone. Shri Prakaashaatma has misinterpreted it saying that—
“Shravana has been stipulated by way of a Vidhi or injunction in the Upanishads and that the first Sootra or aphorism in the Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa, viz. ‘Athaaatoa Brahma Jynaasaa’, meaning—‘Now then (the totality of the teaching of) Brahman (the Ultimate Reality) for the sake of those who have Its Jynaasaa (desire to know)’ has the exclusive purport of determining the qualifications etc. of those who can perform or observe that ‘Shravana Vidhi’ or injunction for listening—quite contrary to both Panchapaadika and the Bhaashya texts.

(c) With regard to the three aspects of direct Intuitive spiritual practices of Shravana (listening to the Upanishadic texts), Manana (ratiocinating or ruminating over that which is heard) and Nididhyaasana (contemplating on the Ultimate Reality of the Self so as to culminate here and now in its Intuitive experience), on the subject as to which of them is the ‘Angi’ or the predominant factor and which is the ‘Anga’ or the secondary factor—there were conflicting opinions between the Bhaamatee Prasthaana and the Vivarana Prasthaana and both these Vyaakhyaanas are opposed to the original Bhaashya texts (of Shri Shankara) which propound that—“Merely from Shravana alone Jnaana or Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of the Self may accrue (to the highly evolved first-grade Jljnaasu).”

(d) Although Shri Vaachaspati Mishra has opined in his ‘Bhaamatee’ that—“There are two ‘Antraaachya’ or indefinable Avidyaas called ‘Kaaranaavidyaar’ and ‘Kaaryaavidyaar’” in the sub-commentary on Bhaamatee called ‘Kalpataru’ there is a persistent attempt to establish that between those two Avidyaas one is called ‘Moolaavidyaar’.

(e) If an ardent student or a discerning scholar who is not biased or gullible makes a cool-headed, incisive deliberation on what Shri Shankara’s original Bhaashya says on the Vedanta Sootra (1-2-23), viz. “Roopoapanyaasaachha”. on the one hand, and how cleverly but surreptitiously the same Bhaashya text has been distorted in Bhaamatee Vyaakhyaana, and in its turn, how this latter version is further distorted in its sub-commentary, viz. Kalpataru, and further in its sub-commentary, viz. Partmala, then he cannot miss to notice very clearly how at each later stage there has been a progressive contradiction.
Shankara’s Bhaashyas are the Principal Means

Thus because of the reason that the fact — “The internal and mutual disputation engendered among the various Vyaakhyaanakaaras have become the root cause for the alien, rival Bhaashyakaaras (like Raamaanujaachaarya, Madhwaachaarya etc.) misunderstanding or wrongly comprehending genuine Shaankara Siddhaanta and therefore jumping to the erroneous but delusive conclusion that — ‘Refutation of the Vyaakhyaana Prasthaanas is itself tantamount to the refutation of Shri Shankara’s Vedantic teachings propounded in his (original) Bhaashyas” — is so very clear. we have not ventured further by enumerating more such glaring examples.

Under the circumstances, in such a confounding and chaotic state of affairs caused by (a) the Vyaakhyaanakaaras, (b) the followers of various conflicting Prasthaanas, (c) rival Bhaashyakaaras having written and published a vast Vedantic literature quite contrary to the pristine pure Shankara’s Bhaashya. and, in addition, having propagated mutually contradictory interpretations — the scenario in which the present-day Jijnasasu or aspirant finds himself totally deluded and dazed to judge as to which among them all is correct and which is wrong, is. to say the least. pitiable and pathetic.

22. Q: In that case, what is your considered opinion as to which proper and correct path the true aspirant has to adopt in order to discern the genuine Vedanta Siddhaanta?

A: (i) First and foremost, he should study and deliberate upon Shri Shankara’s original Bhaashyas which are the most ancient and traditionally authentic and authoritative works and thereupon determine the Vedanta Siddhaanta that can be deduced from them so as to be totally in agreement (having reconciled all the apparent contradictions that may crop up from the standpoint of the uninitiated or the newly initiated).

(ii) This complete reconciliation has to be per force achieved in accordance with Saarvatrlka Anubhava alone (as stressed earlier).

(iii) And then, in consonance with a Siddhaanta arrived at in such a highly rational and Intuitive manner. other spiritual teachings even from the Vyaakhyaanaras and Bhaashyaantararas in so far as they are unopposed to the above-mentioned Siddhaanta. Yukti and Anubhava also may be accepted. One should develop such a catholicity of the mind. sagacious and supersubtle.

23. Q: You have been saying that Vyaakhyaanakaaras as well as the rest of the Bhaashyakaaras have been disputing with one another believing that the subject-matter of Vedanta Siddhaanta is nothing other than Upaasana which has an invisible (posthumous)
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

fruit. If so, how at all we can come across a Tattva (spiritual tenet) which is in consonance with Anubhava in their literature?

A: The Vyaakhyaanakaaras have deliberated upon the purport of Vedantic sentences which pertain to ‘Vastu’ or the Reality. Therefore, in contexts where their interpretations or opinions are not in contradiction with the original Bhaashyas (of Shri Shankara) they should be necessarily accepted.

Because even in the sentences pertaining to the Upaasana Vidhis the Ultimate Reality (Paramaartha) of Brahman alone has been stipulated by way of an injunction to be meditated upon (Upaasana) for the sake of, or the benefit of, the middle-class aspirants, to the extent the essential nature of Brahman, which is defined in those Vidhi sentences to be made the object for meditation (Upaasya), is in consonance with the Brahma Swaroopa mentioned in the Brahma Vaakyaa we must necessarily believe it to be valid (Pramaana). Only the deliberations pertaining to the fruits or results which are promised to be attained in other births or other worlds (Janmaantara and Loakaantara Phalas) on the mere authority of the Shastra should be determined in accordance with grammatical or syntactic rules as applied to the interpretation of sentences (Vaakya Dharma) and axiomatic regulations stipulated in Meemaamsaa Shastra. Even with regard to Avida or non-Vedic religious tenets, if there are instructions which are Apratishiddha or not refuted, then even for such tenets there may be scope here in this context. We should never forget that for ‘Vedanta Siddhaanta’, in the main, Vedantas or Upantshads alone are the original authoritative sources.

III. THE IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO ADHYAASA BHAASHYA IN SHAANKARA PRASTHAANA

24. Q: After discarding both the Vyaakhyaanas and the Bhaashyaantararas, is there any easy device to determine the Vedanta Siddhaanta in accordance with Shri Shankara’s methodology?

A: Yes, of course. This great teacher has, in truth, given the quintessence of all his Prasthaana in his work called ‘Adhyaasa Bhaashya’, which he has written in the form of an introduction to his ‘Sootra Bhaashya’. Here in this book, first, it will be explained as to how this brief Adhyaasa Bhaashya serves the purpose of being an introductory commentary to the elaborate Bhaashya on the Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa Sootras. Then we will try to demonstrate as to how Shri Shankara is fully engaged and engrossed in repeatedly utilizing those very opinions or conclusions which he has deduced and depicted
in this introductory Bhaashya in his endeavour to determine, nay establish, for all times the real purport of Vedanta Vaakya or the Upanishadic sentences

25. Q: Is it your considered opinion that all the important and prominent topics which are propounded or enunciated in the Vedanta Shaastra are condensed in this introduction? Can we believe at all this apparently tall claim that in this small-sized text itself all the essence of such huge treatises like the Upanishad Bhaashyas as well as the Geeta Bhaashya has been compacted? Even if it is so, can we further believe that both the followers of the Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana and the rival Bhaashyakaaras who have propounded their own different systems of spiritual teachings (Siddhaantas) have shown a Nelson eye, so to speak, to this fact about this Adhyaasa Bhaashya and have proceeded quite nonchalantly to determine the purport of Vedantic Reality on the basis of their respective methodologies?

A: In fact, in order to bring home to our readers all these truths in this treatise alone we have undertaken this arduous task. Hence, (a) to explain in detail each topic with its subtle purport and authentic source found in this condensed introductory text: (b) to pinpoint the attention of the Jijnaasus (aspirants) towards the fact that in the later parts of the Bhaashyas how this prime purport has been detected and described at various places repeatedly and how from different viewpoints it is examined and explained by Shri Shankara; and finally, (c) to clarify or elucidate the hard fact as to how the followers of the various Vyaakhyaana Prasthaanas and the Bhaashyantarakaaras have totally neglected this importance of the Introductory Bhaashya on Adhyaasa, or, perhaps, not being able to grasp the esoteric aspects of those spiritual teachings how they have, because of their pride in their own different methodologies or theories, tried to explain and adopt Shri Shankara's opinions or teachings in quite a different, distorted manner — in all such manifold directions we will extend our efforts.

26. Q: What is the reason for giving or attaching greater importance to Adhyaasa Bhaashya than all the other Bhaashyas (on Prasthaana Traya)?

A: “Evamayamanaadiranananto(dhyaaasoa Mithyaapratyayaroopaha Kartrutwabhoaktrutwaprawartakah, Sarvaloakapratyakshaha” — meaning, “In this manner Adhyaasa (misconception), which is Anaadi (beginningless), Ananta (endless) and Swaabhaavika (quite natural), is of the nature of misconception and is capable of projecting both Kartrutwa (agentship of action) and Bhoaktrutwa (enjoyership) and is in everyone’s experience.”
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

(1) The disparateness and distinctness of the two Vedantic viewpoints, viz. Paramaarththa Drshti (Absolute. Transcendental viewpoint of the Witnessing Principle or Pure Consciousness) and Vyavahaara Drshti (the mundane. empirical viewpoint of the ego or 'I' notion); (2) the possibility of determining the Paramaarththa or the Absolute Ultimate Reality (of the Self, Pure Consciousness) on the exclusive strength of Anubhava (Intuitive experience) as also Yukti (logical devices. arguments) in consonance with the above-mentioned Anubhava, without getting caught in the delusive web of the various controversial and mutually conflicting disputes and dialectical wrangles — These two principal features have not been exemplified and elucidated in such an easy and simple manner in any other treatise whatsoever except in this compact. concise Bhaashya on Adhyaasa. Therefore. it is to be emphasized that it is quite proper to take or adopt this Bhaashya portion as the main founding source to determine the true Vedantic Siddhaanta.

27. Q: You have previously in the book entitled — “The Essential Adi Shankara” (already published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Thyagarajanagar. Bangalore-28 earlier this year) — elaborated upon the essential teachings of Vedanta Siddhaanta by Adi Shankara, is it not? Now where was the necessity of publishing another Prakarana Grantha pertaining to the same subject?

A: Though it is true that in the recent book — “The Essential Adi Shankara” — published in 1991 by us the quintessence of the Siddhaanta had been given, the two salient features, viz. (i) ‘the fact that in the introductory commentary called Adhyaasa Bhaashya the principal spiritual teachings of Vedanta have been depicted’; (ii) ‘the fact that the tenets implicit in that introductory commentary have been repeatedly elucidated in so many ways in the Sootra Bhaashya’ — were not demonstrated in that earlier publication: hence. in order to fulfil that onerous task this Prakarana has become a necessity.

IV. THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF ADHYAASA AND THE MUNDANE TRANSACTIONS CAUSED BY IT

28. Q: What is the prime conclusion or verdict of Adhyaasa Bhaashya?

A: “Evamayamanamadtranantoes Naisargikoa(s)dhyaasoa Mithyaapratyaayaroopaha Kartrutwa-Bhoakrutuwapravartakaha Sarvaloakapratyakshaha” — (This part of the Bhaashya is already exemplified and its translation given under Question No. 26 above): “Asyaanarthahetoaho Prahaanaanya Aatmaikatwapratipattaye Sarve Vedantaa Aarabhyante”
The Essential Nature of Adhyyasa

meaning. "Through the means of destroying totally this Adhyyasa which is the root cause for the catastrophe of ‘Samsaara’ (transmigratory existence) all the Upnishads have taken up that one sole purpose of helping the aspirant so that he may attain the ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’ (the Intuitive Knowledge of the unity or nonduality of Atman.’

It need not be gainsaid that from this one sentence it is quite clear that the decisive final verdict of the introductory Adhyyasa Bhaashya is that — “The whole Upnishadic lore is directed and dedicated to the sole purpose of teaching ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’ so as to enable the aspirant to get rid of this mutual Adhyyasa (misconception) between Atman and Anaatman which is of the nature of delusion alone and which is quite but natural to. and inherent in. every human being.

29. Q: What is meant by ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’?

A: The conviction that — "Atman alone is the ‘Paramaartha Satya’ or the Ultimate. Absolute Reality" — is called in Vedantic parlance ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’.

30. Q: Atman means the essential nature of Being of the Jijnaasu or aspirant alone, is it not? Anything other than that, whatsoever it may be, is not real, is it not?

A: Yes. nothing else is real. All else is ‘Anrita’. meaning. ‘Though it appears as if it is real. it Is not. in reality, an existing entity.’

31. Q: You mean to say that this world of duality which is being perceived by all of us is also not real, is it not? From the statement — “Atman alone is real” — itself is it not evident that the other things or the world of duality are existing?

A: It is true that the common run of people are carrying on their workaday transactions of the type of — “What is being perceived as an object or substance is ‘Satya’ or real; what is objectified or perceived through a ‘Pramaana’ or valid means of cognition is ‘Satya’ or real; what is subject to the regulations of action and fruit of action in one series of time. space and causation categories is ‘Satya’ or real” — by connoting certain meanings to the word ‘Satya’. But such characteristics may be suitably addressed to the perceptible world of duality seen in a dream too and the objects which seem to exist in it. When the Upnishads declare that — “Atmanis Satya or real” — they do not connote this meaning to that word ‘Satya’. The purport which the Upnishads have is said to be: ‘That Entity which. once determined to exist in a particular nature or form. does not change or give up that nature or
form is alone called ‘Satya’." In this sense and with this meaning, Atman alone is Satya, the really real Entity. All else is Anrta or a false appearance, indeed.

32. Q: Why did Shri Shankaraachaarya formulate afresh, in complete contravention of and by discrediting the universally acknowledged characteristics of empirical phenomena which are called ‘Satya’ and ‘Anrta’, his own uncommon and exclusive conditions and characteristics for them as suited to and needed by his own exclusive Siddhaanta?

A: These are not at all characteristics imagined or formulated by Shri Shankara by himself to suit his teachings; they are, in fact, characteristics established and acknowledged by the Shruttis, SmrUtis and Nyaaya Shaastra. For example:

(a) In the Taittireeya Shruti (Upanishad) it is stated: “Satyam Chaanritam Cha Satyamabhavat; Yadidam Kincha: Tatsatyammityaachakshate” — (Taittireeya 2-6). Meaning: “Satyam or Reality became ‘Satyam’ and ‘Anrta’ or real and unreal phenomena (in the empirical realm); all this perceptible world it became. That alone is being called ‘Satyam’ or real.”

Here it is explained that although in the absolute sense or in the ultimate analysis (to wit, from the standpoint of the Absolute, Transcendental Reality of Pure Consciousness, Self) Atman alone is really real; what the people in the workaday world (i.e. empirical or mundane realm) transact in the forms (pairs of opposites) like ‘Satyam’ and ‘Anrta’ are both ‘That Absolute Reality’ alone.

(b) In the Bhagavad Geeta (SmrUtis) it is stated: “Naasataoa Vidyate Bhaavoa Naabhaavoa Vidyate Sataha; Ubhayoarapi Drishtoa(s)ntastwanayoastattwadarshibhiti” — (Geeta 2-16). Meaning: “Asat or false phenomenon has no existence; Sat or real entity has no non-existence; the Tattwadarshis or those who have realized or Intuited the Ultimate Reality of Atman have cognized, and are thereby convinced of, these two (misconceived) forms or phenomena” — thus the same above meaning has been propagated.

Here in this context too Sat means Atman who is of an immutable and invariable essence of Being; Asat means even after it is determined or established as to what the essence of being of a thing is, that thing has the nature of getting changed or undergoing a mutation in its essence of being.

(c) Even if one examines this topic (teaching) from the point of view of Yukti, we arrive at the same conclusion indeed. For, whatever phenomenon which is misconceived in or superimposed upon
The Essential Nature of Adhyaasa

Atman or the Absolute. Pure Being-Consciousness never continues or persists to 'exist' in the same essential nature of being: on the other hand, it keeps on changing its forms and undergoes mutations galore.

Therefore, in the empirical transactions or, for that matter, in the mundane realm, whether it be the common run of people or the scholar, and further whether they (by dint of their natural Avidyaa) observe and connote any meanings to the words 'Satyam' and 'Anritam'. when we are engaged in and concerned about determining the supreme or Absolute (Parama) Reality or Entity (Artha or Tattwa) it is quite in order and proper in adopting the Shaastric characteristics which also happen to be quite rational. nay Intuitive, in nature. Hence, with this intention or purport at the back of his mind alone Shri Shankara has enunciated in his introductory Adhyaasa Bhaashya as follows:

"Anyoanyaasmin Anyoanyaatmakataam Anyoanyakdharmaamshch-aadyasya Itaretaraavivekena. Atyantauviktayoardharmadharmanoa-mithyaajnaana Nimittaha Satyaanrite Mithuneekritya 'Ahamidam', 'Mamedam' — Iti Naisargikoa(s)yam Loakavyavahaaraahaa".

The salient features of this sentence are:

(i) Atman is 'Satya' or real, while Anaatman is 'Anrlta' or false: both these can never possibly swap positions or their essential natures. Further, one's intrinsic characteristics or qualities can never become those of the other in whatever manner or forms. Thus these two are totally distinct or different from each other.

(ii) Even so, by dint of (the innate defect or lacuna of not being able to distinguish between them. Mithyaajnaana (misconception) has arisen and as a result of this latter misconception people in general have quite naturally mixed up the two (opposites) and have been transacting in the forms of 'I am this' and 'this is mine.'

(iii) And this mode of transaction is not at all something born or caused by way of an event in time; in truth, as a natural and inherent essence of being of everyone's 'Antahkarana' or inner instrument as the mind it lurks, so to speak, in one's psyche.

33. Q: In the description of the empirical transaction of the type of — 'I am this' and 'this is mine' in the Bhaashya, why is the usage of the word 'this' made?

A: The word — 'I' — indicates the form of Pure Consciousness (Chaltanya) as the Vishayi or subject as well as of the essential nature of Consciousness or sentience (Intuition), while the word — 'this' — signifies the Anaatman or not-self (which is insentient) which is invariably Vishaya or an object. It should be affirmed here that — "That
which is ‘Chetana’ (conscius or sentient) will ever be self-illumining and will always be of the essential nature of illumining its Vishaya and making it perceptible. From this, it can be surmised that — “The Atma Vastu or the Ultimate Reality of everyone’s Self, which is eternally (Nitya) of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness (Chaitanya Swaroopa), can never even be imagined by our mind that ‘I’ can be conceived as the Anaatman or not-self which is an object (Vishaya), insentient (Achldroopa).” Even so, it is a wonder of wonders that it can be noticed that identifying with the Anaatman which is an object as ‘I’ (Ahampratyayagoachara) every one is carrying on his or her empirical transactions. It is not possible even to conjecture as to how one can ever fully identify with any phenomenon, which is indubitably an object, as ‘I’ (myself).

This empathy or, in the language of psychology, the power of projecting one’s personality into the object of contemplation — and coined after the Greek word ‘empathelia’ — is the technique for Upaasanas, meant mainly for the middle-class aspirants or Jijnaasus.

Can anyone even guess that — “Light is dark” — in any period of time? Vice versa, can any one say — “Darkness is light”? Further, is it possible for any one at any time to conceive that — “In the phenomenon called light, there exists at least some traces of darkness”? Contrawise, is it possible to imagine that in stark darkness some traces of the essential nature of light do exist? Even so, hey presto, the common people conceive of a relationship of the non-dual Reality of Atman, of the very essence of Pure. Absolute Consciousness (Adviteeya Chaitanya Swaroopa), with the Anaatman, of the very essence of insentience, and then, as if that in itself is not enough fool-hardiness. venture out to believe innately that these two eternally opposed phenomena do have an organic relationship and, consequently, transact in the form of — “This is mine.” It stands to the credit and glory of this ‘All-time Great World Teacher’, viz. Shri Shankaraachaarya, that he exemplified, nay demonstrated quite convincingly, such a commonplace but highly delusive form of our workaday transaction which is indeed at the very root of all our waking experiences from early morning till bed time. True Jijnaasus, worth any merit whatsoever, must be able to cognize this basic, fundamental defect of Adhyaasa in themselves if they ever wish to understand the subtleties and higher esoteric teachings of Shri Shankara. This very hard but cruel fact of life has been enunciated by the universal preceptor at the outset in his first sentence of the famous ‘Adhyaasa Bhaashya’ in the form of a logical proposition:

“Yushmadasmatpratyayagoacharayaoho, Vishayavishayinoaho Tamahaprakaashavadviuddhaswabhaavayoaho Itaretarabhaavaanupapattou Siddhaayaam, Taddharmaanaamapi Sutaraam Itaretarabhaavaanu-papattihi — Ityataha Asmatpratyayagoachare Vishayini Chidaatmake
Yushmatpratyayagoacharasya Vishayasya. Taddharmamaanaam Chaadhyaasaaha. Tadvlparyayena Vishayinastaddharmamaanaam Cha Vishaye Adhyaasoa Mithyet Bhavitum Yuktam." Meaning — Because of the reasons that — (a) Vishaya (object) and Vishayi (subject). which have become cognizable as the objects for the two Pratyayas or concepts of 'you' and 'I', respectively, and which are of mutually opposite natures like darkness and light; (b) consequently, the possibility of one being of the essential nature of the other can never be rationally acceptable, as it is patently established (in every one's experience): (c) collaterally speaking, their respective inherent qualities or characteristics (Dharmas) can never be accepted to be interchangeable. (with the veracity of this truth also being established) — it is completely reasonable to accept the verdict that — "In the 'I'-notion (the object for the Pratyaya or percept of 'I') which is the Vishayi as also the Chidroopa Tattwa (entity of the very essence of Pure Consciousness), the Vishaya, which is perceived as an object as 'You', is misconceived (superimposed) and vice versa: in a similar fashion. their respective Dharmas or inherent. intrinsic natures or characteristics too. are mutually misconceived (Adhyaasa) is. in truth. absolutely false."

Although while describing the form or type of empirical transactions in general the word — 'Anaatman' — meaning, not-self. has been addressed as 'this' in this propositional sentence (at the commencement) viz. "Yushmatpratyayagoachare", it is described as being suited to be addressed to the notion of 'you'; there is a purport behind this apparent discrepancy. In our workaday transactions, 'this I' (such and such an 'I') — in this manner the two words — 'this' and 'I' — are not only addressed to the Vishaya (object) and the Vishayi (subject), respectively, but also they are used for an object too. But it becomes incomprehensible as to how one can use expressions like — 'I which is you' and 'you which is I' — in any context whatsoever; for, it is so very clearly discernible that — 'You can never be I' — as also that — 'I can never be you'. It being so, it should be clearly understood that here in this context Shri Shankara has attempted successfully to bring home the full force of the hard fact of all transmigratory life that — 'Aanaatman' or not-self. which can always and invariably be addressed as 'You', distinguishable from one's own subjective 'I', can never be associated or blended organically with the sentient and self-cognitive 'I', and reckoned or even spoken of in that fashion. (In other words. much better than the use of the word 'this'. the epithet or significant appellation of 'you'. which is so very obviously and physically noticeable. is suitable to drive home the idea). Even so, it is the irony of life that in Atman (Self) who is of the very essence of Pure Consciousness (Chidroopa) and, consequently, for whom only the subjective (self-conscious) appellation of 'I' can rightly be used in all our empirical transactions — in other words, which can never be dealt with in
the form of 'You' (an object, insentient phenomenon) — all the human beings (unwarily and unwittingly, as it were) mix up the Anaatman which is extremely and totally of an opposite and alien character and nature to that of Atman and are carrying on the whole gamut of their mundane dealings. And. this phenomenon is in the experience of each and every one of us human beings without any exception whatsoever. This is the subtle meaning of this part of the Bhaashya.

34. Q: What is meant by 'Vyavahaara' or empirical transactions?

A: (a) To know or cognize in the manner — 'It is like this'. (b) to communicate the same through speech or language to others and (c) behave in accordance with it — these three together are called 'Vyavahaara'.

35. Q: Who has ever taken the world which is Anaatman to be 'I'? Are there any persons saying so anywhere? Does anybody demonstrate or exhibit in their behaviour treating this external world of duality and variety as 'I' and 'mine' at all? Does anyone ever deal with his own self in the manner — 'This world alone is myself'? Surely this is a false (highly ridiculous) accusation only; It seems to be clearly a figment of imagination and an unfounded allegation levelled against all human beings indeed!

A: Not so. The fact that — "People in general are carrying on empirical transactions of the nature of this Adhyaasa" — is in the experience of myself, yourself and all others (It is universally human to do so). To explain: "When you say — 'I am not this world', you deem all your body, senses and mind taken together as one unit called and addressed as 'I' and on that basis alone you are now talking, is it not so? (See it for yourself with a good measure of concentration and introvertedness). Is it not true that all human beings have believed that — 'I am born in this world; I grow up, live and survive for a long period in this world: eventually, one day or the other I have to leave it behind and go — such a mortal am I!' they further speak in that manner and in accordance with such thoughts, sentiments and feelings they behave."

It is true that no one — whosoever he or she may be — is transacting in the manner — "This world is myself". But in the unit of 'I' which the people in general are dealing with in all their mundane transactions, besides their own inherent essence of Being as the Self (Pure Being-Consciousness, Shuddha Chaitanya) the alien, extraneous constituents of the body and the senses, which are distinctly not this essential nature of our Self, are mixed up; and this hard fact (which any intelligent person can easily discern, given a modicum or measure
The Essential Nature of Adhyāsa

of introverted vision. shall we say) can never be denied or refuted by any one, whosoever he or she may be. Further. it is in every one's experience that — “Despite realizing the truth that they are Anātman alone, not one's Intuitive Self. each one of us is carrying on our workaday transactions in the manner — 'This is my body; these are my senses' — indeed.” All this is Adhyāsa, pure and simple. Is it not?

36. Q: What is meant by Adhyāsa?

A: For this there is an answer given in the Bhaashya itself:


Meaning: “Of the form (nature) of memory the appearance of a thing seen before is itself Adhyāsa. Some people explain it saying: ‘In one thing the qualities or characteristics of another appear (as Adhyāsa): some others (say): ‘When one thing is misconceived (Adhyāsa) in another, the delusion (Bhrama) caused as a result of a lack of discrimination between the two things’ (is called Adhyāsa): still some others say: ‘When one thing is misconceived (Adhyāsa) in another, and when that thing is imagined to possess some other characteristics (is called Adhyāsa). In any case, the one common feature of — 'One thing appearing as if it has got the characteristics (Dharmas) of another — cannot be evaded (where Adhyāsa exists). For this reason alone, in our workaday (empirical) world (people in general) have experiences in the manner — 'The sea-shell (nacre) appears as silver'. 'one single moon appears to exist along with another (second) moon'.”

37. Q: Here it appears to have been stated (enunciated) that — 'One thing which appears as if it is another is itself Adhyāsa' — is it not?

A: In this context the deliberation on the ‘Vastu Tattwa’ or the essential nature of Being of the entity is not relevant at all. For. (Adhyasya Itaretaraavivekena Mithyaajnaanantmittoa Loakavyava­haaraha) having misconceived and as a result of not being able to distinguish (or discriminate) one from the other. the general run of people are quite naturally carrying on their (workaday) transactions of the type — 'I am this’ and ‘This is mine'; in this manner, the subject-matter of Jnaana or Knowledge alone is mentioned here. Then again, it
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

has been stated: (Satyaanrite Mithuneekritya) having mixed up or blended ‘Satya’ or real thing and ‘Anritam’ or false appearance (people carry on their transactions). Therefore, whether it is stated that — “In one thing another appears” or “One thing appears to possess the characteristics (Dharmas) of another” — both statements coalesce in connoting the meaning that — “In that manner to reckon or understand is to be under a delusion (Bhraantil).” Is it not a fact, quite popular and patent too, that both the sentences — “It appears to me like that” and “I have understood it in that manner” — have one and the same meaning?

Even so, the Vyaakhyaanakaaras (i.e. post-Shankara sub-commentators) have not only erroneously imagined the meaning of the above sentences to be: “Another entity or substance (Padaartha) which appears like a particular Vastu or object” — but have mischievously surmised and argued out that in this context Shri Shankara has examined or scrutinized the various prima facie theories (Poorva Paksha Vaadas) like ‘Akhyaati’, ‘Anyathaakhyaati’, ‘Aatmakhyaati’, ‘Satyakhyaati’, ‘Asatkhyaati’ and finally he (Shri Shankara) has refuted all of them and has propounded his own exclusive Siddhaanta called ‘Anirvachaneeya Khyaati’. It is truly a great tragedy of our times that whether it be Shri Shankara’s Sootra Bhaashya or his other Bhaashyas, nowhere even a wee bit or a smack of this theory or of the Anirvachaneeya Khyaati is to be found. Therefore, there is no other go than to conclude that in this context the Vyaakhyaanakaaras (as was their wont) digressed into unrelated and irrelevant considerations at the expense of. and giving up callously, the contextual deliberation. (Research scholars deeply interested in this controversial topic may please refer to the Sanskrit treatise — ‘Vedaanta Prakriya Pratyabhijnna’ — published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur. Hassan District, Karnataka - 573 211).

38. Q: With regard to the Jnaanaadhyaasa or misconception about the Knowledge of Reality, which you have been mentioning hitherto, has Shri Shankara examined this, at least once, anywhere else?

A: This Adhyaasa has been elaborated upon by him in his Geeta Bhaashya in the following manner:

“Kaha Punarayam Kshetrakshetrajnayoaho Samyoagao(s)bhipretaha? Uchyate: Kshetrakshetrajnayoaho, Vishayaviishayinaho, Bhinnaswabhaavyayoaho, Itaretara Taddharmaadhyasaalaxanaha. Samyoagaha, Kshetrakshetrajnaswarooapo Vkekaabhaavanibandhanaha Rajjushuktikaadeenaam Tadvivekajnaanaabhaavaat Adhyaaroapitasarparyataadi
The Essential Nature of Adhyaasa

Samyoagavat. Soa(s)yamadhyaasaswaroopaha Kshetrakshetrajna- 
myaagoa Mithyaajnaanalanaxanaha Yathaashaastram Kshetrakshetrajna-
laxanabhedaparijnaanapoorvavakam Praagdarshitaroopaat Kshetraat 
Munjaaadiveshikaam Yathoaktalaxanam Kshetrajnam Pravibhaja' Na 
Sattanaasaduchyate' Ityanena Nirastasaroopapaadhlvishesham Jneya 
Yam Brahmaswaropena Yaha Pashyati. Kshetram Cha Maayaa-
nirmitahastiswpandrishhtavastu Gandharvanagaraadivat Asadeva 
Sadiyaavabhaasate Ityevam Nishchitavijnanaaoa Yaha Tasya Yathoakt-
tasamyagdarshanaviroadhaat Apagacchati Mithyaajnaanam.''

39. Q: Please explain in detail the meaning of this long excerpt of the Bhaashya?

A: "(Question): What is the opinion of Bhagawaan Shri Krishna as to what exactly is the Samyoaga or association. union that has taken place (or that exists) between Kshetra or the dwelling place and Kshetrajna or one who dwells in it (one who knows it)?

"(Answer): We will explain. Being the Vishaya object and Vishayl subject. respectively. Kshetra and Kshetrajna are of different or distinct essential natures: this association between them is of the nature of misconceiving one in the other; further this (association) is the result of not being able to cognize their respective distinct. innate natures of being. after separating Kshetra and Kshetrajna. This (misconceived association) too has taken place just as when a rope. a sea-shell etc. have not been properly scrutinized and known (perceived). the association with the (false appearances of) projected snake. silver etc. is misconceived. Such an association (union) of the nature of Adhyaasa or misconception between Kshetra and Kshetrajna is necessarily and indubitably of the characteristics of Mithyaajnaana or false knowledge or misconception. "One who — (i) clearly cognizes the differences or distinctions in their respective essential natures of Kshetra and Kshetrajna. in accordance with the Shaastralc teachings; (ii) separates the Kshetra. the innate nature of which was described previously. from the Kshetrajna. whose essential nature of Being has already been explained. just as one separates the stalk from a blade of tender grass and then with the help of the (Shaastralc) teaching that — 'It is neither Sat (real) nor Asat (unreal)’ - Intuits or cognizes It (the latter) to be Brahman or the Ultimate. Absolute Reality to be known (Jneya Brahman) which is devoid of any distinct adjunct whatsoever on the strength of Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness alone: (iii) further. gets established in. or fully convinced by. the Intuitive experience of the type that — 'The Kshetra — though it is really Asat just like an elephant created by Maayaa or magic. an object seen in a dream. a celestial city (Gandharva Nagara appearing in the stellar region) etc. — appears as if it is real' — to such a person. because
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

to what is taught now as Samyajnaana or correct knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman this Mithyaajnaana is (totally) opposed, the latter will vanish (or will be falsified)."

This Geeta Bhaashya excerpt is like a replica of the Adhyaasa Bhaashya indeed. The salient features of the Geeta Bhaashya portion mentioned above are: (1) Adhyaasa means Mithyaajnaana (misconception) — this truth has been repeatedly stressed; (2) It is also underscored that this Mithyaajnaana is caused by (or is the outcome of) a lack of discrimination (Vivekaabhaava) between the Vishaya or the object (here the sentient Anaatman) and the Vishayi or the subject (here the eternally conscious Principle of Atman or Self); (3) It is also taught that Brahman — which is the Ultimate Reality and the essential nature (in the ultimate analysis) of Being (Pramaartha Tattwa) of the Kshetrajna who is (apparently) the Jeeva or transmigratory soul — is the Absolute. Transcendental Truth or Reality (Paramaartha Satya) devoid of any kind of (adjunct of) characteristic whatsoever (Nirvishesha); (4) Kshetra means the conglomeration of the gross and subtle bodies (Sthoola Sookshma Shareera Samudaaya). It is also pointed out that this Kshetra is — just like the ‘Mayaahasti’ or elephant projected by magic, ‘Swapnadrishtha Vastu’ or an object seen in a dream, ‘Gandharvanagara’ or a celestial city seen in the stellar region etc. — a mere appearance of an ‘Anrlta Padaartha’ or false object of perception; (5) finally, it is affirmed that by virtue of the Intuitive Knowledge of the essential nature of Being of Atman (the Ultimate Reality) gained from discrimination (Vivechana or Viveka) the Mithyaajnaana which is truly of the nature of Adhyaasa gets sublated, falsified. This alone is the quintessence of Adhyaasa Bhaashya.

Unfortunately, such a clear teaching written in no uncertain terms and giving no room whatsoever for any ambiguity or alternative interpretation had been totally discarded and, on the contrary, it was mischievously distorted in the manner: — ‘Adhyaasa’ means that superimposed substantive (materialistic) object (Adhyaasa Padaartha); ‘Mithyaajnaana’ means ‘Avidyaashakti’ or a potential power of nescience which is ‘Anrlvaachaneeya’ or indefinable; ‘Nimitta’ means material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana). This Vyakhyaaana Prasthaana or post-Shankara sub-commentary being totally different and contradictory to Shri Shankara’s original Adhyaasa Bhaashya written as a highly purposeful methodological introduction is crystal clear now.

To drive home the fact that those people who have commented upon the original Bhaashya sentence of ‘Paratra Poorvadrishtaaavabhaasaha’ in the manner — “Adhyaasa itself, meaning, another ‘Anrlvaachaneeya Padaartha’ or indefinable substance or entity, which appears like a particular entity’ — have, in truth, distorted the original Bhaashya sentence and have projected their own interpretation. Another sentence
The Essential Nature of Adhyaasa

which follows a little later in the Sootra Bhaashya itself is a clinching pointer. To wit, "Adhyaasoa Naama 'Atasminstadbuddhihi' Ityavochaama" — meaning, "Adhyaasa means a (deep-seated) concept of the type — 'This is it' — in something which it is actually not (Atasminstadbuddhihi) — thus we have enunciated." In this manner the Bhaashyakaara (Shri Shankara) has himself deliberated upon the sentence — "Paratra Poorvadrishtaaavahaaasa" — and clarified its meaning (purport). Further, to clinch the issue he has, in his conclusive sentence, written: "Mithyaapratyayaroopaha" or of the nature of false percept.

40. Q: While describing Atman, why Is it that three distinctive features like — 'Asmatpratyayagoachare' (an object for the concept or notion of 'I'), 'Vishayini' (subjective), 'Chidaatmake' (the very essence in esse or Pure Consciousness) — have been mentioned?

A: The essential nature of Being of Atman is 'Chidaatmaka', meaning 'Shuddha Chinmaatra' (of the very essence of Pure Consciousness or Intuitive experience of the Self). But that very Atman (Absolute, non-dual) in the 'Vyavahaaraavastha' or the mundane, empirical state (of diversity or duality) is reckoned as both 'Asmatpratyayagoachara' and 'Vishayini'; to wit, from the standpoint of Anaatman, which is both 'Yushmatpratyayagoachara' (the object for the concept or notion of 'You' — which can never be equated with or identified as 'I' as explained before) and 'Vishaya' (an object always for its subject) — and which has to be postulated exclusively for the purposes of teaching or understanding — we have to discern it tentatively. Hence, all the three distinct epithets are necessary.

For this reason alone, Shri Shankara has himself raised an objection of the type that — "The fact that there has been Adhyaasa conceived in Atman appears to be quite contrary to, or distinct from, the familiar, popular Adhyaasa (accepted on all hands)!" — and has provided a consolation in the following manner:

Bhaashya excerpt by way of an objection: "Katham Punaha Pratyagaatmani Avishaye Adhyaasoa Vishyataddharmaanaam? Sarvoa Hl Purooa(svasthita Vishaye Vishyaantaramadhyasyanti Yushmatpratyayagoapetasya Cha Pratyagaatmano(a)s)ishayarvam Braveeshi."

This objection has been raised in order to elucidate and elaborate upon the spiritual teaching that — "Atman exists as an object for the notion or concept of 'I.'" The purport behind the element of doubt implicit in this objection is: "It is seen that people in general misconceive one thing in another thing. For example, a rope which is lying in front of anybody is wrongly taken or reckoned to be a snake, but it is not true that any one reckons one particular entity, which is
Paroaksha or beyond the range of sight or invisible and which is not at all an object for any instrument of cognition whatsoever as something other than that entity. is it not?

For this the consolation is: "Uchyaate: Na Taavadayamekaa(s)ntenaa-vishayaha: Asmatpratyaya Vishayatwaat. Aparoakshatwaatasha Pratyagaatmaprasiddhehe: Na Chaayamasti Niyamaha Puroa(s)vasthita Eva Vishaye Vishayaantaramadhyasitavyamtti: Apratyakshepi Hyaakaahe Baalaastalamallinataadyadhyasyanti: Evamaviruddhaha Pratyagaat-

manya;yanaaatmaadhyaasaha."

The purport of this consolatory Bhaashya is:

(a) Because of the reason that Atman. like Anaatman. is not an object for the concepts of 'You', 'this'. we have called him 'Vishayi' or subject. cognizer and not because of the reason that he can never be reckoned as an object at all. for there is no rule of law like that; to explain. he is an object for the notion or concept of 'I'. Hence it amounts to misconceiving one thing in another thing indeed.

(b) If it is your contention or stipulation that the phrase — 'in an object' — must be interpreted only to mean — 'in an object which is perceptible'. then there is no universal rule of law at all to the effect that always in the case of a perceptible object or thing alone misconception should occur; for example. Aakaasha or the sky (empty space) is not perceptible (Aparatyaksha); even so. it appears to everyone as if it is above our heads and in its lower regions it is of a blue color.

(c) One more subtle point: Although Atman is not directly (or perceptibly) an object of cognition. He is familiar to every one (i.e. universally) as the notion or concept of 'I'. No one (at any time. or in any clime) has reckoned Atman as 'Paroaksha' or invisible. non-cognizable. say in the manner — 'My essential nature of Being or Existence (Swaroopa) is not known to me; I do not know whether I exist or I do not exist.' Therefore. because of the reason that Atman (Pure Consciousness) is Aparoaksha or directly Intuited but not a Paroaksha or perceptible object. there is no surprise. or anything to be seriously doubted. when we have actually misconceived the familiar Anaatman in the familiar Atman!

41. Q: Is it acceptable to the Bhaashyakaara that — "Atman is an object for the 'Ahampratyaya' or concept or notion of 'I' " or not? Why has he given one particular answer having accepted in this manner that — "He is an object' and yet another answer without accepting that — "He is not an object" — and thus has confused everyone giving two (mutually contradictory) answers?
A: He has accepted in the empirical transactions that — “Atman is an object for the notion of ‘I’” — just like the Bhaattas (Poorva Meemaamsakas — predominantly ritualists). But his supreme, final spiritual teaching (Parama Siddhaanta) is: “The Pure Consciousness as the Witnessing Principle, which is the essential nature of Being of Atman (Saakshfi Chattanya), is always a non-percept or non-concept — never an object for cognition through any means or medium.” For this conclusion there is full support to be found in Sootra Bhaashya and Geeta Bhaashya. For example, in the Sootra Bhaashya:


In this above Bhaashya excerpt it has been pointed out that people in general misconceive in (superimpose upon) Atman, who is the ‘Ahampratyayavishaya’ (the object for the notion of ‘I’) the distinct characteristics (Dharmas) of: (a) wife and children; (b) of the body, the senses and the psyche. It is very clear that here in this context it becomes expedient and essential for us to add up the ‘Dehaadl Aatmabhaava’ or the innate identification (of everyone of us) with our body, senses and mind to complete the process of summation.

(ii) “Evam Ahampratyaylnam Asheshaswaprachaarasaakshini Pratyagaatmanyadhyasya Tam Cha Pratyagaatmaanam Sarvasasa- kshinam Tadviparyayenaantahkaranaadishwadhhyasyati.”

In this Bhaashya sentence it is affirmed that, on the one hand, every one misconceives in or superimposes upon the ‘Kootasthntyachaltanyaswaroopa Atman’ or Self, who is absolutely immutable and eternally of the very essence of Pure Consciousness and ‘Avishaya Saakshhiroopaatman’ or Self who is the unobjectifiable Witnessing Principle in all of us, the Atman or the self (note the small letter ‘s’, lower case, used for the not-self or the ego), who is both ‘Aashraya’ or base or substrate and the ‘Vishaya’ or object for the Ahampratyaya or the notion of ‘I’; and, on the other hand, the ‘Saakshi’ or the Witnessing Principle is superimposed upon (misconceived in) the ‘Antahkaranaadi’ or the adjuncts of the mind, the senses and the body.

(iii) “TenaIva Hi Ahamkartaa. Ahampratyayavishhayena Pratyayinaa Sarvaaha Kriyaa Nirvartyante; Tatphalam Cha Sa Evaashnaati” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-4).
In this (Bhaashya sentence it has been further affirmed that Atman who is the substrate as well as object for the notion of 'I' is himself the 'Kartru' or the agent of action as well as the 'Bhoaktru' or the enjoyer. Therefore, it is tantamount to saying that Shri Shankaraachaarya's genuine teaching is that — "In our empirical workaday transactions (Vyavahaara) Atman is 'Ahampratyayavishaya' or the object for the 'I' notion, while from the standpoint of 'Paramaartha Saakshiroopa' or the Absolute Transcendental Reality of the Witnessing Pure Consciousness He is never an object.

In addition to this, we will adduce here two more examples selected from the Geeta Bhaashya:

(a) "’Hantaa(s)ham’, ‘Hatoa(s)myaham’ — Iti Dehahanananela Atmaanam Ahampratyayam You Vijaaneetaha, Tou Aatmatattwaanabhijnou — Ityarthaha" — (Geeta Bhaashya 2-19).

Herein it has been taught that — "Those who reckon that when the body is killed or destroyed, Atman to be the ‘Ahampratyaya-vishaya’ or the object for the 'I' notion and misconceive in the manner — 'I am the killer or the killed' — such people do not know the Ultimate Reality (Tattwa)." In this context, the purport of Bhagawaan Shri Krishna's teaching is clearly that — "Atman's Saakshtswaroopa Or the essential nature of Being as the Witnessing Pure Consciousness is never an object of any mental concept or notion.

(b) "Evam Yathoakthalih! Panchabhirhetubhirnirvartye Sati Karmani.. ...Tatra Eteshu Aatmaananyatuwena Avidyayaa ParkalpItahi Kriya-maanasya Karmanaha Ahameva Kartaa Iti Kartaaramaataamaanam Kevalam Shuddham Tu Yaha Pashyatayavidwaan; Kasmaat? Veda-antaachaaryaopadesha Nyaayayla Akritabuddhitwaat Asamskrita-buddhitwaat. ..Na sa Pasyatyaatmanastatwam; Karmanoa Vaa Ityarthaha" — (Geeta Bhaashya 18-16).

In this Geeta Bhaashya excerpt it is taught that — "One who reckons Atman, who is associated with the adjuncts of the body, the senses and the mind, as the 'Kartru' or an agent of action is an 'Ajna' or ignorant one."

In any case, thus it has to be concluded that the Siddhaanta acceptable to Shri Shankara is: "Shuddhaatma or the Pure, Absolute Self (Pure Consciousness) is Akartru or not an agent of action, while the Atman who is the Ahampratyayavishaya or the object for the 'I' notion is the Kartru or the agent of action." It is also further established that: "In Atman both Ahampratyayavishyatwa and Kartruwa-Bhoaktruwa are reckoned by virtue of Adhyaasa alone."
V. DIVISION INTO VIDYAA AND AVIDYAA
AND AVIDYAAKRITA

42. Q: How is the deliberation on Adhyaasa suitable for the determination of the Vedanta Siddhaanta or Upanishadic spiritual teaching?

A: ‘Vedanta’ means ‘Upantshads’, which have the prime purport of propounding the ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’ or the Intuitive Knowledge of the non-dualism of the Self. Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa means the determination (conviction) that Atman alone is the Absolute. Ultimate Reality (Paramaarththa Satya). If it is reckoned that apart from Atman there ‘really’ exists Anaatman (not-self) too, then such a determination cannot be arrived at. Therefore, since the whole of Anaatman is actually misconceived, it becomes quite a necessity to show or demonstrate that it is ‘Anrita’ or false (unreal). Although Anaatman is thus Anrita or a false appearance alone to those (ignorant) people who have not Intuited or cognized the Ultimate Reality, that very Anaatman appears as if it is real as well as the distinct characteristics (Dharmas) of the Reality or Entity of the Self (Aatma Vastu) exist in It. Hence, once again it becomes quite a necessity to demonstrate that — “All that (which appears as if it is all real) is the result of misconception or wrong knowledge (Mithyaajnaana).” For that reason alone, the Bhaashyakaara has written:

“The purport of this Bhaashya sentence is: ‘Panditas’ meaning ‘Aatmajnaanis’ or Realized souls call this ‘Adhyaasa’ with such a Laxana or distinctive characteristic — to wit, on the one hand, superimposing Anaatman on Atman and vice versa, and, on the other hand, superimposing the distinctive characteristics or qualities of Atman on Anaatman and vice versa, by virtue of ‘Bhraanti’ or delusion — ‘Avidyaa’ or ignorance, nescience. Quite different from this Adhyaasa to determine their respective essential natures In esse by means of Intuitive discrimination based on separating Atman and Anaatman in the manner — ‘Such and such as this is the essence of Being of the Aatma Vastu’ and It is ‘Satyam’ or absolutely real indeed; such and such as this is the essential nature of Anaatman: though this appears as if it is really existing, it is not ‘Satyam’ but ‘Anrita’ or false (appearance) indeed. Between that thing or phenomenon which is superimposed (Adhyaasta) and that Entity on which the former is superimposed (Aashraya) — the former is not different from the latter”
— is termed ‘Vidyaa’ (by those Pandits or Aatmajnaants). Thus Atman alone is the ‘Paramaarthta Satya’; all else is ‘Anrita’ or false, and if we discern Intuitively on the strength of this above mentioned definite and distinct viewpoint then it flashes to our intellect the truth that — “By virtue of thus superimposing Anaatman on Atman. no defect or blemish whatsoever occurs in or taints the latter; neither by superimposing upon Anaatman the essentially real nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of Atman and thereby merely misconceiving one as the other does Anaatman acquire any real qualities or characteristics belonging to Atman. For, Atman alone is the Absolute Transcendental Reality or Paramaarthta Satyam and, at the same time, all else (Anaatman as opposed to and other than Atman) has been determined, with total. unavering and unshakable conviction, as not to exist at all in the form it appears.

Here in this context. the Bhaashyakaara has reiterated in a crystal clear manner the distinctive Laxanas of Vidyaa as against Avidyaa as: ‘Vidyaa’ means the (Intuitive) Knowledge that Atman alone is the Paramaarthta Satyam; whereas ‘Avidyaa’ means mutual superimposition of identities between (Paraspara Taadaatmya Adhyaasa) as well as mutual misconception of their respective qualities or characteristics (Paraspara Dharma Adhyaasa). Therefore, those who decide the essential natures of ‘Vidyaa’ and ‘Avidyaa’ quite differently and contrarily to this teaching cannot at all be reckoned to be genuine followers of Shri Shankara’s Siddhaanta.

43. Q: Can you dub even those who determine the Tattwa on the strength of empirical valid means (Louikika Pramaanas) or on the strength of Shaastras (Shaastraadhaaras) as ignorant people (Avidyaavantas)?

A: This objection has arisen because of an absence of the deliberation or discrimination of the difference between the Paramaarthta Drishti (the Absolute Reality’s holistic viewpoint) and the Vyavahaara Drishti (the empirical parochial viewpoint of the Pramaatru or ego). The plenary Intuitive Knowledge (as the viewpoint of the Pure Consciousness as the Witness) of the type — “In the ultimate analysis the really real Aatma Tattwa is non-dual. unitary alone” — is itself the absolutely real ‘Vidyaa’. When observing from the viewpoint of that Vidyaa, neither any Pramaana Vyavahaara whatsoever nor any Shaastraic Vyavahaara whatsoever exists or subsists at all! But exclusively within the realm or purview of the Vyavahaara Drishti which is truly a misconceived viewpoint bringing in its wake an apparent projection of duality. all Pramaanas and Shaastras are carrying out their respective functions. indeed. In order to bring home this truth the Shruti (Upanishad) is stating:
“Yatra Hi Duuttamavī Bhavati Tadītāra Itāram Pashyati Tadītāra Itāram Jighrati Tadītāra Itāram Rasayate Tadītāra Itāram Shrunoait Tadītāra Itāram Manute Tadītāra Itāram Sprushati Tadītāra Itāram Viśaanaaṭī: Yatra Tuvasya Sarvam Aatmaa vaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyeyatkena Kam Jighretakena Kam Rasayetakena Kamabhis-vadetakena Kam Shrunuyaaattakena Kam Maanveeta Tatkena Kam Sprushetakena Kam Viśaaneeyaa-at.” — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-5-15).

The literal meaning of this Upanishadic sentence is: “Where there is duality appearing as if it exists. there one sees another thing. there one smells another thing. there one tastes another thing. there one speaks about another thing. there one listens to another thing. there one thinks about another thing. there one touches another thing. there one cognizes another thing: but. to one when everything exists as Atman (Pure Consciousness) alone. there with what can he see what? There with what can he smell what? There with what can he taste what? There with what can he speak about what? There with what can he listen to what? There with what can he think about what? There with what can he touch what? There with what can he cognize what?”

This Upanishadic sentence has been repeatedly utilized as an illustration in different circumstances and contexts by Shri Shankara In order to drive home the teaching that — “Vyavahaara or empirical transactions in general do not exist in esse in the Absolute. metaphysical sense.”

Thus although in their workaday world people. in general. reckon within the empirical realm in the manner — “Because Pramaanas and Shastraas are giving rise to or teaching the (scientific or technical) Knowledge of their respective objects or topics as they are — that Knowledge is Vidyaa, and further whatever wrong knowledge or misconception that is falsified (Bacculita) by such Vidyaa is Avidyaa — is valid and proper alone” — there is no hindrance or objection to accept or say that — “From the Paramaartha Drishti of the Witnessing Consciousness all this is ‘Avidyaakritta Vyavahaara.’ or empirical. mundane transactions projected by nescience alone:” For this reason alone. Shri Shankara in this introductory Bhaashya has written as follows: “Tametamavidyaakhyam Aatmaanaaatmanoarītaretaraadhyā- asam Puraskritya Sarve Pramaanaaprameyavyavahāraaraa Loukikaa Vai- dikaaascha Pravrittaaha: Sarvaani Cha Shaasstraani Vidhi pratishhedha- moakshaparaan!” — Meaning. “All the Loukika or empirical. secular and Vaidika (religious) or spiritual transactions pertaining to and involving valid means of cognition and the object of cognition (Sarve Pramaana-prameyaa Vyavahaaraa) proceed only in the face of (or on the fundamental basis of) this Anyoanya Adhyaasa or mutual superimposition between Atman and Aanaatman going by the name of ‘Avidyaa’;
similarly. all the Shastraas which expound or enunciate injuctions (Vidhitis) and prohibitions (Nishedha) as well as Liberation (Moaksha) as their prime purport, in the ultimate analysis, also proceed on the very basis of this Avidyaa."

The phrase — ‘proceed keeping in front or in the face of this Avidyaa’ — means: ‘Proceed with the prime purport of engendering Pramaana Jnaana or consummate. mature Knowledge on the basis of valid means of cognition after removing Aynaana or non-comprehension or ignorance (in the minds of those who have not been able to Intuit or cognize the Ultimate Reality of Atman), which lurks in the realm of all transactions of the workaday world.’ Whether they are the valid means of cognition (Pramaanaas) or the various scientific. authoritative treatises (Shastraas) — because of the reason that they proceed with the ultimate purport of teaching or expounding whatever TatwaJnaana (knowledge of an entity) their respective student or follower desires, it is to be understood that they will certainly (deliver the goods, so to speak, and) help attain the immaculate knowledge of their study (and following their guidance sincerely) the students will be feeling in the manner — “We are Jijnaasus or people desirous of knowing or pursuing this profound Reality” and “We must at all costs cognize this Reality of Atman. Brahman.” But in the case of those scholars and logicians referred to in the question, though they are all ‘Jijnaasus’, because they have not been able to Intuit the Ultimate Reality of the Pure Being-Consciousness of Atman, in the final analysis they are to be reckoned as ‘Avidyaavantas’ alone.

44. Q: If you feel like it you may call stone, sand and such other insentient materials — ‘Ajna’ (insensate, insentient) without sensibility or physical sensation because they are totally devoid of the faculty of cognition; although the low, irrational animals like an ox or an ass etc. possess a kind of natural knowledge of the form of instinct, but because they invariably do not possess the faculty of discrimination in the manner — ‘This is such and such a thing’ — in that sense they too may be called ‘Ajna’ (devoid of the discriminative knowledge of the entities). But under any circumstances, can you reasonably call human beings who are capable (and invariably are endowed with the faculty) of discriminating and deliberating upon events and facts of the past, present and future periods of time and cognize their reality ‘Ajna’ (totally ignorant, stupid people)? If they were so ignorant, could it have been possible for them to select properly the respective and relevant valid means of cognition like Pratyaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference) etc. needed in various sets of circumstances and situations to enable them to cognize the reality of the ‘entity’ in question?
A: This long-winded objection has been anticipated, taken up for consideration and answered by Shri Shankara in his introduction in the following manner:

"Objection: Katham Punaravidyaavadishyaanti Pratyakshaadentei Pramaanaant Shaastraant Cha?"

Meaning: "How is it that empirical valid means of cognition like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. and Shaastras proceed and are meant only for the ignorant ones?"


In this above Bhaashya excerpt the fact that — "All the secular valid means of knowledge like perception, inference etc. function for the sake of ignorant ones only" — has been explained. The phrase — "Pratyakshaadi!" — means the empirical Pramaanas like Pratyaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference), Upamaana (illustration), Shabda (scriptural statement — also called 'Aapta Vaakya' or well-wisher's statements), Arthaapatti (presumption, inference from circumstances) and Anupalabdhi (non-perception since the phenomenon can never be found anywhere). Although it is true that there is a discrepancy in the number of accepted valid means of knowledge or cognition (Pramaanas) among the various disputants or logicians, for all these Pramaanas perception (Pratyaksha) alone is the fountainhead.

Now, all these Pramaanas are not by themselves, without the help or presence of the Pramaatru (one who wishes or undertakes to cognize, or in other words, the cognizer), capable of signifying their respective objects. One who claims himself to be called a 'Pramaatru' has per force to have total identification (Aatmatwa) with his body in the manner — "I am the body" — and animate the belief that the external senses and the internal mind belong to him. thinking in the manner — "These senses and mind which are the valid instruments of cognition are mine with their help as media I am able to cognize the external objects."

But, both the external body, the senses and the internal mind as valid means or instruments of cognition are — as we have previously pointed out — 'Vishayyas' or objects for cognition alone and not the Atman, who is the 'Vishayi' or subjective cognizer. Even so, without misconceiving (Adhyaasa) the body as 'I' and the senses and the mind as 'mine' the Absolute Atman (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness)
can never be called 'Pramaatru'. Because of the reason that one who is the Pramaatru alone has invariably to utilize the Pramaanas like Pratyaksha, Anumaana, Shabda etc., on the one hand, and the Shaastras, on the other, and then only he can possibly acquire any knowledge of any particular Prameya (object or phenomenon), only to that 'Avidyaavanta' (ignorant one) who has misconceived himself to be the Pramaatru — it has to be admitted on all hands — both the empirical Pramaanas and the authoritative Shaastras are indubitably of any utility or benefit. This then is the complete clarification of the above-quoted long Bhaashya excerpt.

Whether it is the body or whether they are the external senses and the internal instrument of our mind — to say that they are related to Atman, except for the one singular misconception or wrong reckoning to that effect (to wit. they are innately related or associated with the Absolute non-dual Entity of Atman), there is no other supporting evidence whatsoever. This truth the Bhaashyakaara has been reiterating time and again in his Sootra Bhaashya.

As regards the objection — "If you so feel you may call animals like an ox, a donkey 'Ajna'. but are not human beings capable of discrimination?" — Shri Shankara provides a solution like:


Once again, the purport of this long Bhaashya portion is: Human beings, just like animals, utilize 'Pramaanajnaana' or knowledge gained through the valid means with regard to external objects either to acquire them if desirable or to discard them if undesirable and shy away from them. It is true that human beings are more discriminative than animals, creatures etc. But in their workaday transactions, whether it is in regard to rushing forward towards desirable objects or whether in regard to receding away from things, when it is known that they are bad, dangerous or harmful, it cannot be affirmed that human beings always (invariably) utilize their discrimination and behave accordingly. For, merely on the ground of their feeling to acquire them the external objects always do not continue to be good or beneficial at
Division into Vidyaa and Avidyaa and Avidyaakrita

all. Neither do the objects which were undesirable always continue to be bad or disadvantageous. If it were so, human beings should never have been deluded. It is not the real state of affairs at all. They too, just like the animals, creatures etc., thinking something at a far-off distance as water, go near it for the sake of drinking it. But when they approach nearer that object, it is found to be merely mirage water and actually it is realized to be desert land alone. Really speaking, quite often the medicines and other things which people at first sight dislike and discard thinking that they are not good or beneficial are actually advantageous and conducive to their progress and good health. Therefore, it has to be acknowledged on the basis of rationality that analogous to animals all the empirical transactions like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. are being carried out, prompted by (Purassara, which literally means 'moving in front, harbinger or forerunner) Aviveka or a lack of discrimination, on the one hand, and by virtue of a natural instinct, on the other. Indeed. For that reason alone. saying that — "I had believed it to be so, but it was not true" — people in general become wise after the event, so to speak. only when the result of an endeavour becomes undesirable or disadvantageous, but in the process they belatedly display their ability or faculty of discrimination. No wonder there exists a wise axiomatic saying that — "Swaswaanushthaanasamaye Munayoa(s)pl Na Panditaaha" — meaning, "Even Munis or sages, who keep on teaching or giving discourses to their followers, when it comes to the question of their own work or endeavour, are not knowing, more often than not, the truth about it."

45. Q: So far as the Loukika Vyavahaaras are concerned we may take it for granted that people in general are deluded; but as prescribed in the Shaastras in the manner — "This should be done or performed; this should not be done or performed" — without such discriminative knowledge as stipulated who can carry on any Vaidika Vyavahaara at all? In this regard, the discriminative faculty which human beings possess can never be found in the animals, creatures etc., is it not?

A: To this Shri Shankara has given the following answer:


The real purport implicit in this Bhaashya portion is: It is true that a qualified person who observes or performs the Shaastreeya Karmas
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

or rites and rituals stipulated in the scriptures possesses the knowledge that — "The Atman or self (Jeeva) who transmigrates to other Loakas or worlds (as mentioned in the texts of Karma Kaanda as well as the Upaasana Kaanda of the Vedas) and enjoys either happiness or misery, is different and separate from the body, the senses etc." — but the Intuitive Knowledge of the Absolute Reality of Pure Being-Consciousness of Atman (Paramaraarthaatma Jnaana), which is taught in the Vedantas (Upanishads), he does not have in the least.

(i) It is taught in the Upanishads that Atman does not have the pairs of drawbacks or blemishes like hunger and thirst, grief and attachment, old age and death etc. (Brihadaaranyaka 3-5-1). "Such an Atman am I" — this sort of an Intuitive Knowledge is not attained by one who endeavours to perform Karmas so as to attain ‘Paraloakasiddhi’ or other-worldly joys.

(ii) Further, the Upanishads teach that — "Apart from Atman there does not at all exist, in the Absolute (Intuitive) sense, the Jaatis or castes like Braahmana. Kshatriya. Vaishya. Shoodra, nor the various Loakas or other worlds (both superior and inferior to this our present empirical waking world), nor the Devatas or deities who are to be worshipped and whose blessings are to be invoked by means of the Vedic Karmas, nor the various Pashus or sacrificial animals and such other victims of sacrificial oblations which are stipulated to be used in several Yajnas and Yaggas mentioned in the ritualistic portions of the Vedas." — (Brihadaaranyaka 2-4-6). Such an Intuitive Knowledge of ‘Aatmatattwa’ or the Absolute Reality of the Self is absent in the ‘Karmaadhikaari’ or one who is fit for Karmas alone.

It is little known in religious circles all over our country that not only there exists any need of this Aatmatattwa Jnaana (mentioned above) which is again exclusively ‘Vedaantavedya’ or to be known or learnt from the Upanishadic lore for an agent of actions (Karmas stipulated in the Karma Kaanda, in particular, or, for that matter, even the whole gamut of mundane, secular Karmas). But, on the other hand, for those who have attained this Aatmatattwa Jnaana, none of the triad of Kriya (action), Kaaraka (means of action) and Phala (fruit of action) exists in reality. In fact, there is no possibility for the latter class of Jnaanis to venture into any kind of Karma, since they have attained the Intuitive Knowledge that all of duality (or diversity) is ‘Anrta’ or false appearance alone.

Thus, in view of all the teachings of the Shaastra pertaining to the fruits to be achieved in other worlds by means of certain stipulated Karmas are meant for those (Avidyavantas) who do not have the Aatmatattwa Jnaana which is also Paramaartha. it is tantamount to saying that the former Paraloukka Karmas also are meant
Division into Vidyaa and Avidyaa and Avidyaakrita

for Avidyaavantas alone. And this conclusion is rational and proper indeed.

48. Q: All right, let us take all this you have said as granted, but how at all can it be accepted that even the 'Vedanta Pramaana' or the authoritative validity of the Upanishadic lore, which is 'Moakshapara' or devoted exclusively to Liberation, is also for Avidyaavantas only? If such a text too is dismissed off saying that it is meant only for the ignorant people, then, in that case, which other Pramaana, if at all there is one, meant exclusively for the sake of 'Vidyaaavantas' or the knowing ones exists? Which Pramaana should the knowing one (Jnaani) follow if he were to determine as to which is the 'Kaarya' or that action (ritual) which is to be done or performed and which is 'Akaarya' or that action which is not to be done or performed?

A: To this we have already given an answer (in so many words), is it not true that Shri Shankara has written that — "In order to help get rid of this 'Adhyaasa' which is the root cause for all miseries and ills (Anartha) of transmigratory life and which is of the nature of 'Mithyaapratyayaroopa' or false, unreal type of belief or concept alone all the Upanishads have started expounding" — (Adhyaasa Bhaashya)? Therefore, only that person who has the wrong conception or belief of the type — "Atman is of the form of a Kartru or a Bhoktru, who is none other than the object for the 'I' notion (Ahampratayagoachara)" — aspires in the manner — "I want Moaksha (Liberation) from this Bandha (Bondage of the transmigratory existence)" — and only he thereafter starts deliberating upon the purport of the teachings of the Shaastras (particularly the portion pertaining to the Aatmatattwa Jnaana). Because this person (called in Vedantic parlance 'Mumukshu') has listened to the Shruti (Upanishadic) sentence like — "A Brahmajnaanl (Realized Soul) attains Moaksha which is the Paramapurushaartha or the final, ultimate goal, summum bonum, of human existence" — (Taittireeya 2-1) — and thereupon has launched himself on the Intuitive deliberation to know or cognize the Brahmatattwa or Absolute Reality of Brahman or Atman, it is evident that he (though a Mumukshu, desirous of knowing the Ultimate Reality) is yet without the Intuitive Knowledge (Experience) of the Aatmatattwa. and, not only that, he is one who has wrongly known or believed (misconceived) that Tattwa and hence can be said to be still an Avidyaavanta alone.

On the other hand, 'Vidyaaavanta' or the Aatmatattwa Jnaani, who has already attained the Intuitive Knowledge (Experience, Anubhava) of Aatmatattwa, since he has attained the consummate plenary Knowledge to the effect that ... "Brahmaatma Tattwa alone is
the Paramaarththa Satya" — for his sake no Shaastra whatsoever is any more needed (To wit. in his case the prime and final purport of the Upanishads has come to fruition and no Shaastra. whatsoever it may be. holds good as a Pramaana any longer). When Vidyaa is Intuited or Realized. there does not exist any empirical or mundane transaction or Vyavahaara. Neither there is any possibility or scope whatsoever for any kind of a desire to perform any Karma in a 'Vidyavaanta'. Then. in that event. even the Veda or scripture does not at all subsist as a Pramaana. In support of this above teaching the following Upanishadic statements are adduced:

(i) "Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmaa vaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyet. ..Kena Kam Vijaaneeyaat" — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-5-15 — already mentioned in the answer to Question 43). This is in support of the teaching that — "When everything has become Atman (Pure Consciousness) alone there is no Vyavahaara whatsoever."

(ii) "Aatmaanam Chedvijaaneeyayadayamasmeetl Poorushaha: Kimichchham Kasya Kaamaaya Shareeramanusamjwaret" — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-4-12). Meaning: "One who has attained Aatmajnaana in the manner — 'I am the one who pervades all this' — what desire whatsoever can he have so as to subject his body to any (vain) strenuous task" — This Upanishadic statement is sufficient Pramaana for the affirmation that an Aatmajnaant does not entertain any desire whatsoever. nor does he have any duty or responsibility towards anybody.

(iii) "Atra Pitaa Apitaa Bhavati...Vedaa Avedaaaha" — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-3-22). Meaning: "Herein a father is no-father.... Vedaa or scripture is Avedaa or no-scripture." — This Upanishadic statement is the Pramaana for saying that — "In Paramaarthaatman even the scripture is rendered no-scripture."

VI. SAARVATRIKA ANUBHAVA

47. Q: What is the authoritative evidence to determine the exact import of the two concepts which we have so far determined. viz. 'Avidyaa', of the form of 'Adhyaasa' (misconception) and 'Vidyaa', which sublates that Avidyaa"? You have propounded that both Pramaanas and Shaastras are subsumed under the realm of Vyavahaara (empirical transactions) which is itself projected or prompted by Avidyaa. Is it not? In that case, what supporting proof is there for 'Aatmaikatwa' or the Absolute unity or non-duality of Atman which is to be determined by Vidyaa?

A: For this we have given a suitable answer at the beginning of this treatise itself. Shri Shankara has affirmed that the 'Vedanta Shaastra'
Saarvatrika Anubhava

is itself in toto the Pramaana for 'Aatmaikatwa' or non-dualism of Atman which is the quintessence of his Siddhaanta. He has further elaborated and elucidated that with regard to the deliberation upon Vidyaa and Avidyaa pertaining to the Ultimate Reality of Atman as well as the determination of their respective natures in essence and by their distinctive characteristics: "The Saarvatrika Anubhava or universal Intuitive experience, which evolves out of the determination of the correct interpretation and import of the Upanishadic sentences is itself the convincing and clinching proof." This assertion is crystal clear in his Bhaashya sentence which says:

"Na DharmaJnyaasaayaamiva Shrutyaadayaya Eva Pramaanam BrahmaJnyaasaayaam,

KIM Tu Shrutyaadayo(as)nubhavaadayasya

Yathaasambhavamiha Pramaanam: Anubhavaavasaanatwaat. Bhootva-

stuvlayatwaachcha Brahmajnaanasya."

— (Soottra Bhaashya 1-1-2).

Meaning: "Just as in the case of 'DharmaJnyaasaa' or deliberation on religious tenets 'Shrutyaad' or the scriptural texts and other works and accessories In consonance with them are exclusively Pramaanas or valid means. these latter alone by themselves are not Pramaanas in the case of 'BrahmaJnyaasaa' or deliberation on the Ultimate Reality of Brahman: to wit, Shrutis or Upanishadic lore as well as 'Anubhava' or Intuitive experience and other accessories in keeping with it are invariably Pramaanas. according to the circumstances and contexts (in which either of them become suitable and valid). For. 'Brahmajnaana' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman culminates or reaches its fruition in 'Anubhaava' or Intuitive experience: besides. Brahmajnaana pertains to a 'Bhootavastu' or an already (eternally) existing or established Aatmavastu or Entity of the Self."

48. Q: What is the purport of the sentence that — "Anubhava is also a Pramaana; Brahmajnaana culminates in Anubhava alone"?

A: Shri Shankara's opinion is: 'Ekadesha' or one part of the 'Saarvatrika Anubhava' or universal Intuitive experience is. for the purposes of deliberation. a Pramaana; 'Aatmaikatwajnyaana' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Absolutism or non-dualism of the Self culminates or reaches its fruition in the 'Poorna Anubhava' or plenary, consummate Intuitive experience. which is 'Saarvatrika' or universal. Here in this context. the word 'Pramaana' does not at all connote that this is also one among the empirical valid means of cognition like Pratyaksha (perception). Anumaana (inference) etc.; for. all those Pramaananas are subsumed in the realm of Avidyaa alone. In the present context. when we use the word 'Pramaana' it connotes a means for determining the 'Tattwa' or Reality after Intuitive deliberation: and Poorna Anubhava is that resultant Intuitive experience which evolves
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

out or is deduced from that deliberation. For example: (i) To cognize the fact that the empirical valid means like Pratyaksha. Anumaana etc. are those which help signify different kinds of objects; and (ii) to discern distinctively the three categories of ‘Pramaana’ in the manner — ‘This is a valid means which gives rise to the correct knowledge’: ‘Apramaana’ or invalid means in the manner — ‘This is totally a void with any valid means of cognition being absent. with the result there is no knowledge whatsoever engendered’ — and for these above purposes the support (substrate) is the ‘Ekadesha Saarvatrlka Anubhava’ alone. After the Intuitive deliberation is carried out the Poorna Anubhava of the type — ‘All that exists is Atman alone’ — is itself the final fruition or culmination by way of the resultant fruit. For this reason alone Shri Shankaracharya has written in his Bhaashyas that — “Anubhava alone is Pramaana” and “Aatmajnaana culminates in Anubhava alone.”

49. Q: In the phrase — ‘Anubhavaaddayascha’ — (meaning, Anubhava and such other phenomena) what exactly is the meaning for the word — ‘Aadi’ — meaning ‘etc.’? In addition to Anubhava what else is required in this context?

A: Here taking the ‘Ekadesha Anubhavas’ or parts of Intuitive experiences as the basis, one has to carry out ratiocination keeping in focus the ‘Anvaya’ or agreement and ‘Vyatireka’ or disagreement between two things to be discriminated about. In addition to this kind of a dialectical exercise in consonance with Intuition, here in this context, the other various logical devices in vogue in the empirical transactions like: (a) syllogistic reasoning based on analogous examples or illustrations in keeping with common experience born out of empirical valid means: (b) logic which examines the validity or otherwise of the means (Pramaana Shoadhaka Tarka); (c) Pure critique of reason (Kevala Tarka) — are also needed for deliberation. There is also Intuitive reasoning (Kevala Tarka) which is needed to determine the validity, relevance or otherwise of the propositions of rival disputants. Keeping all these various kinds of dialectical devices in mind, Shri Shankara has used the word — ‘Aadi’ — or ‘etc’. After indicating that all these are necessary for ‘Brahmajijnasaa’ or deliberation to know the Ultimate Reality of Brahman, he has made a pronouncement in the concluding sentence of the Jijnasasootra Bhaashya in the manner:


The purport of this sentence is: Therefore, on the pretext of saying that one should carry out Brahmajijnasaa, it is indicated that for this Meemaamsaa or deep reflection begun to discern the purport of the
Vedaantavaakyas — taking all logical devices not opposed to it as accessories — Moaksha or Liberation alone is the final benefit.

In the expression — 'All logical devices not opposed to Meemaamsaa' — in the above statement the following are subsumed: (i) Ratiocination exemplified or enunciated in the Shruts themselves; (ii) dialectical devices in consonance with that; (iii) logic in keeping with empirical Pramaanasas well as reasoning adopted to determine the validity, relevance or otherwise of the Pramaanas themselves; (iv) pure critique of reason. This should be thoroughly understood and applied.

50. Q: What is the basis for the divisions or differentiation between 'Vidyaa' and 'Avidyaa'? On the strength of which phenomenon do we conclude in the manner — "This is Avidyaa or nescience"? Is there no need for a cause at least for this Avidyaa to arise in human beings?

A: It amounts to our having given an answer already, indeed, to this question. Avidyaa means: (a) Imagining the body and the senses, which are 'Anrrta' (unreal, false) to be really existing; (b) having identification with them in the manner — 'I am this' and 'This is mine'. Because of the reason that this Avidyaa itself being the very foundation for all kinds of Vyavahaara (mundane transactions) no one — whosoever he or she may be — can ever possibly ask for any Pramaana (proof, evidence) or Kaarana (cause). Without desiderating any YuktI (logical device) or Pramaana (valid means) whatsoever, all human beings in general have been believing or reckoning, quite naturally too, as part of their innate pattern of behaviour (Nalsargika). in the manner — "I am this" and "This is mine". There is no need of any cause whatsoever for this (either the belief or Its consequent behaviour). For, this (kind of natural misconception) is 'Anaadi' or beginningless. In fact, it is even the 'Nimitta' or cause for all temporal transactions. No human being — whosoever he or she may be — does ever carry on any workaday transaction thinking in the manner — "I am an Avidyaaavanta, not knowing anything." All the people, in general, are endowed. quite naturally too, with: (i) Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa; (ii) Jnaatrutwa or cognizership which is the cause for these earlier two misconceptions. viz. Kartrutwa and Bhoaktrutwa; (iii) an innate desire (Kaamana) to know the reality of external objects or phenomena and thereafter to carry on all workaday transactions. Both the Vedantas (Upanishads), in the form of the authoritative, canonical texts, and Vedantins (those who have not only studied the spiritual science of Vedanta but also have intuitively imbibed its principal teachings) expound the genuine Vedantic teachings to Jijnaasus that — "The fact of the common run of people having presumed in the above manner is invariably an effect or consequence of Avidyaa: further, this Avidyaa can be destroyed or got rid of by means of Aatmajnaana."
It being so, whether it is the division of Vidyaa and Avidyaa or whether it is the intuitive deliberation to be carried out in order to be able to determine, establish their respective natures in essence — both aspects have to be based on the strength of Anubhava or Intuitive experience alone.

51. Q: Vedanta as a spiritual science is known to propound the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. But Brahman as an empirical entity having a distinct existence is not known to people in general. How then can people entertain any desire to know It or how at all can there even be any inclination of the mind among the people to carry out any kind of deliberation upon such a phenomenon? What relationship is there between the Vidyaa which Shri Shankara has called ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’ in this Adhyaasa Bhaashya and this ‘Brahma Vidyaa’?

A: Brahman is not at all such an unfamiliar entity: the phenomenon, rather concept. called ‘Brahman’ is born out of the root — ‘Brth’, meaning, ‘a huge thing’. That Entity which is in all aspects ‘Aparichchhlnna’ or infinite, indivisible (beyond any limitations whatsoever) is itself ‘Brahman’. Shri Shankara has written in the following manner with regard to It:

(i) “Astf Taavad Brahman Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswabhaavam Sarvajnam Sarvashaktisamanvitam; Brahmasshabdasya Hi Vyutpa- adyaamaanasya Nityashuddhatwaadaayoa(s)thaaha Prateeyante; Brmhaterdhaatoararthaanugamaat.” (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).

Meaning: “The fact that — ‘The Entity of Brahman exists; It is of an eternally Pure, Conscious and Liberated or Free nature: It is all-knowing or Omniscient, all-powerful or Omnipotent’ — will be reckoned if the etymology of the root ‘Brthi’ is studied. The sentence that — ‘Nityashuddha or eternally Pure, Nityabuddha or eternally Conscious, Nityamukta or eternally Free (Liberated), an Entity which can cognize everything and, endowed with Omniscience, is itself Brahman’ — is one which signifies the familiarity of the Entity of Brahman through the meanings of the words."

But such a Brahman need not be reckoned to be a certain invisible, imperceptible phenomenon. In the Upanishads It is declared to be — “Ayamaatmaa Brahman”, meaning, “This Atman Himself is Brahman.” — (Brihadaaranyaka 2-5-19). Atman means that Entity which is the essential nature of Being in each one of us. Therefore Shri Shankara has written in the following manner:

(ii) “Sarvasyaatmatwaachha Brahmaatmatwaaprasiddhhi; Sarvoa Hi Aatmaasttitwam Pratyeti, Na Naahamasmi — Iti; Yadi Hi Naatmaasttitwaaprasiddhi; Syaat Sarvoa Loakoa Naahamasmi Iti Prateeeyaat; Aatmaa Cha Brahman.” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).
Saarvatika Anubhava

Meaning: “Because It (Brahman) is every one’s Atman alone. it has to be accepted that the familiarity in the form of — ‘Brahman exists’ — does prevail. Every one has been reckoning in the manner — ‘I am or I exist’ — alone, and not in the manner — ‘I am not or I do not exist.’ If it were not familiar that — ‘Atman exists’ — then the cognition of the type — ‘I am (I exist)’ — should not have prevailed. In fact, it is not possible even to imagine in the manner — ‘I am not (or I do not exist).’ Because. Atman who is so popularly famous, is Himself Brahman. it is tantamount to the latter also being familiar alone.”

52. Q: If Brahman is familiar as ‘I’ myself, where is a need at all to deliberate upon it?

A: To this Shri Shankara has written this long Bhaashya in answer:

(iii) “Na: Tadvishesham Prati Vipratipattehe; Dehamaatram Chaitanya-vishishtamaatmeti Praakritaa Loakaayatikaascha Pratipannaaha:.... ....Tasmaat Brahmajjnaasoapanyaasamukhena Vedaantavaakya-meemaamsaa Tadaviroadhitarkoapakaranaa Nihshreyasaprayo-ajanaa Prastooyate” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).

Here in the above Bhaashya excerpt the following opinions of nine different schools of philosophy are depicted:

(1) The opinion of the common run of people and the Chaarvaakas that — ‘The body itself is Atman’ (2) the proponents of the theory that — ‘The senses and Praana (the vital force) are together the Atman’: (3) the logicians’ opinion that — ‘The mind itself is Atman’: (4) the opinion of Kshanlka Vijnaanavaadins or proponents of ephemeral or momentary Idealism that — ‘Vijnaana or (intellectual) Idealism is itself Atman’: (5) the tenet of Madhyamikas that — ‘Shoonya or Nihilism (essencelessness) itself is Atman’: (6) the Meemaamsakas’ opinion that — ‘Atman is, by virtue of his Aatveka or non-discrimination, a Gunadharma Bhoaktru or an enjoyer of objects endowed with the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas’; (8) the opinion of Patanjali’s Yoga school that — ‘Ishwara or the Lord also exists apart (from this Bhoaktru of the Saankhyans): (9) the verdict of Vedantins that — ‘That Ishwara is the Atman alone of Samsaarees or transmigratory souls.’

It is also further decided that only after deliberating upon and discriminating about all such varied opinions a true seeker of the Reality will attain Self-Knowledge (Jnaana) to the effect that — “Paramaatman or Supreme Self. of the very essence of ‘Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswaroopa’ alone is Satyam or the Ultimate Reality.” Therefore, what has been propounded to the effect that — ‘For attaining Aatmalkatwa Vidyaa or non-dual Reality of Atman one should carry out deliberation on Vedanta Vaakya or Upanishadic sentences’ — is proper indeed.

51
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

In the same manner, later on in the Sootra Bhaashya, while elaborating on the meaning of the word — 'Tat' — in the sentence: 'Tattwamast' — in (4-1-2), Shri Shankara has written:

"Esya Vyavrittisasamsaaraharmako(s)nubhavaatmakoa Brahmastunjnakastapadaarthaata Vedaantaabhiyuktaanaam Prasiddhaha; Tatha Twampadaarthoa(s)p Pratyagaaatmaa Shroaataa Dehadaarabhy Pratyagaaatmayaya Sambhaavyamaanashchattanyaparyantatwenaavadhaarthaah:..... Sakrudutpannava Hi Aatmapratipattiravidyaam Nivartayateeti Naatra Kwachidapi Kramoa(s)bhyupagamyate" — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-1-2).

In this long Bhaashya portion there are many topics (subtle points) which have to be kept in mind, and they are:

(i) In the sentence — 'Tattwamast', meaning, 'That Brahman Itself are you' — Brahman, which is the meaning of the word 'Tat' is the Anubhavaswaroopo or of the essential nature of Intuitive experience which is devoid of any special or distinctive characteristics (Nirvishesha), having no features whatsoever of Samsaara or transmigratory life: and is of the nature of self-illumining Pure Consciousness (Chaitanya Prakaasharoopa).

(ii) 'Twampadaarthha', meaning, 'Chaitanya' or Pure Consciousness, which is distinct and apart from the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect and all psychic feelings and emotions etc.

(iii) The sentence — 'Tattwamast' — connotes Atman who is non-dual and of the very essence of Pure Consciousness.

(iv) The cause for 'Avidyaapratibanda' or the hindrance, impediment of nescience to know or cognize this Atman means only these three, viz. Ajnaana (non-comprehension, nescience), Samshaya (doubting) and Viparyaya (misconception), that is all.

(v) In the case of superior or first-class seekers (Uttamaadhkaaris), merely by means of listening to the 'Vedantavaakya' or Upanishadie sentence which expounds or enunciates the non-dualism of the Self (Aatmakatwa) this aforesaid Avidyaa or nescience vanishes (falsified, sublated).

(vi) Both the 'Vedaantavaakyaoapadesha' or the spiritual teaching or instruction of the Upanishadic sentences and 'Vichaara' or Intuitive deliberation on their purport are invariably meant for the exclusive goal of sublating Avidyaa which is nothing but misconceiving the body, the senses etc. as Atman. That Vichaara is nothing but the 'Avadhana' or awareness, alertness or attentiveness that is to be devotedly (with all steadfastness) practised in order to get rid of 'Dehaatmatwa' or false identification with the body, the senses etc. superimposed upon one's own Self as well as to cognize Atman in consonance with one's own Intuitive
experience (Anubhaavanasura). It is nothing other than this kind of spiritual discipline indeed.

53. Q: If it is true that in the manner of — ‘Brahman Itself is myself’ — It (Reality) is very familiar as Atman, then who is it that deliberates or discriminates about It? Is it not true that to that person who deliberates in that manner Avidyaa attaches itself? Because Brahman Itself is verily Atman, it amounts to saying that — ‘Brahman Itself deliberates upon Brahman; Brahman Itself has Avidyaa’; further, it amounts to having arrived at the undesirable (ridiculous) conclusion that — “Brahman Itself deliberates and acquires Vidyaa and thereby gets rid of Its Avidyaa”! Is it not?

A: The question that you have raised is valid indeed. To one who deliberates — to him or her alone there is Avidyaa. But after the deliberation, because of the reason that Jnaana or Self-Knowledge of the type — ‘Brahmaatman which is that Pure Consciousness or Reality having no other thing second to It (non-dual) am I’ — invariably accrues, if we consider from that viewpoint (Absolute, Transcendental standpoint of the Pure Consciousness), then it is true that — “No one has Avidyaa at all.” This opinion alone Shri Shankara has revealed in the following Bhaashya sentence: “Kasya Punarayamapraboadha Iti Chet. Yastwam Prichhasi Tasya Te Iti Vadaamaha; Nanwahameshwaraya Evoaktaha Shrutyaa: Yadyevam Pratibuddhra(s)st Naastl Kasyachidapraboadhaha; Yoa(s)yam Doashashchoadyate Katschit — Avidyayaa Kila(s)manaha Saduiteeyatwaat. Advaltaanupapatthritti, Soa(s)pyetena Pratyuktaha.” — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-1-3).

The literal meaning of this Bhaashya portion is:
(a) ‘Whose is this Avidyaa’ — If it is asked like that, then we say — ‘It is yours only, one who is asking the question.’

(Doubt): What is this? The Shruti is stating that — ‘I am Ishwara alone’ — is it not?

(Solution): If you have cognized in that manner, then no one has Avidyaa at all!

(b) “Some others have levelled the following flaw or defect against the Siddhaanta itself: ‘If there is Avidyaa or nescience, then because it amounts to it being the second phenomenon to Atman, it thereby renders non-dualism an invalid proposition or teaching!’ To this objection too, it amounts to our having given a satisfactory answer or solution indeed.”

Shri Shankara’s purport behind this above Bhaashya portion is: The one who is carrying out the deliberation is Atman who is the object for the ‘Ahampratyaya’ or ‘I’ notion; the object for his deliberation is
the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Ishwara who is Nityashuddha-buddhamuktaswaroopa. Sarvajna (Omniscient) and Sarvashaktiyukta (Omnipotent). In the mundane or empirical state of existence (Vyasahasraasthitthi) the one who is deliberating has (quite naturally, without desiderating any cause or reason for doing so, since it is, in the ultimate analysis, merely a delusion) necessarily presumed in the manner — “I am an Ajna or ignorant one.” To such a person, the Shruti is beckoning, as it were, and instructing in the manner — ‘In order to get rid of this Ajnaana you should deliberate upon Vedantavaakyas or Upanishadic sentences which propound the ‘Brahmaswaroopa’ or the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. Then, you will be rid of (or will be able to falsify, sublate) your (apparent) ‘Samsaara Bandha’ or Bondage of transmigratory existence, which is caused or projected by Avidyaa.”

The same opinion has been expressed by the Sootrakaara or Shri Badaraayanaachaarya in his first Sootra, viz. ‘Athaat a Brahmajijnaasaa.’ Shri Shankara has described in the following manner the fact that in this first Sootra it has been taught as to how the seeker can sublate Avidyaa by means of Vidyaa:

“Jnataumchhaa Jijaasaa; Avagati paryantam Jnaanam Sanwachyaayaayaaka Karma; Phalavisheyatwatadiechhyaayaayaaha; Jnaanena Hi Pramaane Naavagantumishtam Brahma; Brahmaa vasticrihl Purushaarthaha; Nhshhasamsaarabeekaavidyaadyanarthiabarhanaat; Tasmaat Brahma Vijiijaasitaavyam.” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).

The purport of this Bhaashya excerpt is: The terminal word ‘Jijaasaa’ indicates the desire for acquiring Jnaana or Knowledge; for, in the Sanskrit language the suffix of ‘Saa’ (San) in words like Prepsaa (desire to obtain), Jittaasaa (desire to conquer), Jijaasaa (desire to know) etc. connotes ‘desire’. The fruition of any desire is to acquire its fruit, is it not? Here in this context, what is really needed is not the Pramaana of mere ‘Shaastrajnaana’ or intellectual knowledge of the Upanishadic teaching or tenet (doctrine); but, through that Pramaana or medium what is to be attained in the form of ‘Avagati’ or Intuitive determinate Knowledge, viz. Vijaana (Self-Knowledge). This Avagati itself is Vidyaa; because, by virtue of this Vidyaa not only Avidyaa but also its resultant evil or ill-effect of the form of transmigratory existence are both destroyed, sublated — that Vidyaa alone is the final fruition or culmination of Vedantic deliberation. Previously also in answers to questions 47 and 48 we have mentioned that in this final fruit of the form or nature of Avagati (Anubhava) alone Brahmajijnaasaa has to culminate. Shri Shankara has affirmed in the concluding sentence of his Adhyaasa Bhaashya that — “Brahmaanubhava or Intuitive experience of Brahman is Itself Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa or non-dual
Absolutism of Pure Consciousness (Self).” That Brahman alone is Paramaarththa Atman or Absolute. Transcendental Self. Because that metaphysical Reality is not yet Intuited or cognized in the state of deliberation (Vichaaraavastha). at that moment or stage It subsists quite apart from the Jijnaasu or one who wishes to know (to wit, the Pramaatru. 'I' notion) It.

54. Q: Since Atman who is of the very essence of Brahman is actually ‘Nishprapancha’ or devoid of any duality whatsoever (to wit, Advaitaswaroopa or of the essential nature of non-duality), how at all can even the Upanishadic sentences signify such a Transcendental Reality? How at all such an esoteric Entity has been determined and on the strength of which Yuktis or logical devices has It been so determined?

A: It is true indeed that because this ‘Jneya Brahma’ or the Ultimate Reality which is to be ‘known’ is devoid of any special characteristics whatsoever, it is not possible at all to describe It as ‘such and such a thing or phenomenon’. In fact, for that reason alone the Shrutis (Upanishads), by the exclusive means of sublating any form extraneous and alien to Its very core of Pure Being-Consciousness that is misconceived in It. teach or propound that Reality. The Sootrakaara expresses this very idea, which the Bhaasheyakaara has strengthened: for instance:

Sootra: “Darshayati Chaathoa Api Smaryate” — (Sootra 3-2-17).


Besides enumerating relevant examples from the Upanishads to drive home the fact that — ‘In order to describe Brahman the exclusive methodology adopted in the Upanishads is to sublate or negate (Pratishedha) whatever nature or characteristics which do not belong to It’ — in the above long Bhaashya portion. the manner in which the Nirvisheshatwa of Brahman is propounded in the Bhagavad Geeta (13-12). viz. ‘It is neither Sat (real) nor Asat (unreal)’ — is illustrated.

Apart from this, for the purposes of propounding Brahman which is Nirvishesha, yet another extra-ordinary methodology has been utilized in Shrutis as well as Smritis. In the Geeta Bhaashya (13-13) this methodology has been described in the following manner:

“Kshetroapaadhibhedakritam Visheshajaatam Mithyaiva Kshetra-jnasya. Itt Tadapanayanena Jneyatwamuktam ‘Na Sattanaasa-duchyate’ — Itt; Upaadhihikritam Mithyaaroopamapastitwaadhigamaaya
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta


The literal meaning of this Bhāṣya portion is: “Since the conglomeration of special features or phenomena made up of the adjuncts of the Kṣetra (dwelling place) existing in the Kṣetrajna (indweller) is Mithyaa or a delusion (misconception) alone. It has been taught that it should be sublated or negated and then cognized in the manner: ‘It is not Sat. nor is it Asat’. Further, to help cognize that — ‘Kṣetrajna exists’, the Mithyaroopa or deluded (misconceived) form conjured up by the adjuncts is conceived, imagined as if it is the distinctive characteristic (Dharma) of the Kṣetrajna to be cognized. It is being taught that — ‘Sarvataha Paanipaadam or that Entity which has limbs like hands and feet everywhere.’ For this reason alone, there is this dictum of those who knew the traditional teaching: By means of superimposition and rescission that Ultimate, Absolute Reality which is devoid of any traces or taint of duality (Nishprapancha) is being described’ — This alone is that saying of those knowledgeable ancient teachers."

Whenever the Absolute, Transcendental Reality of Atman is to be propounded, the Upanishads have invariably utilized this (unique) methodology. In the present context, though Brahman is not at all ‘Jijnaasya’ or an entity which is the object for Jijnasa (desire to know). It is treated as an object of knowledge; though It is, in reality, not cognizable, the Shruts teach — adopting the ‘Adhyaaroapa Drishti’ or the viewpoint of superimposition — that Brahman is fit to be Intuited or cognized in statements like — ‘TadvJijnaasaswa; Tadbrahma’ (Deliberate upon It in order to Intuit It : It is Brahman, the Absolute Reality) — (Taittireeya 3-1); ‘Sa Vijjnaasitavyaha’ (That Atman should be deliberated upon) — (Chhaandogya 8-7-1); ‘Etajneyam’ (This Reality of Atman alone is fit to be Intuited) — (Shwetaashwatara 1-12). After the teaching of this doctrine is completed when Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is Intuitively experienced, from that standpoint of Intuition, the scriptures rescind (Apavaada) the earlier deliberate superimposition of ‘Jneyatwa’ (being an object of knowledge) hoisted on Atman or Brahman in statements like — ‘Avijnaatam Vijjaatwa’ (Those who claim that they have known It, really do not know It) — (Kena 2-3). In the same manner, in the Geeta also it is stated that — ‘Sookshmatwaattadavijnneyam’— (Since It is subtle It is not an object for knowledge) — (Geeta 13-15). Just like Brahman’s ‘Jijnaasyatwa’ elaborated upon above, the Upanishads presume the pairs of concepts like ‘Jijnaasu’ and ‘Jijnasaas’, ‘Vidyaa’ and ‘Avidyaa’ from the viewpoint of Adhyaaroopa alone and are propounding the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman. How this very important, say unique, methodology of ‘Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya’ or ‘The Axiom
of Superimposition and Rescission' has been utilized in all the Shrutis to propound the Absolute Reality of Brahman or Atman in various ways — we will depict in the forthcoming Chapters of this Prakarana Grantha.

VII. BRAHMAN AS THE CAUSE OF THE WORLD
AND ISHWARATWA

55. Q: Apart from the Taittireeya Shruti sentence that you exemplified before to substantiate the fact that — “The prime goal of all Upanishads is to propound the truth that Brahman alone is the Paramaarththa Satya” — are there any other such supporting sentences to be found in other Upanishads?

A: “Tatsatyam Sa Aatmaa” — (Chhaandogya 6-8-7); “Yenaaksharam Purushham Veda Satyam” — (Mundaka 1-2-13); “Tadetad Satyam” — (Mundaka 2-1-1) etc. — in all these contexts the one common teaching is that — “Brahman alone is the Absolute Reality.”

56. Q: In all these sentences quoted by you it has been propounded that — “Brahman is the cause for the world of duality” — is it not? In that case, how can it be proper to say that — “Brahman, which is involved in or within the purview of the empirical categories of cause and effect, is the Absolute (Transcendental) Reality”?

A: Just as we have called Brahman ‘Jneya’ or an object to be known, this our calling Brahman a ‘cause’ is also from the ‘Adhyaaroopa Drishti’ or viewpoint of superimposition only. When one (i.e. the aspirant) has cognized (Intuited) this non-dual, Absolute Reality of Brahmatman, then the Shruti sublates or rescinds the mundane, empirical categories of cause and effect from that ‘Absolute or Intuitive’ viewpoint (Paramaarththa Drishti).

57. Q: Why at all does the Shruti first state that — “Brahman alone is the cause” and then it sublates this ‘causation’; instead, why should it not, at the outset itself, propound the Swaroopa or the essential nature of Pure Being of Brahman and be done with it? It would have been more prudent to follow the moral depicted in the maxim that — “Prakshaalanaaddhipankasya Dooraadasparshanam Varam” — meaning, “Better than getting the hands dirtied by mud, is to keep at a distance away from that mud without touching it” — is it not?
A: Not so. In all the Upanishads there are sentences like — "EtaJjneyam Nityamevaatmasamstham" — (Shwetaashwatara 1-12); "Naaraayanam Mahaajjneyam" — (Taittireeya Naa. 13-28); "Jneyam Yattat Pravakshyami" — (Geeta 13-12) — and it has been expressly pointed out that — "Brahman alone is that which is to be known: Atman alone is that which is to be known." — but not that — "Brahman is a known object alone: Atman is a known object alone." (To wit, there is a very subtle distinction pointed out here. In the first statement the implied meaning is — "Brahman alone is all that is to be known or Intuited: in other words. Brahman is the non-dual, unitary Reality that is to be pursued and found out as the final goal of all knowledge: but in the second statement the stress is shifted on the word — ‘Jneya‘ — being in syntactical proximity with ‘alone‘. The meaning now becomes — Brahman or Atman is merely an object of knowledge just like any other empirical object for our mind or senses).

"Yatparasshabdaha Sa Shabdaarthaha" — meaning, "In that purport in which the Shruti (Upanishad) has its final goal — that alone is the genuine meaning or interpretation of the Shruti sentence" — according to this Nyaaya or axiom, the teaching that — "There is no other cause for the world of duality" — alone is the final goal or purport of the Shruti and not the suggestion that — Brahman always continues to be a cause (for the world)." In the same way, by the fact that in the Upanishads it has been repeatedly taught that — "If one knows Brahman, it amounts to his knowing everything" — "Brahman alone should be known." Similarly, in Shrutis like — "Sa Kaaranam Karanaadhhipaadhipaha" — (Shwetaashwatara 6-6) etc. we should surmise that all the Shrutis, without exception, entertain the sole purport of expounding the teaching — "Paramaatman or the Supreme Self alone is the cause (for the world of duality) and not the Jeeva or the transmigratory soul, nor any other insentient thing or phenomenon whatsoever."

58. Q: Where has it been taught, then, that "Brahman is not a cause"? Merely by making a statement like that what real benefit will accrue? If the Shruti itself first expounds that — "Brahman is the cause (for the world)" — and later on if it affirms that — "Brahman is not the cause" — then, the Shruti will face the consequence of being branded as an invalid means (source) of knowledge (Apraamaanyatwa) since it contradicts its own earlier teaching. That is all!

A: In the Shruti — "Tadetadbrahmaapoorvamanaparamanantarama- baahyamayamaatmaa Brahma Sarvaanubhoohu" — (Brihadaaranyaka 2-5-19) — it is very clearly indicated that — "That Atman who is experiencing everything alone is Brahman: and to that Brahman neither there exists a cause, nor an effect of it exists: neither there is anything
internal to It, nor anything external to It." In Shrutis like — "Anyatra Dharmaadanyatraadharmaadanyatraasmaatkitaakritad Anyatra Bhootaachha Bhavyaachha" — (Kathoapanishad 2-14) — it is very clearly taught that the categories of cause and effect, the opposites of Dharma and Adharma as well as the events past and future do not at all exist. Therefore, in order to determine the teaching that — "Brahman is the Paramaarthta or the Absolute Reality devoid of the categories of cause and effect" — a methodology of exposition adopting both these viewpoints becomes quite a necessity indeed. And merely on account of this the Shruti statements do not get vitiated as invalid means or sources of knowledge.

59. Q: Merely because something is stated by the Shruti, can that statement become a genuine Pramaana? In accordance with that statement, should we not acquire the relevant Jnaana? What supporting evidence is there at all to determine in that manner?

A: The Upanishadic statement — which explains or describes in the following manner (Varnanavaakya): "Yatoa Vaa Imaani Bhootaani Jaayante Yena Jaataani Jeevanti: Yatprayantasyaahisamvishanti Tadvijnaasasaswa: Tadbrahmetvam— (Tatttrewya 3-3-1) — depicts the Brahmalaxana or the distinctive characteristics of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. Here in this context, ‘Laxana’ means ‘Swaroopaa’ or the essential nature of Being alone, and not any extra-ordinary or uncommon nature (Asaadhaaranaadharma) as the logicians aver. For, the Vedantic teaching or instruction (Vedaantoapadesha) is "Brahman is Nirdharmaka Vastu or an Entity devoid of any distinctive characteristics" — alone. Here the Brahmaswaroopaa has been described in the manner that — "From which Entity this entire physical, materialistic world of duality and diversity (made out of the five primordial elements) is born and after being born from that Entity that world is sustained by that very Entity (to wit, in which Brahman the world of duality and multiplicity appears to exist); and in which Entity alone this world merges and in It alone it becomes one with It — such an Entity is Brahman indeed." In the Brahma Soostra — "Janmaadyasya Yataha" — meaning, 'From which Entity the Janma or birth (creation or causation) etc. of this Jagat or world of duality is taking place" — (that Entity alone is Brahman) — thus the Laxanas of 'Jijnaasya Brâhma' or the Ultimate Reality to be known, cognized are described. The nature of the world is to appear in Atman alone, to continue to exist or be sustained by Atman alone, and finally to merge or to become one with Atman alone. It is never in the experience of any one — whosoever he or she may be — that: "Apart from Atman and independently along with Atman the world of duality exists as a second entity: such as this indeed is the essential nature of the Jagat."
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

Therefore. Atman alone is the Reality. It becomes established as certain that — "The world which appears as being subservient to or controlled by Atman and which merges in Him is Anrita or false appearance alone." Further, it is in everyone's experience that by mixing up Atman and Anaatman alone or 'Satyam' and 'Anratm', respectively. indeed all the common people transact in the forms of 'I' and 'mine'. Therefore, what the Shruti is stating viz. "Tatsatyam, Sa Aatmaa" — (Chhaandogya 6-8-7), meaning. "That Brahman alone is the Reality; That alone is Atman" — is in consonance with universal Anubhava. Besides, it amounts to saying that all this is indeed the explanation of what is purported to have been stated in the Adhyaasalaxanavaakya or the sentence pertaining to the distinctive characteristics of misconception.

Here, in this context. the word 'Kaaran' means 'Paramaarthha Satyam' or the Absolute Transcendental Reality alone; the word 'Kaarya' means 'Anrita' or false appearance. In the Bhagavad Geeta too the Laxanas of Paramaatman have been stated in the following manner which are again analogous to the above Laxanas alone. viz.:

(i) "Aham Sarvasya Prabhavoa Mattaha Sarvam Pravartate"
— (Geeta 10-8);
(ii) "Ahamadishcha Madhyam Cha Bhootaanaamanta Eva Cha"
— (Geeta 10-20);
(iii) "Sargaanaamadirantashcha Madhyam Chalvaahamarjuna"
— (Geeta 10-32);
(iv) "Na Tadasti Vinaa Yat Syaanmayaa Bhootam Charaacharam"
— (Geeta 10-39).

Therefore, this 'Kaaranatwa' or causation is not merely connoted by the sentences, but also is in consonance with everyone's Anubhava.

60. Q: Why is it that giving up the popular commonplace meaning of the words 'Kaarya' and 'Kaaran' these very words are used with such a queer (Vilaxana) meaning like this in the Shaastra?

A: In our workaday world too clay. which is the (material) cause. appears as pots. pitchers etc. which are the effects. All these effects of pots. pitchers etc. even in their transactional forms or states are actually clay alone; they are not at all separate or apart from clay the material of which all those forms are made of. Is it not true that gold alone is popular (familiar) by names like a ring. a bangle etc.? Hence. in the sense of — "Aatmavastu or the Entity of Atman (the substratum for the world of duality) alone is appearing as the world based on this analogy and our having dealt with Atman as the cause and the world of duality as His effect does not amount to our having used them contrary to the popular beliefs among the common people.
61. Q: In our workaday world the material causes like clay, gold etc. are with constituent parts (Saavayaava). It is also familiar that the constituents of clay acquire their distinctive, separate forms too. A potter wets the dry clay powder in water, prepares the lump of clay and then turns that into any form (like a pot, a pitcher etc.) according to his whim. Similarly, a goldsmith too melts the gold ingots or biscuits in the fire and pours that molten gold into various moulds or dies to convert the precious metal into various forms of ornament. However, neither the potter gets converted or transformed into pots, pitchers etc. nor the goldsmith gets converted into various ornaments like a ring, a bangle etc. Even so, sentient (animate) individuals like a potter or a goldsmith become the efficient causes for pots, pitchers etc. or rings, bangles etc., respectively. It being so, in what sense is the opinion (purport) of the Shaastra we should understand when it teaches that Atman is the cause for the world of duality or diversity?

A: Materials (insentient, Inanimate) like clay, gold etc. are the ‘Upaadaana Kaarana’ or material causes for their respective effects. While individuals (sentient, animate) like the potter, the goldsmith etc. are the ‘Kartru’ or agent of action and are the ‘Nimitta Kaarana’ or efficient causes for their respective effects. Although it is true that in our empirical workaday world the Upaadaana Kaarana and the Nimitta Kaarana (Kartru) are separate or distinct, before the creation Atman existed by and unto Himself without anything second to Himself. The Shruti describes that — "Soa(s)kaamayata: Bahu Syaam Prajaayeyeti" — (Taittireeya 2-6); "Tadaikshata Bahu Syaam Prajaayeya" — (Chhaandogya 6-2-3) etc. meaning — “I will be born as many” — in this manner Atman imagined and then created the world of duality and diversity. Therefore, for the world the primordial matter (Prakriti) is the Upaadaana Kaarana and Kartru (or Nimitta Kaarana) is Brahman alone. This alone is the real purport of the Shruti teaching. In addition to this, Brahman existing alone by itself. It alone became the whole of the world. As also, just as the clay gets converted into a pot. Brahman by itself (its own volition, so to speak) transformed itself by its own effort into the world of duality — is stated by the following Shruti sentences: "Tadaatmaanam Swayamakuruta" — (Taittireeya 2-3); meaning, “It converted itself by itself”; “Sachha Tyachhaabhavat” — (Taittireeya 2-6). meaning — “It itself became ‘Moorta’ or with forms, ‘Amoorta’ or devoid of forms.” Therefore, it becomes quite evident from all these statements that — “The Kartru of creation, who is both the Upaadaana Kaarana and the Nimitta Kaarana for the world of duality, is Brahman alone” — is the genuine purport of teaching of the Shruttis.

Here in this context, the word ‘Kaarana’ means the cause for the ‘Anrita Vastu’ or false appearance of an object or phenomenon which is
projected or conjured up by Avidyaa and Kaara also means the substratum (Aaspada) of the Absolute Reality of Brahman (Paramaartha) alone, and for this above teaching the illustrations given in the Shruti itself are the causes of clay, gold etc. and their respective effects of pots, gold rings or bangles etc. To wit:

"Yathaa Soamyaalkena Mritpindena Sarvaam Mrinmayam Vjnaatam Syaadvaachaarambhanam Vikaaroa Naamadheyam Mrittiketyeva Satyam" — (Chhaandogya 6-1-4). Meaning: "If one lump of clay is cognized, it amounts to our having cognized all the earthen effects made out of that clay: the effect is nothing but a mere name alone produced out of speech, but the clay alone is the reality."

In this Upantishadic illustration it is pointed out that — "In our workaday world too whatever effects are produced out of the (material) cause of the clay are actually (in truth) clay alone; what is called the effect is merely a name alone. 'Anrfta' or a false appearance alone and not 'Satyam' or the reality, an entity; further, the statement that the clay became a pot is a mere empirical transaction of speech, but clay alone is the entity involved."

In the above Shruti it is further stressed that: "In the effects produced by Brahman, viz. Tejoabanna (Agnt or fire, Ap or water, Prithvi or earth) — because of the reason that there are no other phenomena than Agnt (fire), Aaditya (sun), Vidyut (lightning); "Aparaagaadngeragnitwam Vaachaarambhanam Vikaaroa Naamadheyam Treeni Roopaaneeteyeva Satyam" — (Chhaandogya 6-4-1): meaning, "Fire, sun and lightning — these three in the forms of effects are truly 'Anrfta' alone and are nothing but the causes of 'Tejoabanna' (red, white and black) alone: they are all again 'Vaaachaarambhanaa' (products of speech alone). Even among those Tejoabannas they are mutually related in the forms of cause and effect and are conglomerations indeed: here also it has been enunciated that the cause alone is the reality or entity. Aadhyaatmically speaking, the phenomena like the mind, the intellect etc. which appear within the body are also the effects of the Tejoabanna alone.

"Annamayam Hi Soamya Manashchaapoamayaha Praanaste-Joamayee Vaak" — (Chhaandogya 6-5-4). Meaning: "Because of the reason that the mind is the effect of 'Anna' (food) or earth; the Praana or vital force the effect of Ap (water). Vaak (speech) the effect of Tejas (light or fire) — all of them too are, in truth, Tejoabanna alone and nothing else whatsoever. This sentence also depicts the same idea.

"Annena Soamyaa Shungeenaapoamoolamanwitchhaadbhiihi. Soamya Shungeena Tejoamoolamanwitchha Tejasoaa Soamya Shungeena Sanmoolamanwitchha Sanmoolaaaha Soamyemaaha Sarvaaha Sadaayatanaha Satpratishthaaha" — (Chhaandogya 6-8-4). Meaning: "The cause for Anna (Prithvi) is Ap (water), the cause for Ap is Tejas
Brahman as the Cause of the World

(light or fire). the cause for Tejas is 'Sat' (the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman) — thus it is propounded that the effect being nothing other than the cause, in the final analysis Sat alone remains as the supreme cause (for everything). It being so, all the things which are born do so from Sat alone. are sustained by Sat alone and finally merge into Sat alone. Therefore. the supreme Reality (Paramartha Satya) is Brahman alone. Because in Brahman alone the birth (creation) of the world. its sustenance and finally its merger are taking place. all these three aspects are Anrta (false appearances); and this alone becomes the ultimate purport of teaching of the Shruti. This same teaching is briefly stated in the Sootra — “Janmaadyasya Yataha.”

62. Q: Barring the empirical illustrations of clay, gold etc. given in the Shruti, is there any other Yukti (logical device) to assert that — “Intuitive deliberation on Satyam and Anrta (and their distinct characteristics and natures) alone is the prime purport of the scripture here in this context”?

A: Yes. there is. In the above quoted Sootra viz. “Janmaadyasya Yataha”. if any one tries to discern the purport of the Bhaashya portion devoted to explain the word ‘Asya’, meaning — ‘this world’ and its essential nature as explained therein. then such a person who has Intuited its purport will be convinced that in this context the Shruti sentence has the relevance only in teaching that —“The Kaarana (cause) is Satyam (real). while the Kaarya (effect) is Anrta (a false appearance) only.” To wit. the Bhaashya says: “Asya Jagataha Naama-roopaabhyaam Vyaakritasya. Aneka Kartrubhoaktrusamyuktasya. Pratiniyatadeshkaalanimittakriyaaphalaashrayasya Manasaapayachintyaraachanaaroopasya Janmashthithibhangam Yataha Sarvajnaat Sarvashaktehe Kaaranaaddbhavati ‘Tadbrahma’ Iti Vaakyasheshaha” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-2).

In this description the world which is the effect is stated to be:

(i) “It is divided or differentiated by names and forms.” Therefore, from this it can be discerned that Brahman (Atman) which is the cause is devoid of names and forms and is an Entity quite different from those names and forms.

(ii) It is further stated that — “This (world) is full of Kartrus (agents of action) and Bhoaktrus (enjoyers). Therefore, it can be discerned that — ‘Brahman. which is the cause for this effect of the world of duality full of Kartrus and Bhoaktrus. is surely not of the essential nature of the transmigratory soul (Asamsaaree Swaroopa) and not either a Kartru or a Bhoaktru.

(iii) It is also stated that — “This world is the base (Aashraya) for every rule or regulation involving space. time and causation categories as
Brahman as the Cause of the World

well as action and its relevant fruit." Therefore, it amounts to saying that the world's cause (Brahman) is not controlled or confined by the categories of space, time and causation, and it should be the very substratum for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of this world of duality which is of the nature of action, means of action and its resultant fruit. If it is stated that — "Devoid of the restrictions of time, space and causation, Brahman is the cause for the world, which is conjoined with those categories of time, space and causation and which is of the very nature of action, means of action and its fruit" — it amounts to having taught that Brahman is the Paramaarth Vastu (the Absolute, Transcendental Reality) alone which is bereft of the divisions of time space etc. as also which does not get mutated or changed whatsoever by action, means of action etc. Because of the reason that this essential nature of the world of duality can be cognized not merely from the teaching of the Shruti alone but also by 'Saarvatrika Anubhava' or universal Intuitive experience, it becomes established (proved) that this teaching is based on, or supported by, Yukti in consonance with Anubhava.

63. Q: Is there any authoritative source to affirm that — "Those scriptural sentences which propound Brahman as the cause have, in the main, the purport or goal of teaching Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa or the Knowledge of the non-dualism of the Self"?

A: Yes, there is. This truth has been indicated by Shri Baadaraayana in his Sootra (2-1-14) and Shri Shankara has explained it in his Bhaashya on that Sootra, viz. "Tadananyatwamaa ambhanashabdaad-dibhyaha" — (2-1-14). The Bhaashyakaara, while explaining it in his commentary has written in the following manner: (1) "'Aarambhanashabdaad-dibhyaha'— Itt Aadishabdaaat 'Altadaatmyamldam Sarvam Tatsatyam Sa Aatmaa Tattwamasi' — (Chhaandogya 6-8-7); 'Idam Sarvam Yadayamaatmaa'— (Brihadaaranyaka 2-4-6); 'Brahmalvedam Sarvam' — (Mundaka 2-2-11); 'Aatmalvedam Sarvam' — (Chhaandogya 7-25-1); 'Neha Naanaastf Klnchana' — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-4-19) — Ityevamandaayatatmakatwapratlpaadanaparam Vachanajaatam Udaahartavynam Na Chaanyathaa Ekavijnanena Sarvavijnanam Sampadyate" — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-14).

In the Sootra: 'Aarambhanashabdaad-dibhyaha' — (2-1-14), because the word 'Aadi' (literally 'etc.') is used, the Bhaashya's import is that all the Shruti statements devoted to teaching Aatmalkatwapratlpaadana (propounding non-dualism of the Self) in various Upantshads like the ones quoted from Chhaandogya 6-8-7, Brihadaaranyaka 2-4-6, Mundaka 2-2-11, Chhaandogya 7-25-1 and Brihadaaranyaka 4-4-19 etc. — all such sets of scriptural statements should be exemplified.
Brahman as the Cause of the World

From this it can be discerned that — ‘Whatever we perceive in this external world, all that is verily Brahman alone, Paramaatman alone.’ And this indeed is the prime purport of teaching behind the Vedanta Vaakyas. The oft-repeated teaching of the Shruti that — “By knowing this One Entity it becomes tantamount to knowing all else indeed” — is an authoritative scriptural statement supporting this tenet of Aatmalkatwa Vidyaa alone and is the relevant spiritual teaching in all those statements.

Here in this context, the cause for mixing up Satyam and Anritam, viz. Atman and Anaatman, respectively, and then carrying on our workaday transactions is ‘Avidyaa’ alone. To discern that between these two one is Satyam and the other Anritam is ‘Vidyaa’, and if only this much were the intended purport for the Shruti, then in that case there should not have existed any sentences in the Shruti specifically teaching that — “All is Atman alone.” The Shruti would have given sufficient scope for the wrong conception of the Avivek’s or non-discriminative Avidyaavantas, viz. “The Anrita Anaatman too exists by the side of Satya Aatman as an entity second to It.” But, the real fact is not like that at all. The Anubhava (Intuitive experience) that — “Atman alone is the Paramaartha Satya” — alone is ‘Samyajjnaana’ or the correct Intuitive Knowledge of the Self. Even what is reckoned as Anaatman is said from the Transcendental viewpoint of Atman alone. To determine this truth without any ambiguity or doubt alone is the final goal of Adhyaasa Bhaashya.

64. Q: In our workaday world the one who is a Bhoaktru being different and separate from his Bhoagya Vastu or object of enjoyment is found to be a universal rule of law. If Brahman is accepted as the Upaadaana Kaarana (material cause) for the world of duality or diversity, then the divisions of Bhoaktru, Bhoaga (means of enjoyment) and Bhoagya (object of enjoyment) themselves will be obliterated, is it not? Or, if Brahman, just like a lump of clay or an Ingot of gold etc. gets transformed into Its effects (Kaarya), then the ‘Anishtaprasakti’ or undesirable conclusions of — (i) the Absolute Pure Brahman does not exist during the time of sustenance of the world; (ii) the divisions do not exist during the state of dissolution of the world — will be faced, is it not?

A: Looking from the empirical viewpoint, it is true that Shrutis like — “Sachha Tyachaabhabhavat” - (Taittireeya 2-6) etc. are teaching that Atman by Himself transformed Himself into the form of the world without desiderating any help from anything else. This truth is also being propounded by the Sootra (1-4-26): “Aatmakritehe Partnaamaat”.

65
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

Considering it from this Vyaavahaaric viewpoint, although Bhoaktru and Bhoagya from the standpoint of Brahmaswaroopa (essential nature of Pure Being) are one and the same alone, from the standpoint of their respective forms they may be different or diverse indeed. This truth is briefly taught in the Sootra (2-1-13): “Bhoaktraapatteravibhaagashchet Syaalloakavat”. The Bhaashyakaara has explained it in the following manner:

(i) “Samudraadakatatmano(s)nanyatwe(s)pt Taduvaaranaam Phenaakcheetaranagabudbudaaadeenaamitaretaravibhagaahita Itaretarasamshteshaadilakshnashcha Vyavahaara Upalabhyate: Na Cha Samudraadakatatmano(s)nanyatwe(s)pt Taduvaaraanaam Phenaaturangaadeenaam Itaretarabhaavaapattirhavati: Na Cha Teshaaam Itaretarabhavaaanapatteavesvapi Samudraatmano(s)nayatwam Bhavati: Evam Ihaapi; Na Cha Bhoaktrubhoagyaayitaretarabhaavaapattiti, Na Cha Parastaad Brahmano(s)nayatwam Bhavishyat.” — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-13).

Meaning: “Although foam, wave, bubbles etc. are the distinctive forms of sea water, mutually different from one another, from the viewpoint of their being water (their actual material base) all of them are nothing but sea water alone; in the same manner, although Bhoaktru, Bhoagya etc. are mutually different from one another, all of them may exist as the (unitary, non-dual) Brahma Swaroopa.” To wit, from the Paramaartha Drishti Bhoaktru, Bhoaga and Bhoagya are Anrita only and hence it is established as a fact of life that Kaarya (effect) is not at all different from Kaarana (cause).

From this standpoint, the Bhaashyakaara has written as follows: “Tasmaat. Yathaa Ghatakarakaadyaakaashaanaam Mahaakaashaadananayatwam, Yathaa Cha Mrigatrishnikoadaakaadeenaam Oosharaadibhya(s)nanyatwam, Drishtanashitaswaroopatwaat, Swaroopenaanupaakhyaatwaaat. Evam Asya Bhoagyaabhoaktra-adiprapanchaajataasya Brahmannyatiirekenaabhaava Iti Drish-tavyam” — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-14).

Meaning: “Just as the empty spaces within a pot, a pitcher etc. are identical (Ananya) with the open, large empty space: the waters of a mirage etc. are identical with the desert sand — in the same manner, the different categories of the type of Bhoagya, Bhoaktru etc. are not at all different from Brahman. Thus one has to discern.” Here in this context, the different Jeevas are like the Ghataakaasha, Mataakaasha etc. or the apparent spaces within the pot, the pitcher etc. and all of them are like the water of the mirage (meaning, a mere delusion) — thus the similarity or analogy between two sets of illustrations should be carefully observed. This same illustration has also been mentioned by Shri Goudapaadaachaarya, the Sampradaayapravartaka.
of proponent of the traditional methodology of teaching, in the following Kaarika: "Aatmaa Hyaakaasharajaeevaairghataakaashaair-
naaditahah: Ghanaadvachha Sanghaatirjaataavatannidarshanam"
(Goudapada Kaarika 3-3).

Its purport: Just as the Maahaakaasha itself is born as Ghanakaasha, Mataakaasha etc., Aatman is born as the Jeevas; For the fact of the world) being born or created, this is an (apt) illustration." To explain, although the Maahaakaasha always exists as one and one entity alone, it gets born as many in the forms of Ghanakaasha, Mataakaasha etc.: in the same way, Brahman associated with adjuncts like the body, the senses, the mind etc. appears as if it is the transmigratory souls (Samsaaari Jeevas). Really speaking (from the transcendental viewpoint of Atman, the Pure Consciousness), just as the open empty space exists exclusively as one and one entity only, Brahman too exists ever as the non-dual Reality alone (This alone is the real purport of the illustration given in the Kaarika). Aakaasha appears as Vaayu, Agni, Ap and Prihhti in that order and by virtue of the transformation, or rather mutation, of the last of the primordial elements, viz. Prihhti, it (Aakaasha itself) appears as an earthen pot, pitcher etc. In the same way, although Paramaataan is the only non-dual Entity, He appears as so many Jeevas just like the Ghanakaasha as and as sentient, inanimate phenomena in the world of duality. This is the complete implied meaning of the sentence.

In this manner what has been taught in the Sootra (1-1-2): "Aatmaaadhyasya Yataha" — from the viewpoint of superimposition (Adhyaaroopa Drishti) as the Kaaryakaarana theory, has been, in this context, negated or rescinded (Apavaada) on the strength of the Shruti like ‘Vachchaarabhana Vikaaaro Naamadheyam’ etc.; here also it amounts to having taught the Satyaanrita Viveka or the Intuitive deliberation on what are real and unreal entities from the Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Drishtis.

65. Q: Thus to teach Jagatkaaranatwa (causation of the world) from the Adhyaaroopa Drishti what is the authority or canonical source? What benefit at all can accrue from it?

A: From this the Satkaaryavaada (the theory of the birth of an existing entity) in accordance with the genuine teaching of Vedantic spiritual science as well as the rational, dialectical deduction and justification of the division into Ishwara (the Lord Creator) and Eeshitanya (the ruled Jagat and Jeevas) is fully clarified.
66. Q: What exactly is the essential teaching pertaining to Satkaaryavaada (theory of an existing entity being born) acceptable to Vedantic Shaastra? Are there any other Satkaarya theories apart from this?

A: The Saankhyans opine that - "Kaarana itself gets transformed into the Kaarya"; further they say — "Kaarya and Kaarana are Ananya (identical)." Shri Goudapadaa has demonstrated that their theory of Satkaarya is ‘Asaadhu’ or that which cannot be established or sustained on the strength of reasoning, and then has propounded (enunciated) the Satkaaryavaada acceptable to Vedanta in the following manner: "Bhootam Na Jaayate Kinchidabhootam Naiva Jaayate; Vivadantoa Davyaa Hyevamajaatim Khyaapayanti Te" — (Goudapadaa Kaarika 4-4). Meaning: "That which exists is not born; that which does not exist never at all is born — thus those Duattins who are arguing and disputing among themselves, are, in truth, projecting (propounding unwittingly, as it were) ‘Ajaati’ or birthlessness alone."

Here in this particular context, because Saankhyans, who are proponents of Satkaaryavaada, are being blamed by Vaiseshikas, while the latter who are the proponents of ‘Asatkaaryavaada’ (the theory of a non-existing thing being born) are blamed by Saankhyans — a clear verdict gets evolved from their mutual quarrel, namely, that both their theories are invariably defective; besides, the truth that "From the Paramaarththa Drishti the Tattwaa or Reality of Brahman or Atman never at all is born" — is established jointly by their dialectical disputations and opposite viewpoints. This is implied by the above Kaarika.

"Kaaranaam Yasya Val Kaaryam Kaaranam Tasya Jaayate; Jaayamaanam Kathamajam BhInnam Nityam Katham Cha Tat" — (G. K. 4-12).

"Kaaranaadyadyananyatwamataha Kaaryamajam Tava; Jaayaamaanadhaal Val Kaaryaatkaaranam Te Katham Dhruvam" — (G. K. 4-12).

Shri Goudapadaa in his these two above Kaarikas has shown the defects in the other proponents' theories in the manner: "In the doctrine of the Saankhyans who propound that — ‘Pradhaana which is the cause becomes transformed into its effects like Mahat, Ahamkaara, etc.: and therefore, Kaarya is Ananya (identical) with Kaarana’ — it amounts to saying that although the Kaarana gets transformed into Kaarya, that which is born is Aja (birthless), which is (on the face of it) a blatant contradiction."

"Satoa HI Maayayaa Janma Yujiyate Na Tu Tattwataha; Tattwatoa Jaayate Yasya Jaatam Tasya HI Jaayate" — (G. K. 3-27).

Brahman as the Cause of the World

In these two above Kaarikas Shri Goudapaada has established dialectically the Satkaarya propounded and/or acknowledged by Vedanta in the following manner: "The entity which is Sat (really existing one) may be born by virtue of Maayaa (magic); but if it is propounded that it really is born, then it amounts to saying — 'That which is already born (existing) itself gets born again, afresh' — and this proposition becomes defective logically. But if a thing is at the beginning itself Asat (non-existing phenomenon), there is no possibility of it being born at all." In this manner the Asatkaaryavaada is also condemned.

"Neha Naaneti ChaamnaayaadIndroa Maayaabhirityapf: Ajaaya-

In this Kaarika several Shruti sentences like — "Neha Naanaastl
Kinchana" — (Brihadaranyaka 4-4-10); "Indroa Maayaabhihi Puru-
roopa Eeyate" — (Brihadaaranyaka 2-5-19); "Ajaayamaanoa Bahudhaa
Vijaayate" — (Taittirieya Aaranyaka 3-13) — have been quoted as
authoritative sources and on their strength Shri Goudapaada has
adduced sufficient Pramaana Vaakyas to conclude (deduce) that —
"The Absolute Reality of Atman (Aatma Tattwa), which is really birthless
(Janmarahita), may plausibly be born by virtue of its own magical
powers (Maayayaa)."

This 'Maayaa Satkaaryavaada' (theory of magical birth of the Eternal
Entity of Brahma or Atman) has been expounded in the Brahma Sootra
and the same tenet has been elaborated upon by Shri Shankara in his
Bhaashya on that Sootra. For example: The Sootra (2-1-7): "Asadltl
Chenna Prattshedhamaatratwaat" — has been explained in the
Bhaashya as: "Yathalva Heedaaneemapeedam Kaaryam Kaara-
naatmanoa Sat Evam Praagutpatterapl Iti Gamyate: Na.... ....Heenam
Praagutpatteridaaneem Vaa Astl." — (S. B. 2-1-7).

The Shruti enunciates that — "Brahman is devoid of Shabda (sound).
Sparsha (touch) etc." The world which appears to be associated with
Shabda, Sparsha etc. is never existing apart from Brahma; in other
words, the world of duality or diversity is ever appearing in Brahma
(to wit, Brahma is the substrate for the appearance of the world of
duality). This elucidation is tantamount to enunciating the Maayaa
Satkaaryavaada alone.

67. 9: What is meant by 'Ishwara'? Is this Ishwara different
from 'Brahman' ? How at all can this Ishwaratwa (Lordship) arise
in Aatma Vastu (The Reality of the Self) which is non-dual (one
without anything second to It)?

A: Brahma, the cause, alone in relation to the world, the effect, is
called 'Ishwara' (the Lord Creator); just as the Kaaranatwa (cause-
hood) is superimposed on Brahma, in the same manner Ishwaratwa
also is superimposed on Brahman and is per force relative indeed. Just as in relation to the effect the transaction of treating or calling another thing its cause has arisen. in relation to the 'Eeshitarya Jeeya' (the souls created and controlled by the Lord Ishwara) that Reality of Brahman is called or transacted as 'Ishwara', the Lord. For this reason alone. Shri Shankara in many contexts in his Bhaashya has used the word 'Ishwara' in the sense. or with the meaning. of 'Kaarana Brahman'. For example:

(i) "Asya Jagataha Naamaroupabhyam Vyaakritasya...Janmasthitibhangam Yataha Sarvajnaat. Sarvashaktehe Kaaranaad Bhavati 'Tad Brahma' Iti Vaakyayeshahah" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1.2).

(ii) Yathoaktavisheshanasya Jagataha Yathoaktavisheshanam Ishwaram Muktawa Anyataha Pradhaanaadachetanaad Anubhyou(s)-bhaavaaat Samsaarino Vaa Utpaatyaadi Sambhaavayitum Shakyam" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1.2).

(In the above excerpts Brahman is called Ishwara. Sarvajna and Sarvashhavah.)

(iii) "Kimu Vaktiryam Anekashaakhaabhedabhinnasya Devatiryang-manushyavarnaashramaadipravibhaagaahetoah Rigvedaadyaakhyasya....Sarvajnatwam Sarvashaktihitam Cheti" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-5).

(Here because the special features or qualities of Sarvajnatwam (omniscience) and Sarvashaktihitam or omnipotency are mentioned. it amounts to signifying Brahman as Ishwara alone.)

(iv) "Yatprasadaaat Hi Yoaginaamapyaateetanaagataavishayam Pratyaksham Jnaanamechanti Yoagashaashtravidaha Kimuraktiyyam Tasya Nityasiddhasya Ishwarasya Shrihtishthitsamhrttivishayham Nityajnaanam Bhavateetl" — (Sootra Bhaasya 1-1-5).

(Here it is stated that Ishwara. whom the exponents of Yoga Shaastra are teaching. is none other than Brahman. the cause of the Jagat).

(v) "Apl Cha Avidyaadimataha Samsaarinaha Shareeraaadyapekshaa Jnaanotpatithi Syaat: Na Jnaanapratibhandhakaaaranar~hitasya Ishwarasya"— (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-5).

(Here it is stated that there is no impediment whatsoever for Brahma Jnaanasvaropa and hence that Itself is called Ishwara).

(vi) "Swashabdaadeva Sarvajnaha Ishwaroo Jagataha Kaaranam Shrooyate Samhitoapanishadi" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-11).

68. Q: If the ultimate purport of the Shrutis is to teach that — "The non-dual Atman alone is the Paramaarththa Satya (the supreme. Absolute Reality)" — alone, then why is it that the Shrutis teach about Ishwaratwa. Sarvajnatwa etc. at all?
Brahman as the Cause of the World

A: We have already stated that from the viewpoint of the relation with the world of names and forms the Shrutis teach about Ishwaratwa. His Sarvagnatwa etc. only from the Vyavahara Drishti alone. For this the Bhauashyakara has given a rational or dialectical device as follows:

"Nityashuddhabuddhhamuktaswaroopaat... Saguneshloopaaneshu Upayaoakshyata Iita" — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-14).

There is an immense benefit in deliberating upon the various teachings, one by one, explained in great detail in this long Bhaashya portion:

(i) In the Sootra — "Janaadyyasya Yataha" while projecting the Brahmalaxana, the statement that — 'Brahman is the cause for the Janaa, Sthitii and Layaa of the Jagat' is made from the Adhyaaroopa Drishti alone. And acknowledging the Vyavaharika Kaaryakaaranaabhaava or the empirical categories of cause and effect. Brahman has been mentioned as the cause. that is all. From this, the refutation of the various theories presented by proponents of Pradhaana as the Kaarana for the Jagat (i.e. Saankhyans): Paramaanaas, as the cause of the materialistic world (i.e. Vaisheshikas) etc. is made very clear: further, the subtle relationship between Satyam and Anritam (to wit, Vedantic methodology of teaching is: Jagat is 'Adhyasta' or the super-imposed phenomenon, misconceived one: Brahman, the non-dual Reality, is 'Aaspada or the substrate for this Adhyaasa or misconception. Vedantic methodology teaches us further that this relationship between a real entity and a false appearance of a phenomenon as if the latter is real is itself due to 'Avidya'; but for the Avidyaavantasa, very much steeped in materialistic transactions and pursuits, this methodology accepts in the beginning, by way of a concession and purely for the purposes of teaching, all mundane relationships of cause and effect by deliberate super-imposition but later on rescinds this superimposition to bring home the non-dualism of Brahman or Atman) becomes very evident. From this there is no harm posed to Aatmaikatwa teaching at all.

(ii) Here calling Brahman, the non-dual Absolute Reality. Ishwara is necessitated only by the relationship of the latter to the Eeshitanya Kaurubhoakturopaa Jeeritas or transmigratory souls of the nature of agents of action-cum-enjoyers, who are said to be lorded over or controlled by Ishwara. It should be evident to the careful student that from this teaching the qualities (Dharman) like 'Ishwaratwa' and 'Kaaraanatwa' do not at all attach to or taint Brahman.

(iii) Brahman being called 'Sarvajna' and 'Sarvashakta' is only from the viewpoint of Its Kaaraanavastha or grosser empirical state of being a cause. But from the viewpoint of Its Transcendental Absolute
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

Being (Paramaarththa Drishti) neither 'Sarvajnatwa' nor 'Sarashaktatwa' is to be found in the least in Brahmaan.

(iv) For the whole of Samaaaraaprapancha or the world of transmigratory existence, names and forms are the seed. These names and forms cannot at all be described or defined as 'Tattwa- anyatwaabhyaamanirvachaneeya' or either as Ishwara's essential nature of Pure Being or as independent entities existing by themselves apart from Ishwara. In fact, as if they are Ishwara's very core of Being these names and forms are 'Avidyaa Kalpita' or projected or conjured up by nescience. These are called Maayaa. Shakti, Prakriti in Shrutis and Smritis and this fact is very evident.

(v) Ishwara is none other than Brahmaan alone, which is different from 'Aavyaaktita Naamaropabeeja' or the seed form of names and forms in an unmanifest state and which is independent unto itself.

(vi) Brahmaan which is the Ultimate Reality (Paramaarththa) is non-dual (Adviteeya); in It there is no transaction whatsoever.

(vii) The Sootrakaara (Shri Baadaraayana) in the Sootra (2-1-13): 'Bhoaktraapatteravibhaagaschet Syaallokaaavat' — has given the illustration (analogy) of foam, waves and bubbles as the constituent parts of sea water while teaching this Ultimate Reality or Brahmaan neither with a view to concluding that Brahmaan is also having constituent parts (Saavayava) nor to affirm that in Brahmaan there are divisions of Bhoaktru, Bhoagya etc. In fact, the Sootrakaara does not entertain even an iota of the idea of teaching that — 'Brahman is Parinaaml or an object that undergoes transformation' — at all. For that reason too, he has taught through his Sootra: 'Aarambhanashabdaadtbhyaha' — that — "The world of duality is Ananya (identical) with Brahmaan; and Aatmaikatwa or non-dualism of the Self is the final truth alone". These alone are the genuine Vedantic Siddhaanta. This fact also is clarified here in this context.

(viii) The Sootrakaara acknowledges Ishwara as 'Parinaaml' only from the Vyaavahaarlc viewpoint; he does so with the ultimate purport of teaching that — 'The Jeeva can reach or attain Brahmaanhood through Upaasana (meditation).'

69. Q: Regarding those preceptors who follow (adopt) the Shaankara Siddhaanta and propound the various topics, which of the tenets of Shri Shankara have these preceptors wrongly presented or commented upon?

A: (i) Although Shri Shankara has time and again reiterated in a crystal clear fashion that — "Maayaa, Naamaroopabeeja, Prakriti — all these various names are given to the unmanifested causal
Brahman as the Cause of the World

state (*Praagroopa*) of the world of duality (which is the current topic of discussion) and that unmanifested causal (seed) form is said to be ‘Avidyaakalplta’ or a projection, a conjured up phenomenon (concept) of nescience (to wit, the serious student of *Vedanta Shaastra* cannot afford to forget or neglect this prime secret of Shri Shankara’s methodology of teaching that — “Maayaa or Ishwara’s Shakti is itself Avidyaakalplta, just as Ishwaratwa also is Avidyaakalplta” — and the student should carefully discern the facts that — Avidyaa itself, in a manner of speaking, is the cause for the effects or concepts of Ishwaratwa and Maaya; further, Avidyaa cannot be carelessly equated with Maayaa in all respects: for, all kinds of logical discrepancies will arise to confuse and confound him resulting in his totally missing the true significance of the unique methodology that the world teacher adopted — in consonance with the traditional pedagogic methods — in bringing home the subtle truths of *Advaita Vedanta’* — some commentators have interpolated and adduced their own methodology of equating those three terms of Maayaa. Naamaroopabeeja and Prakrltl with Avidya and Avidyaashakti (to wit, Shri Shankara never calls Avidyaa as a Shakti or a potential force, but has used Mayaa to mean Ishwara’s Shakti or omnipotency, quite in keeping with the *Upanishadic* teaching. Evidently, the confusion seems to have arisen from equating Avidyaa with Maayaa in all aspects).

(iii) Discarding the Bhaashya teaching that — “Avidyaa means the mutual Adhyaasa (misconception and superimposition of qualities or characteristics of each on the other) between Atman and Anaatman’” — Mandana Mishra, the author of *Brahmasiddhi*, has misinterpreted Shri Goudapada’s technical words calling ‘Agrahana’ (non-comprehension of the Reality) ‘Kaaranaaavidyaa’ and ‘Anyathaaagraghana’ (misconception) ‘Kaaryaavldyaa’ — in his (Mandana’s) own whimsical way and has called both Avidyaa to start, or bring into vogue, his own methodology.

(iii) Because Maayaa or Avidyaakalplta Prakrtti is misconceived in, or superimposed upon, Atman, it cannot be determined or defined to be either Atman Himself or some independent entity different from Him. But in the context where Shri Shankara has mentioned ‘Tattwaanyatwaabhyaaamanirvachaneeya’ — Mandana Mishra and the Vyaakhyaanakaaras (post-Shankara sub-commentators) have conceived a new meaning for the above phrase, interpreting it in the manner — “‘Anirvachaneeya’ — means that which cannot be determined as either ‘Sat’ (real) and ‘Asat’ (unreal) and is a substance (Padaartha) which is of quite a queer form different from both (i.e. *Sat* and *Asat*).”
The other Bhaashyakaaros who had undertaken an examination of Shri Shankara's Siddhaanta have erroneously taken this interpretation of Mandana Mishra and the Vyakhyaanakaaras to be that of Shri Shankara alone and have refuted and criticized it. Those Vyakhyaanakaaras who are the proponents of 'Avidyoapaadhaanavadaa' (the theory that Avidyaa itself is the material cause of the world) have imagined a completely new theory (a highly defective one at that, but mostly in vogue today) that — "The silver of nacre or sea-shell (Shuktrirajata) etc. — the appearances which are Antivachaneeya Pradaartha, or a materialistic, substantive thing which cannot be determined or defined as either Sat or Asat — are entities (substances) born out of another kind of Avidya. which is the substratum for not only things like Shukti (nacre) etc. but also the Chaitanya (Consciousness) which is Avacchhina or inseparable from them." (This is truly a far-fetched-unsustainable imaginary theory which can never stand the onslaught of logic, particularly critique of reason: besides, it has, in the main, vitiated Shri Shankara's pristine pure Adhidaata Vedanta Siddhaanta beyond redemption. so to speak. Perhaps only another world teacher of the calibre of Adi Shankara alone may save or salvage Vedanta from further harm and defilement).

(iv) Although Shri Shankara’s description of ‘Adhyaasaa’ is very clear in terms like ‘Atasminstadbuddhiihi’ the Bhraantijnanaa or deluded, wrong knowledge of a thing as something other than what it is) — some Vyakhyaanakaaras have misinterpreted it saying that — ‘Adhyaasa means not only this ‘Jnaanaadhyaasa’ or misconception but besides this there is another ‘Arthaadhyaasa’ which is nothing but the Shuktrirajata or nacre-silver, rope-snake etc. which are born or appear in an Antivachaneeya manner.

(v) Whereas Shri Shankara has enunciated that — ‘Ahampratiya- yagamija Atman or the Self (Pure Consciousness) associated with the adjunct of ‘Ahamkaara’ or ego or the ‘I’ notion is the ‘Jeera’ (transmigratory soul)’ and that — Quite different and distinct from him as his ‘Saakshti’ or Witnessing Consciousness is Ishuvara.” — some other Vyakhyaanakaaras are propounding their own bizarre doctrinaire theory that — ‘The Avidyaa Shakti that is attached to or has adhered to Atman gets transformed into Ahamkaara’; further, mere Adhyaasa alone is not Avidyaa. That Avidyaa (Shakti) covers up even the Brahmaswaroopa by dint of its own ‘Aavarana Shakti’ or potency of covering up or hiding another thing, and thereafter by virtue of its other ‘Vikshepa Shakti’ or potency of dispersing or scattering creates (causes)
'Samsuartinwa' or transmigratory existence (Jeevatwa). Thus they have acknowledged Avidyaa Shakti, which is totally different from Adhyaasa as described by Shri Shankara. They have further explained that this Avidyaa Shakti is the Kaarana and Samsuartinwa is the Kaarya. This in truth is the Kaaryakaarana Vyavahara which they have acknowledged and adopted. This evidently amounts to their complete neglect of the Bhaasuja Siddhaanta that — "All Vyavahaaras are due to Adhyaasa alone."

(vi) A needless controversy has been started with a vain topic for discussion to the effect that — "To whom does Avidyaa attach itself — is it to Brahman or to the Jeeva?" Some have opined that it attaches itself to the Jeeva, while some others say that it attaches itself to Brahman; yet some others have thought that it attaches itself to the Chinmaatra or only the consciousness devoid of the divisions of Jeevatwa and Brahmatwa. Another topic of discussion is — "Is Avidyaa one or many?" — and some have opined it to be one, while some others are saying that — "Each Jeeva has one Avidyaa and thus Avidyaas are many (to wit, as many as the number of Jeevas)." Thus they have expressed and exhibited their mutual differences of opinion among themselves. One more question is raised as to — "Is Saakshi one or many?" — and once again some have opined that — "Jeeva Saakshis are different from Ishwara Saakshi" — and in this way they are conceiving highly illogical and imaginary doctrinaire theories (which again cannot stand the test of critique of reason and Intuitive experience or Anubhava). It is so very clear and evident that these disputants have completely forgotten the Upanishadic teaching that — The transactions of one and 'many' can never take place without any relation to time, space concepts and the truth that — "Saakshi (the Witnessing or Pure Consciousness) is the Witness for everything else: in it there is no scope at all for the entry of any number whatsoever. Yet another ridiculous exercise (in futility) has been indulged in by these rabid logicians who have undertaken the wild goose chase of finding the Pramaana for Avidyaa itself and in the process have become totally oblivious and ignorant of the Anubhava (Intuitive experience) that — "All Pramana Vyavahaaras (empirical transactions of finding valid means of evidence) are born out of Avidyaa itself!"

For all these blatant blemishes in these weird theories or tenets the root, prime cause is to be traced exclusively to the total neglect or obliviousness of the important Vedantic teaching that — "All the Vedantas (Upanishads) propound, on the firm basis of the immaculate
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

time-tested traditional methodology of Adhyaaroopa and Apavaada, that Avidyaa, which is established on the universal experience of the type of Anyoanyaadhyaasa (mutual superimposition of their respective qualities or distinctive characteristics between Atman and Anaatman) and which is the Adhyaaasalaxana (of the nature of misconception). can be got rid of or dissolved by means of Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa (the non-dualistic Knowledge or Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure Consciousness).” Therefore, the curative medicine. as it were. for getting rid of all these above-mentioned defects and defaults is to remember always the methodology of Adhyaasa, on the one hand, and the Kaaryakaarana Prakriya (the methodology of cause and effect) as already explained by us in some detail.

VIII. ISHWARA AND JEEVAS

70. Q: The Laxana (characteristic) of ‘Brahman being the cause for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of the world’ mentioned by the Shaastra does not seem to suit it for, in different Shrutis different orders of creation have been described. Is it not? How can all such discrepancies be reconciled?

A: For this question Shri Baadaraayana has provided satisfactory solution in his Sootra (1-4-14): “Kaaranatuwena Chaakaadishu Yathaa Vyapadishtoaktehe”. The purport of this is explained in the Bhaashya in the following manner:

(i) Yathaabhoota Hyekasmin Vedaante Sarvajnah Sarveshwaraha Sarvaatmaa, Ekoa(s)dvlteeyaha Kaaranatuwena.. Bhavittumarhateelti Shakyate Vaktum: Atiprasangaat.”

Its gist: The Brahmaaswaroopa or the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness that is enunciated in one particular Upanishad is itself described invariably in the same manner in the rest of the Upanishads and such a unitary Pure Being-Consciousness nature of Brahma alone has been enunciated to be the cause for the world of duality (Here the seeker should not get confused by such variations in the order of creation: for, in the ultimate analysis. creation or. for that matter. the details of the order of creation are not so important as the very cause of creation. and this latter tenet of Brahma as cause is enunciated synchronously. In fact. the very purport of teaching creation rests on diverting the attention of the seeker from the world of duality towards its unknown cause using the Adhyaaroopa technique and when Brahma is cognized to be beyond both cause and effect categories. then the deliberately superimposed qualities or characteristics
Ishwara and Jeevas

of Brahman are rescinded by Apavaada). It is true that in so far as the Jagat, which is the Kaarya, and its order of creation are concerned, different Upanishads have described the order of creation in different ways. But merely on that count it cannot be affirmed that in the matter of the Kaarana also the Shrutis (Upanishads) do not have any final purport (Taatparya). This is the opinion expressed in so many words in the above Bhaashya excerpt.

(ii) “Samaadhaasyati Chaachaaryaha Kaaryavishayamapi Vigaanam 'Na Vlyadashrutehe' — (2-3-1) Ityaarabhya: Bhavedapil.. Pratipattojou Samsaaryaatmatwavyaavritllehe” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-4-14).

The purport of this above Bhaashya portion is: With regard to the Upanishadic sentences pertaining to the creation which is the Kaarya, to the objection that there is no unanimity the Sootrakaara (Shri Baadaraayana) will give satisfactory answer later on; but, in case there is no unanimity — even then it does not matter. For, by understanding it there does not appear to be any benefit at all: the Shruti does not also mention any Phala (benefit): last but not the least, we human beings by ourselves can never imagine this. The description of the creation by means of illustrations of clay, metal and sparks of fire etc. is only a clever device (Upaaya) adopted by the Shruti to divert our intellect (discriminative faculty) towards the non-dualism of the Self (Aatmalkatwa) and not to enunciate that the cause is separate or different from the effect (here, the world). Thus the traditional teacher Shri Goudapaada who knows the methodology of teaching handed down from time immemorial from the teacher to the pupil (Sampradaayavid Achaarya) also has affirmed. On the other hand, for the Aatmalkatwa Jnaana at various places in the Shrutis the benefit has been stated. With regard to the teaching — “Tattwamasti” — meaning, “That thou art”, which the seeker has to cognize so as to culminate in his own Intuitive experience as — ‘That Brahman am I’ — the fact that — “From this Shruti Vaakya Aatma Jnaana’, which is engendered, directly helps attain ‘Aatmaanubhava’ or the Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss alone” — is cognized by everyone directly and with certainty or conviction.

Here in this context Kaarana means that Paramaatman (Supreme Self) on whom the world of duality is superimposed (Adhyasta). And since Paramaatman alone is Satyam, the Shruti propounding Its Jnaana in order to attain the Purushaartha (the final goal of human existence) is reasonable indeed. Because the Kaarya Prapancha, which is superimposed on It is Anr/ta, the Shruti instructs (the seeker) that the Tattwa (Absolute Reality of Brahman) should be cognized without any
mixing up, in the least, of the Shrutita world of duality: the Shruti further teaches that in the Paramaarththa not even a trace or taint of Naamaatwa (diversity or manifoldness) exists. Thus it is enunciated in the Sootra (3-2-13): “Api Chaitameke”. Its Bhaashya says:


The gist of the Bhaashya is: The Shruti has specifically stressed that — ‘Those who see as if there exists diversity in the really non-dual Brahman meet with death after death’ — in the form of a condemnation or criticism and then instructed pointedly that — ‘All that is divided or differentiated as Bhaagya (object of enjoyment), Bhaaktru (enjoyer), Parameshwara (the Supreme Lord — who provides or bestows upon those enjoyers the fruits of enjoyment, as their Dispenser) is Brahman alone. Even so, it should not be reckoned that description of creation has no utility whatsoever. The Shruti adopts a methodology of teaching the subtle Reality of Brahman on the strength of a Nyaya (aphorism) that — ‘The Kaarya is not Bhnana (different) from the Kaarana’ — and brings home the truth in the manner: “The Paramaarththa (the Ultimate Reality) behind Pritvi (earth) is Ap (water); the Paramaarththa of Ap is Tejas (fire).” In this order of tracing the root cause for all diverse and gross elements and their conglomerations (of which the world of duality is the visible percept) culminates in Brahman alone. In this manner the creation and its order becomes a pretext for the Shruti to determine the Ultimate non-dual Reality, and this teaching of the Shruts is to be discerned by the true seeker. For this reason alone the Sootrakaarara has enunciated the following Sootra in order to drive home the idea that the dissolution of this world of duality takes place completely in the reverse order of its creation:

“Viparyayena Tu Kramoasita Upapadyate Cha” — (2-3-14). To explain, the gross primordial element of Pritvi gets dissolved (Laya) in the subtler element of Ap, the latter in the still subtler element Tejas — thus these elements get dissolved in that order and this process of dissolution reaches its fruition or finality in the subtlest cause of Brahman in which everything gets merged, so to speak. This order of Layachintana (contemplation on dissolution) helps the seeker to determine the truth that — ‘Everything is Brahman alone’ — in the ultimate analysis (from the Paramaarththa Drishti).
71. Q: Since the world of duality is made up of Bhoagya and Bhoaktru, just like the insentient or inanimate objects which are Bhoagya Vastu, we should reckon that the Jeeva, who is the Bhoaktru, is also born from Brahman alone. Is it not?

A: Not so. Because the bodies of Charachara Praanihi or movable and immovable creatures are being born and are dying, Jeeva, who exists among them, seems to be born and to die. In the Jeeva’s essential nature of Being (Swaroopaa) there exists both the Aatmaamsha (a part or an aspect of Atman, Pure Consciousness) which is animate or sentient and Aatmaamsha (a part or an aspect of not-self) which is insentient in the form of Antahkarana [mind] etc. The Aatmaamsha is Nitya (eternal) while the Aatmaamsha is Anitya (non-eternal, ephemeral). Mixing up both these aspects people in general misconceive themselves to be Jeevas (transmigratory souls having repeated births and deaths) as a result of Avidyaa. For this reason alone, in the Adhyaasa Bhaashya Shri Shankara has stated that — “Evamahampratyayinam Asheshaswaprachararasakshini Pratyagaatmanyadhyasya. Tam Cha Pratyagaatmaanam Sarvasaakshinam Tadviparyayenaantahkarananada-dishu Adhyasyati.”

Here Atman who is ‘Ahampratyayagamya’ is Himself the Jeeva in the realm of empirical transactions: existing or being apart from him and illumining this Jeeva by His Chaitanya (Pure Consciousness) as his Saakshi (Witnessing Consciousness) is Himself referred to in all the Upanishads as Parameshvara or Brahman. In order to elucidate this fact Shri Shankara has written a Bhaashya like — “Nanvaatmaa Ahampratyayavishayatiwaat Upanishatsveva Vijnayatai Ityanapanyamni. Na: Tatsaakshlitwena Pratyuktatwaat: Na Hi Ahampratyaya-vishayaa Kartnayatirekena Tatsaakshara Sarvabhootasthaha Samahaa Ekhaa Kootantriyaha Purushahaa Vidhiikaande Tarkasamaye Vaa Kenachidhigataaha Sarvasyaatmaa: Ataha Sa Na Kenachit Prathyakhyaatatum Shakyaha” — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-4).

In this Bhaashya excerpt the Paramaarthaatman examined in depth is familiar by names like Brahman, Ishwara and Saakshi. Previously the Shruti which the Bhaashyakaara has completely and literally quoted has been examined to suit the contextual purport here. That Shruti Vaakya is:

“Ekaa Devaa Sarabhooteshu Goodhaha Sarvavyaapee Sarvabhoota-
antarataatmaa: Karmaadhyakshaaha Sarvabhootaadhiwaaasaha Saakshee Chetaa Kevaloa Nirajhaseha” — (Shwetáashwatwára’6-11).

Here some details in which Ishwara, who is the Witnessing Consciousness, is different or distinct from the Jeeva, who is the Ahampratyayagamya, have been clearly mentioned with their distinctive features:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ishwara who is the Saakshi</strong></th>
<th><strong>Jeeva who is Ahampratyayagamya</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. He is the Witnessing Principle who objectifies the Jeeva, a Kartru</td>
<td>He is an object for the Saakshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. One who resides in every Bhoota Vastu</td>
<td>One who resides only in his extraordinary conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Of single unitary (Sama) nature, devoid of distinctions</td>
<td>One who has differences in Jnaana, Karma, Sukha and Duhkha etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. One alone, non-dual (without anything second to Him)</td>
<td>Many, one for each body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kootasthanitya (devolt of any changes or mutations whatsoever)</td>
<td>One who undergoes changes by virtue of his Karmas, Phalabhoaga etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Purusha (One who is full and pervasive everywhere)</td>
<td>Parichhinna (divisible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Atman or Self for everyone and everything</td>
<td>Atman or self for each conglomeration (Sanghaata)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The deliberation of the non-dual Purusha, who is the Witnessing Consciousness (Saakshi) is not to be found in the Karma Kaanda; neither is to be found in the logic-oriented Darshanas or schools of philosophy like Saankhya, Vaisheshika, Nyaaya etc.; for, Saankhyans and the others teach that 'Purushas are many.'

**72. Q: Is Ishwara, who is the Saakshi, born? Or, is Jeeva born?**

**A:** Because Saakshiswaroopa is the Chaltanya (Pure Consciousness) which witnesses everything and because It is the Atman of everything, no one can ever possibly imagine in the manner — "My Atman did not exist in the beginning; now He is born."

The Sootrakaara has, in his Soothra — "Asambhavastu Satoa(s)napattehe" — stated that — "To say that for this Paramaatman, who is of the essential nature of Pure Being, is created — is contrary to Yukti (logical devices)." Shri Shankara, while explaining the purport behind this Soothra has stated in his Bhaashya that to say that for Paramaatman, who is Absolute Pure Being, the cause is 'Sat' is not proper. For, between Kaarya and Karana there must per force exist some certain exclusive, distinctive feature in one category more than the other. Sat is Nirvishesha (devoid of distinctions), while Asat (means 'that alone which does not exist') can never be a cause. Therefore, for Sanmaatra (Pure Being i.e. Atman) there cannot be a cause at all. Apart from this, if we go on imagining a cause for a cause, then without
reaching any finality we will face the defect of Anavasthadoasha (a flaw in logic called regressus ad infinitum). Thus the Bhaashyakaara has written. It is quite necessary for the seeker to remember and discern that — “Because Atman is Paramaartha Satya. no one can opine that Atman too is Kalpita (a mere imaginary concept). In fact. even to imagine in that weird manner too Atman is needed.” Even the Shoonyavaadin who imagines that — “Everything is naught or essenceless (Shoonya)” — does not have any kind of logical device whatsoever to prove that — “I too am essenceless (Nihswabhaava).” For. one who imagines in that manner is himself Atman. an existing Entity.

On the other hand. Jeeva is. from the Vyavahaara Drishti. one having a relationship with the conglomeration of the body. the senses. the mind etc.; because from the Paramaartha Drishti he does not have any relationship with the adjuncts of the body. the senses. the mind etc.. it amounts to accepting that he does not have Kartrutwa and Bhoaktrutwa too. nor does he have Janma (birth) and Marana (death).

This above teaching is the Vedantic Siddhaanta substantiated by the following Bhaashya excerpts:

(i) In the brief sentence of Adhyaasa Bhaashya — “Dehendriya- dishwahamamaabhimaanarahitasya Pramaatrutwaanupattou Pramaanapraavrittyanupapattehe” — and in its explanatory statements too it has been demonstrated on the strength of reasoning in consonance with universal Intuitive experience that — “Barring the identification of Atman with the body as ‘I’ and with the senses as ‘mine’ — in the Absolute sense. for Him there is no relationship with either the body or the senses at all.”

(ii) From the brief sentence in the Samanvaya Bhaashya viz. — “Sashareeratwasya Mithyaajnaanamniktatwaat” — and its explanatory Bhaashya. viz. — “Tasmaat. Mithyaapratyaya nlm It- tatwaat Sashareeratwasya Siddham Jeevatoa(s)pl Vldushoa(s)- shareeratam” — up to here the above Siddhaanta is established. Therefore. the fact that Jeevatwa exists only from the Vyavahaara Drishti is once again substantiated.

The Bhaashya on the Sootra (1-4-22): “Avasthiteriti Kaashakritisnaha” says that — “Tathaa Cha Braahmanam ‘Anena Jeevenaa(ss)ttmanaa(s)nuprauvishya Naamaroope Vyaakaravaani’ — Ityevamjaateeyakam Parasyalvaa(ss)ttmanaa Jeevabhaavenaa- vasthaanam Darshayati” — and further in this Sootra Bhaashya by the sentence: “Kaashakritisnasyaachaaryasya Avkritaha Parameshwaroa Jeevoa Naanyaa Iti Matam” — it becomes established that — “Paramaatman Himself entered into the body and has acquired the transactions of a Jeeva.”

(iii) On the Sootra (2-3-50): “Aabhaasa Eva Cha” — the Bhaashya says: “Abhaasa Eva Chaisha Jeevaha Parasyaa(ss)ttmanaa
In this Bhaashya portion a rational device (Upapatti) has been provided in the manner: "Although Paramaatman has entered into all Saktiesa, because the 'Aatmaabhaasa' (the delusory reflection of Atman or Pure Consciousness) in each of the bodies is different from the others it can be said that Jeeras are many (in a manner of speaking)." Anyway, it is tantamount to teaching that — "Jeera means the association of the mutual superimposition (Parasparaadhyasa) between Paramaarththaatman and His reflection projected by Avidyaa." For this reason, topics like Jeeva's Samsaarakrama or the order of his trasmigration from one Janma to another and his Bandha-Moaksha are fit to be deliberated upon from the Vyavahaaric viewpoint. The teaching that — "Jeera is Paramaattman Himself" — which is to be deliberated upon 'Taattvically' (Intuitively) from the viewpoint of Paramaarthaa is quite different.

To the question — "Is the Jeera born?" — how Shri Shankara has given an answer can be dealt with now. The answer is: "He is not born from the standpoint of his essential nature of Pure Being, but can be said to be born from the viewpoint of his Oupaadhikaaropaa (a form associated with adjuncts like the body, the senses etc.)."

73. Q: How does the Vyavahaara of the type — 'Jeeva is born; he dies' — take place?

A: For the Sootra (2-3-16): "Charaacharavypaanshrayastu Syaattadvyapadeshobaanaktastadbhaaarabhaarliturant" — the Bhaashyakaara has written his commentary like:

"Shareeraspraadurbhavaattroabhaavayoorhi Satoorjanamamaranashabdou Bhavatasha. Naasatoaka: Na Hi Shareerasambandhaadanyatra Jeevoa Jaatoa Mritoa Vaa Kenchilllakhyate; 'Sa Vaa Ayam Purusho Juumanaanaha Shareervamabhisdabadhyamaanaha Sa Utkraaman Mriyamaanaha' — (Brihadhaaranyaka 4-3-8) Iti Cha Shareerasamyoga-viyooganimittaavera Janmamaranashabdou Darshayati".

The teaching that — "The relationship with the body is itself caused to Atman by dint of Adhyaasa which is Mithyaapratyayaroopa (of the nature of misconception)" — is propounded from the Paramaarththa Drishti. On the other hand, from the Vyavahaaric viewpoint, because of the reason that, just like the Jeeva, the body too is real empirically, the Shruti teaches from the standpoint of 'Gouna Vritti' (in a secondary sense) that — "With the association of the body Jeeva has birth and with its dissolution he has death."
If it is asked whether from the standpoint of his essential nature of Pure Being or Swaroopa (meaning he being devoid of the adjunct of the body, the senses etc.) the Jeeva has birth, then the answer given in the Sootra is: “Naatmaa(s)shrutinatyatwaachha Taabhyaha” — (2-3-17); and the Bhaashya on it explains:


Its purport: “In his essential nature of Being, Jeeva is Nitya (eternal), Aja (birthless). Brahman (the Absolute Reality), which is immutable, changeless, without having or undergoing any change whatsoever has become (rather assumed the appearance of, as it were) Jeevatman: Jeeva is of the very essence of Brahman alone” — from the support of the Pramaana of the Shrutis which propound in this manner, we have to decide or deduce that Jeeva does not really have any birth. Therefore, the purport of the Bhaashya is: “For the Jeeva his creation or birth is by virtue of the association with the adjuncts like the body, the senses etc. alone and not that he, in reality, has birth.” Because from the Transcendental viewpoint Atman is Kootastha (immutable), Adviteeya (non-dual, i.e. one without anything second to Him), Ajaswaroopa (of the essential nature of birthlessness), He has no birth whatsoever, and this teaching is enunciated by Shri Goudapaada in his Kaarlikas as follows:

“Marane Sambhave Chaiva Gatyaagamanayoarapiti; Sthitou Sarva­shareereshu Chaakaashhenaavilakshanaha.” — (3-9)  
“Sanghaataaha Swapnavat Sarve Aatmamaayaavitsarjitaaha; Aad­hikye Sarvasaamyve Vaa Noapapattirhi Vidyate.” — (3-10).

Meaning: “Aakaasha is born with various adjuncts, gets destroyed, travels to and from and stays put — just as for all these various transactions empty space becomes an object of conception, in the same manner Atman in the form of Jeeva becomes an object for all these mundane transactions like Janma, Marana etc. Although in the dream many bodies etc. of Jeevas are seen to have diverse forms, all those bodies are created by virtue of Avidyaa alone and do not exist in reality (actually); in the same way, all the bodies seen (to appear) in the empirical (waking) transactions are also merely Maayaashareeras or magically appearing bodies projected or conjured up by Aatmaavidyaa or ignorance pertaining to our essential nature of Pure Being as the Self.” Thus Shri Goudapaada has brought home this truth with a suitable analogy.

This same meaning has been made clear by Shri Shankara in his Sootra Bhaashya as follows:

The Sootra (2-1-28) says: “Aatmani Chalvam Vichtraashcha Hi” — and the Bhaashya on this Sootra says: Although the person who sees
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

a dream is a single individual, within him alone a world of diversity is created: similarly, Atman remaining as He is eternally, in the empirical world all kinds of diverse, multifarious creations are appearing to take place indeed: for this reason, to say that — 'Paramaatman at all times eternally exists as one and one alone' — is not at all unreasonable or illogical.

The Sootra (3-2-3) says: "Maayaamaatram Tu Kaartsnyenaana-bhtivyaktaswaroopatwaat" — meaning: "Although there within the body itself the dream is being seen and a diverse, multifarious world appears to be seen therein, because — unlike in the waking world — the necessary time-space-causation categories do not exist therein for a world of duality or diversity to exist. all of us will have to per force accept that all that dream world is Aavidyaka alone (meaning, a mere projection due to Avidyaa). is it not?"

The Bhaashyakaara has explained it thus: "Na Cha Viyadaadilsarga-syaapyaatyantikam Satyatwamasti:::: ....Atoa Vaisheshikamidam Sandhyasya Maayaamaatratwamuditam.''

74. Q: From this deliberation finally what is it that is said to have been determined?

A: (i) Atman, who is the Ultimate Reality (Paramaartha), is non-dual. the only Entity without anything else second to Himself (Adviteeya) and exists unto and by Himself. Because He does not have any restrictions or limitations imposed on Him by time-space-causation categories of the world of duality. we can never imagine Him having Janma, Marana etc. In Him. owing to a relationship of. or association with. (adjuncts like) the body, the senses etc. which are conjured up by Avidyaa (nescience) of the nature of misconception (Adhyaasalaxana) the mundane transaction of Jeevatwa (transmigratory soulhood) is projected. If for the word 'birth' the meaning of — 'as a result of Adhyaasa something appearing' — is reckoned. then there is no objection whatsoever to say — "Just like Naama and Roopa, the body, the senses. etc. which are made up of names and forms and, further, by the relationship with the body, the senses etc. the Jeevas who appear to exist are all the Kaarya of Paramaatman alone." In this sense alone Shri Goudapaada has stated that — "Just as from Aakaasha (empty space) pots. pitchers etc. and pot-space. pitcher-space etc. are born. Jeevas as well as the conglomerations of the body. the senses etc. (Kaaryakaranasanghaata) are born out of Paramaatman alone." Utilizing the axiom of Adhyaaroopa and Apavaada and for the purposes of teaching the Paramaartha Tattwa, the Moaksha Shaastra
Jeeva’s Vyavahaara

(spiritual science devoted to the teaching of Liberation) is begun by assuming the Jeeva who is Ahampratyayagamy as a ‘Jijnaasu’ (one desirous of cognizing the Ultimate Reality of the Self).

(ii) The Shruti in a secondary sense (Gouna Vritti) transacts in the manner — “From the Vyavahaara Drishti Jeevas are born and they die by virtue of the Janma and Marana of their bodies.

(iii) Jeeva in the form in which he appears is neither Paramaatman nor is he an independent entity existing apart from Paramaatman. Even so, in such a state too his Paramaarthaaroopa or essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness invariably exists. The Shruti instructs in the manner — “Tattwamasi” — meaning, “That thou art” — in order to propound the Brahmatwa (the essential real nature of Pure. Absolute Being) which is the Ultimate Reality only after negating or sublating the false appearance of the former phenomenon. While teaching in that manner the Shruti sublates all adjuncts like the body, the senses, the mind. the concepts of the external objects — all of which go to make up Anaatman nature by the cryptic statement — “You are not that” — at every negation and finally what remains after all such series of negations the Shruti points out to the Shroatru (listener) in the manner — “That Paramaartha Chaitanya Brahman alone thou art.” In the same manner all teaching methods adopted by the Shrutis pertaining to topics like Jeeva’s Ekatwa and Anekatwa, Jnaana. Parimaana (dimensions or limitations). Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa. Paramaatma Amshatwa, Janmaantarara Loakaantarara Vyavahaara. Avasthas. Bandha Moaksha Vyavahaara etc. etc. should be reconciled and reckoned in accordance with the differences of the Paramaartha and Vyavahaara Drishtis as taught or propounded in the Shrutis.

IX. JEEVA’S VYAVHAARA

75. Q: Viewed from the Vyavahaara Drishti, Ishwara exists (resides) in the Jeeva’s body, is it not? Then, does the Jeeva’s Vyavahaara taint Ishwara or not?


The purport of this Bhaashya excerpt is: Although the sun’s or (or moon’s) light. which pervades everywhere. by virtue of its relationship or association with adjuncts like fingers, hands etc. itself appears
as if it (the sun’s light) is straight or crooked assuming various such forms. In reality it does not assume such forms at all: if a pot or a pitcher is carried from one place to another, though the pot-space and the pitcher-space appear as if they are moving, in reality space does not at all have any motion: just as when buckets of water are shaken the reflection of the sun or any light etc. in the water appears to shake but the sun or the light themselves do not at all shake — in the same way, the Amsha or part called ‘Jeeva’ who is projected by Avidyaa — even if he (the part akin to the reflection of the illustration) is suffering, Ishwara, like the sun in the illustration, is not at all afflicted by it. Really speaking (that is, observing from the Paramaarththa Drishti), because of the reason that even to the Jeeva as a result of Avidyaa alone this Duhkhitwa is projected or conjured up, the Shrutis sublate this Avidyaa-projected Jeevatwa (soulhood), which is superimposed upon Atman, and teach in the manner — “You are verily Brahman.” Therefore, by the Jeeva’s suffering Ishwara is not at all affected or afflicted.

76. Q: Though Jeeva is Parameshwara alone, Jeevas are many! How is this plausible?

A: For this question while answering the above question itself with the illustration of the reflections a suitable answer has been provided. The same opinion is given by Shri Baadaraayana in his Sootra (3-2-18): “Ata Eva Choapamaa Sooryakaadlvat” — and the Bhaashya on it says: “Yata Eva Chaanyamaatmaa Chattanyaroopoa Nirvisheshhoa Vaang-manasaateetaha Parapratishedhoapadeshyaha Ata Eva Chaasyoapaa-dhinimittaaam Apaaramaarthitheekm Visheshavattaam Abhipretya ‘Jala-sooryakaadlvat’ Ityupamaaa Upadeeyate Moakshashaastreshu;

“Yathaa Hyayam Jyoatlraatmaa Vivaswaanapo Baahnaa Bahudhat-kooa(s)nugachhan; Upaadhinmaa Kriyate Bhedaroopoa Devaha Kshetre-shuvevamajoa(s)yamaatmaa; Eka Eva Hi Bhooaatmaa Bhoote Bhooote Vyavasthitaha; Ekadhaar Bahudhaaa Chatta Drishyate Jalachandravat.” — Ityeamaadlishu.”

The purport of this Bhaashya excerpt is: Because Paramaatman is devoid of any distinctive features or characteristics He, in association with the adjuncts — just like the reflections of the sun in the waters of many buckets — appears to have manifold forms, and thus the Shaastras teach.

In the illustration of the reflections of the sun in various buckets of water it is evident that, although the suns with adjuncts reflected in the waters of the buckets have acquired or assumed manifoldness apparently, in reality the actual sun is not at all more than one, is it not? Similarly, though Paramaatman is one and one only, by virtue of his association with the adjuncts He appears as if He has become many. That is all that is to be discerned here in this context from this illustration.
77. Q: To the Jeeva is consciousness his Dharma (quality) or Swaroopa (essence of Being)? Because it is quite familiar among all human beings that in states like deep sleep etc. there is no consciousness, but when a person wakes up consciousness appears, hence their opinion that — ‘Consciousness is a quality which appears often’ — itself seems to be proper, is it not?

A: Since it is already decided that — “Jeeva is not born at all” — from this alone it amounts to saying that his is Brahmaswabhaava (the essential nature of Brahman. the Ultimate. Absolute Reality) alone. Because Shrutis like Shwetaashvatara 2-1 and Brihadaaranyaka 4-5-13 etc. expound that Brahman is verily Jnaanaswaroopa (of the very essence of Knowledge or Consciousness) we have to reckon that Jeeva too is Jnaanaswaroopa only. If it is doubted in the manner — “Then in that case about what the empirical transactions like — ‘Consciousness came and consciousness disappeared’? — we say that it is a Vrttti or concept of the Antahkarana or mind. Because Vrttti appears being pervaded by Pure Consciousness but exists as a Chidaabhaasa (reflection of Pure Consciousness). Avlvekts (people who do not exercise their discriminative faculty) misconceive that Vrttti alone to be Atman’s Jnaana or Pure Consciousness.

Here in this context the following doubt may raise its head: ‘If Atman is of the very essence of Consciousness or Knowledge, then what is the function for the senses? Is it not true that through the senses alone we all get Jnaana (that is, we all become conscious of the external objects)? In states like deep sleep, swooning etc. though the mind. the senses etc. are not functioning in such states he should have had Jnaana or knowledge of the external objects, is it not? For this doubt the Bhaashyakaara has given the following solution:


The salient points implicit in this long Bhaashya excerpt are:

(i) Because he is cognizing in the manner — ‘I smelt this, I touched this’ — he. the Jeeva. has Chaitanyaswaroopa;

(ii) The senses are responsible for the special objective knowledge of smell, taste etc. Therefore, in the deep sleep state and such other (unconscious) states this specific knowledge is not there, for there are no senses therein.

(iii) In deep sleep the Swaroopa Jnaana (the essential nature of Pure Consciousness) invariably exists; but apart from it therein no other
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

object whatsoever capable of being illumined is not existing in the least and not because therein Pure Consciousness itself did not exist at all. (Failure to discern this secret alone has become the root cause for the Valsheashikas and some other Darshanakaaras like them, who are predominantly relying on logical or dialectical knowledge for deducing their respective Siddhaantas and to opine that therein in deep sleep there is no Jnaana at all: and the present-day Vedantins, who also cannot follow in the footsteps of Shri Shankara's teachings, imagine that therein a potent force called 'Avidyaa Shakti' covers up Atman).

78. Q: What are the dimensions (Parimaana) of Atman?

A: Because Atman Himself is existing as Jeeva, this Jeeva has to be per force accepted as of the very essence of the former (that is, Aatmaswaroopa). Even so, because of the reason that there are the mundane transactions like giving up the body, transmigrate to another birth or another world, again coming back into a body (getting rebirth) etc. Jeeva is Anuparimaanaha or of microscopic dimensions (compared to the macrocosmic dimensions of Brahma or Atman). Because some Shrutis are describing the Jeeva in this manner, he has to be reckoned to be of microscopic dimensions. Even so, we have to come to a definite conclusion in this regard according to the Bhaashya on the Sootre (2-3-29): "Tadgunasaaratwaattu Tadvyapadeshaha Praajnavat". The relevant Bhaashya states:

(I) "Tasyaaaha Buddhehe Gunaastadgunaaha: Ichhhaa Dveshaha Sukham Duhkham Ityavamaadayaha Tadgunaaha.... Tachhalva-meva Samanjasam Syaat Yadyoupachaarikamanutwam Jeevasya Bhaavet. Paaramaarthikam Chaanantyam."

Its purport in brief is: Since it is established by the Shrutis that Atman is Anantam (endless), in the Vyavahaarika Avasthaa we have to conceive in a secondary sense only that with the association of the adjunct of Buddhi (intellect) he has invariably characteristics like Anutwa (atomic or microscopic nature), Itchha (desire) and such other qualities.

The Bhaashyakaara has mentioned Jeeva's Anutwa in another manner too. To discern it here is quite essential:

(ii) "Tathaa Itarasminnapyunmaane 'Buddhergunenataatmagunena Chalwa Aaraagramaatraa Hyavaraa(s)p Drishtaha' — (Shwetaas-shwatara 5-8) Iti Cha Buddhiguna.... Tasmaat Durjnaanatatwaah-bhipraayamidamanutwavachanam Upaadyabhipraayam Vaa Drashtavyam."

Its gist is: Here the Bhaashyakaara has deduced his opinion about Jeeva’s Anutwa or microscopic nature on the basis that
Jeeva's Vyavahara

— "In conjunction with the teaching that — 'He is the very essence of the adjuncts' — Atman's Absolute Swaroopa is difficult to be reckoned."

79. Q: To the Jeeva, is the relationship with the intellect eternal or non-eternal?

A: Because for the Jeeva the relationship with the intellect is conjured up by Adhyaasa. till he attains Jnana this relationship is eternal: from the Paramaartha Drishti because he is verily Paramaatman this relationship itself is not there at all. To substantiate this teaching there are two Sootras:

(a) "Yaavadaatmabhaavitaivaachha Na Doashastaddarshanaat" — (2-3-30).

Its Bhaashya says: "Tathaa Hi Shaastram Darshayati — Yoa(s)yam Vijnanaamayaha Praaneshu Hridayantarjyoatithi Purushaha Sa Samaanaha.... ....Buddhyupaadhisambandhoa Na Shaamyati".

In this long commentary. we have to note carefully the teaching that — "To Atman the relationship with the adjunct of Buddhi is brought about (conjured up) by Mithyaajnaana (misconception): till this latter disappears this relationship is not destroyed.

(b) "Pumstvaadlvattasya Satoa(s)bhlvyaktlyoagaat" — (2-3-31).

Its Bhaashya: "Nanu Sushuptapralayoarna.... Tasmaat. Siddha­metad Yaavadattaatmabhaavee Buddhyadvyupaadhisambandha Iti.”

Its gist: The misconceived relationship with the adjunct of intellect appears in the waking state as well as in the dream state. In states like Sushupti and Pralaya this relationship becomes Avyakta or unmanifest. Adhyaasa is removed or destroyed by Samyajnaana (the real. correct Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Atman): in the Paramaartha Avasthaa (state of being one with the Reality of Atman) that misconception does not exist at all.

Here in this context what is taught with regard to states like Sushupti. Pralaya and the like should be made applicable to states like swoon. coma etc. also. The determination of the Reality (Tattwa Nirnaya) has necessarily to be made only after examining these Adarshana Avasthas (states of unmanifest consciousness) from both viewpoints. viz. Vyaavaharic and Paaramaarthic. And this Avasthaavichaara or deliberation on the three states of Consciousness experienced by every one (universally) needed for the purport of Paramaartha Nirnaya will be taken up for delineation in due course.

89
80. Q: Are the Kartrutwa and Bhoaktrutwa of a Jeeva eternal or non-eternal?

A: This should be understood on the same lines as the Jeeva's Anutwa caused by Buddhisambandha. From the Vyavahaara Drishti his Kartrutwa is eternal, while from the Paramaartha Drishti it does not exist at all.

Consider the following Sootras:

(i) "Kartaa Shaastraarthaavatwaat" — Vidhyanyathaanupapatti;
(ii) "Vihaaroapadeshaat" — the teaching about Vihaara or recreation, pleasure existing in the dream;
(iii) "Upadaaanaat" — because it is described that the Jeeva goes to the Swapnaavasthaa by gathering up his Karanas. by the device suggested by the Shruti (Shrutaarthaapatti) Kartrutwa is inferred;
(iv) "Vyapadeshaachha Kriyaayam Na Chenirideshaviparyayaha" — pointing out Kartrutwa significantly;
(v) "Upalabdhlvadanfyamaha" — with regard to the Jeeva's desirable things and undesirable things, both can be brought under the purview of his discriminative thinking;
(vi) "Shaktiviparyayaat" — if it is said that — 'Apart from Vijnaana (intellectual knowledge) there is no separate Kartru (to wit. this is the opinion of the Vijnaanavaadins — a class of Buddhists). then it will amount to saying that the intellect does not have Karanasakti (the potentiality or faculty of being an instrument of action) but has Kartrushakti (the potentiality of being an agent of action);
(vii) "Samaadhyabhaavaachha" — if it is said that Kartru is not there, then teaching about the mind's Samaadhi or equipoise or equanimity in the Shastraas will become futile.

In these above Sootras mainly based on the logical devices of Shrutaarthaapatti (deliberation on the inferential proofs of the Shruti sentences) and Drishtaarthaapatti (comprehending by way of inference based on perceptual knowledge) — Kartrutwa is being established. From the Vyavahaara Drishti this is agreeable, acceptable. But in the Sootra (2-3-40): "Yathaa Cha Takshoabhayathaat" — on the strength of Yukti and Anubhava it has been determined, nay established. that — "Kartrutwa is not Swaabhaavika (not the essential real nature of Being), but Oupaadhika (false appearance conjured up in association with Upaadhi or adjunct)."

The Bhaashya on this Sootra says:

(i) "Na Swaabhaavikam Kartrutwamaatmanahá Sambhavati Antirmoakshaprasangaat...... Iti Choopaadhishampriktasyatvaatmanoä Bhoaktrutwaadivisheshalaabham Darshayati."
If the logical arguments (devices) or Yukti utilized in this long Bhaashya excerpt referred to above are to be briefly mentioned, then they will amount to saying:

(a) If Kartrutwa, which is evidently and invariably Duhkharoopa (of the very nature of misery, suffering) is accepted as Swaabhaavlka (our essential nature of Being), then there is no possibility whatsoever for our attaining Moaksha (Liberation). From the Arthaapattl (logical inference) that in view of the fact that in the Shaastras (which are canonical, authoritative sources of spiritual teaching) the Moaksha Saadhana has been explicitly taught if we conclude (opine) that there is every possibility of attaining Moaksha, then because of the reason that whatever result or fruit that is acquired as a result of any human effort (Saadhana) becomes invariably Anltya (non-eternal), it will be tantamount to accepting Moaksha (taught by the authoritative Shaastras) too is Anitya. And this conclusion is totally opposed to or contrary to the Vedantic Siddhaanta (spiritual teaching).

(b) Therefore, we have to accept that only because all of us (universally) have invariably misconceived (Adhyaasa) the distinctive characteristics (Dharmas) of the conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc. (Kaaryakaranasanghaata) in our Pure Being of Atman, this Kartrutwa (I' notion reckoned as an agent of action) has arisen (as a false appearance or concept). For this conclusion there is complete support from the Shruts. (The deliberation on the topic that — In the Adhyaasa Bhaashya whatever has been implicitly taught amounts to saying that this Kaaryakaranasanghaata is truly Avidyaakalpita or a projection conjured up by nescience alone: — will be once again taken up for a detailed examination). Now let us turn our attention towards the Bhaashya portion devoted to the expounding of this teaching on the strength of Anubhava (intuitive experience) predominantly:

(iii) “Na Hi Vivekinaam Parasmaadanyoa Jeevoa Naama Kartaa Bhoaktaa Vaa Vidyate — ‘Naanyoa(s)toastl Drishtaa’ — (Brihadaranyaka 4-8-23) Ityaadishravanaat:...... ..... Ityaarabhya ‘Eshaa(s)sya Paramaa. Gatireshaa(s)sya Paramaa Sampa-deshoa(s)sya Paramaa Loakahaa. Eshoa(s)sya Paramaa Aanandaha’ —(Brihadaranyaka 4-3-12) —Ityupasamhaaraat.”

In this long Bhaashya excerpt Shri Shankara clinches the issue, as it were, by bringing home emphatically and clearly the two Anubhavas viz. Intuitive experience of a Jnaanti (a Realized Soul), the Sushupti (deep sleep) Anubhava of an Ajna (an ignorant
person. \textit{Avidyaavanta}) first and then expounding the Upanishadic teaching that — “Although the \textit{Jeeva}'s adjuncts of \textit{Kartrutwa} and \textit{Bhoaktrutwa} appear in the \textit{Dvaitaavasthaa}, which is the resultant or a projection of \textit{Avidya} alone, these adjuncts do not at all adhere to him as his very essential nature of Being.”

While explaining the purport of the Sootra Shri Shankara has stated as follows:

(iii) “\textit{Takshadhrishtaantashcha, Etaavataamshena Dramhtavyaha —}
\textit{Takshaa Hi Visheshteshu Takshanaadivyaapaareshu Apekshyaalva Pratnityataani Karanaani Vaasyaadeeni Kartaa Bhavati...}
\textit{...Takshaa Mana Aadeeni Karanaani Aatmaa Upaadadeeta Nyasyed Vaa.”}

In this \textit{Bhaashya} portion the relevant aspect in the illustration of a carpenter has been explained. If the carpenter has instruments like a chisel, a hammer etc. only jobs like etching etc. are possible; otherwise, not possible. In the same way, if \textit{Atman} has \textit{Karanas} (physical and psychic instruments) only. He gets \textit{Kartrutwa}, otherwise He does not get it at all. This much is common to the illustration and the illustrated. But just as the carpenter has limbs (\textit{Avayavas}) like hands and feet etc. to use those instruments like chisel, hammer etc. the \textit{Jeeva} does not possess any separate \textit{Avayavas} etc. to use his \textit{Karanas}. Hence that aspect is not relevant here in this context at all.

Anyway, \textit{Jeeva}, by virtue of his association with the \textit{Kaaryakaranas} which are conjured up by \textit{Avidya}, has in the empirical sphere \textit{Kartrutwa} which enables him to perform both \textit{Loukika} (secular, mundane) and \textit{Valdika} (scriptural) actions or rituals indeed; but, from the \textit{Paaramaarthic Drishi} (i.e. in the Absolute sense) because he is \textit{Ashareeri} (one devoid of a body), he does not at all have \textit{Kartrutwa}, and this is the Vedicant S\textit{iddhaanta}.

81. Q: Is \textit{Jeeva}'s \textit{Kartrutwa} an independent phenomenon (\textit{Swatantra}) or is it within the control of \textit{Ishwara}?

A: It was stated in Sootra (2-1-34) that because \textit{Ishwara}, the Lord Creator, creates various \textit{Jeevas} (and creatures) according to their respective \textit{Karmas}. He cannot be imagined to have either \textit{Vaishamya} (hatred or prejudice) or \textit{Nairghunya} (cruelty). If it is argued that \textit{Jeeva}'s \textit{Kartrutwa} is within the control of \textit{Ishwara}, then \textit{Ishwara} becomes responsible for everything (concerning the \textit{Jeeva}), then to this question an answer is provided in the Sootra (2-3-41): "\textit{Paraattu Tacchhrutehe}". The explanatory \textit{Bhaashya} says:

(i) "\textit{Avidyaavasthaaayaam Kaaryakaranasanghaataavivekadarshinoa Jeevasya Avidyaatimiraandhasya Sataha Parasmaadaatmanaha}"
Jeeva’s Vyavahaara

**Karmaadhyakshaat Sarvabhootaadhi vaasat Saakshinaha Chetayitreeshwarat Tadanujnyaya Kartrutwabhoakrutwaakshhaasya Samsaarasya Siddhihi: Tadanugrahahetukenaiva Cha Vijnaanena Moakshasiddhirhauitumutarati.**

**Its purport:** In the Avidyaavastha Jeeva’s Kartrutwa and Bhoaktrutwa have been established by Ishwara alone, who is Sarvasaakshl (Witnessing Consciousness of every one): by means of Vijnaana (Self-Knowledge) alone bestowed upon the Jeevas or caused through His Grace alone Moaksha too becomes established indeed.

(ii) **“Sarvaasweva Pravrittiisu Ishwara Hetukartaa Iti Shruteraseeyate: Tathaa Hi Shrutirbhavati ‘Esha Hyeva Saadhu Karma Kaarayati Tam Yamebyjya Loakebhyaha Unninee shate:...... .....’Ya Aatmanl Tishthannaatmano(s)ntaroa .....Yamayati’ — (Brihadaaanyaka 3-7-22) — Ityaddyaa.”**

By Shrutt Pramaana (Upanishadic statements as authoritative evidence) it is established that Parameshwara alone is the substratum, foundation or main cause for all Pravrittils (mundane, workaday pursuits, endeavours of all human beings).

(iii) The Sootra (2-3-42) says: **“Krilaprayatnaapekshastu Vihltapratishiddhaaalyarthyaadlbhyaha” — Its Bhaashya says: “Kritoa Yaha Prayatnaha Jeevasya Dharmaadharma Lakshanaha Tadaapeksha Evainam Ishwaraha Kaarayati:..... ... Poorvataram Cha Yatnaprama-pekshya Poorvamakaarayaditl Anaaditwaat Samsaarasyetya-navadyam.”**

**Its gist:** Jeeva has Kartrutwa indeed, while the Kaarayttatwa (capability of prompting, patronising the Jeeva) to enter into or undertake Karma belongs to Ishwara. Therefore, Ishwara induces the Jeevas proportionate to the quality of their efforts. For the present Karma the previous effort becomes the cause: for the previous Karma its previous effort becomes the cause — Thus in proportion to the quantum and quality of the Jeeva’s efforts Ishwara induces or prompts them into action (Karma). And just as for various kinds of grains and plants rain water is the Saadhaarana Kaarana (common cause) to enable them to grow, Ishwara becomes the common cause and thereby becomes the patron for their desires and purposes: the Jeevas’ individual efforts become the Asaadhaarana Kaarana (uncommon or particular cause) for the fruits of those actions.

(Here in this context the Anaaditwa or beginninglessness which is taught from the Vyaaahaara Drishti is applied by some Vyakhyaa-nakaaras to Adhyaasa which is utilized as a device by the Shaasta to determine the Paramaartha or the Ultimate non-dual Reality.)
Evidently, they have thereby neglected the Vedantic teaching that — ‘Adhyaasa alone is the cause for all Vyavahaara or empirical, mundane transactions.)

82. Q: What is the very essence (Swaroopa) of the relationship between the Upakaarya (one who is helped) or the Jeeva and the Upakaaraka (the helper) or Ishwara?

A: For this Shri Baadaraayana has given an answer in his Sootra (2-3-43): “Amshoa Naanaavyapadeshaadanyathaa Chaapi Daashakita-vaadItwamadheeyata Eke”. In the Bhaashya on this it is stated: “Jeeva Ishwarasyaamshhoa Bhavittumarhhti; Yathaagnerolspulingaha; Amsha Ivamshaha. Na Hi Niravayavasya Mukhyoa(s)mshaha Sambhavati; .... .... ‘Naanyoa(s)toasti Drashtha’ — (Brl. 3-7-33) Ityadi Shrutibhyascha Asyaarthisya Siddhihi..... ....Atoa Bhedaabhedaaavagamaabhyyaam Amshatwaavagamaa.”

In this long Bhaashya excerpt the salient points to be noted are:

(i) Because in the Shruti both Bheda (difference) and Abheda (non-difference) between the Jeeva and Ishwara have been mentioned, Jeeva has been taught to be an Amsha (part) of Brahman;

(ii) The word ‘Amsha’ does not mean ‘part’ in the predominant sense (Mukhyaartha) at all; for, since Atman (Brahman) is devoid of parts (Niravayava) in the predominant sense, Atman does not have any parts or divisions whatsoever. Therefore, just as for fire and sparks of fire heat is common, Chattanyataw or being endowed with Consciousness, sentience is common to both Jeevas and Ishwara. This is the real purport of teaching, and thus it is determined also. For instance, let us examine the next two Sootras: For ‘Mantravarnaachha’ (2-3-44) Shri Shankara has quoted ‘Paadoa(s)sya Sarva Bhootaanr (Chhaandogya 3-13-6) to deduce that — ‘All creatures — movable as well as Immovable (SthaavaraSila Praanls) are parts (Amsha) of Paramaatman.’

For the next Sootra — “Apl Cha Smaryate” — (2-3-45) — he has exemplified the Geeta statement — “Mamalvaamshhoa Jeevaloake Jeevabhootaha Sa naa tanaha ‘ — (Geeta 15-7). In the previous verse of the Geeta it has been stated that those who Intuit Paramaatman do not return to this Samsaara. Further, while commenting on this Geeta verse, Shri Shankara has said; “Yathaa Jalaasoryakaha Sooryamshaha, Jalanimittaapaaye Sooryameva Gatwaa Na Nivartate Tenaluvaatmanaa Samgatchhati Evameva; Yathaa Vaa ... ....’Yadgatvaa Na Nivartante’ It.”

Just like the Jalaasoryakaadiprattibimbhas (reflections of the sun in the waters contained in various buckets or vessels) are within the control or purview of the sun: just as the Ghataakaasahas (pot-spaces)
Jeeva's Vyavahaara

e.tc. are, in truth, Mahaakaasha (open empty space) alone — though by
virtue of the Upaadhi (adjunct) Jeeva is an Amsha, if by means of
Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) this Upaadhi is sublated (falsified) he is (here
and now) verily Paramaatman indeed — this truth becomes clear from
these illustrations.

83. Q: In spite of the Jeeva being Paramaatman Himself, how
can the former, who is (just at present) Saruagata or all-pervasive,
be said justifiably to have the empirical transactions like
Loakaantaragamana (transmigration to other worlds) and then
returning to this mundane world?

A: All the adjuncts or constituent (material) parts (Upakarana
tattwas) of the Jeeva are the effects of Brahman alone: to wit, they are
the things or phenomena which are superimposed upon, or mis-
conceived in. Brahman, the Ultimate non-dual Reality. Since it is
established on the strength of the validity of the Shrutiis (Shruti
Praamaanya) Shri Goudapaada has stated in his Kaarika:

"Marane Sambhava Chaiva Gatyaagamanayoorapli; Sthitou Sarva-
shareereshu Chaakaashhenaavilakshanaha"—(3-9).

According to his teaching, till the Mithyaajnaana is destroyed by
Jnaana the relationship with the adjunct of the conglomeration of the
body, the senses, the mind (Kaaryakaranasanghaata) is inevitable for
Atman: by virtue of these adjuncts the empirical transactions of
Gatyaagamana may be said to be plausible for Atman (who with these
adjuncts is called in Vedantic parlance Jeevaatman).

84. Q: The Bhootasookshmas (subtle elements), which are the
seeds (cause) for the body which is an effect — are these included
in the Upaadhi or are they born afresh?

A: For this Shri Shankara has given a suitable answer in the
following Bhaashya portion: "Jeevoa Mukhyapraanasachivaha
Sendriyaha Samanaskoa Vidyakarma Poorvaprajnaaparigrahaha....
.....Tasmaadadbhihi Pariveshtitoa Jeevao Ramhatl Vrajateeti Gamyate."

In this commentary it is established that by association with the
Panchabhootas (five primordial elements) which are Ap-Pradhaana
(predominantly water-based), Atman goes to another body. Since this
topic is to be determined only on the strength of the validity of the
Shaasstra, it is not directly related to Aatmaikutwa Vichaara (Intuitive
deliberation on the non-dualism of Atman) which is truly (in the
ultimate analysis) the purport or goal of the Vedantic spiritual science.
we have not undertaken to describe or elaborate upon that topic here.
From the Upanishads it can directly be known as to how, according to
his Karmas a Jeeva obtains his Gati (future transmigration) to other births or worlds.

85. Q: What about the Gati occurring to Upaasakas?

A: Upaasana too is a mental action only. Therefore, (barring Kaamyopaasana or meditations performed with specific desires, in all other cases) the fruits or resultant benefits accrue invariably through some Gati or transmigration. With regard to this topic we should keep in mind the following Bhaashya sentences:

(i) "Vidyaaavidyaau Baldwin Brahmanao Duivropataam Darshayaniti Vedaantavaakyaanti: Tatraavidyaavasthaayaaam Brahmana Upaasyoopaasakaadilakshanaha Sarvaa .... ...Teshaaam Gunavisheshaapaadhibhedena Bhedaha."

The gist of this Bhaashya portion is: Because the distinctive qualities or characteristics of the Upaasya (object of meditation) differ from one another; because of the differences in the distinctive qualities or characteristics of the adjunct of the mind — these Upaasanas are necessarily different from one another.


It is clearly stated here that — "Although Dhyaana (meditation) and Jnaana (Knowledge) — both are mental concepts (Maanasika Vrittis). (a) Dhyaana is an action which is within the control or purview of the Shaastravidhi (injunctions stipulated in the scriptures) as also the mind of the meditator; (b) on the other hand, Jnaana is not at all a subject-matter for Vidhi nor within the control or purview of the meditator’s mind." Therefore, Dhyaana is an act which the meditator can perform as he wishes according to his whims. Jnaana is a Knowledge accruing spontaneously by itself to the (proper) Pramaana (valid means of Knowledge) and Prameya Vastu (the Entity, Reality which is the object or goal of pursuit).

(Even in spite of such a clear elucidation by Shri Shankara the Vyakhyaanakaaras. who have accepted the doctrine that Jnaana is a Kriya only. have followed or adopted a theory which is quite contrary to the original Bhaashya as well as to Anubhava. This fact now looms large before us. Here in this context, Jnaana means a fruit or benefit which is itself of the nature of Anubhava. (which is, truly speaking, is not to be gained afresh as a result of any Saadhana however subtle or profound it may be. for Anubhava is never a resultant Phala nor a Prameya). This important Vedantic truth we cannot afford to forget at all.
(iii) "Yaagaadyanushthaayinaameva Vidyasaamaadhivisheshashaaduttena Pathaa Gamanam... Tatraapi Sukhataaratamyam Tatsaadhanaataaratamyam Cha Shastraat 'Yaavatsampaatamushitwaa' — (Chhaandogya 5-1-5) Ityasmaad Gamyate."

In this sentence Shri Shankara has stated that — "The Saadhaka who practises Karmoapaasanas mixing up all similar meditations (coming under that heading or category) goes to the Brahmaloka via the Uttaramaarga or Northern Path."

To the Sootra (4-1-12): "Aa Praayanaattatraapi Hi Drishtam" — the Bhaashya says: "Aavrittihi Sarvoapaasaneshwaaadartavyaa iti Sthitam Aadye(s)dhlkarane: Tatra Yaani Taavat Samyagdarshanaaraarthaani.... Tasmaat. Ye Pratipattavyaphalabhaavanaatmakaaha Pratyyaaaha. Teshwaapraayanaadaaauritihi."

Herein the salient points taught are:

(a) Upaasanas are of two kinds: SamyajJnaanaartha (keeping Self-Knowledge as their goal) and Abhyudayaartha (keeping some posthumous prosperity or progress as its goal).

(b) The Dhyaana which is Samyagdarshanaartha or having its goal as the Darshana or fruition in Self-Knowledge (i.e. culminating in Intuitive experience here and now in this very life) and which is of the essential nature of Nididhyaasana (Intuitive contemplation) is also 'Upaasana' indeed. It also being a mental action, has to be practised (Abhyaasa. meaning Aavritti or repeatedly) over and over again as much as possible till the final fruit of Jnaana (Intuitive experience of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman) is attained.

(c) Jnaana means the Intuitive experience or Knowledge of the type — "Atman alone I am" — which is Anlyoajya or unpredicted (not obtained as a result of an act — be it physical or mental) and which is Brahmaroopa (of the very essence of Brahman. the Absolute Reality). Therefore, when that Intuitive Knowledge (Consciousness) is attained (rather. has dawned) the Shaasta becomes defunct or redundant and cannot thereafter continue to instruct or stipulate by way of an injunction in the manner — 'Thus it should be done.

(d) The Upaasana, which is of the type of Abhyudayaartha desiderating a benefit of some kind of prosperity or progress in other worlds or births has necessarily to be performed repeatedly until death. The Adrishta (invisible) Phala (benefit) which has to accrue in Loakaantaara and which has to be procured by means of this kind of Upaasana has to be necessarily proportionate to the Antya (at the time of death) Pratyaya (conviction of the intellect entertained at that moment).
(This pertains also to the Karmas from which Janmaantara fruits accrue. In the Bhagavad Geeta this is indicated by the verse: “Yam Yam Vaapi Smaran Bhaavam Tyajatyante Kalevaram; Tam Tamevaiti Kounteya Sadaa Tadbhaavabhaavitaha.”)

(e) Both the meditations for the fruits that are to be attained after death and the Bhaavanaaarooopapratyaya (the convincing steadfast concepts that are to be practised) have to be continuously repeated till the last breath ebbs out.

86. Q: For those Upaasanas which have to be performed with the ultimate purport or goal of attaining Brahma Jnaana (Intuitive experience) how does that Brahma Praapti (attainment of the Reality) occur? Although Brahman is Sarvagata (all-pervading), how is it justified in saying that It is Praapya (that which is to be obtained, attained)?

A: For this question the proper answer is given in the Sootra (4-3-7): “Kaaryam Baadarlrasya Gatyupapattehe”.

The gist of this as explained in the Bhaashya on it is: Brahman is of two types (as dealt with in the Shaastras); one is called by synonyms like Avikrita (Kaarana), Nirguna, Para or Mukhya Brahman; the second is called by synonyms like Kaarya, Saguna, Apara Brahman. Between these two, it is rational and proper only to say that the Upaasakas go to or attain Kaarya Brahman. This conclusion has been drawn by Shri Shankara in his Bhaashyas. The reasons for it that he has given are:


He opines that because Brahman is Sarvagata It cannot have Gantavya or Praapya (going somewhere to get it or acquiring it afresh).

(ii) “Nishkalam Nishkriyam Shaantam Niravadyam Niranjanam” — (Shwetaashvatara 6-19); “Asthoolamananavahrasvamadeergham” — (Brihadaaaranyaka 3-8-8); “Sabaahyabhyantaraoa Hyajaha” — (Mundaka 2-1-2); “Sa Vaa Esha Mahaanaja Aatmaa Ajarao(s)maramahaya Brahma” — (Brihadaaaranyaka 4-4-25); “Sa Esha Neti Netyaatmaa” — (Brihadaaaranyaka 3-9-26) Ityaadishru- tismritinyaayebhyo Na Deshakaalaadvisheshhayaoga Parama- atmani Kalpayitum Shakyate.”
Because Atman is Nirvishesha (devoid of any distinctive features or characteristics) it is not proper at all to say that He can be attained in Deshaantara (other places) or Kaalaantara (different periods of time).

(Jeeva's Vyavahaara)

Some salient points taught in this long Bhaashya excerpt are:

(a) The teaching that Brahman is the cause for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of the world of duality is given from the Adhyaaroapa Drishti as a device (Upaaya) for carrying out the (Upaasana) or for meditating upon Aatmaikatwa (non-dualism of the Self). From this, although from the Shaastreeya Vyavahaara Drishti it is tenable, it is not Paramaartha (absolutely real in the ultimate analysis based on Intuitive deliberation). This has been affirmed previously in the Bhaashya on Sootra 2-1-14.

(b) For the Jagajfanma Shrutl the ultimate purport or goal (Parama Taatparya) lies in providing a rational device for attaining Aatmaikatwa Jnaana alone.

(c) There is also complete support in concluding that — 'For the Utpettyaadl Shrutts the prime goal is Ekatwaboadha (spiritual instruction about non-dualism alone).'</n

(d) The Nirvishesha Shrutis end up (culminate) in enunciating the Brahmaswaroopa. The Ekatwa that is to be Intuited by their spiritual instruction (Upadesha) is in the Intuitive experience of and vouched for by Jnaants or Realized Souls. Therefore, Praapyatwa (attainment) does not pertain to Para Brahman, but to the Saguna Brahman who is the Upaasya Tattwa (object of meditation). there being Praapyatwa which is tenable also.

87. Q: What is the authoritative source for dividing Brahman into two as Para and Apara? If it is said that Upaasakas do not reach Brahman, then how can it be called 'Aatyantika Mukti' (final Liberation, eternal Beatitude) at all? Not only that, there will also be a defect; that Brahman, being two, is divisible, is it not?

A: First of all, really there are no two Brahmans as Para and Apara. One non-dual Brahman alone is given two distinctions (Visheshana) and then this is illustrated from the point of view of the Saadhakas.

The Prashnoapanishad (5-2) says: "Etadvad Satyakaamaparam Chaaparam Cha Brahma Yadoankaaraha" — This Shrutl sentence is the authoritative source for this distinction. In the Sootra Bhaashya their deliberation is explained in the following manner:
(I) "Yatraav'dyaakrltanaamaroopaadlvlsheshapratishtshedhat Asthoola-adhi Shabdairbrahman Upadishyate Tat Param Tadeva Yatra Naamaroopaadlvlsheshahana Kenachid Vishishtamupasaanaayayoapadishyate 'Manoamayaha Praanashareeroa Bhaaroopaha' — (Chhaandogya 3-14-2) Ityaadishhabdalhi Tadaparam... Buddhyaadhyupaadhigamane Gamanaprasiddhirityavaadishma 'Tadguna-saaratwaat' — (2-2-29) Ityatra." — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-14).

The gist of this Bhaashya is: When Brahman becomes an object for meditation (Upaasya), having been associated with distinctive characteristics brought about by Naama and Roopa which are in turn conjured up by nescience (Avldyaakrlta), then such a Brahman (also called Saguna Brahman) may become Praapya (attainable). Because such a Brahman exists in a special spatial province or realm, for the Upaasaka, who is a Jeevaatma with the adjunct of his Buddhi (intellect), both Gati (reaching a particular higher state of existence) and Phala (a benefit or fruit with Aishwaryalaxana or characteristics of riches, wealth, comfort in a distinctive spatial world of superior existence) become tenable.

Even so, there is no objection to decide Brahman to be Adviteeya. All this amounts to accepting this teaching.

The Bhaashya on the Sootra (4-3-9): "Saameepyayatu Tadvyapadeshaha" — says: "Parameva Hi Brahma Vishuddhoapaddh-sambandham Kwachit Kaischhit Vikaaradhermaimanoamayatwaadibhirupaasanaayopadishyamaanamapiparamiti Sthithi."

Because here it is stated that — "Jneya Brahma Itself is the Upaasya, It being called by the term 'Brahman' is not at all contradictory" — here in the above context there is no objection whatsoever. Secondly, in the Bhaashyas on Sootras (4-3-10 and 11): "Kaaryaatyaye Tadadyakshena Sahaataha Paramabhldhaanaat" and "Smrilieshcha" —

(i) "Kaaryabrasrahmalokapralayapratyupasthaane Satii. Parapraapthi Sambhavateetyupapadittam" — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-10)
(ii) "Smrititrapi Etamartham Anuyaanaati;.... Kaaryabrasrahmarkshayaa Eva Gatlshrutaya Iti Siddhaanta." — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-11)

Their gist: On the strength of the Smriti sentence that — "In the Brahma Loaka at the end of a Kalpa an Upaasaka attains Jnaana and along with Hiranyagarbha Brahna (the creating aspect of the Trinity) they get Liberated" — we have to infer in this manner.

X. AVASTHA VYAVAHAARA

88. Q: It is determined on the strength of the Shrutis and Smritis that Jeevas can attain Mukti (Liberation) through Upaasana.
Then, which other methodology of teaching can there be on the deliberation of which Sadyoamukti (Liberation here and now while living in this body) is attained?

A: It amounts to our having already given an answer to this question. What has been elaborated upon previously under Saarvatrika Anubhava (Chapter VI) and Brahman's Kaaranatwa (Chapter VII) should once again be ruminated over. In addition to these, by means of Intuitive deliberation on the Shaastraic methodology pertaining to creation with Tarka in consonance with Saarvatrika Anubhava as well as the Intuitive deliberation on the three states of Consciousness (Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupti) as delineated in the Shrutis if the Paramaartha Swaroopa is Intuited the (mature) Jnaanis attain Sadyoamukti instantaneously or spontaneously indeed.

89. Q: You had previously asserted that the Ultimate Reality of Brahman cannot at all be attained by Tarka, is it not?

A: It is true that it has been affirmed in the Shrutis that Brahman can never be attained by Tarka, because of the fact that for both critique of reason (Kevala Tarka) and dialectical or syllogistic reasoning in search of the valid means of Knowledge (Pramaanashoadhaka Tarka) Brahman is not the subject-matter. But here in this context the particular Shaastraic Tarka, which tries to establish the Aatmaikutwa on the strength of a logical device (implicit or in-built, so to speak, in and through the Upanishadic lore) as applied to the universal experiences of the three states of Consciousness — but all through in consonance with Intuitive experience which is universal or Saarvatrika Anubhava — by superimposing (Adhyaaroopa) the three states on Atman as taught by the Upanishads from the Vyavahaaric Drishti (exclusively for the purposes of teaching this profound and subtlest Truth to Avidyaavantas) is not at all discouraged or discounted. Whatever has been elaborated upon in this regard should necessarily be recapitulated once again cautiously before we proceed further. Then only there will not be any room for this doubt at all.

90. Q: What is that spiritual teaching (Siddhaanta) that is arrived at after the Intuitive deliberation from the standpoint of the Avasthaatraya experiences?

A: Although from the Transcendental, Absolute viewpoint of the Pure Being-Consciousness of Atman there is no Avasthaa whatsoever at all, because of the association with various Upaadhis (adjuncts) these three states of Consciousness are experienced universally by everyone. Whenever the Upanishads recommend to us to undertake the Intuitive deliberation on these universal experiences of the three states of
Consciousness they do so with the single, unique purport of determining the non-dualism of Atman by means of merging (Laya) one state into another (a very extra-ordinary profound methodology but a sure clincher at that indeed!). For this conclusion the following Bhashya sentences are authoritative examples:

(i) In the Goudapaada Kaarikas of the Alaatashaanti Prakarana after refuting the opponents' doctrinaire teachings it is stated:

"Savastu Soapalambham Cha Dvayam Loukikamishyate; Avastu Soapalambham Cha Shuddham Loukikamishyate." — (4-87).

"Avastvanupalambham Cha Loakoattaramtt Smritam; Jnaanam Jneyam Cha Vijneyam Sadaa Buddhyaathi Prakeerttiam" — (4-88).

The introductory Bhashya on the following Kaarika begins with:

(a) "Athedaaneem Swaprakriyaapradarshanaaya Aarambhaha";
"Jnaane Cha Tritidee Jneye Kramena Vidite Swayam; Sarvanatataa Hi Sarvatra Bhavateeha Mahaadhiyaha." — (4-89)

The Bhashya on this above Kaarika says:

(b) "Jnaane Cha Loukikaadi Vishaye; Jneye Cha Loukikaadou Tritidee; Poorvam Loukikam Stihooram, Tadabhaavena Pashchaat Shuddham Loukikam;..... ....Na Hi Paramaarthavidoa Jnaaninaha Jnaanoadbhavaabhibhavou Stoa Yathaas(s)nye-shaam Praavaadukaanaam".

Its gist: To the Jnaant who has established himself in the Atmaswaroopa by means of merging the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep in that order of subtlety (to wit, when we discern Intuitively that both waking and dream are identical in all aspects as pointed out by the Shruts and if we shift our attention to the subtle dream experience, then, in a manner of speaking, waking amounts to have been merged in the dream; thereafter, if the dream and deep sleep are found to be equal in being the manifest and unmanifest forms of the Ultimate Reality conjured up by Avidyaa alone then it amounts to our merging the dream also in deep sleep; and finally this process of merging reaches its fruition when deep sleep is reckoned as a state only in relation to the other two states but in its very essence when this relationship also is sublated it flashes to our mind that it is no more a state but therein the Witnessing Consciousness of Atman resides in all Its Glory as the non-dual Absolute Reality beyond all states, beyond all categories of time, space and causation, why say more — beyond all duality) neither the Jnaanoatpattti (attainment of Intuitive of Knowledge) nor Vilaya (total merger into the Sell) brought about within the limitations of time will
occur. In fact, he will be one with Kootasthaanubhava Swaroopa.

(ii) There is the following explanation in the Adhikarana of the Brahma Sootras called 'Sushuptiyultraantyadhidhikarana': "Yastu Madhye Buddhaantaadityavasthoopanyasaat Samsaariswaroopavivakshaam Manyate Sa Praacheemapi Disham Prasthaapitaha... Paapena Teernoa Hi Tadaa Sarvaan Shoakaan Hridayasya Bhavati"— (Brihadaaranyaka 4-2-33). — Iti." — (1-3-42).

Here Yaajnavalkya has instructed Janaka through the examination of the Avasthaatraya that — "The relationship with the Avasthaas does not attach itself to Atman at all; Jeeva (in the ultimate analysis based on the Intuitive experience) is really (verily) Paramaatman alone."

(iii) In the 'Sandhyaadhdhikarana' there is a Sootra — (3-2-3): "Maayaaamaatram Tu Kaartsnyenaanabhivyaktaaswaroopatwaat"; and its Bhaashya says:

"Maayaiva Sandhye Shrishtii, Na Paramaarthagandhoa(s)pyasti; Kutaha? Kaartsnyenaanabhivyaktaswaroopatwaat; Na Hi Kaartsnyena Param aromaticastu Dharmenaabhivyaktaswaroopaha Swapnaha; Kim Punaratra Kaartsnyamabhipretam? Deshakaalanimittasampattithi Abaadhashcha."

Just as in the case of the waking objects there are the time, space and causation categories and their not being falsified (Abadhita) — the dream objects do not have such Dharmas (characteristics), all those are Maayaa indeed, in other words, false only.

In the 'Tadabhaavaadhdhikarana' there is a Sootra (3-2-7): "Tadabhaavoya Naadeeshu Tacchhruteraatmani Chaff" — In its Bhaashya it is stated: "Api Cha Na Kadaachijjeevasya Brahmanaa Sampattirnaasti; Swaroopasyaanapatayitwaat Swapna.......... Tasmaadaatmaiva Suptisthaanam."

The salient points taught in this commentary are:

(a) Observed from the Paramaartha Drishti, Jeevaatman does not ever exist apart from Paramaatman. Therefore, a state, wherein Satsampatti (becoming one with Brahman after merger) is not there at all, does not exist indeed.

(b) In the waking and the dream states, another form, having association with adjuncts like the senses and the mind, also appears as having come afresh. Because of the reason that this form does not exist in the Sushupti state, the Shruti is stating that therein Satsampatti has taken place.
(c) Naadee (subtle nerves — not physical), Pureetat (a particular intestine near the heart) etc. are the doorways only to deep sleep, and not that in them deep sleep itself takes place. Sushupti means a state wherein a second thing is not cognized; because among the Naadees and such other adjuncts there are differences or distinctions, it is not possible at all for not cognizing another second phenomenon. When there is complete merger into Brahman (in other words, when Satsampatti is attained) because there necessarily exists Ekatva (non-dualism) alone, there is no question of cognizing a second entity or phenomenon.

(d) The Sootrakaara has not mentioned the phrase — 'Naadeeshwa-atmani Cha' — meaning, 'In the Naadees and in Atman' — with a view to determining the exact locus where this Sushupti occurs. For that reason alone the Shruti too does not refer to Naadees, and for this conclusion to be drawn the Pramaana (authoritative scriptural evidence) is to be sought in the fact that there is no ‘Phala Shruti’ (a statement describing the benefit or fruit accruing) for the event of Jeeva having entered into the Naadees. Then by determining that — "He (Jeeva) has merged with Atman" — an Intuitive experience (Anubhava) is engendered to the effect — "Jeeva is Brahman alone; in Him there are no empirical dealings of the waking, the dream and the deep sleep at all."

91. Q: Thus if by Satsampatti occurring in Sushupti alone the Jeevabrahmaikya (consummate merger of the Jeeva and Brahman) is to be established, does it not amount to saying that states like swooning, dissolution of the world (Pralaya), death etc. need not be deliberated upon at all?

A: No. Wherever a second thing or object is perceived or is established to exist by means of logical arguments (Yukti) in either the waking or the dream which have Darshanavritti (concepts of manifested forms), in all such situations by virtue of the Vishesha Jnaana (distinctive knowledge) of diverse objects Atman appears to have Pararoopaapatti (acquired alien forms). Wherever there is an Avastha having an Adarshanavritti (concept of unmanifestation), in all such situations — in the Absolute sense — Jeeva remains merged in Brahman or Atman. Thus the Yukti used here by the Shastra in the above manner to help practise that kind of discrimination becomes purposeful in examining Intuitively the three states of Consciousness. For this conclusion, the following Bhaashya statements become authoritative sources:

(i) "Mugdhe(s)rdhasampattihi Parisheshaat" (Sootra 3-2-10) and Its Bhaashya says:
Avastha Vyavahaara

“Na Broomoa Mudhee(s)rdhasampattireevasya Brahmanaa Bhavateeti; Kim Tarhi, Ardhana Sushuptapakshasya Bhavati Mudhatwam; Ardhana Avasthaantarapakshasyeti Broomaha.”

Here the Poorvapaksha (prima facie objection of) — “Tasmaadupadhyupashamaat Sushuptaavasthatue(s)pt Kritsna-sampattireva Jeevasya Bhavati Naardhasampattiriti” — meaning — Just as in Sushupti, in the Moorchaavastha (swooning) Poornasampati (total merger) alone should occur, is it not? — is raised, and accepting it, an opinion is given that from the Vyavaohaaric Drishti swooning is analogous to the death experience only.

(ii) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-24): “Api Cha Samraadhane Pratyakshaanumaanaabhyaam” — “Ap Chaivamaatmaanam Nira-stasamastaprapanchamavyaktam Samraadhanaakaale Pashyantii Yoaginaha; Samraadhanam Cha Bhaktidhyaanapranidhaanaadaya-nushthaanam” — it is stated that: Bhakti (devotion), Dhyana (meditation) and Chittaavadaana (keeping the mind attentive or alert) etc. which are performed to attain Samaadhyaavastha — in these states the Anubhava (Intuitive experience) of Brahman alone which is devoid of all distinctive features or characteristics (Nirvishesha) accrues.

(iii) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-34): “Sthaanavtsheshaat Prakaashaadivat” — “Yadapyuktam Sambandha-vyapadeshaat Bhedavyapadeshaachha Paramataha Syaat — Iti.... .....Tathaa Bhedavyapadeshoa(s)pt Brahmanaha Upaadhibhedaa-pekshayaa Upacharyate Na Swaroopahedaapekshayaa.”

Its gist: Jeeva reaches Brahman in Sushupti — thus the teaching pertaining to the difference as well as the relationship between Jeeva and Ishwara is envisaged because of the reason of an adjunct alone and not because of the reason of a difference in the essential natures of Jeeva and Ishwara existing.

(iv) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-35): “Upapatteshcha” — It is stated:

“Upapadyate Chaatredrisha Eva Sambandhoa Naanyaadrishaha ‘Swamaapeetoo Bhavati’ — (Chhaandogya 6-8-1) Iti Hi Swaroopa-sambandhahemanaamanant;... ...‘Yoas)yamantarhridaya Aakaasha’—(Chhaandogya 3-12-9) — Iti.”

Its gist: Because of the reason that in the waking in association with the Upaadhi the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is hidden, the Shruti says that — “In the deep sleep state (Sushupti) this Jeeva merges with Me (i.e. Brahman or Atman).” Just as for one and one Aakaasha alone the distinctions of the type of — ‘the space outside the body’ and ‘the space within the heart (Hridayaakaasha)’ — are attributed, in the same way the Shruti
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

mentions the Kalittta Bheda (imagined or superimposed distinction) between Jeeva and Ishwara. This truth is clarified here.

(v) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (4-2-8): "Tadaa(s)peeetehe Samsaaravyapadeshaat" — it is stated that — "Keedrishee Punariyam Sampattihi Syaat? — Iti Chintyate;..... Sushuptipralayavat Beeja-bhaavaavasheshaatva Eshaa Satsampattiritt.

Its gist: Here in this context, at the time of death the subtle primordial elements like Teja, Ap and Prithvt etc., Praana as well as senses, other Bhootas (phenomena of the world) along with the Jeeva get merged in the Sadbrahma (Pure Being of Brahman), which is the Supreme Deity. Brahman is the Prakrtti (material cause alone) for all these; even so, all these do not merge permanently (not Aatyantika Laya). Had it been so, the Shaastra portion, which teaches the Samsaaragatt, as well as that Moaksha Shaastra, which teaches that — 'Without Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) Moaksha cannot be attained' — would have become futile. Therefore, just as in Sushupti and Pralaya, in the same manner here it is determined that all those phenomena subsist in a seed form which is projected by Mithyaajnaana (misconception). Previously while explaining the Sootra (2-3-31) it was stated in its Bhaashya that the relationship with Buddhi is caused by Mithyaajnaana; this teaching should be remembered here in this context.

(vi) Sootra (2-1-9): "Na Tu Drishtaantabhaavaat" — solves an objection which the Saankhyans have occasion to raise against the teachings of Vedantins. The Bhaashya on this above Sootra says:


Its gist: In the case of all Praanis (creatures) although in states like Sushupti, Samaadhi, swooning, Marana (death) etc. there is no division between Paramaatman and these creatures, because of the reason that their respective Mithyaajnaana (Adhyaasa) has not been got rid of or removed, they again wake up (or get born) and just as the division between Jeeva and Ishwara takes place, in the same way here too the creatures get divided from their very essence of Being as Ishwara or Paramaatman. Hence whatever theory or principle applies to the concept or phenomenon of Pralaya — that very same theory can be made applicable here too.

In any case, till Avidyaa vanishes, although Satsampattti accrues in states like Sushupti, Samaadhi, Marana, Pralaya etc. the Jeevas
(creatures) appear again and again in their respective previous physical forms in the waking. But observed from the Paramaartha Drshti, all of them are verily of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of Brahman at all times and in all states. Now this is tantamount to teaching that those who attain this Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa do attain Moaksha (that is, they are said to be Liberated from the Bondage of Samsaara or Jeevatwa).

Shri Shankara, while writing his Bhaashya on a Kaarika by Shri Goudapaada in which the latter has referred to an illustration, has driven home the truth about how a Jeeva, who appears to be experiencing the three states of Consciousness, Intuits his essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness as Atman with the guidance of the Shaastraic method of examining these three Avasthaas, avers: "Asti Chaayamaparoa Drishtaantaha Yathaa Swayamprasaaartlayaa Maa-yayaa Maayaavee Trishwapi Kaaleshu Na Samsprishyate, Avastu­twaat;.... ..Ajamanidra-maswapnamadvaitam Budhyate Tadaa."— (G. K. 1-16) ItL” — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-9).

In this Bhaashya excerpt Shri Shankara has in so many words said that — Waking, dream and deep sleep, Jeeva's birth, growth and death, the world's creation, sustenance and dissolution etc. — in all such types of triads of states, Atman (the Absolute non-dual Reality) alone is appearing by His Maayaa (magical power); thus, because this Avasthaatraya is Atman's false (misconceived) appearance alone, in reality (from the Absolute viewpoint of Pure Consciousness) Atman is Aja (birthless), Anidra (devoid of deep sleep), Aswapna (devoid of dream), Advaitaswaroopaha (of the essential nature of non-dual Pure Consciousness). To explain, Aja here means one who is devoid of the mutations or changes like Janma, Marana etc.: Anidra means one who is devoid of an Avastha of the type of Adarshanavritti of not cognizing anything at all; Aswapna means one who does not have any Darshanavritti or a state in which a false appearance (Anritta) of a second thing or phenomenon is seen or known. The final fruition of the examination of the three states of Consciousness is to Intuit this above-mentioned Atman’s Paramaarthaswaroopa alone. The superior Saadhakas (highly evolved seekers) can have this Intuitive experience here and now by one-pointed ratiocination (Manana) on the Bhaashyas on Maandookyoapanishad and on Shri Goudapaada’s Kaarikas in four Prakaranas called Aagama, Vaitathya, Advaita and Alaatashaanti in that order.

XI. BANDHA MOAKSHA VYAVHAARA

92. Q: Thus if it is a hard fact that always at all times Jeeva is invariably of Ishwaraswaroopa alone, then the empirical transactions of Bandha (Bondage) and Moaksha (Liberation) will be
rendered untenable, is it not? But this kind of mundane transaction is being taught in the Shaastras; how can it be justified?

A: Yes, true. As you have said, Atman is beyond all mundane (empirical) transactions (Sarvavyavahaaraaateeta). The scriptural teaching that — "He is eternally Adviteeya (non-dual), having no second entity or phenomenon to Himself" — alone is the Paramaarththa. In this regard Shri Goudapaada, the grand preceptor of Shri Shankara and 'Vedaantaarthasampradaayavid' (an exponent well-versed in the traditional pedagogic methodology of teaching the Ultimate Reality propounded in the Vedantas or Upanishads) has stated: "Etaireeprashtagbhaavaiti Prithageveti Lakshitaha; Evam Yoa Veda Tatwena Kalpayetsoa(s)uushankitaha" — (G. K. 2-30).

Its meaning: Atman is always (eternally) Adviteey~, but this Paramaatman by virtue of His being associated with various adjuncts appears as if He is manifold.


Its meaning: The world of duality is a false appearance alone just like the dream, Maayaa (magic), Gandharvanagara (celestial city) etc.; the really real Entity is this Paramaatma Tattwa alone, and this alone is the Vedantic Siddhaanta.

"Na Niroadhoa Na Choatpattirna Baddhoa Na Cha Saadhakaha; Na Mumukshurna Vai Mukta Iyeshaa Paramaarthataa" — (G. K. 2-32).

Its meaning: Srishiti (creation), Sthiti (sustenance), Laya (dissolution) of the world of duality, seekers who are Mumukshus or desirous of Liberation, Realized souls (Siddhas) who are already Liberated, concepts of Bandha and Moaksha — all these are merely empirical transactions projected or conjured up by Avidyaa alone, but from the Paramaarththa Drishti none of them exists in the least.

In the 13th Chapter of the Bhagavad Geeta too it is stated: From the Paaramaarthic viewpoint Kshetrajna is Bhagavanta (the Supreme Being); by virtue of the mutual superimposition (misconception) between Kshetra and Kshetrajna the creation of movable and immovable creatures, trees and plants appears as if it has taken place.

Even so, from the Vyavahaaric viewpoint which is conjured up by Avidyaa this Vyavahaara of Bandha and Moaksha has been propounded in Vedanta.

93. Q: What is meant by Mukti? Is it not true that to get Liberated from Bondage is itself a Phala (fruit)? Therefore, Mukti also should necessarily be a plausible result attained by means of Saadhana (spiritual practice), is it not? If it is not so, why is it that
Karmoapaasananas have been stipulated by way of injunctions (Vidhi) in the Shrutis to attain Mukti?

A: For this an answer has been given in Sootra (3-4-52) which says: "Euam Muktiphalaaniyamastadavasthaavadhritestadavasthaavadhritehe" — and Shri Shankara in his Bhaashya on this Sootra has written:

(1) "Yathaa Mumukshoarvidyaasaadhanaaavalambinaha Saadhana-vaveryavisheshaat Vidyalaakshane. Phale Athikaamushmikaphala-twakritoa Visheshapratiniyamoaa Drishtaha, Evam Muktilakshane(s)pyutkarshaapakarshakritaha Kashchid.... ....'Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmaivaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyet' — Ityaadi-shrutibhyaha."

Here in this above Bhaashya portion it is expounded that Muktyavastha is not an Avastha at all; in truth, it is the Nityasiddha (eternally existing) Brahmaatmaswaroopa alone.

(2) "Apt Cha Vidyaaasadhanam Swaveeryavisheshaat Swaphale Eva Vidyayaam... ....Na Tu Mukto Kasyachit Atishayasambhavo(s)stti."

Its meaning: There may be distinctions to the effect — if a Saadhana or spiritual practice (to gain Self-Knowledge) is strong it will help attain that Vidyaa either immediately or proportionately faster than if the Saadhana is weak; but in the latter case the Knowledge may accrue in due course of time. However, in Vidyaa itself there do not exist any distinctions of higher and lower, big or small. It is pointed out here that only when it becomes Paripoorna (absolutely whole, consummate), then only it can be called 'Vidyaa' and when it is limited or immature. (Hence, the doctrinaire teaching about gradations among Jnaanis like Brahmavid., Brahmaavidvara and Brahmaavidvarishtha is totally against this Bhaashya portion).

Here it is affirmed that — "Mukti is not Saadhya (a product or effect of an effort or practice, Saadhana); but it is Nityasiddha (eternally existing Reality); thus we have reiterated." Therefore, it amounts to our elucidating beyond any doubt that by means of Vidyaa the falsification or sublation of Avidyaa that takes place is itself the Mukti from Bandha.

94. Q: Where else has it been stated that Mukti is Nityasiddha? Where is any indication about this teaching in Adhyaasa Bhaashya?

A: In the Adhyaasa Bhaashya sentence — "Tametamavidyaakhyam-aatmaaanaatmanoaritarataraadhyaasam Puraskritos Sarve Pramaana-prameyavyavahaaraaaha Pravritttaaha Sarvaani Cha Shastraanti Vidhipratishtedhamoakshaparaaani" — the salient points indicated are:
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

(i) Because it is stated in the above Bhaashya portion that even the Moakshaprada Shastra (the Vedantic teaching pertaining to Moaksha or Mukt) also is prompted by Avidya only — it amounts to saying that for the Jnaani the Moaksha (that he is supposed to have attained as a result of some Saadhana) is really not something that is attained as a fruit or Phala afresh.

(ii) In its explanatory sentence it is stated: "Na Chaanadhystaaratmabhaavaavena Dehena Kaschidvyaapriyate; Na Chaitasmitm Sarvasminnasati Asangasyaatmanaha Pramaatrutwatupapadyate" — meaning: Because it is stated that — Since Atman is Asanga or unrelated (non-dual), unless Dehahyasa (misconception of Atman having a body) is preconceived He cannot possibly have the empirical dealings of possessing Pramaatrutwa with Pramaanas and Prameya' — clearly it is tantamount to having indicated that embodiedness is superimposed on Atman or, in other words, the body is misconceived in Atman.

(iii) In the sentence — "Asti Taavad Brahma Nityashuddhabuddhamauktaswabhaavaam... ...Aatmaa Cha Brahma" — it is taught that — "Atman of the Jynaasu is of the essential nature of eternally Liberated (Nityamuktaswabhaava); He need not attain Mukt afresh or anew" — and thereby in the (Jynaasaa Sootra) the Moaksha Vyavahaara has been rescinded or sublated.

(iv) In the 'Samanvaya Sootra' Bhaashya the statement that — "Ashareeratwameva Dharmakaaryam Iti Chet, Na; Tasya Swaabhaavikatwaat; Tadetadashareeratwam Moakshaakhyam"— it is indicated that — The Moaksha called Ashareeratwa is Swaabhaaavika (to wit, Intuition of being ever devoid of embodiedness is itself called here in this context Moaksha and thereby that is the very essence of Pure Being — not an adventitious state or condition to be acquired or attained afresh; for, that is Swaabhaaavika and is not to be acquired anew at all); further, it is thereby suggested that this essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is not some fruit which is to be established afresh as a result of some Dharma Kaarya or religious or spiritual action giving rise to some merit.

In the Bhaashya Shri Shankara has repeatedly exemplified the scriptural sentence — "Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmatooabhoot" — which implies: 'In the Vidyavastha, wherein one has Intuited Aatmaikatwa culminating in Intuitive experience of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness, there is no Vyavahaara whatsoever' and has thus clarified the Vedantic teaching in clear terms. From this it amounts to having repeatedly taught that — 'From the standpoint of a Jnaani the empirical dealing of Bandha-Moaksha also does not exist whatsoever.'

110
95. Q: Has it been indicated in the Adhyaasa Bhaashya that there is no Bandha whatsoever? In any other context in Shri Shankara's Bhaashya is this truth clarified at all?

A: (1) "Tametamevamlakshanamadhyasaam Panditaav Avidyetii Man- yante: Tadvlvekena Cha Vastuswaroopapavadhaaranam Vidyaa- maahuhu: Tatravam Satl Yatra Yadadhyasaaha, Tatkritena Doashena Gunena Vaa Anumaatrenaapi Sa Na Sambadhyate."

In this Bhaashya, it has been indicated that because Anaatmans (not-selves) of the forms of Upaadhls are super-imposed on, or misconceived in, Nityashuddha Atman, when that Adhyaasa is sublated or negated by Vidyaa (Self-Knowledge), the truth that — 'This defect of evil (Anarthadoasha) of the forms of Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa does not taint or touch Atman in the least’ — is realized.


In this Bhaashya sentence it is stridently affirmed that — 'One who has attained Brahmajnaana gets a steadfast, unflinching conviction to the effect — 'In me never in the past, nor now at present nor in the future — never at any period of time — the Bandha of the form of Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa existed.’”

(3) "Evaameva Cha Moaksha Upapadyate: Anyathaa Anaadikaala- pravrittaaanaam Karmanaam Kshayaabhaave Moakshadhaha- avaha Syaat; Na Cha Deshakaalanimittaapekshoa Moakshaha Karmaphaladvdbhavittumarhali" — (4-1-13).

In this Bhaashya sentence it is stated: If we assume that — ‘Mukti which ever exists is cognized by means of Jnaana’ — alone Moaksha becomes eternal (Nitya) alone and neither when it is attained afresh as a result of, or a product of, Saadhana nor when something is created depending upon the mundane, empirical categories of time, space and causation; otherwise, it becomes Anitya (non-eternal) indeed: besides it will get defaulted without being the real Moaksha.


In this Bhaashya sentence too it is further clarified that — "Having demonstrated or depicted that — 'By the destruction of Avidyaa, Atman is Intuited to be of the essential nature of being ever Liberated or free’ — the final purport of the Shaastras lies in
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

giving rise to Jnaana alone: if this truth is not accepted, then Moaksha will invariably become Anltya indeed." Therefore, here in this context too Samsaarabandha (the Bondage of the form of trasmigratory existence) is Avidyaakalplta (a projection conjured up by nescience) alone: it does not exist. in the absolute sense. as a reality. entity at all.

XII. MOAKSHA SAADHANA VYAVAHAARA

96. Q: In that case, why is it that in the Shaastras Saadhanas have been taught for attaining Moaksha?

A: In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-4-1): “Purushaarthoa(s)taha Shabdaaditl Baadaraayanaha” — it is enunciated that — “By means of Kevalavidyaaa (Aatmakatwapraptipatl) or attainment of Intuition of the non-dualism or Pure. Absolute Being-Consciousness of the Self alone the Paramapurushaarthha is gained. The Bandha that is superimposed by mere Avidyaa has per force to be sublated (falsified) by mere Vidyaaa alone; by means of Yuktl in consonance with Intuitive experience or Saarwatrika Poorna Anubhava also it is inviolably established that besides Jnaana to attain Muktl there is no necessity of any other Saadhana felt. Having followed this teaching, the Sootra (3-4-25) is quoted in support of it: “Ata Eva Chaagneendhanaadoya-napekshaa". The Bhaashya on this Sootra says:

(1) “Ata Eva Cha Vidyaaya Purusharthaahetutwaat Agneendhanaah-deenti Aashramakarmaanii Vidyaaya Swaarhastiddhou Naapekshi-tavyani Iti Aadyasyaivoadhikaranasya Phalamupasamharatyadh-ikaviwakshayaa." — (Sootra Bhaashya 3-4-25).

Its purport: Here all the theories of the proponents to the effect that — “By means of Karmajnaanasamuchhaya (blending Karmas, which are Katrutanttra. and Jnaana. which is Vastutantra) alone Moaksha is attained (afresh)” — are refuted.

But as a solution to the doubt of the type that — ‘Then for Vidyaaa or Self-Knowledge is there no need of any Karmas at all?” — the following Sootra (3-4-26) is quoted: “Sarvaapekshaa Cha Yajnaadishruteraschwavat” — and in his explanatory Bhaashya on this Sootra Shri Shankara says:


The purport of this long Bhaashya excerpt is: In the methodology of teaching adopted by Shri Shankara. alien tenets like — (a) ‘Karmas
have been criticized or condemned in all respects and aspects;
(b) 'For attaining Moaksha. Karmajnaanasamuchhaya is essential';
(c) 'For small or limited Phala an unsteady (Asthira) Karma is needed while for the steadfast (eternal) Moaksha. Karma conjoined with Upaasana is essential' — all such doctrinaire theories are refuted on the strength of delineating the essential natures of Karma and Vidya alone. Further, it amounts to clarifying the genuine Vedantic teaching (in accordance with the Saampradaayic methodology of Shri Shankara) here. viz. 'Svarga and such other Loakaantara or Janmaantara Phalas are Saadhya or attainable as a result of some Karma or Upaasana, but Mukti is Nityasiddha or an eternally existing Reality; therefore, though for Svarga etc. Karma and Upaasanas may be indirect Saadhanas. they are not the direct (i.e. instantaneous. spontaneous. immediate) Saadhanas for Mukti. The fact they may, however, be indirect Saadhanas in a sequential order (Parampara) is clarified here.

Here in this context. we should ruminate over the purport of the verse (6-3) of the Bhagavad Geeta to the effect that — 'For the Aarurukshu. who is about to enter the path of Yoga. Karma is Saadhana, while for the Aaroodha. who has already entered the path of Yoga, Shama (control over the mind) is the Saadhana.'

97. Q: Apart from mere Karmas. which other Saadhanas are needed by the Brahmaxajnaasu?

A: To this Shri Baadaraayana has provided the answer in his Sootra (3-4-27):

"Shamadamaadyupetaha Syaattathaapi Tu Tadvidhestadangatayaa Teshaamavashhyaanushtheyatwaat" — and the Bhaashya on it says: "Yadi Kashchinmanyeta — Tasmaat Yajnadaasyanapekshaayaamapi Shamaadeenyapekshitavyaan!" — (Here the Maadhyandina recension is also mentioned).

Here because the injunctive case is seen in the word — 'Pashyet' — it is stressed that not only is it stipulated that Shama, Dama etc. have to be necessarily practised but also they are more essential than Yajna, Daana etc. This distinctive gradation is clarified too in the next portion of the Bhaashya in the manner: "Yajnaadeenyapi Twapekshitavyaan, YajnaadishruLereva; ... Vriddishaasamyoagaattu Baahyataraant Yajnaadeen! — Ith Vivektavyam."

Here it is blared out indubitably and unambiguously that — "Yajnaadi Karmas are Bahlrangasaadhanas (spiritual disciplines or practices which are external), while Shama, Dama etc. are Antaranga- saadhanas (spiritual practices internally to be observed).
98. Q: Are there any Saadhanas which are still more Antaranga (internal) than Shama, Dama etc.?

A: Yes. there are. In the Sootra (4-1-1): “Aavrittirasakridupadeshaat” — the direct means (Saadhanas) like Shravana, Manana, Nididhyaasana have been elaborated upon very clearly for attaining Self-Knowledge. In the Bhaashya on that Sootra it is stated:


Here because Saadhanas like Shravana, Manana etc. which are exclusively pertaining to the subject-matter of Atman are taught for the Darshana (literally it means vision, but here it means Jnaana), we can discern that they have to be practised till this plenary Darshana or Jnaana accrues or reaches its acme or fruition here and now. Because of the reason that both the words ‘Upaasana’ (meaning mental meditation) and ‘Nididhyaaasanam’ (meaning Intuitive contemplation) are referring to mental actions which are to be repeated over and over again also, it becomes very clear that they have to be repeated till Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) is attained. Hence it amounts to having said that these Saadhanas are to be practised till Darshana or Jnaana accrues. If Shravana, Manana etc. are practised Jnaana accruing here while living in this body is experienced indeed. Therefore it becomes established that these direct Saadhanas of Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana are more effective and efficient Saadhanas than Shama, Dama etc.

99. Q: In all the Upanishadic sentences like — ‘You should do Shravana (Shroatavyaha), you should have vision of Atman (Pashyet) etc. has Jnaana been stipulated as an injunction (Vidhi)? For, in words like Shroatavyaha, Pashyet there is a grammatical suffix ‘Tavya’ (Vidhi Vibhakti Pratyaya) which indicates a commanding injunction, is it not?

A: Here ‘Jnaana’ means a resultant fruit of the nature of Anubhava (Intuitive experience). It is that which evolves by Itself from Pratyayas (convictions) and not a Kriya (an act). This we have mentioned previously. By ruminating over the detailed comments on this subtle topic by Shri Shankara in his Bhaashyas there is an immense benefit.

(i) “Avagatiparyantam Jnaanam Sanvaachyaayaa Ichhaayaaha Karma: PhalavishayatwaadIchhaayaaha” — (1-1-1).

In the expression — ‘One should practise Brahma Jifnaasaa’ — the word ‘Jifnaasaa’ (literally meaning a desire to know) alone is used in the sense that — ‘One should desire (make an attempt) for
Moaksha Saadhana Vyavahaara

**Jnaana (Self-Knowledge).** Any desire is fruit- or benefit-oriented and hence, in a manner of speaking, here *Jnaana* is *Phala* itself, and not an act.

**(ii)** "*Yathaahbhoobrahmaatmovvalshayamapi Jnaanam Na Choadanaa-tantram*"

Its gist: Just like *Pratyaksha Jnaana* etc. *BrahmaJnaana* also is Intuitive experience (Pure Consciousness) alone which indicates or shows an Entity as It really is: therefore, it is not an act (ritual or rite) which is stipulated by way of an injunction.

**(iii)** "*Kimarthaaani Tarhi 'Aatmaa Va Are Drishtavyaha Shroatavyaha' — (Brl.) Ityaadeeni Vidhiicchhaayanti Vachanaani! Swaabhaavikapravrtilivishayavimukhee Karanaarthaaneeti Broomaha."

Its purport is: If it is queried that — "What is the benefit or purpose of statements like 'One should perceive Atman alone, should listen to (texts pertaining to Atman alone)' etc. which appear to be injunctions only? — it is answered here by saying that the ultimate purpose behind these statements is to stop the habitual trend of a person's senses which are extroverted (pursuing the fivefold enjoyments through the five *Jnaanendrlyayas*) and then turn them around completely towards Atman (the very fountainhead of all existence, knowledge and enjoyments).

**(iv)** "*Loake(s)pl 'Idam Pashhya', 'Idamaakarnaya' Iti Cha tavanjaateeyakeshu Nirdesheshu Prandthaanaamaatram Kur — Ityuchyate, Na Saakshaat Jnaanameva Kuru Itt;..... ....Na Cha Pramaanaanta-renaanyathaaprasiddh(es)rthe Anyathaajnaanam Nyuktasyaap-pyupapadyate — (Sootra Bhaashya 3-2-21)."

Its purport is: 'Look here', 'Listen' — these are not at all words of the type of injunctions. For a person who is a perceiver or a listener there should necessarily be the respective instruments of knowledge. Similarly, there should necessarily be percepts outside for perceiving and listening. If not, even if there are injunctions issued neither there will be perceptual knowledge nor *Shravanaajnaana* or knowledge gained through listening. Thus here to conclude that — 'Darshana, Shravana etc. mentioned in the scriptural texts are not really of the nature of injunctions' — a rational explanation is forwarded.

(Therefore, it is established here on the strength of the original *Bhaashya* statements that — "The post-Shankara *Vyaakhyaana-kaaras*' adamantine interpretation that — 'Shravana, Manana, Darshana and Nididhyaasana are injunctions' — as well as such other attempts by other people" — are truly exercises in futility indeed!)

100. *q:* In that case, among the *Saadhanaas* like Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana which is predominant (Mukhya)
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

and which is subservient or secondary (Anga)? Or, is it that only when all these are necessarily complete, then alone Jnaana accrues?

A: Among these, because each one Saadhana is meant for the Avagatstroopa Aatma Jnaana (the plenary consummate Intuitive experience of Self-Knowledge) alone, whichever Saadhana helps accrue or attain Jnaana — to that extent that particular Saadhana is sufficient, and this interpretation alone is correct and proper. Besides, because Jnaana, being Atman’s innate essence of Pure Being-Consciousness of the very nature of Intuitive experience, has to finally manifest itself, evidently if the proper and sufficient instruments of Knowledge (here Saadhanas) are there to turn our attention or awareness towards this core of Aatmavastu (ever-existing Reality of our Self), that will be adequate and will serve the purpose all right.

Here in this context by deliberating upon the following Bhaashya sentences there is immense benefit to the Saadhakas:

(a) “Manananidhidhyaasanayoarapyavagatyarthatwaat” — (1-1-4).

Here it is stated that just as much Shravana is a Saadhana for Anubhava (Intuitive experience) so much are Manana and Nididhyaasana too for Anubhava.

(b) “Tatra Yeshaatemou Padaarthou Aajnaanasanamshayavviparyaya Pratibaddhou Teshaaam ’Tattvamasi’ Ityetad Vaakyam Swaarthe Pramaam Noatpaadayitum Shakhnoatii;.... ....Naatra Kashcidapi Kramoa(s)bhyupagamyate” — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-1-2).

Its gist: For the Uttamaadhikaarts (superior-grade or highly-evolved seekers) who are capable of Intuiting the meaning of the two words — ‘Tat’ and ‘Twam’, and for those who do not have the obstructive defects or impediments like Ajnaana (non-comprehension), Samshaya (doubt) and Viparyaya (misconception) — all together these are called Avidyaa (nescience) — for these two highly qualified seekers merely by virtue of their practising Shravana (of the scriptural teachings about Brahman or Atman as the non-dual Absolute Reality) the purport of the sentences will be Intuited with certainty. Hence, in their case there cannot be any restriction or stipulation that they should necessarily practise further Manana and Nididhyaasana also. But those who do not attain the Padaarthajnaana have per force to practise Manana or even further Nididhyaasana.

101. Q: What is meant by the practice of Shravana and Yukti? What exactly is the essential nature of the Anubhava that accrues either by means of Shravana or by ratiocinating over the Yuktis (logical devices) taught in the Shaastras themselves?
At Anubhava (Intuitive experience) means: Since Dukkhitwa (misery) etc. are objects to (outside or external to) the subjective Aatmaanubhava, the Dhirkanishchaya (unflinching conviction) that they do not attach themselves to Him accrues. (To wit. it is a highly esoteric teaching of Vedanta that anything that can be, and is, objectified — does not belong, or attach itself. to the subject). In support of this conclusion the following Bhaashya sentence is the Pramaana (authoritative source):

(1) "Pratyaksham Hi Dehe Chhidyamaane Dahyamaane Vaa Ahameva Chhidye. Dahye — Iti Cha Mithyaabhimaanaa Drishtaha: ... Na Chalvamaatmaanamanubhavataha Kinchit Anyat Krityama-vashishhyate" — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-1-2).

Its gist: Because of the reasons that: (i) In the waking it is intuited that the adjuncts like the body, the senses etc. as well as the Vedanas like Dukkhitwa etc. are clearly objects for Atman. the Witnessing Consciousness and (ii) these are absent in Sushuptti is the Intuitive experience of Pure Consciousness (Shuddha Chaitanya) for everyone of us — it is stated that this non-dual Chaitanya Itself is the real Self. and this alone is called in Vedantic parlance Aatmaanubhava.

(2) "Yasya Tu Naisho(as)nubhavoa Draaglva Jaayate Tam Pratya-nubhabhavarthha Evaaurittiyaabhyupagamahaa:.... ....Aaurittiyaadivaa-choayukttyaa Abhyupeyate."

Its gist: Knowing full well that whatever is different or apart from Atman is really Anrita and establishing oneself in (or having total or consummate identity with) Atman alone is in truth Anubhava. In order to enable us to establish ourselves in that Anubhava. the (repeated) practice of direct Saadhanas like Shravana, Manana needed for that purpose alone is reckoned as Aauritti or repetition in this context.

(From this it becomes evident that those theories which propound that Anubhava or Soakshaatkaara or materialisation have to be attained afresh by repeated practice of Jnaana are all contrary to the Bhaashya. It also. at the same time. amounts to saying that — 'Getting rid of Adhyaasa and establishing oneself in or becoming one with Atman alone is 'Anubhava').

102. Q: What is meant by Nididhyaasana? Who can do it and how?

A: It is stated in the Kathoapanishad that because Aatmavastu is very subtle, to many Saadhakas it may be beyond their ability to Intuit. and to such people Adhyaatmayoga will first become an essential practice. That also is meant for Anubhava alone. In this regard. the following Bhaashya sentences are authoritative sources:
In the Sootra (3-3-14): "Aadhyaanaaya Prayoajanaabhaavaat", while determining the purport of the Kathopanishad verse (3-10-11): "Indriyebhyaha Para Paraa Hyarthaa Arthebhyashcha Param Manaha; Manasastu Paraa Buddhiruddheraatmaa Mahaan Paraha; Mahataha Paraama Vyaktamanvajkaat Purushaha Paraha; Purushaanna Param Kinchit Saa Kaashthaa Saa Paraat Gatiхи."

It is clarified that —

(1) "Purusha Eva Hyebhyaha Sarvebhyaha Param Pratlpaadyata Iti Yuktam: Na Pratyekameshaam Paratwapratlpaadanam: Kasmaat? Prayoajanaabhaavaat...Na Twaadhyaanamena Swapradhaanam.”

For this long Bhaashya excerpt the gist is: Indriya (senses). Artha (the objects for the senses). Manas (mind) etc. in that order are subtler and subtler, and finally subtler than all else is ‘Purusha’ or Atman. All these have been taught here for the sake of Intuiting Atman through ‘Aadhyaana’. Here Aadhyaana means ‘Nidhihyasana’ alone: by means of that alone Samyajjnaana dawns.

For the Sootra (3-23-15): “Aatmashabdaachha” — the Bhaashya says:

(2) “Esha Sarveshu Bhooteshu Goodhoa(stmaa Na Prakaashate; Drishyate Twagryayaa Buddhyaa Sookshmayaa Sookshmadarshhl-bhthi" - (3-13) Iti Prakritam Purusham Aatmaa - Ityaha:. ...Tadvya-akhyaatam ‘Aanumaanikamapyekeashaam’ —(1-4-1) Ityatra.”

Its purport: By the word ‘Purusha’ Atman alone is indicated: the rest are Anaatman; we have stated in the ‘Aanumaanikaa-dhikarana’ that — ‘To Intuit this subtle Reality of Atman, Aadhyaana has been recommended.’ From this commentary also it amounts to having said that for the sake of getting rid of all Adhyaasas about Anaatmans as well as Intuiting Atman alone this Aadhyaana or Nidhihyasana has been taught.

Further, the Bhaashya portion in the Aanumaanikaadhikarana referred to above says:

(3) “Vaishnavasya Paramapadasya Duravagamatuamuktwa Tada- vagamaaraththam Yoagam Darshayati — Yacchhedwaangmanasee Praajnastadyacchhejnaana Aatmanee... ...Mahaantam Twaatmaanam Shaanta Aatmanti Prakaranavatti Parasmin Purushe Parasyaam Kaashthaayaam Pratishthaapayet — Iti.”

Its gist: Here the description of the spiritual practice called ‘Adhyaatmayoga’ is given in detail. Because Atman is the subtlest Entity, Indriyas or senses etc. first should be merged in a subtler constituent of our Being like Manas (mind) and continuing this process of merging the outer or external gross elements into their immediate subtler elements, finally we should reach the extremely subtlest form of Paramaatman. From the Bhaashya sentence in
Moaksha Saadhana Vyavahaara

Brihadaaranyaka (2-4-4) it can be determined that by ‘Nididhyaasana’ it is meant ‘to concentrate on a thing, observe it and Intuit (cognize) it’ alone from the original sentence: “Pribaa Bataare Naha Satee Priyam Bhaashase Ehyaaswa Vyaakhyasaayaami Te Vyaachakshaanasya Tu Me Nididhyaasasweti” . That complete sentence is:

(4) “Ataha Ehl Aaswa Upavisha Vyaakhyasaayaami Yatte Tava Ishtamamritatwasaadhanamaatmajnaanam Kathayishyaami; Vyaachakshaanasya Tu Me Mama Vyaakhyaanam Kuruataha Nididhyaasaswa Vaakyaanyarthato Nishchayena Dhyaatumiechhetl.” — (Brihadaaranyaka Bhaashya 2-4-4).

Here it is clearly explained to say that Nididhyaasana means ‘to concentrate on and observe a thing and cognize (Intuit) it’ alone.

(Even so, there are some proponents of Vyakhyaana Prasthaana who explain in the manner: “Shravana, Manana, Nididhyaasana mean Dhaarana. Dhyaana and Samaadhi, respectively” — equating the earlier three Vedantic technical terms with the latter three technical terms of PaatanJala Yoga Shastra or Darshana. which is a Dvaita Siddhaanta. These proponents opine that the word ‘Darshana’ used in the Upanishadic sentence means a resultant effect obtained afresh from Samaadhi or trance. This is totally opposed to and not acceptable to the Bhaashya teaching. There is no gainsaying the fact about this clear difference and variance from the Upanishadic teaching).

103. Q: What authoritative (scriptural) texts are there to conclude that after the attainment (or dawning) of Jnaana, Saadhanaas like Yajna, Daana etc. should be given up? Why should it not be believed (reckoned) that both Karma and Jnaana can go hand in hand, so to speak, and together be the cause for the Paramapurushaartha?

A: Even prior to Shri Shankara or even in ancient times there were proponents of this doctrinaire theory that both these together are responsible for (or will engender) Moaksha. The three types of such theories, viz. (a) equal blending (i.e. in equal proportions) of Jnaana and Karma; (b) Jnaana is an Anga (secondary, accessory to) of Karma; (c) Karma is an Anga of Jnaana — were also propounded by some Vedantins even and all such doctrines were refuted by Shri Shankara in his Upanishad Bhaashyas as well as in his Geeta Bhaashya. In the Sootra Bhaashya the second type in the above three was taken as the prima facie objection and on that pretext the genuine Siddhaanta had been established. For instance:

(I) In the Sootra (3-4-3): “Sheshatwaat Purushaarthavaadooda Yatha­ anyeshwitti Jaiminiihi” — it is stated that because Atman is a
Intuitive Approach of Shankara’s Vedanta

Kartru He is Shesha (remnant or subservient) to Karma. Therefore, it is inferred that, just as in a Vidhi, Karnas called ‘Vreehi Proakshana’ etc. Vreehi (paddy) etc., Atman’s Vjnaana (intellectual knowledge) etc. are Karmashesha (things which are remaining apart from the Karnas) Atman too is Karmashesha; the statement that — “By means of Jnaana a Phala accrues” — is mere ‘Arthavaada’ (stated by way of eulogising Jnaana) and hence of secondary importance (subservient to Karma). This is a theory propounded by some proponents following Jalmiini’s Poorva Meemaamsaa Siddhaanta.

(ii) In the Sootra (3-4-3) “Aachaaradarshanaat” — a prima facie objection which championed the theory that ‘Jnaana is Karmashesha’ has been examined. The argument of these proponents was: Because the Upanishads are stating that — ‘Jnaanis also were performing Karma, — if it were true that merely by Jnaana alone Moaksha, which is the Purushaartha, is attained, then there was no necessity whatsoever for Jnaanis to perform Karma. By the Pramaana of Shruitaarthaapatti (the valid means of Arthaapatti or indirect inference from the Shruti Vaakya) Jnaana is deduced as Karmashesha.

(iii) In the Sootra (3-4-4): “Tatchhrutehe” — on the strength of the Chhaandogya sentence — “Yadeva Vidyayaa Karoat. ...Tade’aa Veeryavattaram Bhavatii” — there is a Poorvapaksha champi:ioning the theory that — ‘Vidyaa is Karmashesha’.

(iv) In the Sootra (3-4-5): “Samanvaarambhanaat” — because in the Brhadaaranyaka Upanishad it is stated that — “Tam Vidyaakarmanee Samanvaarabhete” — meaning, ‘Both Jnaana and Karma are responsible for the Phala. It is argued that Jnaana by itself cannot give rise to a Phala independently.

(v) In the Sootra (3-4-6): “Tadvatoa Vidyaaoidhaanaat” — on the strength of the Chhaandogya Upanishad setence — “Aachaarya-kulaad Vedamadheetya.... ...Kutumbe Shuchou Deshe Swaadhya-ayamadheeyaanaaha” — only after listening to the purport of the Vedas (Vedaartha) from a preceptor (Aachaarya) the qualification for performing Karma accrues. Hence Jnaana is Karmashesha. This argument is forwarded.

(vi) In the next Sootra (3-4-7): “Niyamaachha” — there is a prima facie (Poorvapaksha) argument that because there are several Shruti sentences purporting to teach that — ‘As long as the seeker is alive he should per force go on performing Karma’ — it can be deduced that Jnaana is definitely Karmashesha.
Now, according to Shri Shankara's teaching this pr\textit{ma facie} theory is refuted on the basis of the following \textit{Shruti Pramaana Vaakyas}:

(a) For the Sootra (3-4-7): "Adhikopadeshaattu Baadaraayana-syalvam Taddarshanaaat" — the following \textit{Bhaashya} is there:

\textit{Adhikastaaavacchhaareeradaaatmanoa}s\textit{samsaareeshwaraaha}..... ....Pratyutakarmaanyuxcchhinattl."

Its purport: Atman who is expounded in Vedanta is not the \textit{Kartru}; but apart from him, the non-dual Witnessing Consciousness who is beyond the empirical opposites of \textit{Dharma} (ethical and religious acts or rituals) and \textit{Adharma} (irreligious, unethical deeds) is taught. Therefore, \textit{Aatmajnaana} is not \textit{Karmashesha} or \textit{Karmaanga}; in fact. It is capable of destroying or sublating Karmas.

Here we should remember the teaching brought home by Shri Shankara in his \textit{Adhyaasa Bhaashya} that the seeker should discern Intuiting that Atman who is \textit{Chldaatmaka} (of the very essence of Absolute. Pure Consciousness) as well as the \textit{Vishayiswaroopa} (of the essential nature of the eternal Witness or subject but never a \textit{Vishaya} or \textit{Prameya}, meaning an object for anything) but who is separate from the \textit{Ahampratyayagamya Atman} (the 'I' notion, ego or \textit{Pramaatruroopa} self). Hence it becomes established that this Witnessing Consciousness is Itself to be reckoned in the predominant sense and not in any \textit{Gounaartha} or as \textit{Arthavaada}.

(b) For the Sootra (3-4-9): "Tulyam Tu Darshanam" — the following \textit{Bhaashya} is written: "Tulyam, Aachaaradarshanam Akarma-sheshatwe(s)p' Vldyaayaaha:.... ....Na Twaatraapi Karmaanga-twamasti; Prakaranaadyabhaavaat."

Its purport: There is also a \textit{Shruti} which examines the conventions and beliefs, which the \textit{Jnaants} were entertaining to follow, expressed in statements like — "Why do we need \textit{Adhyayana} (studying the scriptural texts) and \textit{Yagna}, \textit{Daana} etc.?" The \textit{Shruti} sentence which the \textit{Poorvapakshi} had exemplified to say that — "\textit{Jnaants} too were performing Karmas is the topic pertaining to Saguna \textit{Vidyaa}, and not to \textit{Nirguna Vidyaa}. Therefore, the opinion that - "Para Brahma Vidyaa is not Karmashesha" — is to be found in this \textit{Bhaashya}.

(c) For the Sootra (3-4-10): "Asaarvatrikee" there is a \textit{Bhaashya}, viz. " \textit{Yadeva Vidyayaa Karoati}" — (Chh.) — Ityeshaa Shrutihi Na Sarvaavidyaavishayaah; Prakritavidyaabhisambandaat; Prakritaa Choادgeethavidyaaa ‘Omltyetadakshharamudgeethamupaaseeta’ — \textit{Ityatra}."
Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

Its gist: The statement that — 'Karma performed along with (or with the support of) Vidyaa (Vidyapoorvaka Karma) will become more efficacious' — is not at all pertaining to the topic of Para Brahma Vidyaa. In fact, it is a Karmaanga Vidyaa (a meditation or Upaasana subservient to a particular Karma) called 'Udgeetha'. Therefore, for the current topic it is not a Pramaana at all.

(d) The Bhasha on Sootra (3-4-11): "Vibhaagaha Shatavat" — says: "Yadapyuktam — 'Tam Vidyakaarmanee Samanvaarabhete' — (Brl.) Ityetatsamanvaarambhavachanam Aswaatantrye Vidyayaa Lingamiti:.... ....Evam Sati Avibhaagenaapeedam Samanvaaraambhavachanamvakalpate:"

Its gist: The Upanishadic statement — 'Vidyakaarmanee Samanvaarabhete' — which was quoted by the opponent propounds the generality of both Jnaana and Karma. In that context there is no deliberation on Brahma Vidyaa at all, and this fact has been revealed in the Bhasha. Therefore, it has been proved here that the theory that — 'Vidyaa is Phalaantara (having a distinct or separate fruit), — has no scope here.

(e) In the Bhasha on Sootra (3-4-13): "Adhyayanamaatravataha" — it is stated: " 'Aachaaryakulaad Vedamadheetya' — (Chh.) — Ityatraadhyayanamaatrastrya Shravanaad Adhyayanamaatraavata Eva Karmavidhiritryadhyayasyaamahaa:.... ....Yathaa Cha Nu Kratwantaraajnaanam Kratwantaraadhikaarena Apekshyate Evametadapi Drashtayamitti:"

Its gist: It is established here that although for Karma both Adhyayana and Vedaarthajaana (knowledge of the meaning of the Vedic text) are necessary, because the word 'Adheetya' is used, it implies only that for Karma sufficient study of the Vedas and the knowledge engendered by it may enhance the qualification for Karma only, but it does not at all imply that for Karmaadikaara (proper qualification to perform a particular Karma) the Aatma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) which is Upanishad (known only from the knowledge taught by the Upanishads) is not essential whatsoever.

The deliberation upon the sentence — 'Yadyapt Buddhpoorvakaaree' explained in the Adhyasa Bhasha must be ruminated over here in this context. Aatma Jnaana is not only of any use for Karma but also is opposed to the Adhikaara (qualification) for performing Karma; this fact is brought out in bold relief here.

(f) In the Bhasha on Sootra (3-4-14): "Stutaye Anumatiivaa" — it is clarified that — "Although a Jnaani is performing his duties
Moaksha Saadhana Vyavahaara

(or discharging his responsibilities) as long as he lives, there will be no Karmalepa (taint of any Karma) and not that to Karma necessarily Aatma Jnaana should be an accessory or be sub­servient always".


Its purport: When the Jnaants attain the Intuitive experience as a result of Jnaana, they do not need Yajna. Daana etc. any more. The fruit of Jnaana is to be attained here and now: while for Karma the fruit accrues in due course of time. It being so, dogmatic theories like — (i) both these are together responsible for Moaksha: (ii) Jnaana is Anga for Karma: (iii) those Shruttis which mention the Phala for Jnaana are Arthavaada (meant for eulogising Jnaana but not giving them any predominance over Karma)— can never be established to be true. This is the genuine purport of the Bhaashya excerpt.

(h) In the Bhaashya on Sootra (3-4-17): “Oordhwaretahsu Cha Shabde HI” — it is stated that — ‘Even to Oordhwaretaskas who are not Grihastas (householders) — meaning, the other three Ashrama people. viz. Naishitka (strict) Brahmacaarits (who have practised strictly abstemiousness and continence), Vaanaprasthas (people who retire to a forest or into solitude for diverting their complete attention towards spiritual truths) and Sannyasins (anchorites or monks who dedicate their life in search of Self-Knowledge alone), the Shruttis recommend Brahma Vidyopadesha. In fact, for these people Karmas like Agnihota etc. of the householders are not at all stipulated. For this reason alone, Brahma Vidyaa is not Karmashesha.

104. g: With regard to Paariuraajyaashrama (the fourth stage of an individual’s private life called Sannyasa Ashrama in which, according to the Shruttis and Smritis, he should take to a wandering monk’s life) what is the Siddhaanta propounded by Shri Baadaraayana? How can it be proper to say that an Ashrama (stage of life) which gives up Karmas stipulated by way of injunctions in the Vedas (Vedavihita Karmas) is in accordance with, and acceptable to, the Shruttis?

A: In Chhaanadogya Upanishad (2-23-1) sentence: “Trayoa Dharma-skandhaaha” and such other Shruti sentences the Aashramas like Gaarhastya (householdership). Vaanaprassthya (living in a forest in
solitude) etc. are elaborately described but not stipulated as injunctions. Although in the Chhaandogya Gaarhasthya is described, because of the reason that therein Agnihoatra or fire sacrifices are stipulated for a Grhistha, that Aashrama itself should be accepted as Shrutiwijita. This prima facie objection raised in Sootra (3-4-17) was taken up for discussion and on the strength of some other Shruttis like — "To one who has discarded Agnihoatras the sin or religious blemish of destroying vitality called 'Veerahatyadoasha'" — the other Aashramas than Gaarhasthya have been condemned: hence there in that context it is stated that Aashramaantaras are not Shrutisammata (acceptable to the Shruttis). But —

(a) In Brhadaaranyaka sentence — "Brahmacharyaadeva Pravrajet" — Paarivaajya has been directly stipulated as an injunction. And in the Chhaandogya Shruti statement — "Trayoa Dharma-skandhaaha" (Chh. 2-23-1), quoted above by the opponent, along with Grhisthaashrama alone the other three Aashramas are examined; therefore, because of the reason that these other three are stipulated along with Gaarhasthya, it amounts to saying that the other three Aashramas are also Shrutiwijita alone.

(b) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-4-20): "Vidhirvaa Dhaaranavat", it has been stated that: "In a particular Shruti sentence — "UpaI Hi Devebhyoa Dhaarayati" (?) — because a topic which is Apoorva (incomprehensible to the common intellect) is taught, we should acknowledge that herein a Vidhi has been stipulated; this contention of Jaimini's Sootra (3-4) propounds the above opinion. According to this Poorva Meemaamsaa Sootra, with regard to the Shruti statement — "Trayoa Dharma-skandhaaha" — even though Ekavaakyata Jnaana (knowledge arising out of reconciling all apparent contradictions) is engendered, discarding such Jnaana we should imagine or infer the Aashramaantara Vidhi alone.

In the Shruti sentence — "Brahmasamsthoa(s)mrittattwameti" — because the Parivraajaka who is Brahmasamstha has been mentioned, we have to accept that Parivraajya is Shrutiwijita alone. Because of the reason that here in this context after the three Dharmaskandhas have been examined the Brahmasamstha has been eulogised, that person cannot be surmised to be the Vaanaprastha as referred to in "Tapa Eva Dviteeyaha". In fact, the Dharmas (spiritual disciplines) of the type of Indriyasamyama (strict control over senses) etc. cannot reasonably be included at all in the Dharmas of a Vaanaprastha whose very stage of life bristles with Kaayaklesha (physical torture). Further, the technical term of Brahmasamstha, meant for a Yogaaroodha (one who has ascended already the spiritual path of a Mumukshu, a Sannyasin completely dedicating his life for attaining Liberation) cannot be addressed to
Conclusion

Grahasthaashramis. for, if those other three Aashramis (Brahma-
chaaris, Grahasthas and Vaanapraasthas) give up their respective
Shaastravihita Karmas or Dharmas they are likely to earn the
demerit of Pratyayaaya.

But in the case of a Sannyaasin: "Brahmanishthatwameva Hi
Tasya Shamadamaadyupabhrmhitam Swaashramavilhitam Karma;
....Brahmasamsthasya Karmaabhaavam Darshayanti." — (Sootra
Bhaashya 3-4-20).

(c) "Vidyate Eva Twaashramaantaravidhaayinenee Shrutih Pratyaksha-
‘Brahmacharyaadeva Pravrjet Grihaadwaa Vanaadwaa’ —
(Jaabaala 4) — Iti...... ....Brahmajnaanaparipaakaangatwaachha
Paarivraajyasya Naanadhiratavishhayatwam."

"Being Brahmasamsta or engrossed, established in Brahman is
the only Dharma for a Sannyaasin" — say all the Shrutis and
Smritis.

In the Jaabaala Upanishad Paarivraajya has been directly stipulated.
The teaching that — ‘Aashrama Karma is subservient or secondary to
the fruition or consummation of Brahma Jnaana” — is mentioned in
Jaabaala Upanishad itself in Mantra 5. Therefore, it amounts to saying
that Paarivraajya is recommended by the Vedas.

XIII. CONCLUSION

105. Q: Finally, what is the quintessence of the Upanishadic
teachings?

A: Atman who is of the very essence of Pure Consciousness is alone
(non-dually) the Paramaarthasatiya (the Absolute Reality). In the
Vyavahaaric realm the conglomerations of the body, the senses, the
mind etc. which appear as if they are related to, or associated with, Him
are Anrta (false appearances) only. Because we have not distinguished
these two opposites of Satyam and Anrtaim and have not cognized their
true natures, we have misconceived Atman to be of the forms of
Pramaatru, Kartru and Bhoaktru; by virtue of Avidyaa, which is of the
nature of misconceiving mutually Atman (the Reality) and Anaatman
(the Anrta or false appearance) and consequently superimposing their
respective Dharmas or intrinsic characteristics on each other, alone —
(a) the cause-effect categories (concepts) appearing in the Prameya
Prapancha (objective external world of duality); (b) the manifoldness of
Jeevaatmas; (c) the mundane or empirical transactions of action,
means of action and its fruit; (d) the dealings of the relevant time, space,
causation concepts needed for all empirical transactions; (e) the
Shaastraic dealings of Karmas and Upaasanas, as also Bandha and
Moaksha — all these mundane transactions are appearing, and if we deliberate (Intuitively) upon the Vedanta Vaakyas it can be established indubitably that — “The non-dualism of Atman alone is the Ultimate Reality”; only such conclusions are drawn. Although Vedanta Shaastra propounds — (i) Vedanta Shaastra Praamaanya or validity and authority of the Upanishadic texts; (ii) the Jijnaasaa or desire for the knowledge of the purport or goal of these texts; (iii) the dawning or Intuition of the Vidyaa as a result of that Jijnaasaa; (iv) the empirical transaction that — ‘From that Vidyaa accrues the sublation or destruction of Avidyaa (nescience)’ — all of them are taught by way of a subtle device (Upaaya) exclusively for the purposes of spiritual instruction (Upadesha), utilizing the unique and traditional methodology of Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya: but from the Absolute viewpoint (Paramaartha Drishti). in Atman (the Ultimate, Transcendental non-dual Reality) neither Avidyaa nor the transaction of its sublation or negation by means of Vidyaa exist in the least. Attaining the supreme Intuitive experience (Anubhava) of the type — “Everything is Brahman alone, non-dual Atman alone, and He alone am I” — we should all achieve this fulfilment of human existence (Parama Purushaarththa). This alone is the quintessence of Vedantic spiritual teaching.

**OM TAT SAT**
All empirical sciences develop their own respective methodologies of explaining the laws of Nature and the ways as to how best those laws can be utilized or harnessed to provide better comforts and facilities to all humanity in various walks of life. Hence there are two distinct aspects in their approach, one which is profoundly theoretical and purely "academic" in character, while the other is highly practical and technological. The common run of laymen are more often than not, totally ignorant or oblivious of the Laws and the principles delineated by those sciences, bar all or most of the immense benefits they can actually accrue to them and show ignorance and carelessness in their products, gadgets and technological appliances.

It is accepted only when the theories evolved by the scientists are totally in consonance with the Laws of Nature a worthwhile benefit accrues to everyone, and not otherwise. Similarly, unless and until the fundamental laws of life (taken in its entirety) as expounded by the Vedantic spiritual science are comprehended in their true perspectives its students cannot hope to cash in on its true benefits. One such profound fundamental "Law of Vedanta" is "Adhyaasaa" (misconception), which is at the root of all mundane dealings. And its subtle applications in this spiritual science are ascertained in prakriti-sarga, which is the antithesis to the laymen.

This handbook reveals many secrets about Adhyaasaa hitherto unknown, and suggests practical hints as to how best the sincere student can utilize this unfathomable system, to enjoy a life of mundane bliss.