CHAPTER - I

ADVAINA VEDANTA UPTO
DHARMARAJADHVARINDRA:
A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Vēdānta philosophy is the outcome of an attempt to systematize the vēdic teachings. The very term Vēdānta reflects its quintessence as the end of Vēdas or Upaniṣads. The Vēdas reveal the fundamental truths of the identity of the individual self and the supreme self and the ultimate reality of Non-dual Brahman - pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The two are presented as intimately connected so that the one points to the other on which the vēdic mysticism, philosophy, religion and ethics are rooted.

Advaita Vēdānta is the most pragmatic among the Vēdāntic philosophies that asserts the non-dual one having no parts. Advaita Vēdānta has been taught from time immemorial by great preceptors as the plenary experience and the acme of all philosophical schools and religious beliefs. The Advaita tradition recognizes God himself as the original inspirer who has revealed the wisdom to Brahmā, the creator followed by
the vaṁśaparampara starting with Vasiṣṭha and the śiṣyaparampara to commence with Gauḍapāda. He is regarded as Śaṅkara's paramaguru (Preceptor's preceptor). The succession list of the early teacher of Advaita as revealed in verse is in the following order.

nārāyaṇam padma-bhuvam vasiṣṭham
śaktim ca tatputraparāsaram ca
vyāsaṃ śukam gauḍapādam mahāntam
gōvindayōgindramathāsya śiṣyam
śrīśaṅkarācāryamathāsya padmapādam, ca hastāmalakam ca śiṣyam
tam tōṭakaṃ vārtikakāramanyān
asmadgurūn santatamānatōsmi.

Nārāyaṇa, the lotus-born Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha, Śakti, his son Parāśaśara, Vyāsa, Śuka, the great Gauḍapāda, Gōvindayōgindra, his disciple Saṅkarācārya, and his four pupils Padmapāda, Hastāmalaka, Tōṭaka and the Vārtikakāra (Surēśvara).

This list obviously places Gauḍapāda as the preceptor of Gauḍapāda who was Śaṅkara's Guru. The first teacher was Nārāyaṇa, the Lord himself; and the line of succession, which is from father to son upto Śuka, consists more or less of mythical persons.1
The earliest among the Vēdāntic thoughts, which are systematic presentation of Upaniṣadic teachings, is the Brahmaśūtra of Bādarāyaṇa (400 A.D.), also known as Vēdāntasūtras and Śārīrakasūtras. As the first comprehensive attempt to evolve a consistent philosophy out of the Upaniṣads, Brahmaśūtra is celebrated as the corner-stone of all Vēdāntic thought and a significant source of inspiration for Vēdāntic thinkers to follow.

Gauḍapāda (500 A.D.)

The earliest known Vēdānta philosopher who reconciled authority with logic and who rationally established Advaita or Non-dualism is Gauḍapāda. His Māṇḍūkya Kārikā is the first available systematic presentation of the cardinal truths of Advaita philosophy. It is the testimony to Gauḍapādas conviction that Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad itself is enough to enable man attain his God. (Māṇḍūkya mekamevalam advaitopalabdhaye)

Besides the Māṇḍūkyakārikā, other works like a vṛtti on the Uttarāgaṅga, a bhaṣya on the Sāṃkhyakārikā, a commentary on the Nṛsimhottarataḥpinyupaniṣad, a bhaṣya on Durgāsaptaśati and two independent Tāntric treatises namely Subhagōdaya and Śrīvidyāratnasūtra are also attributed to Gauḍapāda.

The central concept of Gauḍapāda's philosophy is non-
origination (ajāti) that nothing is ever born. It does not mean that he agrees with Śūnyavāda that nothing is the ultimate truth, but asserts that the self is the only reality. No jīva is born, there is no cause for such birth; this is the supreme truth, nothing whatever is born.

na kaścijjāyatē jīvaḥ saṁbhavīṣya na vidyatē
etat-tad-uttamaṁ satyaṁ yatra kiñcinna jāyatē.⁴

From the stand point of the Absolute there is neither duality, nor anything finite or non-eternal. The absolute alone exists, all else is appearance, illusory and non-real. So Gauḍapāda clearly says that the whole universe is only māyā, the reality being the non-duality (advaita).

māyāmātrimidaṁ dvaitamadvaitaṁ paramārthatāḥ.⁵

Advaita is A-dvaita, it has no parts. Brḥadāraṇyakopaniṣad says "nēha nānāsti kiñcana."⁶ Advaita philosophy, the foundations of which was laid by this great teacher, later attained colossal heights through the immortal works of Śaṅkara.

Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda (788-820 A.D.)

Ādi Śaṅkara, who is also known as Bhagavatpāda was the disciple of Govindapāḍācārya and the grand disciple of Gauḍapāḍācārya. In spite of his short life of thirty two years, Śaṅkara had a remarkable career devoted to establish Advaita
Vēdānta as a sound philosophical system. Hailed as an avatāra of Śiva, his contributions to Indian philosophy and to vēdic religion and culture is overt in the synonymous use of Śaṅkara Vēdānta for Advaita Vēdānta.

Śaṅkara's school of Vēdānta is rightly called Advaita Vēdānta because of its emphatic rejection of any distinction between Ātman and Brahman; self and non-self. Advaita means non-dual which is the basis of Śaṅkara's thesis of the identity of Ātman and Brahman. This echoes the upaniṣadic dictum that what is within is also what is without and what is without is also what is within, and whosoever sees any difference between what is within and what is without goes ever more from death to death. This justifies the claims of Advaita Vēdānta as incorporating the central teachings of upaniṣadic philosophy.

Philosophy is the relentless pursuit of truth; and truth according to Advaita Vēdānta is Brahman. Hence to reach out that Brahman through knowledge is the ultimate goal of Advaita. The truth of Advaita relies not merely on the inherent validity of the scriptures or the Vēdas but on that of actual experiences or anubhava. Ācārya Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda makes it clear in his commentary on the second sūtra of the Brahmasūtra - janmādyasya yataḥ; that unlike in the case of
Dharma the knowledge of Brahman rests, also on experience—
śrutyādayaḥ anubhavādayaśca yathāsaṃbhavamiha pramāṇam. According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is the only eternal, infinite and amorphous reality. Everything other than Brahman is false and is superimposed on it, due to avidyā. Only by the realisation of Brahman, avidyā is removed and the ultimate goal of emancipation achieved. Elucidating this great truth is the unique contribution of Śaṅkara to Indian philosophy which Dr. S. Radhakrishnan aptly acknowledges: "His philosophy stands forth complete, needing neither a before nor an after.... whether we agree or differ, the penetrating hight of his mind never leaves us where we were".10

Apart from being an intellectual philosopher of the highest calibre, Śaṅkara was also an ardent devotee and mystic poet singing in euphoria, about the bliss and beauty of the Divine Mother. Combining the austere and serene philosophy of the upaniṣads with a mystic ardour and fervour, he has evolved a unique, balanced system to satiate the innate religious instincts of the people.

Re-establishing the ṣaṃmatas or the worship of the six ancient Gods viz; the Śaiva, the Śākta, the Gāṇapatya, the Vaiṣṇava, the Saura and the Kaumāra, he reasserted the influence of Hinduism among the people, with a belief in itself.
and in its capacity to satisfy the religious needs of its adherents. Śaṅkara's life itself stands testimony to the fact that selfless service (niṣkāma karma) and devotion (bhakti) goes in harmony with spiritual enlightenment (jñāna).

Since he was more concerned with his teachings than with himself, it is extremely difficult to set out the events of his life into a credible pattern. Śaṅkara was a great writer and he has left us a sizeable collection of his writings like the classic commentaries on the Brahma-sūtra, the Gītā, and the Upaniṣads and general works like Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Upadeśasāhasrī etc. Even though these writings manifest his basic tenets, they deplorably fail to preserve any biographical details of his life. However, a number of biographies called 'Śaṅkaravijayas' by his disciples are available, among which the oldest and the most reliable is Ānandagiri's Śaṅkaravijaya. Other works like the Śivarahasya, the Patañjalivijaya and Śaṅkarābhhyudaya also provide some accounts of his life.

It can unequivocally be stated that Advaita Vēdānta found its full bloom in the works of Śaṅkara which reveal its cardinal tenets. Towards the close of his career, Śaṅkara seems to conceive the idea of perpetuating the doctrine of Advaita by establishing various Maṭhas in different corners of India for propagating Advaita.
The message of Śaṅkara has a universality and an abiding vitality in it that is ever relevant. The philosophy of Advaita is loftier from its counterparts of the East or the West in that it is not a closed system of thought. It is an attempt to transcend the hollowness of mundane concepts and also to establish that it is possible to give intellectually a satisfactory account of Reality. It is the most systematic articulation of the Upaniṣadic insights and vision of man and world; which subsumes under itself the best in all the other orthodox systems. The credit of restoring the glory of the Upaniṣads and their message in an age of barren nihilism and blind formalism of the intellect undoubtedly goes to Śrī Śaṅkara. Hence his philosophy of Advaita is the veritable crown of Indian philosophical thought.

Maṇḍanamiśra (750-850 A.D)

Maṇḍanamiśra, the author of Brahmasiddhi, was an elder contemporary of Śaṅkara believed to have lived in the transition of the eighth and the ninth centuries. Brahmasiddhi is envisaged to vindicate the authority of the Upaniṣads which intimate the non-dual, ever-existent Brahman by means of a searching enquiry and critical investigation.

Maṇḍana has made valuable contribution to the Advaita ontology. His arguments show that bliss which is Brahman is not absence of misery or absence of desire, but a positive state
of happiness and that Brahman is never an object in relation to a knowing subject. Maṇḍana's argument to establish the self-luminosity of Brahman or the self serves as a model of exquisite philosophical reasoning.

Maṇḍana's exposition of the nature and locus of avidyā contains several striking features peculiar to the Advaitic tradition as embodied in the Brahmāsiddhi. The two terms avidyā and māyā synonymously used, came to be used differently only in the post-Śaṅkara period.

Maṇḍana's contribution to epistemology is as valuable as his contribution to the metaphysics of Advaita. According to Maṇḍana, the knowledge obtained from the Upaniṣads is indirect and mediate (Parokṣa) involving relation in some manner. Meditation upon the content of the verbal cognition is necessary in order to transform the indirect and mediate knowledge into direct and immediate experience. So repeated contemplation (prasāṅkhyāna) on the import of the principal texts (mahāvākyas) is obligatory to acquire the direct intuition of Brahman. Vācaspati who follows is greatly indebted to him in this respect.

Like other Advaitins, Maṇḍana too upholds the doctrine of jīvanmukti or liberation in the living state. According to him Karma and knowledge are related as means and end.
He maintains that both Karma and meditation play vital roles in bringing about self-realisation. Maṇḍana is a firm believer in āśrama-dharmas, not as ends in themselves but as very valuable means to the end. His distinction as the foremost among "integrative advaitins" rests on his suggestion of a proper blending of the contemplative discipline with the ritualistic discipline for the attainment of self-realization.\(^{15}\)

In addition to the Brahmasiddhi he wrote three works on Mīmāṁsā-the Mīmāṁsānukramaṇikā, the Bhāvanāviveka and the Vidhiviveka; one work on the philosophy of language-the Sphōtasiddhi and one on the theories of error, namely Vibhramaviveka.

A respected authority on Mīmāṁsā and a reputed teacher of Advaita, a doughty champion of the Upanishadic tradition and a master-mind skilled in dialectical reasoning, Maṇḍana occupies a high pedestal among the luminaries that adorn the history of Advaita.\(^{16}\)

**Padmapāda (800-A.D.)**

Padmapāda; the propounder of the Vivaraṇa school of thought was one of the favourite disciples of Śrī Śaṅkara. He wrote Pañcapādikā, a commentary on the Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkara on the four aphorisms of the Brahma-sūtra. Being the earliest commentary on Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya; the Pañcapādikā
deserves a careful study by every student of Advaita philosophy.

Pañcapādiṅkā was first commented on by Prakāśātman in his Pañcapādiṅkā-vivaraṇa. The Pañcapādiṅkā-vivaraṇa was later commented upon by Akhaṇḍānanda in his Tattvadīpana, Nṛsimhāśrama in his Pañcapādiṅkā-vivaraṇa-prakāśikā and Rāmānanda Sarasvati in his Vivaraṇāpanyāsa.

**Hastāmalaka (800-900 A.D.)**

Hastāmalaka and Tōṭaka, the two direct disciples of Śrī Śaṅkara, have been revered more for what they were, than for any work they have bequeathed to posterity. The sage Hastāmalaka does not care to develop a full-fledged system of philosophy with its complements of metaphysics, ethics, logic, and so forth. He only reveals, in the brief compass of twelve verses, his vision of non-dual reality as plenary consciousness.

**Tōṭakācārya (800-900 A.D.)**

The direct disciple of Śrī Śaṅkara wrote the Śrutisārasamuddhāraṇa, which is a well-sustained discourse on Advaita Vēdānta dealing with the most crucial and important topic of the identity of the individual self and the supreme self.
Suresvara (800-900 A.D.)

Suresvara is renowned for his voluminous varttika on the Brhadaranyakopanisadbhaya and a shorter one on the Taittiriyopanisadbhaya written in response to Śrī Śaṅkara's desire for a treatise elucidating his works. Both the books were published with the commentary of Ānandagiri. He has also written Mānasollāsa, an explanatory note on Śrī Śaṅkara's short poem entitled Dakшинāmurtistotra, the Pañcikaraṇavārttika based on a prose work of Śaṅkara named Pañcikaraṇa and the Naiṣkarmyasiddhi which reiterates the views embodied in Upadeśasāhasrī, which is another important work of Śaṅkara.17

Regarding the practice of Advaita, Suresvara holds18 that the performance of rituals including the optional one (kāmya-karmas), without hope of their fruit, generate the desire to know Brahman in the mind of the aspirant. In his Naiṣkarmyasiddhi,19 criticising the view that mediate knowledge derived from the upaniṣadic texts are later turned immediate by meditation, Suresvara argues that the intuitive knowledge of Brahman arises directly from the upaniṣadic texts. His commentaries on Śrī Śaṅkara's works elucidate the Advaitic doctrine they expound and thereby facilitate better understanding of them.
Suresvara admits the foundation laid by Śrī Śaṅkara, making improvements on it. According to Suresvara Brahman is absolute, truth, consciousness and the only reality. It is in this context that the Advaitins consider the question concerning the relation of the words of the upaniṣadic texts to Brahman. Brahman cannot be primarily conveyed by the words of the upaniṣadic texts. In order to explain the relation of such upaniṣadic texts, Suresvara, adopts jahallakṣaṇā.\textsuperscript{20} He maintains that Īśvara and jīva are the reflections of pure consciousness, i.e., Brahman, in avidyā and intellect respectively and that the reflection in entirety is false or indeterminable either as sentient or insentient. It is falsely identified with pure consciousness. This theory is known as Ābhāsa-vāda. Regarding the locus and content of avidyā, Suresvara considers the differentiation between the locus and content as unnecessary and therefore maintains\textsuperscript{21} that Brahman is the locus and content of avidyā.

Vācaspatimīśra (842 A.D.)

Vācaspatimīśra stands out as a prominent figure in the history of Advaita literature, as the unbiased master of all Indian systems of thought-‘Sarvatrantra svatantra’. His luminous exposition of Śaṅkara’s commentary on the Brahmasūtra, is called Bhāmati; the concluding verses of which enumerates
his other works as follows: the Nyāyakaṇṭikā (a commentary on Maṇḍana's Vidhivivēka), the Brahmatattvasamīkṣā (a commentary on Maṇḍana's Brahmāsiddhi), the Tattvabindu (a discussion of language in its relation to meaning), the Nyāyavārtikatātparyāṭīkā (a commentary on Udyōtakara's Nyāyavārttika), the Nyāyasūcinibandha (perhaps written as a supplement to the Tātparyāṭīkā), the Sāṅkhyaatattvakaumudi (a commentary on Īśvarakṛṣṇa's Sāṅkhyaakārikā), the Tattvavaisāradī (a commentary on Vyāsa's Yōgabhāṣya). All these works have been published with the exception of the Brahmatattvasamīkṣā.

The Bhāmatī itself has been commented on by other Advaitic writers. The most famous among them is Amalānanda's (13th c. A.D.) Vēḍānta kalpataru. The Kalpataru in turn formed the subject of two commentaries, the Parimala of Appayyadīkṣita (16th c. A.D) and Abhoga of Lakṣmīnṛṣimha (17th c. A.D.). Other commentaries on the Bhāmatī are (1) the Bhāmatīvyākhyā or Ṛjuprakāśikā by Akhanḍānanda (2) the Bhāmatītilaka and (3) Bhāmatīvilāsa.22

The name of the Bhāmatī is identified with one of the two main streams of Śāṅkara Advaita. The view of Padmapāda interpreted by Prakāśatman in his Vivaraṇa is known as the tenets of the Vivaraṇapraṣṭhāna while the views
of Vācaspati are known as the tenets of the Bhāmatīprasthāna.

The cardinal percepts of the Bhāmatī school are the following (1) Karmas are useful in generating the desire to know the self; (2) the realization of Brahman arises through the instrument of mind; (3) there is no injunction in the vēdic text 'Ātman should be realized', for that purpose it should be heard, reflected and meditated upon; (4) meditation is the principal factor and Vēdāntic study and reflection are its subsidiary factors; (5) jīva is the consciousness that is limited by ajñāna and Īśvara is the consciousness that transcends the limiting adjunct; (6) the locus and content of ajñāna is different; (7), the primal nescience is manifold; (8), it is only Brahman that is conditioned by the Vṛttī that is the content of the direct knowledge of Brahman; (9) the first factor in the fourfold aid in the discrimination between what is real and non-real; (10), the injunctive text 'one's own recension of vēda must be studied' has for its fruit the knowledge of the meaning of the vēda; (11), the world creation is explained by adapting the theory of triplication; (12), the omniscience of Brahman is derived from the essential nature of Brahman ;(13), mind is a sense organ; and (14), avidyā is located in jīva.

The Vivaraṇa school, on the other hand, maintains that (1) Karma is responsible for the rise of the knowledge of
self; (2), the direct knowledge of Brahman arises from major texts of the Upaniṣads; (3) in the text Ātman should be realized etc; there is restrictive injunction; (4), Vedaṇtic study is the principal factor and reflection and meditation are the subsidiary factors; (5), jīva is the reflected image of Brahman in avidyā,mind etc.; (6) the locus and content of avidyā is the same; (7) the primal nescience is one only; (8) the content of the direct knowledge of Brahman is pure Brahman; (9) the first factor in the fourfold aid is the discrimination between what is eternal and non-eternal; (10), the injunctive text 'One's own recension of the veda must be studied' has for its fruit the learning of the veda by rote; (11), the world creation is explained on the basis of quintuplication theory; (12), the omniscience of Brahman is based on the modes of avidyā; (13), mind is not a sense organ, and (14), avidyā is located in pure consciousness.

The above are a few important differences between the Bhāmatī and the Vivaraṇa schools which were the significant channels through which post-Śaṅkara advaitic thought flowed towards its one goal.

Vimuktātman (950-1050 A.D)

Vimuktātman's repute is secured by his Iṣṭasiddhi. Madhusūdana Sarasvati, at the end of his great classic
Advaitasiddhi, refers to three siddhi works, namely Iśṭasiddhi, Naiśkarmyasiddhi and Brahmasiddhi. The Brahmasiddhi of Manḍana devotes itself to the definition (lakṣaṇa) and testimony (pramāṇa) of Brahman indicated in the expression, Brahmajijnāsā, the desire to know. The Naiśkarmya-siddhi of Suresvara attempts to elucidate whether it is by knowledge alone or by action that release is secured. The Iśṭasiddhi of Vimuktātman engages itself rather in the question of the why of Brahman-knowledge, enquiring into the nature and cause of error, that is the world. In short, ontology, ethology and epistemology are the contents of these three siddhis respectively.

Citsukha (1120-1220 A.D)

Citsukha stands out for his valuable contributions to the development of the dialectical phase of Advaita. Citsukha wrote a commentary on Anandabodha Bhaṭṭarakācārya's Nyāyamakaranda and also on Śrī Harṣa's Kaṇḍana-khaṇḍakhādyā and an independent work called Tattva pradīpikā or Citsukhī.

His Tattva-pradīpikā provides a refutation of the Nyāya categories, thereby defending the doctrine of Advaita and also giving a very keen analysis and interpretation of some of the vital concepts of Advaita Vēdānta.
Sarvajñātman (1050 A.D)

The lucid exposition of Śrī Śaṅkara's views in his bhaśyas on the Brahma-sūtra is the most significant contribution of Sarvajñātman to Advaita. His work is aptly entitled Saṃkṣēpaśārīraka, in which Śrī Śaṅkara's phrases and arguments recur. He mostly focuses attention on finding a way of reconciling with the apparent incongruity of Śrī Śaṅkara's statements. Accordingly, he makes improvements on the foundations laid by his predecessors with a very facile style of expression. Hence, the Advaita thoughts in the subsequent ages has been profoundly influenced by him.

Ānandabōdha (1050-1150 A.D)

Ānandabōdha belongs to a school of Advaitins who took up the defense of the doctrine of Śaṅkara on the basis of logical arguments. The most significant among his works are Pramāṇamālā, Nyāya-Dīpāvalī and Nyāyamakaranda. Of these, the Nyāyamakaranda is of polemical nature and refutes the doctrines of Sāmkhyas, Bauddhas, Vaiśeṣikas, Naiyāyikas, PūrvaMīmāṃsakas and Jñānakarmasamuccayavādins employing dialectical debates.

His refutation of the difference between jīva and Brahman, rejection of difference in objects of knowledge, establishment of the anirvacaniya theory of error, phenomenal
nature of universe, self-revealing nature of the self, self as the form of consciousness, the view that words refer (also) to accomplished or existing things, the doctrine of impartite sense, conception of liberation, the substratum of avidyā and the doctrine of liberation as the outcome of only knowledge are noteworthy.

Śri Harṣa (1075-1175)

In the history of Indian philosophy, before the 10th century the orthodox schools, particularly the Nyāya, evinces opposition to the Buddhist schools. After the ebb of Buddhism that followed, orthodox schools began to turn against each other in a more pronounced manner. The Nyāya school justified the reality of the categories of experience as against the philosophy of jagan-mithyātva of Śaṅkara which made it the main target of the criticism of the Advaitins in the 12th and the 13th centuries.

The opposition against the Nyāya system was pioneered by Śrī Harṣa, who flourished in the 12th century. His most important philosophical contribution is the Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍaka-khādya in which he refutes all definitions of Nyāya system intended to justify the reality of the world and tries to show that the world and all world-experiences are purely phenomenal and have no reality behind them.
The central argument of the Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍa-khādya is that the manifold world of our experience is indefinable and Brahman the absolute consciousness alone is ultimately real.

Śrī Harṣa's place in the history of Advaita is unique in that he had effectively confronted the oppositions raised by the Nyāya school against the philosophy of Śaṅkara.

**Prakāśātman (1100 A.D)**

Prakāśātman is well known for his sub-commentary Pañcapādikā vivaraṇa, on the Pañcapādikā, a commentary by Padmapāda on the Śārīrakamīṃśābhāṣya of Śaṅkara. The Pañcapādikāvivarana marks the epoch-making period of this school, that preceded a history of dialectical literature of Advaita philosophy which is founded solidly upon the conclusions arrived at in clear terms by Prakāśātman. His real name is Svaprakāśānubhava-bhagavat, or simply Svaprakāśānubhava; but popular as Prakāśātmayati or Prakāśātman, the author of Pañcapādikāvivarana and the disciple of Ananyānubhava.

Professor S.N. Dasgupta says: "Prakāśātman (1200. A.D) in his Pañcapādikāvivarana raises this point and says that the great difference between the Mahāyānists and the Vēdāntists consists in the fact that the former holds that the objects have neither any separate existence nor any independent purpose or
action to fulfil as distinguished from the momentary ideas, while the latter maintains that though the objects are in essence identical with the one pure consciousness, yet they can fulfil independent purpose or functions and have separate, abiding and uncontradicted existence."²⁸

Ānandānubhava (1100-1200 A.D.)

Ānandānubhava has written three valuable treatises on Advaita Vedanta. The Iṣṭasiddhi-vivarana, as the name indicates, is a commentary on the Iṣṭasiddhi of Vimuktaṭman. The Nyāyaratnadīpāvalī and Padārthatattva-nirṇaya are his independent works. In addition to these works on Advaita philosophy, he has also a commentary on the Nyāyasāra of Bhāsarvajña to his credit.

The Padārthatattva-nirṇaya seeks to refute the categories of the Vaiśeṣika system and also the views of the Baudhas, the Sāṃkhya, the Mīmāṃsakas and others. Ānandānubhava vindicates the Advaita view that Brahman alone is real and that the phenomenal world of diversity is only an appearance.

Anubhūtisvarūpa (1100-1300 A.D.)

Anubhūtisvarūpa has been well-known in the history of grammar more than in that of Advaita. The most significant among his contributions to Advaita is his view on avidyā. In Advaita, the supreme lord, the individual soul, and the
phenomenal world are but the appearances of the transcendental reality, Brahman. The principle that accounts for this seeming diversification of Brahman is avidyā or māyā. Following the Vivaraṇa school, Anubhūtisvarūpa does not make any distinction between māyā and avidyā. Anubhūtisvarūpa flourished in an age when post-Śaṅkara Advaita had to contend the Bhedābhedāvāda of Bhāskara and the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika. Anubhūtisvarūpa had bitterly attacked Bhāskara who opposed the philosophy of Śaṅkara. By refuting the two schools mentioned above, Anubhūtisvarūpa rendered substantial service to the cause of Advaita when it was the most needed.

He has commented upon Śaṅkara, Vimuktatman and Śrī Harṣa and all the three prakaraṇas of Ānandabodha.

**Amalānanda (1247-1347)**

Śrī Amalānanda wrote a commentary by name Vēdāntakalpataru to facilitate the study of the obscure views set forth in the Bhāmatī. Apart from the Kalpataru on the Bhāmatī, Amalānanda wrote Śastradarpana which is an exposition on the Brahmaśūtra.

**Ānandapurṇa-Vidyāsāgar (1275-1350).**

Ānandapurṇa is renowned for the commentary Vidyāsāgari on Śrī Harṣa's Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyā, which is the most prominent one in the Vādapraśṭhāna. This work is so
complex and the view points set forth in it are confusingly interposed that it requires profound scholarship to comprehend. Ānandapūrṇa's commentary is superb in solving all the intricate points introduced in the work. Further, it critically examines the view-points of the Nyāya, the Prābhākara, the Bhāṭṭa and the Sugata schools. Thus what was once very complicated and full of perplexities forbidding easy access, has been made much easier to understand by Ānandapūrṇa.

In addition to this superb commentary (Vidyāsāgari) Ānandapūrṇa wrote a commentary on Surēśvara's Vārtika on the Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣadbhaṣya, known as Nyāya-kalpalatikā. In this, he explains the Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtras in the order in which the followers of the Prābhākara school have arranged them: into adhikaraṇas; manifesting his profound scholarship of Pūrvamīmāṃsā-school. Ānandapūrṇa wrote ten works; which are:

1. Khaṇḍanaṭikā (Vidyāsāgari)
2. Brhadāraṇyakavārtikavyākhyā (Nyāya-kalpa-latikā)
3. Nyāyacandrikā
4. Brahmasiddhi-vyākhyā (Bhāvaśuddhi)
5. Samanvaya-sūtra-vṛtti
6. Pañcapādikā-vyākhyā
7. Mahāvidyāviḍaṁbanā-vyākhyā

44
Pratyagṣvarūpa

Pratyagṣvarūpa is prominent among the Advaita preceptors who wrote treatises with a view to keep the Advaitic tradition alive for the benefit of posterity. He wrote only one commentary called Nyāyaprasādiṇī on Tattvpradīpikā of Citsukhācārya which can be considered an independent treatise an Advaita.

Śaṅkarānanda (1275-1350)

Śaṅkarānanda was the disciple of Anantātman and Vidyātīrtha. Śaṅkarānanda along with Bhāratītīrtha and Vidyāraṇya, studied under Vidyātīrtha. He became a guru of Vidyāraṇya.30

The most important work of Śaṅkarānanda is Ātmapūrṇa also known as Upaniṣadratna which is in the form of story and dialogue containing the essence of the upaniṣads in verse. He has also written a commentary on the Bhagavad-gītā, a vṛtti on Brahma-sūtra, and Dīpikās on several major and minor upaniṣads. Besides these, there are other independent works also attributed to Śaṅkarānanda like Yatyanuṣṭhāna-paddhati, Vivēkasāra, Śruti-tātparyanirṇaya

45
and so on. His magnum opus, however, is Ātmapūrāṇa, which mainly deals with the nature of Ātman.

Lakṣmīdhara (1406-1500)

Lakṣmīdhara, the author of the Advaitamakaranda, a prakaraṇa work on Advaita Vēdānta, has also written a commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata and Bhagavannāmakaumudī dealing with the validity of the Purāṇas and Nāmasaṅkīrtana as a means to attainment of puruṣārthas.

Ānandagiri

Ānandagiri, otherwise known as Ānandajñāna is an erudite commentator on Śrī Śaṅkara’s bhāṣyas on the Prasthānatraya. In his Tattvālōka, Ānandagiri rejects the parināmavāda of Bhāskara.31

In addition to Tattvālōka, Ānandagiri’s Tarkasaṅgraha is a critical examination and a systematic refutation of the Vaiśeṣika system from the standpoint of the Advaita school. The Tarkasaṅgraha observes that the Advaita school seeks to establish the one without a second on the basis of reasoning and scripture.32

Following Citsukha and Śrī Harṣa who flourished in the latter half of the 12th century Ānandagiri in his Tarkasaṅgraha is mainly concerned with proving the non-real character of the phenomenal universe. Ānandagiri
flourished in the beginning of the thirteenth century; when the
Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school was active in opposing the jagan
mithyatva-vāda of Śrī Śaṅkara. By proving, on the basis of
reasoning, that the universe is indescribable either as real or
as unreal, he rendered substantial service to the cause of
Advaita.

**Vidyāraṇya (1296-1386 A.D.)**

Vidyāraṇya is classed among the greatest of post-
Śaṅkara Advaitins flourished in the fourteenth century. The
most significant among his works are Pañcadaśī, Vivaraṇa-
pramēya-samgraha, Dṛg-dṛṣya-vivēka and Jīvanmuktivivēka.
The Pañcadaśī is a comprehensive manual of Advaita Vēdānta,
that renders a clear presentation of the truths of Advaita.
Pañcadaśī, the magnum opus of Vidyāraṇya stands proof of
his greatness and the merits of his teachings. Vidyāraṇya says
that the aim of his work is to teach the supreme truth in a
facile manner to those hearts which have been purified through
the worship of the lotus like feet of the guru.³³

Pañcadaśī owes the name to its fifteen chapters. The work
is a veritable mine of Vēdāntic treasures. It possesses
exemplary poetic charm that delights the reader. This accounts
for its permanent place as the most favoured among the Advaita
classics and Vidyāraṇya its author, takes his rank with the
best preceptors of Advaita after Śaṅkara.

Sadānanda (1500-1600 A.D.)

Sadānanda is the author of Vēdāntasāra. He presents the fully representative Advaita doctrine, which incorporates into itself elements from preŚaṅkara, Śaṅkara and post-Śaṅkara teachings. Professor Hiriyanna, in his valuable edition of the Vēdāntasāra states that, the author of the work entitled Advaitabrahmasiddhi, is different from Sadānanda the author of the Vēdāntasāra suggesting that there have been at least two Advaitacāryas bearing this name. The name of the book also is seen to be shared by two different Advaita works. Even though very little is known about the life of this ācārya, it is guessed that he must have lived in the early part of the 16th century.

Sadānanda Kaśmīraka

The greatest contribution of Sadānandakāśmīraka is that he provides easy access to all important Advaitic doctrines in a lucid way for the benefit of posterity. He is the author of the Advaita-brahmasiddhi, one of the first rate works on Advaita Vēdānta of post-Śaṅkara school; and has written another work called Svarūpaprakāśa.

Appayya Dīkṣita (1520-1593 A.D.)

Appayya Dīkṣita was one among the three great Drāviḍa
ācāryas who expounded the Advaita philosophy. As an agent of peace, he took reconciliation of creeds, cults, and philosophies as the mission of his life. Born in a very hot age of bigotry, vigorous proselytism and fight about the supreme God and the concept of salvation he pleaded for harmony, tolerance, mutual goodwill and understanding.

Śrī Appayya Dīkṣita made thorough investigation in the Vēdas, Āgamas and the Purāṇas bringing together authoritative statements that deal with Śiva's supremacy in the trinity. He composed meaningful works dealing with the glories of Lord Śiva and his worship. His Śikharīnīmālā, Śivatattvavivēka, Śivakarṇāmṛta, Rāmāyaṇa-tātparya-saṃgraha, Bhārata-tātparya-saṃgraha, Brahmataṅkastava, Śivamahimakalikāstuti and Śivādvaitanirṇaya, all belong to this category.

After significant contributions to settle the sectarian disputes, Śrī Appayya Dīkṣita, turned to writing works for the elucidation and elevation of Advaita philosophy. His greatest and the most memorable work in this line is the Parimala, which is a commentary on the Kalpataru of Amalananda. Kalpataru is itself a commentary on Vācaspatimiśra's Bhāmatī. These four commentaries along with the original Brahmasūtra constitute the Vēdānta Paṅcagranthī; the formidable fortress of Advaita philosophy.
Śrī Appayya Dīkṣita is described as the author of one hundred and four works—caturadhikaśataprabandhakartā, many of which have not been recovered. The majority of the survivors have been brought out in print, in Grantha, Nāgarī and Telugu characters.\textsuperscript{35}

**Nṛsiṃhāśrama (1550-1650 A.D.)**

Nṛsiṃhāśrama, a pupil of Girvāṇēndra Sarasvati and Jagannāthāśrama, was a contemporary of Kṛṣṇatīrtha, the preceptor of Rāmatīrtha. Rāmatīrtha is believed to have lived in the middle of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{36} Hence, it can be inferred that Nṛsiṃhāśrama flourished in the second half of the sixteenth century. His works are Advaita-dīpikā, Advaita-pañcaratna, Advaita-bōdha-dīpikā, Advaita-vāda and commentaries on the Saṁkṣēpa-sārīraka and Pañcapādikā-vivaraṇa prakāśikā respectively.

Nṛsiṃhāśrama emphasises the identity of the individual soul with Brahman and the illusory character of the universe in his teachings. Ajñāna according to him, is the beginningless primal cause of the universe which is removable by the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. From this, it is evident that Nṛsiṃhāśrama does not adopt any new line of arguments in the interpretation of Vēdānta. In handling the dialectic on difference also, Nṛsiṃhāśrama follows the line of thought of
his predecessors, Citsukha and Śrī-Harṣa, with certain occasional elaborations. In his commentary on the Saṃkṣēpa śārīraka Nṛsimhāśrama again endorses the Advaita position.

Dharmarājādhvarīndra is the most renowned among the disciples of Nṛsimhāśrama. In the array of post-Śaṅkara Advaita luminaries, Dharmarāja has a unique position secured by his contributions to the understanding and dissemination of Advaita Vēdānta.

Prakāśānanda

Prakāśānanda is supposed to have lived in the latter half of the sixteenth century. He must have an elder contemporary of Appayya Dīksita, who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and has made the earliest mention of Prakāśānanda's name.

Prakāśānanda's chief work is the Vēdānta-siddhānta-Muktāvalī or Siddhānta Muktāvalī, in which he propounds the doctrine of drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi. In addition to the Siddhānta Muktāvalī Prakāśānanda has also authored works, such as Tārā-Bhakti-Taraṅgini, Manōramā, Tantra-rāja-ṭīkā and Mahālakṣmi-Paddhati, which show his attachment to the Tantra form of worship.

Prakāśānanda's distinction is in propounding the doctrine known as drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda in Advaita. He has taken an extreme
position on most of the important aspects of Advaita thereby failing to exert a permanent influence on the development of Advaita philosophy. His extreme idealism can be attributed to his anxiety to save Advaita from a possible dualism as between Brahman and māyā.

**Madhusūdana Sarasvati (1565-1665 A.D.)**

Madhusūdana Sarasvati carves his place among Advaita philosophers with his magnum opus Advaita-siddhi, which is designed to refute the charges raised by Vyāsatīrtha against Advaita. His Siddhāntabindu is a commentary on Śaṅkara's Daśaśloki a small stōtra consisting of ten verses which comprises the cardinal principles of Advaita Vēdānta. This work, refutes the views of other schools, establishes the views of the Advaita school and also presents the views of the various Advaitic ācāryas on important concepts of Advaita without going into details. His commentary on the Saṃkṣēpa śārīraka is known as Saṃkṣēpaśārīraka sārasamgraha. Madhusūdana has expressed his views on the Brahmaśūtras by commenting upon Sarvajñātmamuni’s Saṃkṣēpaśārīraka which is a brief but lucid commentary in verse on Śaṅkarabhaṣya on the Vēdānta-sūtras.

**Conclusion**

The earliest among the Vēdāntic texts is the Brahma-
sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa which systematically represent upaniṣadic teachings. The cardinal percept of Advaita Vedaṇṭa is contained in the Māṇḍūkyakārikā of Śrī Gauḍapāda. This treatise on Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad is pivotal in propounding Advaita which later on gained momentum through Śrī Śaṅkara.

At present, there are innumerable original and independent treatises as well as commentaries on Advaita Vedaṇṭa. Among the most eminent post-Śaṅkara teachers of Advaita Vedaṇṭa, Padmapāda and Sūrēśvara are direct disciples of Śaṅkarācārya. The lineage of disciples that followed are Tōṭaka, Hastāmalaṇaka, Vācaspatimiśra, Vimuktatatman, Prakāśatman, Sarvajñatman, Ānandabōdha, Śrī Harṣa, Ānandānubhava, Anubhūtisvarūpa, Citsukhacārya, Amalānanda, Ānandaṇūṛṇa, Śaṅkarānanda, Vidyāranya, Lakṣmīdhara, Appayya Dīkṣita, Nṛsimhāśrama and Dharmarājādhvarīndra.

These Advaitins have made very significant philosophical contributions in the form of commentaries, sub-commentaries and original treatises with a view to establishing the unity of the self. They have meticulously elaborated in minute details the concept of māyā or avidyā and the falsity of the world explaining the concepts of Ātman, Brahman, Sākṣin, Īśvara and Jīva. They have also propounded different theories
regarding the relation between Īśvara and Jīva, revealing the nature of mōkṣa, jīvanmukti; the means to mōkṣa and spiritual discipline. The theories that analyse the nature of jīva are known as Avacchēda-vāda, Ābhāsa-vāda and Pratibimbavāda. Vācaspatimiśra advocates Avacchēda-vāda to explain the nature of Jīva and Īśvara maintaining differences between the locus and content of avidyā. Prakāśatman the author of Vivaraṇa advocates the Pratibimbavāda to explain the nature of Jīva and Īśvara and maintains the identity of the locus and content of avidyā. Other preceptors maintain the distinction between māyā and avidyā. Among them, Surēśvara, well-known as the author of the Vārtikas, states that the theory by which the knowledge of Brahman is attained must be taken as the best. He holds the theory of Ābhāsa-vāda that explains Īśvara and Jīva to be the reflections of pure consciousness, that is Brahman, in avidyā and intellect respectively. Since all these divergent theories pertain only to the empirical stage, they do not in any way stultify the non-dual nature of the self.

In order to explain the rise of the duality of world from non-dual and attributeless Brahman, the preceptors of Advaita, introduce the principle of māyā. Śrī Śaṅkara uses the words māyā and avidyā and ajñāna and avyakta as synonyms. Advaitins of the post-Śaṅkara period differed on the nature of
māyā and avidyā and Īśvara and Jīva. Maṇḍana, Vācaspati and Prakāśānanda suggest that the individual Jīva is the locus of avidyā and thus advocate Drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda.39

Except these three, almost all other post-Śaṅkara Advaitins believe that Brahman itself is both the support and the object of avidyā. They also agree that avidyā is the beginningless positive wrong knowledge which is indefinable either as real or as unreal or as both but removable by right knowledge.

Post-Śaṅkara Advaitins are unanimous in maintaining that the eternal non-dual self which underlies the world-appearance is self-shining and self-proved ultimate reality which is at once self-revealing and is the foundation of all knowledge and experience. It is beyond proof, disproof, doubt and denial, beyond origination, annihilation, change and momentariness because all these notions presuppose it.

Regarding Sākṣin, some Advaitins make a distinction between Īśvara-sākṣin and Jīvasākṣin, some believe that there is only one sākṣin in all the Jīvas, while others believe that each Jīva has a sākṣin of its own. The distinction among Īśvara, Jīva and sākṣin is valid only in empirical life, ultimately all the three are Brahman itself. Īśvara, Jīva and jagat are appearances projected by māyā, arising and vanishing in
accordance with the presence or absence of māyā.

The doctrine of Advaita is confirmed not only by the Prasthānātraya but by texts like Pañcadasī, and Yōga-vāsiṣṭha and those which critically examine the objections raised by the other schools of thought. Works like the Tattvapradīpikā, Nyāyamakaranda, Nyāyadipavali, Pañcadasī, Kanḍanakaṇḍakhādya were written in order to counter the threats posed against Advaita. Their chief aim has been to defend Advaita purely on rational grounds in spite of their difference in style. The Tattvapradīpikā, Nyāyamakaranda and other texts do not involve much of the technicalities of the Navya-nyāya. But the text Advaitasiddhī and its commentary known as Brahmanandiya abound in logical subtleties to refute the doctrine of difference advocated by the dualistic school. The breaking of the notion of difference and the ultimate reality of the phenomenal world shows exquisite dialectic skill establishing Śrī-Harṣa, Citṣukha and Madhusūdana Sarasvati to be ranked among the greatest dialecticians of the world.

Moreover, the lines of Vēdāntic interpretation which started with Surēśvara, Padmapāda and Vācaspati were vigourously contined in commentaries and in independent works through the later centuries. From the fourteenth century onwards, there has been no dearth for Vēdānta writers in all
the succeeding centuries. But with the notable exception of Prakāśānanda, Madhusūdana Sarasvati, Vidyāraṇya and Dharmarājādhvarindra, there are few writers who can genuinely claim any originality in Vēdāntic interpretations.

Notes and references

1. Preceptors of Advaita, p.24
2. 'Māṇḍūkyamēkamēvālamadvaitōpalabdhaye'
3. P.A., p.25
4. M.K. III.48; IV.71
5. MK; I.17
6. B.U. IV. iv. 19
8. B.S. I. i.2
9. śṛutyādayaḥ anubhavādayaśca yathāsambhavam iha pramāṇam
10. I.P. Vol.II; PP. 446-47
11. P.A; P.47
12. PA; P. 97
13. B.S. Part I. PP. 129-130
14. B.S., Part I. P. 32
15. P.A; P. 99
16. Ibid.
17. P.A; PP. 69-70
18. Br. U. Bha-varttika; IV. iv.1052
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22. P.A., P. 100
23. Advaita Vēdānta Bibliography, Thangaswami, A., Introduction, P. xvi
25. P.A.; P. 75
26. Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa, introductory verse; 6
27. Ibid. 7
29. P.A. P. 169-70
30. P.A.; P. 178
31. bhāskarābhimataḥ pariṇāmavādaḥ tattvālōkanirasta ēva asmābhīḥ, Anandasrama Edition, P. 15
32. ēkarasāṃ hi vastu pramāṇatō nyāyataśca pratipādayitumprayatnāḥ; Tarkasamgraha, Gaekwad Oriental Series, P. 10
33. Ibid. 2
34. P.17
35. P.A.; P. 250
36. See the article on 'the date of Ramatīrthayati' by P.K. Gode in the Adayar Library Bulletin, Vol. VI. part II. PP. 107-110
37. See A Critique of Difference, by S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri and T.M.P. Mahadevan, Bulletin of the Department of Indian philosophy, University of Madras, No. 2
38. S.N. Dasgupta, A History of I.P. Vol. II. P. 17
39. Advaita Tradition in Indian philosophy; P. 221