CHAPTER IV

Avidya:

All the Upanisads unanimously declare that all this
sensation from Brahman to a clump of grass consisting of the
empirical knower, his instruments of knowledge, his knowledge
and its contents is but a false superimposition on Brahman.¹ And
we have made it clear in the chapter dealing with Brahman that
the self is changeless rock-like intelligence, void of the six
states of phenomenal being beginning with birth.² It is owing to
ignorance that we speak of a connection between the world and
the self. Those passages in the Bruti which assert identity
between the two are injunctory in character. They enjoin meditation
on the Saguna Brahman as in the passage "This earth is verily to
be meditated on as the Nyaya, this fire as the Samaveda."³ The
Atman himself through his own Maya imagines himself into an end-
less divinity of finite beings. The Advaita definitely denies
that there can be any relation at all between two such entities as
matter and spirit. A relation presupposes two distincts, and if
Brahman and the world are to be related they should be regarded as
distinct, but the advaita holds that the world is not other than
Brahman. Brahman and the world are non-different, and so the
question of relation between the two does not arise. It is due to
Maya that pure intelligence, being one and the same, beyond time
and space and immutable, appears in the form of this heterogeneous
world.

1. Advaita Br.B.C.
4. B.B. Dh. IL.1-20.
Maha is unspeakable.

The author of Brahmasidhi, Mandana, holds that avidya is called Maha or false-appearance, because it is neither a characteristic of Brahman nor different from Brahman, neither existent nor non-existent. If it be deemed to be the characteristic of anything, then whether one with that or different from it, it would be real and could not therefore be called avidya or Maha. If it was absolutely non-existent, it would be like the lotus of the sky and would have no practical bearing on experience such as avidya has. Therefore, it is logical to assume that Maha or avidya is indescribable.

This nescience (avidya) has been termed as unmanifest (avayakta), the antecedent seminal condition of this empirical world, when names and forms are not evolved. This seminal condition, causal potentiality, avidya is not the same as Brahman, Nature comprising the equilibrium of the three constituent elements called 'Sattva', 'Tajas' and 'Tamas'. It is because by this antecedent state of the world, Advaita does not mean that it is the independent cause of the actual world, but that it is only a previous state dependent on the highest Lord. Aided by this potentiality of action, pure intelligence is conceived to be the creator of this world. Without this the Lord cannot be active. It has the highest Lord for its substratum. It has been termed as Aksara and Aksara, where in every thing is woven like warp and

2. B.S. En. LA-3.
3. Ibid., and Ananda Giri's commentary LA-3.
It develops into many different forms and exists until the dawn of true knowledge of the self. Even in deep sleep and waking the soul's connection with it exists potentially, and in meditation and at the time of creation this connection becomes manifest.

Brahman associated with thisnescience gives appearance to this world. Maya constitutes the material cause of this universe. If we want to lay stress upon the fact that Maya belongs to Brahman as a Sakti we can say that the material cause of this world is Brahman in so far as it is associated with Maya. In the latter position Brahman is more properly called as Lord or Isvara.

Maya under the guidance of Isvara undergoes different modifications such as individual existences of which the world consists and which are distinguished by names and forms. Maya is other than the Prakriti of the Sankhya because both Purusa and Prakriti are real and eternal according to the system of Sankhya.

If we consider this doctrine, we find that Prakriti will continue to produce attachment in Purusa even after the dawn of the knowledge of his complete isolation. In that case the poor Purusa will never have emancipation. His bondage will be eternal and real.

Maya is indescribable and can make the impossible appear to be possible. In fact according to Bruti neither bondage nor release is real. If bondage is real then it is eternal and release

1. B.G.Sih, I.4-3.
3. V.Dashti, VI.221.
will be impossible. If release is something to be achieved it cannot be eternal. Sûtri declares that in fact there is no death and no birth, none in bondage and none a candidate for release, and none is liberated. It is entirely due to Maya which makes the pure rock—firm intelligence appear to be involved in transmigratory existence.

It is to be noted here that Nagarjuna’s Viparyaya is quite different from the Aœne of advaita, for in advaita consciousness is an indefinable stuff out of which subjective psychological experiences and the world of objects have come into being. It is a positive power which all the effects have at their back as a cause. This is the material of all effects. Viewing all these characteristics it can safely be asserted that the Buddhist conception of Aœne is quite different from that of Vedanta. Ajñâ, the transcendental self is the material cause of this world. The difference between Viparyaya and Avidya is not difficult to bring out. No doubt, the Avidya of the Vedantin is an ontological while the Viparyaya of the Madhyamika is a logical category. Dr. Murti observes, "He (i.e., the Madhyamika) uses only one weapon. By drawing out the implications of any view, he shows its self-contradictory character." The dialectic is the means whereby the Madhyamika arrives at Ajñâna or Viparyaya. The Madhyamika regards Avidya as unreal but for the Vedantin Avidya is a positive entity on the "nyasowego plane and "aditya" from the...

transcendental point of view. The Madhyamika says that if 
'avidya is taken as real, its phenomenal effects, too, would 
have to be regarded as real and, thus, there would be no dis-
solution of the world even in Nirvana. It is, however, to be 
noted that while the Vedanta elaborates the concept of avidya by 
trying to ascertain its locus and object, the Madhyamika, in 
consonance with his anti-speculative bias, refuses to entertain 
this conceptual hair-splitting.

To the Madhyamika, the attempt to apprehend the Real through 
thought-categories is avidya. Viparyaya consists in ascribing 
unchangeability, or changefulness, oneness or plurality, existence 
or non-existence to the Absolute that is fugitive to all defini-
tion in terms of thought. Nagarjuna says, "If it is Viparyaya 
(reversal of truth) to apprehend the impermanent as permanent, 
why should not we regard the apprehension of the indeterminate as 
impermanent as Viparyaya, too?"

In brief according to the Vedanta, Madhakoti 
(imposition of difference on the undifferented unity of Being) 
is illusion, while to the Madhyamika, all exercise of reason as 
such is illusion and is begotten by the mind gone topsy-turvy 
(Viparyaya)

This Aimsa potency is evidenced by perception, inference 
and implication. The term 'power' (sakti) is applied to nesse-
owing to the circumstance of its being dependent on the transcendental self. Avidya is not a power but a substance having certain powers by which it modifies itself into the cosmic experience, subjective and objective. The self, by being a locus of nescience and its transformations, is called a material cause of effects. It is modified into diverse forms. Taking its stand on the self it gives birth to the world-appearance and thereby veils the true nature of Brahman and projects its own multiplicity where there is unity.

Seeing the variety and multiplicity of the world appearance we are led to the conclusion that it springs from a cause which forms its substance. It cannot come out of something which is absolutely non-existent, since such a thing evidently cannot be the cause of anything; hence, since the cause of the world-appearance cannot be either real or unreal, it must have for its cause something which is neither real nor unreal and this neither real nor unreal entity is avidya. Apart from the fact that Maya is not real it is not a negative character. It is positive. In advaita the positive (Bhava) and the sat are not identical, when we say that Maya is a positive category it means that it has objectivity, but is not existent or real (Sat). Maya contains its own negative. Now the question arises whether the unreality of Maya is real or unreal. If it is real then there is a second

1. Naitvadipana p.96.
2. V.Upavaya, Ch. Sanskrit series, p.18.
3. N.Sakaranda, p.122.
reality besides Brahman, and if it is not real, then the world, which is Maya cannot be unreal, because unreality of unreality must become reality. This being the case the Advaitin contends that everything except Brahman is illusory, contradictory and unreal, even the reality predicaded of Brahman is itself unreal. Now this unreality falls into the Maya category and Maya, being

1. The reality predicaded of Brahman is unreal because predicates, after all, derive from and belong to the empirical world. If the application of any predicad to Brahman were to be regarded as valid, the nirguna character of Brahman would be compromised. That would mean dragging down Brahman to the empirical.

It is true Brahman's transcendence of all empirical determination brings in very close to Buddhist Samya. But the orthodox interpretation (it is not relevant whether this interpretation is sound or not, since as pointed out earlier, it is a historical fact) of Samya as void is at variance with the interpretation of Brahman as Pranam. Moreover, if the Buddhists concede that Samya is the substratum of the world-appearance like Vedantic Brahman, the Vedantin will at once agree that the difference between the two is of labels merely.
other than Brahman cannot be real.

1. Causality:

The relation of a cause to its effect holds good only if there were two substantial entities, but in the system of Advaita there is nothing else but Brahman, so the attribution of causality to Brahman can not be regarded as strictly correct. The nature of cause-effect relation shows that Brahman under no circumstances can be called a cause. So in reality the theory of causality lies outside the scope of Advaita. Thus, when nescience is spoken of as the causal material of the world, it is a concession to the vulgar ways of thinking. The nature of this causal materiality e.g. nescience can never be proved by the help of the means of valid knowledge, since, while nescience is like darkness the means of valid proof are like light. It is not possible to see darkness with a lamp so it is not possible for any one to understand it as it is. It is, therefore, regarded as inexplicable and unintelligible. It is positive yet beginning-less because 'beginning' implies that an object originated at a certain time, whereas Jvidya is logically prior to time. The indefinability of nescience is its negation on

1. Dr. Vidya, P. 455.
2. V. G. Abhakta, K. 123.
3. N. Siddhi III. 66.
the ground on which it appears. 1

It is neither a product of Brahman nor a real entity apart from Brahman. Yet it is not unreal. It conceals the Bliss aspect of Brahman and causes Brahman to appear as the world. It conceals the self-luminous self as if a mass of clouds should veil the sun. This nescience is regarded as darkness in regard to its locus and object. Just as darkness has one and the same thing for its object and locus, so ignorance has self for its locus and object. The main argument propounded by Sarvajnatman in establishing that ignorance is an existent substance is that a non-existent entity cannot perform the obscurative and projective functions. 2

Difference between Avidya and Maya 3

Appayya says that according to some Advaitins Maya and Avidya are two different entities, since their difference has been evidenced by scripture. A scriptural passage (Bra.
Up. VI. 5) expressly declares that the parts of a subtle body are made up of two types of elements, (i) gross; and (ii) subtle. Gross elements being the product of Maya located in Isvara are dissolved in their material causes at the time of release, and the subtle elements of the individual internal organ are destroyed at the time of release because of their being the products of nescience. Now the subtle

2. Radha Raman's commentary on S. Sharirak L316.
3. I.L., PP. 81-82.
elements cannot draw to an end at the time of the realisation
of the true nature of the self unless they are the product of
Avidya located in the individual soul. The gross elements, which
likewise constitute the subtle body, are not dissolved in their
material causes. From this it is quite clear that Maya is different
from Avidya, which resides in God while nescience has individual
soul for its locus.

Aviyya is not different from Maya:

Advaitins of this view opine that the universe comprising
sentient beings has the Lord for its material cause, because
consciousness of the Lord cannot be established otherwise. And the
internal organs are also the transformations of Maya, which is not
other than Avidya, but they (internal organs) have the Lord as
their Vivarta-Upanasana. Internal organs are superimposed on the
individual self so being a substratum of the internal organs the
embodied self can be termed as their material cause e.g.

Vivartopasana: In Vivaranas too we see that Brahman is termed as
material cause of this universe because everything is superimposed
upon it and in consequence of that Brahman is related to the
universe. It is otherwise with the individual soul. Only the
internal organs are superimposed upon it and it has a connection
with them only. By this, this school, does not deny Brahman’s
Vivartopasana and Maya’s Parinayapadasana with regard to the
individual soul. The idea is this that the qualities of body,
senses and internal organs are superimposed upon the individual
self, so it is not out of place to say that the individual soul is
their Vivartopasana. Here in this connection it must be noted that
causality (Upadasana) means chithanata- the state of being a

Substratum.

2. K. Pedolis Varana PP. 72, 73.
The nature of Maya as a material cause:

According to Padartha Tattvamiraya, an illusory manifestation, being an effect, cannot but owe its appearance to a material cause which has to undergo a modification. It is in no way possible to assume that an effect, although it be an illusory manifestation, takes its origin without a cause transforming itself. So an illusory manifestation, such as silver in the piece of nacre, has two material causes, one Vivarta i.e. the basis of illusory manifestation such as the piece of nacre, and the other Perinamveda which undergoes a modification in form of silver. The Avidya falls under the second category. So in case of this empirical world Brahman is a Vivart-upadana i.e. a material cause which is the changeless basis of illusory manifestation. Maya thus is to be regarded as the material cause which transforms itself into the form of this world. And this cause i.e. Maya resides in Brahman and ceases to be at the realisation of the Adhisthana, Brahman. This school of Advaitins is much influenced by the Sankhya system of Indian philosophy, where Perinasveda holds an important position. In Perinasveda (the doctrine of modification) a substance, being constituted by parts, can undergo transformation, Brahman, on the contrary, is homogeneous and immutable and thus is not subject to modification, so it is Maya which should be deemed to be a cause transforming itself.

1. Maya is only Dvāra Kāma:

The author of Sankṣepaśaṃśrāka does not think that Maya

1. Ibid., P.96.
transforms itself into the form of this elemental world. Such a view belongs to the Sankhyas who assume Prakriti to be the material cause of the world. This school of Advaitins is not in favour of ascribing material causality to Maya, but Maya is only a subsidiary cause. Brahman alone is the material cause of this world, but since Brahman is immutable so it cannot be itself a cause of this multiform world, hence Maya serves the purpose of a subsidiary cause. Just as pure clay cannot transform itself into a jar unless it is softened with water, and being softened it is moulded into pots and pans. Nevertheless softness is not regarded as an independent cause, so Brahman aided by Maya becomes a Vivartakarana of this world and Maya is only a dvavarakarana, subsidiary cause. Although Maya is not a material cause, yet its qualities such as inertness etc., are persistent in the world, just as the softness of clay is persistent in the jar.

According to this view Brahman is the substratum of this world. The exponent of this view maintains that the assumption that Maya is the material cause of this world is liable to be charged with duality, because a material cause other than Brahman must enjoy the same position as is assigned to Brahman in so far as the causation of the world is concerned.

1. The view of Bhaskara 1.

The Bhaskara school of Advaita holds that ignorance being located in the individual self has Brahman for its object. In this view Brahman is the material cause, since of itself it illusorily

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1. S. Chaitanya, L-322, 22 & 331-33.

2. Ibid., L-322, and S.I.C., P.95.
manifests itself in the form of the world. The idea is this that dye or nescience, being an insentient category is not of itself well suited to create the world, so to create the world it has to resort to pure intelligence. Intelligence, being an object, of nescience stimulates it just as fragrance provokes the sense of smell. Being thus provoked by intelligence, nescience makes Brahman manifest itself illusorily in the form of the world. Thus Brahman is the substratum of this erroneous appearance of the world just as a rope mistaken for a snake is the substratum of the snake. In this way this world has Brahman for its material cause. The part played by nescience is the same that bile (pitta) lying in the eyes of an observing person plays with regard to a conch shell which appears to be yellow. From this it is quite clear that dye is only an accessory not a subsidiary cause persistent in the effect i.e. the world. Bile resting in the eyes of the seer does not leave the eyes for the conchshell, the conch shell remains the same. Just as an actor assumes many roles without undergoing any transformation, so avidya brings forth the diverse forms of empirical reality to the seeing of the jiva without subjecting herself to any modification. This unmodified avidya which has the jiva for its locus and Brahman for its object exhibits the unity of Brahman as the multiplicity of the world.

1. Dhamati 4.78, see also Kalpon it.
2. Ibid., 4.1.
Maya alone is the material cause:

The author of Śiddhanta Sūktavali, Prakāsānanda, is not satisfied with the view that Brahmān is the cause of this multiform world. Unreality cannot spring from reality. Maya alone is the material cause of this world. Brahmān being the location of Maya can be figuratively called as the material cause of the world. It is because there are numerous scriptural passages which declare Brahmān to be without cause and effect and which is omnipresent and omniscient. Such an entity cannot possibly become a material cause in any way, so being the substrate of Maya, Brahmān is termed as the material cause of the world, such a figurative material causality assigned to Brahmān constitutes the definition of Brahmān.

Avidya Diverse parts of Maya:

In the Śvetāmbara Vīrāṇa Maya has been defined as a primal cause of beings. It has no beginning, but draws to an end at the realisation of the highest self. It is indeterminable, because its difference and non-difference from Brahmān cannot logically be established. All the scriptural passages dealing with Brahmān declare unanimously that there is no reality other than Brahmān. It means that Maya is not different from Brahmān. It cannot be identical with Brahmān because of its being non-intelligent. Nor can it be both different and non-different (Shiṣṇabhīma) from Brahmān.

1. V. Sūktas, P.33.
3. V. Sūktas, P.121.
4. P. Vīrāṇa, Fr.3,4.
because two opposite qualities cannot reside at one and the same place. In the same way Maya cannot be termed as existent, because in that case there would result duality, nor it can be non-existent because in that case it cannot be the cause of the beings. That Maya is made of parts (Samayava) is contrary to reason, since Maya itself will then be an effect. And thus there will be a regressus and infinitum (Maheswra). If it be without parts, then it cannot be a material cause, because in every day experience we observe that material causality is assigned to those things only which are made of parts. Thus logically no term can be applied to it so it is indeterminate.

This Maya has innumerable limited parts. These limited parts do not constitute Maya as threads constitute a cloth, because this would involve the fault of Maya's having a beginning. Because a thing consisting of parts is an effect and an effect cannot be beginningless. These parts of the Maya are the innumerable obscuring and projecting energies with gradation. These parts or energies are termed as avidyas.

: Tattvasvisveka view about Maya and Avidya :

In Prakrtartha Vivarana two aspects of Maya were proposed on the assumption of limited innumerable parts endowed with obscuring and projecting energies with gradation in Maya as a whole. But in Tattvasvisveka Vidyaaraya establishes the two distinct forms

1. K.R. Je., P.100.
2. Ibid., P.101.
of the primal cause (Prakrti) otherwise. It is stated that
Prakrti itself becomes Maya and Avidya by the purity and impurity
of Sattva. Prakrti is constituted of three elements Sattva, Rajas
and Tamas. When Sattva occupies a predominant position e.g. over-
powers the Rajas and Tamas, Prakrti is called Maya, and when
Sattva is impure i.e. overpowered by Rajas and Tamas, Prakrti is
turned as nescience. This distinction between Maya and Avidya has
been expounded in Pancadasi.

Maya projects while Avidya obscures

It has been stated that Maya has two types of energy
obscure and projective. On the basis of these two energies
Maya assumes two distinct forms i.e. Maya and Avidya. In this view
the predominance of projection is the essential nature of Maya,
which is an adjunct of the Lord, and the predominance of obscuration
is the characteristic nature of nescience, which is the adjunct of
an individual soul. In consequence of this it follows that,
though Prakrti (primal cause) is associated with intelligence, which
is common to both jiva and Isvara, the experience of being affected
with ignorance, in the form 'I am ignorant' is for the jiva alone,
not for the Lord. This distinction between Lord and jiva cannot
be made otherwise, because Prakrti, being one, associated with
intelligence cannot give rise to two entities like God and the
individual soul. So Prakrti by its differentiation into Maya and
Avidya through the preponderance or otherwise of the various gunas
constitutes two separate adjuncts, namely, Maya for the Lord and
Avidya for the jiva.

2. Y.L.M., p.102.
In Sanksepa Sariraka Sarvajnatma states the view of some Adwaitins. The view propounded by these Adwaitins is not to the liking of Sarvajnatma. That is why he did not mention their names, and characterises them as (Dvivighata - nighnamaneshh) whose minds have been afflicted by the obstacles due to bad luck.

They maintain that Maya and Avidya are two different entities: Maya rests on God while the host of nesciences resorts to the individual souls. The material causality of all the beings, of the empirical existence is assigned to Maya, and the nesciences, which are located in the jivas, conceal the highest self, the substrate of the world. In consequence of which, this empirical existence appears and Brahman is veiled. The things of apparent existence such as nacre-silver and rope-snake are the products of the individual nesciences. Here in this context an objection can be raised that the nesciences located in the jivas may be the material cause of the apparent things of the world in dream but the things of apparent existence, like nacre-silver etc., cannot have the individual nescience for their material cause, because they (Avidya) are deemed to be located in the individual soul not in the intelligence defined by nacre. This objection they a rebut by taking their stand on the view of Vasaspati miera. They remark that apparent nacre silver is a Vivarta (merely an appearance in another form) of nacre-confined intelligence, which is an object of the seer's nescience.

1. S. Sariraka, II.131.
2. Kr. Vya., P.175.
MAYA AND ADJUNCT OF THE LORD:

( THE UPADHI OF ISVARA ASSOCIATED WITH THE VAGANAS OF
THE INTELLICES OF ALL BEINGS )

In accordance with the doctrine of reflection as it has been
expounded by Vidyaranya, Maya the primal cause posited in
the Lord, is defined in the following way: intelligence, being one
and alone cannot assume two different forms as Isvara and the
individual soul unless it is in contact with two different limiting
adjuncts. Now as the adjunct of cit, Maya is assumed to have two
forms, one seminal or radical and the other, evolved or transformed.
The elements, which constitute the seminal form of the Prakrti are
peristant in the evolved or transformed form of Prakrti.

Prakrti (primal cause) is like a cloud which is made up of
dewy like watery parts. That these watery parts, though invisible
exist in the sky is inferred from their effect, namely rain. The
impressions of the intellects of all beings are compared to the
watery particles, which exist in the cloud. Maya, ignorance
coloured by the impressions of the intellects of all beings is the
adjunct of the Lord.

Avidya one but has diverse parts:

It is generally conceded that ignorance is one single
entity and it has the pure Brahman for its locus and object, and it
draws to an end at the realisation of the true nature of Brahman.

2. Ibid., VI-21.
A deeper view of the nature of Avidya reveals that it is not one single homogeneous whole but has a plurality of aspects or parts. In Jivanmukti or the state of release even while embodied, it is not the whole of Avidya which is cancelled. Of the two powers of Avidya, namely obscurative and projective, the jivanmukti is no longer subject to the former i.e. the true nature of things dams on him and he is no longer deluded. But even the cannot claim redemption from the second power, the power of projection, because even to him the world as it comes into being due to creative activity is quite perceptible. There is another reason why Avidya should be regarded as characterised by parts. If it were not special to each being then the liberation of one from the bonds of ignorance should automatically lead to the release of all. But we know that though here and there an individual transcends Avidya, 'Jivanmukti' or the liberation of all remains a dream.

1 Avidya is one but its conjunctions are different with each mind.

2 Appaya mentions a school of advaitins, who are well versed in logic i.e. they are very much influenced by the doctrines of Indian logic. They regard nascience as absolute non-existence (Atyyan-abhaya) namely Atystabhave and nascience are eternal and related to the three times, i.e. past, present and future. This view is disputed by others. The objection is that due to the absence of the pot we apprehend its absolute non-existence on the ground.

but when a pot has been placed on the very spot where it was non-existent, a few moments before, the perception of the pot should not be valid because absolute non-existence is Traikalik (everlasting) and related to the three times, past, present and future. The logicians reply that absolute non-existence is determined and perceived provided it has its conjunction with its location. The determinant of the presence of the absolute non-existence of pot on the ground is the absolute non-existence of the conjunction of the pot with the ground. The existence of the absolute non-existence of a thing is determined by the non-existence of the conjunction of the countenance (pratyogita) with the ground. Similarly the existence of nescience is determined by the existence of the heart which is termed as a knot, i.e., a conjunction of ignorance with intelligence, and when by the dawn of the true knowledge of Brahman that knot (Samkanda) is removed the ignorance though existing, is not perceived and determined.

From this comparison it appears that nescience is one and Traikalike, but its conjunction and non-conjunction are determinant of its perception.

1. Avidya is one but located in each jiva like the jati and vyakti.
2. Some adwaitins maintain that ignorance is one and its relation with the individual soul is like that of a Jati to a

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1. *Mld. II.2.8,* and *S.I.S. I.170.*
particular (Wyakti). According to this view the individual souls are the reflection of intelligence in internal organs, and ignorance like generality in particulars, is realised separately in all the individual souls. It abandons that individuals soul only for whom the knowledge of Brahman has arisen, just as a generality abandons that particular only which is destroyed.

Ignorance, according to this view does not have pure intelligence for its object and individual soul for its locus, as in 'I do not know the true nature of Brahman'. Here the Brahman appears to be the object of ignorance, and 'I do not know' clearly shows that the individual soul is the locus of nescience. How is avidya related to objects? Does it reside in them as plurality does in all the members of group? Or does it make each individual jiva its locus without reference to the others. In the former case the removal of nescience of even one jiva leads to the total extinction of avidya just as the removal of one out of the two members of a group brings about the extinction of the attribute of duality which before the removal inhered in both of them. Therefore according to this view we have to accept the second alternative according to which each jiva is subject to his own brand of avidya and avidya inheres in individual jives as conscious does in all individual a cons.

According to Krsnamoorthy, the perception of ignorance does

2. Ind.Vis., P.171.
not depend upon the perception of all the individual souls subject to that ignorance although it is Vyassayavrtti, because the foresaid rule does not apply to the perception of that thing which is an object of Paks Pratyaksa witness perception.

Rary Avidyus one for each jiva:

To establish the distinction between bondage and release it was thought necessary that the conjunction of nescience with the jive be regarded as bondage and the non-conjunction of nescience as the final release. It is because ignorance according to this doctrine is admitted to be one alone. So the distinction between bondage and release cannot be made if different conjunctions and their destruction were not assumed. The destruction of Avidya is not termed as final release, for in that case there would result the cessation of empirical existence, since nescience is single and its removal will put an end to this entire universe, which is the effect of ignorance.

Vasaspali misra does not agree with this view, because the singleness of nescience is contrary to the passage of scripture and Tanka's commentary on Vyasa sutras, which expressly intimate that the destruction of nescience is designated as final release. So according to Vasaspali there is a different nescience for each

1. Ibid., P.172.
2. Ibid., P.172, see also Bhaskari, PP.377-78.
individual soul, and the persistence and removal of nescience constitute bondage and release respectively. Bondage and release can never be established, if avidya is assumed to be single. The assumption that avidya has many parts and their persistence and destruction will establish bondage and release, is not admissible because at the rise of knowledge avidya cannot persist. Viewing all this it is better to assume that avidyas are many.

Vimuktatman's view:

According to Vimuktatman, the author of Jata Siddhi, nescience is of two kinds. The first is termed vilajnana, the primal cause which undergoes different modifications of empirical existence and has pure intelligence for its locus and has numerous potential energies. The other is modal ignorance (Avesta-jna) which is a particular mode of vilajnana and has intelligence delimited by particular worldly perceptions for its object and the individual soul for its locus. The difference between those two ignorances has been observed in every daily experience when we say 'I do not know the pot, the form of ignorance is opposed to and removed by the cognition of the pot. The form of vilajnana as 'I am ignorant of the true nature of Brahman' is removable by the realisation of Brahman. The vilajnana may be a single entity having numerous energies, but the Avesta-jna is multiform. Just as there are numerous cognitions so there are numerous ignorances removable by those cognitions. Thus it is concluded that the nescience which obscures the intelligence conditioned by objects of empirical existence and removable by the cognitions of those objects is other than the vilajnana which is the material cause of this world and is destroyed by the knowledge of Brahman. The Avesta-jnas are considered to be as
there are cognitions. Each cognition destroys each modal ignorance.

2. The empirical world as consilience of illusions:

In (a) Vivarana Pramayasaengraha and (b) Siddhantabindu a different theory of nescience has been ascribed to Vandana and Vagakpati Mere. According to this view there are as many ignorances as there are individual souls, and each ignorance gives birth to a different empirical world, consequently there are as many worlds as there are individual souls. Appaye seeks to establish this by two fold analysis, that of the nacre-silver illusion and of the notion of duality. If a mother of pearl be taken erroneously for a piece of silver, the number of silvers will increase according as the number of the individual perceivers, whose ignorances are giving birth to silver. Each individual has a different silver over there. Yet the singleness or identity of silver is perceived due to an illusion. We come to this conclusion on the ground that if a person on the realisation of the true nature of silver puts aside to the silver the other persons do not get rid of the illusion. For then the silver is existent there until and unless their ignorance is removed. Thus the persistence and cessation of silver in a nacre piece at one end and the same time furnishes an adequate reason to assume that there are many silvers in apparent existence. Secondly the world is sought to be explained by an analysis of the notion of duality. Against those who maintain the objective existence of duality, the Vedantic logicians uphold the view that the idea of duality is subjective and has no existence apart from the person who is about to probe the truth of things before him.

1. R. Le., p. 207 and I. Indhi, pp. 63-64.
Every such person has his idea of duality with the result that there are as many such ideas as there are persons. There are similarly as many worlds as there are individual souls. The elemental universe, which is the product of respective individual nesciences, is different for each individual, nevertheless we observe in everyday experience that people are not aware of the difference in the universe, but are conscious of the identity of the universe, and that identity is based upon mere illusion as in the nacre-silver instance given above.

1. The twofold Nature of Obscuring Ignorance:

The adwañas, who uphold the doctrine of modification cannot but admit two kinds of ignorance. The first is obscure, residing in an object and because of its being a material cause, transforming itself into an effect. Things although of illusory nature cannot take their origin until there be a material cause undergoing a modification. Therefore, when we take a rope for a snake, we have to assume that there exists an ignorance in the rope which transforms itself into the illusory snake. This type of ignorance is termed as object located ignorance. It is not perceptible but is inferred from its effect. There is another ignorance which is located in the cognizer, and which is perceptible in the form 'I do not know this.' This ignorance cannot be the material cause of the delusion because

2. Ibid., p.225.
of its being located in the person while delusion is associated
with the external object. The ignorance located in the object
cannot be manifested by the luminosity of the witness self in the
form 'I do not know this'. So it is necessary to admit that
there are two types of ignorance.

In the case of the mediate cognition (paroksajnana) the remov-
al of the object located ignorance is impossible, since the
object is not in contact with the sense of sight and consequently
mental activity cannot reach the locality of the object. The 'Vr̥tti'
can remove the ignorance located in the intelligence which is
limited by the object only when it 'Vr̥tti' is associated with
object through the context of the sense with the object. A tree
perceived from a distance appears to be of a particular size which
is different from its size perceived by a person standing nearby.
The distant observer has his perception corrected by the closer
observer but even then the view from the distance is not altered;
it is only the mental notion which is revised. We thus conclude
that it is only one type of ignorance - that located in the per-
cipient is removable but the other which has the object for its
locus persists. This apparent, erroneous size is according to this
doctrine the modification of Avidya resident in the object.

There is only one ignorance located in the knower:

The followers of Bhāmati school of Advaita maintain that the
assumption of two kinds of ignorance would be of no avail to the

1. Tattva Dipana, P.239.
2. Bhāmati, Kalpa, P.373, see also Abhaga, P.371, and
   S.1.5, s.222.
Advaita, hence it is manifestly absurd to stick to this view. According to this tenet there is only one ignorance located in the person alone like the film in the eye, which obscures the objects, and there is no evidence for an ignorance which is over and above that and is present in the object. The difficulties created by the opponent who opines two ignorances, that the ignorance located in the person cannot transform itself into the projection present in the object, and that when the ignorance located in the person is removed by the mediate cognition from the testimony of a reliable person, there is no room for a projection of a contrary size apparent in a distant tree because while there is no material cause which may transform itself into that contrary size, are rebutted by rejoining that the whole universe, according to Vasastapi, is an illusory manifestation of Brahman which has been made the object of ignorance located in the jiva. All the illusory things such as macro-silver etc. are illusory manifestations of Brahman made the content of the ignorance located in the person.

The assertion of the followers of Vasastapi is that it is only if the concept of transformation (parinama) is adopted and a parinama-makarana looked for, that the ignorance resident in the object has to be treated as a material cause of the projection; no such assumption is necessary on the hypothesis of illusory manifestation (Vivarta). In the case of a contrary size apparent in a distant tree it can safely be said that though a particular mode of the ignorance be removed by the mediate vrtti, yet the projection of a contrary size is intelligible through another mode of ignorance.
In reality, although a mediate cognition is admitted to remove ignorance, yet it is an established fact that the mediate cognition being free from all sorts of impediments only disperses ignorance. In the case of a distant tree, mediate cognition imparted by a reliable person, is impeded by some defects such as great distance etc., and cannot remove the ignorance. Therefore, there is no room for the objection that the contrary size without ignorance, which is its material cause, cannot take its place. The objection in that case that if mediate cognition does not remove ignorance, there would result an experience in the form 'I do not know the size of that distant tree' does not hold good, for a mediate cognition, in consequence of which we know something for certainty although it does not remove the ignorance in its entirety, obstructs the experience of ignorance in spite of its being available over there. From this it can be concluded that an unobstructed cognition, let it be mediate or immediate, can remove ignorance. Every kind of knowledge whether it be mediate or immediate removes ignorance provided it be unobstructed.

According to Vasaspadi, a mediate cognition can in no way remove ignorance and verbal testimony is not of itself a means of immediate knowledge. So an uninterrupted immediate cognition alone is the means of the removal of ignorance. Some later Vaishnavas who agree with the foresaid view of Vasaspadi and still

1. S. Chaturveda, L.15, and see the commentary of Madhuandana on S. haridraka, L.14-17.
3. V. L.18, P.306.
adopt the concept of transformation (Pratisamveda) which is not to the liking of Vacaspati Mira, look for a Pratyangika. Thus they treat ignorance resident in the object as a material cause of the projection. Just as a cloth covers the object, so it is ignorance present in the object that covers it. Now there arises an objection that, if the ignorance resident in the object undergoes modification in the form of illusory silver, then the experience 'I do not know the nacre' cannot hold good, because object-located ignorance being not in contact with the witness (Saksi), cannot be manifested by the saksi, and moreover, it can be urged that, that ignorance cannot be removed by a mediate vrtti, since the mediate vrtti does not reach the locality of the object. The upholders of Pratisamveda remark that since there is no difference between primal ignorance and its modes and since primal ignorance is in conjunction with the witness, modal ignorances are also in such conjunction. As the witness intelligence is in reality non-different from the object-defined intelligence, modal ignorance located in the latter is, therefore, in conjunction with the former too.

1. Ibid., P.231.
Modal Ignorance

There is a primal ignorance, which has been deemed to be the material cause of this universe differentiated by names and forms, and the removal of which depends upon the realization of the true nature of Brahman, but over and above this nescience there is a modal ignorance, whose main object is to obscure the intelligence conditioned by an object. The primal ignorance obscures the highest self while the modal ignorance obscures the intelligence conditioned by the object, that is a transformation of the primal nescience. This modal ignorance is experienced in the form 'I do not know the pot' as against to the knowledge of the pot, and in the state of knowledge such as 'one the cognition of the pot the ignorance of the pot is removed, this is experienced as removable by the knowledge. The primal ignorance has Brahman for its object and is removable by the knowledge of Brahman, while modal ignorance has object-defined intelligence for its object and is removed by the true knowledge of the object. This modal ignorance is of the nature of a particular mode of primal
ignorance. These ignorances are as many as there are conditions.

This is a concrete view adopted by those Advaitins who adhere to the doctrine of karman and accordingly believe that this modal ignorance also transforms itself into the form of the objects of illusory existence, such as meca-silver and rope-snake. 2

These modal ignorances too are beginningless:

When we adopt the view of Isaya ciddhi that there are as many modal ignorances as cognitions, it is necessary to assume that modal ignorance has a beginning. It is because it is its opposite i.e. cognition which by its absence gives origin to it (Modal ignorance) and by its presence puts an end to it. This is why we have to postulate that there are as many ignorances as cognitions. In this case the state of its being beginningless is by no means possible.

Therefore, it is quite appropriate to hold that this modal ignorance does not draw to an end at the time when its opponent i.e. cognition comes into being, but it is on its removal that a cognition happens. The modal ignorance being of the nature of a mode of the prinal nescience is likewise of modi and its cessation is effected at the time when the prinal ignorance is dispelled on the realisation of Brahman. 3

1. Is . Siddhi, P.83.
2. Veda. XI., P.118.
Ignorance can obscure something without projecting anything, but it cannot project anything without obscuring that wherein it resides. It is manifestly absurd to say that ignorance exists and still does not obscure or project anything, because in that case there is no evidence for the very existence of ignorance. The existence of ignorance is inferred from its obscuring and projecting capacities. Viewing this we can safely opine that ignorance in the form of sleep and sound sleep has a beginning. Sleep, we see, obscures the empirical world and life and projects the world and life in the dream, so being endowed with obscuring and projecting capacities it can be spoken of as a particular mode of primal nescience. In the same way sound sleep also is a particular mode of primal nescience. The reflection 'I slept well and did not know anything' bears witness to the fact that ignorance with its obscuring capacity was experienced in the state of deep sleep. These two modes of ignorance take their place when there is quiescence of the senses that causes enjoyment in waking life. So we have every reason to assert that these modes of ignorance have a beginning and likewise other ignorances being the modes of primal nescience are with a beginning.

If this modal ignorance is Sadi then it has many ends and many beginnings and may be viewed to be one and alone. And its final end will be that of the primal ignorance. If it is admitted to be Anadl, then it has many appearances and disappearance end
finally it would draw to an end at the realisation of Brahman, that is, when the primal ignorance will be put to an end to.

If we admit that modal ignorance has a beginning, we can safely say that the cognition of a pot destroys the pot's ignorance, which obscures it (pot) prior to the cognition, and after the expiry of cognition ignorance emerges again and obscures the pot because ignorances are numerous each having a beginning and end of its own. But this position cannot be held if it be assumed that ignorance is beginningless. On the view of beginninglessness of modal ignorance, as there is no determination as to which ignorance is to be destroyed by which cognition, we have to assume that the knowledge of a pot that arises first will destroy all the ignorances about the pot, because without the destruction of all the ignorances obscuring the intelligence defined by the pot the manifestation of the pot is impossible. If it be so, the result will be that all the subsequent cognitions would take their places without removing any obscuration. Some advaitins offer a solution analogous to an antecedent non-existence (prag-ábhava).

1. Ibid., P.210.
2. Ibid., P.211.
They assert that though there are so many antecedent non-existences of a cognition yet, when a single cognition arises, only a single antecedent non-existence of cognition ceases and though there exist other antecedent non-existences, which are of the nature of obscuration of that object, there is the manifestation of the object. Similarly when a single cognition arises, a single ignorance ceases, and though there exist other ignorances, there is manifestation of the object.

This reply to the objection is not correct because there are so many antecedent non-existences obscuring the object, although one out of them has been destroyed by the present cognition, the modal ignorance of the object cannot be destroyed and consequently the object must remain veiled, but in experience the object is free from obscuration when there arises a cognition though there are so many ignorances i.e. the antecedent non-existences of knowledge. So a later school of adherents hold that the immediacy of what is obscured is impossible, and when a single cognition arises, though antecedent non-existences of cognition exist, yet there is not that obscuration which is of the nature of multitude of the non-existences of all the specific cognitions, because there is a specific cognition of the object, that is, when a particular ignorance obscures a thing, then by the cognition of that thing there is the destruction of that ignorance alone. All the ignorances do not obscure all the time, because such an assumption is manifestly absurd. But rather is it that when an obscuring ignorance is destroyed by a 'vritti' and when there is cessation of that 'vritti', another obscurative ignorance

1. Ibid., p.31.
supervenes. All these modal ignorances are dependent upon the primal ignorance, so at the dawn of Brahmasana, when the primal nescience is destroyed, they (modal ignorances) will be abolished.

Sleep is a modal ignorance causing dreams.

The material cause of the dream-world as well as the material silver is modal ignorance, not the primal nescience. Primal nescience resides in pure intelligence and is removable by Nirvikalpajñana (knowledge of the substratum) not depending upon and derived by senses), the modal ignorance is located in the intelligence defined by object, and is removed by the knowledge of the true nature of the object i.e. by Avikalpajñana (knowledge depending upon and derived by senses). This mode of nescience i.e. Avasthajñana in the form of sleep is observed to obscure both the empirical jiva, the spectator of the waking world, as well as the empirical world. Sleep is a specific mode of the primal nescience.

The empirical jiva, who is veiled by the primal ignorance, who is the spectator of the waking world, has in respect of himself without doubt and error such conceits as 'I am a man', 'I am a son of Deva-Datta', and by whom such incidents of the waking world as the death of his own grandfather are always experienced, if for him there were no obscuration by something at the time of dreams, then in the dream too, as in the state of waking there would be the contingency

1. Ibid., p.12.
2. c. cit., p.119.
3. ibid., p.107.
of the non-existence of such delusions as 'I am a tiger' 'I am the son of a king' and of such other delusions as that of his grandfather being alive. Therefore, sleep is of the nature of a specific mode of ignorance which arises at that time and obscures the empirical world and jiva. In the state of dream an apparent individual soul (pratibhasika) is superimposed upon the empirical jiva, and that is the spectator of the dream world. This world of dream itself is superimposed upon this empirical world. Then consciousness is called up and waking state is regained, there is the realisation of the substrata, viz. the empirical jiva and the world, which dispels the sleep and consequently the apparent jiva and the dream world disappear. This appearance and disappearance of the pratibhasikajiva and swanaplava is not possible unless the modal ignorance serving the purpose of material cause is admitted.  

This Aijama (Modal ignorance) is destroyed by modal cognition.

There are two types of intelligence, one pure, eternal and omnipresent, the other confined or limited by the limiting adjuncts or the transformation of the prinal ignorance (Mulaajama). The removal of Mulaajama depends upon the realisation of pure intelligence. This realisation is, not at the same level with the modal cognition i.e. 'vrtti' generated by the sense of sight etc., because it lacks Tryutti (cogniser, cognition and object of cognition). Avesthajama (modal ignorance) is dispelled by modal cognition or a 'vrtti' generated by senses. The empirical objects like the pot etc. are also the object of modal ignorance, although

1. Narayana Bhrthta's commentary on S.Binda, p.188.
they are themselves a modification of primal ignorance. It is observed that modal ignorance and modal cognition have empirical things for their object, such as 'I know the pot and I know not the pot'. By the cognition of the pot the ignorance of pot is destroyed. This modal cognition whose content is what is external lacks the authoritativeness characterised by immediate perception of truth (Tattvavedana Purnamasmast). External objects are not in reality unknown, because ignorance (Avyaya) cannot exert its influence upon what is inert i.e. a modification of Ajnana. From this it is quite clear that the invalidity of modal cognition has been established on the ground that the vrtti removes only the modal ignorance, and has the external entities for its object which are the objects of modal ignorance also.

1. Primal ignorance is the cause of the delusion of reflection:

There is a school of Advaitins whose contention is that reflection is a delusion like negro-silver. Its temporary appearance is indicative of its having ignorance for its

material cause. Its material causality cannot be assigned to modal ignorance because the reflecting object like mirror etc. is not an object of ignorance, as it is seen in the case of nacre-silver where the mother of pearl is not perceived when illusory silver is superimposed upon it. From this it follows that modal ignorance cannot be the material cause of the delusion of reflection. We see the mirror and yet we have the cognition of the reflection, while the case of nacre-silver is quite otherwise. In the case of nacre-silver we observe that the ignorance of nacre gives rise to the illusion of silver and the cognition of nacre puts an end to it. In case of reflection we do not find such ignorance and conjunction so they are of the opinion that it is mālājñāna (Primal ignorance) that is the material cause of the superimposition of reflection. Though in respect of external objects different forms of vṛtti overcome primal ignorance in its aspects of obscuring energy, in these parts of intelligence which are defined by the respective objects, yet, they do not dispel its aspect of projective energy; otherwise there would be the contingency of the dissolution even if the empirical projections be present in those places. It does not mean that a reflection having primal ignorance for its material cause must be empirically real like other worldly object, because empirical reality can be assigned to that thing only which is not generated by a defect over and above the primal ignorance. In
the case of a reflection there does exist a defect over and above is the primal nescience viz. the proximity of the original image and the adjunct, that is, the reflecting object, the mirror. Hence a reflection is assumed to have merely apparent character. Now there arises a difficulty that a clear cognition of the substratum on which the reflection is superimposed would not remove the superimposition of reflection even when there is no proximity of the original image and the adjunct, because the cognition of the substratum (mirror) has not the capacity to remove the primal ignorance which is the material cause of the reflection. The followers of this doctrine get over this difficulty by the remark that the cognition of the substratum (mirror) though does not remove the primal ignorance because there is no conflict between primal ignorance and the cognition of the mirror, since they have different objects, yet the cognition of the mirror when it is not proximate to any original image, can remove the superimposition of reflection, since it has an object which is quite in a different category from the reflection whose material cause is the primal ignorance.

2. Ibid, p.449.
Dharma Pada in Vedanta draws a line of difference between mullification (Madha) and cessation or Nivrtti. He says that according to the view that the nacre-silver is an effect of the primal ignorance there is only the cessation (Nivrtti) of the superimposed silver through the knowledge that it is nacre. But on the view that nacre-silver is an effect of the model or subsidiary nescience abiding in the intelligence limited by the nacre there is mullification of the silver together with the nescience regarding the nacre by the knowledge that the supposed silver is nacre.

Thus the upholders of this view assert that the illusory objects being the off-spring of the primal nescience cease to be when their substrata (Adhisthanas) are cognised properly; although their material cause the primal ignorance persists. It is the realisation of the true nature of Brahman which dispels the primal ignorance.

Primal ignorance is the cause of dreams.

The objects of dream-world are the products of primal ignorance. They cannot spring from the subsidiary nescience. It is because they can be assumed to be superimposed either on

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1. V.14.1., p.143.
pure and unlimited intelligence or on that intelligence which is conditioned by limiting adjuncts like inner organs and the like, both of them being beyond the approach of modal ignorance. Modal ignorance has that very intelligence for its locus and object which is conditioned by adjuncts, hence pure intelligence is away from the subsidiary nescience. Now, the intelligence limited by internal organ i.e. egoity or individuality is the locus of the vṛtti of pleasure, pain etc. Therefore, it is also devoid of modal ignorance. Apart from these two types of intelligence there is no other intelligence which could be the substratum of the dream world. Thus the subsidiary ignorance cannot give rise to the dream objects. So ultimately we have to assume that it is primal ignorance alone which serves as the material cause of these objects. Viewing this Saṅkara made the statement that it is the primal nescience, the darkness termed as sleep which is the root cause of the dream and waking worlds. This primal nescience is sublatable only by Brahma knowledge which has the capacity to remove the dream's material cause. The apparent character of the dream, however, is due to a defect such as sleep, over and above the primal nescience.

1. Ś.Lś., p.461.
2. Iśid., p.461, see also V.Śrī., pp.136-38.
The location and object of Ignorance:

Now ignorance cannot exist in the void. It must always be ignorance of some thing about some thing, must always have a conscious locus or 'support' in which it exists and an object which it conceals from view. Further it has also been established that two categories exist and two only, the self and the non-self. From this it follows that the locus or support of ignorance cannot be the non-self. For the very nature of the non-self is ajnana and ignorance existing merely in ignorance is unthinkable, since the existence of ignorance implies a knower or at least knowledge. Again, on the view that the locus of ignorance were the non-self there would be no attainment of knowledge and consequently knowledge would not exist. But ignorance depends on knowledge for its existence, since it exists only by virtue of negating it. Further the not-self is born of ignorance. It is manifestly absurd to suppose that that which is logically and causally prior can only exist supported by and dependent on its own effects. Nor again has the not-self any form independent of and different from ignorance where by it could serve as its locus and support.

2. C. harīcāka L.319.
3. Čañottana's commentary on *Vidhi, IV.104-105.
These arguments rebut the possibility of the not-self serving as the support of ignorance, and when we reflect upon these arguments deeply they show that not-self cannot be the object concealed by ignorance either. Therefore, the not-self is neither the locus nor an object of ignorance.

From the above discussion we conclude that it is the self alone which can possibly be both the locus and object of Avidya. All of us have the experience 'I do not know' and in scripture Narada says 'I am only a knower of the Mantras, my Lord, I do not know the self.' The arguments which rebut the not-self as locus and object of Avidya do not apply to the self. The self indeed is not identical with ignorance, since its nature is pure consciousness. Again, on the hypothesis that the self is the locus of ignorance, a difference is introduced into the locus in the form of a break in knowledge whereby the existence of ignorance as supported in the locus can be established. This is significant, and again, on this view the attainment of knowledge is possible, since the self through its reflection in the mind, can produce knowledge.

'Self is not born of ignorance, since it is the eternal rock-firm changeless self by nature. From all that precedes Suresvara and his followers conclude that it is the self alone which is the locus or support of ignorance.

Now the question arises what is the object concealed by ignorance sustained by the self? 'The self is that object' replies Suresvara. Now the difficulty arises that ignorance is incompatible with the self, since the latter is of the very nature of knowledge, is non-relational, is instrumental in the production of knowledge which is the opposite of ignorance, and is the antithesis of ignorance.

To this question Suresvara replies that ignorance is compatible with the self. For in reality the self remains undifferentiated. It assumes the form of knower, knowledge and known through mere ignorance alone, just as it is through mere ignorance that a rope becomes a snake. The self and the rope remain in reality the same and quite unaffected. Hence when ignorance is shaken off there is complete absence of all the evils of duality and the escape from ignorance occurs only through the holy texts when heard by a man conversant with their meaning.

It should be noted here that the question as to the nature of the smrtya and Visaya of avidya is not discussed by Sri Sankara polemically, but from his commentary of Gitā and his Upaniṣada sahasri it is evident that he held Brahman to be the locus and object of ignorance. He did not return to the question "whose is avidya" on the ground that to do so would imply that avidya is real.

1. Ibid., p.107, and Gauḍapāda's commentary.
2. BhGp., XIII.1, and Up. Sahsri XVIII.44.
The view of Sarvajnatma

Sarvajnatma, the disciple of Sureswara, is of the opinion that the ajnana which rests on the pure self and operates on it as its object covers its real nature and creates illusory appearances. By means of its contact with pure intelligence it gives rise to the three fold appearance of God, soul and the world. He points out that the association of Ajnana is not with the pure Brahman, nor with individual souls, but with the pure light of Brahman which shines as the basis of individual souls. In consequence of this connection alone the ajnana appears and is perceived, when with the dawn of right knowledge pure Brahman is realised, the ajnana is not left. It is only in the light of Brahman as under lying the individual souls that the ajnana is perceived as when one says 'I do not know what you say'. It is neither the individual soul nor the pure one which is Brahman, but the pure light as it reveals itself through each and every individual soul.

The main argument of Sarvajnatma against the doctrine of Jiva-sarma-svidya is that an individual soul being an effect of ignorance is posterior to avidya, so it cannot be the locus of its own cause which is prior to it.

2. ibid., II.321.
3. ibid., II.319.
The doctrine of Jiva as avidya:

The formal polemical discussions of the question of arsraya and Vissaya of avidya were first introduced by Sri Sankara's pupils Padmapada and Suresvara with special reference to the views of Mandana Misra. Avidya, according to Mandana, resides in the individual soul. It does not belong to Brahman, because there is no evidence of its existence if it does not exert its influence upon its location. Brahman will cease to be Brahman in case Brahman is influenced by nescience. If it were objected that jiva cannot be the locus or support of avidya since the very conception of jiva presupposes avidya, the answer that nescience itself is an inconsistent category, so its relation to the individual soul may be an inconsistency. The inconsistency according to Suresvara, of the relationship of avidya with the individual soul is that the individual soul is identical with Brahman, diversity of jives has its root cause in imagination, but this imagination cannot belong to Brahman which is devoid of all imagination. This imagination does not belong to jiva because jiva itself is a product of imagination.

Regarding this inconsistency Mandana proposes two solutions, firstly, that the word Maya implies what is an inconsistent, had it been consistent, it would have ceased to be Maya. It might be

1. Dr. Iddhi., P.I.C.
a reality. Secondly it can be said that jives come from avidya and avidya comes from jives, but it is urged against this that this cycle is beginningless, therefore, there is no ultimate beginning either for the jive or for the nescience. Mandana says that this view is held by those who admit that avidya is not the material cause of this world. Through this avidya jive suffers the cycles of birth and rebirths and this avidya is natural to jive since jives are a product of avidya.

That kept the controversy alive was the fact that in the Bhāmatī commentary the great scholar Vāsandeti Mīra tried to reconcile Śrī Śankara's views with some of the main tenets of Mandana Mīra's Brahma Šiddhi on which he wrote a commentary, called Brahma Tattva Samiksa, now unfortunately lost. The doctrine that jiva, not Brahman, is the locus of avidya the doctrine that a plurality of avidyas exists one for each jiva, and the doctrine that avidya is not one (ulavidya) all appear in the Bhāmatī, together with many others of Mandana Mīra's characteristic views.

1. Ibid., p.10.
2. Ibid., p.12.
The Doctrine of drsticari

The normal Vedanta-view holds that objectively phenomena are happening, but that these are illusory only in the sense that they will not last permanently. They have only a temporary and relative existence in comparison with the truth which is ever the same, constant, and unchangeable entity in all over perception and in world appearance. Normally advaitins hold that the objects of the world are existent as phenomena, when they come into contact with our senses, the subjective perceptions are created.

The opposite of this doctrine is the theory held by some advaitins that there are many individuals and the world appearance is no permanent illusion for all people, but each person creates for himself his own illusion, and there is no objective datum which forms the common ground for the illusory perception of all people. Like the seer of dreams, jiva himself posits everything in himself, and thus is the case of all. Just as when ten persons see in darkness a rope and, having the illusion of a snake there, run away, and agree in their individual perception that they have seen the same snake, though each really had his own illusion and there was no snake at all, so in empirical existence each jiva has his own illusion yet all of them are

unanimous in respect of the existence of the worldly objects.

Creation as simultaneous with perception:

According to this school it is said that all is pure and simple illusion, that things exist only when they are perceived and dissolve into nothingness as soon as we cease to perceive them. The first and foremost indication of this type of existence we have in Mirukta, where a 'word' is spoken of as 'Indriyamitya' according to Sudharmasena. A world is said to be dependent on the sense of speech. When one utters a word another hears. The existence of it lasts as long as it is being uttered and heard. It disappears as soon as it is uttered and heard. In the same way the things must be perceived if they are existent, and they are not existent when they are not perceived. The adherents of this school tried to show that there were no grounds for holding that the external objects existed even when they are not perceived or that external objects had a reality independent of their perception. The nucleus of this doctrine is that the world is not an objective entity, for, apart from perception it does not exist. This is the very reason why it is assumed to be a mere illusion. Just as the objects of dream are concomitants of perception so the objects

1. V.S. Uktavali, 12.
of the waking state too are the constituents of perception. The term 'draya' is found upon analysis to mean and stand for nothing but complexes of experienced qualities. Indeed, 'existence' except as presence to consciousness is meaningless. Hence nothing can be said to exist except mind and the mental content. It means that 'draya' is an illusion.

Now, there arises a difficulty on the view of perception as creation, that if all the objects of empirical existence are assumptive, who is he that posits them? Is it the unconditioned self or the self conditioned by nascent? The first alternative does not stand to reason for, even in release the world would persist as the unconditioned self exists there who posits it without the need of any other instrument. Thus there would be no difference between transmigration and release. The second too does not stand to reason because a person, who posits an assumptive object must be deemed to be prior to the assumption of the assumptive and nascent itself being assumptive cannot condition the self before its assumption.3

Some advaitins get over this difficulty by the remark that the stream of Samsara has had a series, without beginning and end, of the assumptive nascentes and the selves who posit

1. C.L.S., p.476.
2. Ibid., p.477.
3. Harati, p.17; see also Br.Vidyā, p.15.
them. In this stream he, who is conditioned by the earlier posited nescience, posits the subsequent nescience. And since in the case of the stream of posited and posited, it cannot be said, 'this is the first', there is no defect of infinite regress. A continuous stream has neither beginning nor end; and infinite regress is no defect in what is recognised strictly to be like a stream. So this process being beginningless like the succession of the seed and the sprout there is no reciprocal dependence.

Some followers of Drastisarti school are of the opinion that the six ones are in their own nature beginningless; they are not posited by any conditioned self. Nescience is one of them, so in reality certainly it is beginningless. They do not fall into the line of the drastisarti objects. 'Perception is creation' is admitted in respect of the rest of the world. But in reality the scriptures have the non-difference of the jiva from Braham as their main object. As instrumental to the apprehension of this object, there is mention of creation and destruction, since the comprehension of Braham devoid of the connection with the universe comes about through superimposition and subsequent removal thereof.

Remark:

The drastisarti-vada has no proper epistemology, for the experiences of each person are determined by his own subjective avidya and previous impressions as modifications of avidya. The

1. V. 8. 6. 16.
2. C. L. E. 2. 6. 61.
mental and physical phenomena are alike in this and both are modifications of ajnana. The dastisvaratvada theory is the nearest to the Buddhism. The only difference between them is that while Buddha does not admit of any permanent being Vedanata admits Brahman to be the permanent unchangeable reality as the only truth.

The removal of ignorance

According to Shankara, as interpreted by his followers like Turesewara, dispersion of avidya (avidyanivritti) is not a negation, since negation as a separate category has no existence. So dissolution of ignorance means only Brahman. But according to Sankara there is no harm in admitting the existence of such a negation as the cessation of ignorance, for the nonism of Brahman means that there is only one positive entity. It has no reference to negation i.e. the negation of duality only means the negation of all positive entities other than Brahman. The existence of such a negation as the cessation of ignorance does not hurt the monistic creed. In accordance with the view of Sankara too cessation of avidya at the time of the realization of the true nature of Brahman, is not perceived as different from Brahman.

Now there arises a difficulty that the removal of nescience being not other than the eternally existent Brahman what is the use of the knowledge of the true nature of the self because Brahman is immutable and knowledge cannot make any

1. L. Chandra, p.112.
2. "I.e., p.684."
difference in it. This difficulty is got over by the reply that knowledge is sought after since in the absence of knowledge, nescience, the root of evil, being existent, evil too would continue. The removal of nescience, though of the nature of self, is what is effected by knowledge. There is no condition that an effect (Sadhya) must have a beginning (Sadi). An Anadi (beginningless) thing can be an effect (Sadhya) provided its existence and non-existence is dependent upon the existence and non-existence of another thing. Accordingly the cessation of ignorance, though not other than Brahman, is effected by the knowledge of Brahman. It is because the definition of an affected thing runs thus; when the existence of one thing, there is the existence of another at the next instant, when, in the absence of that, there is the absence of the other, the latter is what is effected by the former.

In this context it can be objected that apparently it is illogical to say that in the absence of knowledge there is absence of the self, because there is no difference between Brahman and the destruction of ignorance. While the self is deemed to be eternal omnipresent and omniscient, its absence does not stand to reason. The Advaitin means to say that in reality there can be no absence of Brahman owing to its 'being homogeneous', yet its non-appearance, owing to the obscuration of nescience is its absence.

1. Ibid., p. 106.
Ananda Bo-Th, the author of Nyāyamekāranda, is not satisfied with the foregoing view. He argues against this view as follows: The dispersion of nescience cannot be one with the self, because in that case there will be an eternal removal of ignorance, the state or quality of a Nīvṛtti (removal) cannot be assigned to the self which is eternal and beginningless, because Nīvṛtti presupposes the thing (abode) wherein it (Nīvṛtti) abides. Thus the quality of having no beginning (Aśadita) cannot be attributed, to the self. Moreover, the removal of Avidya is effected by knowledge, then how Avidyāsvārsti can be non-different from the self, because there will be the contingency of its (Atman's) being a Rāhva (effect) and consequently the self cannot be the abide of Avidya from eternity, while Ajñana is admitted to be beginningless.

Viewing all these difficulties which cannot be got over by the help of logic-chopping, he concludes that the removal of nescience is certainly something other than the self, and that (removal of nescience) is not real, as non-duality will be compromised in that case, nor is it unreal (Aṣat) as that

1. N. Mekaranda, p. 353.
2. Ibid., p. 355.
cannot be effected by knowledge. Its nature cannot be real and yet unreal (Sadesade-ruppa) because it would incur contradiction. It cannot be indeterminable (Anirvacaniya) since an indeterminable thing has a beginning and has as a rule, ignorance for its material cause. Thus it would mean that even in release the material will be persistent. And there will be the contingency of its (Avidyanivrtti’s) removal by Jnana. But in release there are no means of knowledge by which it may be removed. So it is legitimate to hold that it (Avidyanivrtti) is a mode (Prakara) other than the above four modes.

After a long discussion Ananda Bodha mentions the view that cessation of Avidya may be Anirvacaniya, indeterminable. His commentator Citsukha holds that this view is Ananda Bodha’s own. The object raised against the indeterminability of Avidyanivrtti can be disposed of, but, if indeterminability means sublatability, then Avidyanivrtti is other than Anirvacaniya. That Avidyanivrtti is a fifth mode is the view which has been formulated first by Vijnaptatman in his Ista Siddhi. It is to be noted here that according to Indian logic the removal of ignorance is called Thamsabhava (Amnibilative non-existence) of nescience. Thamsabhava has a beginning but no end, and thus is eternal. If at the time of release

2. B. Devar, p.357.
3. Ibid., p.367.
4. Ibid., p.369.
Dhvesha of ignorance persists, it means that the locus of Dhvesha which is not other than a particular mode of avidya, too persists. Thus there will be the contingency of duality in the state of release. So Ananda Bodhi did not admit that avidya vinasa is a Dhvesabhava, but he says it is neither sat, nor Asat and nor nirvasaniya, but is a fifth mode.

The author of Vedanta Paribhasa admits Dhvesabhava:

According to him Dhvesabhava is not eternal but is subject to destruction. The annihilative non-existence takes its place when, for example there is a fall of a pestle or so on an earthen pot which consequently is broken into pieces. But when the pieces of the pot are destroyed the annihilation itself is destroyed. It cannot persist after the destruction of the pieces of the pot that is its locus, so the removal of ignorance at the dawn of true knowledge is not persistent as other than Brahman because its material cause, which is not other than avidya, is destroyed.

It is because the locus of the annihilation of ignorance is removable by the knowledge of Brahman. If the locus of avidya Dhvesha (annihilation of ignorance) be consciousness, then the eternity of Dhvesha is not other than the eternity

of Brahman that is the locus of Unavasa since the annihilation whose counter-correlate (Pratiyogin) is superimposed and which is comprised in the substrate, is of the nature of substrate itself.

In the above account of Tharma Raja's views it is clear that reality is not the counter-correlation or even the correlate of negation; what can be negated is the finite and the fleeting, not the infinite and the eternal, and it is not correct to speak of consciousness of Brahman as the substrate of negation in the way in which a particular entity is spoken of as the substrate; the latter can be removed to give place to something else, but consciousness which is pervasive and self-luminous cannot be so removed, rather is it that which remains over when all else is negated. Hence we have to say that the negation of nescience is itself knowledge, the negation of the finite is itself Brahman.

1. Removal of Avidya other than the self but indeterminable

Avidya/advrtti was not regarded as indeterminable by Ananda Bodha although he admitted it to be other than Brahman.

Advaitadvrttiya maintains that avidya/advrtti is other than the self and is certainly indeterminable like nescience.

1. V.Purt., p.237.
2. Odt., p.233.
because everything of empirical existence is indeterminable.
The objection that the persistence of the removal of ignorance
at the time of release presupposes the persistence of its
material cause, that is, ignorance, is untenable because there
is no evidence for the persistence of the removal at the
time of release. We have no means of knowledge by which we can
know the persistence of \textit{avidyanivrtti} in release. The
annihilative non-existence (\textit{Nihawnsabhava}) is not an object of
perception. If in the case of a pot broken by a hammer there
be recognised a variety of non-existence, called destruction,
which has that pot as counter-correlate, is permanent and has
the ground for its locus, then when the heap of pot-sherds has
been removed or when, even without its removal, we do not
see any special configuration in the post-sherds distinguishing
them from the sherds of a jug or basin, why should there not
be the perception of that non-existence? Nor \textit{Chata-dhvensa-abhava}
(destruction of a jar) can be inferred from a special con-
figuration of the pieces of a jar. Advaitavidyaacarya's view
that is based upon the doctrine of \textit{Varayayani} that a \textit{Shava} is
pure existence, which has six phenomenal changes or
modifications. Just as origination is a modification of existence

1. \textit{Bid.}, P.691.
relating to the first instant alone, so destruction too is a modification of existence relating to the last instant alone. Such modifications of existence taking their momentary existence are perishable not eternal. Hence it is that in everyday experience we observe the origination related to three times i.e. past, present and future. Similarly destruction also is a momentary mode of existence, which relates to three times. An entity defined by space and time cannot be eternal so Bhavasa is not ever-lasting, and thus there is no contingency of the persistence of the removal and its material cause, \( \text{vidya} \) at the time of release. Thus \( \text{vidyanivrtti} \) according to Advaitavidyacharya is not identical with release and the self, but is momentary and indeterminable.

Momentariness of the removal of ignorance:

The objection that if thus the removal of nescience be momentary, release will not be a permanent human goal, is based on a fallacy. For, the removal of nescience is not, indeed, of itself a human goal, since it is other than both happiness and absence of misery. It is accomplished by true knowledge of the self. It has been stated many times that nescience obscures the impartite bliss, which constitutes the

true nature of the self, and gives birth to the transmigratory existence, the only cause of misery. By the realization of Brahman the ignorance is destroyed and consequently there is the manifestation of the bliss and the misery of transmigration is put to an end. Thus the removal of ignorance being accomplished by knowledge subserves these. The highest goal of human life is the cessation of misery and the attainment of eternal and immeasurable bliss. And this is by no means an effect but is eternal.  

Removable only by the study of Vedanta:

It is a general assertion of the advaitins that all the 'vrttis' with the forms of the perceptible objects have intelligence for their object as defined by the respective objects. From this it is evident that in all types of cognitions it is the Brahman intelligence which constitutes the object and thus is cognised through all the means of knowledge. An insentient being which is a modification of nescience cannot be an object of knowledge, since it is not liable to be concealed by ignorance. It is contrary to reason to hold that darkness is buffered by darkness. A veil of nescience can neither be veiled nor revealed. Ignorance rests on intelligence, and conceals as it just as darkness conceals its locus. Thus

it is the intelligence which being defined by the respective objects becomes an object of the means of knowledge. From this it follows that in all cognitions there will be the possibility of the removal of the primal ignorance which conceals Brahman Chaitanya. To this it is stated by Suresvara in his Vartika, that all means of knowledge being possible in the case of Brahman, because of its being the locus of the fruit of all means of knowledge, there is the statement, 'It is to be heard', in order to restrict the means to the Vedanta. In conformity with the restrictive injunction of the Vedanta passages it is that knowledge of Brahman which is generated by Vedanta alone, and which being aided by the unseen potency due to the restriction, removes, ignorance about Brahman. Hence there is no possibility of its removal by the cognition of pot etc.

Others, however, say thus: that the primal ignorance which has pure intelligence for its locus and object, is removable by that knowledge alone which is generated by texts like 'Thou art' and pertains to the non-difference of the jiva from Brahman. These advaitins take their stand on the statement of Sri Shankar that knowledge only serves as the means of release

1. S.V., II. V., p. 268.
2. S.I., III., II. 3.
3. S.I., II. 1, p. 331.
which springs from the passages like 'Thou art' and has the identity of jiva with Brahman as its 'object'. The view stands that test of logic, since the non-difference of jiva from Brahman has been concealed by the primal ignorance, so the knowledge related to their identity alone can remove the primal nescience. Thus there is no possibility of its removal by the cognition of the objects like pot etc., which has for its sphere the bare existence of intelligence, not the non-difference of jiva-intelligence from Brahman-intelligence. Now an objection is raised against this view that the knowledge of Brahman like the knowledge of pot etc. cannot remove the primal ignorance, because while the cause and effect can co-exist as in the case of cloth and threads, the simultaneous existence of the remover and the removed is impossible. The very existence of the remover depends on its displacement of the removal. So the 'vrtti' whose object is Brahman cannot remove the primal ignorance which constitutes its material cause because they are not in conflict with each other. The advaitin's rejoinder to this objection is that in this system (advaita) the primal ignorance is not deemed to be an immediate material cause of the vrtti having Brahman for its object. It is the inner organ, which is its immediate substantial cause, so that the 'vrtti' has the capacity to remove the primal nescience. If the opponent insists that they stand to each other like cause and

1. *i.e.*, p.532.

effect, the adwaitin rejoins that though generally such a
conflict is not seen elsewhere between the cause and effect
yet we observe that the conjunction of fire with a cloth is
itself an effect of the cloth, nevertheless it destroys the
cloth so the conflict between knowledge and ignorance caused
by their having one and the same object exists and consequently
the knowledge of Brahman can dispel the primal ignorance.¹
The fire of spiritual knowledge arising from the great sentences
of the upanisads burns up the delusion of the individual soul,²
since the two are incompatibly opposed.

¹ S.L.C. p.670.
² N. idHt., v-8.