CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In the rich heritage of Indian Philosophy, a number of systems have evolved over centuries. One school, the Brahmanical, belongs to the Hindu system, while another, the Buddhist, has always assumed a superior status in the Indian context of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. Many systems have gone to Vedic sources with the grammar and substance of the Vedas and Upanishads.

The Upanishads and Bhagavad-gita are considered to be the most authoritative parts of Vedic scripture. These three constitute the triple foundation of the Vedanta philosophy. The Upanishads are considered to be the containing portion of the Vedas. Bhagavad-gita in eighteen chapters, is considered to be the supreme book of the philosophical and theological wisdom of any ancient cultural origin.
In the rich heritage of Indian Philosophy a number of systems have evolved which could be classified as belonging to the Astika school or the Nastika school. Theoretical conflict between these two philosophical schools has enriched Indian Philosophy in general. Of course, the Astika systems has always assumed a superior status in the Indian context. Of the six systems of Astika Philosophy, Vedanta occupies the most prominent position. Many scholars have gone to the extent of equating Vedanta with the sum and substance of Indian Philosophy.

Brahmasutra, Upanisads and Bhagavadgita are considered to be the most authoritative texts of Vedantic scriptures. These three constitute Prasthanatraya, the triple foundation of Vedanta. Upanisads are considered to be the concluding portion of the Vedas. Bhagavadgita in eighteen chapters, is considered to be the most meaningful and melodious of the philosophical songs existing in any known tongue. Written
sometime between 500 B.C. and 200 B.C., Brahmasūtra was authorised by Bādarāyanā, whose identity has not been clearly established so far. The same goes for Vyāsa too.

Brahmasūtra consists of 555 Sūtras. It is divided into four adhyāyas (chapters), each with four Pādas. Each pāda is further divided into several adhikaranas. The I chapter deals with Brahman and its relation to the world. The second chapter discusses the views of a hypothetical opponent regarding Brahman, the individual Soul and the world. Chapter III presents methods by which one can attain knowledge of Brahman. The last chapter discusses the ultimate end of knowledge viz., liberation or mokṣa.

The importance of Brahmasūtra becomes evident from the fact that all the different propagators of the Vedānta system have invariably relied on it for explication and interpretation. Of course, there have
been differences of opinion among Acāryas about the purport Brahmasūtra. Such differences have led to the origin of different commentaries, which in their own way have enriched the Vedānta system of Indian Philosophy. There are several commentators of Brahmasūtra, from Śaṅkara to Pañcānanatarkaratna-bhattācārya. All these commentators have endeavoured to make their own contributions to the Vedānta Philosophy and have propounded separate schools of thought based on the Brahmasūtra. The commentary written by Śaṅkara is the most important Advaita Vedānta system is based mainly on the commentaries of Śaṅkara on the Brahmasūtra as also on the Upanisads and the Bhagavadgītā.

The first four Sūtras on the bhāṣya on which Padmapāda has commented have set forth the quintessence of Advaita Vedānta. In fact Padmapāda's Pañcapādikā
is one of the most significant of the *Vedānta* works known to us. Sankara's teachings have been interpreted differently by two different schools of thought, one headed by Padmapāda and the other by Vācaspati Miśra. A large literature grew round the works of these two authors, and they were known by the names of the *Vivarāṇa* school and the *Bhāmatī* schools of *Vedānta*. Padmapāda is the founder of the *Vivarāṇa* school. As one of the direct disciples of Śaṅkara, Padmapāda's philosophical position is of paramount importance in the understanding of the Advaita school of *Vedānta*.

The basic text of the *Vivarāṇa* school is the *Pāṇcapādikā*. It is a gloss on Śaṅkara's *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, and only a fragment of the text is now extant. Padmapāda's work and all other commentaries thereon are thus of academic as well as antiquarian interest, as they are undoubtedly of enormous interest to the
student of pure philosophy. Padmapāda's arguments are sound and have a strong appeal, and his pains-taking interpretations with hair splitting differentiations will certainly excite the admiration of succeeding generation with unabated vigour. The hair-line subtleties of his writings perhaps can only be compared with the critical analysis resorted to in the Navya Nyāya school of later times. The Pañcāpadikā is expository of Śāṅkarabhaṣya and as such it gives at the outset a detailed account of Superimposition - adhyāsa, which is the very crux of the Vedānta Philosophy. The doctrine of adhyāsa is opposed by the Naiyyayikas including the Bhāttamīmāṃsakas and Sāmkhyas on the ground that the silver appearing in the shell is real and is not sublated when the knowledge of the locus viz., shell, arises.

The Vijñānavādins of the Buddhist persuasion hold that adhyāsa is nothing more than consciousness taking shape outside of one's self even when
such shape does not correspond to an object, while the Madhyāmika Buddhist regards the so-called external world which includes cases coming under adhyāsa as blank or śūnya. These explanations of error the object of which is somehow to show the untenability of Adhyāsa, are known as anyathākhyāti or Viparītakhyāti, akhyāti, ātmakhyāti and asatkhyāti respectively. They are discussed in detail and their defects exposed in the Pāncapadikā.

Of the five khyātivādas, the anirvacanīya-khyāti belongs to the Advaita Vedānta. Padmapāda has shown that all the different views of illusion (khyātivāda) as illustrated by Śaṅkara himself, have necessarily to admit a common characteristic that the Advaitins drive at, and that makes all the different views practically boiling down to the anirvacanīya-khyātivāda of the Advaitins.
The notable subjects dealt with in the Pañcapadikā are (i) Mūlāvidya which is of a positive nature and without beginning - Anādibhāvarūpā mūlāvidya, (ii) The projection of an indescribable object in connection with Brahman - Brahmasthale Anirvacanīya-padārthotpattih, (iii) The twin adhyāyasas, viz., the Super imposition of jñāna and object - Jñānādhyā-sārthādhyāsātmaka - Adhyāsadvitatayam and (4) Super imposition of the physical body, of consciousness and of ignorance (sārīra, antaḥkaraṇa and avidyā) on the Ātman.

The objective of the Pañcapadikā is to place knowledge of the Vedas through verbal testimony above all else. In that process it also questions the value of meditation. Meditation is not the cause of immediate perception since it does not result is intuitive perception. In fact, meditation on Brahman is a Super imposition that hinders the process of reflection.
The most important contribution of Padmapāda is the Pāñcapādikā. It is divided into nine chapters called Varnakas, each of which deals with different problems relating to the Advaita Vedānta. His original contribution is the definition of falsity - Mithyātva. According to him the world is false in the sense that it is different both from what is sat and what is asat. According to Padmapāda, the terms māyā, avyākta, prakṛti, agrahaṇa, avaykta, tamaḥ, laya, śakti, etc. are synonymous with avidyā. Avidyā is that which obstructs the pure and independently self-revealing nature of Brahman. According to Padmapāda, Brahman is the root-cause of the world being as it is the ground of all apparent transformation. But it is through māyā that Brahman becomes the material cause of the world.
The definition of adhyāsa ās'Śmrtilūpaḥ' by Śāṅkara has been sought to be explained by Padmapāda. He shows that the consciousness appears falsely as the shell created by ignorance having its locus in it. Padmapāda in his Pañcapādikā has referred to the necessity of the adhyāsabhāṣya of Śāṅkara with reference to Brahmajñāna. The Viṣaya and Prayojana are corollaries of the first Sūtra - "Athāto Brahmajijñāsā". Padmapāda shows that the whole of the adhyāsabhāṣya and not any part thereof can suffice to bring out these Viṣaya and Prayojana. Knowledge of the unity of the universal and the individual Self (atmaikatva) and annihilation of the false knowledge of duality responsible for the eternal cycle of births and deaths are the ends of the Vedantic studies.

The Post Śāṅkara Advaitins explain the Jīvā- Brahman identity through three different theories viz.,
The Vivaraṇa school maintains and develops the Pratibimbavāda, the theory that the Jīva is the Pratibimba of Brahman. This Pratibimbavāda is explained briefly in this dissertation. There is greater emphasis on the problem areas of Advaita, eg., the theory of error, how avidyā works, its locus the implications of the various analogics Śaṅkara used the nature of perception, inference and other sources of knowledge or Pramanās.

Besides these the contemporaries of Padmapāda are also examined in this study. Padmapāda who belongs to the 9th century A.D. is one of the four direct disciples of Śaṅkara, the other three being Suresvara, Hastamalaka and Toṭaka. Besides them Maṇḍanamiśra and Vācaspatimiśra also are believed to have been the contemporaries of Padmapāda. Their significant
contributions to Vedānta has been discussed here. The contribution of Śaṅkara falls into three main divisions (1) Commentaries (2) Stotragranthas and (3) Prakaranagranthas. The most important among the commentaries are the commentary on the Brahmasūtra, the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavadgītā, the Prasthānātraya of the Advaitavedānta. Bhajagovindām, Śivanandalahari, Saundaryalahari, Daśaslōki, etc. are the most important among the Stotragranthas. The Aparokṣanubhavah, Ātmabodham, Upadeśasāhasri, Satasloki, etc. come under the Prakaranagranthas.

As one of the four great disciples of Śaṅkara, Sureśvara is also the contemporary of Padmapāda. His most important works are the Naiśkarmyasiddhi and the Brhadāraṇyakopanisadbhāṣyavārttikā. These two works are briefly explained in this dissertation. Hastāmalaka is another contemporary of Padmapāda.
His first and foremost work is the Hastamalaka-stotra, constituting his reply to Śaṅkara's question "who art thou?" All the thirteen verses in it ending with the line "sanityopalabdhi swarūpo ahamātmā". Another contemporary of Padmapāda was Totakācārya. His earlier name was Ānandagiri. His most important work is the Totakāstaka. It consists of eight verses composed in the Totaka metre. As he wrote this astaka in the Totaka metre he came to be known as Totakācārya. Besides Totakāstaka, he was credited with the composition of a work called Śruti-sārasamuddharaṇa which is also explained in this dissertation.

Another contemporary of Padmapāda is Mandanāmisra. His most important work is Brahmasiddhi. Vācaspatimisra was also the contemporary of Padmapāda.
He was the propagator of the Bhāmatī School of Advaita Vedānta. His most important work is Bhāmatī. These works are also discussed in detail in this study.

The Pañcapādikā is one of the most important among the Vedānta works. The very fact that Padmapāda's uncle once tried to destroy his own home so that the Pañcapādikā would not see the light, is an eloquent testimony to the greatness of this work.