Chapter VII

OBSERVATIONS.

On the basis of the general study and also of the textual examination of Gūḍgūḍhārthadīpikā under taken in the foregoing chapters some observations are made here.

The stress in Gūḍhārthadīpikā.

Numerous are the commentaries on the Gūḍa. ancient as well as modern. Of them Sankara's bhaśya is famous for its masterly treatment of the subject. Of the commentators of 'Sāṅkarabhaśya everyone has accepted his own mārga.'

As a rule the approach of Madhusudana is based on the monistic philosophy of Sankara. But he has brought about a synthesis of Jñāna and Bhakti. Gūḍhārthadīpikā is remarkable for its catholicity and erudition. In the process the author
has culled the essence of all awakened thought of India, up to his time. All the Vedic schools of philosophy have been alluded to, commented upon and accepted to the extent of their conformity with monism, the main theme of this great scripture. 2 A good deal has been written on Yoga. But through all this learned effort runs the one increasing idea of complete surrender to God, a complete merger of the individual with the Absolute, of a fusion with the unqualified through love of and devotion to the Qualified.

Treatment of topics

In the Gīgūdhārthadīpikā of Madhusudana all the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavadgītā have been elaborately dealt with. Madhusudana divides the whole of his commentary into three parts. Each part contains six chapters. The first part is named Karmakāṇḍa. Second Bhaktikāṇḍa and third Jñānakāṇḍa.

The first part established with impeccable logic the Essence of the Pure self indicated by the word Tvam of the Upaniṣadic saying. The second part determines the concept
Tat, the principle of Supreme Bliss through instruction on devotion to the Deity and on the way of worship. The third part establishes clearly the identity of the two principles Tat and Tvam, equates the two. Thus the three parts are mutually related.

Madhusudanarasavati has named the chapters of Gitāgūḍhārthadīpikā in a peculiar way. The names of the adhyāyas of the Gitāgūḍhārthadīpikā are as follows:

1. Arjunavisādayogādhyāya.
2. Sarvagīthārthasūtrānādhyāya.
5. Svarūpaparijnānādhyāya.
6. Adhyātmayogādhyāya.
7. Jñeyadheyabrahmanirūpaṇādhyāya.
A comparative analysis of the names of chapters and their contents will show that there is a refreshing property in
the naming process.

**Style of Gūḍhārthadīpikā**

The most noticeable feature of *Gītāgūḍhārthadīpikā* is a full note on the import of every little word, be it a proper noun, a preposition or a conjunction, occurring in the numerous stanzas of the *Gītā*. The following verse is exactly correct.

*Bhagavadpūdabhāṣyārthamālochyātiprayāṇataḥ*

*Prāyaḥ pratyaksāram kurve Gītāgūḍhārthadīpikām.*

Madhusudana has paid keen attention on each and every word of the commentary of Sankara. The hidden meaning of actually every letter of Sankara's commentary is brought to light by Madhusudana. Wherever necessary he reveals his own ideas also in his *Gītāgūḍhārthadīpikā*. He has extracted the essence of the *Gītā* in an inimitable way. The teaching of the *Gītā* is simple and universally applicable. The study of the *Gītā* will offer a society of human interest and show the way to peace and happiness. Death is the inevitable concomitant of birth and it is one's individual *Karma* that limits one's life on earth. As a matter of fact, nothing perishes in essence. There-
fore, Arjuna must fight and not shirk the battle. The Sakti of the mantras of the Gita lies in the saying of the Lord, Sarvadharmaparyatityajyamamekam Saranam Vraja. In the context of a rigorous and strident ritualism of the Veda, such a creed indeed is very bold. It was certainly needed a superman to preach the doctrine free from the trammels of ritualism. Madhusudana undoubtedly, put across this great idea effectively through his Voluminous commentary.

Theistic leanings.

Madhusudana, being a great teacher of Advaitavedanta could hardly go beyond the typical views of the school. He pledged his allegiance to this system by confirming over and over again the unity of Absolute Reality. Knowledge i.e. Vritti-jñana of Brahman leads to salvation. And salvation is absolute identity between Jiva and Brahman. Yet Madhusudana could not keep himself away from the influence of Vaisnavism of his time. But the two apparently conflicting streams of thought did not remain unassimilated. As one of the greatest intellectuals of medieval India, he tried to forge a reconciliation between the Advaita view and the
Vaisnave view.

Madhusudana was an ardent devotee of Krsna. It is a wonder as to how the learned muni who established the supremacy of Advaita by writing one of the accepted masterpieces of Vedānta could proclaim Lord Krsna as the ultimate reality. Madhusudana emphasises on Bhakti as a means for emancipation. This also goes in tune with his devotion to krsna. Madhusudana's soft corner towards theism never amounted to tend him corrupt the fundamental tenets of Advaita. Gūḍhārthadīpikā bears evidence for this. In fact Madhusudana did not meddle with Bhakti in his Gūḍhārthadīpikā.

Historical relevance.

There is an opinion that history describes certain unique events in time and space and that it sticks to the particular and the personal and cannot explain the external truths of Vedānta. This has originated from an outmoded view of history. Modern studies in the fields of philosophy and history have proved the contrary. History is not concerned
with unique events alone.

In the young age Madhusudana stayed in Navadvipa reading Nyāya under the great contemporary masters. The flood gates of Sri Chaitanya's cult of love and devotion had just been opened and the entire country was submerged by the torrent. Young Madhusudana came under the effective influence of this religious fervor. He intended to put this cult on a firm metaphysical basis. Sankara's monism held sway over all philosophical thinking. But the cult of Bhakti presupposed a pluralism, the principles of Jīva, Jagat Kāra.

After he studied monistic Vedānta under Ācārya Ramatirtha. He mastered its philosophy and was soon convinced of the truth of the Vedantic teaching of identification of self with ultimate Reality. To him this offered a better facility for a complete and unqualified surrender to God, the acme of Bhakti.

The Guru advised the pupil to renounce the world and take to ascetic life, in atonement. Madhusudana went to the great Sannyāsin Visvesarasarasvati and prayed to him for
initiation into ascetic life. The sannyāsin, however, informed him that it was a momentous decision he was taking and that there should be no going back upon it. As a test of his mental make-up, the Sannyasin asked him to write a commentary on the Gītābhāṣya and if that proved that he was fit for Sannyāsa, he would initiate him. Thus Madhusudana busied himself in writing his brilliant commentary Gūḍhārthadīpikā on the Gītā. Herein he has succeeded in integrating work, worship and wisdom on the basis of a monistic philosophy. Therein lies its merit and the commentary is all-embracing and comprehensive. It incorporates and collates a variety of views, on a common philosophical ground.

**Middle path**

One of the outstanding contribution of Madhusudana to Indian philosophy is his finding out of a middle way which can touch both monism and devotionalism.¹² His is a unique concept of Bhakti doctrine, where the bimba-pratibimbavada (theory of reflection and the reflected) and the theory of literary sentiment are exploited in such a way as to make a harmonised exposition
of the theory of devotion. The former is a purely monistic theory, while the latter is a typical Vaiśnava theory, highly developed in the Bengal School of Vaiśnavism. In the enumeration of the eleven stages of devotion Madhusudana illustrates them by fragments of the Bhāgavata, though Madhusudana conceives these stages on the analogy of the stages of knowledge as enumerated in the Yogavāsiṣṭha. Madhusudana’s commitment to Advaitavedānta is clear from his attitude towards the core principles of the system. He never diluted the theory of Advaitavedānta in the name of Bhakti.

Brahman.

Philosophy is the relentless pursuit of truth. And truth, according to the Advaitavedānta is Brahman alone. So the knowledge of Brahman is the main point, which the Advaita vedānta tries to preach. Madhusudana argues that the true nature of Brahman can be known from the scripture alone because the limited knowledge of the individual fails to apprehend the unlimited and the unqualified nature of Brahman, the Absolute. As the doctrine holds that Brahman is the whole
having the universe and the enjoyer of it i.e. Jīvas as integral parts, this is known as Visisṭādvaitavāda. The idea is confirmed by several texts from the ‘Sruti and Smṛti viz the universe and selves form Brahman limbs etc. In this world Brahman's own part has become the eternal Jīva and so on. Madhusudana proves this theory in his Gitāgūḍhārthadīpikā.

He reveals that the reality that subsist free from names and forms, is Brahman the absolute existence, the absolute consciousness and the absolute bliss.

Knowledge.

In Advaitavedānta, knowledge or consciousness is the only existing reality which is the essence of Brahman the only ever revealed entity. Knowledge is used in Advaitavedānta to mean both absolute knowledge when left by itself and pragmatic knowledge when falsely related to false objects. Epistemology concerns knowledge distinct from absolute knowledge which is the metaphysical entity, though in substance all types of knowledge are one and same.

Philosophers have tried to apprehend ultimate knowl-
edge through empirical knowledge. An object is exposed to knowledge only through the operation of Vṛtti. Knowledge of an object being an empirical knowledge should therefore involve vṛtti. In other words, empirical knowledge is vṛtti jñāna i.e. consciousness reflected in vṛtti.

Madhusudana has noted in his Gītāgūḍhārthadīpikā the concept of yoga as explained by Patanjali. While elucidating the word cittavṛtti he refers to yoga as it occurs in the Sūtra Yogascīttavṛtti–nirodhah.

Madhusudana states that vṛtti is of five kinds:

(1) Pramāṇa vṛtti

(2) Viparyayavṛtti which means false knowledge. This vṛtti has five subdivisions. They are the kleśas of the Sāṅkhya school.

(3) Vikalpavṛtti is that by which non-existing it exists only objects like skyflower are used, in 'Sabda.

(4) The nidrāvṛtti is that which is the seat of
tamoguna. (5) Smṛtvṛtti is the knowledge of previous knowledge. That is the knowledge of the saṁskāra left by the knowledge formerly experienced. Since Smṛti embraces the impressions left by all the other four vṛttis, Madhusudana mentions it as the last of all. Madhusudana described them as belonging to Sāksijñāna. Vikalpa-vṛtti is, on the other hand not a knowledge at all, but is merely a mention-operation. So evidently all the five vṛttis need not necessarily be taken to be citta-vṛttis.

Liberation.

Mukti or liberation in Advaitavedānta is not a resultant state of Jīva, which it should attain. According to this school Mokṣa is an ever-accomplished fact. It is nothing but Brahman the absolute bliss. Absolute cessation of misery which precedes liberation implies the blissfulness of liberation and Jīva aspires to achieve it due to liberation's being bliss itself.

Vedantic moksa is thus not mere cessation of misery but is absolute bliss. Madhusudana maintains that liberation
is:- Ātman, the integral all bliss non-dual consciousness which is pure existence. Such liberation is, however, indicated by knowledge which is known as akhandākāraccittavṛtti and which comprehends unity between Jīva and Brahman. This unity produces the great Vedantic statements like the tattvamasi. This principle is well seen in the Gūḍhārthadīpikā. Madhusudana first establishes in his Gītāgūḍhārthadīpikā the essence of the pure self indicated by the word Tvam. The second part of the Gūḍhārthadīpikā determines the concept of Tat and thirdly he established clearly the identity of the two principles Tat and Tvam by equating the two.

Madhusudana recognises seven steps of knowledge and for this he draws upon Yogavāśistha. The first state viz. 'Subhecchā is the four fold sādhana, which represent the general preparedness of the mind. The second stage i.e. Vicāraṇā consists in 'sravaṇa and manaṇa. This means the vicāra of Vedāntic statements under the guidance of a preceptor. The third is tanumānas, which is attained when the aspirant deeply meditates upon Vedantic teachings. The first three states are described as the means; the four-fold Vedantic sādhanas are
are considered to be the means for the attainment of liberation. These three states presuppose the knowledge of a pluralistic world, characteristic of a jāgradavasthā. The fourth state is called sattvāpatti, when reality viz the identity between Jīva and Brahman becomes revealed to the aspirant by the indeterminate knowledge.

The last three among the seven states are different stages of a jīvanmukta. In this state the jīvanmukta practises savikalpakasamādhi and by that practice his mind experiences nirvikalpakasamādhi marked by complete detachment. This state is called suṣupti in so far as the aspirant voluntarily returns from it to the world of every day life.

The sixth state is known as padārthabhāvanī. In this state the jīvanmukta lives for a long time in samādhi. He is held to be worthier than the jīvanmukta of the previous stage for he is more advanced towards final emancipation.

In turyagāvasthā, the jīvanmukta remains completely at ease. Even his life is maintained by God, while the ordinary physical functions are discharged with the help of
others. Such jīvanmukta remains always settled in integral and transcendental pleasure. After having attained this stage the jīvanmukta never returns to the vyāvahārika world. This state results in videhamukti, when with the total exhaustion of pṛarabdha karman, his physical body falls off.\textsuperscript{34}

Madhusudana says that the last three stages unfold the spiritual history of an enlightened soul in his unmitigated progress towards liberation. More and more, he forgets the world and settles progressively on perpetual bliss. At last with the total exhaustion of his pṛarabdha karman comes disembodied liberation.\textsuperscript{35} Madhusudana accepts and establishes that Brahmān is the only absolute liberation, the highest goal of jīva.

Bhakti

The study of Madhusudana's concept of Bhakti as evidenced by the Gūḍhārthadīpikā reveals distinct aspects. Madhusudana was the great Advaitavādin, a vigorous dialectician, determined to shatter every opposing tenet. However, he was also the great devotee of Lord Kṛsna.\textsuperscript{36} To have a complete picture of Madhusudana's achievement it is imperative to discuss both these aspects. Madhusudana proves that
the monistic metaphysics and devotionalism go hand in hand in the search for perfection and the achievement of unlimited bliss. In the introductory verses of his commentary on the Gītā Madhusudana gives a full description of the nature of spiritual pursuit. According to him one must perform Japa etc., in addition to niṣkāmakarma. The devotion for the Supreme Being may dawn in the mind of the devotee at any moment.

Madhusudana has drawn the line of differences between Brahmavidyā and Bhakti, yet his synthetic mind has eventually assimilated Brahmavidyā in the texture of Bhakti and has integrated it in the hierarchical evolution of Bhakti in its different stages. Madhusudana's mind in this direction is evident in his commentary on Bhagavadgītā where he says that jīvanmuktaś, being purified by knowledge, develop a love for Bhagavān.37

Madhusudana has explored a new path in which the doctrines of monism are reconciled to the theory of devotionalism. He recognises Bhakti as a means to the removal of avidyā, which leads to ultimate self realization. Bhakti
for Madhusudana is as effective as the 'Sravana, manana etc. of the Advaitins.\textsuperscript{38} As Bhakti leads to salvation through self-realization so knowledge serves both in the theory of devotion and in the monistic view as the direct cause of salvation. But according to devotionalism salvation is not the summum bonum of human life. After Bhagavata, Madhusudana propounds divine love above salvation, when divine love at its climax places the devotee in the state of perpetual bliss. The devotee enjoys at this stage the ecstasy of supreme love for Bhagavān. Such ecstasy, as stated before, is rasa and is Bhagavān himself. Ecstasy is regarded by the followers of Bhagavān as the highest goal of Jīva and Madhusudana accepts this view.\textsuperscript{39} The endeavour of the Advaitins ends in Brahmavidyā which Madhusudana calls as paramukti or supreme salvation.

\section*{NOTES AND REFERENCES}

1. Shilanand Hemraj. W.M.C., 
2. Gupta, S.K., Madhusudanasaraswati on the Bhagavadgītā, Delhi, 1977, preface.

3. Supra. Ch.II.


6. Power or import.

7. B.G. XVIII.66.


9. Ibid.


11. Gupta, S.K., Madhusudanasaraswati on B.G., A
Biographical sketch of the commentator Madhusudana.

12. Gupta, Dr. S., SPMS, Delhi, p.21.

13. GGD.p.315.


16. Gita.ch.15.7.

17. GGD.p.910-914.

18. Satyam jñānamanantham Brahma, Tat.2.1.1.


20. Ibid.p.146.

21. GGD.p.492.

22. Six kinds: prathyakṣa, anumāna, sabda, upamāna, arthāpatti and abhāva,
23. Avidya, asmita, raga dvesa and abhinivesah

24. Ibid p.150.

25. GGD.p.492.


27. Ibid. p.178.

28. Ibid.

29. GGD.p.315,317. Seven in numbers
'subecchā, vicāraṇā, tanumānasa, sattvāpatti, asamsakti, padārthabhavinī, turyagā.

30. Nityānityavastuviveka, ihāmuφapalabhogavirāga, samādamādi sādhana sampat and mumukṣutva.

31. Nirvikalpakajñānam.

32. GGD.p.316.

33. Ibid.p.316.
34. Ibid. p.315-317.

35. Ibid. p.315-317.

36. Yasya devepar̥ bhañ̤tir yathā deve tatha ā guru

Tasyaite kathitam hyarthāḥ prakāśanthe mahātmanah

Ityādi śrutimānena kāyena manasa girā

Sarvāsthāsu bhagavadbhaktiratropayujyate.


38. S.P.M.S.p. 209.