CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEM OF ETHICS IN SANKARA'S PHILOSOPHY - II

(a) The Problem of Values

It is now widely accepted that almost all systems of Indian Philosophy are philosophies of values and thus are fundamentally opposed to those of the West which are primarily concerned with existence. The non-dualistic system of Sankara and its bearing on ethics can be understood in its full significance only in the light of its treatment of values. Here the problem of values in Advaita is relevant and this discussion may be conveniently based on the view that Advaita is essentially a value philosophy.

When the ultimate end of human life is declared to be the realization of Brahman one may rightly ask: (i) what is the logical necessity of realizing Brahman? i.e., why should Brahman be realized at all? That it is the highest reality need not be a sufficient reason for realizing it unless it is also conceived as the supreme value. (ii) with regard to the means of realization, what is the logical and natural method in accordance with the conception of Brahman? How far the methods such as karmayoga, bhaktiyoga jñānayoga etc., can be considered as means leading to Brahma-jñāna? We shall first take up the problem of values.
A value is generally defined as a "quality of an object which involves any sort of appreciation or interest". There are, however, difference of opinion on this question. There are the objectivists like Nicholai Hartman, W. Urban, G.E. Moore etc., who hold that values are inherent in things themselves. There are others, the subjectivists such as R.B. Perry, D. Parker and G. Santyayana who think that values are imposed by feelings and interests of the subjects. There are still others like Samuel Alexander to whom values imply "amalgamation of the object with the human appreciation of it". Values, thus, according to them emerge in the subject-object relationship. There is a forth view held by Sankara and his school according to which all values are appearances i.e., only "imitations of the plenitude and fullness which the self is as the eternally complete reality and which therefore, as such, is of the essence of joy or आनंद".

In dealing with the problems of value in any philosophical system, the general tendency is to take the notion of a highest value as the central point of reference and arrange all others in terms of different kinds of values. The trinity

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1 Encyclopaedia Britanica, p. 962
of truth, beauty and goodness are regarded as the ultimate values which Alexander calls 'tertiary qualities'. The general discussions on value is concerned with these three qualities, though there is difference of opinion with regard to their trans-valuations, i.e., whether they can be ultimately reduced to one or the other.

Truth, Beauty and Goodness

Truth is a value because it satisfies a human impulse i.e., intellectual curiosity. Whether truth can be defined as such, or only in relation to beauty and goodness is a debated question. Frankena says that truth is not intrinsically good, for it may not be even known "what is good in itself is knowledge or belief in the truth". According to Whitehead truth is 'truth-relation' and is a qualification applied to appearance. Truth, thus, becomes "confirmation of appearance to reality". This definition takes reality into account. Thus, reality by itself is not a value; as value it becomes a factor in truth. He further holds that truth is not necessarily beautiful. Where it is found to be beautiful, there, truth is a value. There is thus, a co-ordination between truth and beauty. To put in the words of

4 Ethics, Prentice-hall, 1964, p. 73.

Whitehead himself - "in the absence of beauty truth sinks into triviality. Truth matters because of beauty".

Samuel Alexander suggests the 'coherence theory' of truth according to which truth is not correspondence with reality but coherence with reality. For him truth, taken separately, is a value like beauty and goodness, because it satisfies a human impulse i.e., intellectual curiosity. When reality becomes possessed by the mind it becomes truth. So the difference between truth and reality is that "truth is reality possessed by the mind". "Truth is a value" says the author, "and has value because it satisfies this human curiosity.......The passion of enlightened curiosity which we call enquiry makes knowledge desired for its own sake and at the same time makes that knowledge a value as the satisfaction of a human end".

The idea of truth as coherence is, again shared by F.H. Bradley in his 'Appearance and Reality'. The basic attitude of idealist philosophers towards reality is best represented in him. He speaks of reality as having two

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6 Ibid., p. 344
7 M.R. Convitz, op.cit., p. 102, 103.
8 Ibid., p. 102.
aspects viz., existence and character. "In every judgement" says Bradley, "the genuine object is reality which goes beyond the predicate and of which the predicate is an adjective". Like Alexander, he also holds that reality itself is not true. "Truth, to be true, must be true of something and this something itself is not truth". He rules out the idea of relation between truth and reality. They are inseparable. Truth includes the 'whole of reality' and it is attained only by self-realization i.e., realization of the self as identical with the universal self. It is "self-realization of myself and of the universe as one". One of the remarkable ideas of Bradley's concept of truth is that it has no validity outside the finite mind and outside space and time.

**Beauty**

Just as truth satisfies the intellectual curiosity, "beauty" satisfies the aesthetic impulse of human beings. According to Alexander beauty of the beautiful is appreciated not because it is heard or seen but "contemplated for its own sake". In fact the nature of beauty itself is that it is

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10 CCCP, p. 148

11 ETR, p. 325
enjoyed for its own sake. While Alexander considers that beauty is introduced into the objects by the mind, according to Whitehead it is the "internal conformation of the various items of experience with each other" or, in other words, coherence of experience. But the general tendency now is to consider beauty as a transcendental value rather than considering it as an aesthetic value.

Goodness

"Goodness" is the third in the trinity of tertiary qualities. The pragmatists who have no belief in ultimate values, deny the idea of ultimate good, and reject everything that is not attainable in finite experience. Like truth, goodness is also valid, but only with reference to practical utility. Good again is always 'means' and brings about desirable consequences in life. Thus according to them all goods are instrumental, and there is nothing intrinsically good without reference to practical use. This view of the pragmatist at once reminds us of a similar view of Spinoza: "By good I understand that which we certainly know to be useful to us".

12 'Adventures of Ideas', p. 341

13 CCCP, p. 230

14 Ethics (Tn) 1943, p. 144
Some schools of thought hold that the "worldly pleasure" is the highest good. The idea of 'pleasure' as the highest good was formulated into an ethical theory by Epicurus (egoistic hedonism). According to Utilitarianism, "pleasure of the community" or mankind is the only good. The latest writer on this issue, G.E. Moore, who partially agrees with this view holds that though pleasure is included in the good is not the only good. According to T.H. Green self-realization is the highest good. The moral self is the universal self and there is no clash between personal and social good. Such clashes are found only when one identifies oneself with the interests of the body etc., and acts accordingly. This conception of Green is closely a kin to Sankara's concept of good.

The different views, set forth above, show how philosophers are divided among themselves on the question of ultimate values. These views will help us to consider in detail the Advaitic position with regard to the ultimate value and their treatment by Sankara.

Sankara, it may be noted does not enter into a barren academic discussion on the nature of ultimate values. He does not treat it independently of reality. The conception of reality is his prime concern. Like Urban, Sankara thinks that theories of values are closely connected with reality as a whole.

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15 GCCP, p. 16.
The theories which discuss value without referring to reality are found to be unsatisfactory. They concern themselves with only subject or object and dismiss reality from all such discussions. Sankara on the other hand discusses the problem of values in close connection with ultimate reality, i.e., Brahman.

**Ultimate values in Sankara**

What are the ultimate values in Advaita? To find out an answer to this question we have to go into the question of 'desire'. Many philosophers take 'desire' as the starting point of value - theory. In this connection, a distinction must be made between 'what is desired' and 'what is actually desirable'. Taking this distinction into consideration value has evidently reference to what is ultimately thought of as desirable. The experience shows that what is actually desired by all is pleasure. But it is not the desirable one. What is actually desirable is satisfaction or 'Santi' which people think they can get in the pleasures of this world. But again experience shows that ultimate satisfaction does not come from the enjoyment of the pleasure of this world.

While we desire happiness, it is the happiness of our own self that we desire. It is also a fact that all living beings desire their 'self' more than anything else. Everything else is desired by him, only so long as it is beneficial
To him. This fact is most wonderfully expressed in one of the statements of the Upanishad, "The husband is loved not for his own sake but for the sake of the self which is loved above all else; riches are valued not for the sake of riches but for the sake of self that is valued above all else." (Tn.)

The fact that we desire happiness and that too only for ourselves will give rise to a number of problems. These problems are mainly related to the self. Is the self something which is always in a state of what, in such a way, that it always requires happiness from sense-objects? Or is it in itself happiness?

It is a truism that the pleasures of this world cannot give us ultimate satisfaction. Bradley, speaking about happiness, says that if it means a sum total of pleasure then it cannot be attained. Hence pleasures cannot be considered as 'Good'. For him happiness, in general, is the realization of one's concrete ideal self. In one context he remarks "pleasure is not the good, is not the end; that in pursuing the pleasure as such we do not pursue the good." The fact about happiness is that we are never happy until we realize the true nature of our own self which according to

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16 Br. Up. II - 4, 5.
17 Ethical Studies, p. 33.
18 Ibid., p. 126.
Sankara is *saccid-ānanda*. One attains ultimate happiness not by realizing oneself but by realizing oneself as *ānanda*. Worldly happiness is an ideal which can never be realized ultimately. Bradley has put it in the most beautiful way: "The sensuous satisfaction goes and leaves nothing real behind it, but the ideal satisfaction does not go. It remains, made more definite and intense by reflection on the memory of past enjoyment, and, as a thought, it rises, again before us when the enjoyment is over, and calls for its reality". According to Sankara *ānanda* alone is the ultimate value and its realization comes only in the realization of one's self. And each one of us is pure bliss, but does not realize it owing to our ontological ignorance of the self. This ignorance makes us go in pursuit of happiness outside ourselves not realizing that the self itself is in essence *ānanda*.

With regard to Truth, only the Absolute self is truth. Instead of telling that truth is reality it is better to say that 'reality is truth' for reality is also bliss and knowledge. Sankara accepts a criterion for truth and his conception of reality itself is based on this definition. In his commentary on the Tait. up. Sankara says: "yadṛūpena yanniścitam tadrūpam na vyabhicarati tad satyam" i.e., truth is that which never gets sublated or changed. Accordingly everything in

19 Ibid., p. 243

20 Tā. Up. II - 1.
the world changes and hence cannot be considered as real or true. Then the question is, is there anything which never changes? The question actually occurs in the Chāndogya upanisad, where Śvetaketu, after the completion of his studies is asked by his father whether he had ever studied about that by knowing which everything else becomes known. When the son pleads ignorance the father explains it by an analogy. There are a number of objects made of clay which have different names and forms such as pot etc. They all appear as diverse objects with no common character in them. But when we understand that they are all made of one stuff i.e., clay, we will come to know of the 'oneness' behind all the apparent diversity. The names and forms of the clay change. But the clay as such never changes vis a vis its effects and therefore that alone is true. The world is changing and is hence untrue. There is, however, one thing which does not change, but which is the witness of the changes - the knower of the changes i.e., ....the self. According to the definition of Sankara, thus, the self alone is true "tatsatyaṁ sa ātma".

The word 'truth' applies to reality, again, denies only the changing or sublating nature in Brahman. It does not positively assert the existence of a quality called truth. That

\[ \text{Cha. Up. VI - 1-3.} \]

\[ \text{Ibid., VI. 7-8.} \]
is why Sankara himself says: "atath satyam brahmaḥ brahmaḥ
dvikaṁnīvartaṇyati" i.e., the word truth is employed only to
distinguish brahman from all that is changing i.e., everything
other than Brahman. Thus 'satyaḥ brahma' means Brahman is
not untrue or unreal, a qualification applicable to every-
thing other than Brahman. Bradley has most appropriately
explained this when he says: "Any knowledge which on my view
in a proper sense be called truth is the qualification of
reality by ideal content". So also Brahman is true, but that
is only relative to the world which is untrue. In itself
Brahman is neither true nor untrue—"na sattamāsadoṣacyate".

When the reality is mentioned as 'truth' alone, there
is the possibility of mistaking Brahman as the cause of the
world (kāraṇatvam prāptam) i.e., as in the case of clay.
That is why it is also said that Brahman is 'knowledge' or
jñāna. The word jñāna does not here mean 'act of knowing'
but 'awareness'. It is 'pure awareness' by itself. It is
not 'aware of' something, for, there is nothing by the side
of this Brahman. If we say that Brahman is 'aware of' then
the duality of knower and known 'becomes/unnecessary and this
will clash with its infinitude'. Wherever there is duality

23 Tai. up. II-1.
24 ETR, p. 324
25 B.C. XIII - 12.
there is finitude and if Brahman is accepted as 'knower' then its infinitude will be affected. Therefore Brahman is "pure awareness".

'Awareness' is also not an attribute of reality. It is 'svarūpa' - its very being, like the heat of the fire or the light of the sun. The word jñāna is used only to define it and not to qualify it. Since "pure awareness" cannot be imagined, the idea is conveyed by using the word jñāna which stands for the faculty of intelligence.

The statement in the Upaniṣad that Brahman is truth, knowledge and infinite, according to Sankara, does not attribute qualities to Brahman i.e., the reality, here is not viśeṣya (qualified). If it is accepted as viśeṣya, then Brahman will have difference in itself (svagatabheda) - the difference of viśeṣya and viśeṣaṇa which is metaphysically unsound. That is why Sankara says that Brahman is mentioned here as viśeṣya only in so far as it is considered as something to be known jñeya. The adjectives are usually used to distinguish one object from the other which is also capable of being qualified by adjectives. For example, when we say blue-lotus,

26 jñāna kartṛtvā eka jñeya jñānānāhābhyaṁ pravibhaktamiti anantatā na syād "(STU. II - 1)

27 Yāttu brahmāno vijñānam tatsavituprakāśavat agnyusnā-avacca brahma svarūpānyatiriktam svarūpameva tad" (Ibid.)

28 Ibid.,
it means, the lotus in question is different from similar lotuses, also capable of being qualified by adjectives such as red, white etc., when there is only one object known eg., the sun, to say that the sun is only one does not make any sense. So also Brahman cannot be qualified by adjectives, because, there are no different 'Brahmans from which one Brahman must be distinguished by adding adjectives. The words `satya' etc., thus actually do not define Brahman - They speak of its `śvarūpa' true nature.

The reality, though it may be truth, knowledge and infinitude, still cannot have any value for man unless it is accepted also as ānanda or bliss. The reality is truth, but the knowledge of the truth need not be always a value. In certain cases knowledge of truth may be even a source of pain and sorrow. Therefore truth, if it were to be a value must also be ānanda. Similarly 'pure awareness' cannot be considered as a value unless it is ānanda. That is why Sankara says that the reality is also ānanda or bliss. This conception of reality as ānanda makes Sankara's system really "value - centric". The truth, beauty and goodness, can be thus reduced to one - i.e., ānanda. Thus there is only one ultimate value and that is ānanda. What is desirable in itself alone can be an ultimate value, and ānanda is the only value desirable in itself. Though from the axiological point of view truth and knowledge are also values, from the logical point of view there can be only one ultimate value. It is especially so when that is accepted as a fullfledged principle of the universe.
To prove that the self is ānanda Sankara resorts to the Śruti passages as well as to the experience of realized people. In the Tai up. commentary he says that the ordinary joy is obtained from the contact with sense-objects while Brahmananda is of a unique category and excels all other joys of this world. He further says that some people who have severed all connections with worldly enjoyments and are contemplating Brahman, are found to be very happy and that hence Brahman must be ānanda.

The word ānanda is usually understood in the sense of pleasure (sukha) but the bliss of the self is its essence. Its intensity and duration cannot be imagined. The word ānanda is applied on Brahman, because that is the only way to understand the bliss of Brahman. Moreover, that even the ordinary ānanda is the most desirable thing in the world is known to everyone. Thus it is to make the bliss of Brahman intelligible to the human intellect that the word ānanda is used here.

Sankara's conclusion, thus, is that reality is 'ānandaśvāruṇa' and every one of us is that reality. We do not realize

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29 STU. II-7
30 STU. II-8.

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it owing to our ignorance of the self - avidyā. The pleasures of this world are only a shadow or particle of the bliss of the self. "Sa eva ātmānandarūpovidyāyā paricechino vibhadvyate prānibhibhā" worldly happiness is a particle, being limited by avidyā. Sankara, further, gives an explanation of this empirical ānanda when he says that it is the very same Brahmānanda which is transformed into laukikānanda by the power of avidyā and enjoyed by people according to their karmas. Hence avidyā is the only hindrance standing in the way of our realizing the self as ānanda. When it is removed, the self which is ānanda shines as such. But as in the case of ordinary happiness, there is no duality of ānanda and ānadi, bliss and the enjoyer of the bliss here. Though the absence of such a distinction cannot be logically proved, experience is a sufficient ground to prove it. We may take the ordinary experience of pleasure as an instance. When we are enjoying the maximum of joy, in that moment, we are not aware of even ourselves, not to speak of other things. There will be bliss and bliss alone in that moment. That is why Sankara says that in the ātmānanda there is no duality of bliss and the enjoyer of the bliss.

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31 STU. II-7.

32 Laukikānanda Brahmānandasyaiva mātra avidyāyā tirakṣriyamāne......laukikah sampadyate (STU. II - 7)

33 "Ānandānāṅdinoścāvibhāgotra" (STU. II - 8)
Mokṣa

Since the self is "ānandasvarūpa", we need not make any effort to attain this bliss as we do in the case of worldly pleasures. Here all that we have to do is to realize ourself, for which avidyā is the only hindrance. When the realization comes we will identify ourselves with ānanda. The avidyā that stands in the way can be removed only by knowledge or avidyā and this removal is called mokṣa in Advaita.

The word mokṣa literally means "liberation" and in Advaita this liberation is from the bondage of avidyā. When the bondage is removed by right knowledge one becomes a mukta and therefore mokṣa can be considered as a value. The word mokṣa is a relative term, i.e., relative to 'bandha' (bondage) and since the conception of value demands the acceptance of duality, mokṣa may be rightly considered as the highest value for man.

It is generally accepted that value has an 'ideal being'. Since mokṣa is an ideal it can be a value. S.K.Maitra in his article "Outlines of an Emergent theory of values" argues that to place values in an ideal world is "derogatory to the position of values" and also "metaphysically unsound".

34 Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 393
But the fact about it is that values are always ideals and as such they are always realized through human agency. But by that they will not become unreal. A fact which is not realized may be an ideal. The ideal as such no doubt, is unreal, but the content of the ideal can be a reality. The ideal is an ideal only so long as it is not realized. Here self-realization is an ideal; but when we realize it, it is no longer a mere ideal; it then becomes a reality. Values can be placed only in an ideal world, for when the self is realized the word 'value' itself will have no meaning. One is lifted above the value which hitherto was an ideal. So though the state of 'realizedness' is above value, mokṣa may be considered as a value.

Mokṣa no doubt, according to Sankara is an eternally accomplished fact and not something created. Thus mokṣa in itself is Brahman. But relatively (and mokṣa is a relative term) it is an ideal and a value. The effort we take to attain mokṣa has reference not to mokṣa, but to the removal of avidyā. Mokṣa, thus, is a value both positively and negatively. Negatively it is the removal of avidyā and positively utterly negatively. Negatively it is the attainment of bliss.

Instrumental values

The ultimate value, thus, is the 'ānanda' of mokṣa which consists in the realization of Brahman. All that which helps to realize this highest value can be considered as instrumentally
valuable. George F. Hanrani writes: "Instrumentally valuable means the same as useful and both words always contain a reference to two distinct facts: that the thing in question is efficient at producing something and that that which is or can be produced is itself valuable. It is here that ethics and morality find a place. They are instrumental and help the realization of the self through 'purity of mind'. The purified mind is the immediate cause of moksa.

The Problem of Reality and value

Reality, as we saw, is Brahman according to Sankara and there is nothing by the side of this Brahman. Therefore we have to say that it does not possess any qualities or values such as truth, beauty, and goodness. Brahman by itself is sac-cid-ānanda; but they are not qualities or values. It is by itself the essence of them. It is Brahman, the āndāsvarūpa which gives reality and existence to the values. The main difficulty in considering reality as value is the fact that in Sankara's system there is nothing apart from reality; there is ultimately no value. In all dualistic systems reality can be a value for they accept the reality of both the

235 Ethical value', Allen & Unwin, 1956, p. 56.
36 "sāmy-dānāti Sanskritam manāh ātmadarśane karāṇam" (SBG II - 21)
37 Cf. "The Absolute is that by which all reality, and all truth, and beauty, in their various degrees are, and without which they are nothing" (F.H. Bradley, HTR. p. 352)
valuer and the valued. In a value-situation there is the valuer and the object of valuation. In Advaita ultimately there is neither valuer nor the valued.

When Brahman is thus considered as above all values, the question arises, as to how to realize it. All actions of human beings are motivated by desire and desire in turn is the desire for the realization of values. No man tends to any kind of activity except for the realization of some value or other, either instrumental or ultimate. Thus there is a conflict between the two concepts viz., (1) the conception of Brahman as above values and the insistence that it must be realized (2) the fact that man tends to realize only values and the impossibility of realizing Brahman which is above values.

It is this problem which gives rise to the conception of Saguṇabrahman or God in Advaita. This conception is important in the reconciliation of Sankara's metaphysics and ethics. That is, the reality which is beyond mind and words, can be conceived only by attributing some qualities to it such for example as creator, preserver, full of grace etc. When we attribute qualities Reality becomes God who may be worshipped. Thus Brahman is the Absolute and as value it becomes God which is real to the religious consciousness of man. Only God stands in relation to man and therefore only He can be considered as the ultimate value.
Thus, in Advaita there is a logical necessity for admitting a God in addition to the Absolute. The Absolute would have been sufficient if Sankara was interested only in barren philosophical discussion. But Sankara declares that the realization of the ultimate reality is the end of human life. It is the paramapurusa, the highest value and the highest human end. It is in the context of realizing one's identity with Brahman that the question of God I or Isvara arises.

Since God is the highest reading man can make of the Absolute, in practice, God is the highest reality. He is also the highest value for the man who intents to attain moksha. To express in the language of religion, the aspirant tends to attain God and finds Him as true, beautiful and good. Only God can be considered the abode of such values; for only with him the aspirant can maintain relationship. The Absolute is non-relational and beyond all values.

It has been already mentioned that Brahman - realization is not realizing something outside. It is realizing one's own true nature i.e., as perfect and pure spirit. To think, 'I am this' 'I am that', 'I am the doer' 'I am the enjoyer' etc., is avidya. 38

38 Cf. "If turn to volition psychology makes clear that this is developed and secondary" (F.H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality, p. 426).
But to rid oneself of the avidyā how does the postulation of God become necessary? All values are only ideal in nature, and if God is truth, beautiful and goodness, it follows that God is an ideal just as truth, beauty and goodness are ideals. And an ideal is ideal only so long as we do not realize it; after realization it is no more an ideal. The secret of accepting God as ideal is that through God one can eliminate his sense of ego i.e., one attributes one's own sense of agency to God, and thus thinks God is everything, He is the doer etc. At the end of this process the aspirant slowly eliminates his 'ego' and sense of agency (kāṣṭṭvabuddhi) when God is accepted as the abode of values there arises at once the question of realizing it. Though philosophically speaking the seeker is actually striving to negate his 'ego' or agency; in practice, he is seeking goodness, truth and beauty in God. As Urban says "in the mere recognition of value is implied immediately the obligation to seek it".

Truth and Jñānayoga

Truth as value must be known or realized by the intellect. It is the activity of the intellect and as such differs from goodness and beauty. It satisfies the intellectual curiosity. But Sankara emphasises not truth, but the knowledge of the

39 According to Urban also truth, beauty and goodness are only ideals (Fundamentals of Ethics, p. 165)

40 Ibid., p. 241.
truth. But according to him Brahman is not truth; it is beyond truth; what is true is saguna Brahman or God. But God as truth is good only when he is known. And this knowledge of God which is metaphysically identical with one’s own self is called vijnana. In the B.C. Sankara distinguishes between jnana and vijnana and says that vijnana is the experiential knowledge of one’s identity with Brahman.

It is to get the knowledge of truth that the path of jnanyoga is prescribed. The jnana-marga in the end will lead to the vijnana or realization of truth. The principle contained even in this path is ego-elimination or the elimination of the sense of agency. It is a kind of 'revolving away' as Vivekananda would put it. But this is not easy unless one has a strong will, the capacity for endurance and that is why Vivekananda himself says "This is the yoga for the strong, for those who are neither mystical nor devotional but rational".

That the path of knowledge has 'self-ab-negation' as its ideal is shown in the practices involved in the process of jnanyoga. The Sravana, manana and nididhyasan which form the integral part of jnanyoga is a process mainly intended for

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S.B.C. III - 41.

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Complete works Vol. VIII. p. 3.
shedding the sense of ego. The Jiva, metaphysically identical with Brahman apparently suffers from a limitation and that limitation, in short, is the sense of agency or 'ego'. In Jñānayoga one incessantly identifies oneself with the limitless Brahman, and thus strives to get rid of the 'ego' which stands in the way of Brahman-realization.

**Beauty and Bhaktiyoga**

Viewed as a quality delighting the senses or as giving pleasure, beauty is an aesthetic value. But beauty is also enumerated among the transcendental values. While aesthetic beauty largely depends on senses transcendental beauty does not depend on *senses*; it is enjoyed for its own sake. That which is lasting and enjoyed for its own sake alone can be called lasting value. And since transcendental beauty has reference to the world of intelligence it does not depend on material considerations as Stoics and others maintain.

The transcendental nature of beauty was indicated by many thinkers such as Heraclitus, Socrates, Plato and they considered it as desirable for contemplation. While the desirability of truth leads to its knowledge, that of beauty leads to its contemplation.

One can incessantly contemplate only that which the desires most, in other words, that which he loves most i.e.,
which is intellectually most pleasing. The Absolute or Brahman does not become an object of love. When we imagine Brahman as relational (maintaining a relationship with the devotee) then, Brahman becomes God, and thus, the aspirant maintains a relation with God through 'love' or bhakti. He worships a God of his own, to suit his temperament and surrenders his heart and soul to Him. Aesthetic value, thus, has its fulfilment is bhaktiyoga and like jñānayoga, bhakti also finally leads to self-abnegation. The aspirant practices self surrender to the supreme God and thus overcomes avidya. That is why Sankara wherever he refers to bhakti, speaks always in the language of religion. Many instances where Brahman is described as endowed with attributes, Sankara interprets as 'upāsanārtha' i.e., as a means of worship and thus Sankara's use of the language of theism side by side with that of absolutism can be fully defended. Though mokṣa may appear to be due to the grace of God what actually happens is the elimination of avidya. Thus, in the Gita, Krishna speaks of giving mokṣa to his devotees, and in the Brahma-sūtrabhaṣya, Sankara himself says that mokṣa is obtained only by vijñāna for which God's grace is imperative.

43 It is without understanding the spirit of this dual conception of Brahman that Farquhar complains: "Since Brahman is cut off from all communications with man, he cannot be worshipped" (The crown of Hinduism, p. 245).

44 B.G. IV - 11

45 BSB. II - 3-41.
But the actual part played by "anugraha" in the life of the seeker is explained by Gita itself where Krishna says that it is he who, residing in the heart of his devotees, dispells avidya by the luminous lamp of wisdom'.

Sankara mentions two kinds of bhakti-para and aparā-lower and and higher. The bhakti of a lower category is characterised by 'raga' or love towards the favourite deity where as the higher is identified with jñāna or supreme knowledge. Thus in the 13th chapter of B.C. where jñāna is defined, bhakti is mentioned as an essential characteristic of a jñāni. In the verses XIII - 22 and XVIII - 54, Sankara interprets the word bhakti as jñānalaksana bhakti' i.e., jñāna is characterised by bhakti. This shows that even according to Sankara bhakti in its highest stage is identical with jñāna.

Thus in the contemplation of the divine the aspirant attains the fulfilment of beauty. But as Vivekananda says even the bhaktiyogi is "working his way to complete oneness with the supreme through love and devotion" and to him God appears to be beautiful. "Beautiful object", says Samuel

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46 B.C. VII - 11
47 SEG. VIII-22; IX-29; XIII - 10; XIV - 16; XVIII - 54, 55. In VII-16, four types of Bhakti are mentioned; but they can be ultimately reduced to two viz., that which is lower, and the other higher which is identified with jñāna.
48 B.C. XIII - 10.
49 Complete works Vol. VIII - p.3
Alexander is not merely seen or heard but contemplated for its own sake. But according to Sankara the seeker contemplates and worships God, for he knows that God alone can help him and that there is no other means of salvation.

Goodness and Karmayoga

Among the highest values, goodness is perhaps the most important in the context of the Advaitic metaphysics. 'Good' is an ethical value and a classification of it is often made, i.e., good in the moral context and good as supreme value. In the context of morality it refers to 'good actions' which are means to an end and as supreme value good is desirable as an end.

What is the 'supreme good' in Advaita? The absolute cannot be good for, good is always for somebody, and there is nothing by the side of the Absolute. In other words, the Absolute is beyond good, it is beyond all that which can be considered as the highest good.

According to Sankara, even as according to Bradley and Samuel Alexander, Good is satisfaction or peace, which is often reiterated everywhere in the Upanishads as 'Sānti'. By Sānti is meant the complete cessation of the mind and its passions.

50 The Philosophical and Literary pieces, p. 293.

51 SBC XIII-10.
and emotions (sāmādhāna). Thus, the highest good is sānti or sāmādhāna. "So long and so far as that which occupies you is able to give rest and contentment that thing whatever it is, has goodness" says Bradley; but Sankara would add 'good is that which gives' "lasting rest and contentment". Defining sānti Sankara says "it is the apperception of the 'antakarana' or mind". The mind has always a tendency to go outside; it is ordinarily full of desires, and hankers after worldly attainments. The satisfaction obtained from the worldly pleasure is not of a lasting type; it is actually painful. Sankara himself held this view when he says, "to give up desire is happiness, desire for sensual pleasure is in fact, painful; where there are desires, there cannot be a tinge of happiness".

In a number of instances Sankara identifies sānti with mokṣa. The implication, here, is that perfect satisfaction or peace comes only with mokṣa. Thus, it may be said

52 Kokileswar Sastry, however says that Brahman is the supreme good and that the good is called 'sādhu'. The reference is to a passage where Brahman is said to be 'sādhu', SSB-II-2-1. (An Introduction to Advaita Philosophy, Calcutta, 1926, p. 71). But here Brahman actually refers to saguna Brahman and what is implied here is that 'God is good'.

53 ETR. p.2.

54 SBC. XVI - 2.

55 SBC. II - 66.

56 "Sāntim mokṣam ānnoti (SBC II-70) "parām mokṣākhyāṃ sāntim" (SBC IV-39)., and also (SBC II-71).
that mokṣa which is nothing but the cessation of the activities of the mind is the supreme good. This cessation is called the state of 'naiskarmya' or karma transcendence. The attainment of naiskarmyabhāva is the realization of the supreme good.

As Aristotle has pointed out, good is the end of human actions; if there is no highest good, man would never wish to act. Each action is motivated by desire for good. But people think that the good resides in sensual pleasures; and thus their entire action is diverted towards the attainment of worldly pleasure which is only apparently good. Real good is something obtained by giving up desires.

'Good' in the ethical context is good actions. In this sense, is a means to the supreme good. Thus actions can be called good if they are sub-ordinated or directed towards the supreme good. But what is good actions in the context of Advaita? Here the good, we have seen, is satisfaction or a state where one transcends actions. How to

57 "Every man seeks only the good, if he chooses evil, it is only with the idea that it is the good". (W. Urban, The Fundamentals of Ethics, p. 159).

58 Good is sometimes classified into two viz., ontological good' and the 'moral good'. St. Thomas Aquinas while making this distinction has also explained the connection between ontological and moral good. (Catholic encyclopedic p. 615) According to Sankara, however, there is no ontological good, all values including 'goodness' are only appearances.
attain this state? Only actions which will lead us to this state can be considered as good actions.

According to Sankara all egoistic actions are binding; binding in such a way that they lead to the bondage of samsara. This is because such actions are motivated by selfish desires, a product of avidya. It may be in this sense that the B.C. itself declares that all actions are tinged with evil like fire by smoke. In other words, all egoistic actions are evil actions, and unegoistic actions are good actions. Thus in Sankara, morality of an action is solely determined by the spirit or motive behind it; if it is done with a sense of 'I' and 'mine' or with private motive, it is evil; if done with a sense of duty or for the welfare of others it is good. Such actions done in a disinterested frame of mind is 'karmayoga' i.e., karma is any action, it becomes yoga when it is performed disinterestedly. Through this karmayoga is attained the state 'naiskarmya'.

By naiskarmya is meant 'the elimination of ego' - a product of avidya. It brings about in the end, complete negation of the sense of agency. This self-negation is not reached through inactivity, for as Sankara himself says the man who thus remains inactive also feels 'I am not doing anything' 'I am at ease' etc. Thus the ego is retained, but

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59 B.C. XVIII - 48
60 SBG. IV - 13.
only in a different form. The wonderful method of renouncing the ego is suggested by karmayoga. Karmayoga is the means to achieve a state of karma-transcendence. The process of karmayoga seems to be this: the ordinary action is done with the feeling of kartṛtya and 'bhoktratva'. Both these aspects of an action is removed through karmayoga.

In addition to these three yogas, viz., bhakti, karma and jñāna, there is, a different type of yoga called 'yog rāja-yoga' or 'āhārāyoga'. This is not to be taken as a separate path for it is the 'antarānga' of self-realization; it leads directly to jñāna. It is meant to achieve the psychological state which is conducive to Brahma-realization. It is of the nature of 'contemplative exercise' which is an added advantage in the successful performance of each of the yogas. It helps the aspirant to stabilise himself in complete jñānayoga later.

We have, thus, seen that the three yogas of jñānayoga, bhakti and karma (which Sankara, classifies into pravṛtti and nivṛtti) are specially designed to enable one to seek truth, beauty and goodness respectively and that they are in perfect harmony with the fundamental value-centric notions of Advaita vedanta. The values of truth, beauty and goodness, are finally reducible to one viz., ānanda or bliss and so also all these three paths are reducible to jñānayoga. The rationale of reducing it to this yoga (instead of reducing it to bhaktiyoga or karmayoga) lies in the central concept of
Advaita that realization comes only through jñāna. The theory that mokṣa is attained only by jñāna, in turn, again is based on the concept of avidyā which is said to be standing in the way of our realizing the true nature of our self.

Strictly speaking there is no actual and clear cut distinction between the three ultimate values i.e., we cannot draw a line separating beauty from truth and goodness, and truth and goodness from the beauty. F.H. Bradley has shared this view according to whom, "If beautiful is real and supreme it has ceased forthwith to be merely beautiful". This is also testified to, by Whitehead who, speaking about these values says, "Apart from Beauty, Truth is neither good nor bad" and "In the absence of Truth, Beauty is on a lower level, with a defect of massiveness. In the absence of Beauty, Truth sinks to triviality. Truth matters because of Beauty". This overlapping of the three values, is also found in the three paths leading to the realization of these values. To explain, even in the realm of the means, there is no clear-cut distinction, i.e., we cannot clearly distinguish one yoga from the other; they are interconnected

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61 ETR. p.3.

and has to be practised as a unit. Thus, karmayoga cannot be entirely divorced from Bhaktiyoga and both these cannot be divorced from ānāmyoga. "Karma and bhakti prepare the mind for the highest knowledge and stand to gain when that knowledge has set in. In a sense ānāma pre-supposes karma and bhakti and in another sense, both karma and bhakti, to be truly efficient pre-suppose ānāma.

This is the view of Sankara; and Vivekanandha himself endorses this when he says "The greatest idea in the religion of the vedanta is that we may reach the same goal by different paths and these paths I have generalised into four viz., those of work, love, psychology and knowledge....We have found that in the end all these four paths converge and become one".

(b) Freedom of Will and Action

Freedom of will is an important notion in any philosophical system which seeks to lay emphasis on ethics. If

63 "On reading and re-reading the Gita, however, it seems each time more clear to me that, although a distinction is made between the contemplative and the active life, there is no hard and fast line that divides them from the life of love and devotion to God". (R.C. Zahner, Hindu scriptures, 1966, p. XVI).


65 Complete works Vol. I, p. 103.
freedom of will is totally denied, ethics with its 'oughts' will be reduced to absurdity. The discernment of empirical and eternal values and the determination to pursue the highest value fearlessly pre-suppose free-will. The question of following 'āṛṣya' and 'preya', as shown in the previous chapter also is bound up with a close examination of the problem of free will, for if it is denied one cannot be held responsible for following 'preya'.

Freedom of will is a much talked-about subject in the west. This question is extremely relevant to a monistic philosopher like Sankara, for in a monistic system, the whole of Vyāvahārīka experience is due to avidyā - all activities including all willings are due to it. The sense of agency itself is a product of adhyāsa in Advaita. Such being the case, the injunctions `you ought to do good', `You should not do evil' etc., may appear quite meaningless.

But what exactly is understood by the term free-will? John Meckenzie in his 'Mannuel of Ethics writes', "Freedom means absence of determination by anything outside the character itself. There is nothing to prevent a man from doing anything except himself. To be free means that one is determined by nothing but oneself". Freedom is absolute

66 Mānuel of Ethics, p. 78.
when there is complete absence of any outside determining factor. No one accepts that man has such absolute freedom. It is true that in Advaita, absolute freedom consists in mokṣa. But then, man ceases to be a man; he is Brahma itself. "The only true and ultimate freedom" says Meckenzie, "consists in acting from this self as a centre". But according to Sankara, all activities are due to the influence of avidya; when one gains total freedom all activity ceases.

Though free-will, as a problem was mentioned even by Greek thinkers it was stated definitely as a problem by Christian theology. The problem arose in the context of the Christian conception that man has free will and that God being omniscient knows from eternity what action a man will perform. The free will also contradicts the doctrine of the operation of grace. In later philosophical discussions, however, the problem turned out to be the issue between free will and determinism.

With regard to the issue of free will, the philosophers, broadly speaking, fall into two categories, viz., the determinists and the advocates of free will. While thinkers like Spinoza, Thomas Hobbes and monistic philosophers in

67 Ibid., p. 78

general, have a tendency to deny free will, Christian philosophers and Kant are advocates of freedom. In almost all Indian Philosophies the tendency is to advocate the determinism by Karma and samsāra and they do not raise this issue as a problem of philosophy.

Free will may be understood both positively and negatively. Negatively it refers to the absence of any obstruction or compulsion, while positively it means choosing and acting of one's own accord. Thus, the more precise definition of free will is that it is "an ability characterizing man in the voluntary activity of choosing and not choosing a limited good when it is presented to him".

**In the Upaniṣads**

Before we discuss Sankara's treatment of this problem we may refer to its treatment in the Upaniṣads. Sankara has based his teaching on Upaniṣadic passages and so his view on free will is also derived from the Upaniṣads. At the very outset it may be said that there are passages in the Upaniṣads which advocate both determinism and free will. On the basis of such statements, Paul Deussen concludes that as in the case of Spinoza the Upaniṣads also advocate rigid determinism. That is, the phenomenal jīva is not free, but

69 Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 35.
the Atman itself is everfree. But there are also passages which strongly favour free will.

The Kaúśītaki Upaniṣad which is one of the oldest of the Upaniṣads depicts man as a puppet in the hands of God who makes him do good as well as evil actions. This one truly indeed causes him whom he wishes to lead up from these worlds to perform good action. This one also indeed causes him whom he wishes to lead downward to perform bad action". The Chāndogypaṇiṣad says that there is no real freedom for man before he acquires ātmanān. Those who go hence without here having found the soul (Atman) and those real desires (Satyakāma), for him in all the three worlds there is no freedom. But those who go hence, having found here the soul and those real desires for them in all worlds there is freedom.

There are also passages in the Upaniṣads which affirm man's free will. The Kāṭopaṇiṣad, thus, says, "the better (śreyas) is one thing and the pleasanter (preya) quite another.

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71 Kaúśītaki Upaniṣad, II-3.


73 Chā. Up. VIII - 1-6 (Tn).
Both these of different aim bind a person. Of these two, well is it for him who takes the better. He fails of his aim who chooses the pleasanter. "Again, "Both the better and the pleasanter come to a man. Going all round the two, the wise man discriminates. The wise man chooses the better, indeed, rather than the pleasanter. The stupid man, from getting and keeping (yogākṣema) chooses the pleasanter". Answering the question 'from where does this body come' the Praśnopanishad says that the prāṇā comes to the body by the acts of the mind. Similarly a statement of the Br. Up. runs as follows - "As his desire is, so his will; as his will so is the action that he performs; as his action, so is the fruit that he procures for himself".

In the Bhagavad Gītā

The same line of thought can be found in the Bhagavad Gītā also where it is said that all actions are done by prakṛti and that the soul is actionless. The omni-potence of God is described in the verse, "The Lord abides in the heart of all beings, Oh! Arjuna, causing them to turn round by His power as if they were mounted on a machine". Arjuna, then

74 Katha. Up. II - 1 - 2 (Tn).
76 Br. Up. IV - 4-5. (tn).
77 BG. XVIII - 61 (Tn).
declares, "destroyed is my delusion and recognition has been gained by me through thy grace; Oh! Acyuta, I stand firm with my doubts dispelled, I shall act according to thy word". Here the words of Krishna are most noteworthy. He says, "Thus, has wisdom more secret than all secrets been declared to thee by Me. Having reflected on it fully do as thou choosest". Krishna, here seems to imply that Arjuna need not act according to his word simply because it was imparted by him. Arjuna should exercise his freedom and do as he chooses to. According to this statement of Krishna man's will is apparently free.

In the face of these conflicting views it is very difficult to determine what exactly the Upanishads and the Gita teach regarding free will. According to Paul Deussen, "The meaning of this contrast is evident; as sharers in the continuity of nature we are, like it, subject to necessity; but we are free from it as soon as by virtue of the knowledge of our identity with the Atman we are set free from the continuity of nature". "The constraint of the will, absolute as it is, yet belongs entirely to the great illusion of the
empirical reality and vanishes with it. The phenomenal form is under constraint, but that which makes its appearance in it, the Atman is free".

In Sankara's Philosophy

In Sankara's philosophy the problem of free will arises in three contexts. First is the doctrine of karma which is common to almost all systems of Indian philosophies. The Karma doctrine says that the present experience and actions of man are determined by his past actions. Thus, the man who is subject to the law of karma cannot have an absolutely free will. Secondly the Advaitic concept of avidya as the root cause of all willing and acting practically denies all freedom of will. The sense of agency itself is due to ignorance. All actions are done under the influence of avidya. Thus, it may be said that due to the determinism of avidya, there cannot be any place for free will in Advaita. Thirdly Advaita holds that metaphysically man is ever free (mukta). A mukta cannot act, for he has completely erased his sense of agency and has realized his identity with Brahman. So metaphysically the capacity for willing or acting is irrelevant, for he is essentially and eternally the actionless Brahman.

But how does Sankara handle this problem? In fact the notion of free will is closely connected with the problem of

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ethics. That is, a philosophy which does not deal with ethics need not discuss this problem. It may be in this sense that Moritz Schlick considers free will as a pseudo problem. He says that the problem of free will is a pseudo-problem which has been long settled by Hume and that it is a scandal to philosophy to discuss it. \(^{32}\) C.A. Campbell, thus, rightly says that the main issue in the free will-problem is not whether man has free will or not, but in what sense it is a pre-condition for moral responsibility and a postulate of moral life in general. \(^{33}\) In other words, does the moral agent has freedom sufficient to respond to the norms of morality. Moreover, moral life is a continuous process of choices between good and evil. So, a moral agent should have both freedom of will and freedom of choice.

As a monistic philosopher, while Sankara denies free-will, he has accepted it as a pre-supposition of ethics. That is, absolute freedom is mokṣa; before that we are free only apparently. We attribute to ourselves agency and thus think: 'I am doing this', I am enjoying this'. It does not follow that when freedom is attained in mokṣa, we possess freedom of will. Freedom of will itself is a contradiction

\(^{32}\) Art. 'When is a man responsible?', in 'Free will and Determinism' ed. by Bernard Berofsky, London, 1966, p. 54.

in term. We cannot, will when we are really free. So long as we 'will' we are not free. The apparent freedom, we now feel, thus, is based on the fundamental error of adhyāsa (imposing on oneself agency). All our phenomenal willing and acting are grounded in this adhyāsa. Therefore, the freedom of will also, like any other phenomenal experience is unreal. But Sankara accepts the sense of freedom we now experience as basis enough for ethical endeavour.

According to Sankara, metaphysically man has neither free will nor constrained will. He becomes free only by realizing himself as Brahman. But this freedom is also a freedom from all kinds of willing, for not only action, even the willing behind it is due to avidyā. The mind or 'antahkarana', which is the source of willing is a false limiting adjunct of the actionless Brahman and is a product of avidyā. In his Kenopanisādabhāsya Sankara says "If the mind were free with regard to pravṛtti and nivṛtti, then nobody would have even thought of evil. But having known the evil consequences people entertain desires. The mind, though checked with much difficulty entertains desires the result of which is evidently painful".

\[\text{34 mithyājñāna purassaroyam ātmano budhyupādhi} \]
\[\text{Sambandhāḥ (B.S.B. II - 3-30)}\]

\[\text{35 Ske. U. Introduction.}\]
In denying free will on the metaphysical plane, Sankara is one with Spinoza. The latter explicitly states that man has absolutely no freedom of will. Free will is usually accepted on the basis of the feeling of freedom, as a religious dogma, or as a postulate of ethics. But according to spinoza, none of these is sufficient to prove free will. The sense of freedom is nothing but the consciousness of our desires along with our ignorance of their causes. "Men think themselves free" says Spinoza, "in as much as they are conscious of their volations and desires and never even dream in their ignorance of their cause which has disposed them to wish and desires". 

"But if freedom of will is advocated," continues Spinoza "as a philosophical doctrine, then we can only say that the philosopher is suffering from religion". If it is accepted on the basis of religion, it contradicts the free will of God, i.e., the freedom of man, if it is real, must be a limitation to the freedom of God. Free will is, again, accepted as an axiom of morality by certain philosophers like Kant. But Spinoza does not seem to be against accepting free will as a postulate or morality; he is only against accepting it as a metaphysical reality.

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36 Quoted by R.K. Tripathi in 'Spinoza in the Light of the Vedanta', Banaras Hindu University, 1957, p. 255.

37 Ibid., p. 277

38 Ibid., p. 229.
Sankara's approach to the problem is not only metaphysical but also ethical. Though man has apparent freedom it is rooted in Avidyā. Thus the two stand points (i.e., ānāmārthika and vyāvahārika) which Sankara takes with regard to the conception of Brahman can be found in his conception of free will also. Metaphysically man has no free will. On the vyāvahārika plane man is apparently free. This freedom is unreal - mithyā. But we must remember that in Advaita ethics itself is unreal and has validity only on the vyāvahārika level. Within the realm of vyāvahāra man is free to choose and act. The various statements of Sankara in favour of free will can be explained only from the vyāvahārika point of view. The Vedanta sutras from II - 3-33 to II - 3-40 described the characteristics of the jīva (jīva dharma).

All these sutras affirm that the soul is the agent in action (kārta). Here Sankara says, "The individual soul is an agent because, thus, scripture has a purport, for only on that assumption, Scriptural injunctions (such as, 'He is to sacrifice', 'He is to make an oblation into the fire', 'he is to give' & C) acquire a purport; otherwise they would be purportless. For, they all teach special acts to be done by agents which would not be possible if the soul did not possess the quality of being an agent". Sankara's insight

39 BSB, II - 3 - 33. (In)
into the actual free-will-problem is revealed in these statements. The injunctions or 'oughts' which the ethics prescribe cannot be practised if free will or agency is denied. Several scriptural passages which speaks of the actions of the jīva also will become meaningless. "The quality of being an agent has to be attributed to the soul for that reason also, that in a chapter, treating of the soul, the text declares it to wander about in the state of sleep, "the immortal goes wherever he likes" (Br. Up. IV - 3-12); and again, "He moves according to his pleasure within his own body" (Br. Up. II - 1-13). Again Sankara says that agency should be attributed to the jīva since the scriptures speak of its agency in sacred and secular actions, 'understanding, performs the sacrifice; it performs all actions' (Tai. Up. II - 5). Here one may raise the question: is not actions of a man determined by other external factors? That is, even when we admit agency, every action is found to be determined by other factors like time and space. Here Sankara does not advocate rigid determinism. He does not admit that man's actions are completely governed by external factors though they depend on them to a certain extent. This he states thus: "More over in actions also, the soul

90 BSB. II - 3- 34 (Tn)

91 BSB. II - 3- 36 (Tn)
is not absolutely free as it depends on differences of place
time and efficient causes. But an agent does not cease
to be so because he requires assistance. A cook remains
the agent in the action of cooking although he requires fuel,
water and so on. The presence of a plurality of co-operat-
ing factors is therefore not opposed to the activity of the
soul, unrestrictedly, extending to actions, productive of
pleasant as well as unpleasant results. The scriptures
speak of the agency of the jīva only in the stage of avidyā
and they deny it in the stage of knowledge. Sankara,
thus, concludes that the validity of the entire injunctions
of the Vedas (Vidhi śāstram) depends on the agency imposed
by avidyā.

The Karma-Samsāra theory

The theory of Karma and samsāra in Advaita, also is
applicable only to the empirical jīva. The law of karma is
accepted by Sankara, but not as antagonistic to the phenomenal
free will of the jīva. As in the case of Buddhism, the karmic
law does not contradict free will. Ananda Coomaraswamy says

92 BSB. II - 3 - 37 (Tn)

93 BSB. II - 3 - 30 (Tn)

94 tasmādyidyākartam kartṛtvamupādāya vidhiśāstram
pravartisyate (BSB III - 4 - 30).
"Every action we make depends on what we have come to be at the time; but what we are coming to be at any time depends on the direction of the will. The Karmic law merely asserts that this direction cannot be altered suddenly by the forgiveness of sins, but must be changed by our own efforts."  

That Sankara does not accept the law of karma as deterministic is clear from the relevant passages of his Brahmanasūtrabhāṣya. In one context the purvaraksin says that since some are created poor and others rich, cruelty and partiality should be attributed to God. This objection is answered by saying that God is not an independant Creator and that he creates, according to the good and evil actions of the jīvas. Here Sankara quotes the Br. up. which says 'a man becomes good by good works and bad by bad work'. (Br. Up. III - 2- 13). Just as the rain is the cause of the seeds in sprouting, each according to its character, so also is God, depending on their merits and demerits, the cause of the creation of the jīvas. "As parjanya, the giver of rain is the common cause of the production of rice, barley and other plants and the differences are due to the potentialities

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96 RSB, II - 1 - 34.
of the seeds themselves; even so God is the common cause of the creation, while the differences are due to the merit and demerit of the individual souls". The Karma-theory simply says that our present life and activities are the effects of our past deeds. It also follows that we can shape our destinies by our deeds. There is, thus, nothing in karma - theory which eliminates the empirical freedom of will and moral responsibility.

The idea of sin and punishment merits and rewards etc. also make sense only if the jiva has freedom. Sankara holds that God punishes and rewards men according to their merits and demerits. The inequalities found among men are also due to their own past karmas. Here the law of karma and samsara are explained as beginningless on the analogy of 'sprout and seed' (bijānkuranyāya). Here the words of Swami Vivekananda is worth quoting: "If it be true that we are working out our own destiny here........it must also be true that which we are now is the effect of the whole of our past; therefore no other person is necessary to shape the destiny of mankind but man himself. The evils that are in the world are caused by none else, but ourselves". Again, "Each one of us


98 See Br. up. IV - 4-24.

is the maker of his own fate. This law knocks on the head at once, all doctrine of pre-destination and fate and gives us the only means of reconciliation between God and man.\textsuperscript{100} The law of karma, thus, does not paralyse will, but in it is implied a call for its enlightened exercise.

We have, again, Sankara's own words on the question of free will and moral responsibility. Speaking about the two paths of pravṛtti and nivṛtti, he says that they are entirely left to the agent's will - \textit{\textit{Karti
tṛtatravād pravṛtti nivṛtyoh}}. In one context he says that it is the nature of man to feel attracted to sense-objects when they are enjoyable and to feel aversion when they are not and that here, there is the question of free will and scriptures. With every sense-enjoyment are associated attachment and aversion. If one is to renounce sense-objects, following the scriptures, one must have freedom. Such statements show that Sankara admits free will as a postulate of ethics.

If man has free will on the \textit{Vyāvahārika} plane, it may be asked: of the \textit{śreya} and \textit{preya}, why is it that most of the

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., Vol.III. 1964, p. 125

\textsuperscript{101} SBG. IV - 18

\textsuperscript{102} SBG. III - 34.
people tend towards the latter. Sankara answers this question in his Kenopaniṣad bhaṣya: "It is true that the acceptance of 'śreya' and 'preya' is fully left to the choice of man; but for the ignorant, they present themselves in a mixed form. The wise man alone can distinguish between 'śreya' and 'preya'; like the swan separating milk from water. On the contrary, due to the lack of discriminative power, the ignorant chooses only the 'preya' and attains worldly happiness in the attainment of son etc". Moreover the scriptures only convey what is right and what is wrong; they do not force a man to act rightly.

In fact there is no real contradiction between free will and the law of karma. The law of karma is a law of causation and explains only the present experience of the phenomenal jīva. We can, thus, say along with Russel that the problem of free will VS determinism is an illusion. Russel himself neither affirms nor denies free will. That is, he is of the view that though the reasons for supposing that volitions are determined are strong, they are not conclusive. And even if the will is mechanically determined the freedom revealed by introspection cannot be denied. In such a context,

104 SBU. II - 1-20.
106 Ibid., p. 151.
Sankara's denial and affirmation of free will from paramārthika and vyavahārika points of view respectively sound more logical.