CHAPTER IV

THE JĪVA – BRAHMAN – RELATION

The philosophy of the Upaniṣads mainly depends on some fundamental teachings which are regarded as the most precious ones throughout all the genuine Upaniṣads. These fundamental teachings can be summed up into the two concepts – Brahman and Ātman. To express it more clearly, the sum and substance of the Upaniṣadic speculations revolve round these two concepts which can be simply equated as Brahman = Ātman.¹ Here, the concept of Brahman is related to the one and only unitary world-ground and Ātman is the Self, correlated with the finite individual Self. In the Chāndogyaopaniṣad, Brahman is revealed as the universal ground of the whole creation.² Again, the Self is regarded to dwell in the cavity of the heart, who is immortal and the inner-guide of all.³ But soon these two concepts of Brahman and Ātman are

1. Deussen, P., The Philosophy of the Upanishads, p. 39;
   Dasgupta, S.N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 45
2. sarvar̐h khalvidaṁ brahman tajjalāniti CU, 3.14.1; MU, 2.2.11
3. hṛdi hyeṣa ātmā PU, 3.6; also cf. BU, 3.7. 3-23
correlated with each other, becoming identical. That means the ultimate ground of everything, i.e. Brahman, from which everything is created, sustained and is dissolved into, is basically identical with the Ātman, which is revealed as one's own self. Thus, in the Upaniṣads, we find that this Brahman is known through the same path of Ātman. The search for Brahman and Ātman is the same. In the Taittirīyopaniṣad, it is clearly mentioned that the person in the region of the Sun, is the same who dwells in oneself. Similarly, in the Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, both these concepts are completely fused together in a statement where Brahman is declared as nothing but the Great Self i.e., Ātman, devoid of birth, death, old-age etc. In this way, the two concepts are inter-changed in many passages of the Upaniṣads as being synonymous. The thought of this oneness of Brahman and the Self, is the greatest profound teaching of the age-old Upaniṣads.

4. ya eṣo'kṣiṇi puruṣo dṛṣyata eṣa ātmeti hovāca. etad amṛtama-bhayametad brahmeti CU, 4.15.1
5. ko nu ātma kim brahmeti Ibid, 5.11.1
6. sa yaścāyaṁ puruṣe, yaścāsāvādītye sa ekaḥ TU, 2.8.5; 3.10.4
7. sa vā eṣa mahānaja ātmājaro'maro'mṛto'bhayo brahma BU, 4.4.25
8. Cf. CU, 8.14.1; ŚU, 1.16; MU, 2.2.9
THE INDIVIDUAL SELF OR JĪVĀTMAN

Now, the term Ātman also denotes the individual self or the finite self, the jīva. The individual self is generally identified with body and undergoes births and deaths, experiences hunger and thirst, pain and pleasure etc. It is limited in power and wisdom and is entangled in the cycle of saṁsāra and seeks deliverance from it. Thus this jīva is virtually opposite to Brahman or Ātman, the ultimate reality. In the Upaniṣads, we find two sets of passages as regards the relation of the individual self and the Ultimate Self. In one set of passages, the jīvātman is identified with Paramātman or Brahman. In the other set of passages, the jīva is regarded as the part of Brahman. Let us now first see what the Upaniṣads say about this jīvātman.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, fire, water and earth are said to constitute the jīvātman together with the Infinite Self. In the Mundakopaniṣad, it is stated that this Infinite Self or Brahman is to be realised within the individual self. Here, the individual self seems to be a finite form of that very Universal Self. But originally there is no distinction what so ever. One who has realised this non-difference or identity between Brahman and the individual self, becomes liberated.

9. CU, 6.2.3-4
10. MU, 3.2.7; 3.1.7; also cf. IU, 7
Hence, it can be attained within one’s own self.\textsuperscript{11} Again, we find in some passages that the Person or Brahman in the outer world is nothing dissimilar to the inner self.\textsuperscript{12} In the Taittirīyopaniṣad, again, it is stated that the self is concealed by five kośas or sheaths. These are the gross physical sheath or annamaya kośa, the sheath of the vital breath or prāṇamayakośa, the sheath of the mind or manomayakośa, the sheath of the intellect or vijñānamayakośa, and sheath of bliss or ānandamayakośa. These sheaths are described as being one inside the other and each succeeding sheath is finer than the preceding one.\textsuperscript{13} This passage clearly maintains that the individual self is very fine which remains inside the material body. It is also mentioned here that the inner self of the jīva is in essence non different from that Ultimate Self.\textsuperscript{14}

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,\textsuperscript{15} again, speaks of the individual self and the Universal Self as different, e.g., “Two similar and inseparable birds sit on the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruits, while the other

\begin{itemize}
\item [11.] yadātmatattvena tu brahmatattvaṁ ... ŚU, 2.15
\item [12.] anena jīvena ātmanā anupraviśya CU, 6.3.2
\item [13.] TU, 2.2-6
\item [14.] Ibid, 2.8.5
\item [15.] MU, 3.1.1
\end{itemize}
without eating, just looks on." Thus in the same tree, i.e., the world-tree, the jīva dwells along with Brahman. In the Kathopaniṣad also this difference of the jīva and Brahman is maintained, e.g., "Those two persons who enjoy the fruits of their actions." The Śvetāsvataropaniṣad says, "An unborn becomes attached to it and enjoys it, while another unborn leaves it after enjoyment." In all these passages the individual self is described as different from the Supreme Self.

Some Upaniṣads also describe the jīvātman as the part of Brahman. Thus, the passages like "The universe and the selves form its limb", "Just as thousand of sparks issue from a well burnt fire, so also, o gentle one, different individuals originate from and dissolve in the immutable being" The same idea is pronounced in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad also. The Śvetāsvataropaniṣad describes the jīva as the minutest part of Brahman, e.g., "Know the embodied self to be a part of the hundredth part of the point of a hair divided a hundred times and yet it is infinite."
But the most predominant principle of the Upanisads is the identity of the jīva and Brahman. The identity of the jīva and Brahman is conveyed in such passages as, “one and the same God is concealed within all, and is the inner self of all” \(^{22}\), “The self within this person and the self within the sun are the same” \(^{23}\), “Having entered through this self in the form of the jīva” \(^{24}\) etc.

However, in some passages of this fundamental identity is directly conveyed. Hence, these sentences are very much significant and purposeful to the viewpoint of the identity of Brahman the individual self, which by destroying all the pains (kleśa), result in the attainment of the Supreme Bliss (ānanda). They directly convey the utmost unity of all, nothing else. These are regarded by the Advaita Vedāntins as the Great sayings or Mahāvākyas which have an independent purport of their own. The truth of non-duality of Brahman and Ātman, is beautifully placed in these Mahāvākyas as their central theme, which is the main import of the Upaniṣads. Therefore, these Mahāvākyas are regarded as the most authoritative by the Advaita Vedāntins who are the propagators of Non-

\(^{22}\) Ibid, 6.11

\(^{23}\) TU, 2.8

\(^{24}\) CU, 6.3.2
dualism. In the Upaniṣads, we find this type of the great sayings, four in number. These are – *Tattvamasi*²⁵ (That thou art), *Prajñānaṁ brahma*²⁶ (Consciousness is Ṛṣṭram), *ayamātma brahma*²⁷ (This self is Ṛṣṭram) and lastly, *ahaṁ brahmāsmi*²⁸ (I am Ṛṣṭram). They are regarded as the strongest and the boldest expressions of the basic teachings of the Upaniṣads and have subsequently become the faith of millions of Indians.

According to the Advaita Vedāntins, except these *Mahāvākyas*, the other type of sentences are called secondary sentences or *avāntara-vākyas*. They have interpreted the very significance of these *Mahāvākyas* in order to bring out the sole import of these which, according to them, are capable of bringing about liberation destroying ignorance (*avidyā*).

Now, the later Vedāntins differ among themselves regarding the relation between the *jīva* and Ṛṣṭram, as the Upaniṣads do not provide the same view in this regard. Some Vedāntins like Madhva, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka etc. give stress on the statements conveying difference or part-and-whole relation, while the Advaita Vedāntins stress on the *Mahāvākyas* conveying identity. The Advaita Vedāntins took great pain in order to

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25. CU, 6.8.7
26. AU, 3.1.3
27. MaU, 2
28. BU, 1.4.10
interpret these Mahāvākyas, so that the identity between the jīva and Brahman is established beyond doubt. The other Vedāntins, on the other hand, have tried to refute the view of the Advaitins by interpreting these same Mahāvākyas in their own way. In the following lines we propose to discuss the meaning of the Mahāvākyas as interpreted by these philosophers. These philosophers have taken for interpretation the sentence Tattvamasi as a representative one and as such we will also restrict our discussion on this sentence only.

**MEANING OF THE PROPOSITION TATTVAMASI**

In the Chandogyopanisad, the oneness of the jīva and Brahman has repeatedly been declared in this proposition. In chapter VI of this Upaniṣad, Āruṇi, the father of Śvetaketu advised him about the Ultimate Reality. Here, Brahman is described as sat (existence), which is ekamevādvitiyāṁ (one, without a second). It is the Ultimate source of the world and the souls. All those are indeed Brahman, originating from dissolving and existing in it. Ātman, the individual self is nothing but Brahman itself. ‘That’ denotes the world-ground of the whole creation, which is unborn, immortal, real and eternal, and ‘Thou’ denotes the individual Śvetaketu. The Supreme person who has entered in to the

29. sadeva saumya idam-agra āsidekamevādvitiyāṁ CU, 6.2.1
empirical body in order to manifest names and forms, is the individual self itself.30

Āruṇī instructed Śvetaketu about this truth by means of different examples and finally concludes by saying, *tat satyam, sa ātmā, tattvamasi* Śvetaketu (That is true, he is the self, O Śvetaketu, that thou art).31 This proposition *Tattvamasi* is nine times repeated in order to stress the idea.

**THE ADVAITA VEDANTIC INTERPRETATION**

Śaṅkara's doctrine, which is usually known by the name of *Kevalādvaita* or Absolute Monism, may be summed up in these words — *Brahma satyam jagannithyā, jīvo brahmaiva nāparah* (*Brahman* is the real, the world is false, the individual self is nothing but the *Brahman* itself). According to him, *Brahman* is the highest transcendental truth. It is perfect and the non-dual reality. It is existent, beginningless and unchanging and it is the highest knowledge. In his *Śārīrakabhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtra*, it is also clearly described that without *Brahman*, no existence is possible. Because prior to the beginning of all this creation, there exists only one, non-dual *sat* or *Brahman*, through the knowledge of which everything becomes known. Hence, without the very existence of

30. *tatsrṣṭvā tadevānuprāvisat* TU, 2.6
31. CU, 6.8.7
Brahman, the existence of other objects can never be imagined.\textsuperscript{31} This one being or Brahman, when endowed with māyā or nescience, have created all i.e. living and non-living objects. According to Śaṅkara, there is no distinction between the jīva (individual self) and Brahman. Basically, Brahman or Ātman is the supreme universal self, non-dual and omnipresent. It becomes empirical, only through coming into contact with the adjuncts of body, mind etc. It is the individual soul or jīvātman, with limited phenomenons caused by nescience or māyā. Due to ignorance or māyā or avidyā, it appears as limited jīva, which is not a transcendental one.\textsuperscript{33} So, jīva is nothing but Brahman. When this oneness of Brahman is properly understood, there remains nothing to be known. When one realises this oneness, the limitations of this world in the form of ‘I’, ‘my’, ‘mine’ etc. are totally overcome. By this, all multiformities or phenomenalities are centralised in one concept i.e. Brahman only.

According to Advaita philosophy, Avidyā (nescience) alone is the cause of

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32. na ca brahmavyatiriktaṁ kiṁcidajañṁ samābhavati, ‘sadeva somyedamagra – āsīdekamevādvitiyaṁ’, ityavadhāraṇāt. ekavi-

jñānena ca sarva – vijñānapratijñānāt. na ca brahmavyatiriktaṁ vastu

– astitvamavakalpate BSS, 3. 2.32

33. bhedasti upādhinimitto mithyājñānakalpito na pāramārthikāḥ

Ibid, 1.4.10
\end{flushleft}
the Ātman’s state of illusion, under the power of which, it thinks itself to be limited and separate from Brahman. The knowledge of this pure Brahman leads to the removal of evils, such as, ignorance, sufferings delusion, death etc. By the proposition ‘That thou art’, all dualities superimposed on Brahman because of avidyā is negated and the non-difference of the jīva and Brahman is established.

In this proposition, there are three terms – tat (that), tvam (thou) and asi (art). Śaṅkarācārya has discussed the meanings of the terms tat and tvam in his commentary on the Brahmasūtra. After Śaṅkarācārya, his followers like Suresvara, Sarvajñātīmaṇi, Citsukha and others have explained this sentence in order to establish the identity of the jīva and Brahman. However, according to Śaṅkara, Tat literally means Brahman or consciousness characterized by omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, absence of limitations etc. Tvaṁ literally means the jīva or the consciousness characterized by limited knowledge and powers. The copula asi signifies the apposition or sāmāṇādhikaranya of these two.

34. Cf. tatra ko mohaḥ kāḥ śoka ekatvamanupasyataḥ ĪU, 7; ŚU, 1.11; KU, 1.2.12; 2.2.1
35. BSS, 3.2
36. Ibid, 3.2. 11-41
37. Ibid, 3.2. 1-10
Now, it should be mentioned that the *Advaita* interpretation of the sentence ‘That thou art’, does not take the literal meaning, because the terms *tat* and *tvam* denote quite opposite meanings. The very purpose of propounding the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman* will be defeated then. *Brahman* is one indivisible unit, it is bereft of any relation — *asaṁgo 'yam*³⁸ and so it cannot admit of any division or relation. Accordingly, these two terms cannot be related as the quality and the qualified, none being qualified by the other and hence the relational meaning is not possible.³⁹

Now, comes the *Advaita* theory of a sentence conveying an indivisible non-relational meaning or *akhaṇḍārtha*. *Akhaṇḍārtha* is that which arises from the non-synonymous words of the proposition and which points to one indivisible sense of the substantive.⁴⁰ Basically sentences may be of two types, one conveying the meaning based on syntactical relation or *sāṁsṛṣṭārtha* and the other conveying the meaning which is not based on syntactical relation of non-synonymous words. This

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³⁸. BU, 4.3.15

³⁹. atra tu tat-padārtha — parokṣatvādi — viśiṣṭa — caitanyasya tvam —

padārthāparokṣatvādi — viśiṣṭa — caitanyasya ... viśeṣaṇa — viśeṣya —

bhāva — saṁsargasya ... vakyārthaḥ na saṁgacchate VS, p. 174

⁴⁰. yadvā aparyāya — śabdānāṁ eka — pratipādikārtha — mātra —

paryavasāyitvāṁ akhaṇḍārthatā TP, p. 195
type of meaning is called *akhaṇḍārtha*. As for example of the former one, we may refer to such sentences as *nīlam utpalam* (The lotus is blue). Here though the words are different in meaning, they are mutually inter-related conveying the syntactical relation between them as quality and qualified.\(^{41}\) But for instance in such sentence as *so’yam devadattaḥ* (This is that Devadatta) no syntactical relation is possible of knowledge.

In this proposition, the primary meaning (*abhidhā*) of the words *sa* and *ayam* being contradictory, their identity cannot be reached. ‘That’ means ‘Devadatta of a past time and of a distant place’, where as ‘This’ means ‘Devadatta of the present time and of the contiguous place’. Therefore, to convey the meaning, one must resort to the non-relational identity of Devadatta only. Similarly the proposition *Tattvamasi* also conveys the non-relational meaning or *akhaṇḍārtha* as the one, indivisible identity of consciousness or *Brahman*.

Now, for arriving at this non-relational meaning of the proposition *so’yam devadattaḥ* and *Tattvamasi*, one must resort to secondary function or *lakṣaṇā* of a sentence. It has already been pointed out that the primary meaning of the words of the proposition *so’yam devadattaḥ* are contradictory and as such the identity of them which is

\(^{41}\) VS, p. 174
meaning of *Tat* is consciousness characterised by *parokṣatva* (mediateness), *sarvajñatva* (omniscience) etc. and that of *Tvāṁ* is consciousness characterised by *aparokṣatva* (immediateness), *alpa-jñatva* (possessing limited knowledge) etc. Hence, these two terms cannot convey the meaning of identity as denoted by the term *asi* through primary meaning. It is the general rule that when the primary sense of a word or words comes in conflict with the intended meaning. Then some other meaning of the word connected with the primary meaning is adopted. This is what is called *lakṣaṇā* or implication. Three types of *lakṣaṇā* are accepted, viz., *jahallakṣanā*, *ajahallakṣanā* and *jahada-jahallakṣanā*. (i) In *Jahallakṣanā*, the primary sense of the word is completely abandoned of particular word. For example, in the sentence *gaṅga-yāṁ ghoṣaḥ* (The cowherd village is on the Ganges), the primary meaning of *gaṅga* (i.e. river) is wholly forsaken, but the secondary meaning as the bank of the river is accepted. (ii) In *Ajahallakṣanā*, the primary sense of the word is not totally forsaken, though some other meaning related with it, is taken in the secondary sense. As in *śoṇo dhāvati* (The red runs), the term *śoṇo* means red colour which cannot be linked with running. Hence the secondary sense of a horse having red colour is implied. (iii) In *Jahadajahallakṣanā*, a part of the primary sense of a word given up and another part is taken into account. The last is what is termed
This type of lakṣaṇā as resorted to in the sentence so’yaṁ devadattaḥ. Here a portion (bhāga) of the original conventional meaning which is uncontradicted and accepted by rejection of the other portion. The portion ‘Devadatta’ is not rejected (ajahat) here and the portions (qualified by past time etc. and the present time etc.) are rejected (jahat), as they are opposed to each other. In this way, this type of lakṣaṇā is also known as jahadajahallakṣaṇā or bhāgalakṣaṇā.

Just like the proposition soyaṁ devadattaḥ, the proposition Tattvamasi is also interpreted as pointing to the indivisible identity of consciousness or Brahman, which is beyond any relation. Hence, the Advaita Vedāntins hold that in the sentence Tattvamasi, the portions of the primary senses which are contradictory to each other i.e. consciousness characterized by parokṣatva (indirectness) and aparokṣatva (immediateness) etc. in the meaning of tat and tvam respectively are eliminated and the non-contradictory part of each of the two, i.e. the indivisible consciousness, is accepted.42 In this way the sentence

42. tasmāt yathā ‘so’yaṁ devadattaḥ’ iti vākyam ... aviruddha devadattāṁśa - mātraṁ lakṣayati, tathā ‘tattvamasi’ iti vākyam ... viruddha - parokṣatvāparokṣatva - viśiṣṭatvāṁśaṁ paritvāya aviruddhāṁ akhaṇḍa - Caitanyamātraṁ lakṣayati iti VS, p. 184
Tattvamasi is interpreted as pointing to indivisible identity of the jīva and Brahman by the Advaita Vedāntins by means of lakṣaṇa or implication. Thus, Advaita Vedāntins establish the identity of jīva and Brahman through this sentence, other Mahāvākyas are also to be explained in this way.

THE VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITIC INTERPRETATION

Rāmānuja was the chief propounder of the qualified Monism or Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. Rāmānuja postulates the reality of qualified or savisesa Brahman, which is the main basis of his doctrine. Rāmānuja takes the word Brahman in the sense of Supreme Person who is by nature devoid of all blemishes and endowed with infinite auspicious qualities. He is a personified God who is the receptacle of all the noble qualities. He is Puruṣottama. He is Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa. Brahman in Rāmānuja's philosophy is viśiṣṭa or attributed though advitiya or one, without a second. Brahman is qualified by cit or jīva (self) and acit or jagat (world) and also the one and only non-dual principle. Souls and matter are related the Supreme as attributes to a substance, as parts to a whole or as body to the

43. brahmaśabdāna ca svabhāvato nirastānīkhiladosāḥ anavadhikātisayā saṅkhyaeyakalyāṇagunaganaḥ puruṣottamo’bhidhiyate sarvattra bṛhat-vagunayogena hi brahmaśabdāḥ Śrībhāṣya, 1.1.1
44. cidacidvastusārīratayā tat-prakāram brahmaiva sarvadā sarvaśabdābhidheyam Ibid, 2.1.15
soul. According to him, the existence of real finite self is regarded as part of Brahman, being His body. Therefore, his philosophy is presented as Viśiṣṭādvaita or qualified Monism.

The individual selves fully depend on Brahman, because it is their Ultimate source, substance and controller, yet they have their own individualities and features. They are not mere appearances, but real entities as the attributes or parts of Brahman. Rāmānuja maintains that the jīvātman is an aṁśa of Brahman, who is the Paramapuruṣa. But here 'part' does not mean part of the extension of something or a piece (khaṇḍa). By aṁśa, Rāmānuja means an integral attribute, an inseparable property or character (viśeṣaṇa), implying a necessary dependence of the part on the whole or of the attribute on the substance. Since Brahman as a transcendental Reality is partless, the 'part' should be understood in its qualitative sense only. Rāmānuja rejects absolute identity as well as absolute difference of the jīva and Brahman. In his view, the relation between the jīva and Brahman is both difference and non-difference.

The essence of Viśiṣṭādvaita is the śarīra – śarīri bhāva, a conception based on the analogy of body – soul relation and there are both difference and identity characterizing the relation of a śarīra to śarīrin.⁴５

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⁴⁵. sarvaṁ cetanācetanaṁ tasya śarīraṁ Ibid, 2.1.9;
yathā va dehino devamanuṣyādirdeho – aṁśaḥ, tadvat Ibid, 2.3.45
Brahman only governs and supports the jīva, without being in any way involved into it. Rāmānuja also finds support in some Upaniṣadic statements, where the individual souls and the entire creation are regarded as the integral part of Brahman.\(^{46}\)

However, it is difficult to accommodate the Mahāvākyas which convey the meaning of identity between the individual self and the Universal self in the philosophy of Rāmānuja. But these propositions being the statement of Śruti cannot be ignored. Hence, Rāmānuja tries to interpret these propositions according to his own view. He vehemently rejects pure identity. In his view, every judgment is a synthesis of differences. Hence, the judgement Tat tvam asi also does not establish identity.

In the proposition, Tattvamasi, according to Rāmānuja, the word ‘That’ refers to Brahman and the word ‘Thou’ which stands in coordination to ‘That’, conveys the idea of Brahman as having for its body, the individual selves.\(^{47}\) The word ‘That’ denotes the Lord or

46. pado’sya sarvā bhūtāni tripādasāmṛtām divi CU, 3.12.6; jñājñāyo dvāvajāviśāntāvajā hyekā bhoktrbhogyārthayuktā ŚU, 1.9; BG, 15.7
47. tat-padaṁ hi sarvajñāṁ satyasatikalparṁ jagat-kāraṇaṁ brahma paramṛṣāti. tvan – padaṁ – ca – acid – viśiṣṭa – jīvasaṁkaraṁ brahma pratipādayati Śrībhāṣya, 1.1.1
Brahman who is omnipresent, omniscient, endowed with the true desires and also the main cause of the entire creation or the creator of everything, while the word 'Thou' denotes the individual soul as the body of Brahman. Now, like Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja also points out that there is sāmāṇādhikarāṇya (apposition) of the two terms tat and tvam. But in his view sāmāṇādhikarāṇya does not really point out to identity of the terms; rather it denotes the relation of subject and predicate, or substantive and adjective. Hence, sāmāṇādhikarāṇya refers to the difference between two. If no difference is accepted here then the use of two terms will redundant and the grammatical co-ordination will be impossible. Hence, according to Rāmānuja, when Brahman (tat) and the individual self (tvam) are placed in the relation of sāmāṇādhikarāṇya, it follows that there is a difference between the two as subject and predicate. Moreover, Rāmānuja points out in that case there will be no necessity to take recourse to lakṣaṇā or secondary meaning, as here primary meaning is not contradicted. “Subject and predicate are distinct meanings referred to the some substance. It the two meanings cannot co-inhere in the same substance, the judgement fails.

We distinguish subject and predicate in their meaning or intension, but unite them in their application or extension. So the text “That art thou” brings out the complex nature of the ultimate reality, which has individual souls inhereing in it.”49 Thus, in Rāmānuja’s view, the proposition Tattvamasi does not point out the identity of jīva and Brahman, rather it refers to the non-dual Brahman of which the jīvas are but modes or attributes.

MADHVA’S INTERPRETATION OF TATTVAMASI

Madhva is the founder of Dvaita Vedānta. According to him, there are mainly two kinds of realities, viz. Svatantra (independent) and Asvatantra (dependent), Svatantra is the God and Paratantra or Asvatantra are the matter and individual souls. These are conceived as distinct entities. The number of souls is unlimited and the modifications of matter are numerous, in various states. The reality of God is of the independent grade and that of the rest is dependent upon him. God, being the independent reality, is free from all imperfections, possessing infinite spiritual qualities and hence, is not attributeless.

Madhva, a stern dualist, advocates five kinds of difference which are real and beginningless. These are found between God and soul,

49. Radhakrishnan, S., Indian Philosophy, Vol. 2, p. 688
God and matter, one jīva and another, soul and matter and one matter and the other. These are the five kinds of differences which Madhva has advocated.50

According to Madhva, the highest Reality is Lord Viṣṇu, who controls the mental states and functions of the individual souls.51 Hence, though they are different from the Lord, they are completely dependent on Him for His greater favours.

As the word Brahmaṇa means the great Lord Viṣṇu with all perfections, it cannot be identified with the imperfect individual souls with various limitations. Madhva gives stress on the Śrutis where difference is pronounced. For example, in the Mundakopanisad, we find the reference of the two birds, distinct from one another.52 These two birds which dwell in the same tree, imply the jīvatman and paramatman (God) who have the same designation as Ātman, but are different in their actions. One i.e. the jīva is enjoying different results or fruits of the tree according to one's own

50. Sarvadarśanasamgraha, 5.22

51. parasya brahmaṇo viṣṇoh prasādāt-iti vā bhavet, sa hi sarva - manovṛtti prerakaḥ samudāḥṛtaḥ MBS, 1.1.1

52. dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaḥ vṛksaḥ pariṣasvajāte /
tayoranyah pippalāṁ svādvatyaṇaśnanānanyo abhicākaśīti //
   MU, 3.1.1 ; ŚU, 4.6
merits and actions and the other i.e. God, being indifferent and untouched by them, simply looks on. Again, in the Śvetāsvataropaniṣad, the three different realities as God or Brahman, matter and souls are directly referred to in the passage bhokta bhogyam preritāramca matvā sarvāṁ proktāṁ trividham⁵³ (the individual soul, material elements and the inner controller i.e. God, these three are to be recognised which are narrated by the wise men). Therefore, Madhva points out that the individual souls are never identical with Brahman. Brahman is regarded as pūrṇa i.e. full of auspicious qualities and jīvas are apūrṇa which are lacking in this factor.⁵⁴ God is regarded as endowed with eight qualities, viz. creation (ṣṛṣṭi), sustenance (sthiti), dissolution (saṁhāra), control (niyama), knowledge (jñāna), ignorance (avidyā), bondage (bandha) and liberation (mokṣa).⁵⁵ These qualities imply the fullness of Brahman or God regarding attributes. But the individual soul is devoid of the above qualities, rather he is the subject to the influx of life, including enjoyments, difficulties etc. He is known by the term ‘I’. He moves through the cycle of birth and death and

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53. ŚU, 1.12

54. jijñāsyā - brahma - śabdena guṇa - pūrty - abhidhāyinā |
    apūrṇatvenānubhūtājjīvād bhinnāṁ pratyayate //
    Vide, Dasgupta, S.N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 4, p. 109

55. MBS, 1.1.2
also bondage and release.\textsuperscript{56} According to Madhva, they are free by nature in performing different activities, right or wrong, and also enjoying their fruits. But yet, they are devoid of absolute freedom like God, for which they are dependent on Him. They reap the fruits in regard to their actions including merits and demerits by the God, who is the Moral Governor for them.\textsuperscript{57} Due to avidyā, they suffer from wrong notions and changes which only can be removed by the worship of God. Thus the jīvas, the imperfect ones are different from Lord Viṣṇu, the all perfect one, though possessing consciousness, bliss (ānanda) and eternity as their essential character. In this view, \textit{Brahman} has a different consciousness, eternity and bliss which though similar, is quite distinct and separate from the jīva. So, differences are considered as the very essence of all.\textsuperscript{58} In this way, God is also different from all matters, souls and \textit{prakṛti}, the material cause of the world.

Now, while interpreting the proposition, Tattvamasi, Madhva has applied his own formula. According to him, Tattvamasi which is

\begin{verbatim}
56. ahamityeva yo vedyah sa jiva iti kirtitah / 
    sa dukhah sa sukhah caiva sa patram bandhamoksayoh // 

Vide, Sharma, B.N.K., \textit{Philosophy of Sri Madhvacarya}, p. 253

57. MBS, 2.3.33-42

58. bhedas tu sarva – vastunam svarupaṁ najjanṁ avyayaṁ 

Vide, Dasgupta, S.N., \textit{A History of Indian Philosophy}, Vol. 4, p. 155
\end{verbatim}
regarded as pronouncing identity between the jīva and Brahman cannot be
taken as such. So he has tried to explain it in a dualistic way. Madhva
argues that this sentence does not declare identity between the individual
and universal self, but it points out the similarly between the two. The
sentence states that the jīva has some qualities similar to those of God.  
But no identity of their essence is possible.

In some other place Madhva has changed the whole sentence
itself in order to establish dualism. In his view, it is not Tattvamasi, but
Atattvamasi, that means it is not ‘Thou art That’, but ‘Thou art not That’.
He has arrived at this meaning by splitting the statement of the
Chāndogyopaniṣad where we find the whole statement as tat satyaṁ sa
ātmā, tattvamasi Śvetaketu. Now Madhva has taken the words ātmā and
tattvamasi as conjoined, i.e. ātmātattvamasi and then disjoined it as ātmā
atattvamasi. Grammatically also there is no irregularity. In his book
Bisnūtattvavinirṇaya, he argues “na ca abhede kascidāgamaḥ, santi ca
bhide . sarvāgamāḥ. Tathāhi atattvamasi iti navakṛtvopadesaḥ
sadarṣṭāntakah, na ca ayaṁ abhedopadesaḥ” There is no Vedic passage
stating non-difference. All passages declare difference. Hence ‘Thou art

59. MBS, 2.3.29
60. Madhva on CU, 6.8.7
61. Bisnūtattvavinirṇaya, pp. 168-170; Qt. in Vedānta-darshana, p. 40
not that' is repeated nine times with examples. This does not advocate the non-difference of the soul and the God. Hence, the non-difference of the jīva and the Brahman is not narrated anywhere in the Śrūtis. But in all places, always difference alone is seen. According to him, the Chandogya Upaniṣad propounds this difference by repeatedly pronouncing atattvamasi. Here also, tat means Īśvara, with supreme qualities, tvam means the jīva and na-asi means not identical. So, the jīva and Brahman are not identical, but different.

Madhva holds that in these Mahāvākyas, the otherness of the human soul from God and its dependence and inferiority to Him are clearly recognized. Because, the Lord is different in his essential nature from the jīva (God is infinite and jīva is finite), different in actions (The jīva is the controlled and the Īśvara is the controller), different according to the teachings of the scriptures, the two birds etc. and their objects are also different (one is ever conscious i.e. Īśvara, the other i.e. jīva is not).

Madhva has also explained another Mahāvākyā, viz., aham brahmāsmi in the sense that “the non-destructible Brahman is the Supreme Immeasurable.” Here, the word aham does not mean ‘I’. Madhva has split the word as a + ham or na ham. The word ham (to kill / to destroy)

denotes \textit{jīva} which is subject to destruction, while \textit{ahāṁ} means Lord Viṣṇu, the indestructible. The word Asmi also does not mean ‘I am’, but it is a compound of ‘A’ or not and ‘smi’ meaning small. Thus it means one who is not small i.e. Great or Large. In this way, ‘ahāṁ brahmāsmi’ denotes God, who is indestructible and the greatest. Thus, the whole phrase becomes a description of Lord Viṣṇu. In this way, in all cases, \textit{Bheda} is alone propounded deliberately which is the primary teaching of the scriptures according to Madhva. Regarding the text \textit{ayāṁ ātmā brahma} also Madhva does not admit identity. He maintains that it is either can eulogy of the individual self, or it is intended for meditation.

\textbf{Nimbārka’s Interpretation of \textit{Tattvamāsi}}

Nimbārka was the founder of the \textit{Dvaitādvaita} philosophy. He advocates the relation of identity in difference between the jīvas and \textit{Brahman}. He stresses both the aspects of identity and difference. Therefore, his philosophy is called as \textit{Dvaitādvaita} philosophy or non-difference-cum-difference.

According to Nimbārka, there are only three principles or entities, viz., \textit{cit} (the intelligent world), \textit{acit} (the non-intelligent world) and \textit{Īśvara} (the Lord or the Supreme spirit). They are also called by the significant names of \textit{bhoktā} (the enjoyer), \textit{bhogya} (the enjoyable or matter) and \textit{niyanṭṛ} (the controller). According to Nimbārka, the word \textit{Brahman}
denotes Vishnu, the Highest person, who is the receptacle of all auspicious qualities. Brahman is the greatest of all is possessed of infinite, innumerable qualities, and is above all imperfections. He is the ultimate cause, all-pervading, omnipotent and omniscient. He is not defined by the limitations and imperfections of the souls. He has transformed himself into the material world and spirit.

Nimbarka maintains that the jīva and the world are the parts of Brahman, they are the modification of the powers of Brahman. The jīva have distinct existences which are real indeed, though there is a relation of dependence for them with the Supreme person. Therefore, the world and the souls are also real. The jīva is less powerful and depends on Brahman for his knowledge and activity. It is subject to joys and sorrows. Thus, though resembling Him in being intelligent and knower, the jīva is at the same time distinguished from Him by its dependence for essence, existence, and activities. It is different from Brahman on account of its atomic nature and limited powers, but is identical as a real knower (jñātā).

63. Daśaśloki, 4; Qt. in Vedāntakaustubha, 1.1.1

64. sukha duḥkha bhoktuḥ śarīrād adhikāṁ utkṛṣṭāṁ brahma jagatkartṛ brumāḥ VPS, 2.1.21
real agent (kārta), the beginningless, eternal part of Brahman. In this way Nimbārka emphasises identity as well as difference, both factors being equally important. Nimbārka maintains that the jīva being associated with different actions (karma) through avidyā (ignorance), is naturally misguided from the path of knowledge. It can achieve liberation or mokṣa through the grace of God, who is the main controller and Governor of the results of their actions according to their merits - demerits.

The cit and acit are different from Brahman in as much as they are described by the Śruti, as possessing attributes and capacities distinct from those of Brahman. But at the same time, they are the parts of Brahman and as such, the jīva is identical with Brahman. They are related to each other as part and whole, the controlled and the controller, the worshipper and the worshipped i.e. jīva and Brahman respectively. This very concept is clearly described by Nimbārka in his bhāṣya – anātma mśibhāvāt jīva – paramātmān – bhedābheda darsāyati66 (The relation of part and whole of jīva and Brahman shows difference and non-difference).

65. paramātmabhinno’lpasaktis tad abhīnaḥ saṇātanās tad – anātmaabhūto’nādikarmātmikāvidyāvṛtadharmaḥbhūtajñāno jivakṣetra-jñādi – śabdābhidheyas tat – prayayāśraya iti

Vide, Dasgupta, S.N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 3, p. 409

66. VPS, 2.3.42
Nimbārka has established his view of difference-cum-non-difference on the basis of the Upaniṣadic passages like Tattvamasi etc. According to him, in the sentence Tattvamasi, the identity of the jīva and Brahman is depicted—‘tattvamasi—ityādi abhedavyapadeśācca’. In his view, the jīva being a part of Brahman cannot be different from it. However, this is not the absolute truth. The part and the whole are not totally identical. The whole has its existence over and above the parts. Hence, the jīva and Brahman are also different. This difference is established by him with the help of the passage “jñājñānau dvāvajānvivādā” etc. Thus, in the interpretation of the Mahāvākyas, Nimbārka does not differ from Śaṅkara. However, he has not interpreted these sentences elaborately as done by the Śaṅkarites.

Hence, the truth is that both the difference and non-difference are equally real. According to Nimbārka, bheda or difference means the possibility of an existence, which is separate at the same time dependent (para—tantra—sattā—bhāvala), while abheda or non-difference means the complete impossibility of an independent existence (syatantra—sattā—

67. Ibid
68. SU, 1.9
69. Cf. Vedānākāśarasāna Dvaitādvaitasiddhānta, p. 22
bhāvaḥ). Hence, tattvamasi means that the individual soul (tvāṁ) is both different and non-different from Brahman (tat).

VALLABHA'S INTERPRETATION OF TATTVAMASI

Vallabhācarya was the founder of the Śuddhādvaita school of Vedānta. He has established Pure Monism or Pure Non-dualism. His doctrine of Pure Monism stands in sharp contrast to the Māyāvada of Śaṅkara which deems the whole world to be a product of Māyā and hence unreal.

According to Vallabha, the soul and the world are in essence, nothing but Brahman, since they represent partial manifestations of the essential attributes of Brahman. In this system, pure Brahman is both the cause and the effect of the world which is, as such, not illusory. Brahman is of the nature of sat-cit-ānanda (existence-consciousness-bliss). This Brahman manifests this world and the jīva, by suppressing one or more of His essential characteristics of existence (sat), knowledge (cit) and bliss (ānanda). Thus, sat or existence is manifested in the world, while both the sat and cit aspects of the Lord are manifested in the jīva or the individual soul.70 Again, the Lord manifests himself as the Inner-controller (antaryāmin), where all the above three aspects, viz. sat, cit, ānanda are

70. jaḍa-jīvāntaryāmiṣvekaikāṅśāprākātyāt Anubhāṣya, 1.1.4
manifested. It dwells within all living beings, and is associated with all their activities. Brahman is one, transcendental and without a second, according to Vallabha, and also remain immanent in the world.

In Vallabha’s view, the individual souls are neither caused nor created – na hi ātmana utpattih śrute. The jīva are but parts of Brahman just as the sparks are parts of fire. Being associated with a body the jīva is referred to as originated, while in reality it is eternal. Hence, the jīvas are as eternal and real as Brahman and production in its case means only a manifestation (avirbhāva). They are regarded as parts of the Lord, they are not spoken of as effects. Vallabha maintains that the jīvas are not different from Brahman in quality, but they are different in quantity only. The jīvas are atomic in size, while Brahman is infinite.

The term suddha in Vallabha’s philosophy denotes devoid of any connection with Maya as against the view of Śaṅkara. It is mentioned

71. Ibid, 2.3.17
72. Cf. Tattvārthadīpanibandha, 1.28
73. dehadharmo jīvasya bhāktaḥ, tat- saṁvandhenā - eva - utpatti - vyapadesā īti siddhām Anubhāṣya, 2.3.16
74. Cf. Ibid, 2.3.43
75. Ibid
māyā saṁbandha-rahitam śuddhamityucyate budhaiḥ, kārya — kāraṇarūpaṃ hi śuddham brahma na māyikam.76 (Brahman is devoid of any relation with māyā or nescience. He is the nature of cause and effect, pure and not illusory). Thus, the ‘Śuddhādvaita’ means the non-duality of Brahman, that is pure and, the individual souls and the non-sentient world are essentially one with Brahman.

Devoid of Bliss, the jīvas undergo bondage and revolve in the cycles of births and deaths. They are the agent (karta) and enjoyer (bhokta) of their actions77, but devoid of Bliss and hence are related to various imperfections and evil-deeds. Only through the worship of God with bhakti i.e. love and devotion, they can secure mokṣa or liberation. The jīva then attains the Bliss-aspect also by the grace of God. Here, “Bliss (ānanda) is to be understood as ākārasampākā - a formative element.”78

In Vallabha’s view, the proposition Tattvamasi conveys the meaning of identity, but this is not complete identity. While commenting of the sūtra ‘tadvyaapadesa prājñāvat’, Vallabha points

76. Vide, Marfatia, M.I., The Philosophy of Vallabhacarya, p. 19
77. karta sastrarthavattvan, Anubhasya, 2.3.33
78. Marfatia, M.I., The Philosophy of Vallabhacarya, p. 20
out that though it is not possible for the jīva which is atomic to be identical with Brahman, ever then identity is be taken here in a secondary sense. Just as the minister of the king is sometimes addressed as the king being bestowed with the power of governance etc., similarly the jīva is said to be same as Brahman on the ground that it has knowledge and is the knower which are not found in matter. 79

Some followers of Vallabha, again maintain that in the proposition Tattvamasi, different terms do not remain in the relation of opposition (sāmānādhikārya), but it is a compound word which can be disjoined as tasmāt tvam āsi (tatpuruṣa). Hence, in the sentence Tattvamasi, tasmāt refers to Brahman from which the jīva emanates and tvam refers to individual souls on account of their being manifestations of Brahman. So, ‘That thou art’ is explained by Vallabha as meaning that Brahman is the foundation of the jīvas like gold is the foundation of the ornaments.

Thus, from the above discussion, we see that the relation of the jīva and Brahman is conceived differently by different philosophers according to their own philosophical view. Accordingly, the interpretation

79. tasya brahmaṇo guṇāḥ prajñā – drasṭṛtvādayasta evātra jīve … iti jada – vailakṣaṇāyakārīṇa iti-amātye rājapadāprayogavat – jīve bhagavat-vyapadeśaḥ Aṣṭubhāṣya, 2.3.29
of the proposition *Tattvamasi*, nay the Mahāvākyas differ in different philosophical systems. In our view, Śaṅkara’s doctrine seems to be more true to the context where the main purport of Āruṇi is to convey the non-difference of Śvetaketu, the individual self, with *Sat Brahman*. This idea is established in the Upaniṣads with so many examples.