CHAPTER I

Preamble: Introducing the topic

The Vedas are considered to be the earliest documents of the human mind that we possess. They give us information of all that is most interesting in the realm of spiritual investigation of the ancient world. To Swami Vivekananda, all that is true is Veda. "By the Vedas", he says, "no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits were there before their discovery and would remain ever if we forget them. The discoverers of these laws are called Rishis (sages), and we honour them as perfect beings". It is common knowledge that the Vedas are four in

number, Šrīg, Yagyur, Sama and Atharva. Of the four Vedas the Šrīg-Veda is the most exalted one. The Sama Veda embodies the hymns of the Šrīg-Veda which are used to be chanted during sacrifices. The Jajur Veda however incorporates various portions of the Šrīg. Veda. The three Vedas, namely, Šrīg, Yagyur and Sama agree in their name, form, language and contents as well. They constitute the triad which form the original Vedas. They are attributed higher authority. The Atharva Veda is a later addition. A different spirit pervades this Veda. And it is a later annexe. In the words of Swami Ranganathananda, "One of the enduring fruits of Vedānta has been peace and harmony, tolerance and acceptance. This flows from its teaching of the non-duality of the ultimate Reality and the possibility of different approaches to it. The Šrīg.-Veda gave eloquent expression to this great idea in its famous line: Ekaṁ Sat; Viprā bahudhā Vadānti - 'Truth is one; sages call it by different names'. This sentiment was taken up and amplified by every subsequent age of Indian thought - from Sri Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā, through Buddha and Aśoka, Śaṅkara and Akbar, down to Sri Ramakrishna in our own age - until it has become a most distinguishing mark of the Indian religious and cultural outlook". 2

Each Veda has three divisions, namely, the Samhitās, the Brahmanas and the Āranyakas. The collection of the mantras

or the hymns go by the name - the Samhitā. The Brahmanas comprise the precepts and religious duties. They are the elaboration of the complicated ritualism of the Vedas. They deal with the rules and regulations laid down for the performance of the rites and the sacrifices. Their name 'Brahmana' is derived from the word 'Brahman' which originally means a prayer. There is little philosophy in these, though some philosophical ideas flash here and there in the course of some speculative digressions. The appendages to these Brahmanas are called Āranyakas mainly because they were composed in the calmness of the forests. The Āranyakas mark the transition from the ritualistic to the philosophic thought. The Upaniṣads mainly form parts of the Āranyakas. It is universally accepted that the Upaniṣads frame up the perspective of all subsequent philosophic thoughts of the country. They are the font of inspiration of all Indian thought and culture. To quote a modern writer in point "The Upaniṣads are rightly regarded as the fountainhead of all Indian philosophy". They have inspired not only the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy but also some of the so-called heterodox schools like those of Buddhism. The Upaniṣads are not systematic treaties on philosophy, they are not works of a single

3 Dr. Chandradhar Sharma : A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, p.30.
author. The teachers whose intuitions are recorded in the Upaniṣads are more mystic seers than metaphysical investigators. There is a directness about their teachings and an authenticity born of first-hand experience of the highest reality. The method they adopt is more poetic than philosophic. We find in the Upaniṣad an advancement over the Samhitā mythology, hair-splitting speculations that are in the Brahmanas and even over theology that forms the framework of Āraṇyakas. All of three - Samhitās, Brahmanas and Upaniṣads have existed side by side although they were the products of subsequent ages. While in one aspect of it the Upaniṣads are really a continuation of Vedic process of thought - a sort of compendium so to say, in another aspect it forms a vehement protest against the Brahmanical rites and ritualism. According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan on the other hand, "The aim of the Upaniṣads is not so much to reach philosophical truth as to bring peace and freedom to the anxious human spirit. 'Tentative solutions' of metaphysical questions are put forth in the form of dialogues and disputations, though the Upaniṣads are essentially the outpourings or poetic deliverances of philosophically tempered minds in the face of the facts of life. They express the restlessness and striving of the human mind to grasp the nature of reality". Max Muller compares the philosophy of the Upaniṣads

to the light of the morning and to the pure air of the mountains — so simple, so true, if once understood. A famous German philosopher impressed by the Upaniṣads declared that in the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upaniṣads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death. A Spanish writer described the Upaniṣads as "Himalayas of the soul". Just as the great mountain determines the climate, the rainfall and the physical features of the country, so also these heights of wisdom determines the quality of the spiritual wisdom of the race which inherits it. Referring to the influence of Upaniṣads in the later thought Bloomfield remarks, "There is no important form of Hindu thought, heterodox Buddhism included, which is not rooted in the Upaniṣads".

In his book Indian philosophy, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan writes, "Later systems of philosophy display an almost pathetic anxiety to accommodate their doctrines to the views of the Upaniṣads, even if they cannot father them all on them. Every revival of idealism in India has traced its ancestry to the teaching of the Upaniṣads". Prof. R.D. Ranade in his book A Constructive Survey of the Upaniṣadic Philosophy observes, "The Upaniṣads constitute that lofty eminence of philosophy, which form its

7 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, p. 138.
various sides gives birth to rivulets of thought, which as they progress onwards towards the sea of life, gather strength by the inflow of innumerable tributaries of speculation which intermittently join these rivulets, so as to make a huge expenses of waters at the place where they meet the ocean of life. Deussen opines that the Upaniṣadic seers have thrown, 'if not the most scientific, yet still the most intimate and immediate light upon the last secret of existence', and that there are in them 'philosophical conceptions unequalled in India or perhaps anywhere else in the world'. Prof. Winternitz observes that these old thinkers 'wrestle so earnestly for the truth and in their philosophical poems the eternally unsatisfied human yearning for knowledge has been expressed so fervently' that these works are invaluable for mankind. "As a part of the Veda, the Upaniṣads belong to Śruti or revealed literature. They are immemorial, sanātana, timeless. Their truths are said to be breathed out by God or visioned by the seers. They are the utterances of the sages who speak out of the fullness of their illumed experience." Paying his tribute to the Upaniṣads, Swami Vivekananda says, "Strength, strength is what the Upaniṣads speak to me from every page. This is one great thing to

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8 R.D. Ranade: A constructive Survey of the Upaniṣadic Philosophy, p.41.
9 Dr. Chandradhar Sharma: A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, p.18.
10 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: The Principal Upaniṣad, p.22.
remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life; strength, it says, strength, O man, be not weak."¹¹

A survey of different schools of Vedánta will reveal the fact that different schools of Vedánta derive their doctrine from the Upaniṣads. To Śaṅkara his Vedánta is a garland of Upaniṣadic thoughts. The later Vedántins like Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Mādhva and Vallabha considering the Upaniṣads as sacred have interpreted them in such a way as to mould as a proper authority to justify their theories. Śaṅkara emphasizes the logical and intellectual aspect of the Upaniṣads, while Rāmānuja was inspired by the religious thought. But both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja find their adequate moral strength and stimulation in the Upaniṣadic passages. Indebtedness to the Upaniṣads has been acknowledged even by the Bhagavad Gītā. It will be evident from verses such as - "All the Upaniṣads are the cows, the son of the cowherd Śrīkṛṣṇa is the milker, Partha is the calf, men of purified intellect are the drinkers and the supreme nectar known as Gītā is the milk".¹² The heterodox Jainism has taken its doctrine of Karma from the Upaniṣads. The heterodox Buddhism derives its idealism, monism, absolutism,
the theory of momentariness of all worldly things, the theory of Karma, the distinction between the empirical and the absolute standpoints, and the theory that Ignorance is the root-cause of this cycle of birth-and-death and that Nirvāṇa can be attained by right knowledge alone, from the Upaniṣads. Sāṅkhya derives from them the doctrine of Prākṛti (from Śvetāśvatara), the theory of the three Gūnas (from the three colours in the Chhāndogya), the doctrine of Puruṣa, the relation of mind, intellect and soul (from Kaṭha), the doctrine of Linga-sharira (from Iraśāna). Yoga is rooted in Śvetāśvatara. Kaṭhā speaks of Dhāranā and Muṇḍaka speaks of the soul as a mere onlooker. Iśā preaches the combination of Karma and Jñāna; Mīmāṃsā takes up Karma; Vedānta takes up Jñāna; and some writers take up the combination itself.13

Out of two hundred Upaniṣads only ten have been recognised as authentic. These are Iśā, Kena, Kaṭha, Prāśna, Muṇḍaka, Muṇḍukya, Chāndogya, Brhadāranyaka, Aitareya and Taittāriya. The Upaniṣads are vitally concerned with the following important problems: What is the Reality from which all things originate, by which all live and into which all dissolve when destroyed? What is that by knowing which everything can be known? What is that by knowing which the unknown becomes known? What is

13 Dr. C.D. Sharma: A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, p.31.
that by knowing which one can attain immortality? What is Brahman? What is Ātman? The underlying significance of the above questions is that there is an all-pervasive Reality underlying all things which arise from, exist in and return to it; that there is some reality by knowing which immortality can be attained. Swami Vivekananda rightly observes, "All the books contained in the Upaniṣads have one subject, one task before them - to prove the following theme: Just as by the knowing of one lump of clay we have the knowledge of all the clay in the universe, so what is that, knowing which we know everything in the universe?"¹⁴ In a different context Swamiji says, "When the scientific teacher asserts that all things are the manifestations of one force, does it not remind you of the God of whom you hear in the Upaniṣads: 'As the one fire entering into the universe expresses itself in various forms, even so that One Soul is expressing itself in every soul and yet is infinitely more besides'. Do you not see whither science is tending? The Hindu nation proceeded through the study of the mind, though metaphysics and logic. The European nations start from external nature, and now they too are coming to the same results. We find that searching through the mind we atlast come to that Oneness, that Universal One, the Eternal

Soul of everything, the Essence and Reality of everything, the Ever-Free, the Ever-Blissful, The Ever-Existing. Through material science we come to the same Oneness. Science today is telling us that all things are but the manifestation of one energy which is the sumtotal of everything which exists.¹⁵ He goes on to say, "But only one thing is certain; the mighty river is rushing towards the ocean, and all the drops that constitute the stream will in time be drawn into that boundless ocean. So, in this life, with all its miseries, and sorrows, its joys and smiles and tears, one thing is certain, that all things are rushing towards their goal, and it is only a question of time whether you and I, and plants and animals, and every particle of life that exists must reach the Infinite Ocean of Perfection, must attain to Freedom, to God."¹⁶

The Reality underlying everything of this universe about which the Upaniṣadic sages speak, is called by them sometimes Brahman (God), sometimes Ātman (Self), sometimes simply Sat (Being). "At first there was the Ātman alone", say the Aitareya (1.1) and the Brhadāraṇyaka (1.4.1). "All this is Ātman", says the Chāndogya (7.25.2), "Ātman being known everything is known", says the Brhadāraṇyaka again (4.5.6). Similarly

we find, "There was only Being (Sat) at the beginning, it was one without a second" (Chan. 6.2.1). Again, "All this is Brahman" (Mundaka, 2.2.11) and (Chand, 3.14.1). Brahman and Atman are used simultaneously in these different contexts. We are also told explicitly in some places that "This Self is the Brahman" (Brhad, 2.5.19), "I am Brahman" (Ibid, 1.4.10).

This happy identification of Brahman and Atman constitute the essential teaching of the Upanisads and this has been expressed in the famous maxims "Satyam asi" (That thou art), "Aham Brahma asmi" (I am Brahman) and so on.

The Brahman has been conceived by the Upanisads not only as the pure ground of all reality and consciousness but also as the ultimate source of all joy. Worldly pleasures are expressions of the distorted fragments of that joy as worldly objects are limited manifestations of the Reality. When one realises his identity with Brahman he gets in his heart of hearts Infinite Joy. The proof of the Self's being the source of all joy (says Yajñavalkya to his wife Maitreyī) is that it is the dearest thing to man. One loves another person or thing because he identifies himself with person or thing, regards him or it as his own self. Nothing is dear for its own sake, says Yajñavalkya. The wife is not dear because she is wife, the husband is not dear because of being a
husband, the son is not dear because of being a son, wealth is not dear for its own sake. All is dear because of the Self. That the Self in itself is bliss is shown also by pointing out that when a man falls into dreamless sleep, forgets his relation with the body, the senses, mind and external objects and thus retires into his own intrinsic state, he is at peace, he is untouched by pleasure and pain. Swami Vivekananda beautifully expresses the essence of Upaniṣadic contention in the following manner - "None, O, beloved, loves the husband for the husband's sake, but for the Self that is in the husband; none, O beloved, ever loves the wife for the wife's sake, but for the Self that is in the wife. None ever loves anything else, except for the Self." Even this selfishness, which is so much condemned, is but a manifestation of the same love. Stand aside from this play, donot mix in it, but see this wondrous panorama, this grand drama, played scene after scene, and hear this wonderful harmony; all are the manifestations of the same love. Even in selfishness, that self will multiply, grow and grow. That one self, the one man, will become two selves when he gets married; several when he gets children; and thus he grows until he feels the whole world as his Self, the whole universe as his Self. He expands into one mass of universal love, infinite love - the love that is God". 17

Foundation of bondage lies in the forgetfulness of the true nature of the self. This brings about the soul's wrong identification with the ego, mind and body; and in consequence thereof, the soul is caught in the wheel of birth and death. It is through knowledge of Brahman that ignorance is finally overcome. "If a person knew the self as "I am He", then, with what desire, for love of what would he cling to the body?" It is for such a consummation that the Upaniṣadic seer prays:

"From the unreal lead me to the real
From darkness lead me to light
From death lead me to immortality." ¹⁸

"The Upaniṣads gave a permanent orientation to the incipient Indo-Aryan culture by their emphasis on inner penetration, by their whole-hearted advocacy of what the Greeks centuries later formulated in the dictum 'man, know thyself', and at which they themselves stopped half-way. All subsequent developments of Indian culture were powerfully conditioned by this Upaniṣadic legacy. This stress on inward depth had one supreme consequence for Indian culture, in that all its expansive outward movements throughout history were non-aggressive; every word of its message for man 'has been spoken with a blessing behind it and peace before it; as remarked by

¹⁸ Asato mā sadgamaya
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya
mṛtyormā amṛtaṁ gamaya.
It is evident that philosophical speculation may start either with the thinking self or the object of thought. In India, the interest of philosophy is in the self of man. Where the vision is turned outwards, the rush of fleeting events engages the mind. In India, Atmanam Viddhi (know the self) sums up the law and the prophet within man is the spirit that is the centre of everything.

All the systems of Indian philosophy have given their opinions about self though they are not unanimous with regard to its nature. Buddha refuses to accept the common belief that there is in man a permanent substance called the soul. The belief in an unchanging soul-substance is false as it is inconsistent with his law of universal change and impermanence. But unlike the Cārvākā, refuses to identify the self with the body. For him, the self is the stream of consciousness and not the objective material fact, namely, body. The Mādhyamika Buddhists go a step further and hold that self is a mere vacuity devoid of all contents. Refusing to accept self as the stream of consciousness, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, the Mīmāṃsākas, Jainas and Rāmānuja regard it as a substance with

consciousness as its qualities. While the Nyāya-Vaisēśikas and the Mīmāṁsakās regard consciousness as an essential quality of the soul which ceases to qualify the self in the state of liberation, the Jainas and Rāmānuja regard it as the essential quality of the soul-substance. While the Nyāya-Vaiśeśikas, the Mīmāṁsakās, the Jainas and Rāmānujas regard the self as a substance and consciousness as its quality (essential according to some and inessential according to others), the Sāṅkhya philosophers repudiate this distinction between Soul-substance and consciousness. Self, to them, is always the conscious spirit which is always the subject of knowledge and can never become the object of knowledge. It is not a substance with the attribute of consciousness but it is pure consciousness as such. The Advaita Vedānta believes in the reality of one Self only which is pure being, pure consciousness, and pure bliss. In this system Ātman is identified with Brahman. While recognising the empirical reality of the individual self, it denies its ontological reality. The Self is neither the body, nor the stream of consciousness, nor the Soul-substance. It is unobjective conscious subject. A comparative study of Sāṅkhya and Advaita view of self will reveal the fact that for Sāṅkhya the self is a purely formal principle but for Śaṅkara it has content as well - and this content is bliss. Again the Sāṅkhya philosopher believes in the reality of many selves and realities
other than Self. But Śaṅkara believes in neither. For Śaṅkara there is only one Self and this Self is identified with Brahman who is the only Reality. Unlike the Sāṅkhya philosopher, Śaṅkara thinks that proofs are not necessary for the Self, it is self-evident and self-shining. Accepting the Advaita standpoint of Self, Swami Vivekananda observes, "The infinite oneness of the Soul is the eternal sanction of all morality, that you and I are not only brothers - every literature voicing man's struggle towards freedom has preached that for you - but that you and I are really one. This is the dictate of Indian philosophy. This oneness is the rationale of all ethics and all spirituality."  

The prayer of the Indians - "Lead me from unreal to real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality" - is a point in support of the statement that Indian philosophers aim at Mokṣa or liberation which is considered to be the Summum Bonum of life. Indian conception of Mokṣa implies that a wrong identification of the eternally free self with not-self leads to bondage and the realisation of its true nature is Mokṣa. It is the all and end all of life. Dr. S.N. Das Gupta rightly remarks, "It is the pivot on which all the systems of Indian philosophy revolve". For Sri Aurobindo, Mokṣa is the 'Master Word' of Indian thought. Indian philosophy is as much as an  

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21 Dr. S.N. Das Gupta : Yoga Philosophy in relation to other systems of Indian thought, p.316.
art of living as a science of thinking. Here philosophy is not divorced from religion nor religion from philosophy. Swami Vivekananda rightly points out that Religion without philosophy runs into superstition; philosophy without religion becomes dry atheism. The relation of philosophy and religion in India had always been one of theory and practice. Philosophy shows ideals and religion aims at realising them. Neither is complete in itself. They are like the lame and the blind in the classical story each of whom requires the help of the other.

Indian philosophy aims at 'beyond logic'. "This peculiarity of the viewpoint is to be ascribed to the fact that philosophy in India did not take its rise in wonder or curiosity as it seems to have done in the West; rather it originated under the pressure of a practical need arising from the presence of moral and physical evil in life. It is the problem of how to remove this evil that troubled the ancient Indian most, and mokṣa in all the systems represents a state in which it is, in one sense and another, taken to have been overcome. Philosophical endeavour was directed primarily to find a remedy for the ills of life, and the consideration of metaphysical questions come in as a matter of course."22

The dissatisfaction of Maitreyī, the wife of Yajñavalka,

22 M. Hiriyanna: Outlines of Indian Philosophy, pp. 18–19.
the Upaniṣadic sage, with regard to worldly prosperity is the dissatisfaction of all the Upaniṣadic sages. Her dissatisfaction has been expressed in the simple question - "What shall I do with such possessions which donot give me immortality?"

In the Kaṭho Upaniṣad we find that Naciketa persists in his search for truth disregarding the worldly and heavenly pleasures. The Upaniṣadic sages refuse to be satisfied with anything other than Mokṣa. Negatively, Mokṣa is the cessation of the circuit of birth and death and all kinds of pain; and positively, it is the realisation of oneness with Brahman. Of all the traditional systems of Indian philosophy Advaita view of Mokṣa appears to be the best. According to it, on the attainment of freedom nothing happens to the world, only our view of it changes. The soul only assumes the form of its true nature. As the milk poured into milk becomes one with the milk, as water poured into water becomes one with water, as oil poured into oil becomes one with oil, so the illumed soul absorbed into Brahman becomes one with Brahman. So Mokṣa is not the abolition of the self but realisation of its true nature - realisation of self of what it is fundamentally. It is like the finding of the golden ring which is all the time in our possession. It is an inward realisation - not a gift from the above.

The nature of self has been beautifully described by Swami Vivekananda in the following manner -
I am neither body nor changes of the body;
Nor am I senses or object of the senses.
I am Existence Absolute, knowledge
   Absolute, Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He,
   (Sivo'ham, Sivo'ham)
I am neither sin nor virtue; nor
   Temple nor worship;
Nor pilgrimage nor books.
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute,
   Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He
   (Sivo'ham, Sivo'ham)
I have neither death nor fear of death;
Nor was I ever born, nor had I parents.
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute,
   Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He,
   (Sivo'ham, Sivo'ham).
I am not misery, nor ever had I misery;
I am not enemy nor had I enemies.
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute,
   Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He
   (Sivo'ham, Sivo'ham).
I am without form, without limit,
beyond space, beyond time;
I am in everything; I am the basis of the universe;
everywhere am I.
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute,
Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He.
(Sivo'ham, Sivo'ham) 23

'The giving up of the body is not liberation', says
Śaṅkara, 'not that of the staff and the water-bowl; but libe­
ration consists in the destruction of the heart's knot which 
is nescience' 24. This knot of the heart is mainly seen as 
the egoism of the embodied soul. If any one succeeds in uproot­
ing this ego, he becomes free. "When there is no "I", says 
Āstāvakra, 'there is liberation', when there is "I" there is 
bondage.25 Ramakrishna used to quote a Bengali couplet to this 
effect; 'When shall I be free? When "I" shall cease to be'.
Swami Vivekananda makes a remarkable to the same purport in a 
latter to a brother-disciple, 'It is this that is called

23 Translation from the Sanskrit Aphorisms given by Swami 
Vivekananda under the "Swami's Pine" at Greenacre, July 27,
1894 (quoted from Swami Vivekananda and his Work by 
Swami Abhedananda, p.31).

24 Viveka-Cūḍāmani, p.558.

25 अधिनायमि: जनं जनं जनं जनं जनं जनं जनं जनं
Āstāvakra: op. cit. VIII. 4
liberation-in-life - when the last trance of egoism and selfishness are gone".

From chief means of liberation, namely, Karma, Jñāna, Bhakti and Patanjali Yoga have been recognised by almost all systems of Indian philosophy with a difference of emphasis only. The Mīmāṃsakās hold that liberation can be attained by action alone. Vaisnava Vedāntins on the other hand, consider devotion as the only means of attaining liberation. From Sāṅkhya - Yoga the Yogic practices are indispensable for the realisation of liberation. Śaṅkara emphatically declares that knowledge alone is the direct means of liberation and highest knowledge is itself liberation. The terms Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti may be taken in two senses, namely, higher and lower. Karma in the lower sense means the satisfaction of the unfulfilled desires but in the higher sense it refers to disinterested performance of actions for the sake of Loka-Sangraha surrendering all fruits to the Lord. In like manner, knowledge means intellectual knowledge in the lower sense where there remains the triputi of knowledge, knower and known, but in the higher sense trinity of knower, known and knowledge is transcended. Bhakti in the lower sense means devotion to God who is other

than the devotee; but in the higher sense it refers to devotion offered to one's own ideal form who is the same thing as God. The aim of Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti is the same, namely, seeking a direct spiritual experience. A modern commentator observes, "The sādhaka has to begin with Karma, that being perfectly suitable to the beginner who is not yet purified in body and mind. The stage of Karma next gives place to the stage of Bhakti. This natural attraction necessarily draws the sādhaka nearer and nearer to the object of his worship, and gradually the division between the ideal and the actual becomes healed up until ultimately the ideal is reached. This is the stage of Jñāna implying identity and absolute absorption of the finite in the infinite." Each means is essential at a particular stage in the spiritual development of a sādhaka.

But Swami Vivekanananda refuses to make a clear water-tight compartment between Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti. He is not ready to accept that Karma is a stepping-stone to Bhakti and Bhakti is a means to Jñāna. To him, although an integrated cultivation of all these paths is the ideal of religion, any one of the paths if followed sincerely and entirely will lead to the ultimate goal of human life, namely, liberation. "What is now wanted is a combination of the greatest heart with the highest intellectuality, of infinite love with infinite knowledge. The Vedantist gives no other attributes to God.

EXCEPT THESE THREE - THAT HE IS INFINITE EXISTENCE, INFINITE KNOWLEDGE AND INFINITE BLISS, AND HE REGARDS THESE THREE AS ONE TOPIC OF THE THESIS - EXISTENCE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE CANNOT BE; KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT LOVE AND LOVE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE CANNOT BE. WHAT WE WANT IS THE HARMONY OF EXISTENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND BLISS INFINITE FOR THAT IS OUR GOAL, WE WANT HARMONY, NOT ONE-SIDED DEVELOPMENT. AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE THE INTELLECT OF A ŚAṆKARA WITH THE HEART OF A BUDDHA! I HOPE WE SHALL ALL STRUGGLE TO ATTAIN TO THAT BLESSED COMBINATION"28.

ŚAṆKARA'S TREMENDOUS INTELLECTUAL POWER APPEALSWAMIJI MOST. IN BUDDHA ON THE OTHER HAND, HE VISUALISED A HEART AS WIDE AS THE OCEAN. "ŚAṆKARA COULD NOT DENY THE CLAIMS OF THE HEART IN HIS PRACTICAL LIFE, THOUGH HE WOULD NOT RECOGNISE THEM IN HIS PHILOSOPHICAL THEORY. NOR COULD BUDDHA AVOID ALL METAPHYSICAL DISCUSSION AND KNOWLEDGE IN SPITE OF HIS ALL-ABSORBING INTEREST IN THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF LIFE - THE PROBLEM HOW TO END MISERY"29. IN HIS NEO-VEDÂNTA SWAMIJI COMBINES JÑĀNA, KARMA, BHAKTI, AND YÂOGA. HE WANTS "RELIGION THAT WILL BE A


29 Dr.S.C. Chatterjee: Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Volume, p.276.
EQUALLY ACCEPTABLE TO ALL MINDS; IT MUST BE EQUALLY PHILOSOPHIC, EQUALLY EMOTIONAL, EQUALLY MYSTIC, AND EQUALLY CONDUCTIVE TO ACTION. IN HIS OPINION, "ALL MEN WERE SO CONSTITUTED THAT IN THEIR MINDS ALL THESE ELEMENTS OF PHILOSOPHY, MYSTICISM, EMOTION, AND OF WORK, WERE EQUALLY PRESENT IN FULL." A HARMONIOUS BALANCE IN ALL THESE FOUR DIRECTIONS IS HIS IDEAL OF RELIGION. BUT IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH FOR SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, AN INTEGRATED CULTIVATION OF ALL THESE PATHS IS THE IDEAL OF RELIGION, YET HE IS READY TO ADMIT THAT PURSUIT OF ANY ONE OF THE PATHS SINCERELY AND ENTIRELY WILL LEAD TO THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE, NAMELY, LIBERATION.

In this context SWAMI ABHEDANANDA RIGHTLY POINTS OUT THAT AS A PHILOSOPHER, HE (SWAMI VIVEKANANDA) WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL EASTERN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS. IN HIM I FOUND THE IDEAL OF KARMA-YOGA, BHAKTI-YOGA, RAJA-YOGA AND JÑANA-YOGA. HE WAS LIKE THE LIVING EXAMPLE OF VEDĀNTA IN ALL ITS DIFFERENT BRANCHES.

Paying his highest tribute to Swamiji, Swami Abhedananda remarks, "Vivekananda is not dead, he is with us, now and forever. He is the senior brother to the whole world."

Swami Vivekananda represents the ancient philosophy of his mother-country so completely and comprehensively that it will require another Vivekananda to excel him. He is matchless and unique in this.

The scope and area of investigation of this thesis is not however to reiterate that truth. It is confined to a well-marked and a defined area, namely, "A study of the philosophy of Vivekananda with reference to Advaita Vedanta of Śaṅkara and great universal heart of Buddha."
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