DE-SUPERIMPOSITION OF EXPERIENCE: AN INWARD INQUIRY INTO THE CONCEPT OF BEING

5.0 Inquiry as an inner quest

Mental modes of empirical existence, are composed of dualities like, happiness and suffering, peace and restlessness, exaltation and depression, compassion and cruelty. So the question that can be asked is whether there is something permanent, unchangeable and non-dual. Empirical experiences make one aware of the temporality of things, events, animals and persons. Though origin and destruction are day-to-day experience of human persons, deep down in our heart there is a quest for eternity, a quest for imperishable, non-dual reality. Experience of multiplicity of beings encourages the desire for finding meaning in life.

Upaniṣads support the theory of the non-eternity of the material world and the existence of non-dual reality. Upaniṣads themselves are the result of the intuition of Rṣis unraveling the contradiction between the eternal and non-eternal, or dual or non-dual reality. Upaniṣadic seers in their search after truth have clearly articulated different methods of inquiry. In the previous
chapter an attempt is made to analytically present the method of *adhyāropa-apvāda* according to Śaṅkara-advaita. Present chapter is a continuation of the last one as an inward inquiry to the *Brahmānubhava*. This chapter discusses topics, four-fold means for spiritual enlightenment, the world an immanent entity, Brahman as the transformative cause of the world, sublatory experience leading to *Brahmanubhava*, *vijñāna* the threshold of inward inquiry and *jīvanmukta* in the world but not of the world.

5.1 Spiritual enlightenment - a rigorous discipline

In Vedāntic tradition, there is a stage where the subject-object dichotomy is completely done away with. Such a state of one's being presupposes oneness of the inquirer and the inquired. At this stage to know Brahman means to become Brahman (*brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati*). Such possibility again precedes a desire which comes along with the eligibility of attaining such a state. Intellectual understanding of Vedānta should lead to personal transformation of life. Vedānta tradition prescribes long and meticulous practice of spiritual disciplines called *Sādhana-catuṣṭaya* (fourfold means of spiritual enlightenment).

i) *Nityāntyavastuviveka* is the discrimination between the Real and the unreal. This intuitive knowledge is the basic requirement for a
seeker to progress in the path of inquiry. An ordinary person, without this discriminatory knowledge, will be attracted towards ephemeral things and thus waste his time and energy in life. A seeker will judiciously distinguish between the nityavastu, Brahman and the anityavastu, temporal and non-real things.

ii) *Ihāmuirādiphalabhogavirāga*: A seeker, from the Śruti passages as well as from the experience of realized persons, will come to know that enjoyment of pleasures and happiness, both in this world and in the next world, will be the result of finite actions and hence non-eternal. Even good actions produce results, which are finite, whereas self-knowledge is not the result of any action but it is innate. As a wind that blows away the dark clouds obstructing the radiance of the sun, so too spiritual disciplines remove the impediments to the realization of self-knowledge.

iii) *Śamadamādiṣatsampatti*, This is the basis of ethical practice, consisting of the following six steps.

(a) *Śama* means inner peace or calmness. The seeker after realizing the inherent defects of the anityavastu, gets away from the influence of such experience and spends time and energy in listening to Śruti and to the guru. Such a person is constantly in Brahmavicāra viz reflecting and meditating up on the Śruti.
passages. He goes through different experiences without being
distracted or attracted by them. Deep humility and unshakable self-
control are the characteristics of a seeker. He can be compared to a
tadaśila, a strong rock rising above the water in the sea, but
undisturbed by wind or wave.

(b) Dama is self-control. Organs of action—speaking, grasping,
moving about, procreating and evacuating, and perception tasting
smelling, hearing, seeing and touching—are under control. Though
the organs of action and perception are fully alert they are oriented
only towards Brahman.

(c) Uparati is self-settledness, so that mind having self-control
through the practice of śama and dama may not drift back to
objects of enjoyment. This state is sometimes compared to the life
of sanyāsa.

(d) Titikṣā is known as forbearance. In this stage the seeker will
not be affected by extreme situations, like heat or cold, pleasure or
pain, love or hate and other similar experiences. Physical suffering
will not be a cause of worry for him and will not care to mitigate
them.
(e) *Samādhāna* is complete concentration of the mind on Brahman. Like a flame undisturbed by wind, the mind of the seeker dwells in Brahman

(f) *Sraddha* or faith is the affirmative attitude of the seeker in his belief in the ultimate non-dual Reality. This affirmative faith enables the aspirant to realize the non-dual experience. In Katha- upaniṣad, Naciketas armed with *sraddha*, went to the abode of the lord of death to seek the knowledge of the non-dual Reality.

iv) *Mumukṣutvam* is longing for liberation. As a result of the above mentioned rigorous practices and disciplines, the seeker gets extricated from the influence of the mind-body-ego complex. His passions and emotions are under control, and as an unbroken flow of oil his mind remains concentrated in Brahman. Such seeker is ready to plunge into the experience of the Infinite. Intense desire to get liberated from the control of *Māyā-avidyā* will help the seeker to get *Brahmajñāna*.

The four-fold spiritual means to enlightenment in Advaitavedānta, starts a hermeneutic process and makes the person desirous of understanding the vedantic truth. In other words it makes one adhikarin to conduct an interpretative discussion of the vedāntic texts. It is a meticulously planned out program of
liberation. The seeker, systematically do away with the obstructing factors in his empirical existence viz the limiting factors of mind, body and ego. Āstāṅga-yoga presents a similar program for reaching the samādhi experience.¹ The four-fold spiritual means does not give one the liberating knowledge but only prepares the person for the Brahmajñāna.

5.2 The Immanence of Brahman in the world

There is apparent difference between the world and the Brahman. But the world as effect is non-different from the cause viz. Brahman. Chandogya-upaniṣad says, “O amiable one, in the beginning all this was but Existence, one without a second.” (sadeva somyedamagra āśīdekaṁ evādvitiyam, Ch.Up.6.2.1). Śaṅkara, in his Brahmasūtrabhāṣya (2.1.15) gives the example of thread and cloth, clay and pot in support of his arguments to prove satkāryavāda. Though one sees cloth or pot, thread or clay continues to remain in the cloth or pot. There is non-difference between the cause and effect, because the effect is perceived when the cause is present. For example, pot is perceived when clay present and similarly, cloth is perceived when yarns are present. In the empirical experience of clay-pot; milk- curd; gold-bangles, we see the pre-existence of cause. In these cases effect is determined by the latent potency in the cause. Potency must be the essence of
the cause and effect must be at the core of potency. Any other kind of relationship between cause and effect will involve another object as a mediator, which will lead to infinite regress.

In the phenomenal world of reality one can not make an ontological distinction between cause and effect because they are only apparent. World of multiplicity is only an imagination conditioned by māyā. Multiplicity comes into existence through change and change can be of two kinds. That change, which is of the same grade of reality as the thing, is transformation (parināma); what is not of the same grade of reality is illusory manifestation (vivartā).2 Vivartavāda is presented by Advaitins as a corollary to satkāryavāda, saying that effect is mere ‘appearance of the cause. Against vivartavāda, Sāmkhya philosophers argue that effect is actual transformation of the cause; this is known as parināmavāda. Asatkāryavāda was advocated by Nyāya-vaiśeṣika system of philosophy. They argue that effect exists independent of cause. Vivartavāda gives room for reaching back to Brahman, through de-superimposition of the apparent manifestation.

Chāndogya-upanisad says, “all this is but Brahman.” (7.25.2) The world comes out of Brahman and is sustained by Him, and
when it is dissolved gets back to Brahman, (Taitt.Up 3.1). Different elements of the universe have common factors, they are interconnected and are mutually helpful. Common origin, continuance and dissolution to the single reality point to the underlying factor of the universe viz the Brahman. *janmādyasya yataḥ*, Brhamasūtra,1.1.2 asserts the common origin of the universe. *Asya* means to this (universe). *janmādi* refers to birth and *yataḥ* means from which (from Brahman). One and the same cause is manifested in different names and forms, and through diverse actions and experiences. The omniscient and all-powerful Brahman, which is truth, knowledge and bliss, is immanent in the universe. But in our ordinary day today experience, the Brahman and the world are superimposed on each other. Ignorance is the cause of this superimposition and the world, its effect.

Though indeterminable in itself *māyā* has got Brahman as its *adhiśṭhāna*. Everything in this universe, including Śāstrās and Smritis are proof for the existence of Brahman. *Adhyāropa* is closely connected with the theories of *satkāryavāda* viz the effect pre-exists in its cause and *vivartavāda*, effect is only an apparent manifestation of the cause. *Māyā* is to be understood from epistemological and metaphysical perspective. Śaṅkara gives more importance to the latter kind of superimposition, which is the constituent dimension of our life experiences. Wrong
apprehension, doubt and non-apprehension occur only in the realm of superimposition including cause and effect actions. Vidyāraṇya, speaking about the obstruction that prevents the recognition of the self says, "It is the superimposition of what does not really exist and is not self evident on the self."³

5.3 Brahman: The Transfigurative cause of the world

Gauḍapāda's approach is that Brahman alone exists, everything is Brahman. The entire universe gets sublated when the final knowledge dawns. Gauḍapāda's philosophy is from the perspective of Brahman. All this is verily the Puruṣa himself, "From which these creatures are born, through which, they, when born, live and into which they return and enter." I am the origin of all, from Me everything issues forth.⁴

Śaṅkara's approach is from the perspective of māyā. For Śaṅkara, māyā the power of the lord, beginningless and compound of three constituents (guṇās), associated with Iśvara is the cause of world. According to Śaṅkara, creation is the expansion of Iśvara. Creation in Vedānta is not with a definite purpose, it is for mere sport or līla.⁵ Śaṅkara's aim, in analyzing the origin and existence of the world was to prove the reality of Brahman. Māyā becomes only an instrument in this attempt. Unlike the son of a
barren woman or sky flower mâyā is something positive. Mâyā is the power belonging to God himself and consists of three qualities.⁶

The entire universe is dependent on the Brahman for its existence. This does not mean that the world is totally non-existent. The world is real until the knowledge arises.⁷ Transfiguration alone is the theory of creation advocated by Śaṅkara. Sarvajñātman asserts this standpoint in his Saṅkṣepaśārīrika. (vivatra vādasya hi pūrvabhūmiḥ...vedāntavāde pariṇāmavādah). Veezhinathan in his introduction to the translation of the same work says, apart from this, the theory of transformation serves as a prelude to the theory of transfiguration, which treats Brahman as acosmic.⁸ There is an apparent contradiction in the way existence is attributed to the world but at the same time say it an illusion. Actually world is neither real nor unreal. (sat cet na bādhyeta asat cet na pratīyet). It is indeterminable as either real or unreal, (sadasadvilakṣṇa). Through the presentation of the world as anirvacaniya, Śaṅkara avoided the problem of contradiction, that is, whether the world is real or unreal.⁹ Bubbles, foam etc. are distinguished from sea water though they are modifications of the same. Similarly, a person of an average intellect attributes difference between the experiencer and the experiences though in actuality there is no difference.¹⁰
Advaitavedānta so often has been misunderstood as a philosophy that simply condemns the world to unreality. For an Advaitin, from the subjective standpoint world is neither real nor unreal. The world is an illusion only on the basis of experience of the Absolute. The world cannot be an illusion to one who lacks that experience. Only from the pāramārthika point of view everything empirical appears as if without substance, without independent reality and value. In short: "There is no reason to call the world unreal before the knowledge of the oneness of the Atman has been attained." ¹¹

Śaṅkara seems to have taken two approaches towards the concept of Māyā, that is, from pāramārthika point of view māyā is avidyātmaka and from vyāvahārika point of view it is called the effect of the mysterious power of Brahman. World does not cease to exist for one who obtained Brahmanubhava. The world continues to exist but in a different epistemological status. Though, the world continues to exist, it does not exercise any more influence on the Brahmajñāni. The world by itself is neither true nor false, but it is capable of projecting false impressions on us. The knowledge does not affect the perception whereas the perception does not distort the knowledge.
The Upaniṣads have undertaken a two-way inquiry, that is an inquiry starting from the phenomenal world (empirical reality) to the Brahman (the transcendental Reality), the foundation of everything and from Brahman back to the world in order to establish its illusoriness. (ātman–anātman) Brahmāṇubhava is the criteria for proving the falsity of the world. World becomes illusory from the point of view of the Brahmāṇubhava.

One cannot prove beyond doubt the necessity of the existence of the world. This necessarily leads to the contingency of the world, which will imply a principle other than itself for its existence. Religious theories of creation failed to explain the contrary aspects of reality and unreality of the world in the ultimate sense. Śaṅkara, through the help of māyā-avidyā, integrated these contrary aspects in a convincing way.

5.4 Sublatory experience leads to Brahmāṇubhava

Superimposition is the wrong attribution through ignorance. As a result one thing is perceived as the other. "Avidyā which is superimposed on Brahman makes the latter appear as Īśvara, jīva, and the world. The conception of superimposition is thus an essential part of the Advaitic theory." Subjectivity (karṣṭva) and cognition (jñāṣṭva) are wrongly attributed to the self.
"Sublation is always understood as a situation where one cognition replaces another, the sublating cognition falsifying the sublated one." \(^{13}\)

A *Brahmajñāni* experiences the discriminating knowledge (*vivekabuddhi*) in the internal organ (*antahkaraṇa*). The internal organ, by nature is *jaḍa*, hence; incapable of illumination by itself. But internal organ in association with consciousness gets illuminated. Through the discriminating cognition, *Brahmajñāni* distinguishes between the real and non-real; between the self and the not self.\(^{14}\)

Just as a person when awakened from sleep, realizes the non-reality of dream experiences so also the enlightened self realizes the non-reality of empirical experiences. Such a *jñāni* does not experience anymore plurality of beings. He is in the state of *turiya* where there is no cause and effect, no duality.

Self in its liberated, unsullied state is beyond all these attributes.\(^{15}\) Because of *māyā*, the cosmic illusion, Brahman appears as *Īśvara, jīva* and the world. The liberated self while being in the world transcends the dualities of experiences as his earlier understanding has been completely transformed. Hence it is not a
question of understanding the self but a question of not understanding the not-self.

Śaṅkara in a number of places, speaks about māyā as the power of the Lord. Māyā, is also called the "Unmanifest", and is the power of the Lord. It is beginningless and it comprises of three qualities.

avyaktanāmī, parameśa śaktiḥ anādyavidyā triguṇātmikā para, kāryānumeyā sudhiyaiva māyā, yayā jagat sarvam idam prasūyate,"

Vivekaçūḍāmaṇi,108

Brahmasūtraḥbhāṣya,1.1.14), also

mahāmāyā viśvam bhramāyāsi parabrahmaisi, Saundaryalahar (97).

Śaṅkara says, even the Lord himself depends on the limiting adjuncts of name and form, the product of nescience. B.S.B. 2.2.14, avidyākṛtanāma-rūpopādhi anurodhīsvaro bhavati, Śaṅkara speaks of māyā as deep rooted, incomprehensible because all are ignorant of the non-dual nature of the self.16 Māyā-avidya, as a mysterious stuff must have crept into the Advaita tradition much later not during
Śaṅkara. One who raises such kind of questions, simply misses the programme of Advaita philosophy. One has to make a distinction between philosophically relevant and irrelevant questions, avidyā kasya drṣyate iti praśno nirarthakaḥ, (Gitabhāṣya, 13.2; kasya punaḥ ayam prabodha iti cet, yastvāṃprṛchasi tasya ta iti vadāmaḥ,(B.S.B.4.1.3), satyāntre mithunīkṛtya ahamidam mamedam iti naisargiko’yam lokavyavahāraḥ,(Adhyāsabhāṣya)

In Māṇḍūkyabhāṣya, Śaṅkara says that avidyā is the very nature of the things. Beyond this nothing can be said by way of explaining why the non-dual Reality appears as the world of multiplicity. Na hi avidyā svabhava vyatirekena rajjvādinām sarpādyabhāsatve kāraṇam śakyam vaktum. (Māṇḍūkyabhāṣya, 9)

Some Advaitins consider māyā as the vikāri-upādāna kāraṇam (transformatie material cause) of this world, some others present it as something positive, bhāvarūpa. For Citsukhi, māyā is eternal and positive, and it is destroyed by knowledge. Anādi bhāvarūpam yad vijñānena vilayate, tadahanam iti prājña lakṣaṇam samprakāśate. (Citsukhi, 1.13) Sureśvara says, “Oh! no one is beyond the impudence of avidyā. Disregarding the reality, it exists as if it were the supreme Self.”

aho dhārṣṭyamavidyāyā na kaścidavitartate /
The positive nature expressed in these passages mean only that it is not something absolutely negative. Some of the modern scholars went to the extent of attributing Brahman as the root cause of multiplicity. S. Radhakrishnan has referred to māyā “as a cloak to cover the inner rifts of his (Śaṅkara’s) system.”

Dasgupta, in his History of Indian Philosophy says, “the Vedānta is both unwilling and incapable of explaining the nature of the world-process in all its details, in which philosophy and science are equally interested.”

The entire programme of Śaṅkara, has been represented with an exaggerated emphasis on certain aspects by his own followers, not to speak of his opponents. It is however to be admitted that in the process, much of philosophical ingenuity, and even excellence, has also been depleted by the brilliant followers of the acārya, betraying their innovative ability at the same time.

Advaitavedānta as a system of philosophy starts its inquiry from the experiences but makes a distinction between the experiences that come under the purview of senses, mind and intellect and the experiences that are beyond. According to this approach empirical experience brings about the knowledge of
reality and trans-empirical experience brings about *Brahmānubhava*. Reality as such, does not have any levels (*ekameva advitiyam*). Our experience of increasing realization goes through different levels. Indian philosophical traditions, generally start with the lived-in experience viz. struggles and miseries, pain and suffering, then proceed to *mukti*. Embodiedness is considered as a necessary evil, to the point of undermining the lived-in experience. Śaṅkara speaks about one essence, the Self. R. Balasubramanian says that the phenomenological method which Advaita pursues results in the theory of the levels of reality—what is phenomenally real, what is empirically real, and what is absolutely real.²⁰

5.5 *Vijñāna* the threshold of inward inquiry

*Cit* in Advaitavedānta is pure consciousness, which is non-relational. There is no dichotomy between the knower and the known. The closest to this pure consciousness, we experience in deep sleep, when consciousness is devoid of any objects. Human an intermediary is more a potentiality and promise evolving towards perfect consciousness.²¹ *Kundalini* experience is a quantum leap in consciousness. The striking commonality in the level of sub-atomic particle, energy, and consciousness point to the possible
convergence of principles of physical sciences and mystic experiences.

Dream experience will give way to waking experience, similarly waking experience has to lead one to prājña state in deep sleep and to turiya, the fourth state. The fourth one is stated to be the state of liberation. According to Gauḍapāda when we 'wake up' from the waking experience, the ordinary objects of the world no more remain real. Śaṅkara in his Brhadāraṇyaka bhāṣya presents dream as the effect of past karma and anticipation of future results. He equates deep sleep with ajñāna, and māyā.

_Taittiriya Upanisad_ presents Brahman as cosmic potency (2.8.9.6). Verily this Universe is Brahman. After negating food, breath, manas, vijñānam one reaches the real essence of the self i.e. ānanda, bliss. This invisible, unfathomable experience of bliss is the real self. The world, constituted of entities having properties and relations, has been the main concern of many of the western philosophers. In such a context a concept like _adhyāsa_ does not seem to have any role to play.

5.6 Consciousness - The metaphysical Residuum

Consciousness can be approached from different states of existence that is waking (jāgrat), dream (svapna), deep sleep
and the Fourth (turīya). Early Advaitins considered turīya as a synonym to Brahman-Ātman. Turīya is the unconditioned substratum of all the other three states of consciousness. When the other three states are sublated what remains is the turīya, the metaphysical residuum. It is the basic consciousness whereas Brahman-Ātman, is the foundation (adhiśthāna) of everything in this universe. Brahman in association with māyā is the cause of the material world. Under the Buddhist and Yoga influences turīya was considered as the highest meditative state.

Advaitins emphasize the metaphysical status of each of the three states in explaining the catuspād doctrine. Each state is conditioned by consciousness with its different levels of influence. Western transpersonal psychologists have extensive studies about the working of consciousness in different states and they have come out with close parallels with advaitic catuspād doctrine. In different states of consciousness the brain produces varying kinds of waves, that is beta in waking, alpha in dream, theta in deep sleep, and delta in turīya. Waking (jāgrat) state is the first in the order, where self is in contact with the world of objects through senses. Superimposition is in full force at this state obscuring the
non-dual reality. Waking state is manifested in *vaiśvānara* form. According to Śaṅkara waking state is mere awareness of the external gross objects, which one derives through senses.

Dream (*svapna*) state is oriented towards the subtle internal unconscious ideas and desires. This state is expressed in the form of *taijasa*. In dream cognition the subject shines even in the absence of objects. Though the spatio-temporal limitations disappear at this juncture, *jīva* is still under the grip of *māyā*. Śaṅkara, commenting on dream state agrees that this state is less real than waking because it largely depends on mental creations based on waking experiences. Experiences in the waking state create mental modifications (*vṛtti*) in the intellect which in turn create dream objects. One sees dream objects according to the objects in the previous experiences (*pūrvānubhutavastu*).

According to Śaṅkara waking and dream states are similar, from the *pāramārtika* point of view. Both are based on ignorance hence both are adventitious (*āgantuka*).

### 5.7 Experience of the unified state of existence

Advaitins consider deep sleep as an experience closer to *turīya*, than waking and dream state. The remembrance of having slept well is a clear indicator to the presence of consciousness
during sleep. Deep sleep is experience of bliss, serene rest (samprasāda) an experience of non-duality.

In deep sleep (suṣupti), the third state, consciousness manifests itself in the form of undifferentiated self-luminous mass of consciousness, prajñānaghana. In this stage, consciousness is devoid of awareness, desires and characteristics. It is totally free from any kind of mental modifications. In deep sleep, self is free from all kinds of limitations including cause-effect relationship. The self is totally at rest experiencing identity with the absolute unlike in dream or waking state. It enjoys ānanda equivalent to mokṣa. Self that is in its true nature enjoys bliss (ānanda) in a unified state of existence (ekībhūta). The self-luminous Brahman is immanent in deep sleep. Śaṅkara's commentary on Brhadāranyaka-upaniṣad 2.1.19 presents two themes on suṣupti that is (serene rest) and višeṣavijñāna-abhāva (absence of any consciousness of particulars). The ātman that enjoys bliss in the deep sleep returns to the waking state to be entangled in the activities of this world (samsāravyavahāra).

Śaṅkara elaborately deals with the doctrine of catuspād and turīya in his bhāṣya to Māṇḍukyakārikā. For Śaṅkara, turīya cannot be indicated through words because it is devoid of any characteristics. It is indescribable but definitely it is not śūnya as
in Buddhism. Changing states of consciousness are unreal because they are sublatable. All through the different states it is the same consciousness which persists. This point to the essential unity of self realized in *turiya*. Śaṅkara’s main concern in his *Māṇḍukyabhāṣya* was to establish the essential unity of the self and *turiya*.

5.8 Brahmajñāni: in the world but not of the world

A seeker who has realized Brahman is called Brahmajñāni; such a person is united with the self. According to Advaitavedānta, a person who is liberated still in body, is called *jīvanmukta*. Results of his past actions are fulfilled and ignorance is removed completely. *Saṅcita karma,* results of the accumulated actions and *prārāda karma* are to be enjoyed. Sadānanda says, “a person who is liberated while alive, is one who, by the knowledge of the Brahman has dispelled the ignorance about ‘It’; because of the destruction of ignorance and its effects such, a person is free from all bondage and is established in Brahman. *Jīvanmukto nāma svasvarūpākhanḍabrahmajñānena tadṛjanabādhanaadvārā svasvarūpākhanḍabrahmaṁ sākṣātkṛte jñānatātkāryasaṅcita karma-samśaya viparyayādīnāmaipī bādhitatvād akhilabandarahito brahmaniṣṭhaḥ.* (Vedāntasāra p.117). The knot of the seeker’s
heart is broken, all his doubts are solved, and his past actions are neutralized, (Mund. Up. 2.2.8)

Just like a potter's wheel continues to rotate even after the propelling rod is removed, so too jīvanmukta, will continue to live in his body as long as the effects of prārabdha-karma remains. prārabdha-karma can be exhausted only through reaping the consequences of his past actions. But there is distinction between an ordinary person and a liberated person in their enjoyment of actions. While an ordinary person is controlled by māyā, the liberated one will be totally unaffected by his actions. Like a burnt seed, which will not produce any more sprout, the actions of a liberated person will not create further bondage.

Jīvanmukta continues to live in this world for the benefit of others, who are groping in māyā. They are the preceptors of tradition and values. Actions of a liberated person, need not be properly understood by another one, who is still living in ignorance. Jīvanmukta’s life and actions are guided by brahmajñāna and his concern is always the well-being of humanity.

T.M.P. Mahadevan says,

The Jīvanmukta lives in the world, but he is not of it. He awaits only the fruition of the residue of his prārabdha. Even in reaping the fruits of his karma he is unattached and does not lose his balanced deportment. He is compared to a child or a lunatic, since he has no conceit in his actions. To his synoptic vision there is neither action nor
agent, neither enjoyment nor enjoyer. He has transcended the temporal process; and temporal categories have no meaning for him. He revels in the bliss of non-difference that has not come to be, but which was, is and will ever be.\textsuperscript{38}

A Jivanmukta is no more a sādhaka, he is siddha. At the moment one gets brahmajñāna, he ceases to be a seeker, but he continues to be in the world undergoing empirical experiences with a different attitude. Being a siddha does not mean that he is out of pleasure and sorrow. Just like any other person, he too will have those experiences but will not have any impact on the person. Pain and suffering will not torment him, he will be a sthitaprajña. Hiriyanna says, “The freed man is in and out of samsāra at the same time-empirically in it but transcendentally out of it.”\textsuperscript{39}

A liberated person will not be affected even by the painful or most beautiful experiences in life. He is well aware of the transitory nature of the empirical experiences. His actions and continued life is meant for the benefit of other people. He will be compassionate to the sufferings of other people and creatures; because he has realized the essential unity of all beings. A Brahmajñāni, after realizing the non-difference with the ultimate Reality will not feel different from other beings. Like a person on the top of a mountain, he will have a universal outlook.
5.9 Conclusion

Following the line of thinking envisaged in the Upanisads, Śaṅkara developed a systematic method of inward inquiry - *adhyāropa-apavāda*. This is a means by which one establishes the essential non-difference between one's own self and the ultimate reality. In other words, it is an inward inquiry into one's own self through the technique of superimposition and subsequent sublation. *Māyā-avidyā* through its powers (*āvaraṇa-śakti* and *vikṣepa-śakti*) play a key role in this process. Once the veil of *māyā* is removed, *brahmajñāna* dawns on the seeker. In order to have *brahmajñāna* the seeker has to go through rigorous spiritual discipline called *sādhanacatuṣṭaya*. Discriminatory knowledge between the eternal and non-eternal reality will create an intense desire for liberation. A liberated person - *jīvanmukta* continues to live in the world for the benefit of others (*paropakārthā*), but he is no more of the world.
Notes and references

1. *Yama* (control), *niyama* (cultivation of positive qualities), *āsana* (posture for physical fitness), *prānāyāma* (control of prāṇa), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawing of senses from objects), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation) and *samādhi* (a state of undisturbed unity) are the eight stages prescribed in asāṅga-yoga. Both programs of liberation are similar in many respects.


4. *puruṣa* averted sarvam Rg Veda 10.90.2; *yato va imāni bhutāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yatprayantabhisānviṣānti*, Tait. Up.3.1; *aham sarvasya prabhavo mātah sarvam pravartate*. (B. G.10.8)

5. See Śaṅkara’s commentary on *Maṇḍukyakārīka* 1.7; B.S.B. II.1.33


7. *Brahma-vyatirekena-kārya-jātasya abhāva iti gamyate B S B* 2.1.14

8. *Sarvajñātman, Saṅkshepasārīrika*, 2. 56, 58-64; refer Veezhinathan's introdution to the same work, p. 123


10. *Apratyakhyayaiva kāryapraṇapaṇam pasarināma prakriyam ca ārayati s agonopāñeṇasupapayogata iti* B.Ś.Ś.2.1.14

11. *Suresvara, Sambanda Vārtika*, (aikātmyapratipatthe prang na midhya hetvabhāvatah) p. 288 as quoted by N. K. Devaraja in , *An Introduction to Sankara’s Theory of Knowledge*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1962 p.16; "... of the non-real there is no coming to be; of the real there is no ceasing to be." B.G.11.16


15. *aprthaktve’pi caitanyāt prthagiva avabhāsante-antahkarana vṛttyupādau naneva avabhāsante, Paṅcapāḍikā-Vivaraṇa*, p. 60, both quoted in *Saṅkshepasārīrika* of Sarvajñātman tr. by Veezhinathan, foot note, 254.

16. aho atigambhira dravya-grāhya vicita māyā ceyam yadayaṁ sarvo jantuḥ paramārtataḥ parmārthaḥsatetvoppyeeyavam bodhyamanoham paramārtmeti na grāhāti, anāśamanām dehendriyādi saṅghātātmano drṣye-mānāmapi ghatādivadātmatveṇa ahamamuoṣayapatra ityamucayamānopai grhaṇāti, Kathopanisad bhāṣya 1.3.12,
For Maṇḍana Miśra and Vinaykrtetman, māyā consist of what is inconsistent, whatever is consistent is explainable and therefore not māyā. anupadayamanārthaiva hi māyā; upadayamanārthāvate yatartabhāvama māyā syā, Maṇḍana Miśra. Brahmasiddhi. durghatātvam avidyāyā bhūṣanam na tu dūṣanam, also na hi māyayām asambhāvaniyam nada asambhāvaniyavabhāsacaturah hi sa. This approach will lead to anavasthā, Vinaykrtetman, Iṣṭasiddhi

17. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II p. 201
19. G. C. Nayak, Māyāvada- An approach from Ācārya’s point of view, A paper presented in the national seminar in Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, September 98.

20. R. Balasubramanian, tr., Naiskarmyasiddhi of Suresvara, Introduction, p. xxiv
21. The super-man of Nietzsche, the omega point of Teilhard de Chardin, and Aurobindo’s super consciousness are clear examples of this human potentiality. Human had the dubious distinction both cooperating with the evolutionary process as well as consciously mutilating it.

22. Br. Up. 4.3.9
23. Upadeśasahasrī, 2. 17, 26-29
24. Ch. Up. 3.14, 8.7-12
25. Corresponding to each of these states, brain, heart, mind, and other systems respond differently. For more details please see, “The Concept of Consciousness” by Brahmachari Devendra, in Indian Philosophical Annual, University of Madras, 1976, Vol. No. 11 pp.129 ff. And “Consciousness - Neuro Surgical Point of View”(II) by V. Balasubramanian, Ibid., pp. 41 ff.

26. There are references to the concept of turiya in Minor Upanisads, see Andrew O. Fort, The Self and its States, Motilal Banarsidas, New Delhi:1990, pp. 133 ff.
27. Catuspād doctrine is called so because of its different states, jagrat, svapna, susupti finally culminating in turiya. For a detailed analysis of the doctrine in Maṇḍukya-ūpāniṣad, Gauḍapādākārika and other upaniṣads, please see Andrew O. Fort, The self and its States, op. cit., 1990, pp. 15 ff.

28. For a detailed understanding of the functioning of brain in different states refer Alternate States of Consciousness, ed. by Norman E. Zinberg, New York: Free Press, 1977, p. 154 and Frontiers of Consciousness, ed., by John White, New York: Julian Press, 1974, pp. 262-63. Keith Floid presents the varying intensity of the brain wave in different states. Turyia has the least number of flashes per second when the person is in a state of ecstasy, world within is merged with the world without and time stands still.

29. Classical Indian thinkers believed that dreams arise from food, disease or from waking wishes. For a detailed analysis of Indian understanding of dreams see Indian Psychology by Jadunath Sinha, Calcutta: Sinha Publishing House,1958, Vol. 1 pp. 307 ff. William Indic in his work Consciousness in Advaita Vedānta, New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1995, pp. 84 ff makes an enlightening analysis of dreams mainly based on Śaṅkara and Dharmarāja. He says dreams can be divine or demonic.