CHAPTER VIII
EVALUATION OF THE ARGUMENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

A. Introduction

So far we have explained the five-fold arguments for God's existence; then and there we have given the Śaiva Siddhānta viewpoint. The purpose of our research is not only to present these arguments for the existence of God, but also to evaluate them with reference to Śaiva Siddhānta doctrine on God. A method of comparison would be presenting the arguments for God's existence, which have been developed in the course of history, and comparing them with the explanations of Śaiva Siddhānta. In this thesis, we have not only compared the Siddhānta view with the five arguments adduced by the Western thinkers, but we also have at the same time underlined wherever Siddhāntins differed from them. Hence our method had been a method of comparison and contrast. Now we should like to point out in this chapter how the personal experience as explained in Śaiva Siddhānta can also be considered as an argument for the existence of God, and this would be the special contribution of Śaiva Siddhānta to the Western thinking. The contribution of our research also would consist precisely in presenting a common doctrine that has evolved
from the above study and in linking it with the teaching of Śāiva Siddhānta. From the point of view of methodology, we consider our research new.

**B Evaluation on the basis of Śāiva Siddhānta**

Accepting the one as a guru who has been and who can show God, Śāiva Siddhānta attempts to establish the existence of God. God should not be considered merely as a reality whose existence can be established before men; God should be accepted on the basis of one's own experience. The reality of God is to be experienced and it is not to be established merely on the basis of arguments. However, Śāiva Siddhānta accepts the above arguments to some extent only; that is to say, the arguments are there only to show others that the existence of God can be proved through these arguments on the basis of some logical principles or on the basis of the principle of cause and effect. Śāiva Siddhānta does not pretend to establish the abiding presence of God in another man's mind.

1 **The Ontological Argument**

Of all the arguments expounded above, the ontological argument had been given a prime place. There can be experience of God on the basis of self-evident experience. Such an experience of God cannot be given to another man on the basis of the existence of the world or of the things therein. God is not alien to anything
in the world; He is a great reality pervading all the things and is ever present in them in an intimate union. In this sense, as St. Anselm has said, he is the Great Substance. This is explained by Sáiva Siddhānta in a new way. As the self (sva) is greater than the body in man, so also there is a greater being in man than his self itself. Man has to realize this fact. The greatness of body and the soul is known through their advaitic union. So also man can know the greatness of the third Reality in him through the advaitic union of his self with that reality. Hence Sáiva Siddhānta names the self as "sadasat". That is to say, it is neither sat nor asat, but is at the same time in both; it is the middle sharing the nature of both (madhyamadhyamah), and so it is called sadasat. The explanation by Siddhānta of the ontological argument of St. Anselm consists in stressing that the man should know and understand the nature of sat (sattvyatva), that is in himself. The principle of oneness in duality applied to the self when it is called as sadasat is also made use of by Siddhānta to explain God as the one in the middle of antar and adhi and who is experienced daily in the midst of events of the world. When man has the experience of what happens outside himself, he is able to realize that there must be a common source for all these contradictory events in the world and that this source should be a "Purusaiwar", which is God. Thus from the exigency of a "Purusaiwar", for accounting the daily
experience of contradictory occurrences, the existence of God is established. Meykandar has shown the meaning of 'antam' and 'aachi' in the first sutra of Śaivaśāṅkara-bodha. This was already explained in Tolkāpiyam by referring to the third dot in the final vowel (‘’’) in Tamil (meyeḻhutu).

2 The Cosmological Argument

The second argument is cosmological argument which is accepted and developed by all the philosophical systems. This argument is based on the structure and movements of the world which call for the existence of a Supreme Being who is the source of the world and actuates it. But Śaiva Siddhānta argues for the existence of such a Being from the experience of the world which offers two contradictory occurrences. In this world we experience both light (understanding) and darkness (ignorance); when we are enlightened we find happiness; when we do not get enlightenment we experience pain. From this alternate experience of pleasure and pain in this world we argue that there may be some cause for this. This method is called 'Kaṇṭha-kāṅkaṇum Heri' or the explanation of the advaitic union. From the fact of the external world, we proceed to establish the existence of God. Thus Śaiva Siddhānta established the cosmological argument from
the subjective point of view of the experience of the external world.

3 The Teleological Argument

From the presence of design in the world, an argument for the existence of God is construed. Siddhānta develops this argument with a shift of emphasis. According to this, the goal or design is present not so much in the objective world as it is in the subjective one, namely in the heart of man. The goal of souls is a happy life and completeness of this happiness. At the body acts on eight-fold basis, so also the self attains eightfold differences. If we compare the differences of the self with those of the body we shall have two different experiences. There must be a common reality (nādu naṅkum porul) which causes this different experiences. Such is also the teaching of the Tamil grammar- Tolkāpīyam. There must be a reality which is beyond the two distinct experiences of pleasure and pain and there can be real happiness only when unites himself with this reality. This is the goal of the soul according to Śaiva Siddhānta.

4 The Moral Argument

The next is the moral argument. The world that is the common place for several things, should have also a moral
principle which guides various acts in it. The essence of this argument consists in proving the existence of God by combining moral doctrine with those who have to observe it. But, though Saiva Siddhanta accepts this argument, it introduces its specific teaching by bringing in the concept of 'Vairagi'. This 'Vairagi' is the common way (podumari) for the man. By following this common way one becomes antarpana. When he thus becomes antarpana, there results an experience according to which there should be a Reality that is common to all the things in the world. This is called universal man who transforms himself into Taman (country). Thus through getting the experience of God by following moral principle, the existence of God is established. This is the teaching of Saiva Siddhanta.

5 Argument from Religious Experience

Finally comes the religious experience. Saiva Siddhanta considers this the most appropriate argument for establishing God's existence. The existence of God can be established from one's own experience of God. In this Siddhanta differs from other philosophical systems. The Siddhantin's experience of God rejects the arguments of other systems and explains how his experience was felt by him. In doing so, he distinguishes ordinary vision from that of the vision of God. The