Lord Buddha left metaphysical background to be developed into a powerful philosophical system of thought by his later followers. So different thinkers developed different systems and naturally, there arose doctrinal divergence of views. Hindu thinkers mention two main schools of Buddhism—Hinayana and Mahayana, which are further divided into two. The Vaibhasikas and the Sautrantikas constitute the Hinayana school, who are otherwise known as Sarvastivadins and who believe the reality of the world. The Yogacaras, who believe that the world of thought alone is real and the Madhyamikas or the Shunyavadins constitute the Mahayana school. Scholars are of the view that Buddhistic thought had reached its climax of formative period at the time of Shankara.

Shankara opens the topic by mentioning three principal schools in Buddhist's Philosophy. Firstly, the realists who accept the reality of both, the external and the internal world. The external world consists of external things and the internal that of thought. So, according to them everything is real. The second school is that of Idealists who maintain that the internal world of thought
alone is real. The third school believes that everything is void. All of them uniformly recognise the momentary nature of all things.

I. REPUTATION OF THE REALISTS

First of all, Shankara takes up the Realists' view.

(a) Criticism of 'Being' and 'Becoming'

The Realists say that the universe is made up of two aggregates — the material world and the mental world. The external world is made up of the aggregation of atoms which are hard, fluid, hot or mobile according as they belong to earth, water, fire and air respectively. On the other hand, the following five Skandhas are said to account for the internal world: 

1. The Earthing Skandha which comprises of the senses and their objects.
2. The Vijnana Skandha which comprises of the series of self-cognitions which give rise to the notion of 'I'.
3. The Vedana Skandha which comprises of the experiences of pleasure and pain.
4. The Sankha Skandha which constitutes the cognition of things by names.
5. The Sanskara Skandha which is a combination of attachment and aversion, Dharma and Adharma.

The internal world is produced as the result of the aggregate of these Skandhas. Shankara objects against this view thus:

The aggregation of the Skandhas and the atoms cannot take place without the acceptance of an intelligent principle.

1. Vide Shariraka Bhasya on 2/2/19.
that may guide them to group together. The opponent may say that they spontaneously attain activity and thus join together to constitute one whole. That they are active constitutes their very nature. Shankara in that case points out here that this solution involves a difficulty, viz. impossibility of the realisation of Nirvana. The Skandhas and the atoms will never cease to group together because that is their nature. Consequently "Nirvana" can never be achieved. Groupings cannot be attributed to the activity of the mind. Because the mind, in order to function, demands a corporeal frame which cannot come into existence before the groupings. Being an advocate of the theory of momentariness, the cause cannot be traced to a chain of cognitions of one's own self as 'I am.'

The possibility of Samsara may be attributed to the causal force of the series of Avidya, Samskara, Vijnana, Samaruna, Sadayatana Sharsa, Vedana, Prisna, Uvadana, Dve, Jati, old age and death. The Buddhhas say that these 'steps' in the chain of empirical existence follow successively as surely as water-pots on a wheel. Shankara says that this explanation is unsatisfactory because it merely accounts for the origination of certain members of the series. Internal and external groupings still remain unexplained. But, the opponent resumes, the series itself is the group. Shankara questions then, as to what is its cause?

Obviously, the opponent is caught in fallacy of regress ad infinitum. The series which depends on the groupings of atoms and Skandhas is said to be the cause of the latter. Shamkara's point is correct because the effect is always dependent on its cause as the former borrows its existence from the latter and the vice versa of this supposition is not true.

Unlike the Vaishesikas, the Baudhāyas believe the atoms and the Skandhas to be transitory. The difficulty about their combination is much more complicated than the Vaishesikas. Hence it should be considered refuted in the light of the criticism of the atomic theory of the Vaishesikas. In spite of Shamkara's objections, even if it be granted that each term of the series is by nature such that it produces next one in the series; one fails to understand here how does this series take place exactly in a fixed sequence and at a particular time. How do the Pratyayas, which according to the Baudhāyas go to produce a result, co-operate with each other? If all this happens by mere chance, how should they necessarily produce a certain given product only and nothing else? Hence Shamkara's criticism is convincing.

The Baudhāyas say that the series on the one hand and the Skandhas and the atoms on the other, are both

1. Cf. Chapter Seven of this thesis.
simultaneously responsible for the continued empirical existence. Śāṅkara puts a question here: Is the successive groupings of the atoms and of the Skandhas like or unlike its preceding one? If we assume the sequence to be invariably similar to its preceding one, then, irrespective of one’s good or bad actions, man will never obtain the bodies of birds and animals or of angels and gods. Then the law of Karma, in which the Buddhists believe, will have to be given up. If the second possibility is granted, then man will become endowed with sudden change i.e. he may become an elephant or god even when he is alive in an human body. Besides, how shall the momentary souls will wait till their objects of enjoyment come into being or till the time of final release? Thus release and enjoyment cannot be logically maintained.

The Jātaka tales depict that the Buddhists believe in the theory of Karma and in transmigration. But surprisingly enough, the Buddhists do not accept the entity which may endure in successive lives! That entity cannot be Ashaya, Alayavijñāna, or mind because mind itself changes every moment.

(b) Criticism of the Doctrine of Momentariness

The doctrine of universal momentariness excludes the possibility of any causal relation between two things. Any antecedent cannot be said to have developed into an effect. If we are somehow to recognize the causal relation, then,
we will have to admit that the antecedent exists at least for a second moment of time to exert its influence on the effect. Otherwise, the antecedent will cease to be an antecedent at all. A consequent is no consequent if it does not have its essence in the antecedent.

The 'series' doctrine of the Baudhāya demands that an object is an effect of its predecessor in the series and it vanishes into past by becoming the cause of its successor. Saṅkara very penetratingly observes three instants in the life of a thing. In other words, every object will have to be regarded as existent for at least three moments. In the first moment of its existence, it exerts and struggles to come into being. The second moment is when it is actually existent and is perceptible through means of knowledge. In the third moment of its existence, it is busy to produce the next in the series before its very existence is finished. This goes contrary to the assumption of the Baudhāyas that every thing is momentary.

The fact of recollection is also a fatal blow to the Buddhist's doctrine of momentariness. We never observe that one man cognises a thing and another recognises it. Even the Buddha, if he is true to himself, will have to admit that perceptions that he remembers now, belonged to him in

1. Vide Saṅkīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/30.
the past also. In fact, all his perceptions from his cradle to the grave and the subsequent recollection thereof do belong to him as one and the same person.

If the landótha argues that the knowledge of similarity is absolutely a new cognition, it does not thus require one and the same experiencing subject and it need not be based on the prior cognitions of two things, existing at two different moments of time. Shankara replies that expressions like, 'this is similar to that' indicate not only 'this' and 'that' but also one common experiencing entity whose judgement it is. If the concept of similarity would have been a distinct object of knowledge, then we should be able to talk of similarity independently, making no reference to 'this' or 'that'.

Over and above all this, a distinction of subject and object observed is everyday experience by us all is also a great setback on the theory of momentariness. It is practically impossible that at one and the same time, a subject be also made the object in one and the same act of cognition carried at one and the same time.

It may be objected that there are other sources which tell us that Sarvástivādins did believe in limited permanence. They admit that the "substratum of everything is

1. Vide Sharīraka Bhasya on 2/2/25.
2. Cf. Nāgārjuna's remark in Madhyamika Sūtra XXIV.8 f.
is eternal and permanent. What changes every moment is merely the phase of the thing". In the light of this development, the objections raised by Šaṅkara may be declared to be invalid. Moreover, it may appear unfair to criticise the Sarvāstivādins on the lines of the theory of momentariness. Though all Buddhist teachers of later times do recognise the theory of momentariness, but it may be noted that the credit of elaborating the doctrine goes to Śrīmālākṛiti and Dharmakīrti who took a keen interest in developing and systematising the doctrine.

It may be replied here that Šaṅkara has criticised the Sarvāstivādins looking from their basic principle tenet of Buddhism and hence of every school of Buddhism that everything is momentary. In fact, Lord Buddha never taught or spoke of the doctrine of "Parināmī-ṣṭyātva". Therefore, Dr. S.K. Balvekar observes, "In accenting the doctrine of 'Parināmī-ṣṭyātva', the Sarvāstivādins have departed from the original teaching of the Buddha, which in this respect, would seem to have been more faithfully preserved by the Mīrṣaṇa and Śūnyavādins". Thus Šaṅkara is justified in criticising the Sarvāstivādins, considering them as advocates of the theory of momentariness.

The above-said development that the Sarvāstivādins recognised limited permanence may have provided the clue

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for the critics to criticise Shankara in very bitter terms. They say that Shankara has purposely shut his eyes towards such a development. For example, Shankar Sogen accuses Shankara of misunderstanding and even of purposely mis-representing the views of the opponent. But Mr. Sogen’s conclusions are not convincing, as they are not based on irrefutable sound facts. A. B. Keath has also admitted that Shankara has represented the opponent’s views very accurately. Moreover, the author of the Brahma-Sūtras seems to be unaware of such a development. In the light of the widely accepted fact that Shankara is a faithful interpreter of the spirit of the Brahma-Sūtras, it is unfair to accuse him of willfully perverting the point at issue.

(c) Criticism of the Concepts of ‘Origin and Destruction’. Let us question the Buddhist what does he understand by the “Origin and Destruction” of the world. If he says that it is the nature of things, then, how will he maintain that things, though momentary, still continue with their nature! If he says that they are earlier and later stages of a thing, then he is admitting that a thing may exist for about three moments at least. Even if in a fit of revolt he says that they are completely distinct and separate from each other just as a horse differs from a buffalo, even then the same difficulty stands as before. If origin and

1. Vide his "System of Buddhist Thought"
destruction imply perception and non-perception of a thing, then we shall have to think of a non-existent being. Hence the untenability of the doctrine of the Buddhias.

The difficulty cannot be got over, even if effects are admitted to be uncaused. In that case, the Buddhias will have to abandon their own contention that the mind and its own states are caused by four different factors—material, impersonal, sensory and auxiliary. e.g. the jar, its prior impressions, eyes and light, are the four causes of the perception of a jar. Here every event requires the simultaneous co-operation of these factors which is possible only when objects are not momentary. The opponent cannot escape this difficulty by saying that he does not believe in causal relation, because, then, anything may come out of anything. It will be difficult for him to explain the chaos which would result from discarding the doctrine of causality which is universally recognised.

According to the Buddhias, universal destruction goes on every moment. This destruction is of two types: Voluntary e.g. when a jar is purposely broken with a stick by a person and Involuntary destruction is the natural and gradual decay of things. Shankara observes that neither of

1. Vide Madhyamika Karikas, 1/2.
these can be logically substantiated. Either type of destruction must refer to a series of momentary existences or to the individual members of the series. No third possibility can be envisaged because the Buddhhas cannot afford to give up their doctrine of momentariness. Let us take the first alternative. If it refers to a stream of things and events, then destruction cannot take place because the individuals of the stream are inter-related in an eternal sequence of cause and effect. The stream itself implies that there runs something common in all the individuals of the stream. At least that 'something common' has to be viewed as permanent which is sufficient to prove that destruction has not taken place if the momentary existence has to belong to 'the series'. Nor the things can go on perishing by themselves as the second possibility contemplates. The various states of a certain thing, says Shankara, indicate something of the thing which runs common through the different states of that thing and due to which the particular thing is recognised. Hence it cannot be an exact case of destruction.

It may be appreciated here that Shankara has given a true account of the concept of "Nirodha" in Buddhist Philosophy. At the same time, his criticism has been quite logical and therefore, appealing. The doctrine of momentariness says that a thing coming into existence slips into non-existence leaving behind another thing to act in

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1. Cf. Sharīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/22
the similar way. Śaṁkara very aptly questions here that what is the need of “Mirodha” and its two subdivisions? What purpose does there remain to be fulfilled by the “Mirodha”? A close scrutiny in the matter reveals that the “Mirodha” is neither applicable to the series of momentary existences nor can it affect the individual members of the series in any way. It may be noted that Śaṁkara is silent over the exact workings of Mirodha. He does not prove that they are “Nirupākhya”.

“Avidyā”, according to the Buddhhas, is the false idea of permanency in things which in reality are transitory. Emancipation is achieved when this false notion is destroyed. Now this destruction must also be either voluntary or non-voluntary, because the Buddhhas postulate these two types of destructions only. If it is voluntary, i.e. “Avidyā” is destroyed as a result of perfect knowledge, then we are giving up Buddhhas’ doctrine that universal destruction takes place by itself without any cause. If it is non-voluntary, then the path to “Ardvija” is rendered useless.

According to the opponent, “Pratisankhya” or true knowledge causes the destruction of Avidyā. Śaṁkara points out that it must exist outside the chain, if it is to destroy the chain of “Avidyā”. But there is no scope for such an assumption in the Buddhist Philosophy.

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1. Vide Shariraka Bhāsya on 2/2/23.
(d) **Criticism of the Concept of Space**

The Saunadhas advocate that the external world consists of four elements only—earth, water, fire and air. They say that space is a non-entity because it does not possess the positive characteristics. As against this, Shankara establishes the existence of Space as a separate and independent entity thus: Firstly, the Scripture itself is the first and the final authority to tell us the Space is a real existent entity. Secondly, its existence can also be inferred from the specific quality of sound.

According to the opponent, Space is uncovered space. Shankara refutes this understanding by forwarding an exception. When a bird flies in the space, then the space becomes covered. Then no other bird should be able to fly because the other bird has been left with no space, to fly in. Shankara's above argument, though subtle as usual, is such that compels ascent. It may appear to be crude at the first thought. But close scrutiny reveals that the law of absence can be vindicated even by a single contrary instance.

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1. 'From Agama come forth the Akasha'. Maha-bhishu Upanisad 1/2.
   It may be observed that Shankara has not been able to reserve his temptation to bring in a scriptural passage even while criticising a school which does not recognise the authority of Smriti at all. But, it may be noted that except this one instance he does not speak of scriptural authority till the criticism of the Saunadhas is over.

2. Vide Abhidharmakosa 1/5.
Hence Dr. S. K. Belvalkar remarks very aptly:

"In case of Īchāta in the room destroying the Ṛtaḥāva in that room (but not in any other room), we distinguish between the Abhāvas according to their "anuyogins", because that is so because space is a reality capable of division into parts. The Abhāva qua Abhāva is not affected by the size of its anuyogin. Hence Śankarācārya's argument that when one bird is flying into the Ākāsha, the Ākāsha which alone makes the flight possible being destroyed, another bird cannot fly, unless we imagine that the Ākāsha itself (or some other entity like space) is Vasūrū and so capable of division into parts."

If it be resumed that another bird may fly in another portion of the sky, then we have to define Space negatively that Space is not simply an uncovered space. A negative definition will contradict Baudhās' own contention that the space is the support of the wind. Further, the Baudhās say that wind is the support of the earth. One fails to understand, how wind, a positive entity can have its support from a non-entity, viz. Space? Above all this, the Baudhās advocate Space to be eternal. It may be objected how an eternal thing can be a non-entity? How a thing which is unreal be even non-eternal or eternal because attributes

1. "Vedānta-Xtras," Page 150 of Notes
2. Cf. Śārīraka Bhāṣya on 2/2/24.
3. Vide Yashomitra's Abhidharmakosha-Vyākhyā.
can only be applied to something that is real?

(a) Criticism of the Theory of Causation

The Buddhists say that a cause cannot produce its corresponding effect without destroying itself. An eternal and non-changing thing cannot be the cause of anything. The seed gets destroyed before the sprout comes up. Decomposed milk, which is no longer milk, produces curd. Jar is created when a lump of clay 'as a lump' gets destroyed. Had it been otherwise, i.e. if the causes could produce their respective effects without undergoing destruction, then all the effects should come into existence at one and the same time. Shankara refutes the opponent thus:

If a non-existent thing could produce an existent thing, then why do we assign a particular cause to a particular effect? If the Buddhists then assume that non-existences are of a number of kinds and each kind has got a peculiar characteristic to produce a different effect, then, the Buddhists will be contradicting their own tenet that non-existence is always non-satiety.

Buddhas' doctrine becomes unacceptable when we consider our day-to-day experience that gold does not undergo change when it assumes the form of garments. We see that every every effect has some of its particular aspect of existence, e.g. the jars of clay are like clay and not like the threads of cotton. This indicates that jars participate in their appropriate existing cause. Yet in case of seed, it

is the small particles of seed which are real cause of the sprout. The seed does remain in some form till the sprout has fully grown out. The Buddhhas say that material things are caused by atoms and that mind and its modifications arise out of the four skandhas. Their doctrine that the cause is always non-existent and the effect is existent gets contradicted, because the atoms to which the material causality is assigned, are existent.

Finally Shãkara shows that if the doctrine 'entity comes into being from non-entity' is accepted, then the whole social order will collapse. Corn would grow even if the farmers did not till the land, lazy persons would also achieve their ends! If every thing is of one moment's duration, it can achieve nothing except its mere existence. Why then talk of liberation and other things? These anarchic results, pointed out by Shãkara, are indeed a hard blow on the contention of the Buddhhas.

II. REALIZATION OF THE IDEALISTS

(a) CRITICISM OF THE EXPLANATION OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

According to the Vijnãnavãdins, all experiences are characteristically mental. We experience things as subject

1. It may be observed here that Sãkhya-Màrîkâ 9, furnishing powerful arguments to establish 'sãkhya-vãda', has been utilized here to refute the Buddhistic theory of Causation.
and object because they are determined to be so by our intellect. Because knowledge and objects are always simultaneously perceived; therefore, objects and their ideas are one and the same thing. The existence of the external world can only be established if it is cognised by the sense-contact. But the senses are inoperative during dreams and the ideas still work. Hence the world of ideas alone is real. Difference kinds of objects are perceived to be so because of the difference of ideas of cognition in us which are found to confirm to the things outside. Our ideas determine the external objects. But the ideas about one and the same object may sometimes be dim and faint, and at other times very clear. The variation is not to be attributed to the object itself, but to the perceptive organism of the agent. Had the ideas and their corresponding objects been different, then we might have been conscious of one and not of another, at a given moment of time. Another reason for not believing in the external world is that the perceptions of our waking life are similar to that of our experiences in dreams and illusions.

This school of the Buddhists deserves appreciation for forwarding a theory which can very well appeal in the present times. It is true that it is the mind which supplies almost the whole data for any act of cognition. External objects contribute too little to be assigned a significant value. The contribution is reduced to zero in cases of hallucinations. Absent-minded persons do not have cognitions.
In the light of these facts it appears correct to regard ideas as the only determining factors of the external world.

The Vijnānāvādins elaborate further that Shankaras or the impressions of the past ideas are to account for the variety of ideas. Its cause need not be traced in the external world. The ideas and impressions succeed each other in such an invariable sequence as the seed and the sprout. That the ideas are the result of impressions can be proved by applying the method of "Anvaya-Vyatireka".

Shankara opens the refutation by refusing to believe anything that goes contrary to experience. Admit that in dream states and the like, we do have a variety of ideas due to our prior impressions and if there are no impressions, we do not have different kinds of ideas also, but, asserts Shankara, corresponding to our ideas, our perceptions do indicate to concrete external things like pillars and walls. For that matter, let us imagine the revolt of a man who is relishing dishes prepared by his mother and who is asked by the Buddhhas to believe that he is neither eating anything not getting any satisfaction out of it! This delicate illustration is quite appealing and silences the opponent.

1. Vijnānāvāda has been the target of attack even by Candrakirti and Sthānideva. There is no denying the fact that Shankara has taken some clues from them and employed them while criticising the Vijnānāvādins here.
at the very outset, no human intellect can deny the existence of a given thing which is cognised by all right means of knowledge. Had there been no external object, how can then it be represented in knowledge as "Vijnāna"? This argument is indeed a counter attack to the assertion of the Vijnānavādins that the external object is nothing but an act of its being known. It may be observed that the position of the Mādhyamika in this regard comes very near with the present position of Śaṅkara. The Mādhyamikas have asserted that knowledge cannot take place without the existence of the same object of which the knowledge is.

The Bhuddha may justify his position by saying that the non-existence of the external world means the non-consciousness of the external objects apart from the actual act of consciousness. Śaṅkara shows the untenability of such an escape thus: When the actual act of perception is going on, we are not conscious of the act of perception, but the objects themselves. The Bhuddhas themselves admit this when they say that the internal object of cognition appears 'like something external'. The question whether the objects of perception are external or not, should be judged with reference to the means of knowledge. How can we accept that the external world is non-existent when we do perceive objects by applying different means of right knowledge?

Śaṅkara asserts further that the "idea" of a "thing" presupposes the existence of that "thing. We do not possess
ideas about things which are non-existent. Similarly, how could the ideas have the form of objects if there were no objects at all. In fact, the invariable concomitance of the idea with the corresponding object may at best be understood as an indication of the causal connection between them and not as identity. But the attributes of an object are separate and independent from the object is a proof that the ideas and the objects are distinct from each other. This is why the distinction between the white and a black ox is maintained in daily experience.

The Buddhhas say that the ideas occur in different moments of time and the moment they are felt in consciousness, they disappear. Shankara objects that this contention of the Buddhhas is not logically tenable. In absence of a Permanent knower, how can we talk either of ideas which are different from each other or about the distinction between individuals and class, or between existence and non-existence. All this is possible on the supposition that there exists a knower who can compare one idea with another and that ideas last for at least two moments of time to allow such a comparison. But the Buddhists do not have such belief.

The Vijnānavāda may say that the ideas are self-illuminated like a lamp and thus they illumine themselves without taking any external help and thus they need not be related to the world of objects. Shankara points out

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that this is to go against the held view of the Bauddhas
that the ideas make us aware of the external things.
Shāṅkara’s view, on the other hand, is backed by experience.
The Bauddha may object to it by saying that it involves the
fallacy of Regress in Infinitum, because the idea is
dependent for its apprehension on its corresponding
object, then that object would also require another thing
for its apprehension and so on. Knowledge of ideas does not
involve this difficulty, because ideas are like a lamp and
hence they do not require anything extraneous to illumine
themselves. The Vedāntin replies that the fallacy need not
arise in his case, because, for him, the cogniser, the
Self remains ever the same and there is no cogniser other
than the Self itself. In fact, we see that the light of a lamp
depends on the eye of a man, intelligent being, for its
being known. Similarly, the self-illuminating idea of the
Vijñānavādin can only manifest itself through some intelligent
Principle which must lie beyond it. It is true that every
time an idea comes to us, we do not have to take a light and
search it in our mind because the ideas are by nature self-
illuminous. But the external objects are not so. The
Vedāntin questions here up to whom is the Vijñāna luminous, when
Self is not admitted? The Ālayavijñāna cannot serve the
purpose as it is also momentary like any other thing.

1 According to the Vedāntin, the Self alone is the only
self-illuminating cogniser of all ideas or knowledge.
All propositions of the Vijnānavādins stand in need of some entity which may be the witness of momentary existences. That entity must be independent of the Series. The hypothesis of the Vijnānavādins reaches its climax when it is said that every momentary existent entity produces a transient but self-conscious flicker.

The Vijnānavādin has called the Vijnāna as self-conscious. The statement carries no weight because there is none to experience the self-consciousness. It may be said, that this objection is equally applicable to the Vedāntin’s thesis. The very nature of Brahman is intelligence and bliss. Unto whom Brahman is intelligent? Is there anything which Brahman is to know, keeping which aspect in view it has been endowed with intelligence? Or is there anything in which Brahman takes delight so that it may be called blissful? Is Brahman or Self be self-subsistent Witness, what does he stand witness to, and for whom?

Śaṅkara is not unaware of this difficulty. He has said elsewhere that no description can be given of the attributeless Brahman. To speak strictly in this spirit, it is not possible to make Sat-Śīt-Ānanda as predicable of Brahman. In this connection, Śaṅkara only remarks in nutshell that there is a lot of difference between the conceptions of ‘Vijnāna’ or the Vijnānavādins and that of ‘Brahman’ of the Vedāntins.

(b) The Difference of Dreaming and Waking States

The opponent had established the non-existence of the external world on the analogy of the objects of the waking states, that they are similar to those of the dreaming states. Now Shankara proceeds to prove that there is a great difference between the waking and the dreaming states that no conclusion should be deduced on the premises that they are identical.

Unlike the dreaming experience, the objects of experience of the waking state continue to exist without being negated. Experiences of dreams are due to memory whereas the experiences of the waking life arise due to immediate and direct perception. The difference of both the states is characterised by the presence or absence of objects. Shankara's point is that we cannot maintain a distinction between the dreaming and the waking consciousness, or to be more clear, between the false perception and the true perception, except by admitting the independent existence of the object apart from the knowing act itself. This argument depicting the point of attack on the opponent may be clarified thus: When every content is an equally internal modification of Vijñāna, how can the distinction between true and untrue be accounted and explained?

The fallacy of the Buddhās is that they draw a similarity between the waking and the dreaming states due to their partial resemblance in respect of consciousness. Both
the states are felt in consciousness. Hence the Buddhas are led to assume that they should be similar. Śaṅkara brings out the fallacy in the opponent’s conclusion by asserting that we cannot attribute a quality to an object simply on the ground that the thing partially resembles with another. Can fire be cold because, like water, it is one of the five elements?

Śaṅkara has called dream experience as an act of memory. Though psychologically speaking it is true, yet this statement is not in keeping with the strict spirit of monism. The nirvāṇa śāīṭi explains the phenomenon of dream as an ordinary case of error as a rope is mistaken for a snake. Śaṅkaraśārya has also admitted it. That he has attributed dreams experience to memory may be explained after Dr. S.K. Belvalkar 3 that memory explanation would be more appealing to the vijñānavādins than the explanation of nirvacanīya śāśṭi and therefore, Śaṅkara deemed it proper to give it while criticizing the vijñānavādins here.

c) CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The opponent had attributed the variety of ideas to subliminal impressions. So there was no need to admit the external world. Now, Śaṅkara proceeds to refute the possibility of knowledge due to impressions. Impressions do

1. Vide Śaṅkara śāstra on 2/2/22.
2. Ibid, on 3/2/1
do not rise at all if there are no external objects. Why? Because the impressions are the effects and the objects are their causes. Perception of objects serves as the basis for the rise and formation of subliminal impressions. To say that these impressions are due to previous cognitions is no explanation because this will lead to the fallacy of regress ad infinitum. Moreover, there is no sense in regarding the cogising act as the object cognised because it is the nature and function of cognition to reveal what is existent and present before us.

At another place, it may be recalled here, Shankara sought the help of scriptures while discussing this problem. But the problem is solved through the help of cogitation here. Shankara is justified in dealing with the same problem in two different ways. In previous case, the problem pertained to a cosmological enquiry. But here it is somewhat psychological in character.

The Anavaya-Vyatireka method of the Buddhists favours the opinion of the Vedanta. The Buddhists say that if there are impressions there are cognitions; if not, the cognitions do not arise at all. Shankara simply adds here that cognitions arise only if the external objects exist. People are seen to believe the existence of the external world even though there are no impressions. The external world of objects is the cause and the impressions are its effect. Therefore, the

1. Cde Mārīkānīśa on 2/1/35-35.
cause is independent for its existence. The Buddhist scheme is inadequate to furnish a substratum where the impressions may be said to arise.

At last, Shankara spots all those who are mindful of their well-do to completely discard the Buddhist doctrine. The more we try to find any good point, the more we are harassed as the doctrine throws us in the bewilderment of contradictory statements. It gives way on all sides, as the sandy walls of a well fall when we begin to dig it deep.

d) Shankara's Remarks

It may be observed that Shankara has been quite fair in presenting the Viśiśṭavāda's stand as the opponent. The Śaṅkara, has used even the very expressions of the Viśiśṭavādins. On the other hand, his criticism is also equally sound if considered from the monistic point of view. Dr. L. S. Urli observes rightly in this connection that Shankara's "Criticism of Viśiśṭavāda is an acute and brilliant performance".

We may observe three developing stages of development in Shankara's attitude towards the Lauḍhayás. In the first stage, he becomes ironical and remarks "you have displayed a deep philosophical insight". In the second stage, he comes with abusive language and rates the opponent with an

1. "Central Philosophy of Buddhism", Chapter XIII
unfettered tongue. In the third, he becomes most unkind and charges Lord Buddha with hatred and ill-will for mankind. But the history records something different to it. Lord Buddha is said to have enumerated his principles out of a sense of extreme compassion, not only towards humanity but towards all creatures of the universe. The Ārya in Shankara and the philosophical fanaticism seem to have overpowered his rational thinking when he charged Lord Buddha of ill-will against humanity.

The commentators are not uniform over the division of Ātras of sections directed against the Pāṇḍānas. Bhāskara and Vallabha follow Shankara. But Rāmānuja,śīkānta and Abārka direct Ātra 2/2/32 against the Śūnyavādins. Shankara’s silence or bare mention about the Śūnyavādins may be looked from another angle as follows:

The time of Nāgārjuna, the founder of Śūnyavāda, is assigned the end of the 2nd century A.D. The date of Amārāja, the founder of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school, is said to be not earlier than the fourth century A.D. Viśiṣṭādvāda developed definitely later than Śūnyavāda. It is then, really surprising why Shankara preferred to direct these Ātras against the Viśiṣṭādvādins and not against the Śūnyavādins. It is certain that the Ātrakāra whose date is not later than the First Century A.D., did not know the development

9. सम्प्रदायी गतिमान निरहुतत्वादि तै सुलभस।
10. श्रेष्ठे विषयात्मकामित्वाय विप्रान्तम्।

प्रायः हृति ।
either of Shunyavāda or of Viśṇunāvāda and hence in order to be faithful to the intentions of the Sutrakāra, Shānkara decided to direct the Sūtras against the Viśṇunāvādins. But this sense of faithfulness would have been more justified, if the Sūtras were directed against the school of Shunyavāda rather than that of Viśṇunāvāda, because the former developed earlier than the latter. This can be reconciled by saying that Shunyavāda was not that much publicly accepted at the time of Shānkara as Viṣṇunāvāda. That the Viṣṇunāvāda can have held in the public more rapidly than the Shunyavāda is inferred from the fact that the latter is subtler than the former. So it is not easily to be grasped by the common man. The thesis of the Viṣṇunāvādins is more or less psychological and hence capable of ready acceptance. Any way, this problem doesn't concern us here because we are to restrict our study only to a critical survey of the refutations of the other schools of Indian Philosophy as made by Shānkara alone.

III. CRITICISM OF THE SHUNYAVĀDA

a) Shānkara's Attack on the Shunyavādins.

Shānkara has dismissed Shunyavāda just by mere mention. He smells a sense of contempt against them, so much so, that the he refuses to be drawn in argumentation with them.¹ The only available criticism of the Shunyavādins is

¹ Vide Shānkara's Commentary on the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad IV/3/7.
when Shamkara says, "The doctrine of the Bauddhas advocating everything to be void, meaning thereby that there is absolutely nothing existent, gets contradicted if we evaluate it by applying means of right knowledge. Therefore it does not deserve to be refuted with particular reference to it alone. We cannot deny the existence of this visible world because it is cognised as existent by all means of right knowledge. The empirical world cannot be neglected without accepting another reality because to negate an error is to accept the general truth on which it is based.”

It may be observed that Shamkara’s interpretation here of the term "Shunya" does not agree with its Madhyamika exposition. Like most of the critics of the doctrine of 'Shunya', Shamkara has also not penetrated deep into the implications of "Shunya". Dr. T. R. V. Murti’s observation is true even about Shamkara: “Very often the Absolute of the Madhyamikas is taken by the mis-informed as a non-entity, a mere nothing. The system is dubbed as rank nihilism. Ignorance in this matter is born of prejudice. The terms Shunya and Shunya which are used by the Madhyamika in referring to his Absolute seem to have provided the clue.

for such criticism. There is however hardly any justification for characterising the Madhyamika as a nihilist.¹

Shamkara's failure in understanding some of the Madhyamikas' philosophical doctrines in their correct implications, may be attributed to the obscurities in the exposition of their theories at those times. His belief that it does not merit even a discussion may be due to some defects which might have struck Shamkara from the monistic point of view.

Shamkara discards the Shuñyavadins contemptuously and that he nowhere undertakes a detailed discussion with them may have been due to the reason that the doctrine does not recognise anything like God, soul and matter etc. Although Shamkara enters into a prolonged discussion with the Shuñyavadins while commenting on the Gândogya Upanishad,² he adopts an assertive attitude, and says that there is no such thing as 'asat' because Sat alone is mistaken for the difference and plurality of the world.

b) Comparative Analysis of Shuñyāvāda and Vedānta

The doctrine of the Shuñyāvādins has a striking similarity with the Advaita Vedānta. Hence, it may be remarked

1. "Central Philosophy of Buddhism," by Dr. T. R. V. Surti, Chapter XIII.
2. Cf. VI/2/3.
3. "Central Philosophy of Buddhism", Chapter IX.
that the diplomat in Śaṅkara, preferred to deal it just
in passing references. Talking about the similarity of the
doctrines of the Advaita and the Śūnyavāda, Stcherbatsky
observes: "There is but little difference between Buddhism
and Vedānta.... a circumstance which Śaṅkara carefully
conceals.... when commenting upon Vedānta Sūtras,II/II/28,
Śaṅkara, in combating Buddhist idealism, resorts to
arguments of which he himself does not believe a word,
since they are arguments which the most genuine realist
would use". Śaṅkara's criticism of the Vijnānavāda may be
taken as an answer of this remark, Dr. N.K. Devaraja replies
thus: "The surprising thing is that the mistake should have
been committed by the Hindu Philosophers of all the
schools. It is still more surprising that the mistake should
have been repeated by the Buddhist Philosophers of other
schools, e.g. the Vijnānavādins".

Śarvañjñatmamuni, a great name in Śaṅkara's school
of Vedānta, has brought out beautifully the difference
between Vedānta and Buddhism. The main difference, as the
author points out, is that besides calling this world as
illusion, Vedānta admits an ultimate Reality called Brahman
and the Buddhists have no such belief. It will not be out of
context to mention here some of the major features in which

2. Vide "An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge, "
Page 18.
both the systems seem to display close similarity;

(i) In the Madhyamika school of Buddhism, the Real is regarded as non-dual. No empirical predicate can be attributed to it. It is in this sense that it is termed as "Śūnya" i.e. it is "devoid of every kind of determination". It is non-relative because relativity is a characteristic of the unreal.

The Madhyamika analysis of the Real may be summed up in two factors. Firstly, its nature is absolutely indeterminate and secondly, its non-comprehensibility by the help of Reason. This account may be compared with the following problematic analysis of the monism: How can we speak of a thing of which no predicate is available? And to call that entity as real from ultimate point of view is all the more absurd. The question is met by emphasizing that the Absolute is positive in the sense that it is the underlying reality of all appearances. It is in this sense that the Absolute is referred to. By the "Adbhūtronānavāda Nyūya" this Reality is known i.e. We have to discover, remove the superimposed character of the phenomenal world. This may not place before our mental eyes a definite form of the Absolute, but this can undoubtedly indicate the Absolute as the ground of everything.

(ii) The realisation of the Absolute in the Madhyamika, Viśṇuvāda and the Advaita Vedānta is termed as "Prajñāparamita", "Lokottara-Jñāna" and "Aparoksānubhūti", respectively. All these schools agree in saying that no empirical
determination can be applied to the Absolute. Hence they all adopt a negative method in indicating the nature of the Absolute. This unity leads us to infer that Shūnya is an invariable characteristic mark of all these conceptions of the Absolute. Thus the synthetical and concluding remark in this connection may be: Vedānta and Vijnānavāda have, while analysing the character of illusion, brought out that the illusory has for its ground something which is real, without the presence of which illusion itself cannot take place. Therefore, the illusion of the world is only an superimposition on Brahman or Vijnāna. Keeping this difference between Shūnyavāda and monism in view, Śaṅkara says that both of these may not be a confused because monism is based upon something solid.

(iv) Though no category can be applied to the Absolute, yet it is projected by Nescience in the form of this multifarious world. "Avidyā" is defined in the Śālistamba Sūtra as "The non-apprehension of the Real and its misapprehension as something else". Thus the conception of "Avidyā" in Vedānta and the Madhyamika Schools of Indian Philosophy resembles to a surprising degree, but the Vedānta goes a step further to analyse the concept elaborately in details by defining its locus and object. It works out clearly the realisation between Reality and Appearance, whereas, even Māgūrjuna cannot be said to have brought out this relationship. The basic difference lies in the fact how they treat Reality and

1. Śaṅkara Bhasya on the Gīta, 2/32.
Appearance and what are their conceptions of these two categories. Unlike Śaṅkara, Nāgārjuna believes the world to be essenceless and unintelligible. On the other hand, the character assigned to Nescience in Advaita Philosophy, that it is a mysterious power of God, indicates its positive conception.

Thus "Avidyā", in the Mādhyamika system, implies any effort to view the indeterminate Real by means of thought. Unlike the Vedāntin, the Mādhyamika regards identity as "Avidyā", because identity implies relativity. Thus we see that the scope of "Avidyā" in Mādhyamika set up is larger than that of Vedānta.

It is beyond doubt that at some places, criticisms of the Viśisṭādīns at the hands of the Mādhyamikas has helped in strengthening some of the tenets of the Advaita Vedānta. For example, the Realists argue that thing which can make the unreal appear as real cannot be itself unreal. In reply to it the Mādhyamikas say, that if "Avidyā" were real, its products would also have to be regarded as real. Hence it will become unreasonable to negate the world or even call it changing. This and such other points of the Mādhyamikas might have generated a feeling of friendliness in Śaṅkara which resulted in avoiding the bitter criticisms of Shunyavādins at the hands of Śaṅkara.

(iv) The Mādhyamikas recognise two categories of truths—Paramārtha Satya and Samvrtti gatya. The Knowledge of the Real as-it-is-in-itself is called Paramārtha Satya. In fact,
if we apply the category of thought to Paramārtha Satya, we can only have a deformed view of the Truth. We cannot help projecting our mind. So Paramārtha Truth lies beyond all types of limitations. The Sanvṛtti Satya is differently interpreted by different Buddhist scholars. It may be mentioned that the Prātibhāsika Satya of the Vedāntin can be shown to be subsumed in the Sanvṛtti Satya. But, unlike the Mādhyamika, the Viśiṇavādin does advocate three truths displaying a close similarity to those recognised by the Vedāntins.

(v) Knowledge is the basic problem of the Vedāntin as well as the Mādhyamika. Both of them regard that the knowledge of the Real frees one once from his state of empirical existence. The Mādhyamika notion of "Śīrvāṇa" presents an apparent similarity to the monistic conception of emancipation. The difference is that unlike the former, the latter has gone deep to find out and examine the nature of the Absolute so as to identify It with Consciousness and Bliss. It is in this positive approach as against the negative approach of the Mādhyamikas that the attributeless Brahman may be regarded as having nothing in common with that of the Mādhyamikas. Śāṅkara also speaks of Brahman in positive terms and characterises It as True, Infinite and Knowledge while commenting on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. In fact, these

1 The concept of "Tat-tatā" of Ashvaghosa comes very near to Vedānta. Cf. Aryadeva in Chatushataksa, XVI.25, and also the following definition of "Tathātā" in Māhayāna Śātrālaṅkāra by Asaṅga VI/1.
characteristics constitute the very nature of Brahman. The positive approach of the Vedāntins reaches its climax when the Absolute is identified with the embodied Self, and as such, it is always perceived. On the other hand, and quite contrary to the monists, Nāgārjuna describes "Kīrṇāṇa" in negative terms in the beginning of his Kārikās.

Thus we may conclude that every Absolute is characteristically non-dual. In the final analysis all absolutes seem to reject duality by calling it an illusion. Vijnānavāda negates objectivity, Mādhyamika negates conceptualism and the Vedānta negates Bheda or difference. Thus there arises the recognition of the distinction of the Real and the appearance by them all. The difference lies only in their manner of approach towards the Absolute.

The basis from where the Vedānta and the Vijnānavāda start is the analysis of empirical illusion. The difference is that illusion of Vedānta demands the existence of the real thing on which it may be superimposed. For the Vijnānavāda, the existent visible object is an appearance and the consciousness which corresponds to it is only real. So the difference is only in looking at a thing which a particular angle. The manner in which both try to justify their thesis and conclusions is definitely the same.