CHAPTER - IV

SURVEY OF THE ADVAITA SCHOOL OF VEDĀNTA

In the traditional list uttered daily by the followers of Śaṅkara, Gauḍapāda stands as the grand preceptor of Śaṅkara. The list gives information that the Advaita has its origin from lord Nārāyaṇa. Then from Nārāyaṇa to the secret teachings of the Advaita Vedānta were successively to Brahma - Vasiṣṭha - Śakti - Parāśara - Vyāsa - Śuka - Gauḍapāda - Govinda and Śaṅkara. From Nārāyaṇa upto Śuka, the succession went on in the relation of father-son. From Śuka onwards, succession continued in the relation of teacher-disciple. From this, it is evident that the door of the Advaita Vedānta was not opened by Śaṅkara, but it has been prevalent throughout the centuries. But, as a matter of fact, till Gauḍapāda, the Advaita literature could exist in the form of instruction through successive periods. Thus, it is Gauḍapāda who contributed a frame work of the Vedānta, by means of writing a few books on the Advaita Vedānta.

Gauḍapāda

Śaṅkara’s referring to Gauḍapāda in his commentary on the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad, it is clear that Gauḍapāda was
a direct pupil of Śuka. Gauḍapāda seems to be a nickname and not a proper name, pāda being used to show respect; and Gauḍa apparently refers to the Gauḍa territory where the Kārikas were written and where their author became famous.

Bhāvaviveka (500 A.D.) in his commentary "Tarkajvalā" on his own work called Madhyamaka-hṛdayakārikā, quotes four passages which closely resemble Gauḍapāda's kārikas. Śāntiraksita (700 A.D.) in his Madhyamakālankāra-kārika quotes about ten Kārikas of Gauḍapāda in connection with Upaniṣadic view. And if we believe the genuine nature of the bhasya by Gauḍapāda on the Sāṅkhya-kārikās of Īśvarakṛṣṇa (200 A.D.), it is clear that the date of Gauḍapāda must be somewhere between 300 to 500 A.D.

Works of Gauḍapāda:

1. Sāṅkhya-kārikābhaśya: Perhaps it was his first work when Gauḍapāda was attracted by the Sāṅkhyakārikas, from which learnt of the Puruṣa being entirely different from the Prakṛti which alone was responsible for the evolved world. In fact, he had really not much scope to show his brilliance as the commentary betrays no flashes of deep thought.

2. Māndukyakārikā: The two hundred and fifteen kārikas
comprising the four prakaraṇas, as a whole, are described as Gaudapādiyakārikā or Gaudapādakārikā or Agamaśāstra. These four prakaraṇas are respectively called - Āgama-Prakaraṇa, Vaitathya prakaraṇa, Advaita prakaraṇa, Alātāśantiprakaraṇa. A perusal of this work makes it clear that Gaudapāda was influenced by Mūlamadhyamakārikā of Nāgārjuna, which advocated the unreality of the world, and this enabled him to advocate his Ajātivāda based upon the cardinal doctrine of the Upaniṣads, the oneness of Brahman, and he wrote his own kārikas to preach his Vedāntic doctrines.

3. Uttaragītā: Gaudapāda's commentary on this work is known from the colophons as Gaudapādiyavākyā on the Uttaragītā. As the Uttaragītā is not found either in the Mahābhārata or in the Bhāgavata, it seems that Gaudapāda himself wrote this work along with the commentary. This work deals with the nature of Brahman, Jīvanmukti, and gives detailed description of the nādis, Kūndalinis etc.

4. Subhagodaya stuti: This is a small Tantric work of the stotra type containing 52 verses.

5. Śrīvidyāraṇyasūtra is another Tantric work attributed to Gaudapāda.

Observing the flashes of Buddhist Śūnyavāda and Vijñānavāda teachings and thought in his works, one would say that Gauḍapāda is very much influenced by Buddhistic philosophy. In this connection, S. Radhakrishnan says - "through the influence of Buddhism and its schools, the non-dual nature of reality and the phenomenal nature of the world came to be emphasized in the systems of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. As a matter of fact, such an advaitic philosophy seems to be only a revised version of the Mādhyamika metaphysics in Vedic terminology." But Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara differ from the Śūnyavādin Buddhists in this - that they think that even false creations must have some basis in truth. If a rope appears as a snake, the false creations and false appearances without any firm basis of truth underlying them. However Gauḍapāda can legitimately claim to have placed the Advaita Vedānta on a firm foundation.

**GOVINDBHAGAVATPĀDA**

Gauḍapāda is supposed to have taught Govindbhagavatpāda, Śaṅkara's teacher. It is learnt that Govinda a Kashmir resident, while travelling towards south, happened to meet Gauḍapāda on the banks of Narmadā and became his pupil.
It was also on the bank of Narmada that Śaṅkara subsequently studied with Govinda. Nothing is known about Govinda except that he was Śaṅkara's teacher. He apparently wrote little or nothing.

ŚAṀKARA

This brings us to the time of Śaṅkara. As in the second chapter Śaṅkara's life, date and works have dealt with, here it is not taken again into consideration.

MANDANA (800 A.D.)

General tradition has always identified Maṇḍana with Suresvara. This is but complicated by uncertainty about the identity of Maṇḍanamiśra. His work Brahmasiddhi constitutes an extremely important source of Advaita. The Brahmasiddhi is in four chapters - Brahmakāṇḍa, Tarkakāṇḍa, Niyogakāṇḍa and Siddhikāṇḍa, in the form of verses and long annotations. His being contemporary is evident from the fact that though quotes some writers belonged pre-Śaṅkara period, he never refers any writer belonged post-Śaṅkara period. Besides, Maṇḍana wrote several Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā works and is reputed to have studied with Kumārila. According to the Advaita tradition Maṇḍana then changed his name to Suresvara and became a pupil of Śaṅkara.
**Sureśvara (800 A.D.)**

Sureśvara is associated with the history of the Kāmakoti pīṭha at Canjeevaram, which may have been one of the original mathas established by Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara is said to have assigned to him the work of writing sub-commentaries on two of his own Upanishad-bhāṣyas, those on the Brhadāranyaka and the Taittiriya. Sureśvara also wrote an independent treatise of great beauty and skill, the Naṅkarmyasiddhi which runs into four chapters, discussing respectively - the relation of Vedic duties to the attainment of Vedāntic wisdom, the nature of self-realization, the nature of Ajñāna - its relation with the self and the manner of its dissolution, recapitulation of the central ideas of the previous three chapters. Other works attributed to him are probably spurious.

**Padmapāda (820 A.D.)**

Śaṅkara had many pupils, but only four of them are remembered by name. Padmapāda, a native of Cidambaram, is supposed to have been one of his followers. He wrote Paṅcapādikā a commentary on Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the first four Brahmasūtras. It is not clear whether Padmapāda's work carried beyond that point. But, in any case that much part is available to us. Although there are one or two other works attributed to Padmapāda, his authorship of them is doubtful.
TOTAKA (800 A.D.)

A third disciple of Śaṅkara was Tōtaka. He is supposed to have been a very devoted but apparently not quick learner until one day after Śaṅkara, to the irritation of the other pupils, had delayed lessons so that Tōtaka might attend. He eventually arrived and amazed all by producing first a poem of eight verses, Tōtakāstaka, and then a longer work entitled Śrūtisārasamuddhārana.

HASTĀMALAKA (800 A.D.)

The fourth disciple of Śaṅkara was Hastāmalaka. Tradition identifies him as a son of Prabhākara, and whom his father had despaired, for he had been catalptic from birth. When addressed by Śaṅkara, asking "who are you?" the boy blossomed forth with a fourteen-verse poem on the Self, now called Hastāmalakastotra.

VĀCASPATIMĪṢRA (840 A.D.)

Vācaspatimīśra, the well known author of the Bhāmati, a commentary on Śaṅkara's Brahmasūtrabhasya. He also wrote a commentary called Tattvasamikṣa on the Brahmasiddhi of Mandana. He also commented on the Sāṅkhya-kārikā, Vidhi-viveka, Nyāyavārttikā. In his another work Nyāya-sūcinibandha, he gives his date 898 Vikrama Samvat, which amounts to 842 A.D. In the colophon at the end of the Bhāmati, he
Says that he had already written Nyāya kārikā, Tattvasamikṣā, Tattvabindu and other works on Nyāya, Sāṅkhya and Yoga.

**SARVĀJNĀTMA MUNI (900 A.D.)**

He was a disciple of Sureśvara, to whom at the beginning of his work Sāṅkeśa-pāśārīraka, he offers salutation by the name Deveśvara, of which the identification with Sureśvara is made by Rāmatīrtha, the commentator on the Sāṅkeśa-pāśārīraka. It is said that his other name was Nityabodhacārya. He has been considered to be an younger contemporary of Vācaspatimīśra. In his only work the Sāṅkeśa-pāśārīraka he describes the fundamental problems of the Vedānta philosophy as explained by Śaṅkara. This work is divided into four chapters, written in verses of different metres. The first chapter contains 563 verses, the second 248, the third 365, and the fourth 63.

**ĀNANDABODHA YĀTI**

Ānandabodha who probably lived in the eleventh or the twelfth century, has occupied an honourable place in the Advaita literature. He has written three works, viz. Nyāyamakaranda, Nyāyadipāvali and Pramāṇamāla. Ānandabodha does not pretend himself to have contributed any original thoughts, yet he frankly says that he has collected the material for his works from other compositions available in his time.
SRIHARSA (1150 A.D.)

Śrīhārṣa who flourished during the middle of the twelfth century A.D. has been regarded as one of the well known versatile scholar both in the field of Sahitya and Vedānta. He is often found to have refuted the views of Udayana, the great Nyāya scholar who lived towards the end of the tenth century. Again another great logician, Gaṅgeśa of Mithilā, who lived in 1200 A.D., refutes the views of Śrīhārṣa. Thus Śrīhārṣa can be placed between tenth and twelfth centuries A.D. Śrīhārṣa in his poetical work Naiṣadhyā-carita, mentions many works of his, such as Aṃpava-varṇana, Gauḍorviśa-kulapraśasti, Navasāhasāṅka-carita, Viĵayapraśasti, Śivaśaktisiddhi, Sthairyavicāraṇa, Chandah-praśasti, Īśvarābhisandhi, Påñcanatīyakāvyā. Besides, the most important philosophical contribution of Śrīhārṣa, is the Khandāνa-khanda-khāḍya (the sweets of refutation). In this work, he attempts to refute all views of the Nyāya system intended to justify the reality of the categories of experience; and he has shown therein that all world-experiences are purely phenomenal and have no reality behind them, the only reality is the self-luminous Brahman of pure consciousness.

CITSUKHA (1220 A.D. approx.)

Citsukha was a pupil of Gauḍēśvara Ācārya, called also Jñānottama. He wrote a commentary on the Nyāyamakaranda of Ānandabodha and on the Khandāna-khandā-khāḍya of Śrīhārṣa.
He also wrote an independent work by name Tattvapradīpikā which has been well known as Citsukhī. In this work, he refers to Udayana, Udyotakara, Kumārila, Padmapāda, Vallabha, Śālikanātha, Sureśvara, Śivāditya, Kulāraka Paṇḍita and Śrīharṣa. In addition to these works, he wrote a commentary called Bhāṣya-bhāva-prakāśikā on Śāṅkara’s Brahmasūtrabhāṣya, a commentary called Vivarana-tātparya-dīpikā of the Pramāṇamālā of Ānandabodha, a commentary called Abhīprāya-prakāśikā on the Brahmasiddhi of Maṇḍana, and the Adhikaraṇa-mañjarī an index to the Adhikaraṇas of the Brahmasūtras. He has given us very acute analysis and interpretation of some of the most important concepts of Śāṅkara Vedānta.

VIMUKTĀṬMAN (1200 A.D.)

Vimuktāṭman was a disciple of Avyayāṭman bhagavat-pūjyapāda wrote most important work viz. Īstasiddhi. He wrote also another work called Pramāṇa-vṛtti-nirṇaya, to which he refers in his Īstasiddhi. This work has not been published and the manuscript of the Nāḍuvil Maṭham, Cochin State. The Īstasiddhi is divided into eight chapters. The large part of this work devotes to the discussions relating to the analysis of illusions in the Vedānta school and in other schools of philosophy. This work has been regarded as one of the four Siddhis, such as Brahmasiddhi by Maṇḍana, the Naśkarmyasiddhi by Sureśvara, the Īstasiddhi by Vimuktāṭman and the Advaitasiddhi by Madhusūdana.
RAMADVAYA (1300 A.D.)

Ramadvaya was a disciple of Advayaśrama. He wrote an important work called Vedanta Kaumudi. It runs into the four chapters and discusses in a polemical style, many Vedantic problems while dealing with the subject matter of Śaṅkara's commentary on the first four topics of Brahmaśūtra. This work has not been yet published. The manuscript of this work is available in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras. He wrote also a commentary on his Vedanta-Kaumudi called Vedanta-Kaumudi-vyākhyāna, a manuscript of which is available in the library of the Calcutta Asiatic Society. Ramadvaya in course of his discussions quotes many noted scholars on Nyāya and Vedānta. The views of the Vedanta-kaumudi however cannot be regarded as original in any sense, because they are just reflection of the exposition of the subject in the Pañca-pādikā and the Pañca-pādikā-vivarana of Padmapāda.

VIDYARANYA (1350 A.D.)

Vidyāraṇya is one of the brilliant scholars of India, and shone on the philosophical scene with great honour. There is nothing remained untouched by Vidyāraṇya in the field of Vedānta. It is known by some source material, that he whose former name was Mahāhava was born in a brahmin family at Karnataka. Belonging to the race of Bharadvāja, he was
the follower of Bodhāyana branch of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda.
The second verse of his Kāalanirmaya says that he had Vidyātīrtha, Bhāratītīrtha and Śrīkanṭha. Vidyārāṇya was a royal preceptor of Bukka king of Vijayanagar. During the reign of Bukka he was honoured with the title Karnataka-Simhāsana-sthāpanācārya.

Vidyārāṇya before taking to Sannyāsa, is said to have written the works viz. Parāsara-smṛti-vyākhyā, Kālanirmaya, Jaimini-nyāya-mālā, Vaiyāsikī-nyāyamālā. After Sannyāsa, he is known to have composed two philosophical works - Jīvanmukti-viveka and the Pañcadasī. The Pañcadasī is a popular compendium in verse. Both these works attained great celebrity on account of their clear and forcible style and diction. Another work called Vivaraṇa-prameya-Śaṅgṛaha is more scholastic. It is of the nature of an elaboration of the ideas contained in the Pañcāpadīkāvivaraṇa. Thus Vidyārāṇya’s service in the Vedānta field is really the original contribution to the development of Vedāntic thought.

Nṛsiṁhasārāma Muni (1500 A.D.)

He was a pupil of Gīrvāṇendra Sarasvati and Jagannāthaśrāma, and teacher of Nārāyanāśrāma. Many works have been credited to his academic genius, such as Advaita-dīpīkā, Advaita-
pañcaratna, Advaita-bodha-dīpikā, Advaitavāda, Bheda-dhikkāra, Vācārambhana, Vedānta-tattva-viveka. He wrote also the commentaries on the Saṅkṣepa-sārīraka and Pañcapādikāvivarana, which are respectively called Tattvabodhini and Pañca-pādikā-vivarana-prakāśika. No doubt, Nṛsiṁhaṣrama was well competent among his contemporaries, yet it seems that he has not introduced any new ideas into the Advaita Vedānta. He is found to have emphasized the fact of identity of Brahman with the Self and the illusory character of the world appearance. So far as his dialectical arguments are concerned in his Bheda-dhikkāra, he was anticipated by his great predecessors Śrīharṣa and Gitsukha.

APPAYYA DĪKṢITA (1550 A.D.)

Appayya Dīkṣita lived probably in the middle of the sixteen century. He was a great scholar, well-read in many branches of Sanskrit learning, and wrote a large number of works on many subjects. Ācārya Dīkṣita was his grand-father. Raṅgarāja Makhindra was his father. There is however very less note-worthy original points in his Vedāntic doctrines. At different periods of his life, he had to have inclination towards both Śaiva and the Vedānta for he wrote a Śaiva commentary and Vedāntic commentary. He wrote a commentary called Śivārkamanidīpikā on Śrīkaṇṭha's Brahmaṣūtrabhāṣya. At the outset, he says that though the monistic interpretation
is right interpretation of the Brahmasūtra, yet the desire for attaining this right wisdom of oneness arises only by the grace of Śiva. It indicates that he had lost respect for the monistic interpretation of Śaṅkara even while writing commentary on Śrikantha's Śaiva-bhāṣya.

It is said that Appayya Dīkṣita wrote about four hundred works. Some of them are Tantra-siddhānta-dīpikā, Tattvakaustubha, Advaita-nirmaya, Caturmāta-sāra-saṅgraha, Tattva-muktavāli, Vyākaraṇa-vāda-nakṣatra-mālā, Pūrvottara-mimāṃsā-vāda-nakṣatramālā, Nyāya-rakṣāmani, Vedānta-kalpataru-parimala, Siddhāntaleśasaṅgraha, Rāmānujamatakhandana etc.

MADHUSUĐANA SARASVATI (1500 A.D.)

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī was a pupil of Viśveśvara Sarasvatī and was a teacher of Puruṣottama Sarasvatī. In all probability, he flourished in the first half of the sixteenth century. His works are as follows: Vedānta-kalpa-latikā, Advaita-siddhi, Advaita-ṃañjari, Advaita-ṛata-na-rakṣana, Ātmabodhāti, Ānanda-mandākini, Kṛṣṇa-kutūhala-nātaka, Prasthānakhedā, Bhakti-samānyā nirūpana, Bhaṣavaddīta-gūḍhārtha-dīpikā, Bhaṣavadbhakti-rasāyana, Bhaṣavata-pūrāṇa-prathamaśloka-vyākhya, Vedastutiṭikā, Ānḍīlayātraṭikā, Śāstra-siddhānta-lesā-ṭikā, Saṅkṣepa-śārīraka-saṅgraha, Siddhānta-tattva-bindu, Hari-līla-vyākhya. Of these, his most important work however is the Advaita-siddhi,
wherein he tries to refute the objections raised in the Nyāyāmṛta of Vyāsarāya against the monistic Vedānta of Śaṅkara and his followers.

PRAKĀŚĀNANDA (1550-1600 A.D.)

Prakāśānanda preaches the extreme view of the Vedānta, that there is no kind of objectivity that there can be attributed to the world, that māyā is absolutely non-existent, that our ideas have no objective substratum to which they correspond, that the self is the one and only ultimate reality, and that there is no creation of world. In view of maintaining these opinions, he had often to fight with Sarvajñatmamuni, Prakāśātman and others who developed a more realistic conception of maya transformation. He says that the essence of Vedānta as preached by him is unknown to his contemporaries and it was he who first thoroughly expounded this doctrine of philosophy. He wrote many works such as Siddhānta-Muktāvali, Tarabhakti-taraṅgini, Manorama-tantra rāja-tīka, Mahālakṣmi-paddhati and Śrīvidyā-paddhati. This suggests that, though a reputed Vedānta scholar, he had religious bent of mind and attached to tantra forms of worship.

This brings then, to the time of Sadānanda of whom, life, date and works, will be discussed in the succeeding Chapter.
On the whole, it can be said that these thoroughgoing scholars in the literature of the Advaita school have rendered remarkable service to enrich and spread far and wide the tenets of the Advaita Vedânta.
Chapter-IV

FOOT-NOTES

1. नारायणे पद्ममोहि वलिवल शक्ति व तत्प्रसरण्यं च
   व्यास सूक्तः गोविन्दाय महानं गोविन्दायोगिन्द्रमधायस्य सिद्धम्।
   ब्राह्मणवाचम्पटस्य पद्मपार्श्वं दस्तामलकं व शिवशः
   ते वर्तको वार्षिकाधिन्यानां धनुस्तुं तन्त्रानांतरो विलम।

   Quoted, R.D. Karmarkar, *Gaudapada-karika*, Bhandarkar
   Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1953, p.xxiii.

2. Ibid., p.iv.

3. At the end of the 69th Karikabhasya, we read,
   सांख्य कपिलमुनिनाः प्रारंभं संतारक्षिणिकारणं दिः।
   यत्येतां सन्तारिकारणं माय्यं वाचं गौडपाध्यायम्।
   Mainkar T.G. *Sánkhya-kārika* with *Gaudapādabhāṣya*,


6. नानानिविवेकनुसारोपरात्तन्त्रायायपदेश-भक्तिनीवस्मः।
   *Nyāyakaranda*, Varanasi, 1868, p.359.

7. तद्भावाचलस्य भ्रामकालस्य श्रीमार्तातीतीयेऽको
   विशिष्टविश्वाप्रत्ययूँ द्विव भवि श्रीविवेकतद्वितेम्।
   *Kālaniṃnaya*, Verse 2.

8. वेदान्तात्तरस्तर्यो वेणौ अौसतं।
   अवैवेय मायवेयं तेषु पुर्णाभिमयादानं।