CHAPTER—1

THE CONCEPT OF THE ABSOLUTE

The Absolute means the Highest Reality or the ultimate source of the universe-living and non-living. This Absolute has been looked upon or interpreted by different thinkers in different ways. The jñāna-vādins or the Advaita Vedāntins hold that this Absolute is without any form and is devoid of any quality; it is simply described as sat, cit and ānanda i.e. existence, consciousness and bliss. It does not admit of any description like form, quality etc. The Absolute, according to this view is, thus, Impersonal. Śaṅkara and his followers hold that the Absolute of this nature is known as Brahman.

The devotionists or Bhakti-vādins, on the other hand, hold that the Absolute is essentially endowed with form and quality. The devotionist may be of different types: some hold that the Absolute reveals itself as Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa or Śrī Kṛṣṇa or as different other forms, these thinkers are known as Vaiṣṇavas. According to some others, the Absolute reveals itself as Śiva, these are known as Śaivas. In the view of still other thinkers, the Absolute reveals itself as the Universal Mother or Kāli or Śakti; these thinkers are known as the Śāktas. Śrī Caitanya is one of the foremost thinkers of the Vaiṣṇavas. Accordingly, in his view, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate
reality and the source of the whole universe—living and non-living. He is the repository of the beauty and is the most desired centre of love or preman. In other words, Sri Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute in personal form.

Some are of the view that Śaṅkara, being, an advocate of the Impersonal Absolute, does not accept the Personal Absolute, or have no respect or devotion to the Personal Absolute. But actually this is not correct. Though Śaṅkara accepts the Impersonal Absolute as the Highest Reality, he has profound respect or devotion for the Personal Absolute. This is testified by his songs of the glory of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śiva and Kāli.

In the same way some think that Śrī Caitanya, being, an advocate of the Personal Absolute, has no regard for the Impersonal Absolute. This is also totally false. Śrī Caitanya says that the formless and qualityless Brahman is the anigakānti or lustre of the body of the Lord Kṛṣṇa.

On the relation between the self and the Absolute, Śaṅkara and Śrī Caitanya hold just two opposite views. According to Śaṅkara, the individual self in its real nature is totally identical with Brahman, the Absolute. Though the self in its empirical state does not realize this identity, it realizes the truth when it is totally freed from māyā or ignorance. At this time, the realization arises as ‘I am He’. In the view of Śrī Caitanya, the self is an atomic part of
the Absolute and is never identical with it.

THE ABSOLUTE IN ŚAṆKARA'S PHILOSOPHY

According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is the only reality; the world is an illusory appearance; the individual self is Brahman itself, and no other. It is devoid of any quality and action and of all differences—internal or external. The supreme truth is that Brahman is non-dual and relation-less. It alone is; there is nothing real beside it. But from the empirical standpoint, Brahman appears as God, the cause of the world. Thus, Śaṅkara holds that the qualityless, action less and difference less Brahman is the only ontological reality. Accordingly, this system is called Advaita-vāda or Non-dualism.

THE NATURE OF BRAHMAN

According to Śaṅkara, Brahman, the Absolute, is the only ontological reality. It is the supreme and absolute reality. It transcends all empirical existence. Though it exists at all the time and in all space, it is free from all the limitations of space, time and other things. It is non-spatial, non-temporal, non-casual and trans-empirical reality. It is devoid of causality which implies time-relation, because it has no spatial relation to anything
else. It is quite different from anything and everything of the world, and, as such, it is beyond speech and mind. It cannot be indicated adequately through language, which we use to describe empirical categories. It cannot be comprehended by the mind, because it is not possible for the finite mind to grasp the infinite. It is imperceptible, inconceivable and inexpressible. It is absolutely indeterminate; it cannot be described by positive qualifications. It can be indicated only negatively as ‘neti’, ‘netī’ i.e. not this, not this. This does not mean, however, that Brahman is a naught of nothingness, a contentless void. It is the plenary being, the sole reality. It is, therefore, nirguṇa or qualityless, this only means that it is trans-empirical; since, guṇas are products of prakṛti and the Absolute is superior to it. To affirm any attribute to Brahman is to limit it, to finitize it, while Brahman is free from all the limitations. It transcends the concepts of being and non-being, permanence and change, whole and part, relative and absolute, finite and infinite—which are all based on our ordinary experience and are used to describe categories of the empirical world. Śaṅkara describes it not as one, but as non-dual or advaita. Though the words used to indicate Brahman are negative, what is meant is that it is intensely positive. A negation is only affirmation of absence. It is non-being; since it is not the being, which we attribute to the world of our experience. It does not follow that it is pure nothing; since the negation has its meaning only in relation to the positive.
All these negative descriptions imply that Brahman is so vast, and is so different from the worldly objects that it cannot be grasped by any human conception. We can at best say what Brahman is not, and not what it is. It is true that in some texts of the Upaniṣads, positive descriptions are employed with reference to Brahman, such as, terms like satya, jñāna and ānanda, which are designed for making us understand the real by telling us what it is not. But Śaṅkara holds that in reality, all these positive descriptions have got their negative significations. Thus, Brahman is nitya or eternal, meaning that it not conditioned by time; it is satya or real, which implies it is not acit or non-consciousness, it is ānanda or bliss, meaning that it is not duḥkha-svarūpa or of the nature of pain. Brahman is real i.e. it has being as the existence. It, being a self-identical and self-complete reality, never fails to be. There is no first or last in it. It does not unfold, express, develop, manifest, grow and change etc. It is held that though Brahman can not be described by positive qualifications, the Upaniṣads describe it positively for the sake of the mass mankind to serve the purpose of worship which is essential for the mass mankind for spiritual uplift.

Brahman is described in the Advaita Vedānta in two ways-(1) svarūpa-lakṣaṇa or essential nature i.e. by definition with reference to the essence, and (2) taṭastha-lakṣaṇa or accidental nature i.e. by definition with
The essential definition of Brahman is saccidananda or existence-consciousness-bliss. This is called the svarūpa-lakṣaṇa or essential definition, because, it points to the very essence of Brahman. The Śruti describes essential definition of Brahman as “satyaṁ jñānam anantāṁ brahma” i.e. Brahman is existence, intelligence and infinite, “vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma” i.e. Brahman is knowledge and bliss, “ānanda brahmaḥ vyājānat” and so on. Normally a definition of a thing speaks of its difference from other by pointing to its differentia. But in the case of Brahman, existence, consciousness and bliss form the very essence of Brahman and, hence, they are non-different from Brahman. They are neither the parts nor the attributes of Brahman, because Brahman is akhaṇḍa or partless and nirguna and attributeless. Further, the terms satya, jñāna, ānanda etc. are really non-different from each other. If they be different from one another, we shall be forced to accept some sort of difference in Brahman. If ‘sat’ be different from ‘cit’ and ‘ānanda’, it would be inert and of the nature of misery and hence, something unreal or asat. If ‘jñāna’ be regarded as different from being and bliss, jñāna would be non-being accompanied by misery, and so ‘acit’ or insentient. Again, if ananda be regarded as different from ‘sat’ and ‘cit’; it would not be bliss, but misery. In that case, Brahman

will no longer remain akhanda or partless. To avoid this, the Advaita Vedāntins hold that the meanings of the terms-satya, jñāna, ānanda are not different from one another. Each of these terms is identical with the others and also with Brahman itself. Accordingly, these terms, separately or jointly, indicate the same indivisible reality i.e. Brahman. Thus, in the view of the Advaita Vedāntins, satya, jñāna, ānanda are non-different from one another.

Brahman is of the essence of existence, satyasya satyam (Br.Up.-2. 3.6). Brahman is not only existence but also consciousness, and, being of the nature of consciousness (caitanya svabhāvam) it is self shining, svayam- jyotiḥ. Brahman illumines not only itself, but also all other objects by its light or jyotiḥ. Of course, the world-appearance is also endowed with existence, but here ‘existence’ is not real, since it is subject to change, while real existence is eternal, immutable and unchangeable.

Brahman is infinite and limitless. It is limitless in space and omnipresent. It is limitless in time, because it is not an effect which is limited in time. So it is infinite. That is infinite wherein nothing else is perceived, nothing else is heard, and nothing else is known. The word ‘Brahman’ is derived from the root ‘brh’ which means “to grow or to be great, to increase, to expand well.” “That which has reached its ultimate
evolution, development, expansion or growth. Thus, the derivative meaning signifies that Brahman is great or infinite.

Brahman is of the nature of bliss also. Brahman is unexcellable bliss. There are many passages in Upanisads which attribute bliss as the characteristic of Brahman. “That which is infinite is bliss; there is no bliss in the finite.”

According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is free from all kinds of distinctions—internal or external. Bheda or difference may be of three kinds, viz. (a) sajātiya or tādṛśa i.e. the difference between two homogeneous things, e.g. between one tree and another, (b) vijātiya or atādṛśa or heterogeneous, i.e. the difference between two different things, e.g. between a tree and a stone. (c) svagata or internal, i.e. the difference between the parts of a whole, e.g. between the leaves, flowers and fruits of a tree. Brahman is free from all these differences. Thus, Brahman is one without a second, and is indivisible.

Again, it is true that there are in the Upanisads passages which characterize Brahman as the cause of the world and as the home of all auspicious qualities. But how are we to reconcile the two views—the view that Brahman is the Absolute without characteristics, and the view which
characterizes it as the world ground? For solving this problem, Śaṅkara holds that since Brahman is the only and infinite reality, the world appearance has no transcendental existence. Accordingly, from the transcendental point of view, Brahman is not concerned with the creation, preservation and destruction of the world. But from empirical standpoint, Brahman appears as God, the cause of the world, i.e. the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. This is called tatāstha-lakṣaṇa or accidental definition of Brahman. Actually, the characteristics of creatorship etc. do not belong to Brahman; they are ascribed to Brahman through māyā. Thus, Śaṅkara has conceived pure existence, pure consciousness and pure bliss as constituting the very essence of Brahman.

THE CONCEPT OF ĪŚVARA OR SAGUṆA BRAHMA OR WORLD-GOVERNOR i.e. THE PERSONAL ABSOLUTE

Śaṅkara accepts two forms of Brahman, Para or the higher Brahman and Apara or the lower Brahman. The nirguṇa Brahman or para Brahman is unconditioned, indeterminate, and attributeless Reality lying beyond the world process, while the Apara Brahman or Saguṇa Brahman is conditioned, determinate and qualified by attributes and actions and is concerned with the world process. It is known as Īśvara also. Nirguṇa Brahman is an object of
spiritual enlightenment i.e. jñāna, Saguna Brahman is a state of vital loving awareness i.e. bhakti. While Isvara or God necessarily requires world and individual self to be governed by Him. Brahman is beyond all these.

When Brahman is endowed with māyā, an indefinable universal power and manifests as the cause of the world, it is called Īśvara or God. According to Śaṅkara, Īśvara is endowed with all auspicious qualities. He is omnipotent, omniscient, the cause of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the entire world. He is the object of worship. He is the cause of all effects. He is satyasaṅkalpa, sarvajña, or all knowing, and possessed of all powers i.e. sarvāṅkṛitisamānikam. He is the immanent spirit, i.e. antaryāmin, pervading subjective and objective world. The Śruti thus says, “He who is all knowing”, “He desired, I shall be many” and so on. The sruti declares that Brahman is the all cause, yoto va imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvantī yat prayant yabhisaṁviśantī i.e. from where this world is originated, by which it is sustained and in which it returns in dissolution that is Brahman. Śaṅkara holds that the sruti and the Brahma-sūtra describing Brahman as the cause of the origination, sustenance, and destruction of the world, refer to the tattasthalakṣaṇa of Brahman, which, however, points to its svarūpa-lakṣaṇa also by implication.
Īśvara or God is omnipresent and immanent in all. Though He is omnipresent; He becomes gracious to the devotee who worships Him as residing in his heart. Though He is, in reality, without any form, he assumes various forms of his own accord to favour his worshippers. Īśara is not the highest reality; he is a lower manifestation of Brahman, the Absolute devoid of qualities, forms and actions. It is Brahman endowed with the power of māyā that manifests itself as Īśara, the Lord of the universe. Īśara is, in reality, without any body, but out of his love for the bound selves, he assumes a divine body through which he helps the individual selves in their spiritual pursuits. God or Īśara is the object of worship, but the para Brahman or nirguṇā Brahman is not the object of worship, since it is beyond actor and activity.

The advaitins accept these two stages of Brahman, i.e. saguṇa and nirguṇa. These two stages are, however, not different from each other. It is one and the same Brahman viewed from two different standpoints, one transcendental, the other empirical. When the same Brahman is looked from the pāramārthika or transcendental standpoint, it is called the nirguṇa and when it is looked from the empirical standpoint, it is called the saguṇa Brahman or Īśara, i.e. Brahman endowed with māyā and also with the acts
of creation, sustenance and destruction of the world. Thus the difference between the saguna Brahman and the nirguna Brahman is only difference of view points; there is no actual difference between them.

From the transcendental or pāramārthika standpoint, there is neither any real world, nor any creator. Īśvara, the creator of the world, also must be regarded as unreal; he is real only from the empirical or vyavahārika standpoint. It is, however, held that Brahman, the Absolute, can be attained through the form of Īśvara, since, he is the highest manifestation of the Absolute. According to the Advaitins, there is no difference between saguna Brahman or Īśvara and nirguna Brahman. The author of Kalpataru says that for those weak minded persons who can not grasp the indeterminate Brahman are sympathatised by Brahman through the manifestation having forms and qualities. Worship of Īśvara makes our road to Brahman clear and swift. At an early stage mind refuses to grasp the notion of immutable, indescribable Absolute. At this stage the idea of merging their personal identity and losing their individuality is unpalatable to them. The worship of Īśvara prepares our mind to feel this unity, to realize the identity; to visualize it is all Brahman, the Absolute.

According to some thinkers, Īśvara spoken of by the Advaitins is not
actually identical with the nirguna Brahman; it occupies a lower position as the world governor. The supra-personal form identical with the nirguna Brahman or occupying the status similar to the nirguna Brahman is what is called Puruṣottama Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who, like nirguna Brahman, lies beyond the world process and maintains the world process through another form called Paramātman or Mahāviṣṇu in Śrī Caitanya’s philosophy, who is identified with the world governor or Īśvara of Śaṅkara.

THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ

Māyā is the jaḍa or insentient power lying at the root of the material world has been accepted by both Śaṅkara and Śrī Caitanya. For both the thinkers, māyā is non-conscious; it consists of three guṇas, namely, sattva, rajas, tamas and it forms the material cause of the universe. But in the two schools the concept of māyā is developed in two distinct lines ---- for Śaṅkara it is anirvacanīya i.e. neither real like Brahman nor unreal like a sky flower, while for Śrī Caitanya it is a real power of Paramātman. Let us discuss the concepts in some detail -------

The theory of māyā is the very pivot over which the whole philosophy
of Advaita Vedānta rotates. The principle that makes for the phenomenal appearance of the world is māyā. It has significance only from the vyavahārika or the relative standpoint, and not from the pāramārthika or the Absolute standpoint. The word māyā is derived from ‘mā’ to measure ‘mīyate anaya iti’ i.e. by which it is measured, meaning thereby as tradition has it, that illusive projection of the world by which the immeasurable Brahman appears as if measured. Śaṅkara explains it in the Rgveda as ‘mimīte jānite, karma mīyate anayeti vā māyā karmaviṣayābhijnānam.’ That is root ‘mā’ means to know, by which ritual etc. are known. But from our point of view, māyā appears as an inscrutable power of Is’vara that veils the true and projects the untrue. In his commentary on Brahma-sūtra, Śaṅkara often uses the terms māyā, ajñāna, avidyā, avyakta etc. as more or less synonymous. Māyā is the cause of the world of multiplicity. Māyā is avyakta or unmanifest being neither real nor unreal. Similarly, avidyā is also avyakta. Thus in his commentary on the Brahma-sūtra, Śaṅkara identifies māyā and avidyā.

The concept of Is’vara is essentially mingled with the concept of māyā, since it is in association with māyā that Brahman manifests itself as Is’vara. Māyā is the s’akti or energy of Is’vara, his inherent force, by which he
manifests the potential into the objective world of multiplicity with all its names and forms. Thus, māyā is the seed of the world of difference and multiplicity. This avyakta or unmanifest state of the world is called māyā by Śaṅkara. He defines it as This avyakta or unmanifest state of the world which is inexplicable because it is the same and also not the same as called māyā and it is dependent onĪśvara or God. In fact, the world has no existence apart from Brahman, but the power of māyā gives the sense of otherness. Māyā, being the power ofĪśvara, is not different from him, just as the burning power of fire is not different from fire itself. Just as the juggler, mayavi, by his jugglery makes one coin appear as many, so alsoĪśvara or God conjures up the world show by his māya power. Just as juggler’s creation of many coins is false, so also the creation of the world of multiplicity is only apparent and not real.

In the Vedanta-Sāra, māyā is described as anirvacanīya, i.e. indescribable or mithyā. This maya is neither sat or eternally existent like Brahman, nor asat or totally non-existent like a sky flower; it can not be both sat or real and asat or unreal, because of contradiction and hence, it is called anirvacanīya. Māyā is not real because it has no existence apart from Brahman. Nor is it unreal, since it produces the world appearance. Accordingly, it is called ‘bhāvarūpa’ or ‘positive’ only to emphasize the
point that it is not something negative. It is not real to constitute a limit to Brahman and yet it is real enough to give rise to the world of appearance. Thus, māyā is indescribable.³⁷

³⁸ Again, māyā is tri- guṇātmika. It consists of sattva, rajas and, tamas. Pure sattva not overcome by rajas and tamas is the adjunct of God. It the seed of the material world. During dissolution, this world is absorbed in māyā and māyā exists in the being of Īśvara. At the time of creation, the world is manifested from the bosom of māyā resting in Īśvara or God. Māyā is tri- guṇātmika, because the guṇas or their effect i.e. pleasure, pain and indifference are found in the evolutes of māyā.

Again, māyā is jñāna-virodhinī; because it is negated and contradicted by Brahma-knowledge. It is cancelled after knowledge of its substratum.

TWO POWERS OF MAYA

The Advaita Vedāntins hold that māyā has two powers or aspects, avarana or concealment and vikṣepa or projection. The power of āvaraṇa veils the real nature of a thing and the power of vikṣepa produces something in the place. Thus, by the concealing power, māyā veils the real nature of Brahman from the view of the bound selves and by the projecting power it
creates the multiple worlds. Similarly, with the concealing power, māyā conceals the real nature of the luminous self and causes such experiences as 'The self does not exist', 'The self is not manifested', and so on. These powers are however ineffective in the case of Īśvara from whom the real nature of the non-dual Brahman is not concealed. That is why Īśvara is never subjected to bondage or ignorance, and to him, the world created by māyā is illusory like a dream object. With the power projection māyā projects the unreal on the real. Thus, by the projecting power, māyā creates the world appearance on Brahman.

In connection with the process of creation, we see that the Advaitin imagines the gradual evolution of the world out of Brahman through māyā, by a process of apparent change of the subtle to the gross. Brahman, the unchanging reality cannot, of course, be said to be undergoing evolution. All change and, therefore, evolution belong to the sphere of māyā. Brahman endowed with māyā is said to have three gradations. Brahman conceives as the possessor of the undifferentiated maya is called Īśvara, and described as omniscient and omnipotent. It is the conception of Īśvara existing prior to actual creation, but possessed of the power of creation. Brahman endowed with subtly differentiated māyā is called Hiraṇyagarbha or Sūtrātmā or Prāṇa. Īśvara in the aspect would be the totally of all subtle objects.
Brahman endowed with maya differentiated further into gross or perceptible object is called Vaiśvānara or virāt. This aspect of Īśvara is the totality of all the gross objects. These three gradations of Brahman, viz. Īśvara, hiraṇyagarbha and Vaiśvānara are generally compared to the three stages of the individual, namely, deep sleep, dream and wakefulness, respectively, while Brahman in its highest essence is regarded as lying beyond these three stages, and is described as ‘turīya’. It should be remembered that whereas ordinarily Īśvara implies the ordinary emanent aspects of God, that is Brahman, associated with mayā in all stages.  

THE LOCUS OF MĀYĀ

According to Śaṅkara, the locus and object of ajñāna is none but Brahman itself yet Brahman is not affected by it like magician who is unaffected by his magic. There are, however, differences of opinion among the Advaita Vedāntins at this point.

In the view of Maṇḍana Miśra, jīva is the locus of ajñāna while Brahman is its object. Vācaspati Miśra, like Maṇḍana, accepts the view that ajñāna belongs to the jīva only and not to the Brahman. Thus, in the view of these thinkers, the jīva is the locus of ajñāna and Brahman is its object.
The follower of the Vivarana School like Padmapāda, Prakāśānanda, Citsukha and others also hold that Brahman or pure consciousness is the locus and the object of ājñāna. In the view of Prakāśānanda, Brahman is both the locus and object of ājñāna.

According to Suresvārācārya, the self is both locus and the object of ājñāna. He says that ājñāna is based not on the individual self but on Brahman itself.

Sarvajñātma Muni also holds that Brahman is both the locus and object of ājñāna. Ājñāna, resting upon Brahman and obscuring its real nature and gives rise to threefold appearance, i.e. Īśvara, the jīva and the world.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MĀYĀ AND AVIDYĀ

Śaṅkara often uses the terms māyā and avidyā more or less synonymously in his commentary on the Brahma-sūtra. It cannot be denied that the world has also sometimes been spoken of by Śaṅkara as being ‘avidyātmaka’, ‘avidyā-kalpita’ avidyā-kṛta, avidyāropita and so on in his commentary. Hence, naturally a question may be raised in the connection whether māyā and avidyā are identical or different. There is difference of
opinion. The earlier Advaita Vedāntins, like Sarvajñātma muni, Prakāśananda, Padmapāda and others hold that there is no difference between māyā and avidyā. But in Pañcadasī and Prakāṭartha vivaraṇa, distinction is made between māyā and avidyā. In Pañcadasī, māyā is held to be the adjunct of Īśvara and avidyā of the jīva only. According to Sadānanda Yogīndra, the author of Prakāṭartha vivaraṇa, māyā is beginning less and indeterminable. It is the cause of the world and is the adjunct (upādhi) of Īśvara. while avidyā is the limited form of māyā and is the adjunct of the individual self.

Māyā in it: real nature is a positive, real and eternal aspect of Brahman; it is never a negative entity. It is inseparable power of Brahman to which the phenomenal creation of the world is due. But avidyā is negative in character; being the absence of reality. Māyā conditions Īśvara which is unaffected by avidyā but avidyā, the individual ignorance, conditions to jīva. Brahman reflected in māyā is Īśvara and Brahman reflected in avidyā is jīva. Individual avidyā is dispelled by knowledge but māyā being the inherent nature of Brahman can not be disposed off.

Sarvajñātma muni supports the view of identity between māyā and
avidyā. In the sruti also, both maya and avidyā are said to be subsisting in Sarvajña Isvara. Thus, māyā and avidyā are not different from each other. In the Gītā, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, 'Knowledge is veiled by māyā, and again he says, 'knowledge is veiled by ajñāna'. This view of Śrī Kṛṣṇa shows that māyā and avidyā are identical. Avidyā and māyā represent the subjective and objective sides of the one fundamental experience. It is called avidyā; since it is removable by knowledge; but the objective series is called māyā; since it is coeternal with the supreme personality.

BRAHMAN AS THE CAUSE OF THE WORLD

The cause of the world, according to Advaitins, is Brahman. He creates, sustains and destroys the world. The existence of world depends on Brahman. The Advaitins offer different statements from the Upaniṣads to establish their view, like “He designed (aikṣata): I will become many, I will procreate. He designed: I will create the world, In the beginning it was existent only one without a second, He creates all” and so on. In the second aphorism of Brahma-sūtra, Bādrāyaṇa has stated that Brahman is the source of the origination, sustenance and destruction of the world. We may easily deduce from these that Brahman is the sole cause of the world. But the attribute less, part less and action less Brahman itself cannot be the cause of the world, because it exists beyond the chain of cause and effect. Brahman is
regarded as cause of the world when he is associated with the power of maya, without which Brahman cannot create this world.

According to the Advaitins, the cause is two types - nimittakāraṇa or the efficient cause and the upādānakāraṇa or the material cause. Brahman associated with māyā is regarded as the nimittakāraṇa or the efficient cause of the world i.e. the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world, while Brahman remaining as the ground of everything is the adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa or the ground cause. Brahman is regarded as the upādāna kāraṇa or the material cause, only in the sense that the world appearance has its ground on Brahman. This dual causality of Brahman is stated in the aphorism of Brahma-sūtra. In the commentary of Brahma-sūtra Śaṅkara says that Brahman should be accepted not only as the efficient cause but also as the material cause of the world. Brahman must, therefore, be regarded as both the material cause and the effective cause of the world; it is abhinna-nimittopādāna-kāraṇa. That Brahman is both the efficient cause and material cause of the world is declared in the sruti itself. In this context, Śruti speaks like, ‘That desired, may I become many’, the expression ‘That desired’ indicates to the efficient causality of Brahman and ‘May I become many’ indicates its material causality. The material causality of Brahman is clearly stated by Taittirīya Upaniṣad, which says: ‘Brahman is that where from the
world is originated, wherein it exists and whereto it goes back in the dissolution. This statement can not be explained if the material causality of Brahman is denied, because it is in the material cause that an effect is dissolved, and not in the efficient cause. It is seen that the effect is originated from, exists in and dissolves into the material cause only. In the Upaniṣads, the world cause, i.e. Brahman, has been described as becoming many out of itself, after desired to do so. Now, Brahman, being the agent of desire, knowledge and action required for the creation of the world, is the efficient cause or nimitta-kāraṇa. In the view of Śaṅkara, though in our empirical world the same entity cannot be both the efficient cause and the material cause, in the case of the Absolute; this dual causality can exist without any contradiction, since in the highest plane of reality the subject and the object have no separate entity. Again, Brahman is described in the sruti as the source of all. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad, similarly, declares that “All this verily, is Brahman”. The self, indeed, is this whole world. All this is endowed with that and so on. These also declare that Brahman is the material cause of the world.

A question is raised against the material causality of Brahman. It is generally seen that the material cause is to transform into the effect, but Brahman, being part less and immutable by nature, cannot be said to be
transformed into the world. How can then Brahman become the material cause of the world? To solve this problem, Advaita Vedântins reply that though Brahman is the material cause of the world, it is not subject to any change. In the view of Advaitins, the material cause is of two types—parinâmin or changing i.e. which is really transformed into the effect and aparinâmin or unchanging i.e. which is not really transformed but appears to have transformed into the effect. The unchanging material cause is known as vivarta-kāraṇa also. We have parināma or transformation when the milk is turned into the curd and aparināma, when the rope appears as the snake. Here, the rope does not change into but simply appears as the snake. Likewise, Brahman is also not really transformed into the world; it only appears as the world through the illusory power of maya. Brahman is regarded as the material cause of the world as the vivarta-kāraṇa of the world. The Advaita Vedântins hold that Brahman becomes the cause of the world not through parināma or transformation but through vivarta or appearance. Brahman cannot really change into the world. If Brahman is to change into the world discarding its nature, then Brahman will no longer remain akhaṇḍa or impartite. Hence, it is to be accepted that Brahman simply appears as the world without discarding its real nature. In reality, however, it is may be that is really changed into the world. Brahman remains unchanged in its nature, but yet it is called the material cause only because
of its being the object of māyā, the real material cause. Thus, Brahman is the vivarta-upādana-kāraṇa of the world; while maya is its parināmi-upādana-kāraṇa.

DIFFERENT OPINIONS ABOUT THE MATERIAL CAUSE OF THE WORLD

There are some differences of opinion among the Advaita Vedāntins on the question of the material causality of Brahman and māyā. A section of Advaita Vedāntins give equal importance to both māyā and Brahman. They maintain that it is Brahman endowed with māyā that is the cause of the world. Another section give emphasis on māyā only.

Sarvajñātma muni holds that pure Brahman is the material cause of the world, because all that is must belong to the one reality. It is, however, said that Brahman being immutable, cannot be the material cause by itself; it becomes the material cause being conditioned by maya. Māyā is, therefore, not the material cause, but it is only a dvāra kāraṇa or medium in the causation of the world.

In the view of Vācaspati Mīśra, Brahman, object of Jīva’s nescience, unreally transforms himself as the world; it appears as the world through the illusory power of māyā. Thus, Brahman is the sole cause of the world and
māyā is only the sahakāri kāraṇa or auxiliary cause and not the material cause of the world.

For the Vivaraṇa school, Brahman qualified by māyā, i.e. Īśvara is the material cause of the world. According to the thinkers of dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda, the jīva is the material cause of all, projecting within itself the whole order of things from Īśvara downwards, even as it projects a dream world. In the view of Prakāśānanda, māyā is the material cause, and not Brahman. But since Brahman is the ground of this māyā, Brahman is referred to as the cause of the world only in a remote sense. In the view of Vedānta Paribhāṣā, the cause of the world is māyā and not Brahman.

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SELF AND BRAHMAN

According to Advaita Vedāntins, the relation between the individual self or jīva and Brahman is one of identity or non-difference i.e. the individual self and Brahman are identical under all circumstances—both in bondage and in liberation. The Advaita Vedāntins hold that it is the self in its essential nature as pure consciousness and bliss that is identical with Brahman, which is also nature of pure consciousness and bliss. Identity between the self and Brahman has been declared by all the Upaniṣads and scriptures. Accordingly the Advaita Vedāntins maintain that Upaniṣadic
passages like taṭ-tvam-asi i.e. You (the self) are that (Brahman), aham brahmāsmi, i.e. I am Brahman, “ayam ātmā brahma” i.e. This self is Brahman, “brahmany-ekatmatāṁ yāti” i.e. The self becomes one with Brahman etc. bear the sense of the identity through jahad-ajahad-laksana or implication which retains a part of the direct meaning and rejects another part of the same.

According to Advaita Vedāntins, Brahman appears as the individual self because of the illusory power of māyā.

Here the problem is: how the pure and unlimited Brahman appears as the impure and limited individual self? This difficulty is solved by Śaṅkara himself, he says that Brahman does not actually become the individual self. The individual self has no intrinsic basis, it is only an appearance. According to Śaṅkara, it is avidyā, which is without any beginning, that is responsible for this false appearance.

Śaṅkara takes the help of two images to explain the relation between the individual self and Brahman. He describes the individual self or jīva sometimes as a limitation of Brahman by the internal organ or antaḥkaraṇa, just as the space or ākāśa limited by a jar or a house and sometimes, as a reflection of Brahman in avidyā, just as the sun or the moon appears many on account of the reflection in the different waves of water. By these two
images Śaṅkara means to say that the individual self is merely an appearance and that, in essence, there is no difference between the individual self and Brahman. The later Advaitins are divided into two groups one following the theory of limitation or avaccheda-vāda and the other following the theory of reflection or pratibimba-vāda. The theory of limitation or avaccheda-vāda is upheld by Vācaspati Miśra. According to this theory, Brahman limited by the adjunct of maya is Īśvara, while Brahman limited by the internal organ or antaḥkaraṇa is the jīva. In this view the relation between the jīva and Brahman is like ākāśa limited by a jar or a house. So also Brahman limited by the adjunct of antaḥkaraṇa is called the jīva. According to pratibimba-vādins, the jīva is the reflection of Brahman in avidyā. Suresvara leads the theory of reflection to its extreme and holds that the jīva is merely an ābhāsa or appearance of Brahman. He argues that if the jīva be a reflection of Brahman, it must be false, just like the reflection of the face in the mirror. The reflection in a mirror is only an ābhāsa or appearance of the face and is ultimate by false. In the same way the jīva being only an ābhāsa or appearance of Brahman is false.

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE ABSOLUTE:

In the view of Śaṅkara, the world is merely an appearance of snake in a
rope. As the rope appears to be the illusory snake, so also Brahman appears
to be the world. Brahman is the only reality; and the world is unreal. Māyā is
the cause of the world appearance. The world experience by us all, and this
world-experience continuous to exist until the knowledge of Brahman arises.
When the individual realizes its identity with Brahman, the world-
appearance vanishes and only the one Brahman shines forth. The world is,
therefore, described as mithyā. The world is called mithyā in the sense that it
is neither sat or eternal like neither Brahman nor asat or totally non-existent
like the sky flower; because the world appears. Again, the world appearance
is not absolutely real like Brahman as it disappears when the knowledge of
Brahman arises.

Thus, Sankara says that the world is identical with Brahman, just as jars,
plates etc. are identical with clay, or just as gold ornaments are identical with
gold. In this context, Viveka-cūḍāmani says that this world is an expression
of Brahman, it is Brahmamaya because the existence of superimposed is not
different from its substratum. Thus, it can be said that with the rise of the
knowledge of Brahman, the world does not vanish, it only revealed as
identical with Brahman.
Śrī Caitanya’s view

In the view of Śrī Caitanya and his followers, the Absolute or Bhagavat is the advaya or non-dual. This means that the Absolute is one without a second. Like Śaṅkara, jīva Gosvāmi maintains that the Absolute is an indivisible substance in which there is no difference between the essence and the form, such as is found in between the conscious principle and the organic body in a human being. In other words, the Absolute is an individual substance free from the three kinds of differences, namely sajātiya, vijātiya, and sagata. The Absolute is called non-dual because there is no other self existent conscious or unconscious principle which is similar to it. Jīva Gosvāmi substantiates his statement about the Absolute i.e. the Absolute is the one without second by the Upaniṣadic text like ekamevādvitiyam. In this respect Rāmānuja holds that the Absolute has an internal difference within the being of the Absolute. But Śrī Jīva defies the view of Rāmānuja. He also maintains that the jīva and matter are as much real as the Absolute.

Here, it may be argued that how could the ontological reality of the jīvas and matter be reconciled with non-duality of the Absolute? To this, Śrī Jīva replies that a thing can not exist or become a cause unless there is some power in it. If the ultimate reality exists; it must have power. Since all the
Vedāntins maintain that Brahman is the first cause of the universe, it must therefore have power. Thus, Śrī Jīva says that owing to this fact, the Absolute does not give up its character of being non-dual. It is always one without a second in the strictest possible sense of the term.

Further, it may be asked: Is Śakti or the mysterious power different from the Absolute or non-different i.e. identical with it? If the former is accepted, then non-dualism can not stand; if the later alternative is accepted, then there is no meaning in using a different term ‘Śakti’ or power. In solving the problem, Jīva Gosvāmi replies that since it is quite impossible to conceive of this ‘power’ as identical with the powerful i.e. Absolute being it is to be regarded as bheda or different and since power can not be conceived as distinct from the powerful, it is to be called as abheda or identical. This identity and difference between the power and powerful is the essential truth, but it is beyond human comprehension and logical conceptualization.

To this problem, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa replies from another point of view. He says that sentences like ‘being exists’, ‘the time always exists’, ‘space is everywhere’ etc. are logically tautologies, but they are in constant use and conventionally approved. Since the expression ‘being exists’ conveys as true information as the sentence ‘the jar exists’ there is, therefore, some difference between ‘being’ and ‘existence’, between ‘space’ and
'everywhere', and so on. In the view of Baladeva, this difference is due to the category of 'viśeṣa', the function of which is the specifying or individualizing something. It is due to the function of category of viśeṣa that it is entitled to say that the Absolute has power. Again, it is this viśeṣa which maintains difference in identity between the Absolute and its power. In other words, it is by means of this viśeṣa that the same substance appears as different, and this viśeṣa is a power inherent in the Lord, who as the bhagavat thus exhibits himself as the Brahman and Paramātman. The whole Acintya Bhedābheda theory of the school is based upon this conception of differentiation of viśeṣa. Hence, sakti or power is an entity which is not outside the being of the Absolute; nor is it completely identical with it. The acceptance of power, therefore does not at all involve any concept of duality in the Absolute. The Absolute is called advaya, because it exists with its powers only which can not exist independently of the Absolute. In other words, it is advaya in the sense that its own infinite saktis or powers are the only things which accompany it, but which can not exist without its ultimate existence.

THE ABSOLUTE AS BOTH STATIC AND DYNAMIC

The Absolute is both static and dynamic at the same time. In the view of Jīva Gosvāmi, the two conceptions, static and dynamic are not
contradictory at all, because of the svarūpa-śakti or primary power of the Absolute. It is because of this power that the Absolute is static, perfect and unchangeable, and again the same reality is dynamic and self-expressive. Thus, these two natures of the Absolute are not two different aspects of it, looked at from two different angles, rather, they are real at one and the same time, because it is the necessary outcome of the fullness of the love of the Absolute. The svarūpa-śakti or primary power of the Absolute is that which makes these two facts possible. Hence, in so far as the Absolute is a perfect being, it is steady, immutable and static, on the other hand, and is flexible, mutable and dynamic in so far it is concerned with the expression of love.

THE ABSOLUTE AS SAT-CIT-ĀNANDA

The svarūpa-lakṣaṇa or primary definition of the Absolute is sat-cid-ānanda, i.e. existence, consciousness and bliss. The existence of the Absolute is said to be pūrṇa or complete and ananta or infinite and Absolute, being and the root of the existence of all things. According to Śrī Jīva, the Absolute is the only being and His existence is a necessity. The Absolute existence; in its turn, is identical with Absolute consciousness. Śaṅkara holds that the Absolute is pure consciousness devoid of self-consciousness,
while for Rāmānuja; it is always associated with self-consciousness. Baldeva agrees with Rāmānuja, but he does not oppose Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja and Baladeva agree that the Absolute is self-conscious being. But Rāmānuja denies pure consciousness while Baladeva does not. According to Śrī Jīva and Baladeva however, pure consciousness can not be separated from self-consciousness. And, for that reason, there is no conflict in the proposition that the Absolute is both pure consciousness and at the same time self-conscious. Further, Absolute existence and Absolute consciousness are identical with Absolute bliss. For Baladeva the Absolute is both bliss and blissful and it expresses its bliss through its lila or divine sport, while for Śaṅkara, the Absolute is not blissful but bliss itself which is passive in nature and has no reference to any object.

THE ABSOLUTE AS ADVAYA-JÑĀNA

The Absolute is described as advaya-jñāna or non-dual consciousness also. The term ‘advaya-jñāna’ does not signify nirguna Advaita-jñāna of the monistic idealists of the Advaita School. Here, the term ‘jñāna’ is explained as consisting of pure consciousness which is self-existent, self-luminous and self-complete, eternal and of the nature of infinite bliss. In the view of Śrī Jīva, this consciousness is bhāva-sattvā or ‘the essence of being’
which is real from all times, since it is not produced by the contact between
the subject and object. This bhāva-sattvā is distinguished from kāraka-sattvā
which is the result of a process of transactions between and objects, and
which constitutes the temporary instances of awareness. Here, the word
‘advaya’ means ‘that which has no second’, which again signifies that like
which there is no reality. In other words, the ultimate reality is called
‘advaya’ since there is no other self existent conscious or unconscious
principle which is similar to it.

POWER OF THE ABSOLUTE

In the view of Śrī Caitanya, the power of the Absolute or of three kinds,
viz. the svarūpa-śakti or the essential power, the taṭasthā-śakti or the
peripheral power and the vahīraṅgā-śakti or external power. These śaktis are
also known as successively parā-śakti, jīva-śakti and māyā-śakti. These three
śaktis of the Absolute are also termed as para, kṣetrajñā and avidyā in the
Viṣṇu-purāṇa. The svarūpa-śakti or essential power maintains the integrity of
the essence of the Absolute, which the taṭasthā-śakti and vahīraṅgā-śakti are
the sources of the jīvas and the material world, respectively.
The svarūpa-śakti or essential power of the Absolute has three aspects, namely, sandhinī-śakti or will-to-be, the samvit-śakti or will-to-know and the hlādīnī-śakti or will to enjoy which is another name of prema or Love. These three aspects of the svarūpa-śakti correspond to the sat or existence, cit or consciousness and ānanda or bliss, respectively. Just as sat cit and ānanda are the essential elements in the nature of the Absolute and are, therefore, inseparable from Him; similarly, sandhinī, samvit and hlādīnī are also inseparable aspect of svarūpa-śakti of the Absolute. Of these three aspects, the hlādīnī-śakti is theologically called Rādhā. By the power of sandhinī, Bhagavat or the Absolute though self-existent or sat not only maintains His own existence, but also the existence of the jīvas and prakṛti i.e. material world. It is in relation to this power that Bhagavat or the Absolute is described as the ultimate realities while the world and the individual selves as relative realities. The samvit-śakti is the power of knowledge that makes the Absolute omniscient and enables Him to impart knowledge to others. The hlādīnī-śakti is the energy of bliss. By this śakti or power, Bhagavat or the Absolute who is Himself bliss or ānanda enjoys bliss and also infuses bliss into the hearts of His devotees.

The jīvas emanate from the taṭasthā-śakti or peripheral power and it is related to both svarūpa-śakti and vahiraṅgā-śakti or external-power or māyā power in a peculiar manner. The jīvas which is manifested by the taṭasthā-
śakti remain subject to the influence of both the svarūpa-śakti and vahiraṅga-śakti and exhibit the dual power of spiritual and material interest. The vahiraṅga-śakti or external power or māyā-śakti is the cause of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the material world; unlike the svarūpa-śakti which helps the jīvas to realize the real nature of the Absolute, the vahiraṅga-śakti or māyā-śakti on the contrary, causes bondage to them by attracting them towards material world and by concealing the real nature of the Absolute from them.

The relation between the absolute and its śakti is neither Absolute difference nor Absolute identity; but both identity and difference. And as it is difficult to conceive how these two contradictory notions of identity and difference can exist in the same reality, simultaneously, the relation is called as acintya or unthinkable. This means not that ‘acintya’ itself is the relation, but that the relation is qualified by acintyatva or incomprehensibility. In the view of Śrī Jīva, śakti can not be regarded as absolutely different from the Absolute, for in that case, the sruti declaring knowledge, strength and action of the Absolute as svābhāvika or natural will be contradicted. The infinite śaktis of the Absolute are natural to Him. The śaktis are natural in so far as they inhere in their substance and are inseparable from the latter just as the combusting power of fire remains inseparable from fire itself. But although
natural the śaktis or power of the Absolute are also acintya or incomprehensible in nature because the effect of these powers are beyond our categories of intellect and hence, beyond our comprehension. Further, Śrī Jīva argues that the upanisadic texts like ‘vijñānam anandam brahma’ etc. cannot be adequately explained without restoring to acintya-bhedābheda. In fact, it is this intricate and peculiar relationship that serves as the platform on which the philosophy of acintya-bhedābheda-vāda is based.

THREE GRADATIONS OF THE ABSOLUTE

Though the Absolute is one and indivisible, it has three aspects according to the particular capacity of realization of a devotee. These three aspects are called, respectively, Brahman, Paramātman, and Bhagavat. The followers of the path of jñāna or knowledge who have realized their identity the ultimate reality are unable to realize the diverse power of the Lord; to them, the Absolute appears partially in the form of nirviśeṣa Brahman. On the other hand, the followers of the path of action the Absolute appears as in the form of Paramātman or the inner controller of all beings. However, the same reality i.e. the Absolute appears to the followers of the path bhakti or devotion as the supreme possessor of diverse powers and is identified as Bhagavat. Hence, the ultimate reality, the Absolute is manifested in three
distinct forms, such as Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavat. Here, Bhagavat is the complete manifestation; Paramātman is a partial manifestation of Bhagavat; and Bhagavat is the incomplete manifestation of the Bhagavat. Of these three manifestations, Brahman is merely sat, Paramātman is sat and cit, while Bhagavat is saccidananda. Though in reality, each of these manifestations includes the other two also, a difference in degree is recognized in them in accordance with the degree of realization of the devotees.

**BRAHMAN**

In Śrī Caitanya's view, Brahman is the lowest manifestation of the Absolute. The nature of Brahman is merely sat or existence. Brahman implies the nirvīsesa or undifferentiated and qualified state of Bhagavat. It is devoid of all kinds of distinction and is absolutely homogeneous and indivisible. This state of Bhagavat corresponds to Śaṅkara’s nirguna Brahman. The unqualified Brahman is incomplete manifestation of the Absolute, in whom all the divine attributes and potencies lie in a dormant state. To show its incomplete nature, Brahman is described as ‘tanubhā’ or the bodily lustre of Bhagavat. Just as what we call the sun is nothing but the lustre of the actual
sun behind, so what is called Brahman is nothing but the lustre of the Highest Absolute or Bhagavat lying behind.

PARAMĀTMAN

In Śrī Caitanya’s philosophy, Paramātman is the lower manifestation of Bhagavat. The nature of the Paramātman is sat and cit i.e. existence and consciousness. He is a partial manifestation of Bhagavat and is a savisesa or qualified state of Bhagavat. He is also described as Isvara. He creates, sustains and controls the material world and guides the individual selves. He is endowed with two powers, viz, the tatastha-śakti or jīva-śakti and the māyā-śakti or vahiraṅgā-śakti. Through the tatastha-śakti or peripherical power he creates the jīvas and through the māyā-śakti or the external power, the material world. The antaryāmin or inner controller of the selves and the material world is Paramātman.

In the process of creation, Paramātman, in the form of Mahāviśṇu, the first puruṣa, creates, sustains and dissolves the material world. Mahāviśṇu is the inner soul and controller of all beings---living and non-living. At the time of dissolution, all the selves are absorbed into Mahāviśṇu and again, he creates them. He is the immediate cause of creation. Paramātman is not an appearance of the Absolute; but is an ontological reality endowed with
eternal and real powers connected with the selves and the world. Paramātman, however, has got a limitation, because his powers operate with regard to the jīvas under bondage, but they have no part to play with regard to the liberated selves who have realized the Absolute.

**BHAGAVAT**

Bhagavat is the highest and complete manifestation of the Absolute. The nature of Bhagavat is sat-cit-ānanda i.e. existence-consciousness-bliss. Therefore, Bhagavat is called sat-cit-ānanda-vigraha. He is identified with the supreme personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is not unqualified, but endowed with infinite divine qualities. Bhagavat or Śrī Kṛṣṇa is called Puruṣottama also, because he is the full expression of saccidānanda; he is infinite in excellence, power and sweetness and because all the divine attributes come into full play in him.

Innumerable auspicious qualities are attributed to the Bhagavat. The most remarkable of them are six, viz, aiśvarya, vīrya, yaśas, śrī, jñāna and vairāgya. Aiśvarya means power to influence all, vīrya means potency, yaśas means fame, śrī means prosperity to all kinds, jñāna means omniscience and vairāgya means non-attachment to phenomenal things. The gunas pertaining to Bhagavat are called aprakṛta or non-empirical in nature; they are the
expressions of the svarūpa-śakti or intrinsic energy which is svābhāvika or natural to Bhagavat. The svarūpa-śakti or essential power of the Bhagavat has three aspects—namely, the sandhinī-śakti or will to be, the samvit-śakti or will to know and ṛddhī-śakti or will to enjoy. These three aspects of the svarūpa-śakti correspond, respectively, to sat-cit and ānanda i.e. existence, consciousness and bliss.  

The svarūpa-śakti of Bhagavat is regarded as of the nature of suddha or pure sattva. The saktis or powers of the Bhagavat are regarded as acintya or inscrutable, because these powers and their relation to Bhagavat are beyond the reach of human thought and reason, and because they are capable of bringing about unthinkable effects.

Since, Bhagavat is the indirect displayer of the taṭasthā-śakti and the māyā-śakti; He is not directly concerned with the creation-process of the world and with the events like rebirth, bondage, and liberation of the jīvas. Bhagavat has two aspects, namely, aiśvarya-maya or powerful and mādhurya-maya or sweet. In the first aspect, aiśvarya or power is predominant, while in the second, madhurya or sweetness predominates. The aiśvarya-maya aspect is known as Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyoman. The mādhurya-maya aspect is known as Śrī Kṛṣṇa combines within himself
both aśvarya and mādhurya, while in Vṛndāvana, he has only mādhurya. Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana is called the highest Absolute or the real Bhagavat.

**SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF THESE GRADATIONS**

These three gradations of the Absolute are not found in the Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas and the Pancarātra. In all these sāstras the terms Brahman, Paramātman etc. are used to denote the Absolute without any reference to its gradations. A few examples are given below

1. satyam jñānam anantam brahman—Tait. Up. 2.1
2. Paramātman linam tat-param brahmaiva jāyate-Yogatattva Up. 107
3. para-brahmani lieta-ibid-108
4. jivatmā-paramatmanoh-Dattātreya Yogaśāstra
5. sa eva parameśvarah-Skanda Up. 5
6. bhagavantaṁ maha-viṣṇum-Tripad-vibhuti Up. 1
8. sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya Kṛṣṇaya-Gopāla-pūrva-tāpinī Up. 1
9. Yo vāsudevo bhagavān.--Nārāyaniya. 339.40
10. jñānam eva daram rūpam brahmanah, paramātmanah-Ahirbudhya samhītā, II-62
11. sa eva bhagavān devah paramātma jagad-guruḥ-ibid, II-87
It is to be noted that in the principal Upaniṣads, we generally get the terms Brahman and Ātman in the sense of the Absolute, while the terms Paramātman and Bhagavat are not clearly seen.

In all these cases the words Brahman, Paramātman, Bhagavat, Paramesvara have been used to denote the indivisible ultimate reality only. The very sloka of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa-‘brahmātī paramātmeti bhagavān iti śabdyaite’ on the basis of which these three gradations have been made also does not point to the said gradations. In this śloka, the terms Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavat refer to the indivisible Absolute only.

Thus, the idea of the three gradations of the Absolute is found nowhere in the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas.

Hence, the question comes as to on what basis the Vaiṣṇavite made these gradations. In the reply, we are to say that the seed of the gradations of the Absolute is found in the Bhagavad-Gītā.

1. Puruṣottama Kṛṣṇa or Para-brahman is the highest aspect of the Absolute; in which all the aspects of sat, cit and ānanda are manifest. In the Gītā, this is called the ādhidaivika or divine form of the lord.

2. Antaryāmin is the controller of all the living being and the material world and is the inner soul of all these realities; in it all the aspects of sat, cit, and
ananda are manifest. In the Gītā, this is called the ādhibhatika or elemental aspect of the Absolute.

3. Akṣara is mentioned as qualityless and formless Brahman in the Upaniṣads, in which some amount of the aspect of ānanda or bliss is obscured. In the Gītā, this is called ādhyatmika or spiritual aspect of the Absolute.

Vallabha, a predecessor of Śrī Caitanya, also has accepted these gradations on the basis of the Gītā as mentioned above.

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the three gradations of the Absolute, accepted by the Vallabha, correspond, respectively, to Bhagavat, Paramātman and Brahman of Śrī Caitnya's Vaiṣṇavism.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE LORD

The Lord is infinitely qualified by infinity of blessed perfect attributes. He is endowed with super mundane attributes, inconceivable powers and divine personality. Since Bhagavat is infinite and all perfect, no limit can be set to his powers, attributes and personality. Innumerable auspicious qualities are attributed to the Lord. These attributes, however, are identical with the essence of the Lord and not accidental. Though the attributes ascribed to the Absolute are innumerable, the most remarkable of them are six in number, namely, aśvarya or power to influence all, vīrya or magical
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potency similar to that of precious stones, magical spells etc., yaksas or fame, śrī or prosperity, jñāna or omniscience and vairāgya or non-attachment. Of these six attributes, aīśvarya and vīrya are attributed to Paramātman and the rest to Bhagavat, the Highest Absolute. 118

All the auspicious attributes of Bhagavat are distinguished into two classes, one class is called aīśvarya-maya or majestic, and the other class called mādhurya-maya or sweetness. All the divine qualities such as omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, etc. are included in the category of aīśvarya-maya or majestic attributes, because they are too great for human being to comprehend, and thus they make the Absolute unapproachable. On the other hand, the attributes such as friendliness, sympathy, kindliness, attractiveness, deep affection, eagerness to Love and to be loved etc. are included in the category of mādhurya-maya or sweet attributes, because it is through such attributes that the Lord establishes the sweetest and closest relationship with the devotees. 119 Here the Aīśvarya indicates power, but mādhurya means loveliness of conduct, quality, beauty, sport and emotional intimacy of relationship. The devotees naturally fall into two classes, according as they prefer to experience the divine aīśvarya or mādhurya. A devotee can not realize all the infinite aspects of the divine principle, but he resorts only to that aspect of the Lord which suits his capacity and
inclination. Those who realize the excellent mādhurya-maya aspect of the Lord, which is mainly displayed in the Vṛndāvana-līlā, are superior to those who realize only the aisvarya-maya aspect of the Lord.

Besides all the sweet qualities of the Lord another very unique attribute is ascribed to Him. That attribute is called rasa. The word ‘rasa’ implies relishable flavour. When Absolute thing is enjoyable it is said possess rasa. That which accounts for the enjoyable-ness of an object is called rasa. It has two aspects, namely, Love and Joy. In the view of Śrī Jīva, since these two aspects of rasa find their fullest expression in Bhagavat, he is called ‘solidified rasa’ or rasaghana and rasaraja or the ‘King of rasa’.

DIVINE FORM AND DIVINE ABODE OF THE LORD

The supreme Lord has a beautiful form or body. The beauty and sweetness of the body of the Lord surpass all description and intellectual comprehension. The body of the Lord is made of pure consciousness. In his svarūpa-śakti, Bhagavat possesses a non-phenomenal and spiritual body. This form is not made of gross matter. The human body is made up of existence, knowledge and bliss. For this reason, Bhagavat is called sat-cid-ānanada-vigraha. His body is said to be ‘madana mohana’ or ‘charmingly
graceful'. Nārāyaṇa also has a non-material and spiritual body like Bhagavat. Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana has two arms in his essential form in which he holds a flute; Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Dvārakā and Mathurā has two or four arms; and he assumes four arms in the form of Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha, and holds a conch, a discus, a lotus. The consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana is Rādhā, that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Dvārakā and Mathurā is Rukmini and that of Nārāyaṇa is Laksīni.

The Supreme Lord has not only a beautiful body but also a divine abode in which to dwell. Bhagavat is believed to have a number of transcendental dwelling places or abodes, namely, Gokula, Golaka, Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, Vaikuṇṭha etc. among many others. The highest land of Bhagavat is called Śrī Kṛṣṇa loka which has three manifestations, namely, Dvārakā, Mathurā and Vraja. Vraja is known as Golaka or Vṛndāvana also. Vraja or Vṛndāvana is the highest of all three and has been considered as the highest of all the dhāmanas as the abodes. Vṛndāvana as the transcendental dwelling place of Bhagavat remains the manifestation of his svarūpa-sākṣi and as such, forms a part of Himself and is, therefore, inseparable from Him. Like the form of Bhagavat, his land called Vṛndāvana is also spiritual in nature; it is not made of matter, and is devoid of prakṛta or phenomenal attributes. As a part of Bhagavat, Vṛndāvana is of the nature of sat, cit and...
ānanda. It is a supra-mundane plane of eternal delight, and is not-subject to creation and destruction or to the travails of the world. As the transcendental dwelling place of Bhagavat, Vraḍāvana is eternal, pure, and all-illumined and is free from impurity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Loka is believed to be above all other damans or abodes, such as the Paravyoman and the Brahman-Loka or Siddhaloka. Below Śrī Kṛṣṇa loka, there exists Para-vyoman or Vaikuṇṭha with Nārāyaṇa as the Lord. Around this Para-vyoman, exists Brahman-loka or Siddhaloka, which is also included in Paravyoman. Around this Brahman, there lies Kāraṇa-Samudra or the casual ocean, outside which exists the material world, the manifestation of māyā-śakti. The situation of the dhāmanas or abodes above or below each other should not, however, be taken in its literal sense. It is actually implies their gradation according to their excellence or mahima. The excellence of a Dhāman depends on the degree of manifestation in it of the highest Dhāman Vraḍāvana.

FOUR VYŪHAS AND THREE PURUŚAS

Bhagavat or Śrī Kṛṣṇa has four vyuhas or divine manifestations, namely, Vāsudeva, Sañkarṣaṇa. Pradyumna and Aniruddha. They are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s aṁśa or parts, and, thus, are identical in essence, though different in forms. There are two forms of Vyūhas-the first form lies in Dvārakā, while the second form lies in Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyo ṁan. The four vyuhas of
Dvārakā are the manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, form of Bhagavat and the four vyuhas of Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyoman are the manifestations of the Nārāyaṇa, form of Bhagavat. Among the four vyuhas of Paravyoman, Vāsudeva is the manifestation of Nārāyaṇa. He is the inner soul of all. Again, Saṅkarṣaṇa is the manifestation of Vāsudeva. He creates all the jīvas. Pradyumna is the manifestation of Saṅkaraśaṇa and is the Lord of the mind; Aniruddha is the manifestation of Pradyumna. He is the Lord of ahamkāra or ego.

Puruṣāvatāra has a three fold aspect as Karaṇaṁava-sāyi, Garbhodaka-sāyi and kṣīrābdhi-sāyi. They are known as the First Puruṣa, the Second Puruṣa and the Third Puruṣa respectively. The second vyuha of Paravyoman i.e. Saṅkarṣaṇa resides in a particular form in Karaṇaṁava or Karaṇa-saniudra. He is called Karaṇaṁavaśaṇa-Nārāyaṇa or Mahāviṣṇu or the First Puruṣa. He is the inner soul and inner controller of all living and non-living beings. At the time of mahāpralaya or the total dissolution, all the selves rest in him, and at the time of creation, he manifests them again. He is regarded as the immediate cause of creation, because, it is through his glance on prakṛti that gives a start to the entire process of creation. Then, this Purusa enters into the individual Brahmāṇḍas or worlds in another form after their creation. This form is known as Garbhodaka-sāyi Nārāyaṇa or the Second Puruṣa. As Garbhodaka-sāyi, He is the regulator of all the individual selves.
He is a manifestation of Pradyumna, the Third Vyūha and is the source of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. From the navel pit of the Second Puruṣa springs a golden lotus, out of which is born in four faced Brahmā, who finally creates the entire universe with the fourteen lokas or worlds. Here, Brahmā is the cause of creation of the world, Viṣṇu is the cause of its sustenance and Maheśvara is the cause of its dissolution. An ocean lies in one of those fourteen lokas, which is known as kṣīroda-sāgara. Gārbhadakasāyi-Nārāyaṇa or the Third Puruṣa. He is a manifestation of Aniruddha, the fourth vyūha. He enters into the jīvas also as their antaryāmin or inner self. As Kṣīrabdhiśāyi, He is the immanent regulator of each individual self.

**BHAGAVAT AS THE WORLD-CAUSE**

Bhagavat is described as both the efficient and the material cause of the world. He is regarded as the efficient cause as he creates through his parā-śakti or svarūpa-śakti, and the material cause through his other two saktis, namely, tātastha-śakti and māyā-śakti. Since Bhagavat, as the material and efficient cause of the world, creates the world out of himself by māyā-śakti, yet He does not undergo any modification or lose of essence in as much as māyā-śakti cannot affect His essential nature. In reality, however, Bhagavat is not at all concerned with the world process, and thus causality cannot be properly applied to him. All the creation process is performed by Bhagavat.
through the four vyūhas and three Puruṣas. Of them i.e. Kāraṇāṇava-śāyi Puruṣa can be regarded as both the efficient cause and the material cause of the world.

THE ABSOLUTE AS BOTH SAVIŚEṢA OR QUALIFIED AND NIRVIŚEṢA OR UNQUALIFIED

In the view of Śrī Caitanya, the Personal Absolute or Bhagavat enfolds even the nirviśeṣa or the attribute less Brahman of the Advaitins. It is both saviśeṣa or qualified and nirviśeṣa or unqualified, yet it transcends both the aspects of saviśeṣa and nirviśeṣa. This is possible on account of the inconceivable power of Bhagavat to reconcile the irreconcilable, which enables Him to exist above the contradictory notions of qualified and unqualified Absolute and reconcile them in a higher synthesis. In his Bhagavat Sandarba, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmi upholds the view that the ultimate reality is most perfectly manifested in the form of Bhagavat. He further maintains that nirviśeṣa or unqualified Brahman of the Advaitins is nothing but a partial and incomplete manifestation of the ultimate reality, the Absolute.

The Advaita Vedāntins accept the nirviśeṣa Brahman as the Absolute
and regard the saviśeṣa Brahman, the world governor as the appearance of the Absolute through the power of māyā. On the other hand, Śrī Caitanya maintains that both the saviśeṣa or qualified Brahman and nirviśeṣa or unqualified Brahman are different aspect of Bhagavat, the highest Absolute.

As a matter of fact, the ultimate reality has been described as both saviśeṣa or qualified as well as nirviśeṣa or unqualified in almost all of the Upaniṣads. Śrī Caitanya and his followers have seriously criticised the Advaitic concept of the unqualified Brahman as the Absolute. They hold the Upaniṣadic view which describe Brahman as both nirviśeṣa and saviśeṣa and that these two contradictory positions can be reconciled only by accepting some supra-logical nature of Lord’s power. This can be supported by the Upaniṣadic passage which describe Brahman as acintya-śakti or the possessor of inconceivable power. Śrī Jiva has tried to prove that inconceivable power of Brahman by referring to the Brahma-sūtra ‘ātmani ca evam vicitrāśca hi’ and other texts. Śaṅkara has also recognized the inconceivable power of Brahman in his commentary on Brahma-sūtra. In the view of Śrī Caitanya, the difference between the qualified Brahman and unqualified Brahman is due to the difference between its svarūpa-lakṣaṇa or essential definition and tātāstha-lakṣaṇa or secondary definition. While svarūpa-lakṣaṇa is the essential nature of a thing, tātāstha-lakṣaṇa is the way
THE ABSOLUTE IN RELATION TO THE SELF AND THE WORLD

In the view of Vaisnism, the self or jīva is an aṁsa or part of the Absolute transfused with his jīva-śakti and the world also is the Absolute transfused with his māyā-śakti. Hence, the relation which the Absolute bears with the self and the world is like one between śaktimat or the powerful and śakti or power. That implies that both the self and the world are but manifestations of the śaktis of the Absolute and He is the Śaktimat. Here, the self is the manifestation of the tāṭasthā-śakti or jīva-śakti; the material world, of the vahiraṅgā-śakti or māyā-śakti. Śrī Jīva maintains that śakti or power and the śaktimat or powerful must be regarded as difference from each other, since they cannot be imagined as identical with each other. On the other hand, they must be regarded as identical with each other, because they cannot be imagined as different. And, since simultaneous existence of identity and difference is contradictory, the relation is to be said as acintya or unthinkable. The relation of the self and the world with the Absolute is a peculiar one. It is, therefore, hold that the relation between the Absolute and the self and between the Absolute and the world is difference-cum-non-difference, and is, at the same time, unthinkable. Accordingly, this theory is
known as acintya-bhedābheda-vada or the philosophy of unthinkable difference-cum-non-difference. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣāṇa also maintains the same view and says that without the idea of ‘unthinkability’ the relation of identity-and-difference between the quality and the qualified cannot be explained. In the same way, the relation between the Absolute and its śakti is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference but unthinkable difference-cum-identity. And since the self and the world are but manifestations of the śaktis of the Absolute, the relation which the Absolute bears with the self and the world is also one of unthinkable difference-cum-non difference.

Further, if the Absolute and his śakti are regarded as absolutely difference, that will rise to dualism and in that case the principle of non-duality of the Absolute declared by the ūśstras will be contradicted. Hence, this relation is called acintya-bhedābheda, because it involves both bheda or difference and abheda or non-difference, while it is beyond our comprehension as to how these two opposites are reconciled.
References

1. vide, bhagavato bhaktir drdhā’dhīyatām-Upadeśa-pañcakam, 2; bhaja govindaṁ mūḍhamate- Carpaṭa-paṭjarikā-strotra, 2; iha saṁsāre bhava dustāre kṛpayā’pāre pāhi murāre-ibid, 8.
2. se brahma govinder prabhā hay anīga kānti-Č.Č. 1.2; brahma anīga- kānti tār nirvīśes prakāśe-CC.2.20
3. brahma satyaṁ jagat mithyā jivo brahmaiva na’paraḥ-Brahmajñāvali-20.

4. sadeva somyedam agra āśīd ekam evādvitiyam – Ch.Up.6.2; Śaṅkara’s comt.on ibid and IP. Vol.II.p-535.
5. Śaṅkara-bhāṣya on Tait .Up.2.1 ; BSŚ.3.2.21.
6. akhandam saccidanandam avan manasgocaram-SVSSS,2.

7. na tatra caksur gacchati na vāg gacchati no manaḥ-Kena.Up.1.3
8. neti neti – Br. Up.2.3.6.
10. IP.-pp.535-536
11. anṛtādi pratīṣedhake – AS- p.678; yadyapi sarveṣām nityādi padānāṁ lakṣyaṁ ekam eva nirvīśesāṁ brahma, tathāpi nivarta-niyāṁśādhiyena – ibid, p.676 .
12. . IP.Vol.II, pp.538 -539; Ch.Up.1.6.6; 3.4.2.
17. yadi satyaṁ jñānād bhinnāṁ syāttadā tasya dṛṣṭāyatā satyatvaṁ no syāt-evāṁ jñānamapi sato bhinnāṁ cet asadevete na jñānaṁ syāt-Sāra-saṅggraḥa on Saṁkṣepa-sārīraka,pp.186-187, ānando viṣayānubhavo nityatvaṁceti santi dharmaḥ aprthaktve’pi caityanat prthagivābhāsante-Paṁca- pūdika,p.23; also see-T. M. Mahadevan, Philosophy of Advaita,p.119.
18. brahāttvād brahma-divi- kena. Up.Śaṅkara- bhāṣya –
19. yo vai bhūmi tatuskharī, na'ipe sukham asti rasa vai sah - Tait. Up. 2.7; ānando brahmēti vyajānāt- ibid, 3.6.1.
20. Anandagiri's comt. on ŚB on Ch. Up. 6.2.
21. janmādyasya yataḥ - BS 1.1.2; jagaj-janmādi - kāraṇatvam- VP, p.231
22. omkārasya paraṁ cāpam ca brahmetyabhed āśruteḥ - Pra.Up.ŚB Vol. 3; Br. Up. ŚB 2.3.1.; BSŚ, 1.1.19-20 and 1.2.2.
23. Tait. Up. -3.1
25. syāt parameśvarasyāpi icchāvasāt māyāmayam śāfrām śādhakānugrahārtham - BSŚ, 1.1.20; AS, pp-740-741; ŚB on Ch. Up. 4.14, 2.3.
29. nirviśeṣaṁ paraṁ brahma sāksāt-kartum anśīvarah/yeye mandāste'nukampyante saviśeṣāni rūpanaih - Kalpataru, p.192.
31. Śaṅkara's comt. on the BG.
32. Śāstri P. D., The doctrine of Māyā.
33. Sāvana-bhāṣya on Ṛgveda, 2.27.7.
34. cf. avidyākalpitā nāmarupe māyāsaktiḥ prakṛtirīti-BSŚ, 2.1.14.
35. avidyātmikā hi bijaśaktir avyakta śabda nirdeśyā prameśvarāśrayā māyāmayi mahasuptiḥ-ibid, 1.4.3.
36. ibid, 1.4.3.
37. sad-asadbhyām anirvacanāyam-VS. 34: sad-vilakṣaṇatve sati sad-vilakṣaṇatve sati sadasad-vilakṣaṇatvam-AS, p.621
38. VS, p.30.
39. Vide, ibid, 50 and 'Tattva-pradipika, p.101
40. VS, 38, 78, 89; SLS, 1.43, pp. 119, 121,
41. nävidyā brahmāsrayā, kintu jīve-BSŚ, 1.1.4.
43. pāraśeyyād ātmana evaśtv-ajñānam-Naśikarma-siddhi, 3.1.
44. āśrayatva-viṣayatva- bhāginī nirvibhāga citir eva kevala-SS, 1.4.
45. avidya kalpitā nāmarupe māyāsakti prakṛtirīti-BSŚ, 2.1.14.
46. Pañcadaśi, 1.16-17.
47. Prakṛtartha-vivarana, 1.1.1
49. BG, 5.15 and 7.15.
51. tadaikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti-Ch.Up.6.2.3.
52. sā īkṣata lokānusṛtā iti-Ait.Up.1.1.1.
53. sadeva saumyedam agra āśīd ekamevādvātiyam-Ch.Up.6.2.1.
55. janmādyasya yataḥ-BS, 1.1.2.
56. SLS, pp.66-67: adhīsthānaṁ vivartānāṁ āśrayo brahma saktivaK alpataru, 1.2.8; Pañcadaśī, 1.44.
57. cf. prakṛtisca upādaṇā kāraṇaṁ ca brahma abhyupagantavyaṁ ... nimittakāraṇameva-BSS, 1.4.23.
59. yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yat prayanty-abhisarṣivānti-lait.Up.3.1.
60. upādaṇā- kāraṇaṁ ca brahma abhyupagantavyaṁ nimittakāraṇam ca-BSS, 1.4.23.
63. ibid., 7.25.2.
64. ibid., 6.8.7.
65. AS., p.936.
66. SLS., pp.66-67
67. ibid., pp.96-97.
68. jīva eva svapnāraśtrvat svasmin ṛṣvarādisarvakalpakatvena sarvakāraṇam ity api kecit-ibid,p.88.
69. . ibid, pp.98-99.
70. prapañcasya parināmy upādaṇam māyā na brahmety siddhānta-VP.
71. jīva bramaivo nāparaḥ-Brahmajñānāvali.20.
72. Ch.Up.6.8.7.
73. Br.Up.1.4.10
74. Ma.Up. 2; Br.Up. 4.4.5.
75. JS, 3.22.
76. BSS, 2.3.17.
77. eṣa jīvaḥ parasyātmano jala-sūryatadivalent pratipattavyaḥ-
80. vide, Siddhānta-bindu, pp. 112-113.
81. mṛdeva satyam paramārth-bhūtam-VC, p. 229.
82. nādhīṣṭhānād bhinnatā ropitasya-ibid, p. 231.
83. sajātiya-vijātiya-svagata-bhedarahitam jñānam eva paramān tattvam iti-SS. on BhS, p. 2.
84. sakti-lesam vinā na kvacid avagamya vatsattvam-SS, p. 33.
85. svarūpabhinnatvena cintayaitum aśākyatvād bhedah, bhinnatvaena cintayitum aśākyatvād abhedaś ca pratiyate iti sakti-saktimatoḥ bhedābhedau eva angīkṛtau, tau ca acintyau, ibid, pp. 36 37.
86. see De.S.K., The Early history of the Vaiṣṇavism faith and movement in Bengal, p. 274.
87. na bhinnā dharmino dharma bhedāṁ jñānam viśeṣataḥ. Yasmat kālah sarvadāstīty ādidhir viduṣāṁ api- PR, 1.11; nirbhede api vastūni guṇa guṇi bhāvojjṛmbhakaṁ viśeṣāḥ dharmai gṛhyate-Baladeva’s comment. on SR, 1.21; PS, 29.
88. see, Brahmaçari Mahanambera, Vaiṣṇava-Vedānta, p. 108.
89. sarva-sattādatṛ-avyabhicāri-sattākam-PS, p. 83.
90. Brahmaçari, op cit, pp. 89, 90, 94.
91. vadanti tattvavidas tattvam yaj jñānam advayam. brhmeti paramātmeti bhagavāṁ iti kathyate-BP, quoted in BSG, 1.1.6; sei advay tattva kṛṣṇa-CC-2.24.55.
92. TS. p. 119.
93. tat ca bhāva-sādhanam-SS on BhS, p. 2.
94. De., op cit, p. 270.
95. saktiś ca tridhā antarāṅgā bahiranāgā tātasthā ca — BhS, p. 51; kṛṣnero anata sakti tāte tin pradhān antaraṅgā bahiraṅgā tātasthā kahi jāre- CC, Mādhyā, 8.

BSS, 2.3.50.; parasya paramārtha sato mahākāśa sthānīyasya ghāṭakāsa sthānīyo jīvāḥ-Śankara’s comt. on Māṇḍukya – Kārikā, 3.7.
78. tasmād ghāṭakāśavād antalākaranāvاصchinnam caitanyaṁ jīvāḥ- SLS, 1.6.3.
79. avidyābhidhāreṣu cit-pratibimbo jīvāḥ-SLS, 1.6.2; avidyā-pratibimbo jīvāḥ-ibid; nanu ko’yāṁ jīva nāma? brahmaiva avidyā pratibimbita iti vadāmaḥ-PV, p. 760.
sandhini cidaṁśe samvit-CC, Madhya, 8; BhS, pp. 497-500, and SR, 1.4.3.

99. sattva-rūpo'pi yayā sattvāṁ dadhāti dhārayati ca sa samdhini-jñāna- rūpo'pi yayā jānāti jñāpayati ca sā samvit; hāda-rūpo'pi bhagavān yayā hādate hādayati ca sa hādimi- Viṣṇu-purāṇa; hādinī karāya krṣne ānandāsvādana, hādimiśra dvārā kare bhaktera poṣanā-CC, Ādi, 4.5.3.

100. CC, Ādi, 7.

101. SS, p. 35

102. eka īśvara bhaktera dhyāna anurūpe ekai vigrah kare nānākāra rūpe-CC, Madhya, 9.

103. CC, Madhya, 24, pp. 57-58

104. yad advaitam brahmopaniśad tad-apy-asya-tanubhā, ya ātmāntaryāṁi puruṣa iti so 'syāṁśa vibhavaḥ, saṣāśvarga-pūrṇo ya iha bhagavān-CC, Ādi, 1.


106. se brahma govinder prabhā hay anīga-kānti-CC, 1.2.

107. brahma anīga-kānti tār nirviśeṣ prakāśe. Śūrya jena carma-cakṣe jyotirnay bhāse-CC, 2.20.


109. ibid, pp. 51-52.

110. īśvarah paramāḥ krṣṇaḥ saccidānanda vigrahaḥ anādir ādir- govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇaḥ-Brahma-Saṁhitā, 5.1.

111. saṣ-aśvarya-paripūrṇa-svayam bhagavān-CC, 2.6; BhS, p. 3.

112. atā eva svarūpa-sakti hay tin rūp. ānandāṁśe hādimi śadhimśe sandhini cīdāṁśe samvit-CC, Madhya, 8; BhS, pp. 497, 500 and SR, 1.43.

113. aśvarya-rūpā mādhurya-rūpā ceti bhagavattāyāḥ dvāvīdnyāḥ, SR, 2.1.

114. CCB, pp. 78-79.

115. .BP, 1.2.11.

116. .BG, 8.3.4.


118. BhS, p. 3; De, op cit, p. 275.

119. aśvarya-rūpā mādhurya-rūpā ceti bhagavattāyāḥ dvāvīdnyāḥ, SR, 2.1; karuṇā-nikāmbakomale mādhuraisvarya viśeṣaśālini-CC, Madhya, 21.

120. De, op cit, p. 399.

121. Brahmacari, op cit, pp. 118-119.
122. CCB, pp. 78-79
123. CC, Adi, 5
125. ibid, pp. 247-253, 266-273
126. CCB, pp. 78-79.
129. CCB, p 80 and CC, Adi, 5, pp. 33-34 with R.G. Nath comnt. on them.
130. see Kapoor, op cit, p. 104.
131. baikunṭha-bāhīre jei jyotirmay dhām tāhār bāhīre kāranañāraba nām-seita kāraṇaṅāba seita saṅkarṣan apanār ek aṁśe Karen sāyān. māhat-sraṣṭā puruṣ tiho jagat- kāraṇ---teiche jagata kartā puruṣāvatār-CC, Adi, 5; see also Brahma-Saṁhitā, 5.10
132. CC, Madhya, 20.
133. visṇos tu trini rupāṇi puruṣākhyāny-atho viduh. ekas tu mahataḥ sraṣṭā dvitiyam tv-aṇḍa saṁsthī tām. tritiyam sarvabhūtasthām — quoted in CC, Adi, 5: see also SR, 2.16.
134. tad ubhayaivaṁ ca- Śūkṣma on BŚG, 1.4.23; upādānāṁ nimittaṁ ca bramaiva-ibid, 1.4.26: tasya nimittatvam upādānatvatvam ca abhidhiyate, tatra ādyāṁ paṛś- śaktimad rūpena dvitiyam tu tad- anya-sākṣī dviya-avāraiva-ibid, 1.4.26
135. SS, pp. 142-143
136. Kapoor, op cit, p. 76.
137. ibid, pp. 85-88.
138. CC, Madhya, 20.
139. PS, p. 29, sākṣī-rūpatvaṁ-cāsya taṭasthā-sākṣī-ātmakatvāt- ibid, p. 27
140. vide, SS, pp. 36-37; BhS, p. 16.
141. CC, Madhya, 6.
142. nirbhede api vastuni guṇa-guni bhāvojīrmbhakaḥ viśeṣaḥ dharmi grhyate-acintyatvam vinā nirbhede vastuni- ubhayojīrmbhau- sambhavāt-Baladeva’s comnt. on SR, 1.21.