Chapter 3

THE CONCEPT OF THE WORLD

According to both Śaṅkara and Śrī Caitanya, the material world is never ultimately true and is quite opposed to the nature of Brahman. In the view of Śaṅkara, however, the material world is totally false (jagat mithyā). For Śrī Caitanya, however the world is naśvara or impermanent being subject to creation, sustenance and dissolution.

Śaṅkara’s view

FALSITY OR MITHYĀTVA OF THE WORLD

In the view of Śaṅkara, the world is regarded as mithyā or false; it is merely, an appearance of Brahman. But, when Śaṅkara says ‘brahma satyāṁ jaganmithyā’, he does not deny the existence of the external world. When he says that world is mithya or false he means it is not real in the sense of trikāla-satya i.e. real for all times, past, present and future. Mithyā connotes in Advaita Vedānta a special meaning. This word has a technical sense in Vedānta philosophy. According to Advaita Vedāntins mithyā does not mean non-existent (asat). The mithyā has mermaid sort of reality, it is really false and falsely real. In other words, the world exists because it appears but it is not real since it later disappears. Unreality or
asattvam here means non eternity or trikālabādhitvam, not real for all the times. Therefore, by falsity of the world is meant that it has not eternal existence incapable of sublation while at the same time, it does appear in its ground, i.e. Brahman. Thus, Śaṅkara says that the external world is not absolutely unreal or non-existent like a sky flower, because the world appears, while a sky flower is not. Again, it is not absolutely real like Brahman, because it disappears when the knowledge of Brahman arises. By real, Śaṅkara mean something external, trikala-satya, real for all times, i.e. past, present and future and by unreal he means absolutely unreal like a sky flower. Accordingly, Brahman alone is real. In order to realize clearly the real nature of this world, it is necessary to mention Śaṅkara’s conception of reality. In the view of Śaṅkara, reality or satta is of three types, namely, pāramārthika sattā, vyāvahārika satta and prātibhāsika satta. The theory of three grades of reality is known as sattā-traividyā-vāda.

Pāramārthika-sattā or transcendental reality is the sole reality. It is trikālasatya, i.e. it is not contradicted by any knowledge at any time, past, present and future. It is none but Brahman who is the only reality.

Vyāvahārika sattā or empirical reality is that which is contradicted by Brahman knowledge and not by any empirical knowledge. In other words, by empirical reality Śaṅkara means the reality which is seen in day to day life. In the
view of Dṛgdrṣṭya-viveka, things possess five qualities, namely, asti, bhāti, priya, rūpa and nāma. Of these qualities, the former three are but the characteristics of Brahman, the last two characteristics are of empirical world. Vyāvahārika sattā or empirical reality has practical importance. A common man never doubts the objects of his experience like jar, cloth etc. These objects which we perceive in our normal life are empirical realities. The objective world as a whole is also empirically real, because it is not contradicted not by any empirical knowledge but by Brahman knowledge only.

Prātibhāsika sattā or ephemeral reality means merely apparent existence. It is that which is contradicted by some other empirically valid knowledge. Dream objects and objects of illusion are ephemeral realities, e.g. the perception of snake in rope. This rope snake knowledge is not baseless like sky flower. We impose the knowledge of snake on rope which is to be contradicted later on by the knowledge of rope as rope itself. Prātibhāsika-satta is not absolutely non-existent or asat. It has always a ground. No one has perceived it without ground. It is not really there but appears to be there. Its apparent reality somehow contradicted.

Śaṅkara argues that the world is directly perceived in our day to day life and is not contradicted by any other knowledge except Brahman knowledge. Accordingly he holds, there is no ground to deny the existence of the world. It is
true that the world is described by the Śaṅkara as mithyā or false, in the sense that it is mithyā by comparison with Brahman who is the only reality. But this does not mean that the Advaita Vedāntins regard the world as fiction or illusion. Padmapāda in his pañcapādikā gives two meanings of the term mithyā—negation and indefinability, and here the Advaita Vedāntins use the world technically to mean indefinability and not negation. Thus, the term 'mithyā' has been defined by Advaita Vedāntins as sad-asad-vilākṣaṇa, that is different from both sat or real and asat or unreal. By ‘sat’, the Advaita Vedāntins mean that something eternal, trīkāla satya, real for all times-past, present and future; which is not sublated by any knowledge at any point of time-past, present and future. In this sense only Brahman can be regarded as ‘sat’. By ‘asat’ they mean that which is totally non-existent or alīka and is never experienced, e.g. like sky flower which is never perceived. Accordingly, the world is neither ‘sat’, since it is sublated by the knowledge of Brahman; nor ‘asat’, since it becomes the object of our knowledge. It is this status of the world that is indicated by the term ‘mithyātva’.

Again, ‘mithyā’ means that which is different from sat or reality. Here the sat or reality means that which is established by valid means of knowledge. Thus, mithyā is that which is not established by any valid means of knowledge. Accordingly, the world is false, because it cannot be cognized by any valid means
of knowledge. According to another definition, whatever is negated by real knowledge is mithyā. The world is negated by the real knowledge, i.e. Brahma-knowledge, and hence, is mithyā.

Now, the assertion that the world is mithyā or false does not mean that the world is totally false. The world continues to exist until the realisation of Brahman, but when Brahman, the ground of superimposition of the world, is realized the world is totally sublated. It simply means that though the world is empirically real, in the plane of Absolute it is non-existent. i.e. it has no reality apart from Brahman, the world ground.

According to Śaṅkara, the world appearance is created by māyā, inscrutable power resting on Brahman. When the Brahman is endowed with the power of māyā, and manifests itself as the cause of the world, it becomes Īśvara or God. Māyā has got two powers- āvaraṇa and vikṣepa. The power of āvaraṇa conceals the real nature of Brahman from the view of the bound selves, while the power of vikṣepa produces the world appearance of Brahman. In other words, the world’s multiplicity is simply ascribed to Brahman due to māyā. In reality, Brahman does not produce the world at all, and, accordingly, what we call creation is not a ultimate fact. This view is known as ajāta-vāda or the theory of non-origination. According to this theory, in the highest plane of reality, there is neither cause nor
effect, but only the non-dual Brahman. And, as a matter of fact, the ideas of cause
and effect are unreal, thus, the question of the creation of the world does not arise.

That means, to an ordinary man, the world is real, while to a man who has realized
Brahman, it is tuccha or totally non-existent, for he perceives everywhere the non-
dual Brahman shining in its own radiance. Thus, the question whether the world is
real or illusory is bound up with the individual with reference to whom it is stated.
That means that the question of the reality of the world is one of evaluation and
that its answer is altogether relative to the spiritual insights of the individuals
concerned.

The Vijñānvādins or the Yogācāra-Buddhists hold that the external world has
no reality; and that it is an illusory product of the internal vijñāna or cognition. In
other words, all the objects perceived outside are not actually real; they are nothing
but ideas produced by the mind or internal vijñāna or consciousness.

In criticizing above view of the Vijñānvādins, Śaṅkara argues that the world is
directly perceived in our day to day life, and is not contradicted by any other
knowledge except Brahman knowledge. Accordingly, Śaṅkara maintains that there
is no ground to deny the existence of the world.
The Vijñānavādins hold that the external objects and the corresponding cognitions are identical by the rule that the internal cognition and the external object are always experienced simultaneously, i.e. sahopalambhāniyama. That means that if an object is necessarily perceived simultaneously with another object, both objects cannot be different from each other. Though the moon is really one, it appears as two to some owing to defective vision. In this case, the two moons perceived simultaneously are not different from each other and accordingly, the perception of two moons is erroneous. In the same way, cognition and its objects are always experienced simultaneously, and if any of them is not there, the other is also not perceived. From this position, it is inferred that cognition and its objects must be identical with each other. Thus, it is erroneous to imagine them as different. Again, Vijñānavadins hold that waking cognitions apprehend themselves like dream-cognitions. Both are similar to each other. Both are not created by external objects. But Śaṅkara criticizes these views and argues that invariably simultaneous perception of an object and its cognition does not prove their identity. It proves their difference. They are always perceived together because they are related to each other as the manifested and the manifester. The object is manifested by its cognition. The cognition manifests the object. If there is no object, the cognition cannot be produced. If there is no cognition, the objects cannot be apprehended. Consciousness is common to all cognitions. But it is diversified by
different objects such as a jar and a cloth. The variety of cognitions is due to the
variety of objects. So there is a difference between objects and cognitions. Again, Śaṅkara argues that waking perceptions are not similar to dream-cognitions,
because the former are not contradicted under normal circumstances while the later
are contradicted by waking perceptions. Waking perceptions are perceptions
apprehending present objects while dream-cognitions are recollections
apprehending absent objects perceived in the past. The former apprehend external
objects while the latter apprehend themselves. Thus, waking perceptions are not
object less like dream-cognitions. Hence, objective reality of the world has been
established by Śaṅkara.

In the view of drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vādins, the jīva is the cause of this world. In their
view, the world is nothing but the creation of the jīva’s illusory perception. That
means, the world of names and forms is perceived as such by the jīva because of
his avidya, while, in reality, there is nothing but Brahman. But the ignorant jīva
does not realize the real nature of the objects and perceives them as distinct from
Brahman. According to sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda, the world is the creation of Īśvara and, as
such, common to all the perceiving jīvas. The world is not an illusion like dream; it
has empirical existence, but no absolute existence. That means the world is real for
practical purposes, i.e. until the right knowledge of the identity of Brahman dawns; the world is known as to be real.

**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 sutra, Bādarāyana 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 attributeless, 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 māya, without which Brahman cannot create this world.

According to the Advaitins, the cause is two types – nimitta-kāraṇa or the efficient cause and the upādāna-kāraṇa or the material cause. Brahman associated with maya is regarded as the nimitta-kāraṇa 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 adhiṣṭāna-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 abhinnavnimittopādāna-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 Taittiriya Upaniṣad, which says: ‘Brahman is that wherefrom the world is originated, wherein it exists and whereto it goes back in the dissolution.’ This statement cannot 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-karana. 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 Śruti 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 partless 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 Vedāntins 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--- pariṇāmin or changing i.e. which is really transformed but appears to have transformed into the effect and aparīṇāmin or unchanging i.e. which is not really transformed into the effect. The unchanging material cause is known as vivarta-kāraṇa also, we have pariṇāma or transformation when the milk
is turned into the curds and aparīṇāma, 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 Vedāntins hold that Brahman becomes the cause of the world not through pariṇāma 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 maya 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-upādāna-kāraṇa of the world; while māyā is its pariṇāmi-upādāna-kāraṇa.

DIFFERENT OPINIONS ABOUT THE MATERIAL CAUSE OF THE WORLD

There are some differences of opinion among the Advaita Vedāntins on the question of 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 Miśra, 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 saha-kāri 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 drstī-srsto-vada, the jīva is the material cause of all, projecting within itself the whole order of things from Isvara 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
maya, 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.

**PROCESS OF CREATION AND DISSOLUTION OF THE WORLD**

Saguṇa Brahman or Īśvara is the creator of the world. Brahman associated with māyā appears as Īśvara or saguṇa Brahman who is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. In the beginning of every creation, Brahman creates the world with the power of māyā in the manner of the earlier creation. Śaṅkara says, ‘the work of creation becomes the subject matter of the knowledge of Īśvara before creation’.

Māyā, the creative power of Īśvara is of the nature of three guṇas, namely, sattva, rajas, and tamas. From the pure consciousness associated with the creative power of māya predominating in tamas, ākāśa is produced. So, vāyu or air comes forth from ākāśa; from vāyu proceeds tejas or fire; from tejas, ap or water, and from ap or water, pṛthivī or earth. All these evolutes are subtle elements known as sūkṣmabhūtas or tanmātras. At first, these five elements remain singly, without being mixed with one another. Here, ākāśa is associated with śabda or sound; vāyu, with śabda and sparśa or touch; tejas, with śabda, sparśa and rūpa or colour; ap, with śabda, sparśa, rūpa and rasa or taste; and prithivī, with śabda, sparśa, rūpa,
rasa and gandha or smell. Each of these tanmātras is associated with the three gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas as these are produced from māyā.

Again, the five organs of knowledge produce from the sāttvika aspects of the five sūkṣmabhūtas or tanmātras taken singly. From ākāśa evolves kārṇa or sense of hearing; from vāyu, tvak or sense of touch; from tejas, caksus or sense of sight; from ap, jihvā or sense of taste; and from pṛthivī, nāṣikā or sense of smell. From the same aspects of tanmātras or sūkṣmabhūtas taken collectively, the internal organs of buddhi, manas, ahaṁkāra, and citta are produced. From the rajasa aspects of the tanmātras taken singly, karmendriya or the five organs of action are produced. Thus, from akasa evolves vāk or mouth; from vāyu or air, pāṇi or hands; from tejas or fire, pāda or feet; from ap or water, upastha or sex-organ; and from prthivī or earth, pāyu or anus. Further, from the same aspects of the tanmātras taken collectively, the five prāṇas or vital airs of prāṇa, apāna, udāna, vyāna and samāna are produced.

All these products of the unmixed fine elements or tanmātras from the material of the fine bodies known as sūkṣma-deha or liṅga-śarīra having seventeen elements, viz. five sense organs, five motor organs, five vital airs, buddhi and manas. There are two kinds of liṅgaśarīra, namely, pervasive and limited. In Advaita Vedānta, the divinity guiding the entire field of the fine world is called
Hiranyagarbha. The pervasive liṅgaśārīra belongs to Hiranyagarbha and is called mahat tattva; on the other hand, the limited liṅgaśārīra belongs to other living being and is called ahamkāra. From the tamasa aspects of the five tanmātras, the five sthūla-bhūtas or gross elements, namely, ākāśa, vāyu, tejas, ap and prthivī are produced through the process of pañcīkaraṇa or quintuplication. Pañcīkaraṇa means a particular way of admixture of the said five elements. In this process, each element contains half of itself, while the other half consists of equal portions of the other four elements. From these quintuplicated elements the vast material world comes forth. The divinity guiding the gross elements and the gross world is called Virāt. The tanmātras and the Liṅgaśārīras are created by Īśvara, while the rest of the creation is completed by Hiranyagarbha.

According to another view, the gross elements are produced from the combination of the three subtle elements of earth, water and fire. These two subtle elements are combined in the proportion of half of that element and one-fourth of each of the other two elements. This process is known as trivṛt-karana or triplication. Śaṅkara recognizes triplication also of the subtle elements. He maintains that the process of trivṛt-karaṇa implies the process of pañcīkaraṇa. Thus, in the view of Śaṅkara, in the process of trivṛt-karaṇa or triplication, the
three elements of tejas, ap and पृथ्वि are to be accepted as succeeding the
creation of अकाशा and वायु.

At the time of dissolution, the process takes place in the reverse order. Thus,
the earth becomes water again; water, fire; fire, air; air becomes अकाशा and अकाशा
re-enters into Brahman.

THEORY OF CAUSATION: PARINĀMVĀDA AND VIVARTAVĀDA

According to Advaita Vedāntins, the sole cause of the world is Brahman. The
world is the appearance of Brahman, but not its actual transformation. It is the
ground of the world appearance. Śaṅkara’s theory of creation is known as
Vivartavāda, and is distinguished from the Śāṅkhya theory of evolution which is
called Pariṇāmvāda. The theory of pariṇāma is also accepted by Advaita Vedāntins
to explain some facts of the empirical world. Śaṅkara advocates Vivartavāda from
the ontological standpoint, the Pariṇāmvāda from the empirical standpoint.

When a cause real transforms into the effect, it is called pariṇāma or
transformation. It is real modification. We have pariṇāma or transformation when
the milk is changed into curd. In the case of pariṇāma both the cause and the effect
are real. Here, both milk and curd are real.
Again, when a substance without discarding its real nature falsely appears to be something different, it is called vivarta or appearance. It is an illusory modification of any substance. In the vivarta, nothing really comes into existence as the effect. We have vivarta when a rope appears as a snake. In this case, the rope does not really change into the snake; it simply appears as the snake. Here the rope is real, and the effect, snake is not real. They are the different grades of reality. Actually, no effect has been produced. Similarly, Brahman is not transformed into the world. This world is merely an appearance of snake in a rope.

According to Advaita Vedāntins, Brahman becomes the cause of the world not through pariṇāma or transformation but through vivarta or appearance. In fact, Brahman does not change into the world, rather it appears as the world, and just a rope appears as the snake. The world cannot, therefore, be regarded as a transformation of its cause, Brahman, because Brahman, being partless and immutable, cannot undergo any transformation.

The scriptures bear testimony of pariṇāmvāda also. The Śruti passages like, “just as a spider ejects threads out of its own body and withdraws it, the sprouting of the herbs from the earth, and the growth of the hairs of the head and the body on a living person”--- so everything of this world manifests out of Brahman. He
becomes both the manifest and unmanifest. The Brhadāraṇyaka describes how the world was at first unmanifest, and how later it was made manifest through names (nāma) and forms (rūpa). All these passages have been propounded the parinamavāda. Some aphorism of Brahma-sūtra, such as ‘atmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt’, ‘syāllokavat’, etc. also bears evidences of pariṇāmavāda.

Now, a question naturally arises: why have the Advaita Vedāntins accepted the vivartavāda only? To this problem, it can be replied that pariṇāmavāda is only apparent, in reality, it ends in vivartavāda. To establish this position, we may site examples from Śruti passages. 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 case, clay transforms into the pot, plate etc. gold into gold ornaments, in the same way, Brahman also transforms into the world. In the above examples, it is notable that jars, plates and gold ornaments etc. are declared as mithya or false on the ground that all effects of clay, gold etc. are mere names originating from speech only. The effect does not exist apart from the cause, i.e. the effect is merely a false appearance of the cause, which is the real fact of vivaratavāda. Accordingly, Advaita Vedāntins hold that pariṇāmavāda is only a lower step for understanding of vivaratavāda and hence, ultimately, pariṇāmavāda ends in vivaratavāda. That is why the Śruti and Brahma-sūtra have tried first to establish the pariṇāmavāda for
clarifying the concept of the cause and the effect, and lastly, have established that the effect does not exist apart from the cause. Thus, the statement that ‘the world is mithya’ does not mean that the world is totally false; it simply means that the world has no reality apart from Brahman, the world ground. All the above ideas about the falsity of the world are indicated by Śaṅkara in the expression, ‘kāraṇā-vyatirekeṇa abhāva’. This means that the reality of the world is borrowed from its ground, i.e. Brahman, apart from which it has no ultimate reality; it continues to exist so long as Brahman, the ground is not realized. In other words, until the realization of Brahman, the world is regarded as real, but when Brahman, the ground, is realized, the world ceases to exist.

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, Saṅkara 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-cuḍāmani says that this world is an expression of Brahman, it is Brahma-maya 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 Śrī Caitanya's philosophy, the Absolute or Bhagavat is identical with the supreme personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is endowed with three powers, namely, the svarūpa-śakti or the essential power, the taṭasthā-śakti or jīva-śakti or the peripheral power and the vahrāṇga-śakti or māyā-śakti or external power. The svarūpa-śakti or essential power maintains the integrity of the essence of the Absolute, while the taṭasthā-śakti and the vahrāṇga-sakti are the sources of the jīvas and the material world, respectively. Paramātman is a saviśeṣa or qualified state of Bhagavat, who creates, sustains and controls the empirical world and guides the individual-selves. He is endowed with the taṭasthā-śakti and the māyā-
śakti through he is immanent in the Jīvas and the material world, respectively. In reality, Bhagavat is the substratum of all these powers, but he displays the taṭasthā-śakti and the māyā-śakti through Paramātman. Though Bhagavat is not directly concerned with the creation-process; he is concerned with it indirectly through Paramātman.

In the view of Śrī Jīva, creation of the world is not an instance of vivarta but an instance of pariṇāma. Śrī Caitanya School believes in the reality and phenomenally separate existence of the world but relative to absolute existence of Bhagavat. Though the world is perishable, yet it is not false or unreal as Advaitins hold. Bhagavat is said to be both the efficient and the material cause of the world. Though he is regarded as efficient and material cause of the world evolves it out of Himself through His māyā-śakti, yet does not suffer any change of essence in as much as māyā-śakti cannot affect his real Svarūpa. Thus, according to Śrī Caitanya, the world is neither eternal nor even false. The world exists in the ultimate cause in an unmanifest form and is produced in a manifest form by the Lord’s power of māyā. As māyā is a potency of Bhagavat, and the world, as a product of the potency of Bhagavat, is real.

The highest land of Bhagavat is called Śrī Kṛṣṇa loka. It has three manifestations, namely, Dvārakā, Mathurā and Vraja. Vraja is known as Golaka or
Vṛndāvana also. Below Śrī Kṛṣṇa-loka there exists Paravyoman or Vaikuṇtha with Nārāyaṇa as the Lord. Around this Paravyoman, lies Siddhaloka, the brilliant Land of Brahman, which is also included in Paravyoman. Outside this Siddhaloka there lies Kāraṇasamudra or the causal ocean, outside which lies the material world, the manifestation of māyā-śakti.

FOUR VYŪHAS AND THREE PURUṢAS

Bhagavat manifests himself as four vyūhas or divine manifestations, viz, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. He manifests himself in the form of these vyūhas for the purpose of governing the world. These vyūhas are the parts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus, they are identical in essence, although different in forms. Again, these four vyūhas have two forms---the first form resides in Dvārakā and the second form resides in Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyoman. The four vyūhas of Dvārakā are the manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, form of Bhagavat and the four vyūhas of Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyoman are the manifestations of Nārāyaṇa, form of Bhagavat. Among the four vyūhas of Paravyoman, Vasudeva is the revelation of Nārāyaṇa. He is the inner soul of all. Saṅkarṣaṇa is the revelation of Vāsudeva. He creates all the Jīvas. Pradyumna is the revelation of Saṅkarṣaṇa and is the Lord of the mind. Aniruddha is the revelation of Pradyumna. He is the Lord of ahamkāra or ego. The second vyūha of Paravyoman, i.e. Saṅkarṣaṇa resides in a particular form.
in kāraṇāraṇa or Kāraṇa-samudra. He is called Kāraṇāraṇavāsāyī-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 Mahā-pralaya or the total dissolution, all the selves rest in him, and at the time of creation, he manifests them again. He is the immediate cause of creation, because, it is by his glance on prakṛti that gives a start to the entire process of creation. This purusa enters into the individual brahmāndas or worlds in another form after their creation. This form is known as Gorbhodāsāyī-Nārāyaṇa or the second Puruṣa. He is the regulator of all the individual selves and is the source of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. From the navel pit of his body springs a golden lotus, out of which is born the four-faced Brahmā, who finally creates the entire universe with the fourteen lokas or worlds.

An ocean lies in one of these fourteen lokas, which is known as kṣiroda-sāgara. Gorbhodakāsāyī-Nārāyaṇa i.e. second Puruṣa resides in another form in this Kṣiroda-sāgara. This form is known as Payobdhiśāyī or Kṣirābdhiśāyī-Nārāyaṇa or the third Puruṣa. He enters into the Jīvas also as their antaryāmin or inner soul and is the regulator of each individual self.

BHAGAVAT AS THE EFFICIENT CAUSE AND MATERIAL 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-śaktis, i.e. taṣṭasthā-śakti and māyā-śakti.

Five eternal categories, viz, Īśvara, jīva, kāla, karman and māyā exist before the process of creation. Of them, Isvara or the world governor is identified with the Kāraṇaṇavaśayi-Puruṣa. In him the jīvas and their respective karmans exist in a dormant way. The world is a real manifestation of the Lord’s real power called maya. Māyā is a potency of Bhagavat. It has two aspects, namely, nimitta-māyā or jīva-māyā and pradhāna or guṇa-māyā. Jīva-māyā is the efficient cause of the world, while pradhāna or guṇa-māyā is the material cause, and is identical with the Sāṁkhya’s prakṛti. Nimitta-māyā consists of kāla, karman, daiva and svabhāva.

‘Kāla’ is a vṛtti or mode of Paramātman, which provokes the prakṛti by disturbing the balance of the three guṇas, which ultimately makes creation possible. ‘Kāla’ is, therefore, called ‘kṣobhaka’ or the source of provocation. ‘Karman’ is the series of actions performed by the empirical selves, which serve as the efficient cause of the disturbance. ‘Daiva’ means the essential nature of karmans in giving rise to the effects. ‘Svabhāva’ means the tendency formed in the ego, as a result of the impression left by the karmans.

The upādhaṇa-māyā or guṇa-maya or pradhāna is the state of equilibrium of the three guṇas of sattva, rajas and tamas and is the source of the material world.
The guna-maya consists of the ingredients of dravya, kṣetra, prāṇa, ātman and vikāra. Dravya implies the five subtle elements which are called tanmātra in the Sāṁkhya School. Kṣetra mean prakṛti. Prāṇa is the vital principle in the human body. Ātman indicates the empirical ego or ahaṁkāra. Vikāra consists of the five senses, the five gross elements or the pañca-mahābhūtani and the manasa or the mind. The material body or deha is the collective effect of these all. Before creation, the primal matter or prakṛti remains in a state of equilibrium of all the three gunas. Being unconscious and unintelligent, it cannot start the creation process. It is the ikṣaṇa or the glance of Paramātman that makes it active. Paramātman by his glance disturbs the state of equilibrium that exists in prakṛti, as a result of which creation begins.

THE PROCESS OF CREATION

According to Śrī Caitanya, before the beginning of creation, there exists Bhagavat with his six-fold lordliness and there is nothing which exists besides him. During creation, the infinite jivas and worlds are projected out of him and during dissolution; they are again absorbed into him.

The ultimate source of creation is Bhagavat, the Absolute, in the form of Mahāviṣṇu, who is a manifestation of Saṅkarṣaṇa, the second vyūha of
Paravyoman. He appears as soon as Bhagavat desires to create. The entire process of creation proceeds from him as a result of his desire. In the beginning of creation, when Bhagavat desires to become many, he, in the form of Mahāviṣṇu manifests the jīvas and the world from his bosom. In this process, Bhagavat completely maintains his integrity. It is held that Bhagavat maintains his integrity through his svarūpa-śakti and becomes many through his other two-śaktis, i.e. tāṭasthā-śakti and maya-śakti. The infinite number of jīvas and the material world are manifested through the tāṭasthā-śakti and māyā-śakti, respectively. The desire of Bhagavat has four stages. These four stages are named Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. They are known as four vyūhas. At first, an indistinct feeling arises in Bhagavat, in the second stage, a vibration throbs in him, then, an abstract idea develops, and in the last stage, Bhagavat takes the resolution—‘I shall become many’ (Ch. Up.6.2.3). This will to be many destroys the equilibrium of three gunas of the Primal matter, the prius of evolution, which is known as prakṛti or avyakta or pradhāna. It is known as pradhāna as it is the principal source from which evolution starts, and as avyakta, because prior to the starting of evolution it remains in an unmanifest state. According to Sāṁkhya, Prakṛti, the material cause of the world, is distinct from spirit, but according to Śrī Caitanya, it is nothing but the māyā power of Bhagavat and, hence, is not distinct from him, is eternally dependent upon him and is a relation of unthinkable difference-cum-non-difference.
with him. The Śāṅkhya view that Prakṛti is the ultimate cause of creation is rejected, because prakṛti is insentient and powerless to produce anything without the help of Bhagavat and becomes active only when Bhagavat energizes it.

Prakṛti is a composite of three guṇas, namely, sattva, rajas and tamas. During the time of dissolution, the guṇas change homogeneously; i.e. sattva changes into sattva, rajas into rajas and tamas into tamas. This change does not disturb the equilibrium of the guṇas and unless the equilibrium of the guṇas is disturbed and one guṇa predominates over the other two, evolution cannot take place. It is only when there is heterogeneous change in the guṇas and one guṇa predominates over the other two, that the process of evolution begins. In the beginning of creation, Mahāviśnu or Kāraṇārṇavasāyi-Nārāyaṇa, a form of Bhagavat, moves māyā to action by casting glance on prakṛti and energises it, as a result of which the balance of the three guṇas of prakṛti is disturbed. After that, Kāraṇārṇavasāyi-Nārāyaṇa throws the jīvas, which are resting in him and also their karmans into the bosoms of prakṛti. Then, prakṛti influenced by these karmans of the jīvas.

In the process of creation first, the principle of mahat evolves from prakṛti, which consists of sattva, rajas and tamas, but is predominated by sattva and rajas. From mahat evolves ahaṁkāra, the principle of individuation or egoity, which also
consists of three guṇas, but the gunas of tāmas predominates in it. Ahaṁkāra is that which makes for the I sense on account of which the self considers itself the doer of actions and the owner of properties. Ahaṁkāra is divided into three state, viz, sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. From the sāttvika ahaṁkāra arise the eleven organs, namely, manas, the five sense organs or jñānendriya and the five motor-organs or Karmendriya. From the tāmasika ahaṁkāra, the five-subtle elements or tanmātras or the potential elements of śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa and gandha and their respective substrata i.e. the five gross physical elements or pañca-mahābhūta of ākāśa, vāyu, tejas, ap and prthvī evolves.

Thus, Śrī Caitanya's view of the creation of the world closely resembles the Sāṁkhya theory of creation in its terminology and method. The essential difference, however, is that while in Sāṁkhya, prakṛti is an independent Tattva, according to Śrī Caitanya, it is the result of the external power of Bhagavat. In the view of Sāṁkhya, Prakṛti is both material and efficient cause of the world, because Purusa is essentially inactive and unchanging. But according to Śrī Caitanya, Paramātman, in his partial aspect of Mahāviśṇu is the initiation and regulator of the entire process of creation.
PARINĀMVAEDA OR THE THEORY OF TRANSFORMATION

The Vaiṣṇava philosopher upholds the theory which is known as Parināmavāda or the theory of transformation. Śrī Caitanya believes in Parināmavāda, according to which the world is a Parināma or transformation of Brahmā or Bhagavat, the Absolute, but he adds that even through this parināma or transformation, Bhagavat does not suffer any change or loss of essence, and that what undergoes transformation is his śakti or power. Śrī Caitanya compares this position to a cintāmani or wish-fulfilling stone which itself remaining the produces gold-ornaments. In the view of Śrī Caitanya, the creation of the world is not an instance of Vivarta or illusory appearance. Śaṅkara holds that the world is a vivarta or false manifestation of Brahma, the Absolute, and, hence, is false like a rope-snake. Brahma alone is real and everything else is illusion. But Śrī Caitanya believes in the reality and phenomenally separate existence of the world but relative to absolute existence of the Bhagavat.

Parināma-vāda implies the production of an effect, which is of the same nature as the cause. Therefore, the world is real, because it is the effect of Brahma. Śrī Caitanya, however, emphasizes that there is a difference in the reality of the world and that of the Bhagavat, since the reality of the world is relative and non-eternal, while the reality of Bhagavat is absolute and eternal. Bhagavat does not depend for
its existence on anything else, while the world depends for its existence on Brahman. The world, however, may be regarded as eternal in the sense that even after dissolution it continues to exist in a subtle form in Bhagavat, but it must still be regarded as non-eternal, in the sense that it ceases to exist after dissolution.

In the view of Śrī Caitanya, Bhagavat is not directly concerned with the creation-process; he is concerned with it indirectly through Paramātman. Paramātman is the antaryāmin or inner controller of the selves and the material world. He is the ground of the evolution of the manifold world from prakṛti, and is, thus, endowed with the cosmic activities of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

Though Paramātman creates the world out of himself, yet He does not undergo any modification. The world is not direct transformation of Paramātman. It is real modification of His māyā-śakti which is non-different from Him. But although non-different, yet being an external power or vahiraṅgā-śakti the māyā-śakti is unable to cast any influence on Him. Thus, pariṇāma or the transformation which takes place in His māyā-śakti cannot bring any change in Him. Hence, in spite of being the material as well as efficient cause of the world, the true nature of Paramātman remains unaffected.
RELATION BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE ABSOLUTE

The relation which the Absolute bears with the world is like one between śaktimat or the powerful and śakti or power. That means the world is nothing but the manifestation of the māyā-śakti or external power of the Absolute, Śaktimat. And, since the relation between the Absolute and the world is also of the same nature.

In the view of Śrī Jīva, the sakti and the śaktimat must be regarded as different from the thing in which it inheres, since they cannot be imagined as identical with each other. On the other hand, śakti must be considered as identical with each other, since they cannot be imagined as different from each other. Again, as simultaneous existence of identity and difference is contradictory, the relation is to be considered as acintya or unthinkable.

In the same way, the relation between the Absolute and its śakti is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference, but unthinkable difference-cum-identity. Again, the world cannot be considered as identical with the Absolute, because in that case, the imperfection of the world will have to be ascribed to the Absolute also. Further, the world cannot be regarded as different from the Absolute, since in that case the principle of non-duality of the Absolute declared by the Śruti will be
contradicted. It is, therefore, held that the relation between the Absolute and the world is acintyabhedabheda or unthinkable difference-cum-non-difference, because it involves both difference and non-difference, while it is beyond our comprehension as to how these two opposites are reconciled. It is only the acintya-sakti of Bhagavat, the Absolute that can reconcile these two opposites in such a manner that his purity remains unaffected by His relation with the phenomenal world.

Baldeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa also maintains the same view and says that the relation of identity and difference between quality and the qualified cannot be explained without the idea of ‘acintya’ or ‘unthinkable’.

References

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2. BSS,2.1.14.
4. sadasad vilakṣaṇatvaṃ mithyātvam-AS.
5. sadviviktaṭvaṃ vā mithyātvam-ibid,p.43.
6. sattvaṃ ca pramāṇasiddhatvam-ibid.
7. jñānaniyāntyatvaṃ vā mithyātvam-ibid,p.37.
8. tasmād anirvacanīya māyā-sakti-viśiṣṭam kāraṇaṃ brahmaṃ prāptam-PV,p,652.
9. svato vā parato vā’pina kiñcicd vastu jāyate-MK,4.2.;ādāv ante ca yan nästi vartamaṇe’pi tat tathā-ibid,2.6.
10. tathā jagadidāṁ mithyā ekasmin advaye mayi-Advaitāṇubhūti,71; sarvam
khalvidaṁ brahma-Ch.Up.,3.14.1.; see also Warrior.A.K.,God in
Advaita,pp.127-29, vide Sinha.K.P., Reflexions on Indian Philosophy, p.143.
12. BSS,2.2.28.
13. sahopalambhanyamāt abheda nīlataddhiyoh/bhedaścā bhrāntivijñānair dṛṣṭyate
15. BSS,2.2.9.
16. tadaikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti-Ch.Up.6.2.3.
17. sā īksata lokānucṛta iti-Ait.Up.1.1.1.
18. sadeva saumyedam agra āśīd ekamevādvitīyam-Ch.Up.6.2.1.
20. janmādyasya yatah-BS,1.1.2.
21. SLS, pp.66-67; adhisthānaṁ vivartāṇāṁ āśrayo brahma
  . saktivatKalpataru, 1.2.8; Pañcadaśī, 1.44.
22. cf. prakṛtiśca upādāna kāraṇaṁ ca brahma abhyupagantavyaṁ • • •
  • ••nimittakāraṇameva-BSS, 1.4.23.
23. srṣṭivākyamapi tadaikṣatetī nimittatvāṁ bahu syām iti
24. yato va imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātani jīvanti yat prayanty-
  abhisamaviśānti-Tait.Up.3.1.
25. upādāna- kāraṇaṁ ca brahma abhyupagantavyaṁ nimittakāraṇam
  ca-BSS, 1.4.23.
28. ibid., 7.25.2.
29. ibid., 6.8.7.
30. AS., p.936.
32. ibid., pp.96-97.
33. jīva eva svapnaṁ jñāntvāt svasmin īśvaradisarvakalpakatvena sarvakāraṇam ity api
  kecit-ibid,p.88.
34. ibid, pp.98-99.
35. prapañcasayā pariṇāmy upādānam māyā na brahmy Siddhānta-VP
36. BSS,1.1.5.
37. See ,VP,Viṣaya – Pariccheda.
38. hiraṇyagarbha-liṅga – śārīram –mahat-tattvam , asmadādi liṅgśārīram ahaṁkāra
  ity – akhyāyate-ibid.
39. dvidhā vidhāya caikaikam caturdhā prathamam puṇaḥ svasvetara dvitiyam śāir yojanat pañca pañca te –Pañcadaśi, 1.27.

40. See, SB on Ch. Up, 6.3.
41. See, VP, op cit.
42. Sinha, op cit, p. 401.
43. cf. SŚa, 2.65; VŚ, p. 162.
44. vide, VP, p. 85.
45. cf. SŚa, 2.66; VŚ, p. 162.
46. vide, VP, p. 86.
47. vivarta yasyaite viyad-anila-tejo‘vanayah-Bhāmati, verse. 1.
48. cf. Śvet. Up. 6.9.
51. BS, 1.4.26; 2.1.13.
52. VC, p. 229.
54. BŚŚ, 2.1.14; AS, p. 533.
55. mṛdeva satyaṁ paramārth-bhūtam-VC, p. 229.
56. nādiḥśthānād bhinnatā‘ropitasya-ibid, p. 231.
57. antaraṅgā bahiraṅgā taṭasthā kahi jāre-CC, Madhya, 8.
58. jīvādi niyāntītvena sphūrat paramātmeti Śabdyate-BhŚ, p. 9.
59. see, CC, Ādi, 2 and PS, pp. 34-35.
63. CC, Ādi, 5, 33-34.
64. baikuṇṭha-bāhire jei jyotirmoy dhām tāhār bāhire kārāṇārṇaba nām, seita kārāṇārṇabe seita saṁkarṣan āpanār ek amāre Karen śāyan, mahat-sraṣṭā puṣ tiho jagat kārāṇ-teiche jagater kartā puṣuṣābatar-CC, Īdi, 5; SR, 1.25.
65. CC, Madhya, 20.
66. viṣṇos tu trini rupāni puṣuṣākhyānī atho viduḥ ekas tu mahataḥ sraṣṭr dvitiyaṁ tv-anḍa-saṁsthitam tritiyam sarvabhūtastham— quoted in CC, Īdi, 5
67. upādānaṁ nimittāṁ ca brahmaiva-Sūkṣma on Govinda-Bhāṣya, 1.4.26; tasya nimittatvam upādānatvaṁ ca abhidhyate, tatra ādyam parākhyā sāktimad-rūpeṇa dvitiyam tu tvad-anya-sakti-dvaya-dvāraiva—ibid, 1.4.26; māyā-kāryaṁ jagat-
PS, p.40; bahiraṅgā māyā-sākty jagat-kāraṇ-CC, Ādi, 2.

68. Nalinikanta Devasarma's comm. on Vedānta-Syamantaka, 2.1.

69. seita māyār dui-bidhā abasthiti-CC, Ādi, 5; māyār je dui brāttī māyā ār pradhān māyā nimitta-hetu biśver pradhān upādhān, CC, Madhya, 20.

70. BP., 10.63.26.

71. PS,

72. see, above 70.

73. CC, Madhya, 20, p.890

74. ibid, Madhya, 25, 91

75. ibid, Madhya, 92-94

76. ibid, Ādi, 6, 4

77. antaraṅgayā svarūpa-sākty-ākhyaẏā pūrṇenaiva svarūpena avatīṣṭhate-BhS, pp. 51-52

78. see, Brahmacari.M, Vaiṣṇava Vedānta, p.154

79. māyā-kāryam jagat-PS, p.40; pradhāna-sya māyāntarbhūtatvatam-BhS, p.52

80. CC, Ādi 6.15; Madhya, 20.214

81. CC, Ādi, 6.16.

82. dur haite puruṣ kare māyāte abadhān jīva-rūpa bīrja tāte Karen ādhān-CC, Ādi, 5; and CCB, p.93

83. CCB, p.93

84. CC, Madhya, 20; Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Darśana, Vol. III, p.1477

85. mani jaiche avikṛta prasave hemabhūr/ jagat-rūp hay īśvar tabu nirvikār-CC, 2.6; tathāpi acintya śakty hay avikārī prākṛta cintāmaṇi tāhe drśṭānta je dhari-CC, 1.7.


87. ibid, p.149.

88. see, CC, Madhya, 20.

89. BhS, p.16 and SS on it.

90. Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, 1.3.2. and Śrī Jīva’s comm. on BP, 11.3.37.

91. nirbhede api vastuni guṇa guṇi bhāvojjṛmbhaṅ guṇeśaṅ dharmī grhyate, acintyatvam viṁa nirbhede vastuni ubhayojjṛmbhaṅ śambhavāt-Baladeva’s comm. on SR, 1.21.