CHAPTER-II

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(Among the six theistic philosophies of India, the last is called
the Uttaramīmāṁsā or Vedanta. The Vedas are divided into two,
viz., the karmakānda and the jñānakānda. Jñānakānda is embodied
in the Upaniṣads, called Vedanta. On the basis of the Upaniṣads,
sage Bādarāyaṇa composed the Brahmaṇḍa or Śārīraka
mīmāṁsāsaṅgītra. The BhagavatGītā is a technical interpretation of
the upaniṣadic philosophy. These three great works are called
‘the three great canons’ – Prasthānātṛayā. The Prasthaṇātṛayā is
the basis of Vedanta philosophy.) According to Christopher
Isherwood, "Vedanta is the philosophy of Vedas, those Indian
scriptures which are the most ancient religious writings now known
to the world. More generally speaking, the term ‘Vedanta’ covers
not only the Vedas themselves but the whole body of literature
which explains, elaborates, and comments upon their teachings right
down to the present day".1 Dr Hajime Nakamura says: "The
Vedanta tradition has a great significance in the intellectual history
of India, and it is the representative philosophy which forms the
principal current of thought in that country. The Philosophy of
Vedanta is handed down through the ages in the blood of the Indian people. It is inseparable from the soil of this great Asian continent.²

Vedanta philosophy has great importance in Indian life. No other form of thought has left such a decisive and enduring impression on the whole of Indian culture. The leading and principal tradition in the history of Indian Philosophy has been Vedanta philosophy. Dr. Nakamura quotes Dr. Winternitz: “Although Indian thought is extremely diverse and complicated, Vedanta philosophy stands supreme as regards social and intellectual influence, especially in the modern period. It has had a determining effect on the ways of thinking of all Indians, transcending social distinction, class status, degree of education and so forth. And the outstanding characteristic of the history of Indian philosophy is the fact that Vedanta has been such a powerful and predominant intellectual force.”³

The influence of Vedantic thoughts is found not only in philosophical writings but also in various forms of literature, such as the epics, lyric, poetry, drama, and so forth, and it also forms the basis for the thinking of jurists, medical practitioners, and
grammarians. The sages and philosophers of India looked to Vedanta philosophy for theoretical foundations for their philosophy.

**Meaning of Vedanta**

Literally, the word ‘Vedanta’ means the end of the Vedas or conclusion of the Vedas. As the simple words ‘end’ and ‘conclusion’ have themselves different meanings, naturally the word ‘vedanta’ will correspondingly vary in meaning. The meaning, ‘the end of the Vedas’ is opposed to the passage of Taitirīya Ārānyaka – ‘the sound which were said in the beginning of the Vedas are installed in the end also”⁴. So, Vedanta refers simply to the end of the recitation of the Vedas. The word generally means the ‘end’ of the ‘Veda’ as the sacred canon, and specifically indicates the Upaniṣads. The upaniṣads, constituting the final portion of the Veda in the full sense, as Revealed Sacred Text, are called the end of the Veda. Dr. Nakamura observes: “Looking closely at the history of the ideas, one can easily see how the one word ‘Vedanta’ - as ‘the end of the Vedas’ - came to mean both the concluding portion of the Vedas and also the ultimate meaning or ultimate truth of the Vedas, without any sense of conflict between the two interpretations. This dual meaning of Vedanta was a commonplace among
Indians in later centuries. It would seem then that these two meanings are full explications of the word Vedanta.⁵ According to Dr. Paul Deussen, “Vedanta means literally "the end of the Veda" and signifies originally the theologies - philosophical treatises which appear as the closing chapters of the single Brahmanas of the Veda, and which are afterwards generally called Upanisad, that is, "secret seance", "secret doctrine". Further on, the name Vedanta in the sense of “Final aim of the Veda” is applied to the theologico-philosophical system founded on the Upanisads.⁶ The comprise Vedas four parts, viz., Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka and Upanisad. Of these the end part of the Upanisads is called Vedanta. Vedanta is a systematic philosophy based upon the Upanisadic canon. Swami Vivekananda says: “In the Upanisads we find the germs of all the subsequent development of Indian religious thought”.⁷ Dr. Nakamura observes, “The Vedantic school claims the Upanisads as the principal scriptures”.⁸

Vedanta also means the supreme knowledge of the Vedas. According to the Vedantasara of Sadananda, “Vedanam antah sarabhulorthah Vedantah”,⁹ meaning ‘Vedanta is the end of the knowledge and the essential meaning’. Vedanta simply
implies the essence of knowledge of the mystery of existence. Vedanta becomes a quest that cannot be fenced within the boundaries defined by any particular religion, of every culture, of every racial and national trait. The aim of Vedanta can be defined as “to uplift oneself by oneself.”

Vedanta is the quest for spirituality. It is the religion beyond all religions, or the essence of knowledge that frees man from ignorance, bondage and sufferings of existence. Vedanta has global relevance because it cuts across religious, racial and national borders, and addresses one’s concerns as human beings. It is the philosophy of the supreme reality. According to Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, “Vedanta includes all the six systems of philosophy. But the essence of Vedanta is that Brahman alone is real and the world is illusory. I have no separate existence, I am that Brahman alone.”

According to Nakamura, “with the firm establishment of Vedanta tradition in later centuries, which followed and revered the Upaniṣads, Vedanta came to mean not only the Upaniṣads but also included the literature such as Bhagavat Gīṭa, the Brahmaśūtra and commentaries and works related to them.”
Different interpretations developed on the basis of Prasthānatraya.

Each of the Vedantic schools considers the Upaniṣads, the Brahmasūtra and the Bhagavad Gītā as the basic texts.

Vivekananda observes,

"There is the mistaken notion in modern India, that the word Vedanta has references only to the Advaita system, but it must always be remembered that in modern India, the three prasthānas are considered equally important in the study of all the systems of religion. First of all, there are the revelations, the sūrūtas, the Upaniṣads. Secondly, among the philosophies, the sūtras of Vyāsa have great prominence, on account of their being the consummation of all preceding systems of philosophy. These systems are not contradictory to one another, but one is based on another, and this is a gradual unfolding of the theme which culminates is the sūtras of Vyāsa. Thus, between the Upaniṣads and the sūtras, which are the systematising of the marvellous truths of the Vedanta, comes in the Gītā, the divine commentary on the Vedanta. The Upanisads, the Vyāsasūtra and the Gītā therefore have
been taken up by every sect in India that wants to claim authority for orthodoxy. Whether dualists, or qualified monists, or monists, the authority of each of these is the three prasthānas. Anyone who wanted to propound a new sect – had to take up these three systems and write only a new commentary on them. Therefore, it would be wrong to confine the word ‘Vedanta’ only to one system which has arisen out of the upaniṣads. All these are covered by the Vedanta”

Schools of Vedanta philosophy

There are a number of Vedantic schools based on the Prasthānatraya. The important are five, viz., the Monism or Advaita of Śrī Śaṅkara, Qualified monism or Viśiṣṭādvaita of Śrī Rāmānuja, Dualism or Dvaita of Śrī Madhva, Dualistic monism or Dvaitādvaita of Śrī Niṁbārka, and Pure nondualism or Śuddhādvaita of Śrī Vallabha. Among these five schools, the first three are the major schools. Advaita or monism occupies the highest position in respect of popularity.

Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva composed separate
commentaries on the Prasthanatraya, by giving their own interpretations to establish their theories.

Among these, the commentary of Śaṅkara became most popular and respect. The monistic approach of Śrī Śaṅkara possesses both logical and chronological priority.

Advaita of Śrī Śaṅkara

According to tradition, Śaṅkara was born in Kalady to Śivaguru and Āryāmba. The incidents in the life history of Śaṅkara and his achievements during his Digvijaya have been narrated in the Śaṅkaravijayas. Śaṅkara left his home when he was just eight years old. He went to the north searching for a Guru. He met Govinda Bhagavadpāda, a disciple of Goudapāda and became his disciple. Śaṅkara received instruction from Govindapāda in Veda and Vedanta. After his study, he wandered all over India on foot as a Sanyāsin. During his Digvijaya he met scholars and debated with them on various issues of Darśanas. A reputed Mīmāṃsaka with whom he held philosophical debate was Mandanamiśra, who was also known as Viśwarūpa. Accepting defeat, Mandana gave up his life of house–holder and became
Śaṅkara's disciple with a new name, Sureśvara. The period from 788AD to 820AD is generally accepted as the period of Śaṅkara by modern historians.

Three other direct disciples of Śaṅkara were Padmapāda, Totaka, and Hastāmalaka. Śaṅkara went round India more than once and established monastic institutions in different places in the country. The most notable institutions are the Jyotirmāṭha at Badarikāśrama, the Kālikāpīṭha at Dwāraka, and the Govardhana pīṭha at Śṛṅgeri. He attained siddhi after ascending the Sarvajña pīṭha. Śrī Śaṅkara elaborated and expounded the monistic principles of the Upaniṣads in a logical framework. In interpreting the vedantic texts as a consistent system of spiritual non-dualism capable of facing logical objections, Śaṅkara was led to recognise two directions within the Vedantic texts. One clearly and directly affirmed the central truth of Vedanta, the other spoke of a lower and relative truth relevant to those still engaged in religious worship, meditation or action. Śaṅkara's restoration of ancient Vedanta was not, as a matter of fact, a mere revival or going back. It was a profoundly original reinterpretation. Sankara seized upon one aspect of the Upaniṣads' many-sided and varied teachings, and
developed it uncompromisingly in the light of the logical implications of Advaita and the spiritual ethos of ‘Nivṛttidharma’. Dr. S. Radhākrṣṇan observes: "It is impossible to read Śaṅkara’s writings, packed as they are with serious and subtle thinking, without being conscious that one is in contact with a mind of a very fine penetration and profound spirituality. His philosophy stands forth complete, needing neither before nor an after, whether we agree or not, the penetrating light of his mind never leaves us where we were."  

His great achievement in the field of speculation is the Advaita system which he developed by means of commentaries on the ancient texts. He found it the best way to reconcile contemporary standards of knowledge and belief with the ancient texts and tradition. He felt impelled to attempt the spiritual direction of his age by formulating a philosophy and religion which could satisfy the ethical and spiritual needs of the people.

The theists were veiling the truth in a mist of sentiment. They were indifferent to the practical concerns of life. The Mīmāṃsaka emphasis on karma developed ritualism devoid of spirit. For Śaṅkara, the Advaita philosophy alone could do justice
to the truth of the conflicting creeds. He wrote all his works with the one purpose of helping the individual to the realization of the identity of his soul with Brahman. In his wanderings throughout India, he came across many faces of worship and accepted all those which had in them the power to elevate man and refine his life. He never preached a single exclusive method of salvation. He composed hymns of unmistakable grandeur addressed to the different Gods of popular Hinduism. While reviving the popular religion he also purified it.

According to Advaita, the final goal of human life is Mokṣa or liberation. It is called paramapuruṣārtha, the highest of the ends designed by human beings. The mortal who attains to that state becomes immortal. The aspirant of liberation should clean his mind through the study of the scriptures and through the practice of instructed lessons. The spiritual practice in Advaita is called Sadhanacatuṣṭaya. It consists of Viveka (discrimination), Vairāgya (renunciation), Śamādiṣadkasamāpatti (group of six virtues), and Mumukṣutva (desire for liberation).

Viveka is the knowledge that Brahman alone is real and the infinite, and this world is transient. This knowledge naturally
produces Vairāgya towards the world. The six virtues are Śama (peace of mind), Dama (Control of senses), Uparati (withdrawal of the mind from sense objects), Titikṣa (forbearance), Śraddha (faith) and Samādhāna (concentration of mind). Practice of these six virtues produces Mumukṣutvam, the desire for liberation. Then the aspirant earns the authority to know Brahman.

The Metaphysics of Advaita

Brahman: According to the Upaniṣads, Brahman alone existed before creation. It is the absolute reality. Upaniṣad says, “In the beginning, My dear, this was being alone; one only without a second” 18. “All this indeed is Brahman” 19. “There is no plurality whatever here. He goes from death to death, who sees in it, as it were, diversity” 20.

According to Advaita Vedanta Brahman is conceived as absolutely real. It defines Brahman in terms of svarūpa lakṣaṇa or essential nature and tatastha lakṣaṇa or qualification per accidents. The svarūpalakṣaṇa is “Satyam Jñānam Anantam Brahma” which means Brahman is existence, consciousness and bliss 21. The tatasthalakṣaṇa is “From where all the creation happens, by whom
all the created are sustaining, in which all these are dissolving, that, you know, that is Brahman\(^{22}\).

Brahman the reality is pure nondual self devoid of all internal differentiations and distinctions of whatever sort. It is devoid of all external relations.

Māyā - The Upaniṣads explain how this world of duality has evolved out of the non-dual reality. The world of duality is generally divided to two, viz, the Seer and the Seen. Both these again are divided into countless objects of creation and the innumerable living beings. It is avidyā that causes the one Brahman to appear as many jīvas, and it is Māyā that causes the world of phenomena. Māyā is avidyā at the cosmic level. It is the power of Brahman itself. This avidyā or ajñānā is neither real nor unreal nor even real-unreal; it is beyond any definition. Hence, it is termed anirvacaniya or indefinable. (This ignorance comprises three qualities called Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The ignorance is known as opposed to knowledge and positive (Jñānavirodhī Bhāvarūpā)

The ignorance has two powers. They are Āvaraṇa-concealment-and Vikṣepa - projection. The concealing power
conceals the real nature of Brahman. Its projection power projects the world appearance in the same. According to Dr. M. Hiriyanna,

"That is to say, if Māyā explains the world, we have to seek for the explanation of Māyā itself beyond it. It may be unique in that it is neither real nor unreal, - sadasatvilakṣana, but it is not ultimate, and that entity which explains spirit"\(^{23}\).

Īśvara: Brahman the pure consciousness, associated with Māyā, is called Īśvara. Īśvara is the unmanifested cause of the world or Avyaktakāraṇa and intercontroller of it - Antaryāmin. He is Sarvajñā or all-knowing, all-powerful or Sarveśvara, and all-controller or Sarvaniyantā. According to Dr. M. Hiriyanna, "The qualified Brahman, if personified, becomes the God or Īśvara of Advaita. Like it, God also may be represented as the cosmic parallel to the finite individual self, the distinction between them being entirely one of adjuncts. The consequence of this distinction is that God remains untouched by any of the evil consequences of association with a finite adjunct, such as narrow love and hate. It is attachment which implies preferences and exclusions but God being equally attached to all, is really detached"\(^{24}\).
**Jīva:** All the living beings in the state of bondage and undergoing transmigration are called jīvas. According to Vedanta, the jīva is a reflection of the pure consciousness in the internal organ or Antahkaraṇa or the intellect, the buddhi. Jīva has three aspects. They are viśva, taijasa, and prājñā. The jīva has five sheaths and three states of consciousness. The sheaths are, Annamaya kośa, Prāṇamayakośa, Manomayakośa, Vijñanamaya kośa and Ānandamaya kośa. The states of consciousness are Jāgrat, Svapna, and Suṣupti. The bondage of jīva is caused by ignorance. Jīva can get liberation through Jñāna - the real knowledge.

**Jagat:** According to Vedanta the Jagat or world is a superimposition or adhyāsa on Brahman. Adhyāsa is also called Adhyāropa. According to Śaṅkara, the adhyāsa is, 'the superimposition of the nature of recollection of the appearance of which have seen before.'25 There are fourteen worlds beginning with Bhu. The bodies of the beings inhabit them. The five basic elements, viz, Ākāśa (ether), Vāyu (air), Agni (fire), Ap (water), Pṛthvī (earth) are their causes. Śaṅkara refers to three orders of being. They are Pratibhāsika (illusory), Vyāvahārika (empirical) and Pāramārthika (transcendental). Śaṅkara’s contention is that the
everyday experience of the world is the Vyāvahārika sattā. Through right means of knowledge (pramāṇa), logic (yukti) and experience (anubhava) the world which is being perceived in Brahman through ignorance is sublated and its substratum or adhiṣṭhāna, Brahman, is seen as it is. This method is called de-superimposition or apavāda. According to Siddhinathananda, “The world seems real to the unthinking mind. It becomes inexplicable when subjected to searching analysis; It disappears when reality is experienced”  

Mokṣa: The state of freedom or liberation from all bonds created by ignorance or illusory power is called Mokṣa. It is characterized by bliss and cessation of rebirth. Mukti, Kaivalya, and Nirvāṇa are the alternative words to describe the state of liberation. According to Vedanta, when man realizes the highest truth of the universal oneness, then he is in a state of liberation. Liberation is the negation of the limitedness determined by ego. It is unconditional and absolute. The Upaniṣad says, “Hear, oh, sons of immortal bliss, this is the divine beyond the phenomenal world”  

"I know I am Brahman; I am the resplendent light beyond darkness. Knowing him one can cross the realm of death. There is
no other way to become perfect.”

Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja

Śrī Rāmānuja was born in, Sri Perumbudur in the year 1027 AD. Rāmānuja wrote Vedantasāra, Vedarthasamgraha, and Vedantadīpa and composed commentaries on the Brahmasūtra and the Bhagavat Gītā. The learned among the Vaiṣṇavas gave their approval to Rāmānuja’s exposition of the Brahmasūtra. The commentary of Rāmānuja is called the Śrī Bhāṣya. Like Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja was a great exponent of Vedanta. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan observes, “Their minds were driven to the same points and problems. Their methods were based on the same assumptions and yet their results show striking differences. Rāmānuja trusts firmly to the religious instinct and sets forth a deeply religious view which reveals God to man through creation, through the theophanies, through the prophets, through the incarnations.”

The whole system of Rāmānuja is based on the relation between God and the world of matter and souls. He recognizes three ultimate realities – God, soul, and matter. The last two are absolutely dependent on the first.
Their relation is like the relation of the body to the soul. They are organically connected with God and are inseparable from Him, as inseparable as the attribute from the substance, technically, Viśeṣa from Viśeṣya. The three form one organism. They are a complex whole, an organic unity. Hence, Rāmānuja’s philosophy is called Viśiṣṭādvaita.

Viśiṣṭādvaita is a system of theism. Bhakti holds a higher place in it than Jñāna. According to Rāmānuja, Jñāna yoga is only meditation on the nature of the soul, for the purpose of realizing that it is different from its physical sheath. But, Bhakti yoga is a higher stage of meditation accompanied by love, on the nature of God, for the purpose of realizing the soul’s relation to them. Mokṣa comes only after death to one who has performed his Bhakti. It is the enjoyment of bliss with a superior body in the presence of God in Vaikuṇṭha.

Viśiṣṭādvaita has its philosophical origin from the Upaniṣads, Brahma Sūtra, and Bhagavat Gītā. Rāmānuja’s work, Vedanta Sarāṅgraha, explains his philosophical positions, pointing out the basis for it in the upaniṣads. Dr.M.Hiriyanna observes: "Thus the final upaniṣadic teaching, according to Rāmānuja is
that, while Brahman, the soul and the physical world are all different and equally eternal, they are quite the same time inseparable. The point to be emphasized here, because it is often missed owing to the description of the doctrine as Viśiṣṭādvaita (commonly but erroneously rendered as qualified monism) is that the three entities are different, although they stand in a peculiarly close relation to one another.\textsuperscript{30}

According to Rāmānuja, God or Brahman, is qualified and his theory is called qualified monism. Rāmānuja formulates the relation so important in his system of inseparability or aprṭhak siddhī, which obtains between substance and attribute. Sri Nirod Baran Chakrabarthi remarks: “The aprṭhak siddhī is parallel but not identical with Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika Samavāya. The two agree in so far as the ‘relation’ they bring together is regarded as quite distinct and real, but while Samavāya is an external relation, inseparability is an inner relation. Rāmānuja discards the relation of Samavāya as superfluous and views inseparability itself as the Svarūpa of the two related things as inseparability theory.”\textsuperscript{31}

Rāmānuja’s Brahman admits of internal difference between cit and acit, and is a knower. Rāmānuja does not admit the
possibility of the Advaitic Brahman being consciousness, non-subjective, unobjective, without any distinction and attribute. According to Rāmānuja such a Brahman or consciousness does not express the purport of the Śruti texts. It is not in conformity with our experience. In his ŚrīBhāṣya, Rāmānuja rejects Śaṅkara’s māyā or ajñāna for seven reasons, called saptānupāpathi.\(^{19}\) He never does deny the ultimate reality of the world. To him the unity of the absolute does not exclude the world and its plurality from itself. The world is dependent on God as gold ornaments are on gold. Dependence and falsity are not identical. Rāmānuja does not admit non-difference between Brahman and Jīva, as the infinite and the finite never can be identical. To Rāmānuja, Jīva is a part of Brahman. In liberation Jīva remains a part and does not become identical with Brahman. Rāmānuja is an advocate of Jñāna – Karma-Samuchayavāda – the theory of the combination of knowledge and action. He accepts Karmajñāna, or an enquiry into action as a pre-step for Brahmajñāna, an enquiry into Brahman.

In Viśiṣṭādvaita, liberating knowledge is of the form of prayer or upāsanātmakā. Dhyāna also is dedication and devotion.
Rāmānuja was a Bhakti Vādin- an advocate of Bhakti as the most important means for liberation. An aspirant has to surrender himself completely to God who alone can grant ultimate release from sufferings. Rāmānuja does not admit Jīvanmukti.

Dvaita of Madhvacarya

Madhva was born in 1199 A.D.in a village near Udupi in South Karnataka. He is also known as Pūrṇa prajñā and ĀnandaTīrtha. He developed his dualistic philosophy in discussion with his preceptor, Acyuta prekṣa, an adherent of the Śaṅkara school. He declared Viṣṇu to be the supreme godhead, and admitted the validity of branding one's shoulders with the arms of Viṣṇu. He made many converts to his faith in different parts of the country, and founded a temple for Kṛṣṇa at Udupi. Prohibition of bloodshed in connection with sacrifices is a salutary reform for which he is responsible.

Dvaita claims its origin from the Upaniṣads. Madhva composed commentaries on the Prasthānatraya, as the basis of the Dvaita school. The general metaphysical position of the school of Dvaita is well indicated by Madhva as Diverse, and of Diverse attributes are all the things of the universe.
Madhva appears to be an uncompromising dualist. He admits pāñcabhedas - five differences. They are between:

1. One thing and another,
2. A thing and an individual soul,
3. One individual soul and another,
4. An individual and God, and
5. The material world and God.

Madhva accepts Brahman as a personal God and calls him Viṣṇu or Hari.⁢³³

But the followers of Madhva claim a form of monism. To them, Brahma or God alone is independent (svatantra). The world and the jīvas are dependent on God or Brahman(asvatantrya).

To Śaṅkara, the personal God is ultimately false and Brahman is conciousness as such or the indeterminate absolute. But, both Rāmānuja and Madhvācārya reject this suggestion as unwarranted and unacceptable. Madhva finds a dualism in Sankara because Śaṅkara accepts the attributeless Brahman and then accepts nescience as superimposed on Brahman as the cause of the world. For Madhva, Rāmānuja’s Citacit Viśiṣṭa
Brahman cannot be ultimate. Madhva advocates bheda or difference as ultimate in the sense that God alone is independent. He has a transcendent character which nothing else has. Madhva rejects the view of the world as not false as it is Prāmaṇika or given by the means of knowledge, dependent on God, and it has practical efficiency or pravr̥tti.

Madhva does not accept the non-difference of Ātma and Brahman. As the Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya of Madhva says, Ātma is atomic in nature – anuparimāṇa, Brahman is omnipresent, God is an independent doer, Ātmas’ doership is dependent on God.34 Ātma is the reflected part of Brahman. Though all Ātmas are the reflections of Brahman, still they are of different types due to their differences in activities.35 The Ātma can attain the knowledge of Brahman through devotion and prayer.36 Distinguished performance of action, Niṣkāmākarma, is equally necessary. Action is to be performed even after the attainment of knowledge.37

Madhva is a believer of the combination of knowledge and action. Madhva does not admit the non-difference of Ātma and Brahman in liberation. Madhva speaks of four steps of liberation,
1. Sālokya - residence in the same region with God,
2. Samīpyā - being near with God,
3. Sārūpya - having a form similar to him in some respects, and
4. Sāyūjya - togetherness with God.

He does not admit liberation while living. But he admits the attainment of the body of Brahman - Brahmadehābhava - after liberation\(^{38}\). In Advaita, there is not any ultimate difference or bheda. But in Viśītādvaita and Dvaita, bheda is to be admitted even at the ultimate stage.

A number of followers of each of these schools raised many criticisms against the others. Vedantadeśika, a follower of Rāmānuja, in his Satadūṣaṇi, and Vyāsatīrtha, a follower of Madhva, in his Nyāyāmṛta, have raised various objections against the Advaitins. The text Satabhūṣaṇi is a counter-work to Satadūṣaṇi. Madhusūdana Saraswati wrote Advaitasiddhi which is an answer to Nyāyāmṛta.

**Dvaitādvaita of Nimbārka**

The philosophy of Śrī Nimbārka is Dvaitādvaita. He was a Telugu Brahmin, also called Nimbāditya or Niyamānanda. His philosophy
bears a very close resemblance to that of Rāmānuja. It appears that he has borrowed the whole thing from his illustrious predecessor, adding his own important amendments and modifications. Nimbārka refers to the Śrī and Brahmasampradāya Bhāṣyas of Rāmānuja and Madhva respectively.

Nimbārka admits three realities, viz., God, Soul, and matter, the last two being dependent on the first. The individual soul is essentially of the nature of knowledge, Jñānasvarūpa. But it is also the substratum of knowledge. The relation between the substantive and attributive knowledge is that between the qualified and the qualification, technically, dharmi-dharma bhāva. It is one of identity as well as difference, like the seen is of the nature of light and yet it is also the substratum of light which is its attribute. The soul is a real knower, agent and enjoyer. It is dependent on God, is supported by God, pervaded by God and controlled by God. The souls are atomic in size and many in number. A soul is eternal and yet it suffers births and deaths on account of its embodiment which is due to karma and avidyā. Liberation is due to knowledge which is brought about by God's grace which itself is due to devotion. There are a few main differences between Rāmānuja and Nimbārka.
Rāmānuja believes in identity - in - and - through difference or identity qualified by differences. But Niśťārka believes in identity and difference. Niśťārka rejects the view of Rāmānuja that matter and souls are the attributes of God. Niśťārka rejects the distinction between the body and the soul of God and the view that matter and souls form the body of God. Niśťārka regards matter and souls as parts of God.\cite{39}

Śuddhādvaita of Vallabhācārya

Śrī Vallabha was the master of Śuddhādvaita or pure non-dualism. He was a Telugu Brahmin, born in 1479 AD. In the sense of undefiled by Māyā, the school is called Śuddhādvaita. He composed commentaries on the Brahma Sūtra and Bhagavat Gītā. They are AnuBhaṣya and Subodhini respectively.

Brahman is the independent reality and is identified with Śrīkṛṣṇa. His essence is existence, knowledge and bliss. Souls and matter are His real manifestations. They are His parts. He is the abode of good qualities and includes even the seemingly contradictory qualities. He is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. He is one as well as many. It is by His will that He
manifests himself as matter and as souls revealing His tripartite nature of existence, knowledge and bliss in different proportions. Māyā or Avidyā is his power through which he manifests Himself as many. This manifestation is neither an error nor an illusion. It is a real manifestation. Vallabha’s view is neither vivarta nor pariṇāma. It is something in between the two and is called Avikṛta pariṇāmavāda. The Universe is not a vivarta for it is a real manifestation and not an unreal appearance. It is also not a pariṇāma, for this manifestation does not involve any change or transformation. The Universe is a natural emanation from God, which does not involve any notion of change and is therefore, called avikṛta pariṇāma.

Vallabha distinguishes between Jagat or Prapañca and Samsāra. Jagat is the real manifestation of God, while Samsāra of the cycle of birth and deaths is imagined by the soul on account of ignorance. The ignorance is fivefold:

1. ignorance of the real nature of the soul,
2. false identification with the body,
3. false identification with the senses,
4. with the vital breaths, and
5. with the internal organs.
When knowledge dawns, ignorance vanishes and with it vanishes the Samsāra. But the Jagat continues. It is the real manifestation of God. Bhakti is defined as a firm and all-surpassing affection for God in the full sense. His greatness is only a means of salvation. God, pleased by devotion, takes the devotee within Himself. When He is highly pleased, He keeps the devotee near Himself to enjoy the sweetness of service. The puṣṭimārga of Vallabha is attained without any individual effort, simply by the grace of God which destroys sins forthwith.

Vedanta is part and parcel of Indian Philosophy. Vedanta acknowledges that while the goal before humanity may be the same, there are any number of ways of attaining this goal. This is the supreme cause of the universal acceptance of Vedanta. Christopher Isherwood observes: “In India today, as elsewhere, there are hundreds of sects. Vedanta philosophy is the basis of them all. Indeed in its simplest form, it may be regarded as a statement of the philosophica perinniss, the least common denominator of all religious belief. Reduced to its elements, Vedanta philosophy consists of three propositions, first, that man’s real nature is divine; second, that the aim of human life is to realize
this divine nature; third, that all religions are essentially in agreement.41

The philosophy of Vedanta is expounded and reintroduced by great personalities in every age to meet the demand of the circumstances. The newly interpreted Vedanta is classed as Neo-Vedanta philosophy. Theoretically, the Neo-Vedantism does not differ from traditional Vedanta, but it includes the implications of Vedantic thoughts in day-to-day life.
RESUME

Among the six theistic philosophies of India, the last one is Uttaramimāṁsā or Vedanta. The Upaniṣads, Brahma Sūtra, and the Bhagavat Gītā - collectively called prasthānatraya - are the basis of Vedanta philosophy. The leading and principal tradition in the history of Indian Philosophy has been Vedanta. The schools of Indian philosophy looked to Vedanta for theoretical foundations for their philosophy.

Vedanta means the conclusion of the Vedas. It is the final teaching of Veda, as well as the quest for spirituality. It is the essence of knowledge that frees men from ignorance, bondage and the sufferings of existence.

Different Vedantic schools originated on the basis of prasthānatraya. Advaita of Śaṅkara, Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja, Dvaitā of Madhva, Dvaitadvaita of Nimbārka, and Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha are the major schools of Vedanta.

The Advaita theory occupies the highest position in popularity. Śrī Śaṅkara was the founder master of this school. Śrī Śaṅkara elaborated and expounded the monistic principles of the Vedas in
a logical framework. Śaṅkara lived during the period of 788AD to 820AD. His birth place was Kalady, in Kerala. As a Sanyāsin, he travelled all over India. The life mission of Śaṅkara was to re-establish the pure Vedic dharma. He entered into debates with the scholars of other philosophies and defeated them. He founded four monastic institutions in four corners of the country. The commentary of Prasthānatraya, Prakaraṇa granthas based on Vedanta, and a few stotra granthas are the contributions of Sri Śaṅkara. According to Advaita, the final goal of human life is Mokṣa.

According to Advaita, Brahman alone existed before creation. It is the absolute reality. The nature of Brahman is Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. It is Avidyā that causes the one Brahman to appear as many jīvas, and Māyā is the cause of the world phenomena. It is indefinable. Avidyā has two powers, viz. āvaraṇa and vikṣepa. Brahman, the pure consciousness, associated with Māyā is called Īśvara. All the living beings in the state of bondage and undergoing transmigration are called jīvas. They are the reflection of the pure consciousness in the Antaḥkaraṇa. The jagat is a superimposition on Brahman. According to Vedanta, the state of freedom from all bonds
created by ignorance is called Mokṣa. It is unconditional and absolute.

Śrī Rāmānuja is the master of Viśiṣṭādvaita. He was born in 1027AD at Śrī perumbutur. The works of Rāmānuja are the commentaries on Brahmasūtra, and the Bhagavat Gītā, Vedanta Sāra, Vedartha sarīgraha, and Vedanta dīpa. The system of Rāmānuja is based on the relation between God and the world of matter and souls.

The master of Dvaita philosophy, Madhva, was born in 1199AD at Udipi in South Karnataka. He composed commentaries on the Prasthānatraya. The general metaphysical position of the school is that the Universe is Diverse and of diverse attributes are the things of the Universe.

Nimbārka was a Telugu Brahmin. He introduced the Dvaitadvaita school of Vedanta. This school bears a close resemblance to that of Rāmānuja.

Vallabha was the master of Śuddhādvaita. He was a Telugu Brahmin born in 1479AD. He composed commentaries on Brahmasūtra and the Bhagavat Gītā.
Vedanta is part and parcel of Indian philosophy. It has been reinterpreted in each time as the circumstances demanded. The new school of Vedanta is called Neo-Vedantism. It includes the implementation of Vedantic ideals in our day-to-day life.
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