CHAPTER IV

‘Tongues in Trees, sermons in stones’

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Dharmabhutajnana or Attributive Consciousness posited by Ramanuja in his Visistadvaita can be considered as the genius stroke of the Acharya. By this Ramanuja identifies that all entities of creation possess the ‘I’ consciousness. He also notes that the cit possesses two types of consciousness namely Dharmi Jnana or Substantive consciousness and Dharmabhutajnana or Attributive consciousness. He further argues that the acit or prakriti also possesses dharmabhutajnana which interacts with the world of cit and makes itself known. This chapter will discuss dharmabhutajnana and how it functions in both cit and acit. By meriting it in an understandable way, its workings will be evaluated in some of the works of Shakespeare.

The Sanskrit Jnana is a word with broad spectrum and means several things such as (1) Knowledge (2) Understanding (3) acquainted with (4) Proficiency (5) Learning (6) Consciousness (7) Cognizance (8) Sacred knowledge – especially that knowledge derived from meditation on the higher truths of religion and philosophy which teaches man how to understand his own nature and be united to the Supreme Spirit and the organ of intelligence, sense, intellect. The meaning ‘Sacred knowledge’ pertains to the knowledge about the ‘self’ and it forms the main core of all philosophical thinking. Knowledge is, to
be aware of something or to have had the experience of something. This experience or awareness is also called the *jnana* about that particular thing. Every experience got through the senses, makes the object come into existence. Knowledge got through experience needs a ‘knower’ and a ‘known’. This ‘knower’ is the subject and the ‘known’ is the object. A knower cannot be a person without the awareness either of his external surroundings or of his own thoughts. This awareness called ‘consciousness’, plays a vital part in any created being.

Ramanuja views that a person cannot even know himself except qualified by an activity or a state of consciousness, noted as ‘I’ Consciousness. He argues that even the Brahman cannot be known except as qualified by something; it can be known only as a substance qualified by some attribute. There can be no knowledge of anything without its attributes. In this account Ramanuja differs from Sankara who asserts that the Brahman can be known without any qualities. P.T. Raju in his work *Structural Depths of Indian Thought* (1985) provides an explanation for substance and attribute.

The categorization of Reality according to Ramanuja may then be made into substance (*visesidravya*) and attribute or quality (*visesana guna*). Everything in the world is either a substance or an attribute, and what is substance from one point of view can be an attribute from another. . . . we [then] come across the categorization of reality into the knower and
the known (*drsta* and *drsy*a) and the enjoyer and the enjoyed (*bhokta* and *bhogy*a). The former categorization is epistemological and the latter ethical. The two categorizations are practically common to all the Indian Schools. But that into substance and attributive is peculiar to Ramanuja’s school. (443)

This knowledge can be acquired through perception, inference and scriptures, valid as sources of knowledge and also as affirmations of Reality. Ramanuja affirms that even an illusory perception has some perception of reality. Therefore all experiences have their validity. The integration and harmonization of all knowledge obtained through sense-perception, inference and revelation is the central idea of *Visistadvaita* as a philosophy of religion.

Srisaila Chakravarti in *The Philosophy of Sri Ramanuja* talks about three kinds of souls, namely, embodied souls, liberated souls and eternally liberated souls. Of the three the consciousness of the eternally liberated souls is unlimited ever comprehending the being form, qualities and the glory of God. The consciousness of the liberated souls is limited before the liberation, but becomes comprehensive after the liberation. On the other hand, the consciousness of the embodied souls is liable to contraction and expansion according to their *karma* and so is limited. If this be so, then a question may arise
whether consciousness is a substance or quality. P.T. Raju provides an apt answer:

The conscious is of two kinds, the inward (pratyak) and the outward (parak) that is inwardly directed and outwardly directed. The inward is of two kinds – the atman and God. The atman is of three kinds – the bound, the liberated and the eternal. The outward consciousness is of two kinds – the eternal force (nithya vibhuti) and the attribute consciousness (dharmabhuta Jnana) (443)

The study here is to be restricted to the examination of the consciousness of embodied souls, which are overpowered by the eclipse of karma and vary in degrees of intelligence. Therefore they are subjected to the miseries of material existence. According to Vishnu Purana (VI.7.61-66) as quoted by Srisaila Chakravarti;

The intelligence or consciousness in stones, rocks and blocks of wood which have no breaths, is the lowest. It is great in vegetable kingdom, it is greater in reptiles or creeping creatures and, greater in human beings, and is greater still in gods of several grades. (120)

None can refute the fact the subject; object and the consciousness in them are all creations of a Supreme Being which manifests itself in all beings. Hence, it must be logically accepted that the Supreme Being is Eternal Consciousness, and obviously all manifestations must possess consciousness. Vishnu Purana’s
explication, then, is valid. This consciousness exists as an attribute, an inseparable part of the soul and is graded in intelligence and knowledge, according to its level possessed by a being. But the consciousness can be known only through an attribute. P.N.Srinivasachari views: “Consciousness cannot be aware of itself, but presupposes a self of which it is the idea or attribute” (27). Jnana and self are separate but are not inseparable. For instance, the saltishness in salt is its essential nature, whereas being white or being in powdered form or in rock form is its attribute. In the same way the flame has its attribute of effulgence in it. They have to join together to make up the light in the lamp. There can be no effulgence without the flame.

The category of consciousness is thus described under the title Dravya or substance in the sub-category of Ajada. This consciousness according to Visistadvaita being a quality that cannot exist by itself, it presupposes a substance of which it is a quality and hence an attribute of that substance. Swami Adidevananda in his translation of Srinivasadasa’s Yatindramatadipika (1996) explains attributive consciousness:

It consists in being the subject (visayin i.e. the objects are manifested by it) while it is a self-luminous, unconscious substance. It is of the nature of substance attribute (dravya-guna) like light while it is all-pervasive. Consciousness is that which manifests the objects. These are the characteristics of the attributive consciousness. (86)
When a substance as *ajada* or immaterial is conceived as a conscious self, it is the subject of experience that has *jnana* as its inseparable attribute, the Atman being substantive intelligence but has attributive intelligence as well. “The two can be logically distinguished but cannot be divided”. (29) says P.N. Srinivasachari. This attribute is not only self-illumined but also illumines objects. It can reveal itself and objects. Therefore the characteristics of this are only revelatory. On the other hand *Atman* is self-realized. Consciousness is put in midway between the *cetana* and *jada* as it manifests itself and is like the physical light that can only show but cannot know. *Jnana* or consciousness is like the light that reveals, being always for the other, only if the illumination its attribute is there. P.N.Srnivasachari provides yet another explication for *dharmabhutajnana*:

*Dharmabhutajnana* not only illuminates itself and the objects of nature but is also substance–attribute (*dravya-guna*). At the same time, as the substratum of colour and the shades of colouration, it is a substance. Likewise the term *jnana* expresses an essential and eternal attribute that inheres in the self; but as it contracts and expands like a substance owing to the determining influence of *karma*, it is the substratum of change and may be defined as a substance as well. Eternal consciousness changes when it is caught up in the world of *karma*, but comes to itself in the state of *mukti*
when it is freed from sense contact. *Jnana* is thus both changing and changeless and is both substance and quality. (33)

Maruthi Ramanuja Das further exemplifies attributive consciousness in terms of lake water. The lake full of water is the *swaroopa* and *jiva* is like the water. The *jiva*’s acquisition of knowledge and its transmission of that knowledge to others is akin to the water flowing into the lake and out of it. Just as the water’s attributes, the *jiva*’s attributes are the collection and transmission of the knowledge. The repository knowledge is its *swaroopa* while the added and revealed are the attributive intelligence. This revelation acts according to the contraction or expansion of consciousness in any creation or *jiva*. The author compares the *mukta jivas* to the lake with a uniform flow of water which means it has no contraction. Those *sattvik jivas* are comparable to the lake dependent on rain since these *jivas* are reliant on God. Those who have knowledge but cannot impart it to others, can be compared to a lake from where the water flow is obstructed. The third type of *jivas* possess the most contracted form of knowledge like the water that cannot be transmitted. (www.ramanuja.org./sv/bhakthi/archives/apr/2002/0053.html). This explication points to the three kinds of souls categorized by Srisaila Chakravarthi indicated earlier.

Swami Prabhavananda in his book The *Spiritual Heritage of India* adds a further dimension to the theory of *dharma bhutajnana*:
Ramanuja does not admit a distinction between illusory perception and true perception, for he declares that even in illusory perception so-called, there is some perception of reality. Thus all experience has its validity. Ramanuja's theory of Dharma-Bhuta-Jnana, or consciousness as an attribute and not the thing itself, explains his conception of the threefold function of knowledge: it gives reality; it has the power to reveal the truth; and it can reveal the truth of Brahman. (308)

The term ‘Consciousness’ comes under the category of substances which has modes or which undergo changes. The substance is further classified as Matter (Jada) and immaterial (ajada). This immaterial or ajada includes attributive consciousness in it because it has the capability of both expansion and contraction. When there is enlargement of consciousness to the fullest level, then that jiva attains salvation. As consciousness is invariably associated as the function of the self, it is its dharma and therefore known as dharmabhutajnana. Srinivasachari’s cryptic explanation deserves mention:

When substance is svapramasa or self-illumined, it is called ajada and is different from jada like the world of space and time. Ajada is consciousness with content classified into pratyak or conscious self existing by itself and its knowledge or parak (existing for another) which is its essential quality or dharmabhutajnana. Substance as ajada or the immaterial is thus conceived as a conscious self, finite
or infinite. It is the subject of experience that has *jnana* as its inseparable attribute. *Atman* is and has consciousness. It is substantive intelligence and has attributive intelligence as well, which manifests its nature. The two can be logically distinguished but cannot be divided. *Dharmabhatajnana* is self-illumined (*svayam prakasa*) and it also illuminates objects (*artha prakasaka*). It is also called *mati, prajna, semusi* and *samvit*. (28-29)

The concept of *dharmabhatajnana* seems to get replicated in the western philosophy indicated by the term “thisness”, the principle being forwarded by Duns Scotus (1266-1308), one of the most important Franciscan theologians and the founder of Scotism, a philosopher and logician. He made important contributions to epistemology and undermined the concept of divine illumination of the intellect. He laid out a detailed explanation of how belief can be based on the knowledge of self-evident proposition, induction and awareness of one’s intellectual state. He proposed the concept of “intuitive cognition”, and existential awareness of intelligible objects, which later influenced the artistic world. To the medieval concept of “essence” and “existence”, Duns Scotus added a principle of individuation to the common nature of essence, “haecceitas” or “thisness” which defined the uniqueness of each being apart from its material existence. This concept opened the way for essences or common natures that are distinguished into unique entities by their actual existence, quantity and matter. He defined a principle of individuation, a further substantial difference added to
the essence, an “individual difference” called “haecceitas” or “thisness” The concept of haecceity, or an entity’s “thisness” its particularity, can be contrasted to quiddity, the entity “whatness” or universality.

Duns Scotus’ “haecceitas” is further exemplified by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89), in his poetic theory of ‘inscape’ and ‘instress’. G.M. Hopkins, a Jesuit priest is the most original Victorian poet because of his technical innovations and of his ability to fuse form, language and feeling. With his acute power of observation, Hopkins stressed on ‘inscape’, “the Hopkinsian word for the specific inner form of an object, and ‘instress’, the peculiar poetic feeling which it evoked in him” (V.Sachithanandan, Six English Poets (1978) 217). ‘Inscape’ is a concept that asserts everything in the universe is characterized by inscape, the distinctive dynamic. Each being in the universe ‘selves’, that is, enacts its identity. And the human being, the most highly ‘selved’, the most individually distinctive being in the universe, recognizes the inscape of other beings in an act that Hopkins calls that enables one to realize specific distinctiveness. Ultimately, the ‘instress’ of ‘inscape’ leads one to Christ, for the individual identity of any object is the stamp of divine creation on it. W.A.M. Peters writes about the ‘inscape theory’ of Hopkins in his book A Critical Essay towards the Understanding of His Poetry (1970):

The unified complex of those sensible qualities of the object of perception that strike us as inseparably belonging to and most typical of it, so that through the knowledge of this unified complex of sense-
data we may gain an insight into the individual essence of the object. (5)

This same concept has been described in a different way by Hazrat Inayat Khan in his work *The Sufi Message – Volume II* (1988) when he talks about the power of the word or the communication in every form in which the meaning of life wishes to express itself. Talking about enlightenment through inspiration that comes from within, he further says:

There is another form of this which is attained by a greater enlightenment, by a greater awakening of the soul; and this form can be pictured as a person going through a large room where there are all kinds of things exhibited, and there is no light except a searchlight in his own hand. If he throws its light on music, on notes and rhythm, the music becomes clear to him; . . . This light may be thrown upon living beings and the living beings become like open books to him. It may be thrown open on objects, and the objects may reveal to him their nature and secret. (194)

When a person focuses his inner energy on a specific object or idea, it reveals itself to him and informs him. Similarly, a word becomes attributive and provides more meaning in a given context to different hearers. This is true of Shakespeare. Dominique Enright in his book *The Wicked Wit of William Shakespeare* (2002) has culled out 427 quotes, excerpts and passages from
Shakespeare’s dramas and other works and explains how these witty statements serve as vehicles for a profound comment on the human condition. This seems to parallel Hopkins’ ‘instress’. Such ‘word-attribute’ is often found in Shakespeare’s dialogues between a clown or fool or very innocent and simple persons.

Subsequently, the concept of dharmabhutajnana can be well acknowledged in some of the works of Shakespeare. The dramatist easily identifies the inherent consciousness embedded in the objects and makes them known in lucid poetry through the mouth of the different characters. Such a revelation of the inherent consciousness brings in the “synthetic unity of a perception, apperception that is one’s self consciousness” (P.N.Srinivasachari 25). It has already been said that the ‘knowledge’ is at its lowest ebb in materials like stones. They cannot express it explicitly. But, if they are perceived as objects by a person of higher consciousness they reveal their swarupa in quite different ways to such persons. Shakespeare, with his sensuous perception and spiritual intuition has been able to ‘catch’ up these revelations and transmit them to the world through his characters. Caroline Spurgeon observes that they are all “given at a moment of heightened feeling, of the furniture of his mind, the channels of his thought, the qualities of things, the objects and incidents he observes and remembers, and perhaps most significant of all, those of which he does not observe or remember” (4).
This revelation can be understood and appreciated from the inanimate objects to men of high intelligence. The playwright skillfully presents this through the crestfallen Antony in the play *The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra*. Antony loses his sea–battle and flies away from the battlefield like a “doting mallard” (III.x.24) following Cleopatra. In a dejected mood Antony talks to Eros looking at the changing clouds that indicate the swift changes in man’s life:

Sometimes we see a cloud that is dragonish,
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A towered citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory,
With trees upon it that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air.  

(IV.xiv.3-8)

To an ordinary person’s eyes, the clouds seen everyday do not bring in any appreciation or awesomeness. But, in this striking dialogue the words actually convey the approaching dissolution of his greatness displayed through the rapid-fire images. William Hazlitt calls the above lines as “one of the finest pieces of poetry in Shakespeare. The splendour of the imagery the semblance of reality, the lofty range of picturesque objects hanging over the world, their evanescent nature, the total uncertainty of what is left behind are just like the mouldering schemes of human greatness. It is finer than Cleopatra’s lamentation over his fallen grandeur, but it is more dim, unstable, unsubstantial” (*Characters of Shakespeare’s Plays* 101-102). Antony’s description of the shapes of the clouds
reveal the imminent disaster that is to happen due to the decision and infatuated
determination of Antony to yield to Cleopatra’s wishes to fight Caesar by sea
instead of land.

That the clouds change constantly is a phenomenon that everybody
knows. It displays different shapes in a moment and thus entertains the seer. In
spite of its nebulousness and its ever changing quality, the cloud remains a
substance and reveals its dharmabhutajnana in myriad ways. In the Arden
edition of Antony and Cleopatra, the editor M.R.Ridley (1968) forwards a
succinct comment for these lines: “Several passages have been suggested as the
source of this fancy, but its beautiful and striking use to illustrate man’s unstable
hold of his very entity seems to occur here only” (171 -172). Sometimes the
cloud looks like a dragon, sometimes like a bear or lion or a citadel, yet another
time it looks like a jutting or over-hanging rock or a forked mountain or blue
promontory. The quick succession of unconnected images throws one out of
emotional balance because the person realizes that Antony is visualizing the
impending tragedy in the shape of clouds. Harley Granville-Barker comments in
The plays construction-1930-Shakespeare that “The fantasy that follows -- for all
its beauty – is too much an intellectual conceit and too long drawn out” (Antony
and Cleopatra-A case book 102). He further says, perhaps the playwright wants
that “we should feel with Antony the relief this strange sense of dissolution
brings from the antics of Passion” (102). Antony feels himself melting like the
clouds as:
That which is now a Horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns and makes it indistinct
As water is in water

(IV.xiv.11-13)

The arresting word “dislimns” points to the mere dissolution and formation of clouds in various shapes, however provides a distinct meaning to the existing condition of Antony. Maurice Charney gives credit to Shakespeare as “creating his own vocabulary to establish the feeling of disintegration in the Roman world. The firm substance of life is being undone, things are losing their form, changing and fading with the indistinctness of water in water” (Antony and Cleopatra - A case book 150). Tom Paulin in his essay “One Impulse: Hazlitt, Wordsworth and The Principles of Human Action” included in the edition Metaphysical Wit: Bicentenary Essays (2005) discusses how De Quincey has interpreted this word ‘dislimns’ in his work Suspiria, drawing inspiration from Shakespeare and his opponent Hazlitt as well. He observes:

He uses it both to display his knowledge of Shakespeare, and to create a phantasmagoric, magic-lantern effect. Although De Quincey knew Shakespeare well, I think he took the term ‘dislimn’ from Hazlitt’s citation of Antony and Cleopatra, because it expressed a particularly English emotional concreteness, with a melting, insubstantial effect, which he needed in order to enforce a type of passive spectatorship in his readers. (106)
The usage of the term ‘dislimn’ by different writers as a ‘word-attribute’ is a good illustration for the above said view of Hazrat Inayat Khan. This passage in the play can be said to be the essence of dissolution theme showing Antony’s absolute resignation from all pleasures. The cloud-shapes soon merge into simple clouds; but the thoughts evoked in the mind of Antony make the reader understand that they not only specify the impending danger to him but also the philosophy of life that nothing is permanent. The swift string of cloud images effectively demonstrate the theory of attributive consciousness or the inherent dharmabhutajnana in them.

Consequently, how the plants, the better creations than the nebulous clouds, reveal their ‘attributive consciousness’ has been well-assessed by Shakespeare in many instances. As a sample, Sonnet 54 can be taken for discussion. The poet declares that beauty becomes more beautiful because of its lovely ornament, ‘truth’.

“O! how much more doth beauty beauteous seem / By that sweet ornament which truth doth give”. The poet aptly compares the two different roses – the scented one and the odourless rose. The scented rose becomes more precious as a result of ‘truth’ because it is respected not only for its looks but also for its scent. The ‘scent’ is its ‘truth’ or ‘essence’. On the other hand, the canker blooms are similar to the rose in every other way except the scent. “The canker blooms have full as deep a dye / As the perfumed tincture of the roses, / Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly / When summer's breath their masked buds discloses”. The
only merit they have is simply their show. “They live unwoo’d, and unrespected fade; / Die to themselves”. On the contrary, sweet roses do not die alone, “of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made”. As they fade, they emit their sweet scent and continue to live in their deaths. The poet actually distills the beauty of the rose as he extracts its ‘truth’, the ‘scent’ or its special character or attribute. Caroline Spurgeon observes:

But it is suggestive that in his most sustained and exquisite appreciation of the rose, what chiefly appeals to him is the fact that, unlike other flowers, roses even when faded never smell badly but that “Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made”.

The dissimilarity between these two flowers, however, is evident in lines 9 through 12 in which the poet notes that ‘canker blooms’ do not contain any inner beauty ‘scent’. The ‘scented rose’ is loved for its attribute of odour. That inherent quality or consciousness helps the rose reveal itself as something special apart from its outward appearance. That ‘scent’ is its true nature because even after the death of such roses “are sweetest odors made”. W.A.M. Peters reference to Hopkins’ ‘inscape theory’ well-explicates Sonnet 54 also. The exclusive essence of the objects -- the ‘inscape’ of Hopkins, the ‘thisness’ of Duns Scotus and Shakespeare’s point of view -- converge to isolate the ‘individualism’ of each thing, revealed through the inherent attributive consciousness or dharmabhuta jnana
The consciousness as an attribute in some supernatural things like elves (which the Shakespearean public very much believed to exist) has paved the way to the great dramatist to weave a drama like *A Mid Summer Night’s Dream* based on the ancient figure ‘Puck’ also known as Robin Goodfellow. He has been portrayed as a clever, mischievous elf and personified as the charlatan or the wise knave. Puck is actually a mythological trickster figure. A force of nature and instinct, he has been characterized as a fairy of primitive nature, naive and even ignorant. Puck, though a trickster has been depicted as more annoyingly mischievous than doing evil. Shakespeare’s Puck is presented as a capricious spirit with a magical fancy, fun loving, humorous and lovely -- the naughty emissary of Oberon, the Fairy King, who is always engaged in impish activities. Puck admits all the charges leveled against him when a complaint is made (II.i. 33-42). This merry night wanderer, by his mischievous pranks on human beings and others, makes his master Oberon cheerful.

It is Puck’s mistaken doings in *A Mid Summer Night’s Dream* that provide the convolution of the plot. The unfortunate mistake of smearing the love potion on Lysander’s eyelids instead of on the eyes of Demetrius reverses the direction of the play. Puck has been instructed by Oberon that the love potion be put on Demetrius’ eyes. Oberon’s intention to help Demetrius and Helena get reconciled fails because of Puck’s silly mistake that drives Lysander to chase Helena, thus creating confusion among the lovers. Puck tries to rectify the mistake by anointing the love juice in the eye of Demetrius also, which
hilariously aggravates the situation -- the ladies begin to quarrel and the men begin to fight. Oberon also directs Puck to smear the love potion on his wife Titania’s eyes. The naughty Puck commits another mischief, by providing an ass’ head to Nick Bottom, a weaver and an amateur player of a company. The players have come to the wood to rehearse a play for the ensuing wedding festivities of Duke Theseus and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. Titania, the Queen of Oberon, falls in love with the ass-headed Bottom. In the end all mistakes are corrected by Puck himself and the play ends happily. At the end of the play, he makes a speech directly to the audience, apologizes to them for anything that might have offended them and also suggests to treat all happenings as a dream.

That you have but slumbered here
While these visions did appear,
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream. (V.i.393–396)

Shakespeare has exploited well the Elizabethan audience’s belief in supernatural happenings and created this shadow character in such a way that ‘it’ reveals its presence throughout the play by its mischievousness, ignorance, foolishness, and above all its individualistic way of doing things. In other words, Shakespeare seems to confirm that even the elves, fairies and spirits are endowed with attributive consciousness or dharmabhutajnana

An immaterial thing could reveal so much by itself is the beauty of the creation of such a conscious character. Shakespeare has brought out the ‘goodness’ in Puck’s ‘foolishness’ and ‘mischievousness. He
always tries to fix something correctly which he has disrupted and hence the name ‘Robin Good fellow’ to him. Everything is a game to him. He creates problems out of his own consciousness though under instruction. Yet, once he realizes the consequence, he rectifies it to the best of his ability and power. Shakespeare has incorporated his high level of consciousness into the spirit as its attribute thereby making it reveal its presence in the play.(“The Role of Puck in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*”. www.123 Help Me.com).

This point of view corroborates Ramanuja’s scrutiny of ‘dreams’ in his philosophy. Srisaila Chakravarti based on his study of Ramanuja’s *Sri Bhasya* states: “There is consciousness in dreams. . . . The prima facie view according to Sri Ramanuja is . . . that the creations of dreams are the work of the individual soul” (49). This explains Puck’s address to the audience in the ‘Epilogue’ of the play requesting them to treat all the incidents as a dream. According to Ramanuja there is consciousness in dreams but at different levels -- dormant in deep sleep and active in disturbed ordinary sleep. P.N.Srinivaschari explains this state: “When the self suffers from fatigue, it seeks relaxation and retires into the condition of sleep for recuperation of energy. The sleeping self puts of the instruments of action and refreshes itself; but even in that state, consciousness persists as a potentiality like masculinity in a male child” (293-94). The scholar’s references are from *Sri Bhasya* (II.III, 31) and the *Sacred Books of the East* (XLVIII, 551). He also explicates the states of consciousness, which is
“continuous, distinct and clear in the waking state, dim and confused in the sub-conscious and dream states, and divine in mukti. It is implied in sleep and stupor, and even in the abnormal states of dispersal and dissociation of personality” (32). Referring to inherent consciousness to creations in dreams, he observes: “In dreams the divinity creates specific objects suited to the specific merit or demerit of the jīva. The pleasure or pain experienced in that state is the result of the law of retribution and is as real as the moral life lived in the waking state” (51).

The play A Midsummer Night’s Dream with its apt title has been presented to show that even shadow creations in dreams possess inherent consciousness or dharmabhutajnana and thereby proves Ramanuja’s verdict. A common feature in the Shakespearean dramas is the presence of clowns, fools and some innocent characters of no importance as the most intriguing stage characters. Clown is the general term that has been originally intended to designate a rustic or otherwise uneducated individual. His dramatic purpose is to evoke laughter with his ignorance. In A Mid Summer Night’s Dream Nick Bottom is classified as the clown, whose dream becomes significant as it not only provides a wholesome meaning to the play’s fantasy but also exemplifies Ramanuja’s ‘dream-theory’. Act IV Scene 1 of the play resolves the confusions effected by Puck when all the characters come out of their charmed dreamy sleep to the actual waking state. Nick Bottom is released of his ass-head and comes out of his dream. The words of Bottom about his dream are also worth considering. As he wakes up Bottom thinks that he is rehearsing the play.
. . . I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. . . .but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what me thought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom . . . (IV.ii.197-205)

Waking from his dreamy adventures in the fairy realm, Bottom has trouble differentiating reality and illusion. In a moment of wisdom, Bottom realizes that his dream is past the "wit of man to say what dream it was" (204); dreams and visions are often untellable. Indeed, Bottom believes men are asses if they try to explain this dream — not every event of life is amenable to rational explanation, and some things exist most fully in the realm of the imagination. According to Bottom, such visionary experiences cannot be comprehended by any of the human senses: not eyes, not ears, not hands, not tongues, not hearts. Only art, literature, can capture these magical, visionary experiences, so Bottom will have Peter Quince write a ballad about his night with the fairies. The naïve Bottom seems to confirm the mysterious dynamics of the inherent consciousness that is, dharmabhutajnana. Dr. K.C. Varadachari has elaborately discussed this fact in his work A Study of Dreams in the Philosophy of Śrī Rāmānuja.
Ramanuja affirms that the dream creations are initiated by the Supreme Person and continues to say:

The supreme person, and not the individual soul, is the creator, for the individual is a creature and not a creator. He who is awake in those who sleep, He is the person who creates all. The dream is not illusory experience. It is a real experience; it has a meaning and an ethical purpose. . . . The general principle that no creation of the real experience ever happens without real power or creative power endowed with intelligence is absolutely correct. . . . Dreams are necessary links between several planes of consciousness and possess diverse qualities or phenomena. . . . The continuity of consciousness as a stream grants it the quality of being the substrate of these experiences of objects. Consciousness becomes an eternal and universal background of all phenomenal experiences. (*Pujya Dr.KCV Works-Volume 6 – http://www.imperience.org/Books/kcv6chap_0.htm *)

The preceptor explains in detail, what is Consciousness. He says that consciousness has five fundamental features: Consciousness is an attribute belonging to a permanent subject. It is not a permanent but a transitory function, or rather it is present whenever the subject cognizes. It is not eternal in the sense that it is not always in action, for consciousness itself testifies to its absence as in the judgments. It is the function of a subject. Consciousness is neither agent nor subject but the act of cognition of a subject to whom it is related as an attribute of
the conscious permanent self behind all changes, a quality – *vīsesana* - inseparable and intrinsic to the self itself. It is not the Absolute *Brahman* nor yet the *atman* the individual soul; it is like the light that reveals the object as well as itself to the substrate. It also reveals memories and recognizes past objects of experience. One of its major roles is memory, *smṛiti* emerges in the cognition on occasions and reveals the nature of the object to its substrate. In waking life it is always continuously operating. The self thus owns Consciousness; it is not the absolute but the personal attribute of a self, invariably associated as its function, *dharma*. Therefore it is known as *dharmaḥtva jñāna*. It is creative in its perfect state of expansion (*vikāsa*), and in its lesser stages of perfection it is not creative of reality, but has inventiveness based on the real and thus is the source of illusions or dreams which however always betray the core of the real in them to a discriminative consciousness. Consciousness is a stream as long as it possesses an object. This objectivity might be physical or mental, as in dreams and in reflection. It is found that consciousness tends to be active in a mild or full form according to the state of tension of the individual in dream states. In other words, during the dream state, consciousness is operative reflecting images of reality. This synoptic presentation of Ramanuja’s views on dream state elucidates the play *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, which obviously can be further elaborated and discussed in these terms.

Another notable fictional character is Touchstone in the play *As you like it*, usually referred as a ‘wise fool’. Touchstone assumes the role of a
courtier in his meeting with Corin, an innocent shepherd in the forest. Personally, he feels far superior to the pastoral shepherd; his criticism of pastoral life proceeds from his superior assumption of the sophisticated court life over country living. The old shepherd Corin an insignificant character becomes significant with his simple way of life and philosophy. He counsels his friend Silvius in his love matter to which Silvius pays no heed. But it is Corin who pities Rosalind and Celia in their needy hour of hunger and readily comes forward to feed them from the farm bought by them. His speech reveals his true and innocent nature, his worldly-wisdom and also his limitations. His knowledge of his limited right over the flocks is to be appreciated and actually their meeting with Corin gives a safe settlement to Rosalind and Celia in the wood. Corin says:

But I am shepherd to another man
And do not shear the fleeces that I graze:
My master is of churlish disposition
And little recks to find the way to heaven
By doing deeds of hospitality. . . .
. . . and at our sheepcote now
. . . there is nothing
That you will feed on. But what is, come see,
And in my voice most welcome shall you be. (II.iv.66–78)

Corin pronounces the best philosophy of life that a person, to be healthy, should have contentment with what he has. A person of Corin’s status cannot be said to possess such a level of consciousness capable of transmitting a high flow of
knowledge. But the swarupa of a jiva has in it the inseparable inherent consciousness which reveals itself even through the words of persons with a contracted form of knowledge. Here Corin’s attributive consciousness makes him utter high philosophy:

No more but that I know the more one sickens the worse at ease he is: and that he that wants money, means and content is without three good friends: that the property of rain is to wet and fire to burn: that good pasture makes fat sheep: and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun: that he that hath learned no wit by nature nor art may complain of good breeding or comes of a very dull kindred. (III.ii.18-23)

He talks of life’s highest ideal of contentment in the first three lines of the passage but in the next lines his limited knowledge naturally takes him to his profession of grazing the sheep. His greatest happiness is to see his lamb sucking its mother and his enjoyment of life is to remain plainly as he is. He says:

Sir, I am a true labourer: I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man’s happiness, glad of other men’s good, content with my harm, and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and lambs suck. (III.ii.53–56)

Perhaps this is the highest wisdom taught by the world religions. Ewes grazing and lambs sucking are common sights in a village. The poet gets the revelation of
beauty in ordinary things through the character of Corin. His inherent consciousness could easily gauge the inscaping aspect of the scene and of the subjects that is instressed through them. Corin does not need any scriptural training. His own *dharmabhuta-jnana* and of the object around him impart wisdom to him. It can be assumed that Shakespeare grasps the *dharmabhutajanana* of his imagined character, which is the reality at that moment. Thus, layers of *dharmabhutajanana* ripples out steadily in a given context and makes the readers / audience understand the meaning of Reality.

On the contrary, how Duke Senior, a person of higher knowledge in the same play, shows it out can be seen. He has been banished by his younger brother Frederick who usurps the dukedom and drives him to the forest. He is now surrounded only by his well-wishers in the forest and not by the ‘painted pomp’ and the ‘envious court’ with false faces. His address to his companions reveals his happiness. He understands that “sweet are the faces of the adversity” (II.i.12) and has learnt the real meaning of life.

> And this our life exempt from public haunt  
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
> Sermons in stones and good in everything. (II.i.15-17)

This speech shows his high level of consciousness in seeing good in everything. He hears the ‘speech’ in trees, learns the lesson from the brooks and above all he is able to understand the ‘sermon’ in stones there. The ‘speech’, the lesson’ and the ‘sermon’ are the revelations of the consciousness of the objects like trees,
brooks and the stones that are able to communicate. The Duke alone seems to be able to understand them. One may ask what ‘speech’ trees can give. They invite everyone to enjoy their breeze and shade, to use their foliage, fruits and nuts and quench their hunger. The running brooks with their laughing sounds give life to the creatures living in it and provide greenery wherever they go. As a sculptor who is able to see the figure of God or woman or anything in the stone, the Duke Senior understands the sermon from the stone about patience. In short, the Duke, deprived of his position and opulence and reduced to the state of penury and simplicity, learns the real meaning of life – which he could not get in the pompous besiege of his castle -- in the Arden forest. Whereas the lowly, unpretentious Corin has learnt the lesson of humility from the natural pastoral surrounding devoid of snobbery and affectedness. Such a disposition perhaps, helps the human beings to identify and react to dharmabhutajnana.

Unless there is the capability of the individual subject of affirming itself or himself as a self existent conscious being without any need of a sensory comprehension with an object, the understanding of this revelation is not possible. Consciousness acting as the attribute of any self or being emerges to the foreground on occasions of each cognition. As noted earlier, just as the light is of flame, consciousness is of the self. It is a function in a low knowledgeable things and in persons it is momentary, but a continuous flow in the case of persons of higher mental strata. When a person is able to know something, he “endures all the levels of experience including the perceptual, rational and
revelational sides” says P.N.Srinivasachari (23). He opines that this unity gives him the knowability or jnana, which “is an act of inner necessity. It is the idea that has concourse with the thing and makes the world of nature intelligible and imparts meaning and value to buddhi and other mental states which are the modifications of jnana and not its creations. Reason and understanding, perception and sensation are illumined and explained by jnana, but jnana is self-explanatory” (29). This explains the plain existence of Corin who seems to be the best illustration of jnana as explicated above.

*The Tempest* is a play that validates attributive consciousness in the character of the superman, Prospero. *The Tempest* is considered as the summation of the master’s art and philosophy. Prospero is one of Shakespeare’s enigmatic protagonists, but to be sympathized because of his vigorous pursuit of knowledge that mainly gets him into trouble. His negligence to the everyday matters as a Duke provides a good opportunity for his brother to usurp his dukedom. He literally crosses the sea of miseries with his baby-daughter, lands in a lonely island and becomes the master of that place by his magic. He is the central figure and generates the plot of the play single handedly. Many shortcomings of his character are noted such as his merciless punishments meted out to Caliban, his autocratic nature towards Ariel, the helping spirit reminds him of his release, and his unpleasant treatment of Ferdinand. His various schemes, spells and manipulations work as part of his grand design to the happy ending of the comedy. He emerges as a more likeable and sensible figure in the final two
acts of the play. He becomes an embodiment of mercy and supreme Wisdom

Alan Hobson in his *Full Circle* (1972) observes about the epilogue of Prospero:

Prospero’s tone is that of one setting out into the unknown, not with eager anticipation, not in the full pride of energy and courage, but diffident and stripped of all his former power. Prospero thinks on death, but his last six lines are in the language that Christians use when they look through death, with a moderate hope, a deep humility, and a claim upon forgiving love. (221)

The play opens with a tempestuous noise of thunder with all the enemies of Prospero struggling for survival in the ship on the ‘wild waters’ of the sea. The tempest is conjured by Prospero with the intention of bringing his usurping brother Antonio into repentance. He himself admits this to his daughter Miranda assuring her that no harm would be done to anybody and the motive of this action is only to bring new turn for good in her life. Prospero has been presented as a very scheming person with lot of forethought and pre-planning. His flow of consciousness is not momentary like that of Corin. It is a continuous one and his powers on nature reveal him as high above an ordinary soul. This is possible for the consciousness of a liberated soul, affirms *Yatindramatadipika* by Srinivasadasa. Swami Adidevananda in his English translation of the work presents the meaning of the *sloka 10* (*Avatara VII*) on *dharmabhutajnana* : “The consciousness of the liberated can simultaneously contact infinite number of bodies like rays issuing from the eye, sun etc” (90). Prospero’s high level of
attributive consciousness helps him identify the good spirit Ariel in the island and he makes use of the spirit’s services to the maximum. Puck, the mischievous elf in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* while performing the orders of King Oberon acts impishly according to his own consciousness. But, Ariel is highly disciplined and carries out Prospero’s orders exactly as he wants them to be done. Prospero through his acquired intelligence and consciousness accomplishes what an ordinary man cannot. He plans correctly, rather his *dharmabhutajnana* directs him perfectly as the navigator’s campus with which he achieves what he desires and becomes a *mukta*.

As in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* this play also suggests the dream aspect. When everything ends well, the Boatswain states that they were asleep after the storm. He says:

> If I did think, sir, I were well awake,  
> I’d strive to tell you. We were dead of sleep.  
> And (how we know not) all clapped under hatches,  
> Where but even now, with strange and several noises  
> Of roaring, shrieking, howling, jingling chains,  
> And no diversity of sounds, all horrible,  
> We were awaked; straightaway, at liberty.  

(V.i.261-272)

He thinks that he is at once awake and is awakened from sleep. He feels as though that every thing has happened in a dream. Just as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* can be declared as Bottom’s dream, *The Tempest* may be termed as the Boatswain’s dream. The play has been described as an insubstantial fantasy.
Though the play definitely contains qualities of fantasy, “it hardly lacks substance. Simply because a piece of work is a fantasy does not mean that real substance can’t be valued in the work. By placing The Tempest in a fantasy setting, Shakespeare is able to make a unique account of human nature and power and is able to ask the question of whether the ends justify the means” (http://www.exampleessays.com/viewpaper/67907.html). Barry Bryson finds biblical theme in the opening scene and writes in his article “The Mark that Precludes Drowning” by referring to Gonzalo’s words: “I have great comfort from this fellow; methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good fate, to his hanging! Make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage! If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.” He says:

Gonzalo, the good advisor of the Duke of Milan, takes heart in the midst of the storm because of a sign he thinks he sees. The Boatswain, a crude and blasphemous man, seems marked for hanging. If the boatswain will one day hang, then he will certainly not drown in this storm – thus the prayer “Make the rope of his destiny our cable.” If the boatswain survives by being marked for a different fate, then they may all survive. (http://manassaschurch.org/index.php/manassas-signal-mainmenu-27/archives-mainmenu-31/1057. Oct 1 2008).
In other words, Gonzalo’s dharmabhutajnana perfectly grasps the “thisness” of the Boatswain instressed by an unknown energy.

Coming back to Boatswain’s dream, The question here is whether the creations in a dream are real or not. Ramanuja avers that dreams “are the works of the individual soul” (Srisaila Chakravarthi 49). As consciousness is inseparable from the self, a question is likely to arise what happens to it during deep sleep. It is there but is dormant. This is explicit from the speech of the Boatswain (V.i) because he talks of his knowledge about various sounds and other things though he has been in deep sleep. His knowledge seems to prove that the consciousness as an attribute to the soul is also eternal though it works at different levels. Prospero also confirms the same idea in his explanation to Miranda and Ferdinand (IV.i). Like a spiritual Master, Prospero himself imparts the highest jnana to Ferdinand:

… We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.                                    (IV.i.169–171)

Prospero’s philosophical answer to the question on life has been clearly indicated in the above lines.

Alan Hobson comments.

There are the images of dissolution and insubstantiality, but there is also a distinct shape. That shape is a globe. The globe is first
mentioned as dissolving, but the mind’s eye sees it and before the verbs ‘dissolve’ and ‘faded’ disperse it into cloud rack, the image of all that inherit the earth and all their architectural wonders arrange themselves upon and around the image of the globe. Human life, human achievement and the round earth are associated in one shifting image that has none the less a distinct geometry. What is that which surrounds both life and earth? Are associated in one shifting image that has none the less a distinct geometry. What is that which surrounds both life and earth? The expression Our little life / Is rounded with a sleep has finality: . .. For the visualiser it reshapes the circle that momentarily dislimned to less than a rack of cloud. (83)

Prospero’s vision is not a magical spell; they are the images created by an active dharmabhutajnana. The reader is reminded of Antony’s words to Eros (IV.xiv) in Antony and Cleopatra.

Prospero’s speech to the audience in the epilogue reveals the substantive consciousness in him. P.N.Srinivasachari suitably observes: “Atman is and has consciousness. It is substantive intelligence and has attributive intelligence as well which manifests in nature. The two can be logically distinguished but cannot be divided” (28–29). Prospero announces that he has pardoned all his enemies, begs to be pardoned and freed from all the sins that he had committed. This realization and absolute surrender is the ultimate crux of
the philosophy of Visistadvaita. It is quite strange that a superman like Prospero becomes the model figure of Shakespeare’s philosophy of realization, forgiving the wrong-doers and making an absolute surrender. The speech seems to sum up Ramanuja’s philosophy which is at once jnana and bhakti, wisdom and prayer. In this final speech he likens himself to the playwright. Many critics have interpreted Prospero as a surrogate of Shakespeare. After his delineations of different protagonists, Shakespeare successfully devises a fully developed man of supreme consciousness. As a man of super intelligence he has been created packed with high level attributive consciousness of the great dramatist, who nonetheless performs well his roles as an affectionate father, as a strict ruler and a strategic disposer of events. He has been depicted as a demi-God who can make things happen as he wants only to constitute a harmonious order that leads to the happy ending of the play. Prospero’s words in the epilogue show his maturity that a person is expected to achieve at that time of his life. This seems to be the philosophy of Shakespeare also. He has acquired the wisdom that Mercy and Prayer are the realities of life. Alan Hobson in the last chapter “With Undiscording Voice” of his book Full Circle comments on this realization especially on the last six lines of the Epilogue that at once reveal “a deep humility and a claim upon forgiving love”: “Prospero’s tone is that of one setting out into the unknown, not with eager anticipation, not in the full pride of energy and courage, but different and stripped of all his former power” (221). Hobson
further adds that perhaps Shakespeare desires to pass on this message to the world:

Shakespeare’s last word is a moral injunction, the meaning of which he has explored for many years both through characters who affirm and characters who deny it. Even if the metaphysical context of the words be ignored, a reader who can translate the specialised language into his own idiom will recognize on the one hand Shakespeare’s sense of causal necessity and of the darkness of man’s heart, and on the other hand his affirmation of the saving bonds of love. The moral implications are not merely for the adherents of a particular religious group, or for those who have beliefs about personal immortality. (221)

The great dramatist has rightly identified the dynamics of dharmabhutajnana, explores the inscape in multifarious ways and acknowledges that the instress of “thisness” is the total surrender of the self to the Creator. This could be achieved, as Prospero affirms, through Mercy and Prayer only. The ensuing chapter, obviously takes up the discussion on Daya or Mercy and how the dramatist appends it in his plays. Prayer gets a further dimension in terms of Ramanuja’s philosophy as prapatti and will be elaborated in Chapter six.