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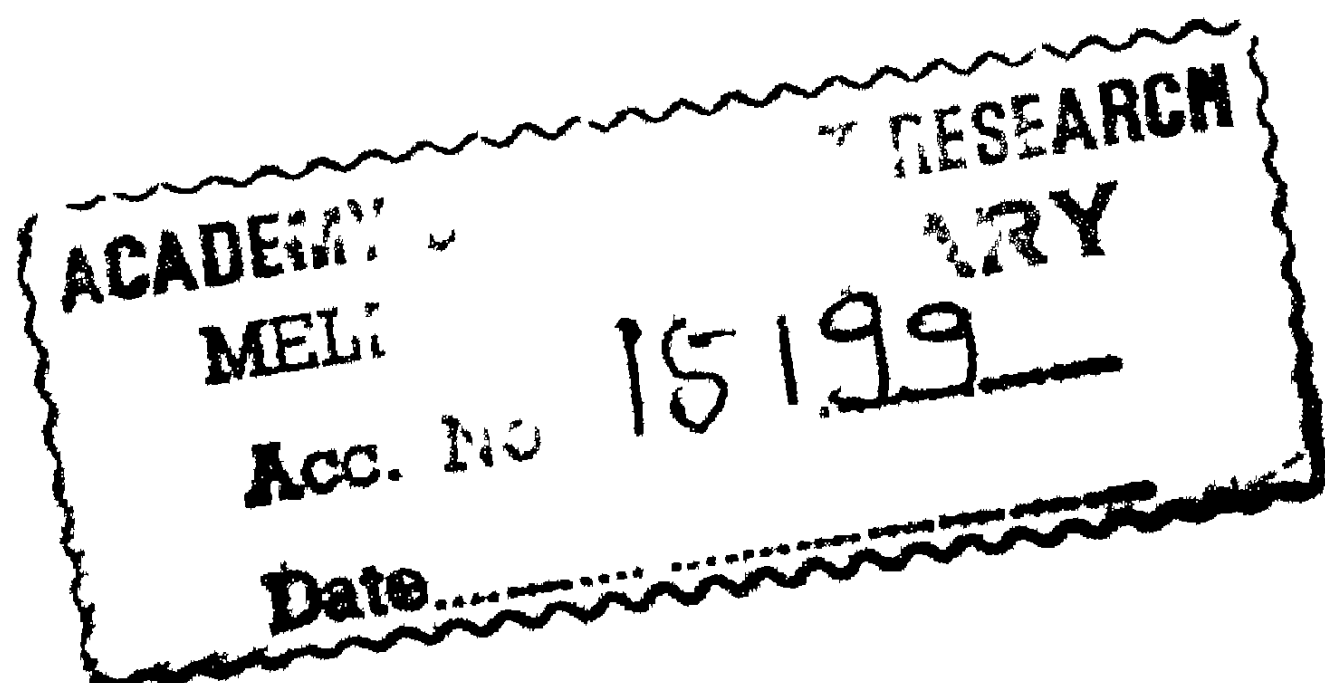
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P R E F A C E

I deem it a great honour that I was invited to deliver these lectures on 'Sri Ramanuja on the *Upanishads*' under the auspices of the Prof. M Rangacharya Memorial Trust.

Prof. Rangacharya was a Guru in his generation, by the manysidedness of his academic attainments, his outstanding qualities as professor and his devoted and most competent contributions to the advancement of learning. He represented the highest qualities of intellect and moral and spiritual fervour.

To us of the succeeding generation, he has bequeathed works of lasting value. His lectures on the *Gītā* are monuments of devoted exposition, vastly erudite, eloquent and profound and deeply moving in their integrity of perspective. Expositors of the *Gītā*, of all persuasions, resort to them for gaining authentic information and insight. There is hardly another exposition of the great scripture, coming up to this level of luminous clarity and breadth of compass, vibrant with the spirit of live piety. His translation of the *Śrībhāṣya* of Rāmānuja with an exhaustive analytical table of contents laid the foundation for all subsequent studies of the great classic. Even George Thibaut is heavily indebted to this masterly ground-work. To the cause of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* Prof. Rangacharya has contributed further through many of his monographs and minor writings. In works of pure literary and scientific value in the field of general Sanskrit scholarship, his services have been immense.

His contemporaries, eminent in their own fields, bear abundant witness in their writings to his personality, to his moral stature, dignity of bearing, inestimable qualities of the heart and range and depth of knowledge. To be associated with an organization devoted to his memory is a distinction to be devoutly coveted.

The worthy son of Prof. Rangacharya, Prof. Sampatkumaran, inheriting the high culture and interests of his father, has borne with me with admirable patience. But for his accommodation to me, in the matter of time and other matters, I would have hardly

delivered these lectures. However, it did come about that I could deliver three lectures on my theme, on 26, 27, 28th of January 1971. They were rather long for lectures but appear condensed in the form of a book. They remain unaltered. Prof. Sampatkumaran kindly undertook to publish them, and he has borne the brunt of the publication. He has corrected the proofs, arranged the material into suitable divisions with appropriate titles, and has verified and translated in his Foot-notes all the passages quoted in the body of the lectures. He is the learned translator of Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Gītā*, and all his gifts and attainments have been brought to bear upon this publication. My deepest gratitude goes to him in all humility and appreciation. I am also thankful to the appreciative audience and the presidential remarks of Swami Paramatmananda, Principal Parasuram and Justice V. V. Raghavan, and to Dr. V. Raghavan who inaugurated the series of lectures.

II

I may mention in passing that the works of Rāmānuja are all available in print, fortunately in good editions. Apart from Śrī Anṇaṅgarāchārya's editions, we have the *Śrībhāṣya* with the *Śrutiprakāśikā* published by Śrī Uttamoor Virarāghavāchārya. The *Gītā-bhāṣya* with the *Tātparyachandrikā* is available in several editions. Śrī Anṇaṅgarāchārya's edition is quite good. The *Vedārthasaṅgraha* is available with the *Tātparyadīpikā* in the edition by the Tirupati-Tirumalai Devasthanam Publication Department, in addition to the older edition by Pundit Rāmamiśra Sāstri of Benares. All the three works are available in some of the South Indian scripts also. The other works of Rāmānuja are also available. The *Gadya-traya* has been published with the three commentaries of Sudarśana Sūri, Periya Āchehān Pillai and Vedānta Deśika. Thus the fundamental texts are at the disposal of the critical student.

As for the translations in English with introductions and notes, we are equally well provided. The *Śrībhāṣya* has been translated by Prof. M. Rangacharya himself, and George Thibaut has translated it for the Sacred Books of the East series. While the former carries an illuminating analysis of contents, Thibaut contributes a

penetrating comparative study. The *Vedārthasaṅgraha* has been translated by Dr. van Buitenen, Prof. M. R. Rajagopala Iyengar and myself. All the three translations carry heavy introductions. The English translation of Rāmānuja's *Gītābhāṣya* by Govindāchārya Svāmin is out of print, but there is a condensed rendering by Dr. Buitenen and an accurate and full translation by Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran. I have also presented the substance of the *Bhāṣya* in my work, *Sri Rāmānuja on the Gītā*. This gratifying record is presented for purposes of acknowledging with pleasure the complete availability of the basic material.

III

It is also a matter of satisfaction that polemical reconsideration of Rāmānuja's standpoint is not wanting. Pundit Ananta Krishna Sāstri engaged himself for a long time in his scholarly career in the refutation of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. He provoked vigorous replies from Sri A. V. Gopālāchārya, Sri V. S. Varadāchār, Sri Uttamoor Virarāghavāchārya and Sri D. T. Tātāchārya. Sri Virarāghavāchārya's *Paramārthabhūṣaṇa* is a massive vindication of Vedānta Deśika's *Satadūṣhaṇī*. Sri Polaham Rāmāswamy Sāstri, in his interesting work, *Dramiḍātreyā-darśanam*, contended that there was no *Bodhāyana-vṛitti*, which Rāmānuja claims to be following, that Tan̄ka and Dramiḍa were straightforward *Advaitins* of the Śāṅkarite type and that Srikanṭha's *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* commentary on the *Sūtras* was pre-Rāmānujite. These issues are examined thoroughly by Sri D. T. Tātāchārya in his *Viśiṣṭādvaita-Siddhi* and the *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* tradition on these questions is defended. Even Vidvān K. S. Varadāchārya of the Mysore Oriental Research Institute argues for the late character of Srikanṭha's *Bhāṣya*. Sri Tātāchārya's treatise is a substantial work in the field. The late lamented Parakāla Svāmin of Mysore, Abhinava Raṅganātha Brahma-tantra Svāmin, produced a modern commentary on the first all-important *adhikaraṇa* of the *Śrībhāṣya*, in which a complete defence of Rāmānuja is worked out in the most scholarly *navīna-tarka* style. Incidentally, this work performs a unique service in that it traces Rāmānuja's statements of the *Advaitic pūrva-pakṣa* to the great early treatises in *Advaita* and thus vindicates the authenticity of Rāmānuja's version of *Advaita*. It also shows in

great detail how Rāmānuja's criticisms of *Advaita* apply with undiminished cogency to the later statements of the *Advaitic* position such as the *Advaita-siddhi* of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. This is a work of great length and immense value.

Among the modern writers in English on Indian philosophy, Dr. Radhakrishnan attempted a critical estimate of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* in the concerned chapter in his *Indian Philosophy*. Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, in his *magnum opus*, *The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, took note of these critical observations and rebutted them in detail. It is an open secret that Dr. Radhakrishnan himself propounds an Idealistic Monism which deviates substantially from the world-denying Absolutism of Śaṅkara. Dr. K. C. Varadarāyaṇar, Prof. R. Ramanujachari and Prof. K. Seshadri have done valuable work in the exposition of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. Dr. B. N. Krishnamurthy Sharma has been labouring for nearly three decades to establish the superiority of *Dvaita* theism. His main point is that the organic relation of the world to God recognized in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* does compromise the transcendence and self-sufficiency of God. It has been pointed out in reply that the learned *Dvaitin* does justice neither to Madhva, to whom the world is eternally real and eternally belongs to God, all through His own will, nor to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, which upholds reciprocal relation and not reciprocal dependence. It is good that sectarian controversies are alive and necessitate repeated study of the classics.

By some of the recent Western students of Vedāntic schools, some new problems are raised. For instance, Dr. van Buitenen and Dr. Lester opine that the full-fledged doctrine of *prapatti* is an invention of later *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and that Rāmānuja himself is no party to that exaltation of *prapatti*. With a view to support this conjecture, they have been obliged to regard the *Gadya-traya* as spurious. There is no evidence for the supporting hypothesis, and the later elaborations of the doctrine of surrender are fully found in essentials in the writings of Rāmānuja. Anyway, this is an interesting historical problem.

Another equally interesting position is taken up by Dr. J. G. Wilson. He regards Rāmānuja's criticism of Śaṅkara's *Advaita* as of the same type as the attack on metaphysics and

theology on the part of current linguistic philosophy. This equation is rather surprising; for, unlike the modern linguistic critics of theology, Rāmānuja has a metaphysico-theological doctrine of his own, possibly more open to attack on the principles of the recent positivism than even that of Saṅkara. Dr. Wilson seeks to rescue Saṅkara on the plea that the latter uses language in an evocative sense, somewhat on the lines of the poetic use of language or the ethical use of language addressed to conation, and not in the propositional manner of metaphysical or theological affirmation. This is a defence worse than the attack. Saṅkara's words are to be denied on this hypothesis all factual significance. This is a point on which Saṅkara has fought with the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsakas* and has tried to demonstrate the assertive nature of the *Upanishadic* statements. Even in the mystic use of words, the intimation of the metaphysically ultimate reality is intended. This two-fold misinterpretation of the two classical philosophers is certainly due to the desire to assimilate their positions to those taken up in the current controversies of the linguistic and analytical philosophers. The assimilation obliterates their identities.

There is a recent work on the *Pāñcharātrāgama* by Dr. S. B. Bhatt from Poona. It is interesting because of the novelty of its conclusions and not because of any solid substantiation. The author maintains that the *Pāñcharātra* is *Advaitic* in its philosophical position. This may be readily granted, and it should also be noted that Rāmānuja's philosophy is also *Advaitic* in an important sense. But the author does not argue in this direction. He thinks that the *Pāñcharātra* is *Advaitic* in the traditional Saṅkarite sense. The implications are double-edged. In this view, it is not only Rāmānuja that misunderstood the *Pāñcharātra*: even Saṅkara who launched a considerable attack on it, misunderstood it in holding that it was anti-*Advaitic*. The author himself does not hold the *Pāñcharātra* in high esteem. He institutes a contrast between the *Pāñcharātra* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. He belittles the *Pāñcharātra* a great deal and pays glowing tributes to Rāmānujite philosophy. It all comes to asserting that the *Āchāryas* of all the schools of Vedānta were wrong in their understanding of the *Pāñcharātra* and that what they hopelessly misunderstood is not worth much. This is research that carries one nowhere. It is good that the traditional identification of the philosophy of the *Pāñcha-*

rātra is called in question and thereby a need to go back to the focal classics of the tradition emerges.

IV

Passing over all these textual and scholastic material, it is worth-while to examine how the philosophy of Rāmānuja stands in the context of modern thought. This may not be for the purpose of assessing it from the standpoint of current philosophic schools whose vogue may after all be transitory. Nor are they beyond criticism. But a reaffirmation of the system must take cognizance of relevant contemporary thinking.

In general, Rāmānuja's approach discloses radical differences from the Absolute Idealism of the close of the last century. That Idealism was attacked by distinguished thinkers such as Pringlepattison and G. F. Stout precisely on grounds similar to those on which Rāmānuja based his attitude to *Advaita*. Much in the Realist Epistemology of the present century confirms and supplements the realist strand in *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. Its theistic standpoint is out of harmony with the naturalistic trend of the prevailing philosophies of the times. That standpoint, based as it is, on the *Upanishadic* revelation, would find many anti-intellectual systems such as Bergsonianism, Pragmatism and Existentialism congenial; but Rāmānuja, though sensitive in a final sense, to the claims of revelation and mystical experience, would not subscribe to a total abdication of Logic. American personalism as presented by Brightman, for instance, is very close to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, but its panpsychism and admission of surd evils brings out certain essential differences. The metaphysics of Whitehead bears strong resemblances to *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. But in the purely logical sphere, Rāmānuja is committed to the subject-predicate logic and for him *Brahman* is the ultimate subject, *viśeṣhya*, of which all else, inclusive of the world of nature and finite spirits, constitutes the predicate, '*viśeṣhaṇa*'.

It is desirable to exhibit how fundamental to Rāmānuja's thought is the category of the substance, *dravya*, and to confront the recent Whitehead-Russell deposition of it. It is true that British Empiricists, beginning with Locke, progressively liquidated the

concept of substance. But with the abandonment of the tradition the exploded category re-enters the field. Hegel substituted 'subject' for 'substance'. This does not affect Rāmānuja's philosophy adversely, as after all, the ultimate 'substance' is to be the ultimate 'su' jec', for the final *viśeṣya* is the *Paramātmān*. Bradley, in his thoroughgoing polemics, demolished the disputed category of substance. But it is doubtful whether, in his final conception of the Absolute and its appearances, he has not re-admitted the category. At least one of his profoundest critics, J. S. Muirhead, does think that he has. "Nevertheless, in Bradley's conception of everything finite as 'adjectival' to the Absolute as the one eternal substance, it seems to have found its way back". (*Platonic Tradition in Anglosaxon Philosophy*, page 467). The admission is implicit in the position of the Idealistic logicians that the hypothetical and disjunctive judgements are grounded in the categorical and that ultimately Reality is the subject of all affirmations. Bradley's condemnation of thought on the ground that it involves the dualism of the 'that' and the 'what' carries no conviction to even fellow idealists, not to mention his epistemological critics such as G. E. Stout.

It is too early to predict that the Russellian position regarding the subject-predicate propositions is final. Even in Whitehead's final metaphysical position, that view appears to have been superseded, and the old modes of thought rooted in the category of substance re-appear irrepressibly. This is what Muirhead has to say on this question: "It is difficult to see how a philosophy can claim, as the philosophy of Organism does, to be carrying on the tradition that 'the things which are temporal arise from participation in the things which are eternal' and that 'the two sets are mediated by a thing which combines the actuality of what is temporal with the timelessness of what is potential' without this idea". (*Platonic Tradition in Anglosaxon Philosophy*, page 436).

Enough provision is made in Rāmānuja's philosophy for the category of relation apart from the category of qualities. In fact, the realm of non-substance, '*adravya*', includes qualities, process, potentiality and also conjunctive relation. It remains to be worked out whether this specific doctrine of substance and non-substance runs against anything infallibly established in modern philosophy. The substance is the principle of permanence amidst change, the source of creative change as agent and the inseparable and unitary locus of the manifold of properties. Permanence, activity and unity are the normal connotations of the concept. How far they are dispensable in a complete philosophy is worthy of investigation. Whitehead designates his ultimate metaphysical principle as 'substantial activity' (*Science and the Modern World*, page 177, Mentor edition), meeting all the requirements of the doctrine of substance. One additional aspect of substance is independence or self-determined

existence, not requiring any other ground of existence or conceivability. If this aspect is fully elaborated, we see, as in Spinozism, there can be only one substance. This is a consequence altogether consistent with *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. God is the one subject of which everything finite is a predicate.

Somewhat in similar strain, it is desirable to indicate the position of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* in relation to the anti-theistic trends in recent thought. Logical positivists like Antony Flew ('Theology and Falsification' in *The Existence of God*, edited by John Flick) demand that we must be able to specify what should occur in order to falsify or refute the hypothesis of God. If we are not able to do that, if we cannot exactly determine the experiential fact or facts, which would constitute a refutation, the propositions asserting divine existence are to be condemned as meaningless. The demand is part of the philosophy that propounds verifiability as the test of truth. There is no finality in that extreme form of empiricism; and verifiability, if rendered logically sustainable, lands itself in coherence. In that extended and 'weakened' philosophy of verification, it is easy to specify what should be the state of affairs for rendering the affirmation of *Brahman* as in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* false. It should be possible to offer a complete explanation of a finite fact in terms of the finite itself, it should be possible to dispose of the garden of the famous parable (*Ibid.*) as we please, even to alienate it, without self-contradiction and without a deadlock in the transaction. It is the contention of the philosophy in question that the situation cannot be so managed. In reality, the very notion of truth, of which verification is upheld as the proof, cannot be conceived or explained without reference to the absolute whole.

It is this argument of the inconceivability of the opposite that is the fundamental assertion of the *Upanishads*. The Logical Positivists try to reduce logical necessity to the necessity of analytical propositions, and that reduction has not succeeded. The whole structure of thought, it is to be maintained, collapses if the implication of the Absolute Spirit is discarded. The untenability of the finite as such is what is asserted again and again in the *Upanishads*. Therefore, it is in the fitness of things that efforts should be taken to make out the message of the *Upanishads*.

An humble attempt in this direction is made in the following pages. Taking the *Upanishadic* heritage in all its compass, and under the guidance of Rāmānuja's interpretation, we are to reconstruct the doctrinal substance of the *Upanishads*.

I once again pay reverential homage to the memory of Professor M. Rangacharya and record my deep gratitude to Professor M. R. Sampathkumaran.

February, 1972, }
Mysore. }

S. S. RAGHAYACHAR

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

As Professor S. S. Raghavachar has indicated in his Preface, three lectures delivered by him at Madras in January 1971 are now published in the form of this book. And we publish it in the confident hope that it will fulfill a long-felt need. There is a widespread impression that Rāmānuja's thought derives more from the *Gītā*, the *Brahma-sūtras* and other such secondary sources of authority than from the basic fountainhead of Indian thought, the *Upanishads*. The fact that he wrote no separate commentaries on the principal *Upanishads* as Śaṅkara had done before him, and that it was left to Raṅgarāmānuja many centuries later to explain the *Upanishads* from the point of view of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* seems to lend colour to this view. But those who have studied the *Sribhāṣya* and the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* of Rāmānuja feel no such inadequacy in his presentation of *Vedānta*.

This is because he has explained in his works more or less all passages of philosophic significance in the principal *Upanishads*. The *Viśayavākyadīpikā* of Raṅgarāmānuja which brings together all texts explained under the *Brahma-sūtras* demonstrates how comprehensively this work has been done, and how Rāmānuja has not evaded or slurred over any text of importance. In fact, Raṅgarāmānuja's commentaries on the *Upanishads* quote extensively from the Master's own explanations. Under the *Sarvavyākhyānādihikaraṇa* of the *Sribhāṣya*, Sudarśana Sūri shows how Rāmānuja's explanations of crucial texts help us to interpret every text of any importance in the whole range of *Upanishadic* literature.

Professor S. S. Raghavachar has now sought to bring this out clearly by a convincing demonstration of the range and quality of Rāmānuja's comments on and exposition of some 15 *Upanishads*. He has assembled together for the first time what Rāmānuja has said in various contexts and more than one work about every one of them. The corpus of interpretation thus made available is substantial and, indeed, impressive in its bulk. A mere bird's-eye-view of all this material is enough to show that in Rāmānuja's works we have,

for all practical purposes, an *Upanishad-bhāṣya* also. Professor Paghavachar has thus blazed the trail for those who may offer more detailed studies of the theme.

Even after all this has been said, there may be a doubt in certain quarters whether exegesis of ancient texts has any relevance to us in the twentieth century. In his stimulating Preface, he has—though quite briefly—dealt with the problems raised in regard to Rāmānuja by the prevailing trends in the world of philosophy. I dare not follow him into those abstruse regions, but shall try, from the point of view of the layman, to supplement what he has said by quoting a few sentences from the *Lectures on the 'Gitā'* by my father, the late Professor M. Banagacharya, intended to explain in a popular way the value and significance of revealed scriptures.

“We speak of the *Veda* as being divinely inspired. To the Christian, the authentic will of God is made manifest in the Bible. The *Koran* is held in similar sanctity by the Moslem. Even to the Buddhist who professes no positive faith in any deity, the *ipsissima verba* of the Enlightened One glow with inspiration.

“What after all is this inspiration? Why is peculiar sanctity attached to the words of these great teachers of mankind, the sages and founders of religions? In all their cases we find that inspiration came to them unbidden, that suddenly and without any conscious effort of their own, they felt themselves uplifted to regions of ecstasy where the secret of the universe and the riddle of existence were laid bare before their vision...It is as though some extraneous Power chose them as the channels of a Revelation.....We may thus derive the authority of the *śāstras* from the rare insight and uncommon knowledge of the founders of religions and propounders of moral codes.....Ultimately, we must trace their genius to the inflow of divine energy into them.” (Vol III, pp. 194–5).

The point that he makes is that the teaching of the *śāstras* “is based on experiences that give us an insight into the nature of our selves and of the right kind of relations that we ought to maintain with the universe”. (*Ibid.*, p. 195.) The *Upanishads* are records as well as interpretations of mystical experience, and as such, have a perennial interest. And it so happens that such

experiences cannot be described without some kind of interpretation, explicit or implicit. If we try to interpret consistently and coherently their diverse statements, descriptions, parables and figures of speech, a few points of view, more or less convincing, emerge. Rāmānuja's is obviously one of the most important among these, and Professor Raghavachar has added to his considerable services to the interpretation of Indian thought by this critical study of Rāmānuja's exposition of the *Upanishads*, in the light of principles of exegesis as well as trends of modern thought. The Trust is happy to acknowledge its indebtedness to the learned Professor for these illuminating lectures and for his handsome tribute to Prof. M. Rangacharya in whose memory the Trust has been founded.

I feel embarrassed at the very nice things which Professor S. S. Raghavachar has said about me, evidently moved by his friendship for me. To admit this is the only way in which I can say thanks to him.

I am under obligations to all who helped me about the lectures and in their printing. It was through the good offices of Sri M. G. Srinivasan, G.D.A., R.A., Retd. Accounts Officer of the College of Military Engineering, Kirkee, Poona, who is now at Mysore, that the request for delivering these lectures was first conveyed to Prof. Raghavachar. Dr. V. Raghavan continued his kindly interest in the Trust, inaugurated the lectures and attended two of them. Swami Paramatmananda, Principal Parasuram and Justice V. V. Raghavan were good enough to agree to our request to preside on the three days. The Triplix Cultural Academy co-sponsored the lectures. We have to express our gratitude to them all.

Sri M. C. Krishnan helped me to see the book through the Press and Sri R. Srinivasaraghavan prepared the indexes and the errata. My thanks to them.

March, 1972, }
Madras. }

M. R. SAMPATKUMARAN.

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SŖĪ RĀMĀNUJA

ON

THE UPANISHADS

—:•:—

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY

I

It is a pleasure for me to devote myself to a theme which has always fascinated me as holding forth prospects of good work, work that calls for more than ordinary effort and competence. It is not that I lay claim to the necessary ability, but only that I bring to the task the required realization of its importance. Imperfect performance on one's part in a great venture such as this might provoke more competent *Vedāntins* to throw themselves into the field and produce correctives and contribute more substantially in furtherance of the aim. It is in this spirit of humble devotion to the task that I undertake to discuss Rāmānuja's interpretation of the *Upanishads*.

It is a recognised convention in the field of *Vedānta* that an *āchārya*, promulgating a new school of *Vedānta*, should work out his thesis on the basis of the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma-Sūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. If his standpoint is sustainable in the light of this three-fold authority, then it stands established. Of these three, the *Upanishads* occupy the foremost position, as the *Brahma-Sūtras* is a treatise subsidiary to the *Upanishads*, and the *Gītā*, being a *Smṛiti*, can ultimately enjoy only derivative authority, however great it may be in itself from the point of view of intrinsic

philosophic worth. It is for this reason that the term '*Vedānta*' originally signified only the *Upanishads*, and it is only in the subsequent history of Indian thought that it came to be applied to the system of philosophy propounded by Bādarāyaṇa in his *Sūtras*.

How does Rāmānuja stand in relation to these fundamental texts? His commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* has received widespread recognition. Its fidelity to the *Sūtras* has been accorded glowing appreciation at the hands of modern scholars like Thibaut. It has almost passed into the current understanding of the *Sūtras*, that their teaching seems to receive more justice at the hands of Rāmānuja than from Śaṅkara. Not that this conclusion is not hotly disputed, but there is a growing body of judgement from informed and competent scholars in favour of Rāmānuja in general. It is not to our purpose now to consider this issue, though such a re-examination may yield further gains. In connection with the *Gītā*, the general tendency among the recent commentators is to concede that it teaches an activist ethics, a theistic conception of the *Brahman* and that it has as its last message the pathway of *bhakti* and surrender to the Divine. These are the fundamental doctrines of the *Gītā* according to Rāmānuja, and recent studies of the *Gītā* such as that of Dr. Zaehner only confirm his findings. There is not much difficulty in seeing, in Rāmānuja's philosophy, an elaboration of what the *Gītā* has as its central purport.

While Rāmānuja's interpretation receives remarkable vindication as an authentic exposition of the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā*, we encounter seemingly insurmountable difficulties when we take up his relation to the *Upanishads*, which, after all, constitute the primary documents of *Vedānta*. His fidelity to the later subsidiary and derivative texts cannot amount to much, if as an interpreter of the *Upanishads* he loses his case. It may be, even then, as a philosopher he may retain his distinction, but as a *bhāṣyakāra*, as an orthodox interpreter of *Vedāntic* texts, he would be counted a failure.

Therefore the examination of his claims to be a faithful exponent of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* is an unconditional imperative. Studies in this direction are hampered by two handicaps. In the first place, writers who discard Śaṅkara's interpretation of the

INTRODUCTORY

Brahma-Sūtras and the *Gītā* with considerable heat pay him compliment that his interpretation of the *Upanishads* is more faithful than that of Rāmānuja. Thibaut and Zaehner are typical examples of this tendency. In the second place, whatever may be his justification, Rāmānuja has not produced the conventional mass of commentaries on even the principal *Upanishads*. To test his understanding of the *Upanishads* in general and of specific passages therein, we have to study relevant statements in *Śrībhāṣya*, *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* and the *Gītā-bhāṣya*. The prejudicial verdict of Western scholars and the absence of ready direct material tend to create a difficult situation on this question.

II

It is into this difficult situation that we have to enter. It is to be supposed that Rāmānuja did not recognise the primacy of *Upanishads*. For him God Himself is to be named '*Aupanishad Parama-purusha*', 'the Supreme Spirit revealed in *Upanishads*'. God is also *śruti-śirasi vidīpta*, specifically expounded by the *Upanishads*, the crown of the *Vedas*. *Brahma-Sūtras* simply bring out the essence of the *Upanishads*. The words of Bādarāyaṇa constitute the nectar churned out of the milky ocean of the *Upanishads*: "*Pārāśarya-vachassudhau Upanishadāugdhābdhi-madhyoddhritām*". The *Gītā* teaches, according to him, *bhaktiyoga*, which, he says, was already taught in the *Vedānta*: "*Vedāntoditam.....bhaktiyogam. avatārayāmāsa*".

So there is no question of his not subscribing to the general *Vedāntic* thesis of the ultimacy of the *Upanishads* in the realm of scriptures. There is, however, the possibility of the adverse conjecture that he was unequal to the task or that he found the texts antagonistic to his point of view and hence avoided open confrontation with them. It is a less risky device, it may be contended, to pick and choose favourable passages and to press them to serve one's preconceived system.

Such an explanation of the lacunae in the interpretative writings of Rāmānuja may not, perhaps, be repelled in an *a priori* manner.

SRI RAMANUJA ON THE UPANISHADS

Let us consider the adequacy of this charge. Raṅgarāmānuja, who has furnished the system of Rāmānuja with the conventional commentaries on the *Upanishads*, can hardly be supposed to have done anything by way of scholarship and philosophical depth that was beyond Rāmānuja. In his commentaries, Raṅgarāmānuja is responsible only for the interpretation of the less significant and less controversial portions of the *Upanishads*. In the elucidation of all the peak passages and all that call for dialectical determination of import, he invariably incorporates Rāmānuja's own elucidation from the *Śrībhāṣya* and the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*.

The texts of the *Upanishads* themselves are not, after all, so dreadfully intractable for a *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* commentator. Even a more radically antimonistic thinker can manage them and make them yield a pure theism. Madhva illustrates this possibility in general. It is an open secret that the *Advaitic* commentator can find delight only in a very small number of *mahāvākyas* and that the rest of the bulk of *Upanishadic* discourses he has to put down as inculcating lower knowledge, *aparā vidyā*. Deussen himself, who identified himself wholly with Śaṅkara's approach to the *Upanishads*, had to concede that there is much in them which is purely pantheistic and theistic, though in what he regards as their highest and characteristic utterances, they proclaim, for him, an idealistic monism. An idealistic monist can hardly do justice to the entire bulk of the *Upanishads* without resorting to the compromising hypothesis of 'preparatory non-sense' or 'concession to the vulgar' in regard to the major portions of even the principal *Upanishads*.

In such an exegetical situation, with so high a proportion of favourable texts, it is a wild conjecture to suppose that Rāmānuja did not engage himself in detailed exegesis on the *Upanishads* on account of the impossibility of making them support his philosophic standpoint. On the contrary, there is a profound principle underlying his position.

He admits, with almost all the commentators of the *Brahma-sūtras*, that they bring out the quintessence of the fundamental *Upanishads*, and that, in a philosophically coherent pattern of thought with all the requisite clarity. As such, he legitimately presumed that the production of independent glosses on the several

Upanishads was not much of a desideratum. There was no such precedent in *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā* either. Detailed commentary on the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the *Vedas* is almost a modern accomplishment on the part of Sāyana. So, as a vital part of the specific task that Rāmānuja set for himself as a commentator of the *Sūtras*, he undertook to elucidate the philosophically central affirmations of the *Upanishads*. What area of the *Upanishadic* texts he brings within the scope of his interpretation will occupy us in the sequel.

In addition to the *Śrībhāṣya* wherein Rāmānuja's interpretation of the *Upanishads* is incorporated, there is the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*, whose distinctive aim is to gather into focus the teachings of the *Upanishads*. According to Sudarśana Sūri, in this work Rāmānuja extracts the nectar of the *Vedānta*, meaning the *Upanishads*. How far this high interpretative claim of *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* is justified also remains to be examined. The accuracy and adequacy of elucidation, and the resulting philosophy of the *Upanishads* as Rāmānuja understood them, constitute the theme of this discussion.

In principle, therefore, Rāmānuja has furnished us a commentary on the *Upanishads*, though not in a formal and conventional manner. It may also be added in passing that Rāmānuja's commentary on the *Gītā* also contains explanations of some important passages of the *Upanishads* along with a condensed enunciation of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* as a whole.

III

We will do well, at this stage, to take stock of the range of the textual data of the *Upanishads* that Rāmānuja actually subjects to interpretation in the course of his writings. While noting the ground he covers, it would be easy to examine the cogency of his explanations of individual passages. After this survey, we may review his understanding of the total perspective of thought embodied in the *Upanishads*. Raṅgarāmānuja attempted that same task and the outcome is his valuable *Vishaya-vākya-dīpikā*. In that work, he brings together Rāmānuja's exegesis of the *Upanishadic* texts in accordance with the sequence of discussion dictated by

the *Sūtras*. The full volume of the interpretative material can also be studied in relation to the individual *Upanishads* themselves, disregarding the order of consideration adopted in the *Sūtras*. That way we can bring in the material provided by the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* also. This procedure appears to be suitable for making us realize the immense range of the ground covered, and also appreciate the justness of the discernment exercised in the selection of texts for elucidation.

In this survey and inspection of data, we will be doing justice to Rāmānuja, if we keep out of consideration the writings of Sudarśana Sūri, Vedānta Deśika, Raṅgarāmānuja and Kūranārāyaṇa. It may well be urged that the school of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* has a satisfactory record on the matter, though Rāmānuja himself does not contribute enough. To obviate that judgement, it is desirable to confine ourselves to Rāmānuja's own discussion of the *Upanishads*.

CHAPTER II.

EIGHT UPANISHADS

ĪśA

The *Īśa Upanishad* is not particularly difficult, as far as the general trend of its thought is concerned. Rāmānuja quotes from it four passages :

“*Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam*” (1) ;

“*Kurvanneveha, karmāpi jijīviṣhet tatam samāh ; evam
tvayi nānyatheto'sti na karma līpate nare*” (2) ;

“*Sa paryagāchokhukramakāyam avraṇam asthāpitaṁ
śuddham apāpavidham*” (8) ;

“*Vidyām chāvidyām yas tadvedobhayaṁ saka ; avidyayā
mṛityuṁ tīrtoḍ vidyayā amṛitamāśnute*” (11).

They are quoted respectively under the *S'ribhāshya* (III. 4. 14 ; III. 4. 13-14 ; I. 1. 1 ; and I. 1. 4).¹

It is significant that the omnipresent reality exercising sovereignty over this entire cosmic scheme is named ‘*Īśa*’ meaning ‘Ruler’. The third passage, though quoted in the course of a

1. The texts may be thus rendered: “By the Lord is all this pervaded”: “Doing works only here, one should wish to live for a hundred years ; in regard to you (the rule is only) in this manner, there is nothing other than this ; works do not taint (the disinterested) man”: “He understood Him to be bright, bodiless, scatheless, without sinews, pure and untouched by evil”: “He who knows both *vidyā* (knowledge) and *avidyā* (works) together, destroys, by means of *avidyā* (works), *mṛityu* (for the effects of past karma causing spiritual stagnation or death) and then, by means of knowledge, attains immortality”.

pūrvapakṣa supporting the *Advaitic* view of *mokṣa*, suggests that *Īśa* has both positive and negative attributes. The second passage is interpreted as permitting the performance of action throughout one's life, even though the primary means of salvation is the contemplation of the Lord. The fourth passage also brings out the synthesis of *karma* and *jñāna* as elements in the perfect way. *Avidyā* is *karma* in the sense of being other than *vidyā*, and it serves the purpose of eradicating the accumulated results of past *karma* and thus facilitates the emergence of *vidyā*, which effectuates the realization of *Brahman*.

It is to be noted that the enigmatic terms, '*sambhūti*' and '*asambhūti*' (12, 14), receive no explanation, and we have to turn to Śaṅkara Sūri and Vedānta Deśika for the only plausible explanation. It is a pleasant surprise to find Vinoba Bhave approximating to that explanation. The ecstatic declaration (16), '*Yo'sau asau puruṣaḥ so'hamasmi*' ("He who is that Spirit, I am He"), has to be construed on the lines of the exegesis offered in connection with "*Aham Brahmāsmi*" ("I am the *Brahman*," *Bṛh. Up.* III. 4. 10). The aesthetic aspect of the Deity definitely posited in the expression, '*kalyāṇatamaṁ rūpam*' (16), is taken up in the discussion of the topic in *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*, wherein the *Upanishadic* expression, '*kalyāṇatama-rūpa*' is explicitly used by Rāmānuja. (V. S. page 333).

KENA

The *Kena Upanishad* clearly divides itself into two parts. The first part, while denying the possibility of knowing the ultimate reality through sense-knowledge, asserts that that reality lies at the foundation of all such knowledge. While we are not wholly bereft of the glimpses of *Brahman*, we miss its immensity if we claim to have exhaustive understanding of it. The second part of the *Upanishad* maintains that whatever power and glory that the finite beings, even of the exalted status of gods, possess, are derivative, as they are bestowed on them by *Brahman*. The position is almost the same as that enunciated by the *Gītā* (X) at the end of the *vibhūti-yoga*.

The two parts are connected in the thought that what constitutes the actuating power behind our knowledge is the source of whatever measure of worth we possess. We owe our knowledge to *Brahman*, and from It we derive all our attributes of power and glory. Indra is a god of high distinction according to the *Upanishad*, precisely because he raises himself to the realization of this derivativeness of status. The *Bhāgavata* sums up the *Upanishad* in this inimitable verse -

“Yo'ntahpraviśya mama vācham imāṁ prasuptāṁ
sañjivayatyakhilaśaktidharasvadhāmnā | Anyāṁścha hasta-
charanaśravanatvāgādīn prāṇān namo Bhagavate Puruṣhāya
Tubhyam” (IV. 9. 6).²

From this *Upanishad*, Rāmānuja selects three passages for elucidation, quoting them respectively under *Śrībhāshya* (I. 1. 1.), (I. 1. 4) and (I. 2. 1) :

- (i) “Yasyāmatam tasya matam, matam yasya na veda saḥ:
avijñātam vijñātām vijñātamavijñātām” (II. 3);
- (ii) “Nedam yadidam upāsate” (I. 5-8);
- (iii) “Prāṇasya prāṇaḥ” (I. 1).³

The first passage means for him not the utter unknowability of *Brahman* for whatever reason, but the impossibility of complete and exhaustive understanding of It for the reason that It is infinite. The arrow shot into the sky eventually returns to the earth, not because there is no further space for it to traverse, but because the energy

2. “You, who, having all powers, enter into my sleeping organ of speech and other organs of sense and action like hands and feet, ears and skin, and vitalise them with Your own power—to You who are the Lord and Supreme Self, salutations.”

3. (i) “He who is of opinion (that *Brahman*) is unknown—to him He is known; he who is of opinion (that He) is known to him—he does not know : to those who know well, (He) is unknown : to those who do not know well, (He) is known.” (ii) “Know thou that alone to be *Brahman*, not this which they worship”. (iii) “(He is) the Life of life.”

that caused its flight is exhausted. Humble confession of this failure to comprehend the boundless is a sure mark of wisdom and true insight.

The second passage does not record the depreciation of *upāsana*, as against philosophical knowledge. It just means that *Brahman* is other than what the unregenerate mass of mankind is devoted to. It is a call to a change of direction of devotion and not to an abandonment of the attitude of devotion. In fact, great devotees like Prahlāda have prayed :

“ *Yā prītir avivekānām vishayeshvanapāyini*
tvāmanusmaratas sā me hṛidayāt māpasarpatu ”.⁴
 (V. P. I. 20. 19)

The third passage indicates that *Brahman* is the basis, support and controller of life.

KATHA

It is difficult to pick out passages from the *Kāṭha Upanishad* as the ones that have received interpretation from Rāmānuja. As a matter of fact, almost the entire *Upanishad* is expounded by him in the course of his commentary on the following sections of the *Brahma-Sūtras* : I. 2. 9 ; I. 3. 23 ; I. 3. 40 ; and I. 4. 1. The fundamental argument of the text is traversed in the commentary without omitting any important pronouncement. It is the considered opinion of T. S. Rawson who has written an exhaustive treatise on the *Upanishad* that Rāmānuja's interpretation is the best guide to its philosophy. Be that as it may, it is adequate for our purpose to note that it receives substantial elucidation.

Some major points in that elucidation may be noticed somewhat. The third boon asked by Nachiketas is not enlightenment, according

4. “The kind of never-ceasing love which the foolish have for worldly pleasures, may such love (for You) never leave my heart, ever remembering You.”

to Rāmānuja, as to whether or not there is survival of man's personality after death. Rāmānuja reviews the story of Nachiketas up to this point and shows the absurdity of taking Nachiketas as being uncertain on the question. It is really a prayer for knowledge about the destiny of the finite soul in the state of final liberation. The word, '*prete*' (I. 20), may mean one who is dead and therefore refer to a partial and transitory separation from the body; but it can also mean one winning complete and final emancipation from embodiment, as it does in the discourse of Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī (*Bṛih.* II. 4.). Really, the perplexity here concerns not 'immortality' but 'life eternal'. Hence, Yama's answer constitutes a complete philosophy, comprising the knowledge of man and God and of man's attainment of God.

The final ideal of life and state of attainment is conveyed by the ancient Vedic expression, '*Tadvishṇoḥ paramam padam*' (III 9), as the highest seat of Vishṇu, identifying thereby the Ultimate Spirit the '*Purusha*' of the *Upanishad*, with the Vishṇu of the *Ṛigveda*. This *Purusha* is so to be "*sā kāntā sā parā gatiḥ*" (III. 1) signifying that the Supreme Deity is man's highest goal and sole refuge.

Priorities in the matter of regulation, among the factors of life, for the purpose of moving towards God, are laid down in the *Upanishad*, according to this interpretation, and the final feat in this process is the appropriation of God Himself as a means by way of surrender to Him: '*Tasya cha vaśīkaraṇam taśchharaṇā-gatireva*' (S. B. I. 4. 1).

The transcendent reality of God is not to be explained away by a misconstruction of Divine immanence :

" *Nityo nityānām Chetanaśchetanānām
Eko bahūnam yo vidadhāti kāmān,
Tamatmastham ye 'nupaśyanti dhīrāḥ,
Teshām śāntih śasvati neta eṣām* " (V. 13)⁵

5. "That one Eternal Self who fulfils the desires of many eternal selves—to them who perceive Him as seated in the self there is lasting peace, not to others "

The position outlined herein is ultimate. And only the grace in response to this devotion can bring about man's emancipation, the vision of the Supreme.

*"Nāyamātmā pravachanena labhyaḥ
Na medhayā na bahurā śrutena,
Yamevaisha vriṇute tena labhyaḥ
Tasyaisha ātmā vivriṇute tanūṁ svām"* (II. 23).⁶

This sentiment or conviction is so deeply embedded in *Upanishadic* thought that another fundamental *Upanishad*, the *Mundaka*, also contains it in the same words (III. 2. 3).

PRASNA

The *Praśna Upanishad* is a delightfully conceived work. In it six sages approach one preceptor, Pippalāda, for enlightenment. They are all *Brahma-paras* and *Brahma-nishṭhas* and are in search of the Supreme *Brahman*. They go to Pippalāda, thinking that he would impart to them complete wisdom. The sage directs them to stay with him for an year under the required spiritual discipline and allows them to put whatever questions they desire to ask. He promises to answer them completely if he has the requisite understanding.

While the opening and the general scheme of the *Upanishad* are such, of the six questions put by the six pupils, not all are of philosophical value, though none lacks in traditional value. Only the fourth and fifth questions are truly philosophical and spiritual in significance. The fourth question by Gārgya relates to states of consciousness such as dream and sleep, and also contains a pointed question as to that on which all that exists is founded. After a brief account of the states of consciousness in the manner characteristic of the *Upanishads*, a grand statement of the ultimate metaphysical

6. "This Self cannot be gained by reflection on Vedic teaching (*pravachana*), nor by steady meditation (*medha*), nor by largely hearing (the scriptures). Whomsoever this (Self) chooses, by him alone is He reached. To him this Self reveals His own form."

position is framed. The fifth question by Satyakāma concerns the fruition of meditation on *Om̐*, the sacred verbal symbol of reality.

We do expect Rāmānuja to take up for appreciation the metaphysical answer to the fourth question. But we do not find him doing so. That the whole of Nature, in its rudimentary and elemental forms as well as in its gross shapes, and all our senses and modes of consciousness along with their respective objects, do rest on the Supreme Self is a declaration that would magnificently suit his philosophical standpoint. That the knowing and active self in man, *vijñānātmā*, does also rest on the imperishable Supreme Self is almost a literal anticipation of the full-fledged *Viśiṣṭādvaitic* position. "Even as birds shelter themselves in their tree-homes, even so all that is abides in the Supreme" (IV. 7). He who comprehends this truth is said to know all and enter into all (IV. 11). It may be that this grand passage is left without any comments by Rāmānuja because there is no uncertainty in its import. Sudarśana Sūri explains Bādarāyaṇa's silence on the *Puruṣa-sūkta* in such a manner.

But the fifth question, that from Satyakāma, and Pippalāda's answer, are discussed under the *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 3 12). Meditation on one element of *Om̐* leads to worldly prosperity. Meditation on two elements leads to heavenly felicity. Meditation on the whole of it, inclusive of its three elements, makes for the realization of the Supreme *Brahman*. In reality, *praṇava* (or the syllable *Om̐*) is the pathway to the lower *Brahman* conceived as desirable earthly and heavenly conditions and also the pathway to the supreme good of beholding *Brahman* in Its natural exaltation, which is named the higher *Brahman*. Such unrestricted communion with *Brahman*, which is *śānta* (changeless), *ajara* (free from old age and death), *abhaya* (free from fear) and *amṛita* (immortal) and which the wise ones behold, is the Ultimate Blessedness, the *Brahman* (V. 7). Rāmānuja argues that the *Brahman* spoken of here is the Ultimate Self and no creature-self such as the *Brahmā* of popular cosmology.

The sweetness of this brief *Upanishad* is brought out even in such brief comments, and the text as a whole is free from obscurity.

MUNDAKA

The *Mundaka Upanishad* receives classification under two sections of the *Brahma-Sūtras* (I. 2. 22 and I. 3. 1). Rāmānuja manages to bring in the entire *Upanishad* within the scope of his commentary on these two sections. No major or ornate passage is left uninterpreted. This is a very impressive *Upanishad* throughout.

Saunaka, a great householder, approaches the sage, Aṅgiras, in a proper way and submits to him the question: "By knowing what, revered sir, all this is known?" (I. 1. 3). The question already implies the acceptance of the philosophical position that there is a single unitary principle at the basis of the multiplicity of the observed world of actuality. The disciple simply seeks to know the determinate nature of that principle. It may be noted that this manner of inquiry is found in the great teaching of Uddālaka to Śvetaketu and of Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī. Rāmānuja gives a precise interpretation of the question and repudiates the suggestion that it implies the unreality of the 'many'.

Two kinds of knowledge are enumerated, and for Rāmānuja the subject-matter of both the kinds is *Brahman* Itself. The difference lies in that the lower knowledge is intellectual and is instrumental to the dawn of the intuitive knowledge of *Brahman*, which indeed is the higher knowledge. Then the nature of *Brahman* is briefly enunciated. The *prima facie* view that the description suits the root-principle of the material universe, the unthinking primordial matter, is refuted in considerable detail by Rāmānuja. There follows an evaluation of the life of action, ritualistic and ethical. Its insufficiency in the last analysis is brought out forcefully. The nature of *Brahman* as the ground and soul of the universe is resumed.

The account of *Brahman* as permeating and sustaining the cosmos is presented in an appropriately poetic way, somewhat anticipating the cosmic form of the Deity portrayed in the *Gītā*. The theme is continued, and to it is added the indication of devout meditation on *Brahman*. The possibility remains that the

Brahman dwelling in the universe as the life of its life may be, after all, the individual soul, either as it is or as it can become in the state of perfection. It is decisively countered by the ancient figure of the two birds, one subject to sorrow and the other, effulgent and glorious, abiding in the same tree (I. 1. 1), that is repeated here; and that the *Brahman*, spoken of here, transcends and surpasses the individual is effectively set forth. The doctrine of grace, already noted in the *Katha*, is enunciated in an identical verse (III. 2. 3), and the final consummation of grace is foreshadowed in words of surpassing splendour.

We have thus indicated that every utterance of substance in the *Upanishad* is taken up in Rāmānuja's interpretation and assimilated into the systematic doctrine he elicits from the text

MĀNDŪKYA

The *Māṇḍūkya* has a dubious status among the *Upanishads*. The *Brahma-Sūtra* does not allude to it according to any of the commentators. What is still more surprising, no commentator, not even Śaṅkara, quotes from it in the course of commentaries on the *Sūtras*, the *Gītā* and the other *Upanishads*. Only from the *Kārikās* of Gauḍapāda, supposed to be an elaboration of the *Upanishad*, quotations are found in the works of Śaṅkara and Sureśvara. Only one passage from the *Kārikās* (I. 16) is quoted in Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya*.

But a reputed commentary on the *Upanishad* and the *Kārikās*, treating them together as one continuous whole, is available and is ascribed to Śaṅkara. A commentary attributed to Kūranārāyaṇa Muni appears to accept part of the *Kārikās* as included in the text of the *Upanishad*. Madhva has written a commentary on the *Upanishad*, and he takes some verses of the *Kārikās* as forming part of the *Upanishad*. The boundaries of the text of the *Upanishad* are thus rendered indefinite. While the status of the *Upanishad* is itself uncertain, the followers of Madhva contend with heat that the *Kārikās* that the *āchārya* regards as forming part of the *Upanishad* are positively so. Deussen shares the uncertainty with regard to the genuineness and antiquity of the *Upanishad*.

The *Upanishad* itself, even if genuine and ancient, is thin in content. Its twin themes are the glorification of the *praṇava* and the analysis of the three states of consciousness—waking, dream and deep sleep—as being signified by the three constituents of *Om*, namely, ‘a’, ‘u’ and ‘m’. The *Upanishad* ends up in the declaration of the self transcending the three states and regards that as the purport of ‘*Om*’ in its integral wholeness.

The sanctity of the *praṇava* is a persistent part of the themes of all *Upanishads* and the inquiry into the three states of consciousness is also a recurrent concern. That the proper manner of construing the *praṇava* makes it signify the transcendent spirit beyond the empirical self is also stated elsewhere in *Upanishadic* literature. The special point of this *Upanishad* is its adjustment of the three states as meanings of the three sound-elements of *Om* in their severality and the idea that the integral import of *Om* is the stateless absolute spirit. Even that idea is not altogether an innovation, if we remember the fifth question answered in *Praśna Upanishad*.

While Rāmānuja offers no interpretation of the *Upanishad*, it is to be recognised that no significant part of its theme falls outside the scope of his understanding of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. Its final message of the *ātman* beyond the three states, though immanent in them all, is the burden of the *Brahma-Sūtras* in the second *pāda* of the third *adhyāya*. ‘*Na sthānato’pi parasya, ubhayaliṅgam sarvatra hi*’ (III. 2. 11)⁷ precisely carries this message for Rāmānuja.

AITAREYA

The *Aitareya Upanishad* is celebrated justly for its opening declaration and its great conclusion.

7. “Not even on account of place (do evils pertain) to the Supreme (Brahman); for He is described everywhere as being characterised by the double attribute (of freedom from evil and possession of auspicious qualities)”

“*Ātmā vā idameka evāgra ḍṣit. Nānyat kiñchana mīṣat. Sa ikṣhata lokānu sṛijā iti*” (I. 1. 1).

“All this was *Ātman* only in the beginning. Nothing else was there. He resolved, ‘Let me create the worlds’”. The fundamental reality of which the manifold universe is regarded as the consequence, is affirmed here in this initial statement to be *Ātman*, and the formation of the world is conceived as an act of will on the part of that primeval *Ātman*. This passage is used by Rāmānuja in the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* in an important argument (211). It is also quoted wholly or in part several times in Rāmānuja’s commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*.⁸

The climax of the *Upanishad* is contained in the concept of *prajñāna*. The varied expressions of consciousness in life are enumerated, and then it is asserted that the cosmos with all its living and non-living contents is rooted in *prajñāna* or consciousness, is guided by it and is established in it. This idealist thought of the supremacy of spirit culminates in the declaration that *prajñāna* is *Brahman* (III. 5. 3). The inclusive significance of *prajñāna*, its dominance in the scheme of things and the identification of the Ultimate Reality with Supreme Consciousness are the cardinal verities announced. Comprehension of the Supreme Consciousness is said to be the way to the final blessedness of life.

This passage, though fundamental in character, receives no exegesis from Rāmānuja, obviously for the reason that it contains no ambiguity and admits of no *prima facie* interpretation. That the individual who establishes communion with the *Prajña Ātman* attains the highest end of life excludes the possibility of taking *prajñāna* as the consciousness constitutive of the individual himself. Further, there are innumerable other passages in the *Upanishads* which define *Brahman* as ‘*jñāna*’, ‘*vijñāna*’ etc., and the interpretation they bear does apply to the present text also. Rāmānuja has furnished interpretation of this entire class of texts in

8. E. g., I. 1. 1, I. 1. 12, I. 4. 21, II. 1. 8, II. 1. 15, II. 1. 26, II. 4. 1, III. 3. 17 and IV. 4. 18.

a general way, and that surely brings out the significance of the passage in question. In between the opening passage and this conclusion, the *Aitereya Upanishad* wanders through a number of cosmological ideas hardly of a strictly philosophical character, and Rāmānuja is silent on them.

TAITTIRIYA

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* is a marvellous composition that captures readers or rather listeners with its music and provides altogether a novel conception of the Supreme Reality, a conception that is implied in the rest of the *Upanishadic* literature but receives explicit and adequate formulation only here. It may almost be said that the *Upanishad* came into existence just to advance this particular thesis.

Before entering into Rāmānuja's explanation of the *Upanishad*, it is worthwhile attempting a brief analysis of the text. It consists of three parts. The first part concerns itself with some nicer points of *Vedic* learning and stresses impressively the duty of learning the *Vedas* and also of imparting them. It has a beautiful discourse meant for the *Vedic* student who has completed his formal education. A comprehensive and sublime code of conduct is presented for his guidance in life. There are some philosophical pieces also in the chapter, but they are not the main theme.

In the second chapter the central philosophy of the *Upanishad* is worked out. '*Brahmavidāpnoti param*' (II. 1. 1). "The knower of *Brahman* attains the Highest". This is the fundamental *sūtra*. It contains four constituents: *Praḥman*, the knowing of *Brahman*, the highest good and the attaining of it. The whole chapter is a definition and elaboration of these four principal topics. *Brahman* is defined (II. 1. 1) as That which is real (*satya*), consciousness (*jñāna*) and infinite (*ananta*). The concept is developed further, and a more concrete determination of the nature of *Brahman* is attempted. Five levels of characterisation are portrayed, and *Brahman* is identified progressively as *anna-maya*, *prāṇa-maya*, *mano-maya*, *vijñāna-maya* and *ānanda-maya* : that is, as

consisting of food, life, mind, knowledge and bliss. Each later category is said to pervade and sustain the earlier one. The *ānanda-maya* is the final concept, and it is at once higher, more pervasive and more primordial than the earlier categories. Then a certain scale of *ānanda* (or bliss) is pictured, and *Brahman's ānanda* is said to be beyond thought and expression. That the spiritual progress of the individual culminates in the attainment of *Brahman* as *ānanda-maya* is graphically described. With this account of *Brahman*, all the three other topics stand explained. Knowledge of *Brahman* as *ānanda-maya* is the fundamental pathway and the attainment of *Brahman* of that description is the highest goal. The manner of attaining the goal is the realization, step by step through several stages, of *Brahman* as *ānanda-maya*. There is no doubt that the basic purport of the text is the characterization of *Brahman* in terms of *ānanda*.

The third chapter is a recapitulation of the second in a different setting. Bhṛigu approaches his father, Varuṇa, for knowledge of *Brahman*. The father-cum-preceptor gives a definition of *Brahman* as That from which all these beings of the world come into being, in which they draw support for existence when they exist and to which they return ultimately (III. 1. 1). He advises the pupil to discover the principle, through personal exploration by way of reflection and devout meditation. Bhṛigu traverses upwards through the categories of *anna* (matter), *prāṇa* (life), *manas* (mind) and *viñāna* (consciousness) to *ānanda* (bliss). After the announcement of each of the four earlier discoveries, Varuṇa exhorts him to meditate and inquire further. Only when the discovery that *Brahman* is *ānanda* is made, no further reference to the teacher is there and the teacher stops advising further search. The picture of attaining *Brahman*, the *Ananda-maya*, *Iti* which is made up of bliss, which is given in the second chapter, is repeated in the third also in conclusion.

It is practically impossible to bring together all the references that Rāmānuja makes to the *Upanishad*. His writings abound in frequent utilization of the text, and its teaching enters into the core of his philosophical conception. We can take note here only of Rāmānuja's interpretation of the most significant passages of the *Taittirīya*, and that would surely give an idea of the volume of elucidation we have from him.

SRI RAMANUJA ON THE UPANISHADS

(1) The *Upanishad* offers two definitions of *Brahman*. 'Satyam, jñānam, anantaṁ Brahma' (II. 1. 1)⁹ is the first one. It means, according to Rāmānuja, that *Brahman* is unconditionally existent, omniscient and infinite. 'Jñāna' does not mean mere knowledge. It means the knowing self, whose knowledge has no limitations. 'Ananta' signifies that *Brahman* has no spatial or temporal bounds and that there is nothing other than *Brahman* which *Brahman* does not maintain in existence as its dwelling soul. It also signifies qualitative infinitude of perfections. The defining proposition attributes to *Brahman* these characteristic and unique excellences. The view that the proposition defines *Brahman* without attributing any characteristics to It is refuted at length.

The second definition, 'Yato va imāni bhūtāni jāyante, yena jātāni jīvanti, yat prayantya bhisamviśanti' (III. 1. 1),¹⁰ is also a sound definition. The implication of *Brahman* in the cosmic activities of creation, maintenance and dissolution is also fundamentally real. While the first definition gives us just the substantive nature of the Supreme Being, the second one includes references to that and also brings out the cosmic self-manifestation of *Brahman*. Of the two, the second is fuller and hence the *Sūtrikāra* adopts it. The great *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (I. 1. 1) has this definition as its first declaration of God's nature.

(2) That the cosmic aspect of *Brahman* is no phenomenal superimposition to be knocked down eventually is established by the fact that the *Brahmānandavallī* itself enunciates the truth of creation thrice:

'Tasmādvā etasmād ātmana ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ' (II. 1. 1).

'So 'kāmayata bahu syām prajāyeyaiti idaṁ sarvam-asṛijata' (II. 6. 1).

'Tadātmānaṁ svayam akuruta' (II. 7. 1).¹¹

9 "Brahman is reality, knowledge and infinity".

10 "Desire to know well that from which all things are born, in which they live on being born, and into which they enter when they perish: that is Brahman."

11 "Indeed, from that same Self, the spatial ether came into existence"; "He desired 'May I become many and be born'...He created all this"; "Therefore He Himself made Himself (into many)."

(3) This creation is not just the setting up of the world or projecting it into existence. *Brahman* enters into the created world of living beings and non-living objects and thus becomes those beings, as it were. Creation is a self-formation of *Brahman* out of non-manifestation into the shape of the manifested world of actuality. *Brahman* becomes the world and hence the world is *sukṛita*, created with consummate ease. The universe is good, because God has taken it as His form. This process of 'becoming' does not affect the transcendent perfection of *Brahman*. This is the meaning of the statement, "*Satyam chaṇṛitam cha satyam bhavat*" (II. 6. 1).¹² The transcendent becomes immanent without losing its transcendence. *Brahman* is not merely the inner soul of all creation; it is by virtue of It that all the forces of cosmos observe the cosmic laws. "*Bhishāsmād vātaḥ pavate, bhishodeti sūryaḥ, bhishāsmād agniśchendraścha, mṛityur dhāvati pañchamaḥ*" (II. 8. 1).¹³ The cosmic order is a proclamation of Divine Power.

(4) It is for this reason that the *Upanishad* describes the Supreme *Ātman* as *Sārīra Ātmā*, Embodied Spirit. In reality, *Brahman* is the soul, and the cosmos of finite beings, conscious and unconscious, constitute Its body. It is this truth that lies behind the designation of the *Brahma-Sūtra* as the *Sārīraka-Sūtra*. What gets affirmed with great zest and grandeur in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* and *Subālā Upanishads* is incorporated in this *Upanishad* unmistakably.

(5) In the search for the *Sārīra Ātmā* the *annamaya-purusha*, *prāṇamaya-purusha* and *manomaya-purusha* are come across and discarded as not rising to that high status. The *viññānamaya-purusha* is the individual self and not the *buddhi*. '*Vijñānamaya*' is not something to which things merely happen. It is an

12. "While being the unchangeable (individual self) and the changeable (matter), He has (nevertheless) remained true to His own nature."

13. "Through fear of Him the wind bows; through fear the sun rises; through fear of Him, fire and Indra (perform their duties); and Death runs as the fifth."

active centre of existence by which moral initiative as action and sacrifice is taken. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, if we take both the *Kāṇva* and *Mādhyandina Śākhā*s, makes it clear that the *viññāna* is the finite *ātman*. It is neither the material *antaḥkaraṇa* nor the Supreme *Ātman*. It is also a dwelling place of the *Antaryāmin*, like the material existents. Knowing or *viññāna* is the unique characteristic of the *jīva*, as the *Brahma-Sūtra* (II. 3. 19) asserts in its expression, '*jñā*'.¹⁴ The Supreme Self, therefore, is transcendent of the *viññānamaya-puruṣa* also. That the individual self attains *ānanda* when it apprehends the *Rasa*, that is, *Brahman*, clearly establishes the distinction between it and that which, when apprehended, confers *ānanda* on it.

(6) Finally, the seeker after *Brahman* finds fulfilment in the discovery that *Brahman* is *ānandamaya*, meaning 'abounding in bliss or joy'. *Ānandamaya* is the same as *ānanda*. '*Ānandamaya*' does not imply that there must be some pain or evil also in *Brahman*. It only means that *Brahman's ānanda* is immense and that every other pleasure is trivial in comparison. That several parts of the *Ānandamaya-puruṣa* such as *moda* and *pramoda*, (which stand for varieties of bliss such as the joy experienced in gaining a desired object and that on using it) are mentioned does not prove that *Ānandamaya* is a composite product. The figurative account does not carry such a literal import. That *Brahman* is the *puchchha*, the tail or base of *Ānandamaya*, only means that *Brahman* is the root of *Ānandamaya*, not to be distinguished from it. *Brahman* is the substantive essence and *Ānanda* is Its defining character. The distinction between *Ananda* and *Anandamaya* is untenable, for both the second *vallī* wherein *Ānandamaya* is mentioned and the third which identifies *Brahman* as *Ānanda* picture the goal of all spiritual endeavour as lying in the '*upasaṅkramaṇa* (attaining and experiencing) of the *Ānandamaya*'. The special purport of the *Taittirīya* is to declare the blissful nature of *Brahman*. It is taught that *Brahman* is *Ananda* in and for Itself and that It imparts *Ānanda* to Its devotee. The *Upanishad* says: '*Raso vai saḥ : rasam hyevāyam labdhvā ānandī bhavati..... esha hyeva*

14. *Jñāta eva* : "It (the individual self) is the knower itself, because of them (i.e., because of scriptural statements to that effect)".

ānandayāti” (II. 7. 1).¹⁵ That the world contains the possibility for finite beings to be in it, to attain worldly pleasure in it and even to work out their supreme destiny in it, is due to the fact that it is filled with *Ānanda* “*Kohyevānyāt kaḥ prāṇyāt yadesha ākāśa ānando na syāt*” (II. 7. 1).¹⁶ A Godless universe could never be a ‘vale of soul-making’.

An idea of the infinitude of Divine *Ānanda* is sought be conveyed through a graded scale. Almost the same kind of gradation of *ananda* is worked out in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*. At the conclusion of this scale occurs the famous sentence: “*Yato vācō nivartante aprāpva manasā saha*” (II. 9. 1).¹⁷ This exalted confession of failure of thought and words is due to the excess of delight characterizing the realization of *Brahman*. It does not signify that *Brahman* is beyond words and thought altogether. Such an entity would be nothing, unless some intimation of its existence were available for human thought. How then can it be beyond all thought?

To contend that the Absolute is not relative to thought is to bring it within the realm of relativity, in so far as that contention itself is concerned. Thought which is so utterly vitiated and depraved ought not to be trusted when it condemns itself as not rising to the requirements of apprehending reality. It cannot command the stamina for even self-censure. To say that words fail, when *Brahman* is the subject-matter of discourse, is itself a triumphant way of conveying through words the profundity and magnitude of the theme. Perhaps it is the only way in which words can function in the context.

(7) Man exists in so far as he affirms the existence of *Brahman* who is *Ānanda*. He denies *Brahman* at the cost of his own existence. “*Asanneva sa bhavati asad Brahmeti veda ohet. Asti*

15. “Bliss indeed is He. Having obtained that very same Bliss, he (the individual self) becomes blissful.... For He Himself causes bliss.”

16. ‘If this *Ākāśa* (i.e., *Brahman*) be not Bliss, who indeed is there that can live, and who that can enjoy?’

17. “Without being able to attain Him speech returns with the mind.”

Bra .meti chedveda santamenam tato viduh” (II. 6. 1).¹⁸ This truth is paralleled by Tolstoy’s experimental finding that he lived while he affirmed God and seemed to get annihilated when he ceased believing in God. Perhaps this conception of human existence is what the *Īśa Upanishad* means by the word ‘*sambhūti*’. That precisely is the meaning of ‘*sambhūti*’ according to Sudarśana Sūri and Vedānta Deśika. ‘*Sambhūti*’, in that case, would mean coming into being by virtue of cognizing the presence of God. God is not to be contemplated upon as something remote, a transcendent something that is incapable of immanence. The *Upanishad* is emphatic on the point that *Brahman* is “*nihitam guhāyām*” (II. 1. 1), dwelling in the cave of one’s heart.

The meditation advocated is said to generate fearlessness, freedom from regrets and peace absolute, if it is ceaseless and uninterrupted. It should be a deeply rooted and steadfast devotion. If it is broken and unsteady, intervals of fear and anxiety are also inevitable. This is Rāmānuja’s understanding of the passage, “*Yadā hyevaisha etasmin adṛiṣṭe ’nātmye ’nirukte ’nil .yane ’bhayaṁ pratisthām vindate, atha so’bhayaṁ gato bhavati. Yadā hyevaisha etasminn udaramantaram kurute ’tha tasya bhayaṁ bhavati*” (II. 7. 1).¹⁹ It is true that ‘*antara*’ may mean both differentiation and interruption. In the present context, as opposed to *pratisthā* (steadfast devotion), it could only mean, according to Rāmānuja, interruption or break in devotion. He quotes a sublime *pūrāṇic* verse expressing the same thought: “*Yanmuhūrtham kṣaṇam vāpi Vāsudevo na chintayate sā hānis tanmahachchhidram sā bhrāntis sa cha vikriyā*”.²⁰ The manner of the final

18. “Whoever knows *Brahman* as non-existent, he becomes non-existent, indeed. Whoever knows *Brahman* as existent, him therefore they know as existing.”

19. “For, indeed, when he obtains fearless support in that which is invisible, incorporeal, indefinable, homeless, then he becomes one who has attained freedom from fear. Therefore, whenever he causes the smallest interruption in this (meditation that is based on Him), then indeed there is fear for him.”

20. “If Vāsudeva is not meditated upon (at least) for the short interval of a *muhūrta* or even for a mere moment, that is loss, that is great weakness, that is illusion, and that is uncoordinated and unnatural activity.” Cf. *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, 234. 23.

attainment of *Brahman* is indicated by the expression, '*āpnoti param*' (II. 1). It is further expanded by the statement, "*Ānanda-mayam ātmānam upasañkrāmati*". This approach to the Supreme Self of the nature of joy need not be interpreted in the crude sense of journeying to *Brahman*.

(8) Unless the '*upasañkrāmaṇa*' is so badly interpreted, it cannot be proved that the *Upanishad* is speaking of the lower *Brahman* in this *upasañkrāmaṇa śruti*. It just means the final and eternal blessedness of God-realization. The pilgrimage is by way of the ascent of the individual spirit to its ultimate abode of eternal life. In that state of ecstatic experience—and it is a state of experience and not annihilation of consciousness—the seeking soul achieves the presence of the all-knowing *Brahman* with all His perfections. "So '*śnute sarvān kāmān saha Brahmaṇā vipaśchitā*'" (II. 1. 1).²¹ We have here neither the dissolution of individuality nor the merger of the individual into a qualityless Godhead. On the other hand, it is a rapturous vision of the God of inexhaustible glories, one of the glories being the liberated individual himself.

These are the landmarks in Rāmānuja's explanation of the *Upanishad*.

21. "He attains with the omniscient *Brahman* all desirable qualities".

CHAPTER III.

THE CHHĀNDOGYA

Before entering into a consideration of Rāmānuja's treatment of *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, we may indulge in a generalization. We notice a certain peculiarity in the older *Upanishads*, the *Chhāndogya*, *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, *Aitareya* and *Kaushītaki*. We see them emerging out of the *Brāhmaṇa* type of lucubration and ascending to philosophical dialogues, unlike the later and shorter *Upanishads* like the *Muṇḍaka*, which are neatly philosophical and contain no pre-*upanishadic* elements. In the longer and older *Upanishads*, we find a good deal of matter pertaining to sacred chants and works, and attempts to deal with the ritualistic religion in the language of symbolism.

Presentation of such mixed material partly belonging to the *Brāhmaṇa* level of religious culture and partly of the nature of clear articulations of high philosophical reflections, is characteristic of the few fundamental and early *Upanishads*. So even those who hold that the *Upanishads* embody a single and coherent philosophical doctrine can only be referring to the philosophical parts of the earlier *Upanishads* and the later class of the principal *Upanishads*. This heterogeneity and unevenness of quality is taken note of distinctly by the traditional commentators also. They differ from the modern Western scholars in this, that the latter extend such a characterisation to the strictly philosophical portions of the *Upanishads* also.

With a distinct understanding of this character of its structure, we may enter upon a consideration of the *Chhāndogya*. In its first five chapters, the text contains a good deal of non-philosophical matter, while the three later chapters constitute some of the loftiest utterances of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. That this *Upanishad* is a basic one can be made out from certain important historical facts. The *Brahma-Sūtra* follows the *Upanishad* so

closely and its reference to the *Upanishad* is so absolutely preponderating over that to any other *Upanishad* that several acute modern students like Deussen conjecture that the *Sūtra* might have originated just for systematising the thoughts of this *Upanishad* alone. Even if this extreme hypothesis is not admitted, it stands as an incontestable fact that the *Sūtra* concerns itself with the *Chhāndogya* to the utmost extent.

According to Rāmānuja one Bodhāyana wrote an extensive commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*. Śaṅkara nowhere refers to Bodhāyana, but mentions an earlier *Vṛittikāra* and also speaks of one Upavarsha with considerable respect. Vedānta Deśika, in his *Tattvatīkā*, seems to suggest the identity of Bodhāyana and Upavarsha. In another context where Upavarsha is quoted by Śaṅkara, Sudarśana Sūri (under *Brahma-Sūtra*, III. 3. 51) attributes the quotation to the *Vṛittikāra* and, according to the Viśiṣṭādvaitic tradition, the *Vṛittikāra* is always Bodhāyana. Again, in the Viśiṣṭādvaitic account of the history of *Vedānta* one *Vākyakāra*, also named Taṅka and Bruhmanandin, is said to have written a commentary on the *Chhāndogya* named '*Vākyā*'. In this work he is supposed to have condensed the views of Bodhāyana. This *Vākyā* in turn is claimed to have been explained by one Dramīlāchārya, to whom there are plenty of references in Śaṅkara. Both Taṅka and Dramida are accepted as authorities by the *Advaitins*, as for instance, by Sarvājñātma-muni in his *Saṅkshepa-śāstraka*.

That a commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* could be summarised in a commentary on the *Chhāndogya* could be explained only on the supposition that the *Brahma-Sūtra* is closely woven with the *Upanishad*, such that a commentary on the one could furnish guidance for a commentary on the other. Such being the historical importance of the *Upanishad*, we have to examine Rāmānuja's contribution to the understanding of the *Upanishad*.

It would be a good method to consider first what may be called minor passages, all of them occurring in the course of the first five chapters, and then dwell on the major ones. Discussion of *Brahman*, the ultimate metaphysical principle, in a straightforward manner, may be taken as the criterion for the identification of the major

passages. What is philosophically significant, but does not deal with *Brahman* and also what deals with *Brahman* through some manifestations of It in an indirect manner may be treated as minor.

MINOR PASSAGES

(1) *Jānaśruti and Satyakāma*: At the commencement of the fourth chapter of the *Upanishad* (IV. 1. 3), we have the interesting story of how Raikva came to teach *Brahma-vidyā* to Jānaśruti. Jānaśruti was a good king who practised the kingly virtues to perfection. But he had no knowledge of *Brahman*. That was a great deficiency, for mere goodness without philosophic wisdom does not take a man to the highest goal of life. Some supernatural beings, pleased with his goodness, managed to instil in him a keenness for the highest knowledge and made him aware of the presence of a great sage in the neighbourhood by name Raikva. The king sought him out and offered huge presents and begged for instruction. The sage repelled him and called him a '*Sūdra*'. The king enhanced his gifts, and the sage consented to teach him and did so.

The point here is, according to Rāmānuja, that unless a disciple serves the teacher for a sufficient duration or gives him gifts commensurate with his material resources, the instruction will not take roots in him and bear the desired fruit. Hence, the apparent crudeness of Raikva's behaviour. It is hardness proceeding from compassion. The fact that Jānaśruti is called a '*Sūdra*' and that finally he receives the desired teaching has made the author of *Brahma-Sūtra* raise the question whether *Sūdras*, outside the pale of Vedic learning, could be entitled to the knowledge of *Brahman*. The *Sūtrakāra*, according to Rāmānuja, answers the question in the negative and understands the term '*Sūdra*', not in its conventional sense, but in the etymological sense of one who 'suffers' and in the present case, for want of knowledge of *Brahman*.

In support of this conclusion, the story of Satyakāma Jābāla is brought in, which story follows this one in the *Upanishad* (IV.4 4). The teacher, in that story, accepts Satyakāma as a worthy disciple on the ground that he must be a Brahmin, because he has spoken the

truth. While the first story gives a dismal impression of the social ethics of the *Upanishad*, the second one mitigates it by making truth the necessary and sufficient demonstration of one's Brahminhood. To admit such a purely ethical test of the higher caste, is to undo the legitimacy of the social hierarchy based exclusively on birth. It is to introduce a revolutionary principle, which in the *bhakti* tradition as a whole worked in the future for the spiritual elevation of the masses, from the standpoint of the right to God-realisation.

(2) *The four stages of life*: In the second chapter of the *Chhândogya* in section twentythree, we have an account of the four *āśramas*—*brahmacharya*, *gārhasthya*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* (the stages in life of the student, the married householder, the wandering hermit and the ascetic). This seems to conflict with the concluding passage of the *Upanishad*, wherein only the order of the householder seems to be enjoined. According to Rāmānuja, the latter injunction must be given a limited application and all the four orders or stages of life are to be recognised. He does not subscribe to Śaṅkara's view that only the *sannyāsin*, supposed to be indicated by the word, '*Brahma-samstha*' (one who abides completely in *Brahman*), is fit to attain final liberation. On the other hand, all the four stages of life are useless from the point of view of salvation, if one simply fulfils the requirement of one's stage, but lacks devotion to *Brahman*. If he has that devotion, he can achieve liberation from any of the four stages. '*Brahma-samstha*' for Rāmānuja means 'one who is established in *Brahman*, i.e., devoted to *Brahman* completely'. There is no rejection of *sannyāsa*, though there is no exclusive exaltation of that order of life. The word '*tapas*' earlier in the context means for Rāmānuja both the *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* stages, while according to Śaṅkara it stands only for the *vānaprastha*, *Brahma-samstha* alone referring to the *sannyāsa*.

That Rāmānuja's interpretation of '*Brahma-samstha*' has great plausibility and may even be made to include self-surrender to the Supreme, is established by the reference, in the immediately preceding section (II. 22) of the *Upanishad*, to those who surrender themselves to Indra, Prajāpati and Mrityu with the exact formula of self-surrender: "*Indram śaraṇam prapanno bhūvam..... Prajāpatim śaraṇam prapanno, bhūvam..... Mrityum śaraṇam*

prapanno'bhūvam".²² That the way of surrender to the Deity is not absent in the *Upanishadic* conception of spiritual life is a fact worth serious consideration.

(3) *Eschatology*: The doctrine of *karma* and rebirth is one of the cardinal elements in *Upanishadic* thought. There is also the conception that, after death, those who have attained illumination in life will travel to the highest abode of spiritual felicity through a 'bright way' of the gods, while those who have not attained it traverse other ways varying according to their conduct in life, to be ultimately reborn in the mundane world. These ideas are cast in eschatological frameworks of a somewhat pictorial character. The underlying principles are philosophical enough, but the presentation is made in a form which has no basis except textual sanction. The *Chhāndogya Upanishad* deals with these topics in the fifth chapter from section four to section ten. Rāmānuja discusses these sections in detail removing textual uncertainties, and brings them to harmony with the slightly varying accounts of the same matter in the other *Upanishads*. A consolidated and clear eschatological picture is worked out and is accepted as an authentic description of the life after death. In this, he propounds nothing that does not fall within the actual teaching of the *Upanishads*.

(4) *Cosmic forces*: We may now notice five passages of a more or less similar character. In each of them *Brahman* is named as one of the well-known cosmic forces. The *Sūtrakāra*, according to Rāmānuja, elucidates them thoroughly and discerns them as expounding *Brahman*. The first one occurs in I. 9, and in it *Ākāśa* is declared to be the primordial reality in which the world has its refuge. This surely means *Brahman* and not the physical *ākāśa* (or spatial ether). In the same chapter, in section eleven, *Prāṇa* is said to be the primordial Deity in which all beings have their being. 'Prāṇa' in I. 11 is determined by a thorough discussion of the context to refer to *Brahman* and not to the conventional principle of *prāṇa*. In III. 13, some *Jyotiḥ* is said to be transcendent of the

22. "I have surrendered to and sought refuge with Indra . . . I have surrendered to and sought refuge with Prajāpati . . . I have surrendered and sought refuge with Mṛityu."

highest heavens and to be the foundation of the universe, of even the highest worlds and also to be the *jyotis* in man. This primordial effulgence is not the physical light, but the light that is God. Such is the interpretation of the *Sūtrakāra* according to Rāmānuja. In XV. 5 is the declaration that the Person seen in the eye is the *Ātman*, is immortal and fearless, and that He is the *Brahman*. This *Person in the eye* is not the image in the eye, nor the individual soul, nor any particular deity. He is the Supreme *Brahman* Himself. Again, in the fourteenth section of the eighth chapter, *Ākāśa* is said to be the immortal inner *Brahman*, who fashions the names and forms of the beings in the manifested world (VIII. 14. 1). This *Ākāśa* is *Brahman* and no lower category

(5) '*Vaiśvānara*': In XI. 5, we are told that five sages approach Uddālaka and seek from him enlightenment concerning the *Ātman*, the *Brahman*. Uddālaka realizes that he does not have the requisite knowledge, and he joins them in the search. All the six approach the king of Kekayas, Aśvapati, who ascertains what they already know and imparts to them wisdom on that basis, comprehending and completing what they severally know. Aśvapati finally gives a connected and comprehensive account of the Supreme Reality called here '*Vaiśvānara*'.

This is a fairly extensive dialogue. Who is this *Vaiśvānara*? The term itself is used in Vedic literature in four senses. It may mean the energy in the living body bringing about digestion, it may refer to the physical fire, it may stand for a specific deity in charge of the concerned force of nature, or it may denote the Supreme Reality, *Brahman*. Rāmānuja goes over the whole dialogue and determines that the term in the context signifies only *Brahman*. It is further added that *Vaiśvānara*, comprehending the entire universe as His form, must be meditated upon as a totality and not in His fractional manifestations. The *Vaiśvānara* is the Ultimate Self and not the lower categories going under that name.

(6) '*Kam* and '*Kham*': In the course of the instruction to Upakosala (IV. 10), an important and enigmatic pronouncement is considered, "*Kam* *Brahma*, *kham* *Brahma*". Satyakāma Jābala, the preceptor, explains to Upakosala that what is '*kam*' is '*kham*' and what is '*kham*' is '*kam*'. '*Kham*' means the boundless

space and 'kaṁ' signifies pleasure or happiness. The meaning of each term is to be determined in the passage in the light of the other term. It does not mean, therefore, that *Brahman* is space and pleasure. On the contrary, it means that *Brahman* is boundless joy, transcending at once physical space and finite felicities. It is of the character of infinite joy in itself and the fount of infinite joy to the devotee, and thus, the great thought of the *Taittirīya* stands incorporated in the text in baffling abridgement. *Brahman* is not a negative absolute, but the absolute of positive perfection effectuating abundance of life.

(7) *The 'kapyāsaṁ' text*: Now we are to consider a passage that has unique significance for Rāmānuja. Tradition records that it was the interpretation of this passage by the teacher, Yādavaprakāśa, that made Rāmānuja realize painfully that his teacher could not rise to the height of intellect and spiritual perception needed for grasping the importance of the *śruti*. The passage is of the utmost significance for Rāmānuja, for it contains a clear affirmation of the aesthetic aspect of *Brahman*, which, for him, should go into the final characterization of the ultimate principle. The *Vākyakāra* and *Draṁidāchārya* also appear to have exercised themselves seriously in elucidating its real meaning, if we admit the accuracy of the historical information supplied by Sudarśana Sūri. Rāmānuja discusses it both in the *Śrībhāṣya* and more copiously in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha*.

It reads as follows: "Ya esho'ntarāditye hiraṇmayah purusho dīśyate hiraṇyāśmaśrur hiraṇyakeśa āpraṇakhāt sarva eva suvarṇah. Tasya yathā kapyāsaṁ pundarikam evaṁ akṣhiṇī. Tasyoditi nāma. Sa eṣa sarvebhyah pāpmabhya uditā. Udeti ha vai sarvebhyah pāpmabhyo ya evaṁ veda" (I. 6. 6-7).²³ The text announces the presence of the Golden Person in the sun. It is a recurrent theme in the *Upanishadic* literature that the Divine Spirit is luminously present in the sun. Often, it is also asserted

23. "This Person who is seen within the sun, He is brilliant like gold, has a golden beard, has golden hair and is altogether golden even to the very tips of His nails. His two eyes are like the lotus blossomed under the influence of the sun's rays. His name is *Uditi* (or High). This same above-mentioned Person has risen above all evil. He who knows (Him) thus rises, indeed, above all sins."

that the same Luminous Being abides in the eye that sees. In other words, the same Supreme Spirit shines in the sun and the eye, thereby intimating that It is the centre of the world of the knowable universe and knowing subject. Its altogether radiant presence in the sun is what is declared in the present text.

It goes on to assert further that the eyes of this Being are like the lotus which is *kapyāsa*. Yādavaprakāśa, following Śaṅkara, evidently seems to have interpreted the expression as signifying the reddish hind portion of the monkey. Śaṅkara sees the repulsiveness of the simile and hastens to add that it is only a simile with the lotus, which alone is directly compared to the Divine eyes. Rāmānuja does not see any necessity for such an expedient. He understands the word, '*kapyāsa*', as signifying the lotus displaying itself in all its glory under the enlivening light of the sun, securely resting on its flourishing stalk and growing luxuriantly in deep waters. The word, '*kapi*', itself often means the sun in Vedic literature and Śaṅkara himself takes it to mean the sun in his commentary on *Vishṇu-sahasranāma*, if that is a work of his, as claimed by tradition and as it was so regarded by even Parāśara Bhaṭṭa in his work on the *Sahasranāma*.

Rāmānuja's long poetic compound is worth citing: "*Gambhīrāmbhassamudbhūta-sumṛishtanāla-ravikaravikasita-puṇḍarikadalāmālāyatekshaṇa*" (*Vedārtha-saṅgraha*).²⁴ All this care and delicacy of feeling are intelligible in the light of Rāmānuja's view that the beauty of form attributed to God is absolutely real, as real as His very transcendent nature, His infinite perfections and His creative self-manifestation through the worlds. It is proclaimed by the same Vedāntic texts, on whose authority the

24. "He has eyes, long and clear like the petals of the lotus, unfolded by the rays of the sun and growing on stout stalks from deep water." Sudarśana Sūri, commenting on Rāmānuja's explanation, observes that the *Vākyakāra* has enumerated six interpretations of the term, '*kapyāsam*', of which three are acceptable and three are not. All the three acceptable views are here set out—opened by the sun, having stout stalks and growing in deep water. The rejected explanations suggest that it refers to the sphere of the sun, the posteriors of the monkey and a state of half blossoming.

other truths concerning *Brahman* are asserted. This sameness of the source of knowledge is an important consideration. There is nothing purely earthly in beauty as such, for even earthly beauty owes its splendour to the ingression of the Divinity into it. The *Bhāgavata* (X. 35. 9) puts the thought in inimitable words: “*Vanalatāstarava ātmani Vishṇum vyanjayantya iva pushpaphalādhyāḥ*”. (The trees and creepers were glorious with flowers and fruits, as if they were showing forth the All-pervading One dwelling in them).

Śaṅkara too acknowledges the aesthetic aspect of the Divine principle and makes a striking observation in the course of his interpretation of the passage in question. “The theme of even secular music”, he says, “is God Himself”. *Laukikeshvapī gāneṣhu asyaiva gīyamānatvam darśayati*. (*Brahma-Sūtra*, I. 10. 20). Thus, the passage in question attributing supreme beauty to *Brahman* cannot be explained away, and it stands as stating a fundamental character of ultimate reality, according to the *Chhāndogya*.

There is a further point made in the comments quoted from the *Vākyakāra* and *Draṇidāchārya* in the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha*. They are quoted as insisting that the beauty of God is a fact, because it is apprehended by only a pure mind. The purity of the apprehending mind guarantees the objectivity of what is apprehended. The text adds that the Being spoken of here transcends all sin and that he who comprehends it rises above the realm of sin. The attribute of beauty is shown thereby to have as much of metaphysical ultimacy as that of holiness.

SĀṆḌILYA-VIDYĀ

The justly celebrated section of the *Chhāndogya* (III. 14), traditionally named *Sāṇḍilya-vidyā*, is discussed in *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 2. 1). Its general import is not subject to much dispute among commentators. Śaṅkara does not find it possible to understand it as representing what he regards as the highest philosophy of the *Upanishads*, as evidenced, for instance, in what he says about it in his commentary on it. He holds that it is inferior to the sixth and seventh chapters of the *Upanishad* on the

ground that it pertains to the lower *Brahman*. In his commentary on the *Sūtra* (III. 2. 11), he takes it as an illustration of the *saviśeṣa* exposition of *Brahman*, which is supposed to be superseded by the *nirviśeṣa* point of view. It is heartening to note that the import of *Sāṇḍilya-vidyā* as lying in a determinate and cosmic *Brahman* is unambiguously acknowledged.

The estimate of it on the part of *Advaita* is not very disturbing to a commentator like Rāmānuja, for whom the assumptions underlying that estimate carry no conviction. It is yet to be proved that the sixth and seventh chapters of the *Chhāndogya* teach what they are supposed to teach, namely, Śāṅkarite non-dualism. It is also to be established that the *Upanishads* contain anywhere the doctrine of a *Brahman* both attributeless and acosmic. Even if they do, the philosophy according to which such an Absolutism is the highest truth, is yet to be vindicated. Until these assumptions are fully demonstrated to be true, the relative estimate damaging the philosophic claims of *Sāṇḍilya-vidyā* is of no force. But the admission that it proclaims *Brahman* as characterized by attributes and as involved in the processes of the cosmos is of paramount value, as far as the interpretation of it is concerned.

We may now try to understand Rāmānuja's elucidation of the section as a whole. It begins thus: "*Sarvaṁ khalvidam Brahma. Tajjalān iti śānta upāśita*" (III. 14. 1). We may translate it: "All this is verily *Brahman*, because all this originates from, ends in and subsists through *Brahman*. Hence one should meditate on *Brahman*, having acquired mastery over the passions leading one astray".

An identity statement such as 'All this is *Brahman*' may be interpreted in several ways. (a) It may mean that *Brahman* is superposed on 'all' for some specific purpose, even though 'all' is not *Brahman*. (b) It may mean that what we take to be 'all', the empirical manifold of existence, is not real and only *Brahman* is real. The identification is for purposes of cancelling the affirmation of 'all' and substituting, in its place, the affirmation of *Brahman*. (c) It may mean that *Brahman* is really identical in substance with all. This identity is of no value, if by '*Brahman*' we mean nothing

ever and above what we mean by 'all'. Such an identity amounts to a denial of *Brahman*.

The alternative (d) is actually a denial of 'all'. The alternative (a) makes the identification a provisional expedient not to be taken as serious truth. An illusionist monism which denies the world of plurality, and a pantheism which denies the transcendence of *Brahman* altogether are not legitimate imports of an identity-statement such as the one under consideration. The passage itself specifies the nature of the identity between *Brahman* and 'the all'.

The world of plurality signified here by 'all this' is said to originate from *Brahman*, to end in *Brahman* and to subsist in *Brahman*. It is on the ground of *Brahman* being the source, final resort and sustaining ground that the world is said to be *Brahman*. *Brahman*'s transcendence of the world is not discarded, for to deny the transcendence of *Brahman* is to deny *Brahman*. But transcendence does not mean being out of relation or being merely distinct. That would reduce *Brahman* to the status of one real among other realities and render it finite. It means that the one includes the many and is also what it is in itself. Rather, it includes by virtue of what it is in itself. Thus, transcendence without immanence cannot be the characteristic of the Infinite Reality.

What exactly does immanence mean? Can it mean that it is in the finite in such a way that the finite is pushed out of reality by this very permeation? This negativistic notion of immanence makes the idea meaningless, as there is nothing in which *Brahman* is immanent. Immanence can be conceived of as the presence of the infinite in the finite, establishing the latter in existence and continually imparting to it the power to be. That would make immanence an affirmative and life-giving pervasion. It is this kind of the immanence of the transcendent, an immanence that makes the world of the many and does not negative it that is posited here. The realm of the finites is real, but it is real on account of the presence of the infinite in it. It is this *Brahman* as sustaining the many that the *Upanishad* holds forth as the object of meditation.

The text proceeds further. "Atha khalu kratumayah purusho, yathakratuḥ asmin loka purusho bhavati tathetaḥ prētya bhavati,

sa kratuh kuroita " (III. 14. 1). "Man is indeed of the nature of deed. What he does here, he becomes when he dies. So let him do." Man's future is determined by what he does in the present. Therefore, let him engage himself in the present in the meditation on *Brahman*. Then, an account of *Brahman*'s nature is offered. *Brahman* is *manomaya*, i.e., can be apprehended only by the pure mind. He is *prāṇa-śarīra*, all life is His body. He is *bhā-rūpa*, supremely effulgent in form. He is *satya-saṅkalpa*, His will knows no obstacles. There is no counterforce in existence that could thwart it. He is *ākāśātma*: pervasive and pure like space. He is the soul of even space in which all beings take birth. He is luminous and sheds light on everything. He is *sarva-karma*: the entire universe is His work and all activities are His activities. He is *satya-kāma*: all objects of desire are His. He is *sarva-gandha* and *sarva-rasa*, the abode of all sweet fragrances and all fine tastes. In other words, all sensuous splendours adorn Him. He has appropriated all this. He is *avākī*, speechless, because He is full and perfect, *anādara*.

Thus the Reality spoken of as *Brahman* is shown to be immanent in all existence as the sustaining ground and as characterised by exalted qualities constitutive of supreme perfection. This perfect and all-maintaining Spirit is said to dwell in the heart of man. The devotee has to see Him within his own inner being, as having established Himself there in a subtler-than-the-subtlest form. "*Esha me Ātmā antarhṛdaye apīyān*" (III. 14. 3).²⁵

This installation of the Supreme Being, in the subtlest form, in the heart of the individual, is due to His compassion and He thereby makes Himself available for devout meditation. Even under this condition of subtlety, put on out of compassion, the natural infinity is not abrogated. His incomparable immensity and qualitative majesty are paradoxically present even in this self-imposed diminution. "*Esha me Ātmā antarhṛdaye jyāyān*" (*ibid.*).²⁶ The ingression out of compassion and the absence of the loss of natural perfection thereby are additional perfections, and the total

25 "He is my Self within the heart exceedingly small".

26 "He is my Self within the heart, exceedingly great".

situation brings out the further glory of God's inward appropriation of the worlds. He who meditates on *Brahman* of this nature is said to attain Him. He who meditates with certitude about *Brahman* and about eventually attaining Him will attain Him assuredly. "*Esha me Ātmā antarhridaya etad Brahma. Etam itaḥ pretya abhisambhavitāsmi iti yasya syād addhā na vichikitsāsti*" (III. 14. 4).²⁷ "So said Śāṇḍilya, (so said) Śāṇḍilya" are the concluding words of assertion: "*Iti ha smāha Śāṇḍilyaḥ Śāṇḍilyaḥ*" (*Ibid*).

Brahman is possessed of transcendent perfections and is the power creating, sustaining and withdrawing the worlds. He takes residence, as it were, in the centre of the individual for purposes of his redemption, and even in this confined condition retains all His infinitude. Such a descent and the resultant uplift of the individual constitute additional aspects of perfection.

The *Brahma-Sūtra* makes clear, according to Rāmānuja, that *Brahman*, whose attainment constitutes perfection for the individual, meditation on whom brings about that consummation, who dwells within the self of the meditating devotee, whose immensity and perfections are affirmed therein and who is said to be the source, sustenance and final resort of the universe, is not to be confounded with the *jīva*, the finite individual self. No wonder the text is relegated to a secondary status by *Advaita*. In fact, all passages so relegated are found to be unyielding in their proclamation of a determinate and cosmic *Brahman*, and it is to the seemingly less certain passages that the interpreters of acosmic predilection should resort as a haven of refuge. Whether the latter are dubious enough for such exploitation is to be ascertained in the sequel, and the measure of success obtained by such interpretation is also to be evaluated.

SAD-VIDYĀ

We now come to what is named *Sadvidyā* by tradition on the ground that the term '*Sat*' is its choice for designating the Ultimate Reality. The whole of the sixth chapter of the *Chhāndogya*

27. "He is my Self within the heart, He is *Brahman*. After departing from this world, I attain Him. He who has this conviction, to him there is no doubt".

is taken up by this section. It consists of the sage Uddālaka's teaching to his son, Svetaketu. The teaching contains the most important declaration, '*Tat-tvam-asi*', and *Advaita Vedānta* regards that as the final doctrine. Apart from this exaltation of the text on the part of *Advaita*, its intrinsic significance is also of the highest level in the view of the *Brahma-Sūtra*. Bādarāyaṇa discusses it in several crucial *adhikaraṇas*. At least, the following contexts may be mentioned: I. 1. 5; I. 4. 23; II. 1. 5; II. 4. 17; IV. 1. 15; and IV. 2. 1. Apart from these specific *adhikaraṇas*, there is an extensive utilization and repeated elucidation of its parts in almost the whole of *Śrībhāṣya*. The main theme of *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* seems to be the interpretation of this fundamental text, if we examine the opening argument of the work. We may argue that Rāmānuja undertook to defend his philosophy as the import of this *Vidyā*, specially to counteract the prevailing presumption that "*Tattvamasī*" stands for pure *Advaita* of the Śaṅkarite type. It would, of course, be unfair to urge, on the strength of other passages, that the *Upanishads* teach *Dvaita* or *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. But he and his tradition value the text on its own merits, even apart from the requirements of polemical fairness. Śaṅkarana Sūri remarks that it fulfils best the sixfold criterion governing authenticity of interpretation: *upakrama* and *upasaṁhāra*, *abhyāsa*, *apūroṇā*, *upapatti*, *arthavāda* and *phala*.²⁸ (*Vedārtha-saṅgraha*, 199).

Svetaketu returns from his preceptor, puffed up with pride of learning. His father, Uddālaka, asks him: "*Tamādeśam aprākshyaḥ. Yena aśrutam śrutam bhavati, amataṁ matam, avijñātam vijñātam*"? (VI. 1. 2-3). It means, according to Rāmānuja: "Have you enquired about that *Ādeśa*, by which the unheard becomes heard, the unthought about becomes thought about, and the uncomprehended becomes comprehended?" Hearing, thinking and comprehending are too close to the *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* to be construed as

28. In exegesis the meaning of scriptural passages is determined with the help of the six criteria of "the commencement-cum-conclusion, repetition, newness, being reasonable and appropriate, laudatory statements and declared results".

intellectual processes different from those laid down in the other *Upanishad*. *Ādeśa*, for Rāmānuja, means God by whose command the worlds are ruled. The grammar of this exegesis is justified at length by Sudarśana Sūri and Vedānta Deśika. The question signifies that there is a supreme spiritual principle, by understanding which we understand the world of variety presented to empirical consciousness. In short, there is a unity at the heart of reality, and to grasp it is to comprehend the world of plurality in principle.

Rāmānuja sets aside the possible misinterpretation of this idea, that when we understand the *One*, we understand the unreality of the *many*. The Monistic thesis enunciated here is the same that Yājñyavalkya propounds in his discourse to Maitreyī and that Śaunaka implies in his question to Aṅgiras in the *Muṇḍaka*. If the *many* is a false appearance of the *One*, on the comprehension of the *One*, the *many* simply cease as presentations, and they, having been so for objects of hearing, thought and comprehension, cease to be so hereafter. It is the sublation of the many and not its comprehension that issues from the understanding of the *One* in that case. Unless the knowledge of the *One* includes, in a positive sense, the knowledge of the *many*, the proposition underlying Uddālaka's question becomes meaningless.

Svetaketu is puzzled and wants to know how the knowledge of one thing can include the knowledge of anything else. He is still at the pluralistic stage of thought. Then Uddālaka removes the perplexity by introducing the idea of causation. He says that by understanding the properties of clay, we can understand the properties of clay-products. He also instances the cases of gold and golden articles, iron and iron-articles. He says that the effect is '*vāchārāmbhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam mṛittiketyeva satvam*' (VI. 1. 4), that is, is "modification, as also the name attained (by the cause, i.e., clay) for the purpose of speech to be followed by action: it (i.e., the effect) is all real as clay itself." On the strength of this passage, the unreality of the effect is asserted. Rāmānuja dissents from this exegesis and holds that the passage simply means that the cause itself acquires a new name and a new shape for purposes of fulfilling new uses. The clay-product is real only as clay. Not that the product is unreal, but that it is real only as a modification of clay.

Even if the principle of causation is admitted, the monistic proposition does not get to be intelligible, unless the entire world of plurality is shown to be the effect of a single cause.

The next assertion in the text meets that requirement. It is to this effect: "*Sadeva sonya idam agra āsit, ekamevādvitīyam*" (VI. 2. 1). It means: "This (world) was Being alone in the beginning, one only, without a second". Before creation, the world was one with Being. It was not non-existent, but existent in Being. This part of the sentence means for Rāmānuja the formulation of the *Satkārya-vāda*. The text expressly denies that non-being was the origin of the world. It objects: How can what is arise from a state of total non-being? That means that the effect *which is*, could not come out of a cause in which *it was not*. The objection proves the existence of the effect in the cause on the ground that it *is* now. Far from annulling the reality of the effect, the argument makes reference to the reality of the effect for proving its existence anterior to its production.

This Being was 'one only'. For Rāmānuja the phrase means that it was not yet divided into a multiplicity in terms of names and forms. It was the undifferentiated potentiality of the multifarious world yet to be generated. It was 'without a second'. It was not simple matter for a conscious being to work upon and shape it into the world. It was itself that Supreme Conscious Self. Herein the material and efficient cause coincide, for the Primordial Being is omni-competent. That this is the meaning of 'without a second' is initially hinted at by the term, '*Ādeśa*', and is clearly established in what follows immediately.

"The Being saw: 'Let me become many · let me multiply'" (*Tadaikshata bahusyām prajāyeya* VI. 2. 3) The language of this resolve on the part of the Being is significant. It desired to 'become' many and therefore 'to multiply'. This is not a case of 'making' but of 'becoming'. Hence, the identity of the material and spiritual causes is clearly brought out. The Being comes to be described here as exercising volition. "*Tattejo 'srijata. Tatteja aikshata bahu syām prajāyeyeti. Tadaṇo 'srijata...Tā āpa aikshanta bahvyaḥ syāma prajāyemahiti. Tā annam asrijanta*" (VI. 2. 3-4). "That (Being) created light. The light resolved,

'Let me be many and multiply'. It created the waters....The waters resolved, 'Let us become many and multiply'. So they created *anna*, the earth.'

The progressive formation of the three primary elements is thus narrated. These three are given as illustrative of the creation of all the five elements. It is not that God willed light into being and afterwards light itself created the further factors. He enters into light and through it continues further creation. There is nothing that is not directly created by Him. This is the significance of attributing creative will to light and the waters. Embodied in them, the Creative Being fashions the next phases of creation.

These three elements, Deussen argues, suggested in latter thought the conception of the three *guṇas*. It is hardly a tenable hypothesis. These are physical elements. But the *guṇas* are definable only in relation to percipient *puruṣas*. The number three and the ascription of colours to the three elements, red, white and dark, have given rise to the wrong conjecture. The colours of the elements are sensed, while the colours ascribed to the *guṇas* are psychical in character.

The *Upanishad* proceeds further and says: "*Seyam devataikshata hantāham imās tisro devatā anena jīvenātmanā-nupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaravāṇiti. Tāsām triṣṭitam triṣṭitam ekaikām karavāṇiti, seyam devatēmās tisro devatā menaiva jīvenātmanā-nupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākarot*" (VI. 3. 2-3).²⁹ The Being, called the *Ādeśa* to start with and to which creative volition has been ascribed, comes to be described as the Deity now. The Deity, in question, resolved to make each element threefold, by mixing them up appropriately to enter into them, 'through this *Ātman*, the *jīva*', and differentiate names and forms.

29. "This aforesaid Deity resolved, 'Indeed, entering those three entities (i.e., the elements of fire, water and earth) as the individual self which is (a part of) Myself, I evolve the differentiation of names and forms; will make each of these tripartite, tripartite'. This aforesaid Deity, entering these three entities as the individual self which is the Self, evolved the differentiation of names and forms".

Differentiation of names and forms just means the changing of Its unmanifest being into clear manifestation in the form of the world of diversity. The elements originally brought into being by the Deity are mixed up, so that in each element you can see the other elements also in some proportion. The *Upanishad* elaborately works out this idea of the intermingling of elements. Into these elements the Deity entered and gave them names and forms. As It has entered them for that purpose, the names and forms given to the elements and their products are names and forms of the Deity Itself in Its condition of embodiment in them. In other words, the Creative Principle took its abode in the creatures and rendered them existent enough to bear names and acquire forms. Ultimately, all names and forms are names and forms of the Indwelling Spirit.

The *Upanishad* says that the Deity resolved to enter the elements and did so 'through this *Ātman*, the *jīva*'. The account of entry causes difficulty to the interpreter. Does it mean that the Deity entered the elements along with the *jīva*, suggesting something analogous to the picture of two birds on the self-same tree? It cannot be so interpreted. There is no basis for construing that the Deity entered and also the *jīva*. There is no indication to show that the *two beings* entered on an equal footing, nor does it mean that the Deity entered through the *instrumentality of the 'jīva'*. The *jīva* could never be a facilitating factor in the process. Nor can the passage mean that the Deity only entered. Nor again can it mean that it caused the *jīva* only to enter. Both the *jīva* and the Deity must enter, but as *one* and not as *two*.

There are thus only two possible interpretations. It may be that the Supreme Deity took on the character of the *jīva*, the individual self, and entered. The difficulty in that position is to admit individuation antecedent to the passage into matter. The normal *Advaitic* view is that individuation results from embodiment and is not its presupposition. The other possible view is that the Deity takes up the individual self as its own body and that it enters into the material world as embodied in the individual self. This is the interpretation adopted by Rāmānuja. The Supreme Spirit enters, clothed with the *jīva* as Its own body. To put it otherwise, the *jīva* is caused to enter, carrying within itself the Supreme *Devatā* as its own soul. It is not that the selves enter by separate acts of

entry; only the one Supreme Self enters. But it enters the *jīva* first and appropriates it as Its own body. This entry into the *jīva* is maintained in the *Taittirīya* (II. 6) also. Then It enters the physical elements, appropriating them also as Its body.

The Deity has two bodies, first the individual self and then matter. Matter is the body of the individual self which is itself the body of the Deity, and is thus ultimately the body of the latter. The resulting manifold of names and forms applies to the material objects, through them to the selves incarnate in them and through these to the Ultimate Self dwelling in them. It is not that anything is at any stage bereft of the inner presence of the Deity for making the entry spoken of here and elsewhere in the *Upanishads* intelligible. There is no temporal commencement for Divine immanence. All that is meant is that the indwelling Deity wills to continue Its immanence in the altered state of explicit and manifested being of what It already dwells in.

The *Upanishad* gathers the various threads of thought and frames a comprehensive statement. It says: "*Sanmūlāḥ somyemāḥ sarvāḥ prajāḥ sadāyatanāḥ satpratishthāḥ*" (VI. 8. 4, 6). The summary almost repeats in a clearer form the '*Tajjalān*' (III 14. 1) of the *Sāṇḍilya-vidyā*. It means that all these creatures have the *Sat*, the Primordial Being, as their source, have It as their sustaining principle when they are, and take shelter in It when they pass out of manifest existence. One of the two *Taittirīya* definitions coincides with this. Yet the *Upanishads* are supposed to set forth divergent currents of thought.

The nature of the Fundamental Being is sought to be conveyed by a series of analogies. That all beings, though so full of *Sat*, are unaware of It, is rendered intelligible by the analogy of honey (VI. 9) and rivers (VI. 10). That death means the departure of the spirit and not its cessation is conveyed by the analogy of the tree that withers away when the life-principle leaves it (VI. 11). That the individual soul sinks into *Sat* during deep sleep and death, and thus relapses to the causal state is also brought out (VI. 8). It does not perish in those states, but enjoys the joy of union with *Brahman*, undistracted by the concerns of the outer world of which it is unaware then. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (IV. 3. 21) explains the state of sleep

by the analogy of the embrace of lovers. The *Chhândogya* proceeds to explain how what is too subtle for human comprehension is yet the cause of the immeasurably vast universe : it is explained with the help of the analogy of the invisible seed growing into a mighty *nyagrodha* tree (VI. 12). Just as the salt that has dissolved in water cannot be seen, but assuredly exists, because it can be tasted, the *Sat*, not knowable by ways of ordinary knowledge, can yet be apprehended by a method of knowledge suited to Its nature. Just as a man kidnapped, blindfolded and released in an unknown country, can return to his native land in due course through the direction of others who know, men ignorant of the *Sat* can acquire knowledge from the wise *āchāryas* (VI. 13, 14).

Incidentally, it is remarked that the final attainment of the *Sat* occurs just when man is released from the bonds that tie him to the earthly life. “*Tasya tāvadeva chiraṁ yāvāna vimokshye atha sampatsye*” (VI. 14. 2).³⁰ This lays the foundation for the standard doctrine of *Vedānta* that the *prārabdha karma*³¹ is destructible only through its effects being undergone, while all other forms of *karma* are liquidated through the knowledge of *Brahman*. As in a trial by ordeal the honest man gets exonerated, there is certainty that one who knows the *Sat* will realize perfection (VI. 16). It is to be noted that Rāmānuja does not offer explanations of the seven analogies, though what they aim at clarifying form part of his exegesis of the *Sad-vidyā* as a whole.

Now we come to what may legitimately be regarded as the central affirmation of the *Sad-vidyā* and the text itself leaves us in no doubt with regard to the weight it attaches to it. The statement

30. “So long as he is not freed (from this body), so long there is delay for him ; then he will be blessed”

31. Karma (or the effect of past deeds) that has begun to yield results is *prārabdha* : the accumulated karma awaiting fructification is *sañchita* ; the results of present and future deeds are *āgāmi*, to be experienced in some future birth or births. Every birth is due to a part of the accumulated karma beginning to yield results, and the course of life in that birth is determined by this *prārabdha-karma*.

is made nine times³² in a more or less systematic fashion in the course of a growing presentation. It is evident that everything in the dialogue is meant to lead up to this doctrinal climax: "*Aitadātmīyam idaṁ sarvaṁ. Tatsatyam. Sa Ātmā. Tattvamasi Śvetaketu*".³³ It is desirable to go over each sentence in this declaration.

"*Aitadātmīyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*". The sentence means, for Rāmānuja, that all this, namely, the world of physical nature and finite selves, is ensouled by the Supreme Being. The world is the cosmic body of the *Sat* and has It as its soul.

"*Tatsatyam*". It is only by virtue of this immanence that the world is real. Apart from this relation to the Supreme, it has no reality.

"*Sa Ātmā*". He, the Lord, the *Ādeśa*, the *Sat*, the Supreme Deity, who willed it into existence and entered into it in order to impart to it concreteness of being, is its soul. While the first sentence posits the relation from the standpoint of the world, this sentence reaffirms it from the standpoint of the Supreme *Brahman*.

The fourth sentence in the passage is the conclusion of the conclusion. "*Tat-tvam-asi*". This contains the culmination of the philosophical vision of Uddālaka. The term, '*Tat*' (that), should be taken as signifying the supreme and primordial *Sat*, which was one without a second before creation, which brought forth the world and which sustains it from within in its manifested condition of actuality. It also signifies all the attributes implied by the fact that it produces the world '*Tat*' (that) must bear all this richness of connotation in order to be really meaningful.

'*Tvam*', meaning 'thou', refers in the discourse to Śvetaketu, and it should be taken as standing for the individual. What is the

32. VI. 8. 7; VI. 9. 4; VI. 10. 3; VI. 11. 3; VI. 12. 3; VI. 13. 3; VI. 14. 3; VI. 15. 3 and VI. 16. 3.

33. "All this has that (*Sat* or *Brahman*) for its Self. It is real (in consequence thereof). He (*Brahman*) is the Self. That you are, O Śvetaketu."

exact scope of its reference? It is in answer to this question that all the mighty battles of Vedānta are fought. We will exclude all polemics and focus on Rāmānuja's positive understanding of the concept of 'tvam'.

In the first place, it cannot refer merely to the physical personality, which cannot be addressed and cannot be the recipient of philosophical wisdom. So 'tvam' does not mean the body. Does it mean the individual self, finite and particular, named the *jiva*? The discourse, while explaining the entry of the *Self* into the world of particulars, has made it clear that the finite self cannot even exist if the Supreme Self does not dwell in it. No term applicable to the individual self is applicable only to it. Its reference must extend to the indwelling Divine Principle also. In fact, this reference to the higher reality is the primary denotation. This applies to the term, 'tvam', too. All names and forms are ultimately names and forms of the Supreme Self. Therefore, 'tvam' must be taken as signifying the Ultimate Self. The speciality of this term, as different from the term 'tat', is that it signifies the Divine Self as dwelling within the human self of Svātaketu, which itself dwells within the body of Svātaketu. It is this totality that is described as 'tvam', and in that totality the principal factor is the immanent Divine Self and the subsidiary factor is the *body* of Svātaketu, in relation to which his body is the subsidiary factor. So 'tvam' (that) stands for the Supreme Spirit as immanent in the individual.

The verb 'asi' means 'art', the second person present indicative singular, and effects the identification of the meaning of 'tat' and 'tvam'. The causal Brahman is identified with the Brahman immanent in the effect. It is this level of self-knowledge that Uddālaka found wanting in his son, and he accordingly imparts it to him.

A slight indication of the way in which this text, 'Tat-tvam-asi', is interpreted in Advaita may be brought in at this stage to show why Rāmānuja rejects it as untenable. That would perhaps bring the principle of his interpretation into clearer relief. On the Advaita interpretation also, the term 'tat' stands initially for Brahman, the source of the universe characterized by all

characteristics implied in being that. The word, '*tvam*', stands initially for the individual self, subject to all imperfections characteristic of the finite individual. The identification of *tat* and *tvam* is certainly impossible as such.

Hence a drastic revision of their connotations must be worked out to facilitate the identification. In the revised scheme, all that the word '*tat*' means by virtue of *Brahman*'s creatorship of the world gets abolished. Only the idea of *Brahman* being infinite and non-dual remains. In the same way, all that is understood by the word, '*jīva*', its finitude, its subjection to evil, is to be rejected. Only its being the immediate and self-evident subject of knowledge is to be retained. The resulting import that emerges out of the identification is that the self signified by '*tvam*' is immediate and infinite.

The double pruning down of the connotations of the two terms costs a great deal. The entire thought that *Brahman* is the creative source of the world, is to be abandoned. The finiteness and evil associated with the individual self must be given up as just creations of misunderstanding and error. Rāmānuja refutes this interpretation repeatedly, and most thoroughly in the *Ārandamayādīkaraṇa* of the *S'ribhāshya* as also in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha*. The gist of his argument can be indicated.

The whole of the *Sadvidyā* upto the declaration '*Tattvamasi*' builds up the conception of *Brahman* as the source and sustaining soul of the cosmos. It is on that premise that '*Tattvamasi*' is constructed. One cannot demolish the premise and enjoy the conclusion. The '*tat*' vanishes into nothingness, if every attribute distinguishing *Brahman* is drastically cut out. The subjection to evil characterising the *jīva* cannot be abolished by the hypothesis that it is just a fabrication of error. The liability to such an error is itself a fundamental evil, and as long as that is admitted, the identification of the *jīva* with the perfect *Sat* is an absurd proposition. The pruning proposed is utterly unworkable. Hence Rāmānuja suggests that '*tvam*' must not be mechanically understood as standing for the *jīva* but for the Supreme Self immanent in the *jīva*. *Brahman* which is the ground of the world is identified with *Brahman*, the ultimate self of all

individual selves. This general thesis already propounded in the sentences, "*Ātadātmyam idam sarvam. Tatsatyam. Sa Ātmā*", is particularized in conclusion, with reference to Svetaketu, in '*Tat-tvam-asi*'. *

An impartial scrutiny of these two interpretations will disclose an identity of intention in so far as both the commentators strive to effect the signification of *Brahman* by both '*tat*' and '*tvam*'. On the *Advaitic* view, to achieve that signification, *Brahman* should be stripped of its cosmic aspect, its actual cosmic operations and all that such operations imply by way of powers and attributions. The individual also should be conceived as bereft of all that constitutes his individuality and, in particular, the specific imperfections that make him what he is in his mundane career. But the liability to such self-imposed illusions is an imperfection that clings ineradicably.

* *Advaita* has a partiality for the negative descriptions of the Ultimate. Sankara says that when absolute truth is to be conveyed, the *Upanishads* adopt the negative method. (*Bṛih. Up. Bhāṣya*, II. 2). But *Sarvajñātma-muni* holds that between the negative and positive statements, the latter are of a higher status (*Sattishepaśāstraka*, 122-236). While *Sureśvara* interprets even '*Aham Brahmasmi*' which is but an experiential rendering of '*Tattvamasi*', as representing a negation. This is what is called '*bādhanāśāmanādhikarāya*' (*Naiṣkarmya-siddhi* II. 29), or 'coordinate predication for purposes of sublation'.

But the author of the *Vivareṇa* seems to repudiate the negative mode of interpretation outlined above. (See *Pañchedaśī*, VII. 46.) Attribution of two different features to *Brahman* through the terms, '*tat*' and '*tvam*', is often construed as importing into it distinctions by way of such predicates. For this reason, the terms, it is urged, must be interpreted as simply negating what is opposed to their connotations and not as predicating anything positively of the subject. The position is untenable for two reasons. First, negative predication also does import the kind of distinction sought to be avoided, unless it is utterly meaningless. Secondly, negation to be significant must have a positive basis. So, in general and with particular reference to '*Tattvamasi*', the negativistic interpretation, it is argued by Rāmānuja, is logically unsound. S. S. R.

What is this *prāṇa*? Is it mere life-breath? Rāmānuja discards that identification. In the first place, the text speaks of *prāṇa* as father and mother. In the second place, it considers it as liable to be unkindly treated and injured. In the third place, the individual soul is so invariably associated with *prāṇa* that one could refer to it as '*prāṇa*'. It could not be an inanimate and non-sentient principle. It has to be identified with the *jīva*, the individual self.

Nārada seems to be satisfied with this climax and does not enquire as to what is higher than *prāṇa*, as he invariably did with respect to every previously enunciated lower principle. Then, the preceptor himself introduces a new category under the name of '*Satya*' and says that he who is devoted to *Satya* is an *ativādin*. Nārada wants to be instructed about this principle and wants to become the *ativādin* of *Satya*. Here the problem is whether the category of *prāṇa* itself is carried forward and the *Satya* spoken of is just truthfulness as a part of devotion to *prāṇa*. Every commentator strongly protests against this interpretation and all contend that *Satya* is a higher category and that the teacher is inducting Nārada to a higher and, indeed, the final plane of devotion. There is the extremely favourable word, '*tu*' (but), in the sentence introducing *Satya*.

The teacher proceeds to indicate the steps necessary for the attainment of *Satya*. They are '*vijñāna*', '*manana*', '*śraddhā*' '*nishthā*' and '*kṛiti*'. Rāmānuja explains in detail the appropriateness of this hierarchy of means. But one does not undertake to exert oneself through this rather strenuous procedure, unless *Satya* is something that could bring fulfilment to the seeker, unless it is of the nature of *sukha* (joy). Nārada eagerly announces that he resolves to devote himself to *sukha*. Then Sanatkumāra frames a definition of *sukha*. He says that only the '*Bhūman*', the infinite or the immense, is *sukha*, and there is no pleasure in what is trivial. This *Bhūman*, introduced as defining *sukha*, which in itself is identified with *Satya*, needs an explanatory definition.

It is easy to see that in the passage '*Satya*' means *Brahman*, which for the *Upanishads* is the *Real* in an absolute sense. It is also an established thesis that *Brahman* is of the nature of *sukha* or

ānanda. The *Taittirīya* has contributed that substantial thought to the characterization of *Brahman* and even the *Chhāndogya* has said that *Brahman* is '*kham*' and '*kaṁ*', 'infinite joy'. The purport of this passage is to add, to the definition of *Brahman*, the concept of '*Bhūman*', another word for '*kham*' and '*ananta*' of the *Taittirīya*.

But it goes forward and elucidates in a remarkable manner the notion of '*Bhūman*'. Sanatkumāra offers the following definition of '*Bhūman*': "*Yatra nānyat paśyati, nānyat śṛṇoti, nānyat vijānāti, sa Bhūmā. Atha yatra anyat paśyati, anyat śṛṇoti, anyat vijānāti tadalpam*" (VII. 24. 1). This means: "Where one does not see another, does not hear another, and does not know another, that one is the *Bhūman*. Where one does see another, hear another and know another, that is trivial". This is the literal rendering of the sentence. "Where" does really mean "that in the experience of which" according to Rāmānuja.

It is easy to take the statement as meaning that, in the experience of the *Bhūman*, there is no cognitive relation to an object other than the subject. Śaṅkara takes it in that sense. He adds that exclusion of the knowing of the object may still leave room for the supposition that the subject knows itself. Such a self-cognition would imply that the knowing self is its own object. But that would import into the being of the self a subject-object situation, which is dualistic in so far as it involves dualism of aspects, if not dualism of entities. It is also a self-contradictory notion of the self. The integral non-dualism of the *Ātman* would stand negated by that supposition. Hence, in reality, knowing another entity as well as knowing itself must be denied of the Absolute Self. A total negation of the cognitive process either directed towards an external object or towards itself is the fact of the situation for Śaṅkara.

Rāmānuja would object to this interpretation. The passage in question goes on to speak of the *Ātman* as *aham*, 'I', whose nature lies in self-affirmation. Knowing other entities, entities other than the knowing self, is also definitely asserted in the text. A great deal of knowing is described as happening within the knowing self, when this experience of the *Bhūman* occurs. The knower of the *Bhūman* not merely knows It, but knows that from It originates the entire

empirical world. Therefore, there is no question of the annihilation of the cognitive process.

Then what does it actually mean for Rāmānuja? He takes the implication of infinitude seriously. *Brahman* is infinite. The infinite is that within which falls everything that exists. Therefore, when one is knowing the infinite, either by way of seeing, or hearing, or knowing, there is nothing that falls outside the range of his vision. The knowing is all-inclusive in scope and leaves no residue. The nature of the joy that flows from *Bhūman* is infinite, as *Brahman* is infinite. Hence he who is in communion with *Brahman* by way of knowing, knows no sorrow, for *Brahman* is infinitely blissful. The all-comprehensive being of *Brahman* and the all-comprehensive-ness of the joy that a seeker finds in *Brahman* are the principal points in this interpretation. The ontological and exiological plenitude is the fundamental import of the passage.

Nārada asks - 'On what is the *Bhūman* established'? Sanatkumāra answers that It is established in Its own glory, *sve mahimni*. This is a case of self-dependence. Even this might create the misconception that the Infinite Reality derives something from Its glories. The preceptor hastens to correct and says that It is not established in anything, not even in Its glory. It is not that the glories are denied. Sudarśana Sūri (under *Śrībhāṣya*, I. 3. 7) puts the point very precisely. "*Na mahimanishedhah, api tu vibhūtirūpamahimāpratiṣṭhitatva-nishedah*".³⁴ God's glories are gifts and not investments. The creative self-manifestation of God is for imparting life out of His own abundance and not for rectification of His own deficiencies. As this urge for self-impartation is an eternal attribute, He manifests Himself through eternity.

He, the Supreme *Ātman*, described as the *Bhūman* of this nature, is all-pervading. In that sense, "*Sa eva idaṁ sarvaṁ*" (VII. 25. 1), He alone is all this. After all, the *Śāṇḍilya-vidyā* which said, "*Sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ Brahma*" (III. 14. 1), did not

34 "There is no denial of glory. But there is denial of His being established in the glory of the form of lordship (over all things derived and controlled) "

say anything else. If the *Bhūman* is all this, the knowing self does not stand outside Its range of being. It too is penetrated by the Infinite and has It as its inmost self. Hence, Sanatkumāra advances to what he names "*ahaṅkāraśa*", contemplation of *Brahman* as one's own ego. 'I am all this' is the culmination of this process.

Nārada lamented, to start with, his ignorance of the *Ātman*. Now he is told that the *Ātman* is omnipresent. He is all this, "*Ātmaiva idam sarvam*". Nārada was sorrowing and wanted to be ferried beyond the river of sorrow. Sanatkumāra now declares that he who sees, thinks and understands the *Ātman* will find in the *Ātman* itself every type of joy. He becomes *Ātmarati*, *Ātmakriḍa*, *Ātmamithuna*, *Ātmānanda* and *Svarāṭ*. He gets to have the Self for his satisfaction, the Self for his sport, the Self for his enjoyment and the Self for his rapture. He becomes his own ruler, he becomes free.

This *Ātman*, called progressively '*Satya*', '*Sukha*', '*Bhūman*' and '*Ahaṁ*', was said to transcend *prāṇa*, which in its turn was shown to transcend a multitude of lower principles. What is the ontological fate of those principles?

The discourse answers that question too. He who sees, thinks and knows this *Ātman* will realise all those lower categories beginning with *prāṇa* down to *mantras* and *karma* as coming into being from *Brahman*. *Brahman*'s causal relation to the realm of finite existents is definitively formulated. From the standpoint of supreme illumination, the cosmic aspect of *Brahman* does not get annulled, but is re-affirmed as part of the ultimate truth. The *Ātman* is no doubt transcendent, but is also immanent. The immanence of the transcendent Absolute in creative involvement with the world of finites is taken as an irreducible fact. '*Ātmata eva idam sarvam*' (VII. 26. 1). Only from the Self does everything come into being. He who knows this goes beyond all affliction and achieves all-sided perfection (VII. 26. 2)

The dialogue seems to end with an immediately valuable and practical direction. "*Āhāraśuddhau sattvaśuddhiḥ. Sattvaśuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ. Smṛtilambhe sarvagrathinām*

vipramokṣah" (VII. 26. 2).³⁵ In the purity of food indicated here Rāmānuja sees the main principle of *karma-yoga* as explained in his commentary on the *Gitā*. The purity of mind is the resultant thereof. In the pure mind, *dhruvā smṛiti* or steady remembrance of the Lord arises. This for Rāmānuja is *bhakti*. Only the element of love posited in the *Mundaka* and *Katha* must be added to make the *smṛiti* full-fledged *bhakti*. When this *bhakti* is ripened into fullness the letters of the soul drop off. Such is Rāmānuja's understanding of the *Bhūma-vidyā*.

DAHARA-VIDYĀ

The eighth chapter of the *Chāndogya* contains what is traditionally called *Dahara-vidyā*. Its importance is fairly well-established. There are versions of it in the *Taittiriya* (IV) and in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* discourse of Yājñavalkya to Janaka. As its main purport seems to be the delineation of the Supreme Self as residing in the heart of man, the parallelism extends even further. The *Sanḍilya-vidyā*, the *Sad-vidyā* and the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* are not far removed from this in their subject-matter. The conception of *Brahman* as transcendent but still dwelling in the centre of the individual, may even be claimed to be the fundamental doctrine of the *Upanishads*. One will not be far wrong, if one recognizes the *Dahara-vidyā* as a focal text in the entire bulk of *Upanishadic* literature.

While this is the general impression, one is struck by Śaṅkara's attitude to it. He is of opinion that it does not embody the highest teaching of *Vedānta*, but offers only a lower conception of *Brahman* out of consideration for the dull-witted. This is a revealing judgement and proves forcefully that this part of the *Chāndogya* does not present the concept of *Brahman* that Śaṅkara regarded as the true one. The depreciation may be questioned, and it may even

35. "When food is pure, the mind is pure. When the mind is pure, the memory is firm. When (such) memory is obtained, there is the loosening of all knots."

be doubted whether any other part of this major *Upanishad* propounds an attributeless and acosmic *Brahman*. But the admission that the *vidyā* in question does not support such a conception is a major gain for an exponent of the *Upanishads* who reads in them a philosophy other than that of Śaṅkara. Even while introducing the chapter, Śaṅkara announces that it concerns itself with a lower order of thought. Again, in the *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, he maintains that the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is higher (as it teaches *Nirguṇa-Brahman*) than this *Chhāndogya* text, which, according to him, represents *Brahman* as *saguṇa*. (Br. Sū. III. 2. 39). It must also be added that he does find difficulty in interpreting the *Brahman* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Dahara-vidyā* as wholly *nirguṇa*, but the inconvenient elements in that passage are set aside as mere *stuti*. Whatever may be the final philosophy of *Brahman* in the *Upanishads*, the interpretation of the eighth chapter of the *Chhāndogya* is comparatively free from controversies, as it is recognized by all commentators as setting forth the *Saguṇa-Brahman*.

The *Śrībhāṣya* discusses the chapter rather elaborately under I. 3. 13 and briefly under III. 3. 40. The *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* also elucidates the main points. So, there is ample interpretative material in the works of Rāmānuja bearing on the present passage. The human body is named the city of *Brahman*. The lotus-like heart within it is called the palace or temple within the city. In that abode there is a '*dahara ākāśa*', subtle space. What lies within that subtle space and that subtle space itself must be investigated. The wording of the text is not clear whether the subtle space is also specified as the object of investigation. Rāmānuja exercises a great deal of exegetical subtlety and maintains that both the small space and what exists in it are to be investigated according to the text.

This space is identified with *Brahman*. It can mean neither physical space, nor the individual self. The subsequent description of the space is proved to establish this identification. What is that which lies within the so-called space in the heart? Rāmānuja takes pains both in the *Śrībhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* to refute the suggestion that there is a Principle or Deity higher than the '*Dahara ākāśa*' dwelling in it. There seems to have been an ancient *prima facie* view, named '*Vyomātita-vāda*' in

Viśiṣṭādvaitic literature, which posited a Being higher than this principle of 'subtle space' in the heart. The text itself clarifies the position perfectly according to Rāmānuja, and he cites a more ancient authority in support, namely, the *Vākyakāra*.

That inner space is actually as vast as the outer space, and it contains within itself the immensity of the entire universe, with the earth and the heavens, all fires, all air, the sun and the moon, lightning and stars, all that is by way of pleasures and all objects of all aspiration. The substantive *Brahman* and the infinitude of Its contents, by way of all existents and values, must be made the object of contemplation. This Principle does not age even if It dwells in what ages, does not cease to be though It inhabits the perishable.

It is the Supreme *Ātman*. This *Ātman* is *Satya* and is the *Brahman* that is the abode of all. He contains perfections beyond number. He is *apahatapāpman*, (sinless), *vijara* (unaging), *vimṛityu*, (deathless), *viśoka* (sorrowless), *vijighatsa* (free from hunger), *apipāsa* (free from thirst), *satyakāma* (self-fulfilled) and *satysaṅkalpa* (self-fulfilling).

This string of predicates has a unique significance. In the first place, there are both negative and positive predicates. The negative predicates consistently deny, of *Brahman*, imperfections. The principle underlying negative accounts of Ultimate Reality is elucidated thereby. A general denial gets exactly determined through such particular negations. When *Brahman* is said to be attributeless, it just means that no attributes of the nature of imperfection characterize It. This is the logical rule of exegesis called '*sāmānya-viśeṣha-nyāya*' which brings down the general to the particular. Further, the negative characterization of *Brahman*, however generally worded, must so restrict itself as to leave the affirmative characterisations actually formulated untouched. This is called *utsargāpavāda-nyāya* which determines the force of exceptions to a general rule. In the present statement, the negations do not nullify the positive attributes, '*satyakāma*' and '*satysaṅkalpa*'. Thus, there is a twofold restriction in the interpretation of the negative predicates. A general negation has its scope delimited by the particular negations, and it is also limited by the actually asserted affirmative predicates.

The text proceeds further and tells of those who know nothing of this *Ātman* and His attributes. They attain both in this life and after death only perishable and limited pleasures. They are not free. On the other hand, those who understand this *Ātman* and His perfections attain everlasting good. They achieve freedom. What prevents the appreciation of the exalted attributes of the *Ātman* is called '*anṛita*'. The word means for Rāmānuja '*karma*', as a result of which *Brahman*'s nature stands concealed from our view.

The situation is graphically pictured with an analogy. If there is a great treasure buried underground and people above it are unaware of its presence, it is so near them and still it is not theirs. Similarly, *Brahman* lies very near us. It is in our own selves, and we move about always in the greatest proximity to It, but still we do not discover It, covered as our vision is by *anṛita*. *Brahman* is the supreme treasure hidden by our own unrighteousness.

When the *jīva* approaches this supreme light of *Brahman*, he realizes his own essential nature. To miss *Brahman* is literally to miss oneself. The state of self-manifestation in the commanding effulgence of *Brahman* is clearly elucidated. *Brahman* is the supreme object of attainment by way of apprehension and communion. When this attainment takes place, the self of the seeker gains the full dimensions of its own being. *Brahman* sustains the world that its parts are held in order. Things have their severality of nature preserved through the sustaining power of *Brahman*. It is beyond time, beyond age, beyond death, beyond sorrow, beyond the law of *karma*, and all sins fall away from It, because It is sinless, *apahatapāpman*. On achieving communion with *Brahman*, the blind begin to see, the sorrowing ones begin to rejoice, night becomes day and the state of perpetual illumination sets in.

At this stage (in Section 7) the Chapter moves on to what appears at first to be a new theme. Eventually, its integral connection with the *Dakṣa-vidyā* is explicated.

Prajāpati enunciates the nature of the individual *ātman* in words applied to the Supreme *Ātman* so far. The *ātman* is *apahata-pāpman*, *vijara*, *vimṛityu*, *viśoka*, *vijighatsa*, *apipāsa*, *satyakāma* and *satyasaṅkalpa*.

Indra, the chief of the gods, and Virochana, the chief of the *asuras*, listen to it. They approach Prajāpati for enlightenment concerning the *ātman*. He takes them as pupils and directs them to regard their physical personality belonging to their waking state of experience as the *ātman*. They are both satisfied and take leave. There is, however, this difference between them. Virochana is finally satisfied and goes back to his kingdom once for all. But Indra develops dissatisfaction with the teaching on his way back. He returns to the teacher and discloses his difficulties in accepting the position. Prajāpati takes him again under his direction and instructs that the dream-self is the *ātman*. Indra leaves the teacher apparently convinced. But, on his way back, he develops formidable objections to the doctrine taught. He comes back to the preceptor again and explains his objections. Prajāpati makes him live with him again and points finally to his self in the state of deep sleep as the *ātman*. As before, Indra accepts the teaching and leaves his teacher. Once more, he is assailed by doubts about the latest instruction. He returns to Prajāpati and presents his difficulties.

Now Prajāpati comes out with the final doctrine, as he is satisfied with the maturity of the disciple who does not accept what does not get approved by his own critical reflection. He tells Indra that the earlier teaching to him had to do only with the physical aspect of personality. The body is perishable and is heir to mortality. The real self transcends the body, though it inhabits the body in the state of bondage. It is this embodiment that makes it subject to mundane pains and pleasures. When it recovers its natural independence from the body, it is released from these dualities. This individual *ātman*, named '*samprasāda*' in the text, ascends above the body, approaches the Supreme Light and comes to be revealed in its own form. "*Esha samprasāda asmāt śarīrāt samutthāya param jyotirupasaṁpadya svena rūpeṇa abhinishpadyate. Sa uttamah purushah, sa tatra paryeti jakshan kṛdān ramamāṇah*" (VIII. 12 3).³⁶ This *samprasāda*,

36. "Now this same *samprasāda* (the individual self), rising up from this body, attains the Supreme Light, and becomes manifest in his true nature. He (i.e., the Supreme Light or *Brahman*) is the Highest Person; he (the released self) moves about there, eating, playing and enjoying."

says Prajāpati, rises beyond this body and approaches the Supreme Light and thereby its natural form, namely, its essential nature, gets actualized. The liberation of the individual occurs only on his attaining the Supreme, named here the Supreme Light. In that state of exaltation, the individual does not acquire anything new. He gets rather released into his own proper selfhood, as the hindrances in the form of ignorance and evil to the exercise of his authentic nature are obliterated. The ideal is not an escape from intrinsic being, it is genuine self-attainment through an elimination of all that is extrinsic. But it is self-attainment in and through the presence of the Infinite Spirit.

Then it is stated: '*Sa uttamah purushah*' (*Ibid*). "He is the Highest *Purusha*". Now who is this 'He' that is the Highest *Purusha*? Śaṅkara takes him to be the *saṁprasāda* who has recovered his nature through enlightenment. Rāmānuja takes him to be the *Param Jyotis* on approaching whose presence the *saṁprasāda* has dehypnotized himself. The grammar of both the explanations is full of complication. Śaṅkara connects the passage with the *Purushottama* of the *Gītā* (XV), who, according to him, is the Unconditioned *Purusha* transcending His own two forms of conditioned existence, that conditioned by particularized and manifested phenomenal adjuncts and that conditioned by the general and unmanifested phenomenal adjunct. This is the only legitimate interpretation for a school which does not posit a reality higher than the pure and free *ātman*.

But the passage is definite that the liberation of the *ātman* is owing to its approach, apprehension and communion with the Supreme. Self-attainment is not an autonomous process; it occurs as a part of the experience of the Supreme. Self-liberation is precipitated, as it were, in the vision of God. Hence superlative excellence is to be attributed to the object of that liberating vision and not to the self that gets liberated by that vision. The liberated individual is *uttama* (highest) relatively to the inferior phases of his life; but That, on the experience of which he reaches that height of self-hood, is surely *uttama* in an absolute sense.

Such considerations influence Rāmānuja to take the *Uttama Purusha* as the universal and absolute *Ātman*, transcendent of the

individual self even in its perfected state. But this transcendence, though it bars identity, does not cancel the immanence so lovingly and exultantly portrayed in the *Dahara-vidyā*. The *Purushottama* of the *Gītā* causes no difficulty for Rāmānuja, for He is described there in specifically cosmic terms. He is *Īśvara*, He fills the three worlds and sustains all. If the whole of *Dahara-vidyā* is surrendered to *Saguṇa Brahman*, there is not much point in claiming for the liberated *jīva* all the attributes appropriate to that *Brahman*. ~

Both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja, when interpreting *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 3 15), hold that, while the account of the *Ātman* of the *Dahara-vidyā* attributes to Him the maintenance of the beings of the world, the enunciation of the nature of the *ātman* by Prajāpati omits to do so. This difference surely implies distinction between the Supreme and the individual self. In view of all this, it follows that the *Uttama Puruṣa* is the Highest *Ātman*. The *saṁprasāda*, who has become himself, enjoys supreme happiness 'there' ('*tatra*'). This word, '*tatra*', signifies for Rāmānuja the Highest *Brahman*, the *Uttama Puruṣa*, the Supreme Light.

What is the connection between the *Dahara-vidyā* devoted to the Supreme Deity dwelling in the heart and the discourse of Prajāpati purporting to make clear the nature of the individual as transcending the three states, as being super-physical and as reaching the consummation of being in the experience of *Brahman*? Are they two independent units of teaching though loosely connected? If the two are to be treated as organically connected, which of the two is to be looked upon, if either can be so looked upon, as the core of the eighth chapter? These are important textual questions.

Rāmānuja answers this enquiry with splended clarity, and the answer enhances our appreciation of the original text. He asserts that the teaching of Prajāpati is subsidiary to the *Dahara-vidyā*. "*Prajāpativākye muktātma-svarūpayāthātmaya-vijñānam dahara-vidyopayogitayā uktam*" (*Śrībhāṣya*, I. 3. 19).³⁷ The *Dahara-*

37. "In the teaching of Prajāpati the knowledge relating to the truth concerning the essential nature of the released individual self has been mentioned so as to be helpful to the meditation on the *Dahara*."

vidyā is engaged in expounding the exalted perfections of *Brahman*. It details His attributes, such as freedom from sin and the power of sustaining the cosmos. The discourse of Prajāpati attributes to the liberated *jīva* many of the qualities ascribed to *Brahman* in the *Dahara-vidyā*. This approximation in perfection is a result of the *jīva*'s communion with *Brahman*. That *Brahman* is such that he who approaches It gets conferred upon him many of the perfections characterizing *Brahman*, is an additional perfection of *Brahman*. To put it in the language of religion, the Lord is such that those who worship Him are taken into fellowship with Him in holiness. Being made holy in that manner, they contemplate the Holy One. This, too, is a part of the bountiful majesty of God. Rāmānuja says: '*Muktasya tadupasampattyā apahatapāpmatvādi-kalyāṇaguṇa-viśiṣṭa-svābhāvika-rūpa-prāpti-kathanena, taddhetutva-rūpaṁ Parama-purushāsādhāraṇaṁ guṇaṁ upadeshtum Prajāpati-vākyuktasya jīvasya atra parāmarśaḥ*' (*Śrībhāṣya*, I. 3. 19).³⁸

Rāmānuja discusses this question again under III. 3. 52. He includes the *jīva* within the field of contemplation, when one contemplates on God. The contemplating self is part of the all-inclusive Divine Principle. It is also recognized that that Principle must be contemplated upon as dwelling within the individual self. Hence the *ahamgraha-upāsanā* of the *Bhūma-vidyā*. Now the question is whether the individual self, taken up within the scope of devout meditation, should be taken as it is in its actual condition of imperfection, or in its unvarying essence common to both the conditions of bondage and release. Rāmānuja argues that it should be thought of as it will be in the condition of liberation. The reason is that it is in its own proper excellence of being in that condition. Further, there is the all-important consideration that by contemplating on that ideal state, we become duly aware of the grace of God that will effectuate it. It would be an inadequate devotion to God, which does not take cognizance of the omnipotent grace of God that could render the contemplating soul perfect and self-fulfilled.

38. "The individual self mentioned in the teaching of Prajāpati is here referred to in order to teach—through recounting the attainment by the released self of auspicious qualities like freedom from sin on his reaching Him (i.e., the *Dahara*)—that peculiar attribute of the Higher Person which constitutes the cause of such (attainment by the individual self)."

Brother Laurence, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time, the leaves would be renewed and after that the flowers and fruit appear, received a high view of the providence and power of God, which was never afterwards effaced from his soul. Vastly superior and more philosophical is the position here, as we have to do with perfection and the grace that brings it about. Hence, the position of Prajāpati's instruction to Indra in relation to the conception of *Brahman* as seated in the heart is clearly established.

SUMMING UP

We have now traversed the whole of the philosophy of the *Chhāndogya* under Rāmānuja's guidance. It is not that, though considerably faithful to the *Brahma-Sūtra*, his fidelity to the *Upanishad* is questionable. He appears to be so utterly faithful to the *Chhāndogya*, that his being a dependable interpreter of the *Sūtras*, which largely follow the thought-pattern of the *Chhāndogya*, is an inevitable consequence.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BṚIHADĀRANYAKA

I

The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is the biggest of the *Upanishads*, and in amplitude and height of vision it constitutes the supreme utterance of *Vedānta*.

In characterizing its contents, due notice must be taken of the fact that it is an old prose *Upanishad* just emerging out of the *Brāhmaṇa* type of composition. Therefore, as could be fairly expected on the analogy of the *Chhāndogya*, *Aitareya* and *Kaushītaki*, it contains considerable matter that is hardly philosophical. Semi-mythological cosmology, psychology and speculation on rituals, old-world religious practices and eschatology are naturally found. As Rāmānuja has not produced a close and complete gloss, we are not guided by him in understanding these elements of the *Upanishad*. This is certainly a gap. But Rāmānuja's neglect in this regard is no serious deficiency, for after all, when he is criticised as deviating from the *Upanishads*, it is not his failure to do justice to the unphilosophical contents of those texts that is the principal point of attack. Does he fail the *Upanishads*, in so far as they put on record their philosophical discoveries and spiritual experiences? That surely is the fundamental issue.

Two general propositions on the *Upanishad* in question may be made at this stage, and they may aid the comprehension of its focal value.

In the first place, the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* seems to incorporate in itself the central teachings of all the principal *Upanishads*. We notice in it what may be called a confluence of all of them, and that, even verbally. The chronological ordering of the *Upanishads* is not quite material to this phenomenon. One can recognize in this

Upanishad the meeting-point of them all. The fact stands incontestably, whether the inclusiveness of the *Upanishad* is by way of recapitulation or anticipation. The superficial view taken for granted by all writers on the subject that the *Upanishads* do not embody a single doctrine is seriously invalidated by a close scrutiny of this confluence of the several texts in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*.

Some crucial passages of the *Īśa*, *Kena* and *Katha* are parts of the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* in the fourth chapter of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*. The opening declaration of the *Aitareya* is almost literally repeated in the first chapter itself: *Ātmaiva idam agra āsit* (I. 4. 1 & 17). Its conclusion that *prajñāna* is *Brahman* is identical with a number of statements in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*. '*Vijñānam ānandaṁ Brahma*' (III. 9. 28) is the grand conclusion of Yājñavalkya's reply to Śākalya.

The *Akshara* of the *Muṇḍaka* is the central concept of Yājñavalkya's second reply to Gārgī (III. 8). The fourth chapter of the *Prasna* is included unmistakably in the *Madhu-brāhmaṇa* of the second chapter of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (II. 5). The section contains in essence and also verbally the passage at the end of the third chapter of the *Kaushītaki* also.

The *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 1. 31) validly connects Indra's assimilation of himself to *Brahman* in the course of his instruction to Pratarḍana in the *Kaushītaki* (III) with Vāmadeva's declaration to the same effect in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (I. 4. 10). The two together go into the meaning of '*Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*' (I. 4. 9-10), which itself restates the instruction of Uddālaka to Svetaketu, namely, '*Tattvamasi*' (*Chhāndogya*, VI. 8. 7), from the plane of intuitive apprehension. The entire *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* (III. 7) is repeated and also elaborated significantly in the *Subāla Upanishad*. Whether the latter is an authoritative text may be disputed, but its reaffirmation of the philosophy of the *Antaryāmin* is beyond all dispute. Again, the teaching of Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī (II. 4 & IV. 5) centres round the thought that the *Ātman* is the highest object for man's search and that it is the Reality by knowing which we know everything. This theme is what is implied by Uddālaka's initial question to Svetaketu in the *Chhāndogya* and by Śaunaka's enquiry addressed to Aṅgiras in the *Muṇḍaka* (I. 1. 3).

The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* openly incorporates within itself the doctrine that *Brahman* is *ānanda*, which doctrine is the distinctive theme of the *Taittirīya*. The actual gradation of *ānanda* presented in the *Taittirīya* is repeated in the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (IV. 3) with minor variations. The theme of the *Māṇḍūkya*, the philosophy of the three states of consciousness, is a commonplace of *Upanishadic* thought, and it is worked out in great detail in the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa*. In fact, the *Māṇḍūkya* appears, in contrast, to be a digest of this fuller treatment.

The concordance between the *Chhāndogya* and the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is fundamental and extensive. That 'Tattvamasī' is repeated in different words in 'Aham Brahmasmi' is one principal point of identity. That the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Chhāndogya* is embodied in the equally great *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* is a well-recognised fact. Even the *Sūtrakāra* (III. 3. 38) is convinced of it. Śaṅkara qualifies the identification somewhat. His observation will occupy us in the sequel. But he does not reject the standpoint of the *Sūtrakāra*, but only adds a further consideration. There is also verbal correspondence between the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* and the *Pratardanavidyā* of the *Kaushitakī*. The *Sāṇḍilyavidyā* of the *Chhāndogya* (III. 14) is repeated in an abridged form in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (V. 1. 1).

So, our first proposition that this *Upanishad* focusses in itself the major teachings of the principal *Upanishads* is decisively maintainable. The second general proposition that is equally maintainable is that the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* exhibits an overwhelming unity of thought.

One of its basic ideas expressed even in the earlier part is contained in the declaration, 'Aham Brahmasmi', and it permeates the entire philosophy of the *Upanishad*. To know the 'many' only as 'many' is to have knowledge that is *akṛitsna*, incomplete. Whatever is affirmed apart from *Brahman* repudiates the affirmation. There is no plurality in existence (I. 4. 7 & 10, II. 4. 6 and IV. 4. 19). This is a recurrent theme and is set forth in different ways in almost every philosophical discourse.

Another formula is 'Satyasya Satyam'. That *Brahman* or *Ātman* is the Reality of realities and that knowledge concerning It is

the Truth of truths is repeated to bring out its importance (II. 1. 20, II. 2. 6). A still more recurrent expression is '*Neti, neti*', meaning 'Not thus, not thus'. This perhaps is a unique idea of this *Upanishad*, and it is inserted into every important declaration of the nature of *Brahman* (II. 3. 6, III. 9. 23, IV. 2. 4, IV. 4. 22 and IV. 5. 15). The entire dialogue containing Yājñavalkya's teaching to Maitreyī occurs twice in the *Upanishad* (II. 4 & IV. 5) with only slight variations. Yājñavalkya seems to open his philosophy with it and conclude with it. It is the *upakrama* and the *upasaṁhāra*. All the intervening discourses are to be interpreted, it seems, in the light of this introduction and climax.

The sages, Ushasta and Kahola, put an identical question to Yājñavalkya (in III. 4 and III. 5 respectively) and elicit from him the full doctrine of the inmost *Brahman*. This is not an isolated discourse, as passages from it are found included in the teaching of Yājñavalkya to Janaka himself. The latter dialogue contains '*Neti, neti*', which links it with several of the other discourses. Yājñavalkya's answers to Uddālaka concerning the *Antaryāmin* (III. 7) and to Gārgī concerning the *Akshara* (III. 8) are practically identical, as both conclude with the thesis of the 'Unseen Seer', other than whom there is no 'seer'. The difference between these two sensed by some interpreters will be considered shortly. The overruling impression of identity of thought cannot be missed. It is impossible to separate the '*Antaryāmin*' expounded to Uddālaka from the inmost *Ātman*, '*Sarvāntara*', expounded to Ushasta and Kahola.

The *Ātman* described as *aja* (unborn) and *mahat* (great), who dwells in the heart of the individual, beyond the law of *karma* and from whom the worlds draw their sustenance, forming the final theme of the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa* addressed to Janaka, cannot be distinguished, without doing inexcusable violence to the text, from the *Ātman* preached to Maitreyī, the inmost *Ātman* expounded to Ushasta and Kahola, the 'Inner Ruler Immortal' set forth before Uddālaka and the 'Imperishable One' portrayed to Gārgī.

An exegesis which cannot recognise this unified import of the *Upanishad* is incompetent and self-condemned. The thesis glibly advanced that even the same *Upanishad* often preaches divergent doctrines appears wholly absurd when applied to the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*. Thus, the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, in addition to bringing

together into a harmonious whole the teaching of all the other major *Upanishads*, embodies in itself a single philosophical insight into Ultimate Reality.

II

Now we shall go over the leading sections of the *Upanishad* and study Rāmānuja's elucidation of them.

(1) '*Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*' (I. 4. 10).

This is a good passage to begin with, and it is almost in the beginning of the *Upanishad*. Rāmānuja discusses it repeatedly, and we may just note one context in which it is dealt with as an illustration (I. 4. 7). The passage is preceded by the statement, "*Sa yataḥ ekaikam upāste na sa vedākṛitsno hyesho'ta..... Ātmetye vopāśīta. Atra hyete sarva ekaṁ bhavanti*".³⁹ Whoever knows the different beings in their severalty does not know them. To conceive them so is to understand them incompletely. To contemplate the Real as *ātman* (i.e., as Its body, the individual self) is the correct procedure laid down. All beings become unified in the *Ātman*, (the Self of all), and in that unification lies the completeness of our understanding of them.

Then occurs the statement, '*I am Brahman*'. The ancient sage, Vāmadeva, is cited as an example of one who accomplished this unified vision. The passage adds that he who sees himself as a worshipper worshipping a deity other than himself, does not know: "*Ye'nyāṁ devatāṁ upāste anyo'sau anyo'ham asmiti na sa veda*" (I. 4. 10).⁴⁰ There are two unmistakable points here. To

39. "Therefore he who meditates (on the individual self) in severalty (as having a particular name and form and as distinguished from Brahman who is qualified by all names and forms), does not meditate at all hence this (self) (meditated on as having a particular name and form) is not all this...Let one meditate (on Brahman) as the self itself. In him indeed all these become one (as His body)."

40. "He who worships the (Supreme) Divinity, thinking, 'He (the Divinity) is different, I am different', he does not know."

know the the plurality of existents, is to have only fragmentary knowledge. To locate that plurality in the *Ātman* is to unify them and complete our knowledge of them. When this unified knowledge arises, the self that knows, cognizes itself as falling within the object of its contemplation and has the experience, 'I am *Brahman*'. The general unitary vision assimilates the particular subject of knowledge into the object of contemplation."

For Rāmānuja, the depreciatory term, '*akṛitsna*', applied to pluralistic understanding, implies that the monism, of the ideal experience is a completing complement of the affirmation of plurality and not its cancellation. Plurality is not a sheer fiction; it is a fragment of truth clamouring for completion in a comprehending integration. And again the 'I' in 'I am *Brahman*' is neither to be sublated in that experience, nor to be taken as co-extensive with *Brahman*. It finds itself inseparably lodged in that Infinite Reality.

Sureśvara opines in his *Neiṣkarmvasiddhi* (II. 29) that the 'I' is negated in the unitary experience of 'I am *Brahman*'. This sense of the unitary proposition seems to have been refuted by the author of the *Vivaraṇa* according to the *Pāñchadaśī* (VIII. 46). Even if the essential 'I' is taken into account, its identification with *Brahman* requires the redefinition of *Brahman* in such a way that its creative and cosmic aspects are discarded, for, only on that condition can the identification be effected. Only the ethereal self stripped of its concrete individuality, can be one in substance with the Absolute stripped of its concrete cosmic creativity.

According to Rāmānuja, neither that view of the individual self, nor the required attenuation of the import of the concept of *Brahman* finds support in the *Upanishad*. What we have here is the fulfilment of the individual self in the perception of itself as having within the core of its being the Absolute Spirit, the infinite and all-sustaining Divine presence.

2 'Neti, neti' (III. 3. 6).

This fundamental proposition receives elucidation in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* and the *S'ribhāshya* (III. 2. 21). The formula 'Neti, neti' occurs five times in the *Upanishad* as noted before, but it has a special force in the present context. What is more, this

seems to be a distinctive characterization of *Brahman* on the part of the *Upanishad*.

The entire section, III. 3, needs consideration. The opening announces that *Brahman* has two *rūpas* or forms, and they are *mūrta* and *amūrta*, meaning 'gross' and 'subtle'. The two forms are found both in the cosmos and in the individual. In the external cosmos, the gross form consists of all the elements other than air and space. In the individual, it consists of factors other than breath and the interior space. The cosmic aspect of the subtle form consists of air and space, while in the individual it is made up of air and interior space. The essence of the gross cosmic form is 'that which burns' and the essence of the subtle cosmic form is 'the Person in the sun'. The essence of the individual gross form is the eye and that of the individual subtle form is 'the Person in the right eye'. The sun and eye are said to gather into themselves the entire twofold form of *Brahman*.

Now, the text seems to deviate a little and proceeds to picture the glory of the aesthetic form of *Brahman*. It attributes to *Brahman* sensuous splendours. According to Rāmānuja, this doctrine of the beauty of *Brahman* is a vital part of the teaching of the *Upanishads*. We notice the aesthetic characterization of *Brahman* throughout *Upanishadic* literature. Even if the *Purushasūkta* expression, 'ādityavarṇam', is understood as referring to the brilliance of knowledge and not physical luminosity, there are other passages that cannot be so explained away. The *Chhāndogya* 'sarvagandha', 'sarvarasa' (III. 14. 2) and 'kapyāsam puṇḍarikam evam akshini' (I. 6. 7), the *Taittirīya* 'nīlatovadamadhyasthā vidyullekheva bhāsvārā' (*Mahānārāyaṇa*, XI 12) and the 'kalyanatamaṁ rūpaṁ' of the *Īśa* (16)⁴¹ are not interpretable except by an aesthetic concept of the Divine Reality. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is making here a powerful affirmation of the same aesthetic point of view. The *Vishṇusahasranāma* does not after all

41. "(He is) all (auspicious) odours, all (auspicious) tastes": "His two eyes are like the lotus opened by the sun": "Shining like a flash of lightning in the middle of a dark blue cloud": "the most auspicious form".

register a lapse from the *Upanishadic* heights, when it names the Deity 'pushpahāsa', as having the beauty of the laughter of flowers. The *Vedārthasaṅgraha* has a thorough discussion of this question (pages, 303-335).

Now comes the controversial and crucial pronouncement, "Neti, neti". It just means 'Not thus, not thus'. It may be taken as negating the forms attributed to *Brahman* in the passage and the repetition may be taken as ruling out the attribution of all conceivable forms. Such is Śaṅkara's interpretation of the text. *Brahman* is the Self in man, and in the condition of ignorance and misconception, empirical qualities and forms get attributed to it. This misattribution is in reality the essence of human bondage. When the Self is sought after in Its real nature and is to be apprehended as It is in Itself, this misattribution must be wholly cancelled. In fact, this process of cancellation is the only way open for the acquisition of insight into the inward and sole spiritual Reality. Śaṅkara holds that all positive accounts of *Brahman* such as "Vijñānam ānandam Brahma" (III. 9. 28) and 'Vijñānaghana eva Brahmātma',⁴² relate to the conditioned *Brahman* and that when the unconditioned and absolute *Brahman* is taught in the *Upanishads*, it is this negative procedure that is adopted. The attempt of Sarvajñātma-muni (*Saṅkshepa Śāstraka*, I. 251-256) to rescue the positive statements in the *Upanishads* from this inferior status does not signify much, in view of the fact that even the most positive of statements, 'Aham Brahmāsmi' is taken by Suresvara as meaning the negation of 'Aham' (*Naishkarnya-siddhi*, II 29).

Śaṅkara hastens to correct this apparently nihilistic position by asserting that the negative propositions such as 'Neti, neti' culminate in being and not in non-being. The statement in question is not 'abhāvavāsanā', but 'Brahmavāsanā'. The negation does not apply to *Brahman*, but only to the superimposed forms. That residual affirmation remains undiminished. In fact, it is on the strength of this basic positivity that negations can have meaning. Objective forms are cancelled and the pure subject,

42. "Brahman is consciousness, bliss": "Brahman, the Self, is only a mass of consciousness".

not to be brought within any objectifying cognition, stands unsublated and unsublatable. This agrees perfectly with what he says in his *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya* of *sūnya-vāda* (nihilism): 'Na hyaṃ sarvaprāmāṇya-prasiddho lokavyavahāro' nyat tattvam anadhigamya śakyate 'pahnotum, apavādābhāva utsargaprasiddheḥ' (II. 2. 31).⁴³ In support of this affirmative culmination of negative statements, Śaṅkara directs attention to what follows "Neti, neti" in the text: "Nahyetasmād iti neti anyat-paramasti" (II. 3. 6).⁴⁴

This sentence of the *Upanishad* means, according to Śaṅkara, that "there exists nothing other than Brahman". That surely restricts the scope of the previous negation and Brahman remains unnegated. The sentence can also mean for him that "there is no way of indicating Brahman other than this mode of negation as expressed in 'Neti, neti'". Even on this meaning, negation is not the last word in the text. We have the further remark that Brahman's name is 'the Real of reals', 'Satyasya Satyam' (*Ibid.*) That designation would be absurd, if the previous negation were total and final.

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Rāmānuja is wholly opposed to this interpretation of the text. Such an interpretation, according to him, would reduce it to nonsense. The two forms of Brahman spoken of may contain factors that are matters of common experience. But the view of them as forms of Brahman is what is presented by the text itself. The text also adds some additional factors not belonging to common experience. Thus the conception of the two aggregates of factors as forms of Brahman is what is advanced by the scripture itself. Under this circumstance, to negate them seems an illogical procedure. *Śruti*,

43. "Indeed, this process of the empirical world, established by all criteria of valid knowledge, cannot be negated without arriving at another principle altogether, for, in the absence of exceptions what is general prevails".

44. "There is nothing other than and different from This (Brahman) described as 'Not this'." (Note that 'param' has to be understood as 'higher' rather than 'other', because 'anyat' indicates otherness and 'param' cannot also mean the same thing.)

in that case, would not be merely contradicting empirical knowledge, which is itself indefensible logically, but is stultifying itself. It seems to be committing a mistake for the purpose of eventually eliminating it.

It has been argued by *Advaitins* that the *Śruti*, first of all, denies the independence of the empirical world by proclaiming it to be a form of *Brahman*. Then it denies that it is in reality the form of *Brahman*. That way the world gets denied both as independent of *Brahman* and also as constitutive of *Brahman's* form. Completeness of denial is accomplished thereby. But the denial of the world as the form of *Brahman* annuls the earlier denial of its independence. The reality of the world gets triumphantly re-affirmed, in consequence, as undivine and autonomous.

Rāmānuja takes, therefore, '*Neti, neti*' as signifying that the forms attributed to *Brahman* do not exhaust all the forms of *Brahman*. There is determination here without negation. The inadequacy of our characterization of *Brahman* in terms of the forms enumerated is the principal import of '*Neti, neti*'. We have predication here without pretension to completeness of predication. The infinitude of Divine forms, the limitless glory of the Supreme Being, is brought out by this apparently negative assertion; for the glory of forms is not just what the *Śruti* could measure out through its limited appreciations. *It is not a denial of what is affirmed, but a denial of the denial of what is not affirmed in the finite affirmation on hand.* This exegesis is supported for Rāmānuja in what follows in the text.

There are two profound affirmations following. The first of these is: '*Nahyetasmād iti, netyanyad paramasti*' (II. 3. 6). This means that there is nothing high or great other than *Brahman*. The Sāṅkarite exegesis of this sentence, that there is nothing other than and different from *Brahman*, seems to overlook the fact that there are two words here, '*anyat*' and '*para*', that the negation is of the '*anyat-para*', and that it will be tautological to make them both mean otherness. This is a positive declaration of the absolute eminence of *Brahman*. No more positive statement is conceivable.

The next sentence describes *Brahman* as '*Satyasya Satyam*', the Reality of realities. The text itself explains the latter

statement. The '*prāṇas*' are real. The '*prāṇas*' stand for individual selves as in the *Bhūma-vidyā*. These are more real than the material world, in so far as they maintain their substantive individualities through all eternity. No material object enjoys such imperishable individuality. *Brahman* is more real than these individual spirits also. The scope of the consciousness of *Brahman* knows no fluctuations, unlike that of the consciousness of the finite selves. This total self-maintenance makes *Brahman* describable as the reality of realities. This is also an emphatically positive characterization of *Brahman*. Hence the negation in '*Neti, neti*' is a negation of limitations and not that of forms and attributes.

The principle enunciated repeatedly in the expression, '*Satyasya Satyam*', may be restated. Matter, on account of its subjection to mutation of a more radical kind, does not admit of being affirmed as eternal being. Its nature includes an element of non-being. The finite spirits are immutable in their substantive self-identity and hence have a larger measure of being. But they too are liable to alteration, in so far as their quality of consciousness is concerned. In their lower levels of existence prior to final emancipation, they suffer varying diminutions of knowledge. Hence they too enjoy being that is not free from some measure of non-being. They are more real than matter, but not altogether real. The infinite *Brahman* is possessed of both enduring self-identity and eternal infinitude of knowledge. There is thus no element of non-being in Its nature. So It is the Supreme Reality. There is the further point that no perfection attributed to It exhausts Its richness and glory. Negation of the nature of limitation of forms and attributes is negated by this '*Neti, neti*'. Hence Its reality is unconditioned, as It is altogether free from negation, except of the nature of negation of negation. In fact, the idea of '*neti, neti*' is an ingredient in the grander and fuller statement that *Brahman* is the '*Real of reals*'.

III. MAITREYI BRĀHMAṆA (II. 4 & IV. 5).

The progression of the *Upanishad* takes us to *Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa*, which is undoubtedly one of the most fundamental parts of the *Upanishad*. Its weight is duly recognised by the text itself, as it repeats it at the end of Yājñavalkya's protracted philosophising.

Yājñavalkya enters the *Upanishad*, as it were, with this dialogue and leaves it as his final message. The two versions (II. 4 and IV. 5) contain some minor variations. But the bulk and the order of thought remain unaltered. Rāmānuja determines the philosophy of this dialogue in his *Sribhāṣya* under *Adhikaraṇa* 16 in the fourth *pāda* of the first *Adhyāya*.

Yājñavalkya communicates to Maitreyī, one of his two wives, his resolve to renounce the householder's life and offers to divide his belongings between the other wife, Kātyāyanī whose attitude to life is that of women in general (*striprajñā*), and Maitreyī who is philosophical in outlook (*Brahmavādinī*). Maitreyī asks him whether even the greatest wealth could make her immortal, '*amṛitā*'. Yājñavalkya denies the possibility and says that her life would only be like that of other persons of means. He generalizes and says that there is no hope of immortality through wealth: '*Amṛitatvasya tu nāśāsti vittaṇa*' (II. 4. 2). We come across this idea in the *Kaṭha* also wherein Nachiketas declares that man cannot be satisfied by wealth: '*Na vittaṇa tarpaṇīyo manushyaḥ*' (I. 27).

Maitreyī has no use for anything that could not be a means to immortality and wants from Yājñavalkya the knowledge that he has and which could bring about immortality. Now the immortality spoken of here is not mere deathlessness, for that characterizes the *jīva* even in its course of transmigration and bondage. It can mean only eternal life, the life of perfection and blessedness which goes beyond the realm of life of which death is an inevitable part. It is not survival after death, but the death of death itself.

Yājñavalkya says that she was dear to him before and is now making herself more dear by this resolute and philosophical speech. The word used in connection with Maitreyī is '*priyā*', and that seems to lead up to what Yājñavalkya starts by way of philosophical discourse to Maitreyī.

The first major constituent of the instruction is advanced now. "*Na vā are patyuh kāmāya patih priyo bhavati, Ātmanastu kāmāya patih priyo bhavati.....Na vā are sarvasya kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati, Ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati*" (II. 4. 5. & IV. 5. 6). This arresting and amply illustrated

formula may be translated thus: "The husband indeed is dear, not for the sake of the desire of the husband, but for the sake of the desire of the *Ātman*.....No object that is dear is dear for the sake of its own desire, but for the sake of the desire of the *Ātman*".

This concerns not the object of desire, but the subject of desire. Tagore, quite contrary to all the traditional commentaries, takes it as 'desire for' and not as 'desire on the part of'. The discourse aims at inculcating the desirability of the pursuit of the *Ātman*, which it actually does in the sequel. Therefore, no desire for the *Ātman* is presupposed here. Only the desiring agent, the subject that desires, is the point under discussion.

Yājñavalkya teaches here that whatever is dear is so, not because of its own desire, but because of the desire on the part of the *Ātman*. It is not because the object seeks fulfilment of its own desire that it becomes dear, but it becomes dear as the *Ātman* seeks thereby to fulfil its own desire. Not the desire on the part of the object, but that on the part of the *Ātman* is the determinant of the interest, love and pleasure that the object evokes.

Who is this *Ātman* whose desire is the cause of the fact that a certain object is dear? Is he the same as the subject to whom the object is dear? Does it mean that the self to which an object is dear has made it dear to itself by virtue of its desire for it? Rāmānuja rejects this way of understanding the passage. The conclusion drawn in the passage from this analysis of the determinant of the phenomenon of things being dear, precludes for him that interpretation. The conclusion urges that the *Ātman* should be sought. It would be absurd to say that because objects are dear to us as we desire them and not because they desire to be dear to us, we should seek our own selves or self and not the objects. Because they fulfil *our own desires*, we ought to seek them, and not the self, which desires them to overcome its own deficiencies through them. The desiring self is a poor self, as it seeks self-enrichment through the realization of the objects of desire. There is no point in seeking it. We should rather seek that which would make it fuller.

It may be that we seek the self to ascertain whether the poverty that makes it desire is genuine or fancied. If it is the former, the

desire is justified, and if it is fancied imperfection, enlightenment in that regard would put an end to desire. But then the very necessity for such critical discernment of the self, to decide whether it is imperfect (as desire implies) or perfect, presupposes imperfection in the matter of self-knowledge. A self that could so far miss its own nature and be in need of finding out whether it is too perfect to desire anything else or imperfect enough to gain by fulfilment of desire, is hardly a perfect and self-fulfilled being. When the self is imperfect that much, there is every reason for desire to arise, and the quest after such a self cannot be the sole quest of life. Hence the desire that makes objects dear to us cannot be the desire of the finite self.

Therefore Rāmānuja takes the *Ātman* here as standing for the Supreme Self. It is His will or desire, in response to our devotion, that lends attractiveness and desirability to the objects that happen to be dear to us, in proportion naturally not to our devotion to the objects, but to our devotion to Him. We read later on that the objects we love will repudiate us, if we seek them apart from the *Ātman* (II. 4. 6. & IV. 5. 7). It is implied that they conform to our desire in far as we succeed in locating them in the *Ātman*. If we wholly devote ourselves to the *Ātman*, it goes without saying that everything else brings us beauty and joy. The world becomes a 'mansion of delight' to one who is wholly after the Supreme.

From this analysis of the phenomenon of some things being dear, the discourse takes the next major step. Yājñavalkya says: '*Ātmā vā are drashṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo... Ātmano vā are darśanena śravaṇena matyā vijñānena idam sarvaṁ viditam*' (II. 4. 5).⁴⁵ This statement contains two fundamental ideas.

(a) The *Ātman* has to be seen, heard about, reflected and meditated upon. The vision of the *Ātman* is, of course, the final phase in the pursuit. It has to be achieved through *śravaṇa*,

45. "The Self, indeed, my dear one, is to be seen, heard about, reflected on, and meditated upon. All this, indeed, becomes known, my dear, through the seeing, hearing about, reflection on and meditation upon the Self."

'hearing' or learning from the scriptures under the direction of proper preceptors. This hearing has to pass into critical reflection (*manana*) on what the scriptures proclaim. The element of rational consideration is quite vital. No mere acceptance of sacred testimony will do. When reflection establishes conviction concerning *Ātman*, the process is not over. The conviction must be transformed into meditation (*nididhyāsana*). When meditation reaches the highest point of maturity, it almost acquires the condition of perception. It is this heightened and intensified meditation that effectuates the vision of the Supreme *Ātman*.

The familiar Vedāntic prescription of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* as the stages of the progress of the seeker to the realization of the Ultimate Spirit is laid down in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* in this passage. Of the three stages, the first two are preparatory and instrumental, and only meditation is the ultimate pathway. This meditation is no heartless dwelling on the theme, namely, the *Ātman*. Rather, it is full of love, such that without the meditation the seeker finds himself withering away. Meditation of this nature is named *bhakti*. The element of love is imported into *nididhyāsana* on the strength of explicit statements in the *Muṇḍaka* and *Kāṭha Upanishads*.

Even if that extraneous authority is rejected, the discourse of Yājñavalkya itself takes place in the context of love. Maitreyī is a loved one, her speech evokes love, and it is in the process of analysing why things are loved that the *Ātman* is introduced as the ground of the fact of our love of certain objects and situations. Yājñavalkya is advising that these objects which owe their loveliness to the desire of the *Ātman* to that effect must be set aside and that the Supreme Ground of all that is worthy of love must itself be made the sole object of search. It cannot but signify that the search must be carried out with increasing love. It is only here that love is not misplaced. When the search culminates in meditation, the love characterizing the search also reaches its utmost height.

It is also to be noted that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* itself has declared that *Ātman* is the most lovable of realities and that the object of one's love does not pass away only when one offers one's love to the Supreme *Ātman* (I. 4. 8). In this atmosphere of

absorbing concern with love, the *vidīdhyaśana* advocated by the *Upanishad* cannot be loveless contemplation. It is loving meditation or meditative love. It cannot be anything else. The picture of the progress towards *Ātman* given here seems to be crying for the right word, and that word is '*bhakti*'.

(b) The second important idea introduced in this brief statement is that by learning about, reflecting and meditating upon and perceiving *Ātman*, we understand everything else. Here we get the initial proposition of the *Sadvidyā* and the essential enquiry of the *Mundaka*. That idea is that *Brahman* or *Ātman* is the ground-principle and that the infinite diversity of empirical existents gets comprehended in principle when this basic reality is known, because that diversity has issued out of this.

To put the matter in crude simplicity, the 'one' is the cause of the 'many', and therefore to know the 'one' is to know the 'many' in essence and principle. It is likely to be argued that when the 'one' is realized, the 'many' is understood in the sense that the secret that the 'many' are ultimately unreal is made out. Whether the understanding of plurality promised here signifies the understanding of its unreality is a question that is fundamental, and it must be faced.

For Rāmānuja the question is answered in what follows in the discourse of Yājñavalkya. We are told: '*Sarvaṁ taṁ parādāt yo 'nyatra Ātmanā sarvaṁ oda...-Idaṁ sarvaṁ yadāyamātmā*' (II. 4. 6).⁴⁶ Many factors of the empirical world of plurality are mentioned and we are told that they repudiate him who sees them apart from *Ātman*. In separation from the Ultimate Soul, they defy all efforts to understand them. Hence this entire world is to be seen in *Ātman*.

What is asserted here is that the world is in *Ātman* and not that it is unreal. It is unreal if viewed as independent. But, as falling within *Ātman*, it is real and gets understood in our understanding of *Ātman*. There is no word suggesting that the

46. "All things reject him who knows all things apart from *Ātman*..... All this, whatever there is, is *Ātman*"

world of plurality repudiates *him also* who sees it as falling within *Atman*. The offence is not affirmation of the world, but its affirmation as located outside the Supreme Self and as not being sustained by It. To place it as a factor within the Infinite is to see it aright, and there is no censure of that inclusive perspective. We have the conception of the unfairly treated *Śaṇḍilya vidyā*, with its '*Survaṁ khalu idaṁ Brahma*' (III. 14. 1), lodged within the heart of Yājñavalkya's discourse. The *Śaṇḍilya-vidyā* said, '*Tajjalān*', pointing out that all things originate from, are sustained by and get dissolved into *Brahman*. Corresponding to that, we have here the proposition that the world of scriptures and the world of actuality are breathed into existence by *Atman*.

Even as smoke arises out of the burning of wet wood, the entire world of speech and all the worlds and beings are breathed out by *Atman*: "*Asyaivaitāni sarvāṇi niśvasitāni*" (II. 4. 10). The idea of creation is thus introduced, and it is clear that by knowing *Atman* we know the worlds and beings, precisely because the latter originate from that Fundamental Principle. The Supreme Self creates and sustains within Itself what It creates. It follows that to know It is to comprehend the multiplicity.

The seeing of *Atman* advocated as the supreme objective is arduous and requires tremendous discipline. It is to put forth forcefully this necessity of discipline that the analogies of controlling the sounds of the drum, the conch and the *vijā* (a stringed musical instrument) are brought in (II. 7.9), according to Rāmānuja. In the same way, the crucial points in the control of the various senses, motor and sensory, and also the mind are explained. This mode of interpreting is special to Rāmānuja, and we need not discuss it further, as it involves no serious philosophical issue and no other commentator would object to insisting upon discipline in spiritual life. Śaṅkara takes all the analogies and the detailed mention of the basal factors of sense-experiences as bringing out the unitary basis of all existence. That is elucidated adequately for Rāmānuja by the thesis of creation that utilizes the analogy of smoke and the burning of wet wood.

The self that seeks immortality as Maitreyī does and is exhorted to seek *Ātman* by way of seeing, hearing, reflecting and meditating,

must also be correctly conceived. Hence Yājñavalkya takes up the topic of the nature of the individual self. Rāmānuja is emphatic that this part of the teaching, though necessary, does not inculcate the final truth. The teaching concerning *Brahman* and meditation on Him is the central theme. The doctrine of the individual self is subordinate and instrumental to that teaching.

Rāmānuja says: "*Paramapurusha-vibhūtibhūtasya prāptur-ātmanas svarūpāyāthātmyam apavargasādhana-Paramapurusha-vedanoḥayogitayāvagantavyam, na svata eva upāyatvena*" (*Śrībhāshya* I. 4. 19).⁴⁷ The *jīvātman* is described as '*viññānaghana*' (a mass of intelligence), even as a lump of salt is '*saindhavaghana*' or '*rasaghana*' (a mass of taste). In its natural condition of purity, the individual self is a 'mass of intelligence', wholly consisting of the essence of knowledge, knowing itself and knowing all else that is real. It contains no dark point of unknowing in its entire being. But this substance of the nature of intelligence gets entangled in matter in the state of bondage, and its innate power of knowledge gets conditioned by this disabling alliance with what is material. Its knowledge in that state gets confined within the materialistic framework of consciousness. It seems to take birth in matter and perish with the body.

It is the termination of this type of body-determined consciousness that Yājñavalkya has in mind when he says that there is no 'consciousness' after 'death': "*Na pretya samjñāsti*" (II. 4. 12). All the interpreters are agreed that '*pretya*' here refers not to mundane death but to a total and final liberation from matter. It is not to death but to a state in which death is an impossibility. Maitreyī is confused and cannot help perceiving the contradiction between the nature of the *jīva* which is *viññānaghana* and the extinction of its essential attribute of *samjñā* in its ideal state of life. Yājñavalkya corrects the misunderstanding and reiterates that the conscious self is imperishable (*avināśin*) and its attribute of intelligence is also indestructible (*anuchchittidharma*).

47. "The truth about the essential nature of the attaining individual self who forms the glory of the Supreme Person has to be understood as being helpful to the knowledge of the Supreme Person that forms the means of final release, and not as being an independent means by itself."

What ceases in that state of perfection is the consciousness that proceeds from the erroneous identification of the self with the body. The knowledge that arises in a soul by virtue of its mistaking itself to be the body must cease, when the distinction between the body and the soul becomes an established fact for the soul in question. This dwarfed and mutilated expression of intelligence is put an end to in the ideal state. Maitreyi's puzzle must be taken as removed with this clarification.

In reality, the release into the higher life is not annihilation of consciousness, but a liberation of it into its natural magnitude. Why does Yājñavalkya adopt such a misleadingly negative manner of describing the ideal experience? The transition from the present degenerate phase of experience must be sharply marked, and negation is a suitable way of indicating that transcendence. Yājñavalkya works out the positive import of this experience in a further and truly sublime climax. This climax is fuller in the second version of the *Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa* (IV. 5). We shall do well to consider it.

In addition to the cessation of knowledge that occurs to an individual by virtue of his identification with the body, there is also the cessation of another kind of knowledge.

We imagine that the world consists of independent entities. The subject of knowledge is one such entity on that assumption, the object of knowledge is another, and whatever accessories there are for the achievement of knowledge by the independent subject of an independent object also form collectively an independent means of knowledge. These three factors are not only mutually independent, but are also conceived as independent of *Brahman*. Now there is a kind of seeing or knowing in this mistaken world of plurality. An alien subject comprehends an alien object through the aid of an alien means, and all the three are taken as subsisting apart from the unitary foundation. Knowledge of this kind is described in "*Yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati tad itara itaram paśyati*" (IV. 5. 15) etc. Where there is duality as it were, there the independent knower knows the independent object of knowledge. The word, '*iva*', meaning 'as it were', indicates that the duality is not a fact.

This type of knowledge must surely cease when enlightenment arises and all the knowers, the objects of knowledge and the aids of knowledge are comprehended as existing within the Supreme *Ātman*. *Ātman* is the all-embracing field within which the situation of knowledge with all the factors involved obtains. “*Yatra teasya sarvam Ātmaivābhūt, tat kena kam paśyet?*” (IV. 6. 15). Where *Ātman* is all in all, through what aid what object can be seen? In other words, when all factors associated with knowledge are realised as located and established in *Ātman*, the knowing of a self-dependent object, by a self-dependent knower through self-dependent aids, cannot take place. Here the question is a refutation.

‘*Ātmaivābhūt*’ does not mean that *Ātman* ‘becomes’ all in some particular state. It means that It is understood as being all in all in this state. It is not to become all; It is all eternally, but is to be understood as such now. When *Ātman* is apprehended as all-sustaining, the knowledge—to call it knowledge at this stage would be wrong—as a process of bringing together three utterly separate existents is ruled out. That means that the ideal experience dissolves the so-called knowledge taking place in the unreal world of absolute plurality. The understanding rooted in plurality ceases to be, when the unity of *Ātman* embracing all existence becomes a fact of experience.

Yājñavalkya has thus explained what types of knowledge or experiences are put an end to in the realization of *Ātman*. What takes place by way of experience as a result of both the self’s misreading of its own nature as the body and of the mistaken notion of absolute plurality on its part, is extinguished in this supreme experience.

Now Yājñavalkya moves to another thought. *Ātman* is the basic power supporting the self in all its knowing activity. How can this *Ātman*, so basic to all knowing, be Itself known without Its own grace? “*Yenedaṁ sarvaṁ vijānāti, taṁ kena vijānīyāt?*” (IV. 5. 15). This may be rendered: Through what (other aid) can He be understood by whose aid all this is understood? The significance of this question cannot be that understanding *Ātman* is impossible. That would be an absurd proposition in the context. After all, Yājñavalkya is preaching the necessity of understanding

Ātman through *darśana*, *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. The question could only mean that the understanding is impossible without the grace of *Ātman*. When comprehension of nothing else is possible without the aid of *Ātman*, it is all the more certain that there is no comprehension possible of the Supreme and Ultimate Power Itself without Its own grace to that effect. Our knowledge of It is a gift and not an achievement through other aids.

Now Yājñavalkya repeats the old formula, '*Neti, neti*'. It means, in this context, for Rāmānuja, the transcendence and uniqueness of the principle in question. It does not mean a total denial of all adjectival determinations. The text itself offers a specific identification of what is denied: "*Agrihyo na grihyate, aśīryo na hi śīryate, asaṅgo na hi sajjate, asito na vyathate na riśhyati*" (IV. 5. 15).⁴⁸ This is an important delimitation of the scope of negation meant by '*Neti, neti*'. All that is given here as not characterizing *Ātman* is of the nature of imperfection. It is logical, therefore, to construe that the negative statements of a general character regarding the Ultimate Principle do not mean that It is wholly attributeless, but that It is free from imperfections.

The last pronouncement of Yājñavalkya comes in the form of a question again: "*Vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt*" (IV. 5. 15). "Through what can you know the knower?" he asks. Here again it is not the impossibility of knowing that is being asserted. The entire pursuit of *Ātman* by way of knowing that is proclaimed as the road to immortality, becomes untenable on that interpretation. What it precisely means for Rāmānuja is that unless one practises the meditation laid down here, to know *Ātman* is out of the question. The two culminating questions, "*Yenedaṁ sarvaṁ vijānāti taṁ kena vijānīyāt?*" (IV. 5. 15) and "*Vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt?*" (*Ibid.*), do not rule out knowledge, but insist that the knowledge is unattainable except through *grace* won through *devout meditation*. '*Vijñātri*' in the last question means the Supreme

48. "(This *Ātman*) is incapable of being perceived and is indeed not perceived, is incapable of being broken into pieces and is not broken, is incapable of being attached to material things and does not feel attachment, is not bound, does not suffer and does not perish."

Knower with all His perfections and glories. The all-comprehending and self-sufficient knower is surely the absolute *Ātman*, the source of all beings and worlds, the knowledge concerning whom includes the knowledge of all else, and who abounds in all transcendent perfections beyond number and measure. There is nothing more to be learnt concerning immortality. Attainment of this experience of the *Ātman* is immortality, and the means for that consummation is the loving meditation formulated. This is all we ought to know.

IV. MADHU BRĀHMAṆA (II. 5).

The next *Brāhmaṇa* (5th) in the second *adhyāya* of the *Brihadāranyaka* speaks glowingly of *Ātman* as *tejomaya* (shining with consciousness), *amṛitamaya* (free from death), *purusha* and *Brahman*, and as dwelling in both members of a series of pairs of objects which are mutually important to each other. In the enumeration of the series, the entire universe is brought in, and in each case one member of the mutually valued duality is microcosmic and the other macrocosmic. The *purusha* dwells as the light and bliss in both and comprehends them within the circle of His being. He is declared to be 'all this'. Among those entities in which He dwells, the individual selves are also clearly included. The concluding sentence sums up the final import: "*Yathā rathanābau cha rathanemau chārāḥ sarve samarpitā evam evāsminn ātmani sarvāṇi bhūtāni sarve vedāḥ sarve lokāḥ sarve prāṇāḥ sarve eta ātmānaḥ samarpitāḥ*" (II. 5. 15). In this *Ātman* all beings, all the *Vedas*, all the worlds, all the life-principles and all these souls are sheltered, declares this text, even as the spokes of a wheel are held by the outer ring and the central mechanism. This Supreme *Ātman* is beyond time and space and He is *Brahman*. He is all-experiencing: "*Tadetad Brahmāpūrvam anaparam anantaram abāhyam ayam ātmā brahma sarvānubhūḥ*" (II. 5. 19).⁴⁹

49. "This *Brahman* has nothing anterior and nothing posterior (i.e., is eternal); has nothing within and nothing without (i.e., is omnipresent); this Self is *Brahman*; It experiences everything (i.e., perceives all things at all times in all manner of ways)."

Just prior to this last declaration, the passage contains the sentence : “*Indre māyābhiḥ pururūpa īyate*” (*Ibid*). It means : ‘God, by virtue of *māyā*s, is seen as of many forms’. It may be construed that the principle of *māyā* the power of cosmic illusion, is responsible for the presentation of the plurality of forms. Rāmānuja rejects this interpretation. The word, ‘*māyā*’, means for him wondrous power. Even ordinary illusions come under this definition of *māyā*, for in an illusion we have an experience not generated by the corresponding object and thus the normal law of cognitive causation stands circumvented. The word is used many times in the sense of occult and extraordinary powers in *purāṇic* literature. The Vedic etymologist, Yāska, understands it to mean ‘*vayunam*, *jñānam*’, i.e., knowledge.

More decisive still is the fact that this sentence about God manifesting many forms through *māyā* is a quotation from the *Rigveda* (VI. 47. 18); and there, in that ancient text, it does not and cannot have the sense of illusion. Rāmānuja points to what the *Rigveda* says further in the passage. It says : “*Bhūri Tvashṭeva rājati*” (VI. 47. 19), meaning that He is surpassingly resplendent like Tvashṭri (the Creator). Rāmānuja argues that one who is overcome by illusion does not get resplendent thereby. Illusion is a calamity and not a glory. Even if the illusion is ours and not God’s, it can be only a distortion and not a beautification.

Thus, the one clear mention of *māyā* in this early *Upanishad* fails to support the later doctrine of *māyā*, and this should be remembered while reconstructing the final thought of the *Upanishads*.

V. ĀRTABHĀGA, USHASTA & KAHOLA

The third and fourth chapters of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* take us to an altogether new setting. Yājñavalkya first gives philosophical instruction to Maitreyī and he repeats it later on. But in between these two dialogues of instruction, we have dialogues of inquiry wherein he discourses under intellectual challenges from other sages and in answer to King Janaka himself. The portion of the *Upanishad*—the whole of the third chapter and the fourth except

for the last section of instruction to Maitreyi—narrating these philosophical discussions constitutes a brilliant formulation in philosophical terms of the major thesis of the *Upanishad*. In this part of the text also there are some dull intervals, as some of the questions test Yājñavalkya on recondite and not philosophically important points of traditional thought. But the philosophically weighty matter predominates. It is a great pleasure to follow these inquiries.

The sages that challenge Yājñavalkya are Hotāśvala, Jāratkāra, Ārtabhāga, Bhujyu, Lāhyāvanī, Ushasta, Kahola, Uddālaka, Gārgi and Śākalya. It is also to be remarked that the sages know the answers and want only to find out whether Yājñavalkya too knows them. The questions put by Hotāśvala and Bhujyu are of no philosophical significance. We get from Rāmānuja no elucidation of them, or of the answers to them.

Ārtabhāga: Jāratkāra, Ārtabhāga does put an important question as to what remains of a man when he dies. In answer to him, Yājñavalkya tells him in secret the doctrine of *karma*. We have here a clear enunciation of that doctrine by the *Upanishad*: “*Yad ūchatuḥ karma haiva tad ūchatur atha yat praśaśamsatuḥ karma haiva tat praśaśamsatuḥ puṇyo vai puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati, pāpaḥ papeneti*” (III. 2. 13).⁵⁰ Rāmānuja finds that this discussion pertains not to release but to the transmigration of the unenlightened soul (*Śrībhāṣya*, IV. 2. 13).

Śaṅkara understands the context both in his *Sūtra-bhāṣya* and his commentary on the *Upanishad* to deal with the release of the enlightened soul also.

50. “What they two (Yājñavalkya and Ārtabhāga) spoke about (as the cause of the embodiment of the embodied soul), it was indeed about *karma* that they spoke: what they two stressed (among the causes of embodiment), it was *karma* that they stressed. For indeed one becomes auspicious (i.e., gets a body which is the reward of virtue and which favours the practice of virtue) through virtue and one becomes associated with evil (i.e., a body which is the result of evil deeds and which favours the practice of sin) through evil deeds.”

Ushasta : Ushasta puts the following question to Yājñavalkya : “*Yat sākshād aparokshād Brahma ya Ātmā sarvāntaras tam me vyāchakshva*” (III. 4. 1). This may be thus translated : “Tell me of that innermost *Ātman* who is the Primary *Brahman* and who is an immediate presence”. Rāmānuja discusses this section and the next under the *Brahma-Sūtras* (III. 3. 35-37). The term ‘*Brahman*’ is used in connection with lower categories also sometimes. Therefore, the question seeks information about the Fundamental and Primary *Brahman*. This *Brahman* is presupposed by the question to be ‘*aparoksha*’, that is, immediate. That can be a possible character of only that Reality which is omnipresent and eternal and dwells in all. Only the Infinite can be immediate in all experiences and to all subjects of experience. The *Brahman* is also taken as “*Ātmā sarvāntara*”, the innermost soul of all and more inward than everything else in everyone.

Yājñavalkya propounds an answer straightaway somewhat in the manner of the *Kena Upanishad* and the *Taittirīya*. He says that the soul of Ushasta—‘*esha te ātmā*’—is that principle. Ushasta asks for elucidation. Yājñavalkya elaborates by saying that the *Ātman* is that which maintains life by way of the several life-breaths : “*Esha te ātmā*”. Ushasta is not satisfied, and the answer of Yājñavalkya needs further elucidation for him. Yājñavalkya goes on : “*Na drishṭeḥ drashtāraṁ paśyeḥ, na śruteḥ śrotāraṁ sṛṇuyāt.....*” (III. 4. 2).⁵¹ Ushasta is asked not to mistake this innermost *Ātman* with the seer of sights, the hearer of sounds etc. The point of this explanation is not that the seeing self is not really the self, nor is it that the seer of the seeing is not to be seen. Its significance for Rāmānuja lies neither in denying the cognitive activity of the self, nor in denying its cognisability. Yājñavalkya is putting forward, according to Rāmānuja, the clarification that the innermost *Ātman* is other than the individual self which is the immediate subject of experiences like seeing. *Brahman*’s transcendence of the *jīva* is the idea in the explanation.

Kahola : Ushasta now retires from the conversation. Then Kahola raises the same question and makes clear that he is repeating

51. “You should not see the seer of the sight, you should not hear the hearer of the act of hearing .. .”

Ushasta's question by the expression '*Yadeva*' (III. 5. 1): he is referring to "that very thing" which Ushasta asked about. Yājñavalkya adds now a new thought to his exposition of the innermost *Ātman*. He says that this *Ātman* is beyond hunger and thirst, beyond old age and death and beyond sorrow and delusion: "*Aśanāyāpipāse śokaṁ moham jarām mṛityum atyeti*" (*Ibid.*).⁵² This makes it still more clear that the Self in question is altogether transcendent of the individual self which is subject to these infirmities.

The character of *Brahman* presented by Yājñavalkya, on Rāmānuja's interpretation, is its utter inwardness and immanence in all as such: It is *sarvāntara*. The three elucidations offered by Yājñavalkya aim at rendering this character understandable. Hence the primary theme of this discussion is the ultimate fact of divine immanence.

The meditation on this primary *Brahman* is characterized by two features. First, it is said that the seekers who have found *Brahman* have renounced everything else. This idea of renunciation is again set forth in exactly the same words in *Jyotirbrāhmaṇa* (IV. 3). The repetition brings out the coherence between the two discourses and also lays down the spiritual necessity of renunciation.

The second feature consists of certain other accomplishments integral to the meditative approach to the Deity. They are *pāṇḍitya*—(learning), *bālyā* (childlike nature) and *mauna* (reflection). '*Pāṇḍitya*', according to Rāmānuja, is the product of both *śravaṇa* and *manana*. '*Bālyā*' means absence of ostentation, pretentiousness, and the habit of showing forth one's merits. Inward spiritual felicity arising from one's worth melts away when one gets himself rewarded for his worth by social distinction and public approbation. 'Childlike nature' in this context denotes the absence of self-display. Children do not cash their merits by publicity. '*Mauna*' does not mean for Rāmānuja either *manana* which is already included in *pāṇḍitya* or *nididhyāsana* (profound meditation)

52. "(He) transcends hunger and thirst, sorrow, delusion, old age and death."

which is the principal *sādhana* (*S'ribhāshya* III. 4. 46-48). It stands here for cultivating remembrance of God even outside regular and systematic meditation on God.

The building up of this habit of *mauna* between serious meditations prevents too great and precipitous a fall when one comes out of such meditation. If one's habitual thoughts are directed to God, when one descends from the high altitude of deliberate prayer, one does not descend too much; and if normal thoughts are sufficiently high, ascending from them to intensive awareness of God is easier. Rise is easy and fall is not disastrous. It is not much of a fall if one falls high enough. To climb is easy, when one is standing already on heights. It is this *mauna* that is prescribed here. It is called '*saṁśīlana*', assured habit of reflection. Yājñavalkya concludes with the aphoristic declaration - everything else is miserable. "*Anyadārtam*" (III. 5. 1).

VI. ANTARYAMI-BRĀHMAṆA

Now the *Upanishad* moves on to a discourse (III. 7) in which is enshrined the fundamental conception of the philosophy of Rāmānuja. There is not much difficulty in interpreting it, as it is clear in itself and Śaṅkara finds it so definite in its import that he is obliged to adjust it with his final philosophy by taking it as relating to the conditioned *Brahman*, though the condition is exalted: "*Nitya - niratiśaya - jñānaśaktyupādhir Ātmāntaryāmiśvara uchyate*". (On *Bṛih. Up.* III. 8. 12)⁵³

That the passage gives a definitive shape to the doctrine of *Brahman* as the innermost reality in Nature and the individual is transparent. All later Vedic thought is moving upwards to this concept, and all the *Upanishads* in their major affirmations converge towards it. That it gets superseded by the characteristic philosophy of Yājñavalkya as expressed in the *Ushasta-Kahola-brāhmanas*, in

53. "The Self, when conditioned by eternal and unsurpassed knowledge and energy, is called the Internal Ruler and the Lord."

the *Akṣhara-brāhmaṇa*, in the *Jyotir-brāhmaṇa*, in the *Maitreyi-brāhmaṇa* and also in the 'Neti, neti' formula is hardly a tenable thesis. These sections do nothing but approach the conception formulated here, and it is impossible to substantiate that they are different in purpose from this *Brāhmaṇa*, as we have seen already in the sections we have traversed. The story is continued with regard to the *Akṣhara* and *Jyotis Brāhmaṇas*, as we shall see. The *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*, now under discussion, cannot be evaluated as lower, on grounds of being either commonplace or being eccentric. It gathers into itself the entire philosophy of the *Upanishads* in general and the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* in particular and frames the common intention with uncommon clarity, power and grandeur. As Rāmānuja says elsewhere: A theism to which the Deity and the world of creatures are utterly separate and mutually isolated entities is giving up all that the *Upanishads* stand for; and a monistic philosophy which identifies the individual self and the Supreme Spirit, without the explanatory idea of Divine immanence in the finite, is a false monism. He puts it thus: "*Na eha sarvātmavātirekeṇa Parasmin Brahmani jivātmānusandhānam, jive cha Parabrahmatvānusandhānam tathyaṁ bhavati*" (*Śrībhāshya*, III. 3. 37).⁵⁴ Such a crude identity-philosophy takes away the majesty of the Godhead and does not constitute an exposition of that majesty. Rāmānuja is concerned to render the identification an integral part of the delineation of the glory of *Brahman*, such delineation being the central theme of the *Upanishads*. In other words, the philosophical core of the *Upanishads* can be preserved only on condition that the idea embodied in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* is accorded centrality of significance.

We may now go through the essential thoughts of the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*. It is in answer to Uddālaka's question. If this Uddālaka is the same as the teacher of 'Tattvamasi' in *Chhāndogya* (VI. 8. 7), Rāmānuja's interpretation of 'Tattvamasi' in terms of the *Antaryāmin* gets some kind of an extrinsic confirmation also.

54. "Moreover, meditation on the Supreme *Brahman* as the individual self and on the individual self as the Supreme *Brahman* can never be based on truth, if His being the Self of all is excluded."

Uddālaka wants to know whether Yājñavalkya has understood the *Antaryāmin* and demands exposition thereof. Yājñavalkya gives an extensive and magnificent account of the Inner Ruler. He is said to be in the earth, water, fire, sky, air, heavens, sun, space, darkness, light, all beings, the life-breath, speech, eye, ear, mind, skin, *viññāna* and the genetic principle. The list seems to include much else in the *Mādhyaṇḍina* version of the *Upanishad*. In the latter, in the place of '*viññāna*', the term '*ātman*' is used, lending support to the interpretation of '*viññāna*' as '*jīvātman*'. This Inner Ruler is said to be in all these macrocosmic and microcosmic principles and entities and also in what are posited in the scriptures.

The *Subālopanishad* (VII) which repeats this subject-matter, adds some more factors to the list. The intention is clear that the entire realm of finite being must be brought within the scope of the statement. The Inner Ruler is so much 'in' in this realm that the *Upanishad* elaborates by saying that He is 'interior to', 'dwells' and is within. He is '*antara*'. The beings within which He dwells do not know Him, '*na veda*'. It may be that some of them are inanimate. In that case, their presiding deities are to be taken as not knowing Him. Those which are endowed with the power of knowledge do not know Him. That in which He dwells is the interior of its being and which does not cognize Him, is said to be His 'body', '*śarīra*'. This is not an inoperative inner presence, pervasion without making any difference to what is pervaded. He rules what He pervades from within: '*Antaro yamayati*'. The Inner Ruler is also said to be '*amṛita*', immortal. The epithet signifies His transcendence of all evil and imperfection. 'He', Yājñavalkya declares, 'is your soul': '*Esha te ātmā*'. The *Mādhyaṇḍina* recension has it as '*Sa te ātmā*'.

That God 'is in all', 'dwells in all', 'the all know Him not', 'the all constitute His body' and 'He rules all from within' is the main proposition here. The discourse proceeds further. It says: "*Adṛiṣṭo dṛeṣṭā...aviññāto viññātā*" (III. 7. 23). He is the unseen seer, the unknown knower. Though none knows Him, He knows all. He is the uncomprehended comprehender. When He is said to be the knower, the previously affirmed characteristics are not to be ignored. They are to be carried forward as attributes of the knower. The Inner Ruler, dwelling in all, holding all as His body

and ruling all from within, the immortal soul of all, is unknown to all, but knows all. There is no seer and knower other than this one : " *Nānyo 'to 'sti drashtā.....nānyo 'to 'sti vijñātā* " (III. 7. 23).

Does this mean that there is only one knower? Rāmānuja's interpretation rules out that meaning as superficial and piecemeal exegesis. It means for him that there is no knower like God, a knower who holds what he knows as his body and rules it from within, just as He does with regard to the entire realm of finite beings according to the earlier enunciation. There can be none who knows *Brahman* in this manner. In other words, ' *Nānyo 'to 'sti drashtā* ' etc. simply means that the *Antaryāmin* described has no further *Antaryāmin* in relation to Himself. He is the ultimate *Antaryāmin*.

He, it is concluded, is the soul of Uddālaka, ' *Bhāva te Atmā* ', almost reiterating what Uddālaka proclaimed to Śvetaketu in ' *Tattvamasi* ' (*Shh. Up.* VI. 8. 7). The general principle that the *Antaryāmin* is the soul of all and that all beings are His body is given an immediate and telling application. All else is miserable, trivial, ' *ato 'nyadāritam* ' (III. 7. 28).

What this discourse does may be summarised. It expounds the cosmic role of *Brahman* in perfect clarity. It formulates the concept of the world as the body of God. That body of *Brahman* includes even the individual soul. *Brahman's* transcendence of His body along with His immanence in it as the 'Inner Ruler Immortal' is presented in appropriate grandeur.

VII. AKSHARA-BRĀHMAN 1

The eighth *Brāhmaṇa* in the third *adhya*ya of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* has come to be known as the ' *Akshara-brāhmaṇa* '. It is one of the strangest errors in the history of *Upanishadic* exegesis that this has been taken as representing a thought higher than that of the preceding *Antaryāmin-brāhmaṇa*, when in fact the teachings in both have precisely the same conclusion concerning the 'unknown knower other than whom there is no other'.

knower'. The earlier part of this discourse is frankly theistic, as it propounds a principle explanatory of the physical and moral orders of the universe. In essence, it is hardly less committed to the doctrine of an Absolute Being concerned with the cosmos than the thesis of the *Antaryāmin*.

This wholly insupportable distinction between the *Akshara-vidyā* and the *Antaryāmi-vidyā* seems to have originated from a commentator earlier than Śaṅkara to whom the latter refers (under *Bṛih. Up.* III. 8. 12) for purposes of refutation. Śaṅkara's own view refuses to posit an objective or ontological fall of the *Akshara* to the condition of *Antaryāmin*, but concedes that the *Ātman* in its unconditioned being is the *Akshara* describable only negatively; but that, viewed under a certain type of condition, no doubt not objectively conditioning it, but subjectively imposed by the observer, It is the *Antaryāmin*. To Rāmānuja it is evident that the entire attempt to break up the integral doctrine propounded in these two discourses into the higher and lower conceptions of *Brahman* is misconceived and is wholly without any basis in the text. His own interpretation of the *Akshara-vidyā* occurs in three places in the *S'ribhāshya* (I. 3. 9, II. 4. 13 and III. 3. 33).

Gārgī addresses an enquiry to Yājñavalkya, which she herself considers important, as to what is the warp and woof of the world. Yājñavalkya answers that it is the primordial *ākāśa* or space. She accepts this answer as sound and proceeds with the second enquiry which she considers more fundamental. She enquires as to what is the warp and woof of this primordial *ākāśa* itself. Yājñavalkya answers, "That is this *Akshara*". The term '*Akshara*' means the 'Imperishable'. Then he plunges into a glowing account of the *Akshara*. In the first place, the *Akshara* is without all the properties of matter and all the organs and properties of living beings known to us. We should not be fooled by Yājñavalkya's negative mode of description and understand him as propounding an attributeless reality. All that is denied of the *Akshara* is of the nature of limitations and imperfections, and there is no reason for taking Yājñavalkya as meaning that the *Akshara* is '*sarva-viśeṣaṇa-rahita*', devoid of all attributes. Determinateness of character is not negated, but only materiality and the limitations

characteristic of life. The *Akshara* is not altogether 'undistinguished', but is only free from imperfections. That is surely a way of being eminently 'distinguished' and determinate.

Then, Yājñavalkya proceeds to delineate the *Akshara* as commanding the sun and the moon, the earth and the sky, time itself in all its determinate forms, the rivers of the east and the west and all the rest of the physical universe, bringing them into existence and making them follow their determinate functions. It is the source of the existence and ordered functioning of the multifarious factors of the world of Nature. In the moral sphere, men are praised as worthy and meritorious in proportion to their conformity to the commandments of the *Akshara*. He who dies, without understanding this *Akshara*, however much he may have practised the conventional modes of righteousness, will inherit only transient felicity after death, and his life sinks into insignificance. He who understands the *Akshara* also and passes away becomes a 'man of Brahman' (III. 8. 10).

Now Yājñavalkya repeats himself and concludes the discourse with precisely the same declaration with which he concluded the *Antaryāmi*-discourse. The *Akshara* is "the unseen seer, the unheard hearer, the unthought thinker, the uncomprehended comprehender. There is no other seer, no other hearer, no other thinker and no other comprehender" (III. 8. 11). While he says that the *Akshara* is the seer, we cannot take him as not carrying forward in that statement all the previous descriptions of the *Akshara* he has given us. This is a cumulative characterization, and the Supreme Seer is the one affirmed before as transcending materiality and animality, as commanding the universe into being and order, as sustaining the moral order, as conferring everlasting blessedness on those who know Him and as, in fact, the warp and woof of the entire cosmos.

That He is 'unseen' simply implies that He is beyond all that is known in our mundane experience and such ignorance of Him is the cause of spiritual decline for creatures. That there is no other 'seer, knower' etc., simply signifies that there is no higher being or entity commanding and sustaining the *Akshara* Itself, even as this *Akshara* does in relation to the cosmos of empirical being and moral

endeavour. This is an emphatic manner of conveying the absolute supremacy of the *Akshara*.

Comparisons of the discourses for purposes of relative evaluations is no doubt wrong, when a commentator holds them all as presenting a single doctrine from various complementary and supplementary points of view. But still it may be noted by us, looking at them not strictly within the framework of Rāmānuja's thought, that the *Akshara-vidyā* omits to state an essential truth so well enunciated in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*. It does not have anything corresponding to "*antara*", meaning "in the interior of", which is a prominent element in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*. But for its general coherence with the rest of the discourses of Yājñavalkya and the undeniable implication of Divine immanence carried by what it explicitly propounds, the *Akshara-vidyā* could almost be construed as advocating the thesis of dualistic theism. Happily, it is rescued from this position by the two circumstances of its coherence with the rest of the discourses and its implications. In fact, the *Akshara* of this *vidyā* should be named *Antarākshara*.

The exposition of *Brahman* by Yājñavalkya addressed to Ushasta and Kahola brings out specifically the fact that *Brahman* is '*sarvāntara*', the innermost soul of all. But it does not attend to the fact of *Brahman* being the ruler of all. The exposition addressed to Gārgī brings out the fact of *Brahman* being the '*śāstā*' or ruler prominently. But it does not make a clear mention of *Brahman* being the innermost core of all. The Vedic statement, "*Antaḥ pravishṭas śāstā*" (*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, III. 21), that "He who has entered within is the ruler", is partially elucidated by each. The former elaborates the idea of '*antaḥ-pravishṭa*' (entering within), while the latter does justice to the idea of '*śāstā*' (ruler). It is only the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* that fully brings out the philosophic import of that proposition by its concept of '*Antaryāmin*', for the *Antaryāmin* is both '*antaḥ-pravishṭa*' and '*śāstā*'.

VIII. ŚAKALYA'S QUESTIONS

The ninth *Brāhmaṇa* of the third chapter of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* does not have much original or fundamental ideas of philosophical

importance. Its theme may be indicated in a summary fashion. The sage who questions Yājñavalkya is one Sākalya. He wants to know how many gods there are. Yājñavalkya mentions a great number of gods in accordance with the popular belief of the Vedic people. Under Sākalya's persistent questioning, the number gets progressively reduced, and finally only one God is recognized by Yājñavalkya (III 4. 9). Historically, this movement of thought from a superficial polytheism to the fundamental theistic monism of the *Upanishads* is very significant. The section corresponds in this respect to the second half of the *Ken Upanishad*. That single Divine Principle is described as '*Aupanishada Purusha*' (III. 9. 26), the Supreme Being revealed in the *Upanishads*. That is also a very significant point in the section. Rāmānuja is greatly struck by this naming of *Brahman*, and he uses the expression in a grand passage in his *Mahāsidhānta* (*Sribhāshya*, I. 1. 1).

The *Aupanishada Purusha* is characterized in a negative manner also, and the '*Neti, neti*' formula as found in the *Jyotirbrāhmaṇa* (IV. 4. 22) and the *Maitreyi-brāhmaṇa* (IV. 5. 15) of the fourth chapter is inserted for that purpose here (III. 9. 26). In the context, it can mean only transcendence of evil, as what is denied of *Brahman* in '*Neti, neti*' is exactly specified here, and thus the scope of negation is restricted thereby to imperfection. Yājñavalkya proclaims that the Supreme Reality is '*vijñānam ānandaṁ Brahma*' (III. 9. 28)⁵⁵ and this is a grand positive thesis. It is in consonance with a vast number of passages in the *Upanishads* in general and also in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* itself. It is strange that Śaṅkara singles it out as representing a lower conception of *Brahman*, while interpreting the first instance of '*Neti, neti*'. '*Vijñānam ānandaṁ Brahma*', duly combined with '*Neti, neti*', as is done here, imparts as high an understanding of *Brahman* as any other passage ever does in the entire range of *Upanishadic* literature. This is a depreciation of the great statement without any foundation whatever. Śaṅkara's fascination for the negative is at the bottom of this unfair estimate, and Sarvajñātma-muni seems to be rather sound in denouncing the overvaluation of the negative *vākyas*.

55. "Brahman is knowledge and bliss."

In Rāmānuja's works, apart from quotations from this *Brāhmaṇa*, there seems to be no extensive use or substantial elucidation of it. Considering the poor value that Saṅkara himself attaches to it, this gap seems to be no serious deficiency in Rāmānuja's contribution to the understanding of the *Upanishad*. Rāmānuja's selection of passages for elucidation is mostly governed by the fact that they are alleged to be contrary to his philosophical standpoint. His proposed correction of the *Advaitic* elucidation of 'Neti, neti' does everything necessary for re-establishing the passage in its right status of philosophical ultimacy.

IX. JYOTIR-BRĀHMAṆA

The third *Brāhmaṇa* of the fourth *adhyāya* has come to be known as *Jyotirbrāhmaṇa*. With the fourth into which it overflows, it is certainly the greatest discourse in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*. Deussen describes it as 'incomparable'. It is the longest of Yājñavalkya's discourses. It is in this dialogue that we meet with almost all the other principal *Upanishads*. It is certainly a version of *Dakṣa-vidyā* which is the culmination of the *Chhāndogya*, as such is the view of *Brahma-Sūtra* (III. 3. 38-39). We find in it significant anticipations or recapitulations of the other *Upanishads* such as *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Katha* and *Taittirīya*. Even that brief *Upanishad*, the *Māṇḍūkya*, is found here anticipated in impressive elaborateness. In fact, that *Upanishad* strikes one as too thin for its theme, unless one sees it as a summary of this dialogue, and if the latter is grasped in all its masterly treatment of the theme, that *Upanishad* appears rather a superfluous synopsis. It is unnecessary to exhibit in detail how the *Jyotirbrāhmaṇa* is a brilliant synthesis of all that the *Upanishads* stand for.

Taking the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* itself, it appears that this discourse incorporates into itself the essential affirmations of all the several philosophical passages. 'Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi' (I. 4. 10), containing the unification of the *jīva* and *Brahman*, is almost the central point of this dialogue. The *vijñānamaya ātman* (IV. 3. 7) is made to pass into the *Mahān Aja Ātmā* (IV. 4. 24). The formula of 'Neti, neti' (IV. 4. 22) is there in all its force. The teaching to Maitreyī, 'Śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ' (II. 4. 5), that the *Ātman* has to be heard about, reflected on and steadily meditated

upon, is here unmistakably in "*Vijñāya prajñāṁ kuroita*" (IV. 4. 21), which may be translated as: "Having understood, let one practise supreme awareness". The ideal of *sannyāsa* inculcated in that dialogue and in the *Kahola-brāhmaṇa* is reiterated here with the required clarity. The doctrine of *karma* secretly communicated to Ārtabhāga is clearly set forth here also. What is contained in Yājñavalkya's replies to Ushasta, Kahola and Uddālaka, namely, the presence of the Supreme *Ātman* as the inner core of all existents and particularly of the individual soul, is part of the central doctrine here. The idea of *Brahman* as the Ruler, made prominent in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* and *Akshara-brāhmaṇa* is brought out here in a series of epithets asserting the lordly powers of the Universal and Infinite Spirit. In reality, the *Jyotiṣbrāhmaṇa* is enough by itself to refute once for all the ill-conceived notion that the *Upanishads* contain divergent doctrines and that even in a single *Upanishad* there is no unified philosophy.

This discourse starts as a dialogue of inquiry. Somewhat in the style of the other sages, Janaka challenges Yājñavalkya with a question as to what the 'light' is in a man's life (IV. 3. 2). Yājñavalkya starts by saying that the sun is the light. Janaka asks as to what the 'light' is when the sun sets. In this early part of the dialogue, Janaka leads the conversation by his successive enquiries. Yājñavalkya mentions the moon, fire and speech in succession. Finally, he arrives at the answer that the *ātman* or soul is its own light. By '*ātman*' is to be understood the individual self in man whose essence is consciousness, '*vijñāna-maya*' (IV. 3. 7), and this *ātman* is self-luminous as it were. Yājñavalkya says that the *puruṣa* is '*svayam-jyotis*' (IV. 3. 9).

From this point onwards, Yājñavalkya takes the discourse into his own hands completely and develops his philosophy. Janaka occasionally speaks to convey his pleasure at the instruction and ask for more enlightenment. The discourse ceases to be one of inquiry and becomes instruction. It is in this stage of instruction that Yājñavalkya puts forward his magnificent argument in astonishing strides, widening the horizon of the discourse by every major step, and concludes with the fullest statement of the nature of *Brahman* and the manner of achieving the direct experience or vision of that Supreme Reality.

Rāmānuja discusses parts of this discourse in several contexts in the *Śrībhāṣya* as also in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha*. But directly he interprets its central thought in two *adhikaraṇas*, I. 3. 42-44 and III. 3. 38-40. Its striking denial of plurality, '*Neha nānāsti kiñchana*', (IV. 4. 19), that 'there is no multiplicity in this (*Brahman*)', is elucidated also in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* (page 80).

We may now proceed to understand this culminating discourse of Yājñavalkya as Rāmānuja expounds it. The section is identified as *Daharavidyā* in the *Brahma-Sūtras* themselves (III. 3. 38-40). Even as the *Daharavidyā* in the *Chhāndogya* (VIII. 7) describes the nature of *Brahman* and connects it later with the doctrine of the individual soul in the instruction of Prajāpati to Indra, in this version of *Daharavidyā* also we have the determination of both the individual *ātman* and the Supreme *Ātman*. The difference lies in the fact we start with the individual soul in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* and conclude with *Brahman*, while in the *Chhāndogya* the sequence is reversed.

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The teaching proceeds in three stages. We have first of all an account of the states of the individual soul. Then we have an enthusiastic and ecstatic presentation of the nature of the *Paramātman*. The last stage consists of the indication of the pathway to the attainment of *Brahman*.

The individual self is of the nature of self-consciousness, '*svayaṁ jyotis*' (IV. 3. 9). The *viññānamaya* passes through the three stages of waking, dream and deep sleep in his empirical and mundane career. In the waking state, he appropriates experiences through the senses called here the '*prāṇas*' (IV. 3. 7), and lives in pleasures and pains caused by his association with the body in accordance with *karma*. The *jīva* passes into dream-states also. The speciality of the dream-state is that in it the individual self moves in a world of unreality in comparison with the waking world. Rāmānuja contends that this is a special world, but it is not made or projected by the individual dreamer. The principal reason is that there are pleasures and pains in dreams also, and they must surely be due to *karma* by way of *puṇya* and *pāpa*. The text (IV. 3. 9) specifically indicates *puṇya* and *pāpa* as operating in this experience. Now this machinery producing experiences through the

law of moral causation is not of the *jīva*'s making, and he is not the force governing the operation of that law. Hence the *Upanishad* says, '*Sa hi kartā*' (IV. 3. 10). This means for Rāmānuja that God, the supreme law-maintainer of the universe, is the author of the dream-world also. That world, therefore, is not a subjective realm wholly set up by the dreaming individual. It obeys indubitably certain laws and the latter transcend his operative competence. This part of the teaching is explained under *Brahma-Sūtra* (III. 2. 1-5).

The state of dreamless sleep is wonderful in many ways. Hence its perennial fascination for the *Vedāntin*. In it, the subject of experience is cut off from the objective world of waking experience. He experiences no outer presentation then and is freed from pleasures and pains resulting from such experiences. In that stage, the familiar verities of waking experience are set aside. But the subject of experience is not extinguished. '*Na vijñātur vijñāter viparilopo vidyate*' (IV. 3. 30). That is, there is no disappearance of the consciousness of the knowing self. He is imperishable and bears within himself the unextinguished light of consciousness; unawareness characterizes his life then. He is unaware of the outer world, unaware of himself and unaware of the Supreme Self also. The Supreme Self is said to take possession of him then, manifestly for purposes of rejuvenating him after the exhausting trials and tribulations of earthly life. He is '*Prājñena Atmanā samparishvakta*' (IV. 3. 21), embraced by the Supreme Spirit. This unawareness is natural in that ecstatic union. The *Upanishad* offers the earthly analogy of the self-forgetful embrace of lovers.

Such a union is always there between God and the individual, but in the other two states, man runs after Godless trivialities and thus denies himself the infinite joy he could find within himself by turning to the Godhead there. In deep sleep, though he has not turned to God by a deliberate act of contemplation, the suspension of the Godless experiences of dream and waking releases the joy of union. This is a foretaste of the greater joy of union that would be man's, if only he too turns towards God. As it is, the initiative in the union is God's only. The *Upanishad* abruptly brings in *Prājña* in its account of deep sleep, and thereby it indicates that its ultimate design is to lead up to that reality. The *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 3. 42-43) points out that the distinction between the individual self and

Brahman is clearly hinted here, as it is going to be hinted again in the account of death in the sequel.

That *Brahman* is of the nature of joy supreme and all earthly joys are parts thereof is a great theme for the sages of the *Upanishads*. The refreshing experience of deep sleep and the serenity and healthful joy that mark it are linked in the dialogue with the nature of *Brahman*, as in that state the individual is said to be sheltered solely in *Brahman* for the time being. It is a case of unearned joy and in the state of release and mystic devotion, the joy is made ours by our responsive initiative also.

At this point, Yājñavalkya allows himself to digress a little and casts himself into the theme of *ānanda*. He says that *Brahman* is 'paramā gatiḥ.....paramā sampat.....paramo lokah . paramo ānandah' (IV. 3. 32), the supreme goal, the supreme treasure, the supreme world, the supreme bliss. The *Taittiriya* ladder of *ānanda* is worked out with minor variations. That the *ānanda* characteristic of *Brahman* is not the same as what one gets in *sushupti* (dreamless sleep) is made clear by the statement that the *ānanda* of *Brahman* comes only to him who is *śrotriya*, *avijina* and *akāmahata* (IV. 3. 33), i.e., to one who is profoundly enlightened in the *śruti*, sinless and desireless.

So *Brahman* is the supreme refuge, the supreme treasure, the supreme world and the supreme *ānanda* for one who has conquered desire and sin and who is established in knowledge. There is significance in describing *Brahman* as the supreme world. It is not that *Brahman* is one object of interest among several objects of interest, all these together forming the world of ideal ends. Rather, *Brahman* is the whole world of values, the supreme and all-inclusive end.

The original and primary argument is resumed. The individual who lives in these three states is overtaken by death. In death, named 'utkrānti', the cessation of life-functions takes place and the self is reduced to its bare essentials. In this state also, the *Prājña* takes possession of it. 'Prājñena Ātmanā anvārūḍhah' (ridden upon by the Omniscient Self) is the expression used. This is also mentioned as a fact indicative of the otherness of the Supreme

Self in the *Sūtra* (I. 3. 42). The individual discards the body and passes beyond, carrying with him the effects of his previous *vidyā* (loving meditation) and *karma*: he also carries with him his *pūroa-prajñā* (IV. 4. 2). This '*pūroa-prajñā*', says Saṅkara, accounts for the phenomenon of genius and prodigies. He particularly instances genius in the fine arts.

Now, what happens to the soul after passing out of the body at death? Here the discourse brings in the doctrine of *karma* and rebirth explicitly. "*Yathākārī yathāchārī tathā bhavati, sādhu-kārī sādhu-bhavati, pāp-kārī pāpo bhavati, puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmanā bhavati, pāpaḥ pāpena; kāmamaya evāyaṁ puruṣaḥ.....yathākāmo bhavati tatkratur bhavati, yatkratur bhavati tatkarma kurute, yatkarma kurute tad abhi-sampadyate*" (IV. 4. 5).⁵⁶ This is perhaps the best and the clearest statement of the doctrine of *karma*.

On this principle, then, the soul that leaves the body at death takes another body for another life. In fact, it is only after taking hold of the next locus of re-incarnation that the former body is given up. The new life may be of any kind out of an indefinite number of alternative possibilities. The determining factor that determines the specific re-embodiment is *karma*. The first determinant in the entire chain culminating in rebirth is certainly *kāma* or desire, for desire determines deed or *kratu*, and *kratu* determines re-birth.

So far, the course of the bound soul caught up in the cycle of *sāṁsara* has been depicted. The pathway of liberation from this cycle is taken up now. He who is *akāma*, *nishkāma*, *āptakāma* and *ātmakāma* (IV. 4. 6), that is, one who has no desires, whose desires have left him, who has had his desires fulfilled and whose sole desire is the *Ātman*, has no rebirth to undergo, he is *Brahman* and attains *Brahman*. This means that he who is without desire because

56. "As one acts, as one conducts oneself, so one becomes. He who does good becomes good, he who commits sin becomes evil. One becomes auspicious by virtuous action and evil by sinful action.....This self in the embodied state is made up of (i.e., is actuated by) desire.....As one desires, so one resolves: as one resolves, so one acts: as one acts, so one attains results."

he has conquered desire, passes beyond the realm of transmigration through the strength of the desire that is fulfilled, for it is desire for the *Ātman*. He is great in himself and attains the greatest of the great, namely, *Brahman*. What the *Chhāndogya* expresses by the words '*Param jyotirupasampadya svena rūpeṇa abhinishpadyate*' (*Chh. Up.* VIII. 12. 3)⁵⁷ is introduced here and the reaching of *Brahman* is the destruction of the lower life characterized by the round of the fruitless lives of *karma*.

What is that the reaching of which constitutes this sublime consummation? It is the great unborn *Ātman*, '*Mahān Aja Ātmā*' (IV. 4. 22, 24). He abides in the *viññānamaya ātman*, who lives amidst the *prāṇās* (senses) and with whom the spiritual instruction of Yājñavalkya started. We have here something corresponding to the "*anena jīvena Ātmanā anupraviśya*" (VI. 3. 2) of the *Chhāndogya*. The actual words of the *śruti* might be interpreted as meaning either that the *Mahān Ātman* dwells in the *viññānamaya ātman*, as declared by the *Chhāndogya* text alluded to and as more clearly enunciated by the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*, or as simply identifying the *Mahān Ātman* with the *viññānamaya ātman*. The latter interpretation has its analogue in '*Tattvamasī*' (*Chh.* VI. 8. 7) and '*Ahaṁ brahmāsmi*' (*Bṛih.* I. 4. 10). Rāmānuja does not discuss the relative merits of the interpretations. It is as it should be. As we have found in the case of the two latter identity-texts, for him, the identity-texts are themselves immanence-texts.

There is no identity between *Brahman* and the *jīva* other than immanence such that when we say that *Brahman* is the *jīva*, we simply mean that *Brahman* is the inner soul of the *jīva* itself. What we mean by identity in the context is that *Brahman* who is the soul of the universe in its totality is the soul of the individual soul also. The perfection implied in being the soul of the universe and the perfection implied in being the soul of the individual are together predicated of the self-same *Brahman*. Thus identity-texts themselves turn out to be predicative texts. This is the fundamental logic of '*sāmānādhikaraṇya*', coordinate and

⁵⁷ "In this manner only, this individual self, rising up from this body, attains the Supreme Light and appears in his own form."

complementary predication. It may be of interest to note that the *Mādhyaṇḍina* version of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is without this reference to the *viññāna-maya ātman*, rendering the text clearly predicative and not an identity-text. This *Mahān Ātman* is said to repose in the interior space or *Ākāśa* of the individual's heart. It is this proposition that makes the *vidyā* of the *Jyotirbrāhmaṇa* a case of *Dahara-vidyā* bringing out its fundamental unity with the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Chhāndogya* (VIII. 7). It also exhibits unity with the abridged *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad*.

There are some outstanding characterizations of the Supreme *Ātman*. He is beyond the law of *karma* and thereby stands distinguished from the individual self. He is '*sarvasya vaśi, sarvasyeśānaḥ, sarvasyādhipatiḥ, sarveśvaraḥ, bhūtādhipatiḥ, bhūtapālaḥ*' (IV. 4. 22).⁵⁸ All these cumulatively represent him as maintaining and controlling the entire universe as the *Antaryāmin*. This makes Him substantially cosmic. But His transcendence is not to be ignored. He is to be apprehended as '*neti, neti*' (*Ibid.*). His nature is altogether beyond all that constitutes the imperfections characteristic of matter and the finite spirits. That this is the meaning of '*neti, neti*' is well brought out by the specification by the text itself of what stands negated by the formula. Further, we have to recognize that there is no plurality: "*Neha nānāsti kiñchana*" (IV. 4. 19). This declaration of ultimate monism must be properly understood. We have no right to take it as cancelling the affirmation that He is the Lord of the universe.

Rāmānuja interprets the *Sūtra*, '*Ādarādalopaḥ*' (III. 3. 39) thus: "*Sarvasya vaśi sarvasyeśānaḥ.....eṣa sarveśvara eṣa bhūtadhipatiḥ eṣa bhūtapālaḥ iti bhūyobhūya aiśvarya-padeśāt guṇeṣhvādaraḥ pratiyate*".⁵⁹ It does not appear that Yājñavalkya is mentioning casually and without any philosophical interest whatever, these glories and attributes of *Brahman*. The

58. "(He is) the controller of all, the ruler of all, the master of all, the sovereign over all, the lord of all beings, the protector of all beings."

59. "'He is the controller of all, the ruler of allHe is the sovereign over all, He is the lord of all beings, He is the protector of all beings' (*Bṛih. Up.* IV. 4. 22)—here His sovereignty is taught often and often, and therefore ardour is made out in (teaching) His auspicious qualities."

glorification comes, as if it was the principal purport of the teaching. The denial of plurality must be, therefore, restricted in scope and made supplementary to this basic purport.

It is eminently logical to see that a plurality not sustained by the unitary *Īśvara*, is what is negated here. We have a monism no doubt, but it is not a monism antithetical to the outspoken and emphatically proclaimed theism. It is a theistic and not an atheistic monism that the instruction propounds, even as the negation of '*neti, neti*' is the negation of evil and finitude. So what stands out as the principal doctrine is the idea of *Brahman* as the '*Sarveśvara*', the Lord and Ruler of all. The individual self and the realm of the non-self just constitute a part of the glory of God. We may interpret this truth in the light of the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*. The finite world is included in the '*sarva*' (all) of which *Brahman* is the *vasī, īśāna, pati* and *pāla*, controller, ruler, lord and protector. To read a monism in the discourse other than this is to attribute to Yājñavalkya sheer nonsense.

We may note the cardinal character of this vision of *Brahman*. In the first place, it posits a transcendent reality. In the second place, it holds that reality to be the controlling power immanent in all finite existence. In the third place, the plurality that stands appropriated by this reality as a part of its glory, bears the aspect of completed and integrated plurality and not an incomplete (*akṛitsna*) many and not such as to repudiate Him who asserts its being. There is transcendence, immanence and the consequent integration of the manifold empirical actuality.

One may pause here to make an observation. It may legitimately be objected that the vision outlined here may not be a veridical experience and that the reality affirmed may not have objective being. In other words, the whole conception of *Brahman* and the so-called experience of *Brahman* may be challenged on grounds of lack of proof. To picture *Brahman* on so grand a scale and to look forward to a vision of It may be good poetry, even if it be that much. But on what logical foundation does the imposing superstructure stand?

This is a challenge that a philosophy such as that of the *Upanishads* must face at some stage or other. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*

has familiarised us with the thought that plurality as such is nothing complete. It is *akṛitsna*. Further, to posit such a plurality apart from a unitary substratum is to miss it wholly: it would repudiate him who posits it. Yājñavalkya's discourse to Maitreyī makes that principle clear. The world of diversity is incomplete in itself and this incompleteness is demonstrated by the self-contradictoriness of our affirmation of it as self-contained. Hence the *Upanishads* have it enunciated over and over again that to understand the 'many', we have to understand the 'One' of which they are the aspects. This basic monism would be the starting point, the first premise of the argument.

The basic reality, at once unitary and foundational in relation to empirical plurality, must be transcendent. It does not serve the requirements of the situation, if it is just one real among many reals or only an aggregate of the 'many'. It must go beyond what it has to render intelligible. Hence the formula of '*neti, neti*' is the next important step of the argument. The discourse under consideration does well in including this vital idea of transcendence in the formula of '*neti, neti*'.

This transcendence is not mere distinction or exclusiveness. If it were simply that and no more, we would have on hand two incompatible alternatives. Either the world or God would have to be conceived as the sole reality, unless we can embrace a meaningless dualism of two ultimate principles. The difficulty in such a position would be that neither of the two alternative contradictory conceptions would secure final acceptance and could be made the subject-matter of a triumphant affirmation. The 'one' that is set in such isolation from the 'many' can offer no explanation of the 'many' and would itself sink into the position of a 'one' among the many. It must incorporate the 'many' in itself and impart to it completeness, consistency and intelligibility. Hence the discourse speaks of God in exuberant reiteration as the Lord, Master and Saviour of the 'many'. That is a higher truth which includes what it supersedes and thereby renders it intelligible.

Truth does not sublate error, except in so far as the latter negates what is beyond it. On the contrary, it includes the element of truth embedded in error, negates the negations it contains and

completes it in an ampler and therefore more harmonious affirmation. The triumphant theory as contrasted with a disproved theory contains all that is sound in the latter, removes its exclusions by bringing in more facts and explains how it could explain what it did explain. This inclusiveness is characteristic of the real. What simply transcends and does not include what it transcends is a weak alternative and is sure to be broken by what it does not include. Therefore, the *Upanishad* takes care to regard the Supreme *Brahman* as taking into Itself the cosmos and upholding it from within.

This relation of 'belonging' to *Brahman* brings to the world of plurality order, harmony and coherence. In so far as the plurality embodies the single ultimate principle, it becomes part of a single arrangement, gaining the completeness and intelligibility flowing from that integration. It is this truth that the sentence, "*Neha nānāsti kiñchana*" (IV. 4. 19), really sets forth.

The unity of the Absolute Principle, Its transcendence of the world of plurality, Its inclusion of that world and the consequent unification of it as an intelligible order are the principal facts of the metaphysical situation. The idea or vision of *Brahman* would lose its claim to the ultimacy of truth, if it failed to provide for these fundamental facts. *Brahman* is real, because It is one, because It transcends the 'many', because It includes the 'many' and because It imparts systematic unification to the 'many'. There is an *ākāṅkṣhā* (need or expectancy) for It on the part of the many, It is *ap-rāpta* and *abādhitā* (underived and unstultified) and there is *bādhā* for Its *bādhaka* (stultification for what stultifies It) It is the *pūṛaka*—or that which completes—all knowledge.

A critical analysis of the notion of reality does render clear that only *Brahman* of this nature can be real and nothing else. *Brahman* is truly '*satyasya satyam*', the Real of the real. A mysticism that obliterates the awareness of God, of the subject of experience and of the world and is just sentience and no more, does not rise beyond *sushupti* (dreamless sleep), and to this category belong all drug-mysticisms. A mysticism that is intensely aware of the one Supreme Reality and does not relate the waking world of diversity to that inward reality is yet to develop and establish itself

as true. Mysticism is true in proportion to its power in transforming the empirical plurality into a radiant manifestation of the Deity.

It is worthwhile considering here one important observation of Śaṅkara. While agreeing with Bādarāyaṇa (III. 3. 39) in holding that the *Jyotiṛbrāhmaṇa* inculcates a *vidyā* that is identical with the *Dahara-vidyā* of *Chhāndogya*, he goes on to point out a distinction. The *Chhāndogya Dahara-vidyā*, according to him, deals with *Brahman* as characterized by attributes, and the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* concerns itself with *Nirguṇa Brahman*. It is difficult to maintain this distinction, unless we discard that part of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* passage which delights itself in delineating the cosmic glory of *Brahman*. The strength of the import of '*neti, neti*' cannot justify such an exclusion of the seemingly vital part of the text, '*sarvasya vaśī..... bhutapālah*' (III. 4. 22), for the negation should be restricted in the light of the affirmation that *Brahman* is the ruler of all, the protector of all beings etc.: and the passage itself makes clear that what is negated is of the nature of imperfection characteristic of matter and the finite self.

That *Brahman* is *nirguṇa* in its ultimate nature has to be supported not merely by the desperate expedient of discarding the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Chhāndogya* as concerned with a lower view of *Brahman*, but also by the more untenable expedient of writing off genuine parts of the essential teaching of the *vidyā* as presented in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* itself. It seems that one cannot read in this 'incomparable' dialogue of Yājñavalkya the doctrine of an acosmic and attributeless *Brahman*, unless one cuts it down conveniently. It is not that Yājñavalkya teaches the required monism by himself, but that he is to be admonished into silence a great deal to yield that wanted philosophy. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* at its best fails the cause of *Nirguṇa Brahman*. Such is the position of Rāmānuja.

Another thought connected with this question may also be mentioned. If the concept of *Brahman* as *sarveśvara*, the Lord of all, so prominently advanced in the passage, is given serious attention, the identity of the *jīva* with such a *Brahman* hinted at in the text can only be on the lines propounded by the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* and even the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Chhāndogya*. A

more radical and substantive identity is possible only, if *Brahman* is suitably divested, and our text runs counter to such an exegetical move. The glory of *Brahman* seems to be fundamental to it. We cannot take *Brahman* as presented in the text as ultimate and still posit such an identity. It is a question of redefining *Brahman* in order to provide for the required kind of identity with the *jīva* or redefining the identity in order to keep undamaged the full notion of *Brahman*. Rāmānuja prefers the second alternative, and for him the identification of the *jīva* with *Brahman* is itself a part of the glorification of *Brahman*.

The next fundamental element of the teaching of Yājñavalkya in the dialogue concerns the pathway to the attainment of *Brahman*. The dialogue is distinguished by its adequate handling of the theme. The ideal conduct of life, according to the passage, must include an element of action, and it thereby agrees with the *Īśa Upaniṣad* and anticipates the *Gītā*. It says: "*Tametaṁ vedānuvachinena Brāhmaṇā vividishanti, yajñena dānena tapasā 'nāśakena*" (III. 4. 22).⁶⁰ The author of the *Sūtras* takes note of this injunction and provides for moral activity in his scheme of Godward life. There is an interesting divergence of opinion among the interpreters of Śaṅkara as to whether the passage holds that actions such as *yajña* (sacrifice) and *dāna* (charitable deeds) give rise to knowledge of *Brahman* or to a desire for such knowledge. It is unnecessary for us to enter into this exegetical controversy. Rāmānuja sees in the text a straightforward advocacy of *karma-yoga* (*Śrībhāṣya*, III. 4. 26).

The text goes further and enjoins on the seeker of *Brahman* cultivation of certain dispositions and attitudes, which are more inward ethical requirements: "*Sānto dānta uparatastitikshuh samāhito bhūtvā 'tmanyevātmānam paśyet*" (IV. 4. 23).⁶¹ A disposition marked by the conquest of the senses inward and outward,

60. "Brāhmaṇas desire to know Him who is thus, by reciting the Vedas, by sacrifices, by giving gifts, by religious austerities associated with fasting".

61. "Being tranquilised in mind, with the senses restrained, having given up desires, resigned, patient, having become absorbed in meditation, one should see the Self in (his own) self."

fortitude in bearing the ills of life, and a reflective or contemplative attitude pave the way for seeing the Supreme *Ātman* in the *ātman*. These appear as virtues of restraint, and Rāmānuja sees an apparent difficulty in harmonizing them with the active ethics of *karma-yoga*. But he solves the difficulty by a suitable distinction in *karma*. *Karma* can bind and also liberate. The restraints relate to worldly activity and the *karma-yoga* proper is devotion to liberating activity (*Śrībhāshya*, III. 4. 27). Of the three cardinal virtues taught by the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* (V. 2. 3), *dāna*, *dama* and *dayā*, charity, self-control and compassion, two, *dāna* and *dama*, are incorporated in the ethical prescriptions here. We are to take that *dayā* is also included by necessary implication. Yājñavalkya repeats prominently what he introduced in his replies to Kahola and Ushasta and lays down the law of renunciation.

The question of renunciation is amply discussed by Rāmānuja (*Śrībhāshya*, III. 4. 17-20). He is of opinion that *sannyāsa* as an order or stage of life is definitely taught in the Vedāntic scriptures. All the three upper castes are eligible for it. For a view according to which *sannyāsa* is indispensable for the higher life, it is an unbearable restriction to advocate it only for the *Brāhmaṇas*. Sureśvara is right in rejecting that restriction. For Rāmānuja, though the *sannyāsa āśrama* is a recognized mode of life for the spiritual aspirants, it is not absolutely necessary for spiritual progress. The spirit of *sannyāsa*, renunciation and dedication, can be cultivated in the other *āśramas* also. Formal *sannyāsa* is an alternative and not a universal necessity.

The actual knowledge of *Brahman* is to be acquired in two stages. The text says : "*Vijñāya prajñāṁ kuruṭa*" (IV. 4. 21).⁶² We have here what the *Muṇḍaka* (I. 1. 4) propounds in its thesis of the two *vidyās* of *Brahman*, *parā* and *aparā*, the higher and the lower. '*Vijñāya*' refers to the attainment of knowledge through scriptural study and philosophical reflection bearing on it. The *prajñā* that follows from it is the meditative awareness of *Brahman*. It certainly requires to be cultivated, and hence a *vidhi* or mandate of the form '*kuruṭa*' is perfectly reasonable. It is also to be seen

62. "Having attained knowledge, let one practise meditation."

that the two stages of knowledge, the intellectual understanding and meditative directing of thought, correspond to the *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* of the *Maitreyī* dialogue. The *viññāna* consists of *śravaṇa* and *manana*, while the *prajñā* advocated is the *nididhyāsana*. The first stage also recapitulates the 'pāṇḍitya' of the *Kaṇḍa-brāhmaṇa*. It also corresponds to the *pravachana* and 'bahunā śrutena', which the *Muṇḍaka* (III. 2. 3) and the *Kaṭha* (II. 23) regard as incompetent for bringing about the vision of the *Ātman*.

The *nididhyāsana* is the *dhruvā smṛiti* of the *Bhūma-vidyā* of *Chhāndogya* (VII). It consists of a steady contemplation of *Brahman*. It is *upāsana* or devout meditation. The object of this meditation is *Brahman* as dwelling in the soul of the meditator. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* is very emphatic on the point, and we have a clear denunciation of meditation in which the object is viewed as external and alien to the meditating subject: "Atmetyeva upāsita... yo 'nyām devatām upāste 'nyo'sāvanyo'ham asmīti na sa veda" (I. 4. 7,10).⁶³ This clearly corresponds to the *Taittirīya* text, "Yo veda nihitam guhāyām....." (II. 1. 1).

This immanence in the individual must enter into the theme of meditation, and hence the *Dahara-vidyā* of both the *Chhāndogya* and the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* locate the Supreme *Ātman* in the 'interior of the heart' and take pains to formulate a clear conception of the individual self. The *Chhāndogya* appends the teaching concerning the individual at the end of the *Dahara-vidyā*, and the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* has it as the first part of the *Dahara-vidyā*. All this is conveyed in the abridged injunction, 'Ātmanyeva 'tmānam paśyet' (IV. 4. 23)⁶⁴ of the dialogue. Rāmānuja definitely states that the *jīva* is 'upāsya-koṭi-nikshipta', placed in the position of the object of meditation. This assimilation of the individual into the theme of meditation is a part of the general truth that *Brahman* has to be contemplated as possessed of all perfections and cosmic and

63. "One should meditate (on *Brahman*) as the self.....He who worships the Deity as different (from his self), thinking that that (Deity) is one and he another, does not know."

64. "One should see the Self in the self."

supercosmic glories. It is this all-inclusiveness of the object that *Bhūma-vidyā* propounds, when it asserts that the experience is such that one knows and sees nothing else. It is this totality of the object of meditation that Yājñavalkya teaches in his instruction to Maitreyī when he speaks of the state in which the *Ātman* becomes everything : “ *Yatra tvasya sarvam Ātmaivābhūt* ”.⁶⁵

While elucidating the term, ‘*nididhyāsana*’, it was forced upon us that we must include in it the element of love. This enrichment of the notion of meditation is to be admitted even without reference to the explicit statement to that effect in the *Muṇḍaka* and the *Kaṭha*. The *Gītā* elaborates the fundamental characterization of *upāsana* as *bhakti*, and that thesis is no innovation but only an explication. Keeping out the *bhakti*-texts of the other *Upanishads* and the *Gītā*, in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* itself the essential idea that *upāsana* must be of the nature of love can be discerned without any uncertainty. The *nididhyāsana* of the Maitreyī dialogue occurs in the grand context of love, and Yājñavalkya is simply holding forth the *Ātman* as the supreme object of supreme love. Janaka is so overwhelmed by the mood of devotion that Yājñavalkya sets up in him that he surrenders himself and all that belongs to him to that great teacher for loving service, ‘*dāsyāya*’ (IV. 4. 23). This is surely *guru-bhakti* flowing from *Deva-bhakti*. It is impossible to miss in all this the attitude of love. Hence the last step in the ladder of human effort towards the realization of *Brahman* is *prajñā* of the nature of *nididhyāsana* characterized by love and adoration. It is the culminating *sādhana* of this description that Rāmānuja prays for in the opening verse of his *Śrībhāshya*, ‘*śemushī bhaktirūpā*’, that his understanding should assume the form of loving devotion to the Lord.

65. “in which (experience) to him all things are *Ātman*.”

CHAPTER V

FIVE MORE UPANISHADS

THE KAUSHITAKI

There is no reason to belittle the *Kaushitaki Upanishad*. It bears the character of a very old *Upanishad* like the *Chhândogya* and the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka*. It has been brought under discussion by the *Brahma-Sûtras* in two sections (I. 1. 29-32 and I. 3. 16). Śaṅkara, Bhāskara and Rāmānuja agree that these sections of the *Sûtras* elucidate some basic passages of the *Upanishad*. The commentators make use of the *Upanishad*, even apart from these two sections of the *Sûtras*. Like all the older *Upanishads*, it also contains material not strictly philosophical. And there seems to be no justifiable reason for not according to this *Upanishad* the status of a primary scripture of *Vedānta*. Rāmānuja offers a very substantial interpretation of its philosophical contents.

The first section in the *Brahma-Sûtras* to discuss this *Upanishad* takes up a very important chapter (III) of the *Upanishad* and it alone will concern us here. Rāmānuja devotes the maximum consideration to it. In intrinsic weight, the chapter is as lofty as any of the best discourses of the *Chhândogya* and the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka*.

Divodāsa's son, Pratardana, does some extraordinarily good deeds. The god Indra to whose world he goes as a reward of merit, is highly pleased with him and offers to give him a fitting boon. Pratardana does not name the boon and prays to Indra to confer himself what he considers to be the highest good of man. If this is rather surprising, Indra's response is still more surprising. He directs Pratardana to direct his devotion to himself, that is, to Indra himself. Then an extraordinary glorification of Indra by Indra himself is recorded. He narrates his own feats that are familiar to students of Vedic

mythology. He goes on to describe himself as the fundamental *prāṇa*. This is no simple breath, but a cosmic principle. Gradually, he advances to a highly metaphysical plane.

Indra describes the multiplicity of the self in man to the various organs and processes through which he functions. He points out that this self, described as *prajñāmatā* (subtle intelligence), a truly appropriate designation, is organically related to the material world, described as *bhūtamātrā* (subtle matter). It is not as if there were several *prajñāmātrās* and several *bhūtamātrās* mutually distinct and separate. The *Upanishad* says, "No *etan nānā*" (III. 9), that this is not a bare multiplicity. The *bhūtamātrās* are established in the *prajñāmātrās*. That means that the material world rests on the selves in an ultimate way. The *prajñāmātrās*, in their turn, are established in the Supreme *Prāṇa*.

The *Upanishads* are fond of using the simile of a wheel for illustrating the formation of an organically united structure out of a multiplicity of factors. But they can show no better use of this simile than what we have here. The outer rim of the wheel rests upon the spokes. Even so do the material elements of existence rest upon the selves. The spokes are held together by the axle. Similarly, the selves are supported and held up by the *Prāṇa* (III. 9).

Now the discourse devotes itself to the delineation of the *Prāṇa*. This *Prāṇa* is *prajñātmā*, *ānanda*, *ajara* and *amṛita* (*Ibid*). That is, It is of the nature of supreme consciousness and joy, unaging and immortal. It is beyond the law of *karma*; on the contrary, it actuates the agents that come under the law of *karma* (*Ibid*). This *Prāṇa* is He who protects the worlds, rules over the worlds, He is the Lord of all, *Sarveśvara*. Indra says: "He is my *Ātman* and one should meditate on Him as my *Ātman*" (*Ibid*). This is the substance of the third chapter of the *Kaushitaki*.

Rāmānuja finds this instruction highly contributory to the right formulation of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. That the material universe is subservient to the finite self and that the finite selves are based on the Supreme Spirit are magnificent propositions for him. The exact relation of the material universe and the finite selves to

the *Paramātmān* is describable in terms of the body-soul relationship as propounded in the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa*. Hence Indra does well in instructing Pratardana to meditate on the Supreme as dwelling in his individual soul. In precisely the same way does Vāmadeva communicate his supreme experience of *Brahman* (*Bṛih. Up.*, I. 4. 10). Happily the instruction here culminates in the proclamation of the cosmic glories of *Brahman*. There is no suspicion of the impersonal and attributeless Absolute here, no hint of the unreality of the many and intimation of the unity of the *jīva* and *Brahman* except in terms of *Brahman*'s immanence in the *jīva*.

The only anomaly in the discourse is that *Brahman* is not presented as such but is said to be Indra, with the well-known exploits to the credit of that Vedic deity. He is identified with *Prāṇa*, and many of the empirical characteristics of the well-known life-breath are mentioned. How are we to resolve this tangle? The difficulty of textual interpretation is genuine and the *Sūtrakāra* handles the problem superbly. Rāmānuja interprets him as maintaining that three types of meditation on *Brahman* are possible.

Sometimes a physical principle may be chosen for focusing attention upon and *Brahman* may be meditated upon as dwelling within that principle. That is the case in the present discourse, as far as it deals with meditation on *prāṇa*. Sometimes a particular individual self, such as the *jīva* of Indra in the present text, may be made the field of contemplation, and *Brahman* may be worshipped as dwelling in the individual as his Ultimate Soul. Sometimes *Brahman* may be meditated upon apart from these embodiments, in His own intrinsic nature along with His inherent perfections. That is also a distinct manner of devotion.

Hence nothing has gone wrong if Indra directs Pratardana to meditate on *Brahman* as the soul of Indra himself or as the soul of *prāṇa*. Through the cosmos also there runs a road to the Absolute Reality. But the essential principle is that our devotion to these lower principles must progress beyond them and must reach the Highest as embodied in them. There should be no crude identification of the ostensible object with the real inner object shining through it. This instruction of Indra does itself contain directions for all the three types of meditation on *Brahman*.

SVETĀSVĀTARA

The *Svetāsvātara Upanishad* is certainly a late *Upanishad*, but it is not too late for being authoritative. The *Brahma-Sūtra* elucidates its passages in one section according to Saṅkara himself (I. 4. 8-10). According to Rāmānuja, it elucidates some other passages in another section also (III. 2. 35).⁶⁶ These two commentators refer to its authority widely in the course of their writings. Hence its status as a primary *Upanishad* cannot be validly disputed.

The *Upanishad* as a whole provides a congenial climate of thought for Rāmānuja. It ecstatically dwells on the inherent attributes and glories of *Īśvara*. It distinguishes the *jīva* from *Īśvara* any number of times. Hence, whenever Rāmānuja wants to give clear instances of *bheda-śruti*, scriptural texts differentiating the individual self from *Brahman*, he resorts to this *Upanishad*. *Prakṛiti* is one of the eternal verities according to it. It is identified with *māyā* and *Īśvara* is said to be the wielder of *māyā*. It explicitly sets forth the pathway of surrender and *bhakti*, using the very words, '*śaraṇam prapadye*' and '*parābhakti*' (VI. 18, 23)⁶⁷ of the later *bhakti* treatises. There is nothing in the *Upanishad* which cannot and does not get magnificent interpretation at the hands of Rāmānuja. He takes care to differentiate its philosophy from Sāṅkhya, so great is its insistence on *prakṛiti*. He also takes care to show that its doctrine is not a dualistic theism. It is not that there is a being higher than the Supreme *Puruṣa* who pervades the

66. Under I. 4. 8-10, the *Chamasādhikaraṇa*, *Śvet. Up.* (IV. 5) that describes *prakṛiti* is discussed with cross-references to *Bṛh. Up.* (II. 2. 3) and other passages in the same *Upanishad* as well as in the *Chhāndogya*. Both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja consider this *adhikaraṇa* as declaring that the *Svetāsvātara* text does not and cannot refer to a *prakṛiti* independent of *Brahman*, though they differ in various details of interpretation as necessitated by their philosophic standpoints and other exegetical considerations. The other aphorism in the *Brahma-Sūtra* discussing a *Svetāsvātara* passage occurs in the *Parādhikaraṇa*. It is III. 2. 35, according to Rāmānuja's numbering. Saṅkara reckons it as III. 2. 36, and he also quotes *Śvet. Up.* (III. 9), which Rāmānuja explains elaborately.

67. "I take refuge": "supreme devotion."

universe. In principle and in essential details, the *Śvetāśvatara* stands for a sublime theism. There is no special need for exhibiting in detail Rāmānuja's fidelity to it.

Somewhat in the manner of Indra's instruction to Prataardana, this *Upanishad* also propounds three realities and three modes of meditation on *Brahman*. The apparently pluralistic theism of the first proposition is corrected in the second proposition. It says: "*Etajjñeyam nityamevātmamsthām nātaḥ param veditavyam hi kiñchit. Bhoktā bhogyaṁ preritāraṁ cha matvā sarvaṁ proktaṁ trividhaṁ Brahmametad*" (I. 12).⁶⁸ The first half of the verse makes it clear that the Supreme Being must be sought within the individual, as eternally abiding therein. There is said to be no other knowledge worth pursuing. The latter half of the verse is beautifully explained in the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* (p. 135).

There are three entities. The *bhoktri* is the *jīva* enjoying and suffering in the course of his transmigratory existence. He transcends the body and attains perfection by the knowledge of *Īśvara*. There is the material world, the *bhogyā* in which the *jīva* in *samsāra* finds his joys and sorrows and which is wielded by *Īśvara*. There is the third entity, *Īśvara*, who actuates all else. He is the *Preritri*, the Impeller. If the passage stopped at this point, it would be propounding only a pluralistic theism. But it goes beyond, according to Rāmānuja. "All this threefold *Brahman*", says the teacher, "stands expounded".

Brahman permits of a threefold presentation. *Brahman* may be conceived as *Preritri* the Supreme Actuator, and His intrinsic nature and powers and attributes are to be apprehended in this aspect *Brahman*, having this nature and attributes, may be contemplated as the Supreme Soul indwelling matter, the *bhogyā*. He can also be contemplated as the inner soul of the *bhoktri*, the *jīva* himself. This doctrine of threefold meditation on *Brahman*

⁶⁸. "This (*Brahman*) thus described has to be known as eternally established in the individual self (as its Internal Ruler): beyond this, there is nothing to be known. All this threefold *Brahman* stands expounded when regarded as the enjoyer, the enjoyed and the Impeller."

cancels the apparent pluralism of the earlier enunciation of the three categories.

That the theism taught in the *Svetāśvatara* is a monistic theism is the guiding thought of Rāmānuja in his explanation of this and other similar passages of the *Upanishad*.⁶⁹ We have, according to him, no basis whatever in the *Upanishad* for an atheistic monism or a pluralistic theism. It is a magnificent unfoldment of the concept of the *Antaryāmin*, so well presented in the other *Upanishads* also, in the appropriate style of high devotional poetry.

MAHOPANISHAD

Rāmānuja, we are in a position to assert at this stage, does not leave out of account any major and ancient *Upanishad* in building up the structure of his *Vedānta*. It has also to be recognized definitively that not a single fundamental philosophical passage in the body of the major *Upanishads* remains unexplained in his *Sribhāshya*, *Vedārthasaṅgraha* and *Gītābhāshya*. He does take a step beyond the conventional range of *Upanishadic* literature and takes into account three other texts of the *Upanishads*. He is not descending from the *Upanishadic* heights thereby, but is rather scaling a new peak. These texts are an unfamiliar *Mahopanishad*, a still more unfamiliar *Subālopanishad* and the *Nārāyaṇa-sūkta* of the famous and universally accepted *Mahānārāyaṇīya Upanishad*. He advances an additional thesis on the basis of their authority. That the *Mahopanishad* is no spurious *Upanishad* is proved by Vedānta Deśika on the ground that it is amply used as an authoritative work by Yāmunāchārya in his *Purusha-nirṇaya*, by Yādavaprakāśa in his commentary on the *Gītā* and by Nārāyaṇārya, a follower of Yādava, in his *Tattva-nirṇaya*. (See the *Sachcharitra-rakshā*, 46-47).

All these texts identify the *Brahman* of the *Upanishads* with Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Deity according to Vaishṇava philosophy and

69 Some commentators tend to view the *Upanishad* as Śaivite. On this, see the next section.

religion. Thibaut exercises a high degree of fairness of judgement in saying that this is the only sectarian feature in the whole philosophy of Rāmānuja. (Introduction to his translation of Śaṅkara's *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, xxxi). The *Mahopaniṣad* designates the ground (*kāraṇa*) of the universe named variously in the various *Upanishads* as 'Sat', 'Brahman' and 'Ātman' as Nārāyaṇa. There is increasing determinateness in this series of terms, 'Sat'-'Brahman'-'Ātman'-'Nārāyaṇa', and therefore the most determinate of the designations must be accepted as final. The others are tentative and inconclusive, while this contains the utmost particularization. This is the doctrinal purpose to which Rāmānuja puts the *Mahopaniṣad*.

SUBĀLOPANISHAD

The *Subālopaniṣad* repeats the *Antaryāmi brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* with great gusto increasing the range of illustrations of the bodies of the *Antaryāmin* and identifies the *Antaryāmin* with Nārāyaṇa. This seems to have been an ancient equation in Vedic thought, for even Śaṅkara, in his interpretation of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* construes the *Antaryāmin* as Nārāyaṇa. The author of the *Nārāyaṇīya* (xc. 5, 6) makes the observation that Śaṅkara is no partisan in his views and that the fact of his choosing to comment upon *Vishṇusahasranāma* demonstrates that Nārāyaṇa is in reality the Supreme Deity.

MAHĀNĀRĀYĀṆA UPANISHAD

The *Nārāyaṇa Anuvāka* of the *Taittirīya* collects together all the terms used in the *Upanishads* for signifying the Ultimate Reality such as 'Akshara', 'Śiva', 'Śambhu', 'Parabrahman', 'Paramjyotis', 'Paratattva', 'Pārāyaṇa' 'Paramātman', and asserts that Nārāyaṇa is all this. The section seems to have no purport other than this exact determination of the identity of the Highest Reality as Nārāyaṇa. It is in continuation of the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Taittirīya*, but goes beyond it and includes in its scope all the *vidyās* of the *Upanishads*. It connects itself with the *Parusha-sūkta* unmistakably. The passage could only mean that the *Brahman* of the *Upanishads* is Nārāyaṇa.

This entire Nārāyaṇite exegesis is found in great detail in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* (page 210) and is also worked out briefly in the *Śrībhāṣya* (III. 3. 43). It is not, therefore, that Rāmānuja reads into the *Vedānta* the concept of Nārāyaṇa gathered from elsewhere, from some alien and non-Vedic source, but that he finds in the body of *Upanishadic* revelation Nārāyaṇa represented as the Highest Deity, the Supreme Reality. If he had failed to incorporate this revealed truth in his philosophy, he would have been truly an inadequate interpreter. His philosophy would have been a fragmentary version of the teachings of the *Upanishads*. So his Vaishnavism is something to which he is driven by the *Upanishads* and not something he superimposes on them illegitimately. He says:

Vedavātpurvāṅ prakṛta-vākyaṇyāyopabhiśhitāḥ

Vedās sāṅgā Hariṁ prāhur jagajjanmādikāraṇam ¹⁰

—(*Vedārthasaṅgraha*, p. 210)

¹⁰ The Vedas with their auxiliaries and amplified and supported by arguments from the utterances of the best among Vedic scholars, speak of Hari as the cause of the creation etc. of the world.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMING UP

We have gone through Rāmānuja's interpretation in some detail of the major passages of the major *Upanishads*, and it is difficult to establish that what remains over unexplained by him is anything but the unessential husk of the *Upanishadic* compositions. Not much remains now for us to accomplish by way of elucidating the treatment of the *Upanishads* by Rāmānuja. It is to be noted that a profoundly unerring discernment is displayed in the choice of texts for explanation and a high degree of fairness is observable in the repeated and thorough consideration bestowed on discourses on which the other interpreters, particularly of the *Advaitic* school, based their reconstruction of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. It may be appropriate to conclude this survey with the enunciation, on Rāmānuja's part, of what he regards as the final and total message of the *Upanishads*.

Śaṅkara has two remarkable pronouncements on the total drift of the *Upanishads* in his commentary on the *Sūtras*. The first of these runs as follows :

“*Dvirūpā hi vedāntavākyānām pravṛttau, kvachit Paramātmāsvārūpanirūpaṇaparā kvachit vijnānātmanah Paramātmāikatvopadeśaparā*” (I. 3. 25).⁷¹

Śaṅkara here refers to “two kinds of statements in the *Upanishads*. One kind seeks to set forth clearly the nature of *Brahman*. The other kind seeks to teach the identity of the

⁷¹ “The indicatory force of Vedānta texts is twofold—being concerned with the determination of the essential nature of the Supreme Self in some places and elsewhere being devoted to instruction about the oneness of the Supreme Self and the cognising subject.”

individual self with the Supreme Self." Here we have a comprehensive declaration.

The other pronouncement occurs in the preface to the *Ānandamayādhikaraṇa* (I. 1. 12) : "*Dvirūpaṁ hi Brahmā-vagamya, nāmarūpavikārabhedopādhivishīṭaṁ, tad viparītaṁ cha sarvopādhivivarjitaṁ.*"

"There are two forms," it is stated here, "in which *Brahman* comes to be understood—as characterized by adjuncts of the nature of name and form entailing change and differentiation, and as the opposite of all this, transcending all adjuncts." These two forms in which *Brahman* is presented are not of equal philosophical value. Śaṅkara goes on to add : "*Evam sahasraśo vidyāvidyāvishaya-bhedena Brahmaṇaḥ dvirūpatāṁ darśayanti vākyaṇi*" (*Ibid.*).⁷² Of the two modes of the conception of *Brahman*, that of the conditioned *Brahman* is lower, inasmuch as it is meant for the consumption of the ignorant, while that of the unconditioned *Brahman* is for the enlightened and is therefore the higher and the ultimate conception.

Thus we gather that, according to Śaṅkara, the ultimate affirmation of the *Upanishads* concerns the nature of *Brahman* or the identity of the individual spirit with *Brahman*. In the presentation of the concept of *Brahman*, there are statements that do not rise beyond the realm of ignorance and misconception, and also those that deal with it in its true essence as open to comprehension by seekers with unclouded intellect.

Rāmānuja does not subscribe to this way of arranging the teachings of the *Upanishads*. He does not admit that there are any texts preaching an attributeless *Brahman*. If there were any, they would only be perpetrating an error, for the conception of an attributeless entity is fundamentally self-contradictory. To be real, according to him, is to be characterized by attributes.

72. "In this way the texts in their thousands show *Brahman* to be of two forms, according to the distinction between the objects of knowledge and ignorance."

Happily no *Upanishadic* passage commits the error of positing such an entity. If it did, far from meeting the spiritual requirements of an enlightened seeker after truth, it would only snare the seeker into a hopeless muddle.

The teaching of *Brahman* with attributes is not to present a 'conditioned' *Brahman*. The attribute, '*viśeṣaṇa*', is not the same as '*upādhi*', the limiting adjunct. Qualities are not limitations, for infinitude is itself a quality and implies infinitude of qualitative perfections, and limiting adjuncts are just obscurations or curtailments of qualities. All empirical determination is negation, because what it affirms is finite and is thus conjoined to a negation. The infinite is determined absolutely, and the infinite determination carries the negation of all such negations. To escape the negative implication of empirical determination, it is hopeless to seek refuge in an indeterminate real, for the indeterminate carries to perfection, as it were, the limited negations of empirical determinations. The indeterminate real is a blank non-entity. The passage of thought from determinations to the indeterminate is to surrender partial negations in exchange for an infinity of negations. The true infinite is that in which determinateness reaches its fullness, and it is determined not against anything positive, but is such that it excludes all exclusions.

Hence *Brahman* with attributes is the only *Brahman*, and the *Upanishads*, in so far as they propound this conception, are addressed to the loftiest intellectual level. The doctrine that the *Upanishads* present *Brahman* under two forms, *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa*, as attributeless and with attributes, and the view relating *Nirguṇa Brahman* to *vidyā* or true knowledge and *Saguṇa Brahman* to *avidyā* or ignorance are thus radically wrong, according to Rāmānuja.

Rāmānuja would be critical of the supposition that the statements of the *Upanishads* concern either the nature of *Brahman* or the identity of the individual self and *Brahman*. The latter is not a distinct theme. It is subsumed in the former. It is also too rough and incomplete an indication of the relation between the individual and the Supreme Reality, which relation, according to Rāmānuja, obtains an ampler and logically more satisfactory formulation in the *Upanishads*.

The all-inclusive theme of the *Upanishads* is *Brahman* and *Brahman* alone. They discern the nature of *Brahman* as being real, conscious, infinite, perfect and blissful. They declare that *Brahman* is characterized by infinite perfections by way of exalted attributes and is altogether free from imperfections.

This is what is technically described as '*ubhaya-lingatva*', being characterised in two ways. *Brahman* does have as Its or His glory the mundane world of gross nature and finite souls still in the state of bondage. There is also a higher realm of glory, consisting of Nature without its binding properties and the individual souls in the state of perfection. This aspect of *Brahman* is described as the '*ubhaya-vibhūti*', the twofold glory, of *Brahman*. The fundamental and the only purport of the *Upanishads* is the proclamation of the Supreme *Brahman* in all His inexhaustible perfections and glories.

It is in the course of the complete articulation of the relation of *Brahman* to the realm of physical Nature and finite conscious personalities that the concept of their identity comes to be put forth by the *Upanishads*. In principle, therefore, it is not a distinct and independent theme. It falls within the inclusive theme of the nature and splendour of *Brahman*.

Now the relation between the finite world, both material and spiritual, and the Supreme *Brahman* receives a threefold presentation in the *Upanishads* on Rāmānuja's interpretation. There are passages that sharply distinguish *prakṛiti* (matter), *puruṣa* (the individual self) and the *Purushottama* (the Supreme Person). They bring out the exalted qualities of the *Purushottama* and establish His transcendent supremacy. There are again passages that proclaim that *prakṛiti* and *puruṣa*, so distinguished from the Supreme Being, are constitutive of only His powers, glory and body and are part of Him. The thesis of the *Upanishads* does not terminate in the doctrine of distinctions. The lower realities are assimilated into the being of *Brahman* in the status of 'body' or 'adjectival determination'.

If this step were not taken, we would have only a dualistic theism. Rāmānuja is emphatic that such a theism discards the whole of *Vedānta*. He says: "*Kevalabheda-vādinām chātyantabhinnaḥ*

kenāpi prakāreṇa aikyāsambhavādeva Brahmātmadeśā na sambhavantīti sarvavedāntaparityāgas syāt " (Śrībhāṣya, I. 1. 1, *Mahāsiddhānta*).⁷³

If the full implication of this truth is apprehended and we recognize that what we regard as the world of matter and souls is just an aspect or mode or embodiment of *Brahman*, we are obliged to affirm that *Brahman* is the sole reality as all finite existence is comprehended in the glory of *Brahman*. It is in this sense that the *Upanishads* declare that *Brahman* is all, and identify the world in all its states with *Brahman*. The identity meant here is not a mechanical and literal sameness of being, but the fact of the comprehension of the finite as an aspect of the full being of *Brahman*. It is inclusion rather than sameness.

If the identity is understood in such a way that the distinctions enunciated and the body-and-soul relation formulated are set aside and total identity of substantive essence is asserted, we face, according to Rāmānuja, insuperable difficulties, both exegetical and philosophical. All the perfections of *Brahman* antithetical to such an identification with the finite, are to be discarded in such an interpretation. The imperfections of the individual soul that stand in the way of the identification are to be explained away as illusory. But the proneness to such illusions has to be predicated of the only conscious principle in the scheme, namely, *Brahman*. The outcome would be the assertion of an ineradicably finite spirit and no Supreme *Brahman* at all.

A more thorough-going negation of all that the *Upanishads* stand for is hardly conceivable. Hence the identity spoken of between the individual and *Brahman* must be interpreted in a way consistent with the retention of the supremacy and ultimate reality of *Brahman*.

73. "The whole of the *Vedānta* will have to be given up by those who are strict dualists, pure and simple, as (according to their tenets) expositions of *Brahman* being the individual self cannot possibly arise, on account, indeed, of the impossibility of any kind of oneness whatever between two entities (such as *Brahman* and the self) which are radically different from each other."

and Its perfections, and that is possible only by assigning to the individual the status of a subordinate element by way of body in the total expanse of Divine existence. Such a position would also bring out a further perfection of *Brahman*, that of being the inner soul of the finite soul also.

Hence for Rāmānuja the core of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* lies in the declaration of *Brahman* in all Its perfections. He is not particular about the categorization of his position as propounding *bheda* (distinction) or *bhedābheda* (distinction-cum-identity) or *abheda* (identity or oneness). He says in a truly grand passage of the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* (p. 182) that he upholds all the three, *bheda*, *bhedābheda* and *abheda*, because such is indeed the synthetic position of the *Upanishads*. Only the three points of view are to be properly construed.

Rāmānuja is particularly happy when he has to formulate in a synoptic fashion the teachings of the *Upanishads*. He offers his formulation in six important contexts in his writings. He does so twice in the course of the *Mahāsiddhānta* of the *Jijñāṣādhikaraṇa* of the *Śrībhāṣya* (I. 1. 1). First, while combating the *Advaitic* interpretation of the *śruti* texts, he sets out his considered view, taking care to concentrate on all those passages which seem particularly favourable to *Advaita*. Again, towards the close of the *adhikaraṇa*, he attempts a grand outline of his understanding of the *Upanishads*. Almost the whole of this latter outline is incorporated in his commentary on the controversial 13th chapter of the *Gītā*. The opening words of both these discussions are precisely the same, "*Atredaṁ tattvam*".⁷⁴ Similar statements of a comprehensive nature are made in the introductory remarks of the *Vedāntadīpa* and the *Vedāntasāra*.

In its essential nature, the whole of the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* is a statement of his interpretation of the *Upanishads*. But within the treatise there occurs the central part starting with '*Atredaṁ sarva-sāstra-hṛdayam*',⁷⁵ and in this part he outlines his approach in

74. "The truth here is this."

75. "The heart of all the *sāstras* here is this."

all its wide compass. He states therein that a proper elucidation must discern the basic harmony of doctrine and take the primary significance of every type of inspired utterance. He contends that the *Upanishads* proclaim a single coherent doctrine of *Brahman*, which unfortunately gets broken up into primary and secondary teachings by commentators who sponsor either an atheistic monism or a dualistic theism.

It is not that they offer solutions for the problem of the apparently divergent teachings of the *Upanishads*. Rather, they introduce a divergence which is not there by their partisan and antecedent predilections. They surrender themselves to the texts imperfectly and attempt to extract support for their pre-formed views; and hence the stratification of the contents and the consequent ignoring of certain inconvenient aspects of the teaching are inevitable. We have seen how Saṅkara has to reject entire sections of the *Upanishads* such as the *Sāṅdilya-vidyā*, the *Dahara-vidyā* of the *Chhāndogya* and the *Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* as doling out the doctrine of the lower *Brahman*, and how substantial parts of even those discourses such as the *Sadavidyā*, the *Aksharabrāhmaṇa* and the *Iyotirbrāhmaṇa* supposed to be expounding the higher *Brahman*, are subjected to such subtraction.

The *Upanishadic* philosophy, when reconstructed in a spirit of thorough-going objectivity, is a coherent whole that does justice to all its principal parts. Rāmānuja lists the varied types of texts and elucidates them, giving them their due weight of significance and demonstrates the resulting unity of doctrine. There is no logic in the position of *Advaita* which attaches only secondary significance to texts that speak of the creation of the world by *Brahman* out of Itself. The passages that posit a knowledge which includes all knowledge, propound the creation-thesis, and to reject them is to destroy the foundation of the monism of the *Upanishads*. We cannot abolish the creation-thesis and flourish on the monism built up by the doctrine of creation.

As for passages that speak of *Brahman* as attributeless and refer to It in a negative way, they are to be understood as negating imperfections of *Brahman*. There is no going away from the texts here. Some negative passages make clear that it is imperfection that

is denied of *Brahman* and some negative passages form part of larger discourses which characterize *Brahman* in an affirmative manner. The formula of 'Neti, neti' does either declare the inexhaustibility of the forms of *Brahman* or proclaim the fact of Its transcendence.

When the *Upanishads* speak of *Brahman* as *jñāna* or *prajñāna*, they just assert that consciousness is a primary attribute of the Supreme Reality and that the Supreme Self is self-luminous in the matter of knowledge. There is no element of 'unknowing' in *Brahman*. The Absolute is spirit fully and eternally awake to Its own plenitude of being. When *Brahman* is spoken of as *ānanda*, it means that It is blissful and perfect spirit and does impart joy to him who contemplates It. When all is said to be *Brahman*, the immanence of *Brahman* in all is meant and all finite reality constitutes a form or aspect of the Infinite Being.

When *Brahman* is said to be unknowable, only the possibility of complete understanding is being denied. When plurality is denied, it only means that plurality not permeated by the unitary ground is denied. When *Brahman* is spoken of as the Supreme Personality with countless holy perfections, it simply means that such is the final truth. When *Brahman* is said to be the *Ātman* and all else Its body, what is perfectly right is being said, as such a theistic monism is the final philosophy of the *Upanishads*.

Brahman is the ontological ultimate, and all characteristics implied by that fact are surely to be attributed to *Brahman*. *Brahman* is also the exiological ultimate and the famous *Bhūma-vidyā* and all the descriptions of *Brahman* as *ānanda* (or bliss) elucidate that position. *Brahman* is also the final redemptive power, and it is not that *Brahman* can be attained independent of initiative on Its part. Hence, all attributes constitutive of grace are to be attributed to *Brahman*. In short, the *Brahman* of the *Upanishads* is the *paratattova*, *parakṛta* and *parapurushārtha*, the supreme reality, the supreme way to redemption and the supreme goal.

It is often maintained that the distinctiveness of the teachings of the *Upanishads*, lies in the concept of an impersonal Absolute and the final identity of the individual spirit with it. This, according to

Rāmānuja, would be seeking originality at the cost of truth. Even otherwise, enough grounds for the claim of uniqueness do remain. The triumphant assertion of the immanent existence of the absolutely transcendent *Brahman* has a perfectly revolutionary character in the context of loosely conceived dualistic theisms and atheistic monisms. It is likely that this doctrine has affinities with all higher religions and philosophies. It is also true that Vedic thought itself has it in essentials. That only proves that the *Upanishads* as interpreted by Rāmānuja are a consummation of all aspirations, religious and philosophical. The uniqueness of the philosophy in that case lies in the clarity of vision and fullness of explication.

It is interesting to note that Rāmānuja's findings on the *Upanishads* have come to stay in Indian philosophy and have passed into the structure of other *Vedāntic* schools of interpretation. Jayatīrtha, after quoting the remarks that we have been discussing of Śaṅkara in the *Ānandamayādhikaraṇa* on the two ways in which *Brahman* is presented in the *Upanishads* according to him, comments: "*Tadidam anupapannaṁ, Brahmano dvairūpyasya aprāmāṇikatvāt*".⁷⁶ He does not elaborate in the context why he regards the conception of the two forms of *Brahman* as untrue.

What follows is a glowing statement of the *Dvaita* view of *Upanishadic* philosophy: "*Sarvānyapi Vedāntavākyaṇyaśaṅkhyeya-kalyāṇa-guṇādhikaram sakala-dosha-gandha-vidhuram ekarūpameva Brahma Nārāyaṇākhyam pratipādayanti. Kintu kānichit sarvajñatva-sarveśvaratva-sarvāntaryāmitva-saundaryaudārya-guṇaviśiṣṭatayā. Kānichit apahatapāpmatva-nir-duḥkhitva-prākṛitavigraharahitatvādidoshābhava-viśiṣṭatayā. Kānichit atigahanatājñāpāpāya vāñmanasāgōcharatvādyā-kāreṇa. Kānichit sarvaparityāgena tasyaivopādānāya advitīyatvena. Kānichit sarvasattāpratīti-pravṛttinimittatā-pratipattiyartham sarvātmakatvena. Ityevamādyanekaprakāraiḥ*

⁷⁶ This is thus against reason, as there is no valid source of knowledge showing *Brahman* to have two forms.

Paramapurusham bodhayanti. Tatah vākalabuddhayaḥ sarvatrāpyeṣarūpatām anatusandhādhānā Vedam chhindanti," (*Nyāyasūkhā*, I. 1. 6).⁷⁷

It is evident that Rāmānuja's central contention is embodied in this view of the *Upanishads*. It rejects the two-level presentation of *Brahman* and subsumes the identity-texts under the comprehensive scheme of declaring the glorious nature of the Deity. The perspective of Rāmānuja concerning the *Upanishads* crystallizes itself in the subsequent evolution of *Vedānta* into a fullfledged formulation of their teachings. It looks as if they yielded their integrated meaning with no loss to any trend of statement, only if approached on the lines propounded by him. Far from Rāmānuja deviating from the teachings of the *Upanishads*, it is only his mode of interpreting them that would save a *Vedāntin* from doing violence to their import.

It was said above that *Brahman* is the ultimate reality, the ultimate good and the ultimate power effectuating the realization of the good. There is nothing beside *Brahman*. Matter and finite selves are real only as adjectival to the Supreme. Their being does not constitute a limitation, because they themselves are parts of the splendour of *Brahman*. The speciality of Rāmānuja's thought lies

77. "All texts of the *Vedānta* declare, indeed, *Brahman* known as *Narāyaṇa* to be only of one form—as the mine of countless auspicious qualities and devoid of the slightest trace of all imperfection. But some (of them) (do so) by way of referring to His being qualified by the attributes of omniscience, sovereignty over all, rulership of all from within, beauty and magnanimity. Others by way of (referring to) His being negatively characterised by the absence of imperfections, such negative characterisations including freedom from sin, being devoid of grief, having no material body and so on. Others, again, by way of His being such as to be beyond the range of speech and mind and so on, in order to teach us the extreme difficulty of understanding Him. Yet others by way of His being one only without a second, as the object to be pursued through the renunciation of all else. Still others, by way of His being the self of all, in as much as He confers on all else being, activity and knowability. In these and many other ways, they teach about the Supreme Person. Therefore, confused minds cut the *Veda* into pieces, failing to hold on to the same form of *Brahman* in all (texts)."

not in the conception of the ultimacy of the *Saguṇa Brahman*, nor in the emphatic declaration of the reality of the cosmos. It lies in interpreting that reality as due to the selves and matter forming a *prakāra* or mode or adjectival determination of *Brahman*. There is nothing, therefore, in existence beside the Supreme *Brahman* with all His infinite attributes, the latter including all finite existents.

It is the conception of the adjectival status of Nature and finite spirits that makes Rāmānuja's philosophy a monism. But it is a monism that does not abrogate the concept of the Supreme Spirit, the Highest Self. It is a monism to which God is the central reality. Assimilation of the individual soul to God in the status of a *prakāra*, does not entail the pruning away of the attributes of Godhead. On the contrary, it enlarges our conception of Divine attributes, for the *jīva* himself is an attribute of *Īśvara*.

For Rāmānuja and his school of thought, the Ultimate Spirit holds all things within Itself and abides in all things. All that brings about the perfection of the finite self forms a fundamental characteristic of the Supreme Reality. What constitutes the final perfection for that self is the realization, by way of experiential apprehension, of the Infinite Divine.

Such is the final substance and the entire message of the *Upanishads*, according to Rāmānuja. For his way of thinking the concept of Nārāyaṇa, properly comprehended, embodies in itself this philosophy completely. Hence one may, as well, conclude that the whole teaching of the *Upanishads* stands summed up in a supreme synthesis in the concept of Nārāyaṇa.

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38-40 100

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INDEX OF SANSKRIT WORDS AND PROPER NAMES

(Arranged according to the Sanskrit Alphabet.)

'a': 16.

akāma : 103.

akāmahata : 102.

akṛitsna : 66, 69, 106, 107.

Akshara : *passim*.

Akshara-brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛih Up.*, see 'Index of Quotations'.

Akshara-vidyā : meditation on *Brahman* as *Akshara*, 94, 96.

Āṅgiras : the sage and teacher in *Mund Up.*, described as being in close lineal descent from *Brahmā* the creator, 14, 40, 65.

aja : 67.

ajara : 13, 115.

ativādin : 50, 51.

Advaita : the monistic school of *Vedānta*, of which the most notable exponent is *Śaṅkarāchārya*, *passim* : -ic relating to this philosophical school, *passim*; -in, a follower of this school of thought.

Adhikaraṇas : sections or topics (particularly of the *Brahma-Sūtras*), *passim*.

adhyāya : chapter, *passim*.

ananta (m) : 18, 20, 52.

anā dara : 39.

anuchchhitti-dharma : indestructible, 81.

anṛita : lit. falsehood, here *karma* which brings about the loss of true vision, 58.

antahkaraṇa : lit. the internal organ, the mind conceived as a material entity and differentiated from the immaterial self, 22.

antah-praviṣṭa : (past participle) having entered within, 96.

antara : (noun) interval, difference, 24; (adjective) interior to, 92.

Antarākshara : He who is within and immutable, 96.

antaro yamayati : rules from within, 92.

Antarvāmin : the Ruler from within, the Internal Controller, *passim*.

Antaryāmi brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛih. Up.* 'See Index to Quotations'.

Antaryāmi vidyā : meditation on *Brahman* as the Internal Ruler, 94.

anna : 19, 42.

annamaya : consisting of food or matter, material, 18.

anyat: other, 72, 73;—*para*: great and other than, 73.

aparā: low, lower, 111;—*vidyā*, lower knowledge, 4.

aparoksha: immediate, perceptible, 88.

apahata pāpman: sinless, devoid of evil, 67-8.

apipāsa: 57-8

aprāpta: 108.

abhaya: 13.

abhādhita: 108.

abhāva-vāsanā: 71.

abheda: 127.

amūrta: 70.

amṛita(ā): 13, 75, 92, 115;—*maya*, 85.

avāki: 37.

avidyā: 7n., 8; 124.

avināśin: 81.

avijina: 102.

Aśvapati: 31

asambhūti: lit non-existence; giving up of evil tendencies, 8

asi: 47.

Asuras: supernatural beings with evil qualities and in perpetual struggle with the gods, 59.

aham: 52, 54, 71

Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi: I am Brahman, 49, 65, 66, 68, 71, 98, 104.

ahaṅkāra-deśa: 54

ahaṅgraha-upasanā contemplation of Brahman as dwelling within the self, 52.

ākāṅkshā: 108.

ākāśa: Brahman, 23, 30, 31, 105, spatial ether, 94.

ākāśātman 37.

āgāmin: impending, future, 45.

āchārya: spiritual preceptor, teacher of philosophy and religion, 1, 15, 45.

ātmakāma 103.

ātmakīḍa 54.

ātman: the individual self, *passim*: the Supreme Self, *passim*.

ātmamithuna: 54.

ātmaraṭi: 54.

ātmānanda: 54.

ātmā sarvāntara: 88.

ādityavarṇam: (accusative case) brilliant (lit. coloured) like the sun, 70.

ādeśa: 39, 42, 46.

ānanda-maya: *passim*;—*puruṣa*: 21, 22;—*adhikaraṇa*, a section of *Taitt. Up.*, see 'Index of Quotations'.

āptakāma: 103.

Ārtabhāga: lit the son of Rīta-bhāga; he is also described as belonging to the gotra of Jaratkāru; he is one of the interlocutors of Yājñavalkya in *Bṛih. Up.*, 86-7, 99.

āśrama(s) 29, 111.

Indra: the chief of the minor gods, *passim*.

iśāna: 106.

Īśvara: the Lord, the Supreme Ruler, 61, 106, 117-8, 132.

'u' : 16.

utkrānti : 102.

uttama : 60.

Uttama Puruṣa : 60, 61.

utsargāpavāda-nyāya : the principle which states that a general rule is set aside when an exception has to prevail, 57.

Uditi : 32n.

Uddālaka : 39, 40, 91-3.

Upakosala : 31.

upakrama : commencement, 67.

Upanishads : the philosophical sections of the *Vedas*, *passim*.

Upavarsha : 27.

upasañhāra : conclusion, 67.

upasañkrāmaṇa : 22, 25; *-śruti* : the scriptural text dealing with it, 23.

upādhi : 124.

upāsana(ā) : meditation, 10, 112-3.

upāsya-koṭi-nikshipta : 112.

ubhayaśiṅgata : 125.

ubhaya-vibhūti : 125.

Ushasta : 67, 87-90.

Ushasta - Kahola - brāhmaṇas : sections of *Bṛh Up.*, 90.

Om : 13, 16.

Aupanishada- (Parama) -puruṣa : 3, 97.

Kaṁ : 31, 32, 52.

kapi : 33.

kapyāsaṁ : 32, 33.

karma : *passim*.

karma-kāṇḍa : the ritualistic portion of the *Vedas*, 5.

karma-yoga : the path of works to self-realisation and God-realisation, 55, 110-1.

kalyāṇatama-rūpa : the most auspicious and lovely form, 8, 70.

Kahola : a sage and son of Kaushitaka, 67, 88-9.

Kahola-brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛh. Up.*, 99, 112.

Kāṇva : a version of *Bṛh. Up.*, associated with the sage, Kaṇva.

Kātyāyāni : 75.

kāma : 103.

kāraṇa : 120

kārikās : concise explanations and summing up in verse, 15.

kurvita : let him do, potential 3rd person singular of *kṛi*, to do, 111.

Kūraṇḍāyaṇa : a Śrīvaiṣṇava ascetic who has commented on *Is. Up.*, 6.

kṛiti : volition, an internal stimulus leading to external activity, 51.

Kekayas : the people of a country which formed part of the Panjab, 31.

kratu : 103.

Khaṁ : 31, 52.

Gārgī : a learned lady descended from Garga and the daughter of Vachaknu, 65, 67, 87, 94.

Gārgya : a descendant of Garga and the son of Sūryāyana, 12.

gārhasthya : the state of the married householder, 29.

gunas : constituents or attributes of matter, 42.

gurubhakti : devotion to one's spiritual preceptor, 113.

Gauḍapāda : a predecessor of Saṅkara in formulating Vedāntic monism and the author of *kārikās* on *Māṇḍ. Up.*, 15.

Janaka : a philosophic king of Videha, 55, 67, 86, 99.

Jayatīrtha : a famous writer belonging to Madhvāchārya's pluralistic school, 130.

Jānaśruti : lit. the son of Janaśruta : he is a king and described to be the grandson of Putra, 28.

Jāratkāra : one descended from Jaratkāru, 87.

Jijñāsādhikaraṇa : the opening section of *Brahma-Sūtra* (I. 1. 1) : it deals with the desire to know *Brahman*, 127.

jīva : *passim*.

jivātman : the individual self, 81, 92.

jñā : one who knows, 22.

jñāna : the path of meditation, 8 ; knowledge, 17, 18, 129 ; the Self, 20, 129

Jyotir-brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛih. Up.*, see 'Index of Quotations'.

jyotis : light, 30, 31.

Ṭaṅka : 27.

tajjalān : It is born out of Him, is absorbed in Him and is sustained by Him, 80.

tat : 46-9.

Tattvatikā : a commentary on the *S'ribhāṣya* by Vedānta Deśika, 27.

Tattvanirṇaya : 119.

tatra : 61.

tapas : lit. penance, austerities ; hence stages of life where these are practised, 29.

tu : 51.

tejomaya : 85.

tvaṁ : 46-9.

Tvashtī : 86.

dama : 111.

dayā : 111.

darśana : seeing, immediate experience, 84.

dahara : lit., small, subtle ; the small space in the heart which is identified with *Brahman*, 61-2.

dahara-ākāśā : subtle space (in the heart), 56.

Dahara vidyā : meditation on *Brahman* as the subtle ether in the heart, 55-6, 58, 61-2, 100, 105, 109.

dāna : 110.

dāsyāya : 113.

Divodāsa : a celebrated figure in Vedic literature, famous for his liberality and his war against Sambara, 114.

devatā : divinity, 43.

deva-bhakti : devotion to God, 113.

Draṇḍāchārya : 27, 32, 34.

Dvaita : Vedāntic pluralism, of which the chief exponent is Mādhvāchārya, 39, 130.

dhruvā smṛiti : 55, 112.

na veda : does not know ; 3rd person singular of 'vid', to know, 92.

Nachiketas : a young boy who is taught the highest truths by the god of death, 10-1, 75.

Nārada : a sage, 50-1, 53.

Nārāyaṇa : 119-21, 131-2.

Nārāyaṇa-anuvāka : lit. the section on Nārāyaṇa, *M. Nār. Up.* XI., 120.

Nārāyaṇārya : 119.

Nārāyaṇīya : a famous condensation of the *Bhāgavata* by Nārāyaṇa Nambūdiri, 120.

nididhyāsana : profound meditation, 39, 78-9, 84, 89, 112-3.

nirguṇa : without attributes, 56, 109, 124.

Nirguṇa-Brahman : the Absolute without attributes, 56, 109, 124.

nirviśeṣa : (adj.) denying attributes, 35.

niṣkāma : 103.

niṣkṛhā : firm conviction (that *Brahman* alone has to be heard about, thought about and contemplated upon), 51.

nihitam guhāyām : 24.

Noti. neti : 67-74, 84, 91, 97-8, 105-6, 129.

nyagrodha : the Indian fig tree the banyan, 45.

Pañchadāśī : a well known work (in 15 chapters) on Vedāntic monism by Vidyāraṇya, 49, 69.

pati : 106.

para (ā) : 73, 111 :- *m* : 72.

Paramātmān : the Supreme Self, 100, 116, 120.

Param Jyotis : the Supreme Light, 60, 120.

paratattva : the Supreme Reality, 120, 129.

parapurushārtha : 129.

Parābrahman : 120.

parahita : 129.

Parāyaṇa : 120.

parābhakti : 117-20.

Parāśara Bhaṭṭa : 38.

pāṇḍitya : 89, 112.

pāda : section, quarter, 16.

pāpa : sin, 100.

pāla : 106.

Pippalāda : 12-3.

pucchha : 22.

punya : meritorious or virtuous deeds or their effects, 100.

purāṇic : relating to a *purāṇa*, 24.
puruṣa : spirit, self, 11, 42, 85, *passim*.
Purushanirṇaya : 119.
Puruṣa-sūkta : a famous hymn in *Rig Veda* (X), 13, 70
Purushottama : the Supreme Person, 60-1, 125.
puṣhpahāsa : 71.
pūraka : 108.
pūrva-pakṣa : the antecedent view (of a *śruti*) which is to be refuted, a *prima facie* view, 8.
pūrva-prajñā : earlier knowledge or impressions from a previous birth, 103.
Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā : 'the earlier enquiry', the systematic investigation of Vedic rituals, 5.
prakāra : 132
prakṛiti : material Nature, matter, 117-8, 125.
Prajāpati : a Vedic god, 29, 30 n. : Brahmā the Creator, 58-61.
prajna : 101-2 ; -*Ātman* : 17.
prajñā : 111-3.
prajñātmā : 115.
prajñāna : 17, 65.
prajñāmātrā : 115, 129.
praṇava : 13, 16.
Pratardana : 65, 114, 116.
Pratardanavidyā : the meditation taught to Pratardana, 66.
prāṇīkṣā : 24
pramoda : 22, 112.

Prahlāda : a great devotee of the Lord for whose sake He incarnated as the Man-lion to save him from his father, the Asura king, Hiraṇyakaśipu, 10.
Prājña : the Omniscient (Self), 101-2.
prāṇa : life, 19 ; self, 50-1 ; the Supreme Self, 115-6 : -*maya*, 18, 27 ; -*śarīra* : 37.
prārabdha : 45n. : -*karma*, 45.
prīyā : (fem.) the dear one, 75.
'prete' : (locative case) in respect of one who is dead, 11.
pretya : after dying, 81.
Preṭiṭi : the Impeller, 118.
bahunā śrutena : by means of much hearing, 112.
brahmacharya : the state of one who is a religious student, 29.
Brahman : *passim*.
Brahmanandin : 27.
Brahma-nishthas : those attentive in the study of the Veda, 12 ; -*paras* : those devoted to knowledge of the Supreme Self, 12 : -*samsthā*, 29 -*vādinī* : a lady who discusses the Supreme Self, 75 : -*vāsanā*, 71 : -*vidyā* : knowledge of or meditation on the Supreme Self, 28.
Brahmā : 13.
Brahmānandavallī : a section of *Taitt Up.*, 26.
Brahmana : that portion of the *Veda* which contains rules for the conduct of sacrifices and discusses their origin and significance, 26, 64.

Bādarāyaṇa : the author of the *Brahma-Sūtrā*s and often identified with Vyāsa, 2, 3, 13, 39, 109.

bādhā : 108 : *-ka* : 108.

bādhārtha-sāmānādhikaraṇya : 149.

bālyā : lit. the state of being a child, childlike qualities, 89.

buddhi : the intellect, 21.

Bodhāyana : 27.

bhakti : devotion to God, *passim* : *-yoga* : the discipline of devotion to God, 3.

bhārūpa : 37.

bhāṣhyakāra : writer of an exhaustive commentary, 2.

Bhāṣaka : a philosopher who held the individual self to be both different from and identical with the Supreme Self, 114.

Bhujyu : 87.

bhūtamātrā : 115.

Bhūman : 51-4.

Bhuma-vidyā : 55, 62, 74, 112.

Bhūmādhikaraṇa : a section of *Brahma-Sūtras*, 50.

Bhrigu : 19.

bheda : 127.

bhedābheda : 127.

bhoktri : the experiencer, the enjoyer, 118.

bhogyā : that which is experienced, 118.

'*m*' : 16.

Madhu brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛh. Up.*, 65.

Madhva : the great exponent of the *Dvaita* school of *Vedānta*, 4, 15.

mantras : Vedic hymns, 50, 54.

manana : critical reflection, 39, 51, 78, 84, 89, 112.

manas : 19.

manomaya : 18, 37 : *-purusha* : 21.

mahat : 67.

Mahān (Aja) Ātmā : (n.) 98, 104-5.

Mahāsiddhānta : lit. 'the great conclusion'; a section of *Śrībhāṣya* (I. 1. 1), where Rāmānuja argues out his case against *Advaita*, 97, 126-7.

mahāvākyas : lit. "great sentences"; certain scriptural texts regarded by the *Advaitins* as of such preeminent authority as to supersede and override all other statements and to require everything else to be construed in harmony with them, 4.

Mādhyaṇdina Śākhā : a branch of the Vājasaneyin school of the *Yajurveda*, 22, 92, 105.

māyā (s) : wondrous power (s), 86 ; matter, 117.

mūrta : 70.

muhūrta : a unit of time technically defined as equivalent to 48 minutes : the word is used to indicate any short interval of time, 24.

mṛityu : the effect of past *karmas*, 7 n. : the god of death, 29, 30 n.

medhā : 12 n.

Maitreyī : 11, 14, 40, 65, 67, 75, 78, 80, 82, 113.

Maitreyi-brāhmaṇa : a section of *Bṛih. Up.*, see 'Index of Quotations'.

moksha : final emancipation, 8.

moda : 22.

mauna : 89, 90.

yajña : 110.

Yadeva : 89-2.

Yama : the god of death, 11.

Yājñavalkya : *passim*.

Yādavaṇṇakāśa : a teacher of Rāmānuja 32-3; a philosopher of the *bhedābheda* school, 119.

Yāmunāchārya : the greatest figure in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* before Rāmānuja, 119.

Yāska : 86.

Raṅgarāmānuja : the author of commentaries on the principal *Upanishads* in consonance with Rāmānuja's thought and of a sub-commentary on the *Śrutaprakāśikā*, 4-6.

rasa : bliss, 22.

rasaghana : 81.

rūpas : 70.

Raikva : 28.

Lāhyāyani : belonging to the *gotra* of Lāhya, 87.

vayunaṁ : knowledge, 86.

Varuṇa : a Vedic god; he is stated to be the adoptive father of the sage, Bhṛigu, 19.

vallī : lit. "creeper" : the word is used to denote the chapters of *Taitt. Up.*, 22.

vaśī : 106.

Vākya : name of a commentary on *Chh. Up.*, 27 : statement, 97.

Vākyakāra : 27, 32, 34.

vānaprastha : 29.

Vāmadeva : an ancient *rishi* to whom many hymns of the *Rig Veda* are attributed, 65, 68, 116.

Vāsudeva : the all-pervading Lord, 24 n.

vijara : 57-8

vijighatsa : 57-8.

vijñātri : 84.

vijñāna : knowledge, consciousness, 17, 19, 65, 71, 57; the finite self, 22; direct vision of God, 51 : *-maya* : 18, 21, 98-100, 104-5 : *-ghana* : 71, 81.

vijñānātmā : 13.

vijñāya : having attained knowledge, 111.

vidyā : knowledge, meditation, *passim*.

vidhi : 111.

Vibhūtiyoga : the 10th chapter of the *Gītā*, where the Lord's association with glory everywhere is described, 8.

vimṛityu : 57-8.

Virochana : 59.

Vivaraṇa : a famous commentary by Prakāśātman on the *Pañchapādikā* which is itself a commentary by Padmapāda on Saṅkara's *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, 49, 66.

- Viśiṣṭādvaita* : the school of *Vedānta* in which *Brahman* with attributes is the primary reality, 6.
- viśeṣhaṇa* : 124.
- viśoka* : 57-8.
- Vishaya-vākya-dīpikā* : 5.
- Vishṇu* : 11.
- Vishṇusahasranāma* : a prayer containing the 1000 names of *Vishṇu* in the *Mahābhārata* (xiii), 38, 70, 120.
- viṇā* : 80.
- Vṛittikāra* : 27.
- Veda(s)* : 3, 5.
- Vedānta, -ic, -in* : *passim*.
- Vedānta Deśika* : a great exponent of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* and the leader of the 'Northern School' among *Rāmānuja*'s followers, 6, 8, 24, 27, 40, 119.
- Vedānta-dīpa* : a brief commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras* by *Rāmānuja*, 127 : -*sāra* : an even more concise commentary by *Rāmānuja*, 127.
- Vedārtha-saṅgraha* : an outline of the teachings of the *Upanishads* by *Rāmānuja*, *passim*.
- vaibhava* : 50.
- Vaiśvānara* : 31.
- Vaishṇava* : relating to the worship of *Vishṇu*, 119.
- Vaishṇavism* : the school of thought which identifies the Supreme *Brahman* with *Vishṇu*, 121.
- Vyomātīta-vāda* : the view that there is something higher than the ether of space (in the heart), 56.
- Śaṅkara* : the famous teacher of *Vedāntic* monism, *passim*.
- Sambhu* : a name usually associated with *Śiva*, 120.
- śarīra* : 92.
- Śākalya* : the son of *Sakala* and one of the many who questioned *Yājñavalkya*, 87, 96-7.
- Sāṇḍilya* : a famous sage, 86 : -*vidyā* : the meditation taught by him, see 'Index of Quotations'.
- śānta* : 13.
- Śārīraka-Sūtra* : lit. the aphorisms relating to the Embodied Self; a name of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, 21.
- Śāstā* : 96.
- Śiva* : the Deity regarded as the Supreme Being by one of the sects of Hinduism, 120.
- Sūdra* : 28.
- Sūnyavāda* : philosophic nihilism, 74.
- Śaivite* : advocating the supremacy of *Śiva*, 119 n.
- Saunaka* : the seeker of instruction in *Mund. Up.*, 14, 40, 65.
- śraddhā* : eagerness to learn about *Brahman*, 51.
- śravaṇa* : 77-8, 84, 89, 112.
- śruti-śirasi vidīpta* : a phrase from *Rāmānuja*'s opening invocatory verse in the *Śrībhāshya* : it literally means, "brilliantly shining in the head of the *Vedas*", 3.

śrotriya: 102.

Svetaketu: the young man to whom the *Sadvidyā* is taught in *Chh. Up.*, *passim*.

saṁsīlana: 90.

saṁsāra: the recurring cycle of mundane existence, 103, 118.

saguna: having attributes, 56, 124.

Saguna-Brahman: the Absolute with attributes, 56, 61, 124, 132.

Saṅkshapa-śāstraka: a brief compendium on the purport of the *Brahma-Sūtras*, see 'Index of Quotations'.

sañchita: accumulated, 45 n.

'*Sat*': That which is existent, *Brahman*, 38, 44-8, 120.

Satkāryavāda: the view that the effect is existent in the cause, 41.

Satya: real, 18: *Brahman*, as the Real, 51, 54:—*kāma*: 37, 57-8:—*saṅkalpa*: 37, 57-8.

Satyakāma: one of Pippalāda's disciples, 13: (Jābala) disciple and teacher in *Chh. Up.*, 28, 31.

Satyasya satyam: 66, 72-4, 108.

Sadvidyā: the teaching about the *Brahman* as the Existent, 38, 45, 48, 55, 79, 128.

Sanatkumāra: the teacher of *Bhūma-vidyā*, 50-4.

saṁnyāsa: 29, 99, 111:—*āśrama*, 111:—*in*: an ascetic, 29.

saṁjñā: 81.

saṁprasāda: 59-61.

sambhūti: lit. existence: the experience of *Brahman*, 8, 24.

sarva: 106:—*karma*, 37:—*gandha*, 37, 70:—*rasa*, 37, 70:—*viśeṣa-rahita*: 94.

Sarveśvara: 106, 109, 115.

sarvāntara: 67, 89, 96.

Sarvajñātmamuni: a pupil of *Sureśvara* and a well known writer on *Advaita*, 27, 49, 71, 91.

saviśeṣa: affirming attributes, 35.

Sāṅkhya: a school of ancient Indian philosophy which analyses the universe into matter and numerous selves, 117.

sādhana: means, the means of liberation, 90, 113.

sāmānādhikarāṇya: 104.

sāmānya-viśeṣa-nyāya: 57.

Sāyana: a famous commentator of the 14th century on the *Vedas*, 5.

sukṛita: 21.

sukha: joy, pleasure, 51; God as infinite bliss, 54.

Sudarśana Sūri: a great commentator on the *Sribhāṣya* and *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* (13th-14th centuries), 5, 6, 8, 24, 27, 32-3, 39, 40, 53.

Sureśvara: a well known writer on *Advaita*, 15, 49, 69, 71.

sushupti: 102, 108.

Sūtrakāra: the author of the (*Brahma*-) *Sūtras*, 20, 28, 30.

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Preface contains a section devoted to the works of Rāmānuja principally used in these lectures. Additional bibliographical information about one of his works and about some works of others is given below.

Vedārtha-saṅgraha of Rāmānuja : The page references are to the Tirupati-Tirumalai Devasthanam edition.

Sachcharitra-rakshā of Vedānta Deśika : Published by P. B. Annangaracharya, Kanchipuram.

The commentaries of Śaṅkara on the *Brahma-Sūtras* and on the *Upanishads* are available in various editions. So too are the *Pañchadaśī* and the *Naishkarmya-Siddhi*.

ERRATA

The more important printing mistakes are given below :

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
4	33	H eadmits	He admits
23	7	sought be	sought to be
31	5	XV. 5	IV. 15
31	13	XI. 5	V. 11
33	10	simile with	simile to
34	14	I. 10. 20	I. 1. 20
36	3	(d)	(b)
64	last line	On can	One can
70	27	<i>akshinī</i>	<i>akshinī</i>
70	29	<i>kalyanatamaṁ</i>	<i>kalyāṇatamaṁ</i>
80	628	<i>Saṇḍilya-vidyā</i>	<i>Sāṇḍilya-vidyā</i>
80	16	<i>iśśvasitāni</i>	<i>niśśvasitāni</i>
83	7	IV. 6. 15	IV. 5 15
92	16-17	'dwells' and is within	'dwells within'
122	28	ne ness	oneness
134	1 a	VI 3	VI. 1

