

Brahmasutrashashyam  
Adhyasa bhashya  
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The Bhashya of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada is the means for understanding the meaning of the sutras. The Bhashya begins with the Adhyasabhashya. We shall first examine what is the purpose of the Adhyasabhashya and what is the relationship between the first sutra and Adhyasabhashya. Another matter to be considered is, what are the objections raised by other schools and what is the reply of Advaita to them.

The first sutra is—atha atah Brahmajijnaasaa- अथ अतः ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा

The meaning of the word 'atha' is, 'after having acquired the four essential requisites', namely, discrimination between the eternal and the ephemeral, an attitude of detachment towards enjoyment of the fruits of action in this world as well as in higher worlds, perfection of disciplines such as control of the mind, control of all the senses and organs, etc., and intense yearning for liberation-- नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः, इहामुन्नार्थभोगविरागः, शमदमादिसाधनसंपत्, मुमुक्षुत्वं च.

### 1. Brahmajijnaasaa implies adhyaasa

A person who has acquired these four requisites is the competent person (adhikari) to take up Brahmajijnaasaa. Jijnaasaa means the desire to know. Desire and knowledge are not matters in respect of which there can be an injunction. They have to arise by themselves. The desire for liberation arises in a person who has acquired the four requisites mentioned earlier. Then he should do whatever is necessary for the fulfillment of this desire. A man who is hungry and wants relief from it should eat. Similarly, this sutra says that one who desires liberation should engage in Vedanta vichara, just as a man who wants to go to heaven must perform a yajna. The knowledge of Brahman is the means for liberation. Liberation is the removal of bondage. By the knowledge of a particular thing the ignorance about it is removed. When it is said that knowledge of Brahman removes bondage, it is indicated that bondage is due to ignorance of Brahman. Bondage cannot be removed by any means other than knowledge of Brahman. Ignorance and its effects are removed by knowledge. A real snake can be driven away by some action, but an illusory snake appearing where there is only a rope can be removed only by the knowledge of the rope. The first sutra therefore indicates that bondage is mithya (not real). This conclusion is arrived at by the pramana known as arthaapatti. Arthaapatti is explained later on.

### 2. The nature of bondage

There are gradations in bondage. The main bondage is the connection of ignorance with the Atma, in the form of superimposition. Thereafter comes the superimposition of the subtle and the gross bodies. Then follows the superimposition of external objects. In superimposition there

is a substratum (adhishtana) and the superimposed (aaropya). Sri Sankara says that there is a blending of the real and the unreal (satya-anrte midhuneekrtya- सत्यान्ते मिथुनीकृत्य). So in bondage one part is real (Atma), and the other part is unreal (anaatma).

### 3. **The purpose of Adhyasabhashya**

Now an objection is raised. It is said that such a superimposition is impossible because the requisite conditions for the same are not present. So the claim in the first sutra that bondage can be removed by knowledge cannot be correct. The Adhyasabhashya is intended to reply to this objection.

Now the question arises, what is the need for dealing with superimposition at the beginning of the Bhashya itself? The answer is that if the objections raised are answered, then the further study of the Saastra can proceed.

This work is known as Saairakamimamsa- शरीरकमीमांसा. Saairira means the one who is in the body, i.e. the jiva. So this Saastra deals with the jiva. But it begins with the desire to know Brahman. This shows that the subject-matter of this Saastra is the oneness of jiva and Brahman. But the jiva looks upon himself as different from Brahman. It follows that this difference is due only to ignorance. Bondage which is the result of this ignorance is therefore mithya. Thus it seen that two results flow from this. One is that, since bondage can be removed by knowledge, it must be mithya. The second is that, since jiva and Brahman are one, bondage is mithya. The purpose of the Adhyasabhashya is to establish these two matters.

### 4. **Knowledge cannot destroy what is real**

Now two objections are raised: (1) Just because knowledge removes bondage, it does not follow that bondage is mithya. (2) Since the Saastra is pramana, why can it not be merely accepted, and what is the need for proving that bondage is mithya?

In support of the first objection some examples are given. It is said that a poison which has entered the body is removed by thinking of Garuda (Garudasmaranam). The thought of Garuda is only knowledge. By this knowledge the poison, which is real, is removed. It is said that detachment can be acquired by knowing the adverse effects of sense-objects. Here also the knowledge of the adverse effects removes the desire for the sense-objects, though the desire is real. The sin of killing a Brahmana is said to be removed by the sight of Setu. The sight of Setu is only knowledge and it destroys the sin which is real. Another example is the antecedent negation of knowledge (jnaana-praagabhaava), which is removed by knowledge, though it is real.

These objections are answered as follows. The mere thought of Garuda does not remove the poison. It should be accompanied by the chanting of the relevant mantras and the performance of prescribed rituals. Detachment is not mere removal of desire. It is the attainment of

a state of mind which is opposed to desire. The sight of Setu by itself does not remove the sin. The person has to observe celibacy for twelve years, should publicly announce his guilt and repentance wherever he goes, and also perform the prescribed rituals. Antecedent negation is not a positive entity and so this example is not valid. So in all these cases mere jnaana does not destroy something that is real.

#### **5. The role of arthapatti**

The second objection is that since the Saastra is pramana, there is no need for proving its correctness by means of other reasons. This objection is met as follows. For attaining heaven yaga is prescribed. But the result, heaven, will come only much after the performance of the yaga. If there is to be the relationship of cause and effect between the yaga and the attainment of heaven, there should be no intervening period between the conclusion of the yaga and the attainment of heaven. To solve this difficulty Mimamsakas have postulated a result in the form of 'apoorva' which is produced during the performance of the yaga. This apoorva continues till the life of the person who has performed the yaga comes to an end and he attains heaven. This apoorva is not mentioned in the sruti. It is postulated on the basis of the pramana known as 'arthaapatti'. When there is conflict between two pramanas, a conclusion has to be postulated which reconciles the conflict. For example, a person named Devadatta is known to be alive, but he is not found in his house. Both these are pramanas and they are in conflict. So it has to be concluded that he is elsewhere. This reconciles the conflict. This is arthaapatti. Another example is-- Devadatta does not eat during the day, but he continues to be fat. Here also there is conflict between two pramanas. This is resolved by the conclusion that he must be eating at night. Similarly, the sruti which is pramana, says that yaga is the cause of heaven. But we see that heaven is not attained immediately on the completion of the yaga. This is also a pramana. Thus there is conflict between the two pramanas. To resolve this conflict apoorva has been postulated by arthaapatti.

#### **6. Knowledge does not need any other help to remove bondage**

Sri Sankara has said repeatedly that the Saastra gives knowledge alone and cannot modify facts. (शास्त्रं ज्ञापकं न कारकम्). The opponent now asks: In the case of nacre-silver it is true that knowledge of the nacre alone is necessary for removal of the illusory silver. But has Vedanta proved that knowledge by itself leads to removal of bondage and that knowledge does not depend on anything else for this purpose? This question has been answered later in the Bhashya on Brahmasutra 3.4.25 and 3.4.26. There it has been said that for knowledge to arise karma, etc., are necessary, but once knowledge has arisen it does not need the help of anything else for removing bondage. In Bhagavadgita also it has been said in chapter 6 that karma is necessary for a person to

become yogaarudha, but thereafter karma is not necessary, but only the pursuit of knowledge.

Some contend that even without establishing superimposition, the study of the Saastra can be proceeded with. This is rejected as untenable.

### **7. Reality is of one nature only**

The following objection is raised: When you say that if bondage is real, it cannot be removed by knowledge, what is the nature of the reality that you are speaking of? Is it vyaavahaarika or paaramaarthika?

The answer to this objection is that it is not correct to divide reality into two categories. Reality is only one. Only mithya can be divided into two categories, namely vyaavahaarika or empirical and praatibhaasika or illusory. So the question raised is without any basis.

### **8. Superimposition is on consciousness**

The next objection is:- You say that there is superimposition of avidya on the Atma. Is this superimposition on the paramatma or on the jivatma? The former is impossible, since paramatma is pure consciousness. To say that there is superimposition of avidya on paramatma would be like saying that there is darkness in the sun. If you say that there is superimposition of avidya on the jivatma, that is also not tenable, because according to you the jivatma is the same as paramatma. Moreover, jivatma is consciousness with the superimposition of avidya. How can there be a superimposition of avidya on such a jivatma?

The Advaitin's answer to this objection is: This is not a proper question at all since it goes against the theory of the Naiyayika himself. To take an example. A man with a stick is called a 'dandi'. All men in the world can be divided into two categories—those with a stick and those without a stick. There is no other category. Who is the person for whom connection with a stick arose? Clearly not the person without a stick. If you say that connection with a stick arose for the dandi, it will mean that he was a dandi even before he had the stick. So the correct answer is that the connection with the stick arose for a man and not for a dandi or an adandi. Similarly superimposition of avidya is for the pure consciousness. Another example can be given. A man sees smoke on a mountain and infers that there is fire on the mountain. Any fire falls into one of two categories; mountain fire and non-mountain fire. Does the person who infers the existence of fire on a mountain after seeing smoke there infer that it is mountain fire or non-mountain fire? It cannot obviously be non-mountain fire. If he says that it is mountain fire, what is the basis for this inference? The inference is based on his experience that when there is smoke in the kitchen there is fire there. But that is non-mountain fire. On the basis of this experience how can he infer the existence of mountain fire? So it could be said that there is the defect of non-existence in the example (kitchen) of the thing to be proved (mountain fire). This is answered by saying that what is inferred is just

fire without any qualification such as kitchen fire, mountain fire, etc. Similarly, what we say is that the superimposition is on consciousness as such, without any qualification.

#### **9. Superimposition is the effect of avidya**

By association with avidya, pure consciousness becomes three-fold, namely, pure consciousness, Isvara and jiva. According to the reflection theory (pratibimbavada), these are Isvara who is the bimba, jiva who is the pratibimba, and pure consciousness which pervades both of them. Superimposition is the effect of avidya. This superimposition is for the reflection in avidya (namely jiva) and not for the other two. To take an example: there is a pot with water in it. There is space within the pot, there is total space and there is the reflection of space (the sky with the sun or stars, etc) in the water. When the water in the pot moves it is only the reflection of space that moves and not the other two. So also, it is only the reflection in avidya that is affected and not the bimba or pure consciousness.

According to the author of Prakatarthavivarana both Isvara and jiva are reflections. The distinction is caused by the reflecting medium. The medium is Maya for Isvara and avidya for the jiva. Maya has an infinite number of parts and each part is an avidya. This avidya has two powers, veiling power and projecting power. It is called avidya because it is destroyed by vidya. He follows the theory of multiple jivas as distinguished from that of a single jiva. When a person attains Self-knowledge, the avidya in his mind is destroyed and he becomes pure consciousness. Isvara is the indwelling Self and the inner controller for all jivas. Once a person becomes liberated, he no longer experiences bondage though the world continues to exist, just as a blind man does not experience the world through the power of vision.

In the sruti statement which says that Maya is destroyed in its entirety for the liberated person -- भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः-, Maya means avidya pertaining to that person alone according to Prakatarthakara. When a particular jiva attains videhamukti, the avidyasamskara in his internal organ is destroyed. In this way the parts of Maya known as avidya get destroyed when the persons to whom those avidyas pertain attain videhamukti. The question arises whether, in this manner, when all jivas get videhamukti, Maya will cease to exist. According to Prakatarthakara this cannot happen because the parts of Maya called avidya are infinite in number and so they can never be exhausted. This view is contradictory to those of other commentators who hold that a time will come when all the jivas are liberated and Maya ceases to exist.

#### **10. Maya does not contradict non-duality of Brahman**

The next question is, if Maya is never destroyed, will not the theory of non-duality of Brahman be contradicted? The answer is no, because Maya is mithya and Brahman is the only reality. Even according to Prakatarthakara Maya and avidya are not different because avidya is

only a part of Maya, just as the pot-space is not different from the total space.

### **Objections to the theory of superimposition of Atma and Anatma**

The next objection is: Adhyasa can occur only if the substratum is not known. Superimposition of silver can take place only if the nacre is not known. The Atma is known to every one as 'I'. The difference between the self and the not-self, namely, body, mind and sense organs, is known to all because no one says 'I am the body'. Moreover, only another substance can be superimposed on a substance. The illusion is in the form of 'This is silver' and not as 'I am silver'. The seen cannot be superimposed on the seer, or vice versa. The Atma being the seer, nothing can be superimposed on it. Moreover, there has to be some similarity between the substratum and the superimposed object. One mistakes nacre for silver because they are similar in that they are both bright. No one mistakes nacre for an elephant. Atma and Anatma are totally contradictory like light and darkness- युष्मदस्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरयोः विषयविषयिणोः

तमःप्रकाशवद्विरुद्धस्वभावयोः इतरेतरभावानुपपत्तौ सिद्ध्यां तद्धर्माणामपि सुतरां इतरेतरभावानुपपत्तिः -  
For all these reasons superimposition of the self on the not-self or vice versa is not possible. When a person says "I am a man", etc, it is only in a secondary sense (gauna), like saying 'This boy is a lion'.

Even though, for the reasons stated above there cannot be superimposition between the self and the not self as such—धर्म्यास—, let us consider whether superimposition of the qualities of the one on the other is possible – धर्माध्यास—, like the superimposition of the red colour of a flower on a crystal. This is also not possible. Even in the case of the crystal there is dharmi-adhyasa also, because there is superimposition of the reflection of the flower on the crystal. Dharma-adhyasa is not possible without dharmi-adhyasa.

### **Knowledge of difference does not prevent superimposition**

Every one is aware of the difference between nacre and silver, still superimposition of silver on nacre does occur. Though the difference between 'man' and 'I' is known, every one says, 'I am a man' though no one says 'I am the body'. So knowledge of difference does not prevent superimposition.

### **The other objections to superimposition answered**

According to the Advaita theory of 'anirvachaniya' there is ज्ञानाध्यास or superimposition of knowledge, and also अर्थाध्यास, superimposition of the objects. In the superimposition of silver on nacre, one gets the knowledge 'This is silver'. This is jnana-adhyasa. Knowledge is not possible without an object. So Advaita says that there is actually silver in front. This is supported by the fact that the person goes forward to grab the silver. In the same way, the world which is superimposed on the Atma (Brahman) is accepted as existing, though it has no absolute realty. The first portion

of the first sentence in Adhyasabhashya--युष्मदस्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरयोः विषयविषयिणोः तमःप्रकाशवद्विरुद्धस्वभावयोः इतरेतरभावानुपपत्तौ सिद्धायां तद्धर्माणामपि सुतरां इतरेतरभावानुपपत्तिः -- refers to jnana-adhyasa. The second portion--इत्यतः अस्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरे विषयिणि चिदात्मके युष्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरस्य विषयस्य तद्धर्माणां चाध्यासः, तद्विपर्ययेण विषयिणः तद्धर्माणां च विषये अध्यासः मिथ्येति भवितुं युक्तम्-- refers to artha-adhyasa.

It has been established that the reasons given by the opponent for rejecting superimposition are not valid. Every one looks upon his body as himself. The body has birth and death and so the self is also thought to have birth and death. Similarly the qualities of the self are attributed to the body and so the body is very dear, though this is actually a quality of the self. This superimposition is a fact experienced by every one and so it cannot be denied. This identification of the self with the body cannot be considered to be merely secondary (gauna) on the ground that every one knows that he is different from the body because no one says “I am the body”. Though the difference between nacre and silver is known to every one, still nacre is sometimes mistaken for silver. This is because of lack of discrimination at the relevant time. It is therefore said in the Bhashya that because of lack of discrimination between the self and the not-self -- इतरेतराविवेकेन --, there is ignorance-- मिथ्याज्ञान-- and this is the reason for the wrong identification. Moreover, though “I” and ‘man’ are different, no man says “I am not a man”. So there is no realization of the difference between ‘I’ and ‘man’. The same is the case when one says “I am the doer”. Thus, though the difference is known, there is lack of discrimination between the self and the body and this is the reason for the identification of the two.

The contention of the opponent that both the substratum and the superimposed entity should be substances (vishaya) is not tenable because it is well known from everyday experience that the self and the not-self are looked upon as identical by every one. Such a patent fact cannot be rejected by mere arguments.

Mithyajnana is split up as mithya+ajnana, i.e. ignorance which is mithya, that is, it cannot be described as either real or unreal. This is the reason for the wrong identification. By using the word ‘nimitta’ after mithyajnana in the Bhashya it is pointed out that ignorance is the material cause (upaadaana kaaranam) of the superimposition. In Vedantic terminology, the word ‘nimitta’ is used to denote the efficient cause and the word ‘upaadaana’ denotes the material cause. But in grammar and also in worldly usage ‘nimitta’ is used to denote material cause also. In Nyaya several kinds of causes such as samavayi, asamavayi, nimitta, are mentioned, but in Vedanta only two causes, nimitta and upaadaana, are accepted. For any effect to be produced a material cause is necessary. Illusion (bhrama), being an effect, must have a material cause. In this sentence in the Bhashya there is no other word

to denote the material cause and so the word 'nimitta' has been interpreted by Prakatarthakara as material cause. The word itaretara-avivekena—meaning, 'due to non-discrimination between the self and the not-self'- has been interpreted as denoting the efficient cause.

### **Brahman is the cause through vivarta and nescience by parinama**

Brahman is both the efficient and the material cause of the universe, but it is the material cause only through vivarta or transfiguration and not parinama or transformation, Ajnaana is the material cause of the universe by transformation (parinami-upaadaanakaarana). Ajnaana is a defect (dosha) and so the word nimitta implies that ajnaana is the efficient cause also.

Can the word mithyajnaana be split up as mithya+jnaana also? The answer is no, because the word would then mean adhyasa itself, but not the cause of adhyasa.

The question as to whether there is any pramana for ajnaana cannot arise at all. The question itself means that the questioner has ignorance. Moreover, when a person wakes up from deep sleep he says that he slept happily and did not know anything. This clearly shows that there was ignorance during sleep.

The expression सत्यान्ते मिथुनीकृत्य- combining the real and the unreal—brings out the Advaita theory of अनिर्वचनीयख्याति.

### **Theories of error (khyati)**

There are five well-known theories of khyati or erroneous cognition, each held by a different darsana. These theories are described briefly below.

1. आत्मख्याति is the theory of one school of Buddhism known as Yogachara. They deny the existence of external objects and hold that it is only internal cognitions that are externalized as objects. According to this theory the illusory object, say, silver, as well as the substratum, nacre, are both non-existent and are only internal ideas. The error consists in their being perceived as external objects. Just as the nacre is only a form of inner consciousness, so is the illusory silver. In the term Atmakhyati the word 'Atma' stands for consciousness which is momentary and which appears as the external objects. Advaita Vedanta rejects this theory. One of the grounds for rejection is that if the substratum, nacre, and the illusory silver are only forms of inner consciousness, then there cannot be any distinction between valid and erroneous perception.

2. असत्ख्याति —Apprehension of a non-existent thing.

This is the theory of the Nihilist school of Buddhism, known as the Madhyamika school. It says that in illusory perception something non-existent is apprehended as existent. Both the substratum, nacre and the illusory silver are non-existent. This view is rejected by all the Vedic schools, because there cannot be any cognition of what does not exist. The son of a barren woman cannot be seen either in reality or in illusion.



### 3. अख्याति -- Non-apprehension.

This is the theory of the Prabhakara school of Mimamsa. The view held by this school is that there is no positive error in illusory perception; instead, there is only lack of discrimination between the object perceived (nacre) and the object remembered (silver). The nacre is perceived in a general way as 'this' and not as possessing the distinctive feature of nacreness. Silver, which was seen elsewhere, is recollected, but without its association with the past time when, and the particular place where, it was seen. Such recollection is described as "recollection of an object robbed of its 'thatness'. In certain other cases, such as 'the conch is yellow', this school explains that two imperfect perceptions arise, one being the visual perception of a conch as such, its real colour (white) being missed, and the other being the visual perception of the yellow colour of the bilious matter which causes jaundice, the relation of the yellow colour to the bilious substance being missed. Thus in all cases of erroneous cognition two distinct cognitions—either a perception and a recollection or two perceptions—arise, but their distinction is missed.

### 4. अन्यथाख्याति — Misapprehension.

This is the theory of the Naiyayikas. When nacre is wrongly perceived as silver, the erroneous cognition that arises takes the form 'this is silver'. Here 'this' stands for nacre lying in front of the perceiver, and it is first seen as a white piece and not as nacre, the distinctive feature of nacreness being missed either through some defect in sight or because of the particular situation in which the visual perception arises. The visual perception of nacre as 'this' arises in the ordinary way, by contact of the visual organ with the object in front. The real silver-ness that belongs to the real silver existing elsewhere is presented in this visual perception as the attribute of the nacre seen as 'this' in a general form; neither the real silver nor the real silver-ness could be said to be connected with the sense of sight through normal sense-relation; and without such sense-relation being established between the sense-organ concerned and the object to be perceived, perception cannot arise. So the Naiyayikas hold that the real silver and silver-ness come to be connected with the sense

of sight through an extra-normal type of sense-relation. Thus according to the Naiyayikas, the visual misapprehension of nacre as silver is an extra-normal variety of visual perception.

5. अनिर्वचनीयख्याति:-- This is the theory of the Advaitins. According to this the silver seen on nacre cannot be categorized as either real or unreal. The person seeing it thinks that there is real silver before him and that is why he stretches out his hand to grab the silver. Similarly, the universe which is an appearance on Brahman is neither real nor unreal. As in the case of silver, the universe is looked upon by all as real until Brahman is

realized. As a result of this superimposition every one says 'I am a man', etc., and 'This is mine'. Thus there are two kinds of adhyasa.

This superimposition is described as नैसर्गिक which means 'beginningless'. So far the interpretation of Prakatarthakara has been given. In his view the objections raised are answered by the three expressions इतरेतराविवेकेन, मिथ्याज्ञाननिमित्तः, नैसर्गिकः

Vivarana and Ratnaprabha consider the objection that there can be superimposition of a particular object such as silver only if the person has previously seen real silver somewhere. He must have knowledge of the superimposed object as a reality. This is not possible in the case of the superimposition of the non-self because the non-self is not real and so he could not have experienced it as real previously. This objection is answered by the word 'naisargika' which means that the adhyasa is beginningless and in each adhyasa the experience of a previous adhyasa is there. Moreover, it is not necessary that he should have knowledge of the real object. Even a person who has seen a snake only in a picture can mistake a rope for a snake.

According to Bhamati, the expression 'itaretara-avivekena' answers the objections. The objection considered is that everyone is aware that the body is different from the self and so superimposition of the body on the self is not possible. The answer is that though the difference is known, there is still lack of discrimination between the two to the extent necessary and so adhyasa is possible.

### **Definition, possibility and proof of adhyasa**

In the first part of Adhyasabhashya the lakshana or nature of adhyasa is described. The adhyasas such as that of silver on nacre, etc are not disputed by any one; only the mutual adhyasa of the self and the not-self is claimed to be impossible by other darsanas.

The adhyasabhashya has three parts- definition of adhyasa, the possibility of adhyasa, and the proof for adhyasa. The definition is now taken up.

The question is asked: कोऽयमध्यासो नाम-“what is this adhyasa?” This may be taken as a question by a disciple eager to know, or as an objection to the theory of superimposition by an opponent, depending on the tone of the questioner. Both these meanings are intended here.

The answer is: स्मृतिरूपः परत्र पूर्वदृष्टावभासः

The first word in the answer, namely, 'smritirupah' is by way of answer to the disciple. The sentence consists of four parts: smritirupah, paratra. poorvadrshtha, and avabhasah. The words paratra (elsewhere) and avabhasa (appearance) describe adhyasa. The words smritirupah (of the nature of, or similar to, remembrance) and poorvadrshthah (seen or experienced previously) describe the cause of adhyasa. If a person or thing seen previously somewhere is seen again at another time and place it is recognition (pratyabhijna) and not adhyasa. If a person sees a cow

somewhere and later on sees another cow at a different time and place, that is also not adhyasa, but it is recognition of the same species. The word smrtirupah shows that it is not the same as remembrance, but is only similar to remembrance.

Three factors are the cause of adhyasa—some defect, contact between the eye and the thing in front, and samskara (mental impression of an object seen previously elsewhere). Remembrance is knowledge arising from samskara alone. Knowledge is of two kinds, actual experience (anubhava) and remembrance. The experience may be from direct perception (pratyaksha) or the indirect means of knowledge such as inference, comparison, etc. An experience gives rise to a samskara. This samskara is the cause of remembrance. The point of similarity between adhyasa and remembrance is that both are produced by samskara. The difference is that, for adhyasa there should be some defect as one of the causes, but not for remembrance. Contact of the eye with an object is necessary for adhyasa, but not for remembrance. For adhyasa of silver on nacre there should be contact of the eye with the object in front, the knowledge that there is an object in front, but not the knowledge of the nacre-ness of the object. If it is pitch dark the object itself will not be seen and then there can be no adhyasa. So some defect (dosha), because of which the nacre-ness of the object in front is not known, is necessary for adhyasa of silver to take place. This definition of adhyasa brings out both the tatasthalakshana and the svarupalakshana of adhyasa. The word smrtirupah denotes the tatasthalakshana and the words paratra avabhasah denote the svarupalakshana. What has been said so far is the well known definition (lakshana) of adhyasa.

Prakatartha gives a different commentary. He takes all the four words together and says all of them together describe the lakshana of adhyasa. The word purvadrshita-avabhasa by itself can refer to mere remembrance also and so there is the defect of over-applicability of the definition if this word alone is used. To avoid this, the word smrtirupah has been added. This indicates that it is like remembrance but it is not remembrance itself. If we say only purvadrshita-avabhasah—the appearance of what was seen before-- it could apply to recognition also. Recognition requires previous perception of the particular object, together with the samskara generated by the previous perception. But recognition is not adhyasa. So the definition has to be supplemented by some word which will exclude recognition. The word paratra—elsewhere-- has been added for this purpose. This shows that what is seen in adhyasa is a thing different from what was seen before. The silver seen is not the same as the real silver seen elsewhere.

A person sees a cow at a particular time and place. Later on he sees an animal resembling a cow, but not another cow. This is not adhyasa. To prevent this being taken as adhyasa the word purvadrshitah has been introduced. So what is seen in adhyasa must be what was seen earlier and not something similar to it. When nacre is seen as silver, what is

seen is silver and not some other substance which resembles silver. Thus the adhyasa is caused by the samskara of the previous perception of silver. The silver seen in the adhyasa is however mithya and not the real silver seen earlier. It is different from what was seen earlier, but it is thought to be the same.

Bhamati's view: Avabhasa means knowledge which is discarded later on when found to be wrong.

What has been said above applies equally to jnana-adhyasa (superimposition of cognition) and to artha-adhyasa (superimposition of object). In nacre-silver illusion there is the cogniton "This is silver". This is jnana-adhyasa. The person says "There is silver here". That is, he sees silver as actually existing before him. The object, silver, is thus actually present according to him. This is artha-adhyasa, i.e. the object, silver, appears there. The word 'smritih' can be split up as 'smaryate iti smritih', in which case it applies to the object and consequently to artha-adhyasa. It can also be split up as 'smaranam iti smritih' in which case it applies to the cognition of silver and therefore to jnana-adhyasa.

Defect, contact of the eye with the object, and samskara—these three are the nimitta karana, efficient cause, of adhyasa. Ignorance of the nacre is the defect.

Thus the lakshana (definition) of adhyasa has been given. The lakshya (what is intended to be defined) is -- अतस्मिन् तद्बुद्धिः - seeing a thing where it is not.

The purpose of lakshana is to distinguish a particular thing from other things- itaravyaavrttih'. For example, a person sees a cow before him. He can know that it is a cow only if he knows the lakshana of a cow. If he does not know, he will see it only as some animal. The lakshana for the moon is "That which is most resplendent is the moon". Only a person who knows this definition can identify the moon in the sky. This is the svarupalakshanam. The pramana (valid means of knowledge such as the eye) is necessary, but it is not sufficient to identify any object. In addition, knowledge of the definition (lakshana) of the object is also necessary.

The other darsanas also admit that there is adhyasa. The Sastras are intended to remove this adhyasa.

The different darsanas give different definitions for adhyasa. These are known as khyati. Five of these are well known. These have been described earlier. In the bhashya three of these are referred to.

The first definition referred to in the bhashya is, तं केचित् अन्यत्र अन्यधर्माध्यासः इति वदन्ति --

"Some say that it consists in the superimposition of the attributes of one thing on another". This is the definition according to Atmakhyati of the Yogachara school of Buddhism as well as according to Anyathakhyati of the Naiyayikas. The Yogachara school of Buddhism denies the existence of external objects and holds that it is only internal cognitions that are

externalized as objects. According to this theory the illusory object, say, silver, as well as the substratum, nacre, are both non-existent and are only internal ideas. The error consists in their being perceived as external objects. Just as the nacre is only a form of inner consciousness, so is the illusory silver. Advaita Vedanta rejects this theory. One of the grounds for rejection is that if the substratum, nacre, and the illusory silver are only forms of inner consciousness, then there cannot be any distinction between valid and erroneous perception.

According to the theory of Anyathakhyati of the Naiyayikas, when nacre is wrongly perceived as silver, the erroneous cognition that arises takes the form 'this is silver'. Here 'this' stands for nacre lying in front of the perceiver, and it is first seen as a white piece and not as nacre, the distinctive feature of nacre-ness being missed either through some defect in sight or because of the particular situation in which the visual perception arises. The visual perception of nacre as 'this' arises in the ordinary way, by contact of the visual organ with the object in front. The real silver-ness that belongs to the real silver existing elsewhere is presented in this visual perception as the attribute of the nacre seen as 'this' in a general form; neither the real silver nor the real silver-ness could be said to be connected with the sense of sight through normal sense-relation; and without such sense-relation being established between the sense-organ concerned and the object to be perceived, perception cannot arise. So the Naiyayikas hold that the real silver and silver-ness come to be connected with the sense of sight through an extra-normal type of sense-relation. Thus according to the Naiyayikas, the visual misapprehension of nacre as silver is an extra-normal variety of visual perception.

The second definition referred to in the Bhashya is, केचित् तु यत्र यदध्यासः तद्विवेकाग्रहनिबन्धनो भ्रम इति --

“But others assert that wherever a superimposition on anything occurs, there is in evidence only a confusion arising from the absence of discrimination between them”. This is Akhyati which is the theory of the Prabhakara school of Purvamimamsa. According to this school all knowledge is valid knowledge. The object of this definition is to protect the authoritativeness of the Vedas which are apaurusheya. The validity of any statement depends on the reliability of the person making it. But the Vedas have no author. So this theory makes the Vedas self-valid (svatah pramana).

Sri Sankara points out that, in addition to perception and remembrance there should be another knowledge of the form “This is silver” and this is illusion (bhrama). So Akhyativada is not valid.

According to the Tattvadipana commentary on Vivarana this definition is that of the Sankhyas. This is based on the view that Sri Sankara must have referred to the Sankhya view because he considers the Sankhyas to be the principal opponents of Advaita.

The third definition is-- अन्ये तु यत्र यदध्यासः तस्यैव विपरीतधर्मत्वकल्पनां आचक्षते इति--  
“Others say that the superimposition of anything on any other substratum consists in attributing some contradictory qualities to that very substratum”. This is the theory of Asatkhyati held by the Madhyamika school of Buddhism. It says that in illusory perception something non-existent is apprehended as existent. Both the substratum, nacre and the illusory silver are non-existent. This view is rejected by all the Vedic schools, because there cannot be any cognition of what does not exist.

However, according to Brahmavidyabharana this is the definition of Advaita itself.

After referring to these three definitions, Sri Sankara points out that according to all schools, “there is no difference of opinion on the point that in adhyasa one thing appears as something else” -- सर्वथाऽपि तु अन्यस्य अन्यधर्मावभासतां न व्यभिचरति. Thus this is a feature of adhyasa which is accepted by all. Such a definition is therefore comprehensive and cannot be disputed by any one.

All schools of philosophy accept adhyasa. The difference is only in the method of explaining how it happens. There are five main theories in this respect, as described in the earlier lectures. The theory of Advaita Vedanta is Anirvachaniyakhyati. In the bhashya two examples of adhyasa are taken—शुक्तिका हि रजतवदवभासते, एकश्चन्द्रः सद्वितीयवत्--

A piece of nacre appears as silver, and one moon appears as many. The nacre appearing as silver is called ‘nirupaadhika- adhyasa’, i.e. superimposition without an upadhi or limiting adjunct. This is the kind of adhyasa because of which one says. “I am a man”. In this adhyasa the self is identified with the human body. The moon appearing as many due to reflections in many pots of water is called ‘sopaadhika-adhyasa’—superimposition with a limiting adjunct. Here the limiting adjunct is the medium of reflection, namely the pot of water. This is the kind of adhyasa by which the one non-dual pure consciousness appears as innumerable jivas, because of being reflected in innumerable subtle bodies. Adhyasa creates differences such as Isvara and jivas in the one and only pure consciousness. The suffix ‘vat’ added to ‘rajata’ in the bhashya indicates that the silver is anirvachaniya, i.e. it cannot be categorized as either real or unreal. This indescribability has necessarily to be accepted. Appayya Dikshita gives an example in his work ‘Parimala’. We see a man coming towards us from a distance. We say, “This man looks like Devadatta”. Here the word ‘like’ does not indicate similarity, but doubt as to whether the man is Devadatta or not. In

‘rajatavat’ also, the suffix ‘vat’ added to ‘rajata’ does not mean that what is seen is ‘like silver’. It indicates the indescribability of the silver seen. By the use of this suffix ‘vat’ Sri Sankara rejects all the other theories about adhyasa.

Is the silver real or false? If it is real, is the silver actually present in front, or is it silver existing somewhere else? We cannot say that the silver is present here because when we go near and examine we find that there is no silver. If it is silver existing somewhere else (as held by the theory of Anyathakhyati), it cannot be seen because there is no contact between the eye and the silver. If the opponent says that it can be seen even without eye-contact it will mean that anything anywhere can be seen by us, which is absurd. If the opponent says that the silver is seen due to some defect (and not by the eye), it will mean that it can be seen even when the eyes are closed. If the opponent says that the eyes have to be kept open to see the nacre, and if by keeping the eyes open one can see even an object far away, then it is not a defect but a blessing. Defect is what prevents the thing on which it operates from performing its function. If there is some defect in the eyes, nothing will be seen. The defect cannot make him see what cannot be seen with good eyes. So silver which is elsewhere cannot be seen.

Seeing double is not due to a defect. What the defect does is to prevent the person from seeing that there is only one object. The reason for seeing double is ajnana or ignorance according to Advaita. So it is anirvaachya. Defect is the reason for not seeing the moon as only one, and ajnana is the reason for seeing the moon as two. Because of defect the nacre is not seen as nacre, and because of ignorance it is seen as silver. The defect may be in the object, or the person seeing it, or in the conditions prevailing at the time. The Nihilist Buddhist says that the objects seen are non-existent. This cannot be, because what is non-existent cannot become an object of perception. So the silver is neither real nor unreal.

Now an objection is raised: how can a thing be both real and unreal, or different from real as well as different from unreal? The answer is given by taking an example. An animal cannot be both a cow and a buffalo. But it can be different from both cow and buffalo. It can be a horse. Similarly, a thing can be different from both real and unreal.

Vivarana says there is no scope for any such question because the silver is anirvachaniyam.

Another objection is: The man who thinks it is silver goes forward to grab it. That means that he thinks it is real silver. So it cannot be anirvachaniyam. It must be real silver, existing elsewhere. Or, he may not know that it is anirvaachyam and may think it is real silver. That is why he tries to grab it.

The answer to this is: The desire to grab the silver arises because he sees it as real silver. He need not know for certain that it is real silver. Otherwise even if the silver is real he will not proceed to take hold of it

because he cannot be sure beforehand that it is real. He will be able to know whether it is real or not only if he goes forward and takes it in his hand and examines it. If the opponent says that he will proceed to take the silver only after knowing definitely that it is real, there will be the defect of mutual dependence (anyonya-aasrayatvam) because only after he knows that it is real he will try to take it and only after taking it he will know for certain whether it is real or not. So we must say that the knowledge that it is silver is sufficient to make him proceed to take it, and knowledge that it is real silver is not necessary. So merely because he desires it and attempts to take hold of it, it cannot be said that he has known it as real silver. But if he already knows that it is false, he will not make any attempt to take it. From all this it follows that the silver cannot be described as either real or unreal (anirvachaniyam).

The next objection is: The knowledge of any object comes only through a pramana. So when silver is seen in an illusion it is wrong to conclude that there is silver in front. But you, Advaitin, assert that there is silver by merely seeing silver in an illusion. What is the pramana for this assertion?

The answer to this is: A cognition cannot arise unless there is an object. (Only the Vijnanaavaadi school of Buddhism says that there are no external objects and that only an inner idea appears as an external object). The silver alone is sublated subsequently and not the cognition of silver. The cognition is therefore real and so there must be an object for this cognition. This object cannot therefore be called non-existent. Nor can we call it real because it is sublated subsequently. So it is anirvaachyam.

Next objection: You (Advaitin) say that the universe is mithya. So how can there be the distinction of correct knowledge and illusion in the world?

The answer is: The silver seen in an illusion is sublated later, but the real silver is not sublated during the whole lifetime of the person. Though the silver seen in an illusion and the real silver are both mithya, there is a difference in the manner of the rise of the knowledge of its illusoriness (mithyatva). If the person who sees the nacre-silver does not realize its illusoriness throughout his life, he will continue to believe that it is real. So the test to know whether a thing is real or mithya is whether the sublating knowledge has arisen or not. There is another difference between illusory silver and real silver. Bhrama is caused by ignorance. Though real silver is also mithya, the cause of its appearance is ignorance of Brahman and the substratum (adhishtana) is Brahman itself. For the illusory silver appearing on nacre the cause is ignorance of Brahman limited by nacre (sukti-avacchinna-Brahman) and the substratum is Brahman limited by nacre. In both cases the bhrama will cease only when the particular substratum is known.

So from the empirical (vyaavahaarika) standpoint we describe a thing as real when it has the unconditioned Brahman as its substratum and



we describe a thing as illusory when it has Brahman limited by some object (such as nacre in the case of silver) as its substratum. Thus there are three levels of reality—paaramaarthika (absolute), vyaavahaarika (empirical) and praatibhaasika (illusory).

Now the opponent raises an objection: If you say that the silver was there during the period when the illusion lasted, then how can it be said that it was never there during all the three periods of time? If, for example, there is a book on the table now, and it is removed subsequently, it cannot be said that it was never there in all the three periods of time.

Answer: The silver is not there as real silver in all the three periods of time. It is never vyaavahaarika (empirically real) silver.

Opponent: You did not see real silver. You saw only illusory silver. So what you should say is that illusory silver is not there in all the periods of time. But what you are denying is the existence of real silver. That means that you saw one thing and you are denying the existence of another thing.

Answer: If there is a book on the table there is the relationship of contact between the book and the table, but there is no relationship such as samavaaya (inherence) between the book and the table. So even when there is a relationship of one kind, there can at the same time be absence of relationship of another kind. Only a relationship of the same kind cannot be asserted and denied at the same time, and not relationships of two different kinds. Similarly here there is absence of real silver at the same time as there is presence of illusory (or false) silver.

Question: A person who has seen the illusory silver says subsequently, on knowing that there is only nacre, that there was no silver at all there. Nobody says that silver was there and has gone subsequently. So it cannot be said that he experienced indescribable (anirvaachya) silver earlier.

Answer: Sublation (baadhaa) is of two kinds. (1) Both the silver and its cause, ignorance, are removed. (2) The silver is known to be false, but the ignorance has not gone. The second kind of sublation occurs when a reliable person comes and says that there is no silver there. In this case the ignorance which made the silver appear is not removed, but the silver is known to be false. However, the object in front continues to look like silver, but the person believes the word of the reliable person that it is not silver. The first kind of sublation happens when the person who saw the silver realizes that the object in front is only nacre. In this case the ignorance of nacre, which was the cause of the appearance of silver, is also destroyed. In such a sublation he cannot at all think that there was silver previously.

The knowledge of the substratum, nacre, destroys even the samskara of the illusion. So even the remembrance that silver was seen in the illusion disappears because the cause of such remembrance, namely, the samskara, is no longer there. But he will remember that he had such an

illusion, though he will not remember that he saw silver there. The samskara for remembering “I saw silver” and the samskara for remembering “I had an illusion that I saw silver” are different. While the former samskara is destroyed by the knowledge of the substratum, the latter is not destroyed. So there is only remembrance of the knowledge of the illusion and not remembrance of silver. Remembrance of an object and remembrance of knowledge are different. So he cannot remember the silver, but he can remember the knowledge of the illusion. There can therefore be no valid objection to the statement that there was silver.

The suffix ‘vat’ indicates that the silver was indescribable as real or unreal and that it was mithya.

There are four pramanas for this indescribability—pratyaksha, anumana, arthapatti, and sruti.

Pratyaksha—by the statement “The silver I saw was false”, it follows that a false silver was there. Thus there are two kinds of silver, real silver and false silver.

Arthapatti- If it is said that false silver was also not seen, then it could not have been seen as silver at all. But it was seen. Therefore false silver was seen.

Sruti—The statement in the Veda, “Then there was neither real nor unreal; but there was tamas”. This statement means that tamas was neither real nor unreal, but it was there. This proves that there can be something which is not describable as real or unreal. Therefore the silver seen is neither real nor unreal nor both, but it is different from both real and unreal. This has been brought out by the suffix ‘vat’. Thus ‘anirvaachyatva’ (indescribability) is established.

Now another question is raised: The self is not an object according to you (Advaitin). Adhyasa can happen only on an object such as nacre, rope, etc. When a person sees nacre as silver he says, “This is silver” and not “I am silver”. It therefore follows that there can be no adhyasa on the self. The self is pure knowledge itself. It cannot become an object of knowledge.

The answer is: The self can be an object. It cannot be said that the self cannot at all be an object, because it is the object of the concept ‘I’. In this concept there are two parts: one is the internal organ (antahkarana), and the other is the pure consciousness. If we leave out the internal organ what is left is consciousness, which is the same as the self. So the self is also an object of the concept ‘I’. The pure consciousness without an upadhi is no doubt not an object of knowledge, but with the internal organ as the upadhi it is an object.

Opponent: You say that the self with the upadhi of the internal organ is an object. The self gets an upadhi only because of adhyasa. That means that the self becomes an object only because of adhyasa and only if it is an object there can be adhyasa on it. There is thus the defect of mutual dependence.

The answer to this is: The adhyasa of the internal organ on the self is beginningless. There is a continuous stream of adhyasa. It is like the seed and the sprout. So the defect of mutual dependence does not come in.

Moreover, the self need not be an object for adhyasa to take place. Even without being an object it can be the substratum of adhyasa. In the adhyasa of silver on nacre, what is necessary for adhyasa is that the nacre should be cognized as 'this'. If there is no such cognition there can be no adhyasa. Nacre is not self-luminous and so it can be cognized only by a mental modification (vritti). The self is self-luminous and so it does not need another cognition to become known. The word 'aparokshatvaat' in the bhashya means that the self is directly perceived and is self-revealing. An object is first seen through the visual organ. That gives the knowledge in the form, "There is this object". Then the person says, "I see this object". It is only because the self shines in every cognition that a person is able to say that he sees the object. This proves that the self shines by itself.

Moreover, from the fact that ignorance is known, it is clear that the self is self-luminous. Every one knows what he does not know. So every one experiences his ignorance. This also proves that the self is self-luminous.

The Prabhakara school of Purvamimamsa does not accept the self to be self-luminous. According to it, knowledge is self-luminous. In any cognition the self who is the knower, the object known, and the knowledge are simultaneously revealed. They say that ignorance is not self-revealing. So, since ignorance is also known, they have necessarily to admit that the self is self-luminous.

Now a question is raised by the opponent. What is meant by saying that the self is 'self-luminous'? Does it mean that the self illumines itself and others, or does it mean something else? The Buddhists say that knowledge becomes an object for the same knowledge. In knowledge of pot both knowledge and pot are objects (vishaya). Objects are revealed by light and light itself is revealed by the same light. This is not accepted by Advaita. The vishaya or object of knowledge and the vishayi, the knower, can never be the same. 'Self-luminous' means that it does not need any other consciousness to reveal it, but it is not correct to say that it illumines itself also. The self is always the knower and never the object.

Earlier, when it was said that the self is not absolutely a non-object (avishaya), what was meant was that it could have objectiveness attributed to it (aropita vishayatva) and not that it could be an object in the true sense.

The conclusion is that the self is necessarily self-luminous and it need not be an object for there to be adhyasa. Adhyasa of the non-self on the self is therefore possible.

The opponent raises another objection. Adhyasa can take place only if the thing on which there is superimposition is in front of the person who experiences the illusion. Superimposition can occur only on an object

which is in front. The self is the person himself and so it cannot be in front of him. There can therefore be no adhyasa on the self.

The answer is: There is no invariable rule that adhyasa can occur only on an object in front. Akasa (ether) is not perceptible by the sense organs. Still blueness is superimposed on it. The Tarkika says that akasa is the abode of sound and so it is known only by inference. It is therefore not perceptible as an object in front even according to the Tarkikas. In spite of this, it is a well known fact that blueness is superimposed on akasa. Similarly adhyasa is possible on the self though it cannot be perceived as an object in front. By the use of the word 'api' after 'apratyaksha' in the bhashya the Acharya indicates that the view that akasa is apratyaksha is not accepted by Advaita. According to Advaita akasa is known directly by the witness-consciousness itself.

The Bhattas hold that akasa can be seen by the eye. This is rejected by Advaita on the ground that, if akasa which has no form or colour can be seen by the eye, it should also be possible to know it by the sense of touch even though it does not have the quality of touch.

An objection is raised that, since one has to open the eyes to see akasa, it is perceivable by the eyes.

The answer to this is that one has to open the eyes to see the blue colour and not to see akasa. We can see with the eyes only things which are limited in size and not what are unlimited, like akasa and the form of Isvara. What we see with the eyes is not akasa but 'avakasa' or empty space. If a thing can be seen by the eye, its absence should also be seen by the eye. The rule is that the absence of a thing is known by the same sense-organ by which its presence is known. So if we say that there is no avakasa or empty space, it means that its absence is seen by the eye. So a person has to open his eyes only to see that no object with form is there and not to see empty space. Avakasa (empty space) is different from akasa (ether). An empty space disappears when an object is put there, but akasa remains unaffected. To know that a quality is or is not there, we have to know its abode, for example to know smell we have to know its abode, such as a flower. So when we say that there is no sound in a particular place, we have to say that there is no sound in this particular part of akasa. It is not necessary that the abode should be known by the same organ by which its quality is known. Smell is known by the olfactory organ, but the flower is known by the eye. We know sound by the ear, but its abode, akasa, need not be known by the ear. It is known by the witness-consciousness.

All the objections raised against the possibility of superimposition of the not-self on the self have been refuted in the preceding lectures and superimposition has been established.

Superimposition of the not-self on the self is the cause of such notions as 'I am a man', 'I am a doer and an enjoyer', etc. The Acharya says in the bhashya that the adhyasa of this nature is called avidya by

the learned. And the determination of the nature of the reality by discrimination is called vidya --तमेतमेवंलक्षणमध्यासं पण्डिता अविद्येति मन्यन्ते। तद्विवेकेन च वस्तुस्वरूपावधारणं विद्यामाहुः।

It is only the superimposition of the not-self on the self that is called avidya and not other superimpositions such as that of silver on nacre, or snake on rope. It is only for getting rid of this avidya that the Sastra has to be studied. In the Yogasutra avidya is defined as 'looking upon the not-self as the self'. So by the term 'learned people' those who are learned in the Yogasastra are meant. This sentence should not be taken as referring to 'moola-avidya' or as saying that there is no difference between avidya and adhyasa. It only means that yogis refer to what we call adhyasa as avidya. It is called avidya because it is destroyed by vidya. According to Advaita, adhyasa can be called avidya because avidya is the material cause of adhyasa, just as a pot made of clay can be called clay. Eradicating this avidya is the main purpose of the Sastras. The word प्रहाणाय (prahaanaaya) is used to show that adhyasa should be destroyed along with its cause. Moola-avidya does not by itself do any harm. It is adhyasa that is the cause of all evil. It can be got rid of only by knowing the real self. The wrong identification will be removed only when the substratum, the pure self, is realized. It is only the knowledge arising from the mahavakyas that is called vidya. All other knowledge falls under the category of avidya. The pure self is not at all affected by avidya. It is not affected by the merits or defects of what is superimposed on it by avidya.

The mutual superimposition of the self and the not-self is the basis for all activities in the world. Without this superimposition there can be no activity. All the scriptures operate only with this superimposition as the basis. Not only the karma kANDa but even the jnAna kANDa or vedAnta is meant only for persons with this adhyAsa. This adhyAsa is necessary for all the six valid means of knowledge (perception, inference, comparison, verbal testimony, presumption, and non-apprehension).

A doubt arises. Superimposition is wrong knowledge (bhrAnti). If that is the basis for the valid means of knowledge (pramANa), how can they be accepted as valid? Even if such wrong knowledge is the basis for the worldly means of knowledge, how can the SAstra have superimposition as its basis? The object of the SAstra is to remove superimposition. So it is contradictory to say that SAstra itself operates only because of superimposition.

The answer to this is: In the world a person undertakes any action only when the desire to acquire or get rid of some thing arises in him. Such a desire arises only after he has got knowledge of the favourable or unfavourable nature of that thing. So a person has first to become a knower or pramAtA. Such a knower prompts his body to act in order to fulfill his desire. The body is the instrument of the knower. The pure self cannot be a knower. To become a knower and to perform action the

superimposition of the subtle and gross bodies is necessary. Knowership and action are possible only for one who has the notions of 'I' and 'mine' with regard to the sense-organs and the body. Unless he becomes a knower his sense-organs cannot function. In deep sleep he has no identification with the senses and the body and so he is not a knower. Here the term 'senses' includes the mind also. In deep sleep there is no identification with the mind. In the dream state there is superimposition of the mind only. In dream the vAsanAs in his subtle body produce various experiences for him. But these experiences are not caused or prompted by him as a knower. So these are not the activities of the senses. He can be called a knower only when he prompts the senses and the body to action. In the waking state his consciousness is directed outwards and so he is 'bahishprajna'. In dream there is superimposition of the subtle body alone. Only when the self is associated with the senses there can be action.

Prakatarthakara raises another question. Soldiers fight a battle but the victory or defeat is attributed to the king though the king does not participate in the fighting. Similarly why cannot the senses function without prompting by the self. The answer is that the king pays wages to the soldiers and provides other amenities to them. He thus indirectly prompts them to fight. So also, the self has to be associated with the senses in order to make the senses function.

Then another question arises. Superimposition of the senses alone is sufficient. What is the need for the superimposition of the gross body also? The answer to this is that the senses cannot function without the gross body as adhishThAna or locus. The senses are part of the subtle body, but they have corresponding physical organs in the gross body such as the eyes, ear, nose, etc. These are called 'golaka'. Without these the senses cannot function. When the subtle body departs from the gross body on death it is carried to other worlds by various devatas. The sense-organs in the subtle body cannot then do any thing because they are no longer located in the gross body. They can function only through the golakas in the gross body. A person who has no identification with the gross body cannot have such notions as 'I am a knower, doer, enjoyer, etc'. It is only when there is superimposition of the gross body on the self that one can say 'I am so and so', etc. The self can become a knower (pramAtA) only if there is identification with the subtle as well as the gross bodies. Without the person becoming a knower the senses cannot function. Knowledge of Brahman arises only to a person who is a pramAtA, i.e., one who identifies himself with the two bodies. Not only the karma kANDa but also the jnAna kANDa is only for one with the superimposition of the two bodies. The object of moksha SAstra is to destroy adhyAsa, but it can be studied and practised only by a person who has identification with the two bodies.

The Acharya further says that the behaviour of even the person who has mastered Vedanta is not different from that of animals in the matter of worldly dealings--पश्चादिभिश्चाविशेषात्.

Though he has acquired discrimination, it is only paroksha (indirect) and it is obscured during worldly dealings. In deep sleep also there is no difference between a learned man and one who is not learned.

When a cow sees a person coming towards it with a stick it infers that he is coming to attack it and runs away. When a person comes with grass in his hands it infers that the person comes to feed it and goes towards him—

यथा हि पश्चादयः शब्दादिभिः श्रोत्रादीनां सम्बन्धे सति शब्दादिविज्ञाने प्रतिकूले जाते ततो निवर्तन्ते, अनुकूले च प्रवर्तन्ते। यथा दण्डोद्यतकरं पुरुषमभिमुखमुपलभ्य मां हन्तुमयमिच्छतीति पलायितुमारभन्ते, हरिततृणपूर्णपाणिमुपलभ्य तं प्रत्यभिमुखीभवन्ति। एवं पुरुषा अपि व्युत्पन्नचित्ताः क्रूरदृष्टीनाक्रोशतः खड्गोद्यतकरान् बलवत् उपलभ्य ततो निवर्तन्ते, तद्विपरीतान् प्रति प्रवर्तन्ते। अतः समानः पश्चादिभिः पुरुषाणां प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहारः।

Thus the animal uses both direct perception and inference to decide what to do. In other words, it is also a knower (pramAtA) because of adhyAsa. Thus there is similarity between even learned persons and animals in the matter of worldly dealings.

Now it may be asked: What has been said is true of worldly dealings. But what about actions performed in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas? The answer is that adhyAsa of the bodies is necessary for these also. A person performs a yajna for attaining heaven. For this he must know that he has an AtmA different from the gross body, because he knows that the gross body cannot go to heaven. But it is not necessary for him to know that the AtmA is unattached, free from hunger, thirst, etc and does not transmigrate, as stated in vedAnta. If he has acquired this knowledge, then he will not do any karma for going to heaven, etc. Moreover, he should identify himself as a Brahmana for whom alone some of the rituals are prescribed. Thus adhyAsa is necessary for a person to engage in any action including those prescribed in the Vedas. Until a person realizes that he is the pure self, the SAstras are applicable.

It has been established that there is mutual superimposition between the self which is pure consciousness, and the not-self consisting of the body, mind and senses. Such a superimposition is essential for a jiva to become a knower (pramaataa). Only if the jiva becomes a pramaataa he can experience objects through the sense-organs. Only then he becomes a seer, hearer, thinker, etc. Even for the Saastra to be applicable there has to be superimposition. For performing the rituals laid down in the Vedas for attaining heaven the person should know that there is a self

which is different from the gross body and which will continue after death. But he need not know the real nature of the self as described in Vedanta. If he knows the real nature of the self it will be an obstacle to his performing the rituals laid down in the Vedas because there is nothing to be attained by such a person. Rituals are laid down based on caste such as Brahmana, etc., ashrama, age, etc. So a person has to identify himself as a Brahmana or a grihasta, etc., to perform rituals. All these relate to the body. Such identification is possible only if there is adhyaasa of the body on the self.

Superimposition has been defined in the bhashya as the cognition of one thing as some thing else. Nacre is cognized as silver, rope as snake, etc. The consequence of the mutual superimposition of the self and the not-self is that when a person's wife, son, etc., is happy he is also happy. When they are unhappy he is also unhappy. He thus attributes to himself the joys and sorrows of those near and dear to him. Similarly he attributes to himself the qualities of his gross body such as stoutness, etc., the qualities of his senses such as blindness, deafness, etc., and the qualities of his mind such as thinking, deciding, etc. Wife, son etc., who are external to the body are known as 'gauna-atma'. The body, mind and senses are known as 'mithya-atma'.

Here Prakatarthakara raises a question and answers it. A person sees in himself the joys and sorrows of his wife, son etc. That means that he sees what is somewhere else as present in himself. Does this not amount to anyathakhyati? The answer is, no. What he sees is not what is somewhere else, such as the good health or illness. It is another feeling caused by his son's condition. So it is not anyathakhyati.

Can the attribution of the qualities of the body, mind and senses to the self be said to be anyathakhyati? Here also the answer is, no. The material cause of the body is not only the five elements but also the nescience relating to the particular jiva. Since nescience is anirvachaniyam, its effect, the body, is also the same. In this view maya is the totality and individual nescience is a part of it. The body is not something already existing elsewhere but it has come into existence from the individual nescience. So anyathakhyati is not applicable.

As stated above, the material cause of the body is the five elements together with the nescience of the particular jiva. If we say that the nescience alone is the material cause, then the body should disappear when the nescience ceases, just as the illusory silver ceases to exist when ignorance of the nacre is removed. The body merges in the elements on death.

Now another question arises. Since the nescience which is one of the material causes of the body is still there on death, how can the body merge in the elements? This is answered by taking the analogy of a cloth. When all the threads are removed there will be no cloth though threads, which are the material cause of cloth, still exist. So the effect can cease to exist even if the cause is not destroyed. The effect, cloth, ceases to



exist because the conjunction (samyoga) of the threads, which is one of the causes of the cloth, has ceased to exist.

The qualities of the senses are also superimposed on the self. The senses can function only when the corresponding organ in the body, known as 'golaka' is in good condition. When the presiding deity withdraws its blessing to the corresponding golaka, the particular sense cannot function.

The qualities of the mind such as thinking, etc., are also attributed to the self.

The entity referred to as 'I' is the blend of the self and the two bodies. The witness of all its acts is the self.

The difference between the body of a living being and a stone is clearly seen. The former is sentient while the latter is inert. The sentiency of the body is because of the superimposition of the self, which is pure consciousness, on the body. There is a difference between this superimposition and the superimposition of silver on nacre. In the latter the silver alone is seen and the nacre is hidden, though it is seen as 'this', that is, some object in front. But in the case of the superimposition of the self on the body, both the consciousness and the body are seen to be present at the same time. There is mutual adhyaasa in both the cases. In the case of nacre appearing as silver there is mutual superimposition between the object in front which is cognized only as 'this' without the nacre-ness being known, and the silver. This is known as 'swaropa-adhyaasa'. In the case of the superimposition of the self on the body, the qualities of the self, namely, existence, luminosity, and being loved (asti, bhaati, priyam) are attributed to the body and so the body appears to exist, to be conscious and to be the object of love. The other two qualities of the body, namely, name and form, belong to maayaa. This superimposition of the self on the body is known as 'samsarga-adhyaasa', because only the qualities of the self are superimposed.

The existence of superimposition is proved by the theories held by other schools also. The Charvakas consider the body to be the self. This is only because of the superimposition of consciousness on the body. The Buddhists consider the internal organ to be the self. This again means that consciousness is superimposed on the internal organ. The Naiyayikas say that what is referred to as 'I' is the self because of the presence of consciousness. Thus mutual superimposition of the self and the not-self is perceived all. This adhyaasa is also mithya. It is the cause of the notion that the self is an agent and enjoyer. It is thus the cause of all suffering. It has to be removed along with its cause, avidya, by knowledge of the self. For removing the obstacles to the rise of self-knowledge three means are laid down. These are hearing, reflection, and meditation.

Hearing is the determination, by the application of the six characteristic signs, that the purport of the entire Vedanta is the non-dual Brahman. The six signs are—(1)the beginning and the conclusion, (2)repetition, (3)originality, (4)result, (5)eulogy and (6)demonstration. The Sanskrit terms for these are, respectively, *upakramopasamhaara*, *abhyaasa*, *apoorvataa*, *phala*, *arthavaada*, *upapatti*. 'Hearing' removes *pramaana-asambhaavanaa*, or the doubt about the *pramaana* or the upanishad itself.

Reflection is the constant thinking of Brahman, the One without a second, already heard about from the teacher, by making use of arguments in a constructive manner. 'Reflection' removes the doubt whether Brahman and the jiva are identical or not. This doubt is called *prameya-asambhaavanaa*.

Meditation is keeping the mind fixed on the thought of Brahman, uninterrupted by any other thought. Meditation is intended to remove wrong notions such as "The universe is real; the difference between Brahman and jiva is real", which are contrary to the teachings of the upanishads, by concentrating the mind on the self. By this *anaatma-vaasanaa* is removed and *aatma-vaasanaa* is established. Such wrong notions are known as *viparita-bhaavanaa*.

Thus the purpose of hearing, reflection and meditation is the removal of obstacles in the form of doubts and wrong notions that stand in the way of the dawn of Self-knowledge.

For a person who does not have these obstructions mere upadesa of the mahaavaakya by the Guru is sufficient. Others will need one or more of these three steps, depending on the nature of the obstructions. If self-knowledge does not come in this birth it will come in a future birth after the obstructions are removed.

The identity of jiva and Brahman is the subject-matter of all the Upanishads. The purpose of the Upanishads is the total removal of the mutual superimposition of the self and the not-self along with its cause.

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