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INDIAN PHILOSOPHY



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-:Author :-

Dr. Swami Satya prasad dasji

Vedantacharya

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Sri Kaushalendraprasadji Maharaj

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Introduction

Shree Ramanujcharya was guru of Shree Ramanand swami whose disciple was Lord Swaminarayan Shree Ramanujcharya's visistadwaita principle is based on the theory of life, world and God. They are three elements eternal and independent. Accepting above principle shree Hari has quoted that *Matam visishtadwaitam me Golokodhama chepsitam* (shikshapatri) he has clearly depicted the specialties of above three symptoms udhav facts is based on ancient theory of Acharya i.e. visishtadwaita principle which is narrated in this book.

There are 12 main darshanas which are narrated in nutshell but vividly knowing all this one can understand the meaning of Indian philosophy and its magnitude and which harps upon the principle of removing misgiving this book contains 6 Nastik darshan (non-believer) and 6 Astik Darshan (believer). They are Charvak Bauddha & Jain darshans which are Nastik Darshan as they have not accepted the certificate of Vedas. 6 Darshans contains Sankhya, Yog, Nyay and special Purva mimamsha and Uttar mimamsha, as they have accepted the validity of Vedas in the last part the introduction of Uddhav sect by Shri Hari and from shree Sankarachary sect to Bhagwat religion whose last Acharya was Swaminarayan Bhagwan . I hope this book published at the auspicious ceremony of Shri Nanarayan Dav new temple festival, so that all the devotees may be blessed by its reading.

Mahant Purani

Swami Dharmanandan Dasji
Shree Swaminarayan Mandir Bhuj

A RESPECTFUL SUBMISSION

“Bharathiya Darshan” may appear to be a small book by ordinary standards but it contains a wealth of revelations about the absolute principles of the Divine Vedas, which have emanated verily from the mouth of God Himself. This Book also contains an accurate description of the real nature of the main ‘Darshanas’ or Visions of Absolute Truths or Systems of Philosophy leading to direct knowledge of Reality that have originated in the Land called Bharat. What actually is this Indian Vision of Absolute Truth or Reality? What are its different manifestations, their respective inherent forms and nature? Which of these have the capacity to illuminate the truth? In practice, how useful are these systems of philosophy in day to day life? How does this knowledge of truth really benefit us in our material as well as spiritual lives? How essential or relevant is this vision of absolute truth or reality in the present Age? All these questions have been satisfactorily resolved in this little Book. If we read it seated alone in solitude, we will surely realise how advanced the Science of Knowledge actually was in India thousands of years ago. These “Darshanas” contain profound contemplations of the inherent characteristics and natures of all types of beings starting with the bodies made up of the five gross-elements and going right up to the divine nature of the Paramâtma.

It is generally accepted that there are 12 main Darshanas or Systems of Philosophy in Bharat. Of these 6 are categorised as ‘Nâstik’ or *Godless or Atheistic* and the other six as ‘Âstik’ or *Theistic*. Amongst the Nâstik Darshanas or Visions, the first one

is “Chârvak” which deals only with the Science of the Body. This particular Darshana was unable to contemplate anything beyond the body. While expounding the truths, each Darshana after the other has, to varying degrees, stated that beyond the body there exist the Mind, the Intellect, the Âtma or the Soul and the Paramâtma or the Super-Soul. The last Darshana is the “Uttar Mimâmsa” in which there is a definitive exposition of the true nature of entities from bodies to the ultimate truth which is the Paramâtma. In the Jain, the Buddhist and other Darshanans such as the Nyâya-Vaishesika, the Sânkhya-Yoga and the Purva-Mimâsa also, the truths concerning entities beginning with bodies and going gradually right up to the Paramâtma are duly clarified along with all the intermediate truths.

Knowledge of the Truth or Reality is an integral part of Dharma. If not an integral part, it is an essential principle without which Dharma cannot remain intact. Hence Dharma is not merely an external practice or show but it is a sacred code of conduct or performance or accomplishment which is closely linked with the Knowledge of Truth. Just as food enables the body’s growth and development, knowledge of the truth facilitates the growth and evolution of mind, the intellect, and the knowledge of the Self. The development of the knowledge of the Self to its fullest extent means acquiring knowledge of the fundamental nature of the Self which leads to the emancipation of the Self.

It is only after emancipation of the Self that the Paramâtma can be attained. The practice of Dharma, the striving for the Knowledge of the Truth, the emancipation of the Self, and the final attainment of the Paramâtma are all possible only in the

Bharathiya or Indian Darshanas and the Truths expounded therein. The devotee who possesses true knowledge is considered as best or pre-eminent as per the Srimad Bhagavad Geetha. Bhagavan Sriswaminarayan, in his “Vachnâmrut” also regards such a devotee as the most excellent. The devotee who truly knows the real nature the Âtma or the Self and the Paramâtma is called the “Jnâni Bakht” or the Devotee with True Knowledge. There are many Tenets or Doctrines in this World but they deal exclusively with the Science of the Body. They are not even aware of the possible existence of any entity or concept of truth higher than the gross body let alone contemplating a search for it. The Indian Darshanâs contain answers to many such profound questions. The search for the truth is the final object of the Darshanâs of Truth. The search for the “I” (the Âtma or the Self) is but the search for the Paramâtma. What is the nature of the relationship between the Material World and the Âtma and the Paramâtma? If there be a relationship, then why has it been broken and how could it be restored? All such doubts have been clarified through the Darshanâs. Our Rishis were not only great scholars but also constantly strived for perfection in actual practice. They have not only spoken about the material word but also dealt with many things therein which can be obtained after a thorough search. The Science of the Material World, the Science of the Self and the Paramâtma have been clearly explained in these Darshanas.

In this little Book, we are introduced to the 12 Indian Darshanâs. We are also acquainted with the religious and philosophical tenets or doctrines of the Âdi Jagadguru (The First World Teacher) Sri Sankarâcharya, Sri Râmânujâchârya., Sri Madhvâchârya, Sri Nimbârkâchârya, Sri Vallabhâchârya, Sri

Chaitanya Mahâprabhu Bhagavan, Sri Swaminârayan which are either established and time –tested or are currently being established.

We do not feel as much liking for a stranger we have just met as we do for a person with whom we are well acquainted. In the same way, until we get to know God properly, God remains a stranger or an unknown entity and we do not experience any tangible liking for Him. But when the knowledge arises that one possess such intimate relationships with Him as expressed in statements such as “My Father-Son”, “Master-Servant” etc, then one begins to develop love for God. Thus, with the help of Tattvagyân or Knowledge of the Truth, the relationship between the devotee and God becomes deeper and more profound. When the realisation dawns upon the devotee that he is a Servant of God, that he is a Son of God, then true love for God arises in that devotee. Therefore, Rishis, Thinkers, Âchâryas and the incarnations of God have all strived to clarify and reveal the true nature of the relationships between God, the Jiva and the Material World through these Darshanâs.

The Hindu Systems of Knowledge of Truth or Reality are not just a matter of traditional reverence or blind faith. It is the end product of the most advanced and lofty thinking, and a unique special science. The Darshanas contain the fundamental values of Sanâtana Dharma or the Ancient Eternal Code of Conduct. The Rishis and Âchâryas who created all these Darshanâs did so out of their actual first-hand experiences of these Truths. All the Darshanâs are based on the Vedas. The repeated application in

real life of the teachings of the Darshanâs facilitates the eventual understanding of the Vedas with relative ease. In short it may be said that application of the teachings of the Vedas, the Upanishads and Holy Texts such as the Sri Geeta and others can only be done through the repeated practice of the teachings of these Darshanâs.

I am hopeful that the readers of this little Book who are ardent seekers of the Truth will certainly find it useful and further, whatever misconceptions about some Darshana or the other, which may have formed in their minds, will be removed because all Doctrines/Tenets (Darshanâs) have been formulated primarily to make human minds fit and capable of understanding the Truths.

Dr Swami Satya prasâd Dâsji
Vedântâchâya
Sri Swaminârâyan Mandir – Bhuj.

Introduction of an author

Dr. Swami Satya prasad Dasji (Vedantacharya)

After attaining Bhagwati mantra Dixa from **Acharya Tejendraprasadji Maharaj** and receiving religious course from honourable **Sataguru Swami Morlimanohar Dasji** and **Swami Premprakash Dasji** at Bhuj became their disciple in Samvat 2041 Bhadra Sud 11. (E.V. 24-9-1985) Sanskrit Pathashala running in the temple premises and **K.Kasturi Rangacharya's** guidance, after finishing primary education, proceeded to Melkote (Karnatak) for higher studies went to the abode of scholar so **K. S.Vardacharya** to study Vedant and finished his studies becoming Acharya in Vedanta Thereafter proceeded to Tirupati (Andhra pradesh) at **Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidhyapeth** to carry out research in research department. He Wrote Bhasya as **Shribhasyam by Shri Ramanujacharya** and **Bhrahmimamsa. by Shri Muktanand Swami.** He wrote **Shodhaprabandh** on above two Bhashyam due to it he was awarded **“Vidya Varidhi” Ph.D.**

He has written many religious extract books, being published by-Bhuj Temple Publishing House.

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Shree Swaminarayano vijayteteram



INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

In the Land of Bharath (India), there are different traditions of religion and philosophy handed down in regular succession. Although the exposition and interpretations of all the Darshanâs are different from one another, they have a common goal which is to acquire knowledge of the highest truth and to attain supreme bliss. All the Darshanas have their own separate codes of conduct and propriety. Consider a tree which has many different branches and although they are not all alike, some being small and some being big, the flavour of all the fruits of that tree is the same. This is because all the branches have the same roots. In the same way, the roots of all the different Darshanâs are the Vedâs. Whereas if some Darshanâ contains the direct testimony of the Vedâs, in some other Darshanâ, we will find the testimony of the Vedâs in an indirect way through the traditional teachings handed down in regular succession of Âchâryâs of that order. However, in all the Darshanâs, we find an elaboration of the Vedâs

alone. The Vedâs are without beginning and they are eternal. They cannot be comprehended fully by ordinary people. Therefore, from time-to-time, verily God Himself as well as great men have made efforts to explain the tenets or established truths of the Vedâs. As a result of their efforts, various Darshana traditions arose and began to be passed down in regular succession. What is the actual form and nature of these Darshanâs? How did they arise and become prevalent and how did they expand and spread? Who were responsible for this?

It is necessary to know all this. For this purpose a proper study of the Scriptures together with instruction by a Guru are both absolutely essential. But nowadays who has the time to undertake a deep and extensive study of the Scriptures? Bearing this in mind, an attempt has been made in this little Book, to progressively explain a profound and vast subject in a concise manner by dealing with twelve of the main Darshanâs together with the Vaishnava Âchâryâs and Vaishnava Traditions.

THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

The word 'darshan' terminates in the verb 'drush' which is 'to see'. The word 'darshan' means to know, to inspect or examine, or to view with due respect. The Sanskrit saying 'दृश्यते अनेन इति दर्शनम्' "*Drushyate anena iti darshanam*" defines darshan as that which enables one to see. One can see in two ways namely the large, coarse viewpoint or the minute, subtle, and delicate viewpoint. When we see with our external eyes, it is called the macro or coarse vision. When we see with our subtle internal eyes, which are also termed as 'divine eyes', 'the eyes of knowl-

edge”, or the ‘eyes of wisdom”, it is called the micro or fine vision. The macro and the micro visions constitute the instruments used in the study of anything. In other words, if any truth exists, one can determine its veracity only by examining it with both the macro as well as micro visions.

ENUMERATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY

According to the Indian System of Philosophy, 12 Darshanâs or Visions are considered the most important. These 12 Darshanâs are divided into two categories. The first category is the one which has faith in and reverence for the Vedâs and considers the Vedâs as being beyond the need for proof or verification. The other category is the one which has no belief in the Vedâs and does not consider the Vedâs as infallible or authoritative and seeks independent proof. On this basis, the Darshan Shâstra or Scriptures of Indian Philosophical Vision are divided into two main groups namely Âstik or Theist (Believers) and Nâstik or Atheist (Non-Believers). It is generally accepted that the Darshanâs which repose absolute faith in the authority of the Vedâs and who draw conclusions based on the heard scriptures i.e. the Vedâs are the Âstik Branches of Indian Philosophy. The other category; in which the respective founder Âchâryas, not accepting the Vedâs as the authority, have drawn conclusions based on their own intellect and reasoning; constitutes the Nâstik Branches of the Darshanâs.

In the Âstik Branches there are six Darshanâs as follows:-

1. Nyâya.
2. Vaisheshik.
3. Sânkhya.

4. Yoga. 5. Purvamimâmsa.

6. Uttaramimâmsa.

The Nâstik Branches consist of six Darshanâs as follows:-

1. Chârvak.

Baodh or Buddhist Darshana which is sub-divided into four schools as under:-

2. Mâdhyamik. 3. Yogâchâr.

4. Sautrântik. 5. Vaibhâshik. and lastly,

6. Jain

In this manner, the twelve main types of Darshanâs of Indian Philosophy are generally classified.

Indian Philosophic Vision and Science

The present age is dominated by science. Whatever is proved by science is readily accepted by most people. Science too has made progress. Science has attempted to investigate the veracity of certain aspects previously mentioned only in our Scriptures, and has achieved success to a certain extent. Modern science & technology has created robots to perform many day-to-day chores. To travel long distances, planes, trains, and motor vehicles have been manufactured. For travelling across the seas, large ships have been built. For communicating far and wide, satellite-based phones, mobiles have been invented. It appears that nowadays there is no need for a Guru for learning since one can learn directly from computers. For transmitting video images over vast distances, the Television has been invented and installed. Not just that, with the help of science man has been able to leave the Earth and visit other planets. We do not know the full extent of the amazing changes that have been made so far

to achieve progress and what will continue to be done in the future as well. If someone should speak about an ancient philosophic vision or spirituality in front of those who are caught up in this upward flight of science, such a speaker may well become an object of laughter and ridicule. Nevertheless, however extraordinary science might be, one truth is certain and that is that without philosophic vision and spiritual thinking, science will still be incomplete and harmful. If we concentrate exclusively on science, then mankind will become totally dependent on machines, instruments and gadgets. This dependency on machines, instruments and gadgets implies loss of human freedom. A Darshana or Philosophic Vision is vital to preserve our identity as human beings. Therefore, Science and Philosophic Vision should be considered complementary to each other for ensuring the welfare of mankind.

Without science, Dharma is incomplete and without Dharma so is Science. For instance, scientists of certain nations have developed nuclear weapons. These weapons have so much destructive potential that a single bomb can destroy an entire city. This happened in Japan. If the persons responsible for dropping the atomic bombs had previously been taught about spirituality and a code of ethics, such a thing would not have occurred. Even today, all nations should be given spiritual instruction so that the use of nuclear weapons can be prevented. The world will be destroyed if these weapons are in the wrong hands. Spiritual power alone can neutralize the forces of evil. India has repeatedly declared that she has made nuclear weapons solely for her own protection and not for destroying any other nation. If the spirit of this message is clearly understood by the whole world, then no

one need have any kind of fear and today's powerful science also need not cause any apprehension.

The Meaning of the term 'Nâstik' or 'Atheist'

The study of the Âstik and Nastik Darshanas will become easier if we understand the etymology and meanings of the words 'Âstik' and 'Nastik'.

Interpreting these two terms in his Sutrâs (pithy aphorisms), the great Âchârya (Revered Preceptor) of Sanskrit Grammar, Pânini has clarified the meanings of these two terms as follows:-

‘अस्ति नास्ति दिष्टं मतिः । अस्तिपरलोक इत्येवं मतिर्यस्य स आस्तिकः । नास्तीति मतिर्यस्य स नास्तिकः’

“Asti nâsti dishtam matihi. Asti paralok iti evam matir yasya sah âstikaha. Nâsti iti matir yasya sah nâstikâha.”

“He who does not accept the existence of a higher world (in the after-life) is a Nâstik. One who accepts the existence of a higher world is an Âstik.”

If we consider the definitions of the terms strictly as per the above Sutrâ, a question arises as to why the Buddhist Dharma which also acknowledges the existence of higher worlds should still be classified as Nâstik. Should it not be counted amongst the Âstik Darshanas ?

An attempt has been made by devotees to resolve this question by interpreting the terms as follows- Those who deny the existence of God are Nâstiks and those who have believe in God are Âstiks. If we define the two terms in this manner, another

question arises. Sâmkhya Darshana which is included amongst the Âstik Darshanas should be regarded as a Nâstik Darshana because Sâmkhya Darshana denies the existence of Ishwara or God who is the creator. However, Sankhya is still considered a Âstik Darshana.

Under the circumstances, how should these two terms be correctly defined? This question is answered by VedântÂchârya. (The Preceptor of the Vedâs) *Bâdarâyan* and VyâkarnÂchârya. (The Preceptor of Grammar) *Pannini*. *Bhagawân Bâdarâyan* has said – 'वेद नीन्दको नास्तिकः' “*Veda neendako nâstikaha*” meaning those who do not accept the teachings of the Vedas, who are critical of the Vedas, are nâstiks.” ‘अस्ति नास्ति दिष्टं मतिः । अस्ति परलोक इत्येवं मतिर्यस्य स आस्तिकः । नास्तीति मतिर्यस्य स नास्तिकः ।’ “*Asti nâsti dishtum matihi. Asti paraloka iti evam matir yasya sah âstikaha. Nâstiti matir yaysya sah nâstikaha.*” In this Sutrâ, VyâkarnÂchârya. *Bhagawan Pânnini*’s purport is that one cannot be called a âstik merely because one accepts the existence of ‘parlok’ or ‘the higher supernatural worlds’. Only one, who accepts the existence of such worlds based on the Vedâs as the source of such knowledge, can be deemed âstiks. The Jain and Buddhist Darshanas certainly acknowledge the existence of ‘parlok’ but they do not do so on the basis of vedic authority. Hence, these Darshanas are regarded as nâstik Darshanas. Sankhya is a godless doctrine but as it accepts the tenets of the Vedas, the Sankhya Darshana is considered as âstik.



Nâstik Darshanas

CHARVAKPHILOSOPHY

The Meaning of the “Chârvak”

There are various opinions regarding the origin of the term ‘chârvak’. According to certain scholars, this Darshana has “chârvak” – ‘châru’ or ‘beautiful’ and ‘vâk’ or ‘words’. Virtuous merit, sin, hell-heaven, and such other intangible or invisible concepts or entities are ‘charvan’ or ‘destroyed’ by its tenets. In other words, since this darshana does not accept all these entities, it is termed ‘chârvak’ as such.

According to some scholars, Chârvak Rishi (Sage) is said to have propagated this philosophy, and hence it acquired the name ‘chârvak’. Some other learned people hold that the word ‘chârvak’ rests in the verb ‘चर्व’ ‘charva’. The word ‘charva’ means ‘to chew, to masticate’. Thus in this Darshana greater emphasis is given to eating and drinking. The chârvaks believe in the dictum, ‘पिब, खाद च वरलोचने’ “peebea, khad cha varlochane” which means “eat and drink whatever is beautiful to behold”. For this reason, it acquired the name “Chârvak”.

According to some philosophers, the meaning of the term 'chârvak' is given by 'charuvak' which means 'sweet speech' or 'sweet words'. They say that ordinary people found this Darshana sweet to listen to. Hence, it came to be called 'chârvak'. The second name for the Chârvak Darshana is 'Lokâyat'. This is because this Darshana had spread widely. Since it had diffused all over the 'lok' or 'country', it got the name 'Lokâyat'.

This Darshana accepts the evidence of the senses or sense-perception as the only source of valid knowledge or authority. It is 'jadvâd' or 'matter based' which means that 'jad' or 'matter or material' is the only truth. Not accepting the validity of other truths such as the Soul, God, Dharma, Sin-Virtue etc, they acknowledge everything which can be experienced in terms of fundamental matter alone. Thus this Darshana came to be called by names such as 'chârvak', 'lokâyat', and 'jadvâd'.

Some scholars are of the opinion that the author of this Darshana is Âchârya Brihaspathi. But the truth is that this doctrine has neither any chief preacher nor any institution or organisation. Nor has it any written holy text of its own. We find references to it only in the written texts of other Darshânas in the course of refutations of this Darshanâ. A brief introduction to this Darshana is found in the 'Shadadarshan Samucchaya' written by Haribhadra Suri. A more detailed account may be found in Sâyan Madhav's 'Sarvadarshan Sangraha'.

In this manner, despite having no valid sources of knowledge, this Darshana has spread extensively. This is because the

main tenet of this philosophy is to secure material happiness in the present life by any means. Everyone seems to be abiding by the following 'chârvak' dictum:-

‘यावज्जीवं सुखं जीवेन्नास्ति मृत्योरगोचरः
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कृतः ॥’

Yâvajjivam sukham jeevennaasti mrutyourgocharaha I
Bhasmibhutasya dehasya punarâgamanam kutaha II

In other words, as long as one is alive, one should live happily. There is no one who will not meet with death. Once the body is burnt, how can it come back again? The innate tendency of man is towards acquisition of wealth and enjoyment of pleasures. Thus man has a natural tendency to be attracted towards the Chârvak philosophy.

Consequently, it appears that even without any formal teaching or propagation, people of their own accord tend to drift towards the Chârvak doctrine. Hence the other name given to this Darshana, namely 'Lokâyat', seems to be appropriate. In this world, its import has spread far and wide. According to the Chârvak doctrine, the body is made up of four 'mahâbhutas' or 'fundamental elements', namely earth, water, fire, and air. The existential truth of the fifth element i.e. 'âkash' or 'sky or ether' is not accepted because it cannot be perceived directly by the senses. The sky or the ether cannot be directly seen with the eyes; it can only be proved or established indirectly by inference. According to the Chârvak belief, the body itself is the 'âtma' or 'soul'. The essential truth of self-consciousness experienced by the body of a sentient being is nothing different from the body and there is no truth like the soul. Not only that, consciousness arises from the

four truths (fundamental elements). Just as 'kinva', a drug or seed used for fermentation while making spirits and other intoxicants generates the power of intoxication, in the same manner, when the fundamental elements of matter are transformed into a body, it is from the combination of same four truths that intelligence or consciousness arises. When the consciousness of the body is destroyed, the body perishes automatically. This is called death. After death, consciousness has no existence. Thus, the above mentioned body endowed with intelligence or consciousness is alone called the self or the soul. The body itself is the self or the soul. Consequently, the destruction of the body constitutes 'moksha' or 'release from the bondage of material existence'. There are no separate worlds like hell or heaven. The sorrows that arise due to various reasons connected with matter alone constitute hell and likewise happiness alone is heaven. The Universe comes into being and also ceases to exist of its own accord. Therefore as regards the world, there is no 'Ishvara' or 'Supreme God' who is the Controller, the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Destroyer who grants re-birth. The Ruler of the Land alone is 'Ishvara'.

Ishvara has no role or influence in the life of a sentient being. Hence, only sentient beings have independent lives. Each sentient being gets a life once only. The body is created out of the four truths (fundamental elements) and the power of intelligence or consciousness

Arises therein. So long as the power of consciousness exists in the body, it has life. No sooner the power or force of con-

consciousness ends, the body is destroyed. Therefore, the body (life) has no link or connection with the past. Keeping this principle in mind, Chârvak says, 'ऋणं कृत्वा धृतं पिबेत्' "*Hrunam krutva dhritam peebeet*" or "borrow if need be to consume ghee". This implies that if you don't have funds or good things of life with you, you should borrow from others to ensure a happy life of enjoyment. This is because after death, consciousness has no existence. In that case, the question of repayment of debts does not arise.

Analysis of the Chârvak Philosophy

Chârvak Darshana is rooted in materialism. It accepts the direct evidence of the senses as the only valid source of knowledge. In this world, whatever we experience with our sense organs is deemed as direct perception. Therefore, basic matter is regarded as the only philosophical truth in the Chârvak Darshana. Ishvara, soul, heaven, hell, eternal life as also 'mâya' or 'cosmic illusion or nescience' etc are directly imperceptible. Consequently Chârvaks do not accept such concepts as valid.

As direct perception is the cornerstone of Chârvak philosophy, intangible or invisible things not directly connected with the body are not relied upon. The feeling of consciousness that is experienced within the sentient body is in reality a characteristic quality of the body itself.

The coming together of the four basic elements results in the creation of the body and along with it, the intelligence or consciousness is also formed. If it be asked as to how intelligence could possibly arise from inert matter, the Chârvak replies that it does just as the power of intoxication arises when 'kinva'

and other intoxicants are mixed with food.

As mentioned in the Sarvadarshana Sangraha-

‘किण्वादिभ्यो मदशक्तिवत् चैतन्यमुपजायते’ “*Kinvâdibhyo madshakthivat chaitanyam upajâyate*”, just as the combination of betel leaves, betel nuts, and edible lime produces a red colour, in the same way, the coming together of the four fundamental elements gives rise to intelligence or consciousness in the body. Therefore, the body and intelligence are not different principles or truths. They are essentially the same. In our daily lives, almost all people go about under the assumption that the âtma or soul and the body are one. Their utterances such as, “I am fat”, “I am thin” proves the point. A question may be raised by other Darshanas that if intelligence is said to arise from the four fundamental truths of matter, and if the sentient being (body) gets life thereby and if the body (life) has no connection with the past, then all existing sentient beings should be of the same form and nature. But it is not so. If some are happy from birth, then others are unhappy from the day they are born. If someone is a Master then another is a servant. Some are intelligent while others are dullards. Some are wealthy and some are poor. Even after working hard, day and night, some are unable to procure enough food for one meal while some others are able to get all that they may desire without any effort.

In answering the objection raised by this question, the Chârvak says – “Putting faith in intangible or invisible things, men strive to attain the invisible or illusory happiness of heaven which they will never secure. Nor will they experience the perceivable happiness of the present world. These are the unhappy people. They will remain servants all their lives. And those who accept

the evidence of their senses and do not sacrifice the enjoyment of material things are truly happy people. Thus man alone has created this adverse contrast”.

The Basis of the Nâstik Belief

We consider ourselves as great Âstiks (Dhârmik or Righteous People). But it is essential to realize one thing and that is that the emergence of any Darshana takes place only when there is adverse mismatch or imbalance between materialism and spirituality. When a path in which faith, devotion, trust has been transformed into blind faith, that path (doctrine) is refuted or challenged by the emergence of a new Darshana. This Chârvak Darshana may have come into being under the circumstances for similar reasons as given below.

When in this World, in the name of the âstik ethos, people may have become trapped in blind faith. And there may no longer be any relationship whatsoever between the spiritual and material sides of life. Also people may have started running their businesses of profit under the cover of a pious way of life. People who consider themselves âstiks (spiritual minded), while openly refuting materialism, might themselves have become deeply immersed in a material existence. When the pettiest problems in life, which could easily have been resolved through wisdom and understanding, instead of applying their minds, people may have started using ‘tantra-mantra’ (black-magic/incantations, spells), rites/rituals from the ‘Karmakânda’ (the ritualistic portion of the Vedas). People may have started portraying common problems,

well within the scope of normal human intellect and reasoning, as something very big and serious. For instance, while walking, a vessel being carried by a person may have slipped from the hand and fallen down; or the person may have himself have fallen down; today the buffalo may have given less milk; last night the window may have made a strange and unexpected sound; someone's voice may have been heard at night; the child be crying repeatedly; and so on. For solving even such apparently trivial and transparent problems, rather than applying their minds and searching for practical solutions, people may have begun to turn to 'yagnya' (sacrificial rites), 'pooja' (elaborate rituals of worship), penance, atonement rites and such other elaborate and weighty rituals/ceremonies, and begun to run here and there seeking the help of black magic and incantation spells and may have also started actually using the same. As a result of this, Society may have become totally dependent or enslaved. It may have become crippled. The state of society may have become just like 'अंधेन नीयमानाः यथा अंधः' "Andhene niyamânaha yatha andhaha" or the blind leading the blind. Under these circumstances, the life of human beings may have become neither spiritual nor materialistic. Life may have become insipid. It may have become a life only in name. Under similar conditions, the Chârvak Darshana emerged. In order to protect people from blind spiritual dogmas, the material path was clearly enunciated by this doctrine giving prominence to material values.

Whenever human society finds itself in such a state, then a materialistic ethos or philosophy (like the Chârvak Darshana)

evolves and spreads. Therefore, the basis of the Chârvak Darshana is spiritual philosophy superficially and only in name.

Why did Chârvak Philosophy not survive as a Darshana?

The Chârvak Darshana could not attain any special place in our society. This is because men generally live by faith and hope. If there is no hope, there is no life. Whenever man meets with failure in his life, he blames it on some divine power, and if he is successful, then also he attributes it a divine power. Verily this is proof of the existence of the abiding creed of faith. Men are idealists by nature but there is no place for faith and hope in the Chârvak Darshana. Consequently, except for certain concepts, the Chârvak Darshana could not make any impact upon the majority of people whose inherent inclination has always been towards faith and hope.

A second reason could be as follows. If you look into the history of successive Indian traditions, you will come to know that the extremely influential, spiritually surcharged thoughts and ideas of the incarnations of God as well as those of great persons, have kept faith alive in the hearts of the people. Wherever there is the powerful influence of hope, atheism cannot take hold.

Today, no matter how loudly a man might proclaim that he is an atheist or a non-believer, still belief remains an integral part of his essential nature. Further, should efforts be made to follow the atheistic creed in practice, even so, man can become an atheist only superficially. He can, at best, only pretend to be an athe-

ist. Man's intellect is limited and he is also bound by the canons of propriety. Therefore, time and again he is compelled to act on the basis of faith and hope. Thus even when someone has met with failure again and again in some endeavour, he still retains hope of success in the future. As a result, in life he does not ever give way to hopeless despair. Faith and hope are the cutting edges of life. Verily these are components of spiritualism. The Chârvak Darshana does not teach this. Hence, people are not particularly impressed with this Darshana. The lives of men are filled with faith alone. In olden times, atheism was looked down upon with disgust. But in this age, it has become fashionable to call oneself an atheist. Now, to satisfy this fad a person may talk about atheism but spiritualism and faith alone will abide in that person's heart. Consequently, by not accepting the concepts of faith and hope, the Chârvak Darshana made a superficial impression on the lives of the people. Hence, when compared to other Darshanas, the Chârvak Darshana could not touch the hearts of men. Nevertheless, one thing is clear and that is that the Chârvak Darshana, whether as a proponent of our fundamental material roots or as an advocate of a purely materialistic life, is alive and present in this World even today.

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THE BUDDHIST DARSHANA

The Way of Life propounded by Bhagawan Buddha is called 'Bauddhdharma'. The philosophy of this 'Bauddhdharma' is known as 'Bauddh Darshana'. The deity of the followers of this Dharma is the Enlightened One (Buddha). In this religious tradition, there are four main fundamental divisions as follows:-

1. Mâdhyamik.
2. Yogâchâr.
3. Sautrântik.
4. Vaibhâshik.

In this context, the following shloka is well known:-

“मुख्यो माध्यमिको विवर्तमखिलं शुन्यस्य मेने जगत्
योगचारमते तु सन्ति मतयस्यतासां विवर्तोऽखिलः
अर्थोऽस्ति क्षणिकस्तवसावनुमितो बुद्ध्येति सौत्रान्तिकः
प्रत्यक्षं क्षणभङ्गं च सकलं वैभाषिको भाषते ॥”

*“Mukhyo mâdhyâki vivartam akhilaamshunyasya
mene jagat yogâchârmate tu santi matyasyatâsâm vivarto
akhilamI*

*Arthasti kshanikarastvanumito buddhayeti
sautrântikaha pratyaksham*

kshnabhanguramcha sakalam vaibhâshiko bhâshet II”

माध्यमिक - Mâdhyamik - They accept as empty/void both external as well as internal substances / entities .

योगाचार - Yogâchâr - They accept that external substances/entities are empty/void but hold that internal substances such as intelligence etc are not empty/void but truths.

सौत्रान्तिक - Sautrântik - They do not accept external substances / entities as being empty /void but regard them as inferable. They also hold that internal substances/entities are not empty/ void but truths. In other words, they consider both internal as well as external substances / entities as truths.

वैभाषित - Vaibhâshik - They also consider that both internal and external substances/entities are real.

These four schools are firmly rooted in their respective statements and doctrines. To recapitulate, we see that in --

माध्यमिक - Mâdhyamik - everything is empty/void.

योगाचार - Yogâchâr - only external substances/entities are empty/void.

सौत्रान्तिक - Sautrântik - we get knowledge of external substances/entities through inference.

वैभाषित - Vaibhâshik - we get knowledge of external substances directly through our senses.

Although Bhagawan Buddha was the sole teacher, due to intellectual differences of opinion in interpretation amongst those who were taught, these four divisions took place. This is similar to the analogy of how a lover, a thief, and a reader of the Vedâs

would proceed to keep their scheduled appointments when it is announced “*gatoastamarkaha*” or “the sun has set”. The lover proceeds to meet his beloved at the indicated place. Once it gets dark, the thief embarks upon his mission to steal and lastly, the reader of the Vedâs understands that it is time for him to perform the rituals of Sandhyavandhanam etc. We will now briefly describe these four famous traditions, one by one.

THE MÂDHYAMIK TRADITION (PHILOSOPHY)

‘शून्यं शून्यमित्यपि भावनीयम्’ “*Shunyam shunyam iti api bhâvaniyam*”. We should think that everything is empty or void and nothing but empty or void. In other words, according to the Mâdhyamik Doctrine, every substance or entity in the Universe is empty or void. This concept of emptiness was developed by Nâgarjuna who established the Doctrine of Emptiness or the Mâdhyamika Tradition. Although the idea of emptiness had been discussed much earlier in ancient texts such as ‘Pragnyapârmit’, ‘Ratnakarand’ and others, the entire credit goes to Nâgarjuna for transforming this concept into a formal doctrine and for propagating it with inherent proofs. In the Mâdhyamik Kârîka it is mentioned as follows:-

“न सन्नसन्न सदसन्न चाप्यनुभयात्मकम् ।

चतुष्कोटिविनिर्मुक्तं तत्त्वं माध्यमिकं विदुः”

“*Na sannasanna sadsanna chapyanubhayâtmakam I*

Chatushkotivinirmuktam tattvam mâdhyamikam viduhu II’

According to this shloka (verse), the World is void or un-

true. The interconnected seer, the object, and the act of seeing are all like a three-dimensional dream or illusion, nevertheless compared to the four boundaries of truth (truth, untruth, eternal truth, and non-eternal truth), the experience of emptiness or void is unusually different and cannot be described in words. Only in order to explain the world, concepts like ‘mâya -shakti’ or ‘the illusory creative force’ and practical-existence have to be accepted. These do not exist in fact.

It is therefore said:

“परिव्राट् कामुक-शूनामेकस्यां प्रमदातनो ।

कृपणः कामिनी भक्ष्य इति तिस्रो विकल्पनाः ॥ ”

*“Parivrât kâ muk-shunâ me kasyâ m pramadâ tanau I
Krupanaha kâmini bhakshya iti tistro vikalpanaha ”*

A woman’s body is viewed by a ‘sanyâsi’ or ‘ascetic’, a lover, and a dog with different perspectives. For instance, the ascetic views it as a mere skeleton. The lover looks upon with pining and the dog views it as something to eat. In the same way, in this World, people see in the same emptiness various different things like a vessel, a garment, or a book, each according to their own imagination and pursue their daily activities accordingly. In fact there is nothing other than emptiness. All the substances that are in this world whatsoever did not exist at the very beginning, and will not exist at the very end. Whatever is seen or experienced in between are nothing more than a dream. They exist but for the moment for our knowledge alone. Subsequently, they will all become empty or void. For example, a vessel did not exist before it came into being. It will not exist after its destruction. In between, knowledge of the vessel arose and afterwards

this knowledge of the same vessel was also destroyed. Consequently, external as well as internal substances and entities are both void and empty. When all sorrowful thoughts and desires are eliminated, then 'moksha' supreme (final) liberation from the bondage of Karma will be attained.

In this traditional order, there are other Âchâryas too. One is Âryadev who was a disciple of Nâgarjuna. He has written texts such as 'Chatuhashatak', 'Chittavishudhiprakaran' and others. In 'Bhâvavivek' he has made a compilation of the Madhyamika philosophy and clarified the code of conduct. He has given expositions through treatises such as 'Chandrakirti', 'Shastashati', 'Madhyamikâvatar', 'Prasannapada' and others and has written a commentary on the 'Chatuhushatak'. There were Âchâryas like Shantidev, Shantirakshit, and others.

YOGÂCHÂR TRADITION (PHILOSOPHY)

Yogâchâr affects a union between Yoga (Proficiency of the State of the Mind) and it's Practice. By means of Yoga, the substance of the mind belonging to the 'âlayavigyan' or 'the universal storehouse of consciousness' alone is accepted and all external substances or entities are removed or eliminated. According to the tenets of Yogâchâr, both consciousness and the mind are regarded as true. In the Mâdhyamik doctrine, all substances both internal as well as external have been considered as void or empty whereas in the Yogâchâr teaching, while all external substances are regarded as void or empty, internal substances

or entities like, consciousness, the mind etc are considered to be true and valid. This is the difference between these two traditions.

The Yogâchâr tradition holds that just like external substances, if we regard internal substances such as the mind etc as empty or void, there will be no existence of the knower himself. Hence, at least self-knowledge or 'svayamvedan' must be accepted as true. If not, a context will arise in which we may have to regard the entire world as blind. Should our knowledge or the knowledge of the very knower be void or empty, then everything imaginable would be void or empty. Who will then be remaining to know this in any case? Therefore, Yogâchâr proposes that the very intellect with which we perceive all external substances as empty should at least be considered as true. Consequently, the intellect, the mind, and consciousness alone ought to be considered as true substances.

Acceptance of consciousness as a true substance or entity is the reason why this Darshana is called 'Vigyânâvâda' or 'The Theory of Consciousness'. The fundamental precept of the Darshana which we call Advaita today is possibly the same as that of Vigyânâvâda because there appears to be no significant difference between the two. Both these Darshanâs hold that the universe is unreal. There is no real existence of the world. It is illusory. It is a false idea or impression. The 'âtma' or soul is true. However, in the Yogâchâr doctrine, the soul is momentary, whereas in Advaitâ, the soul is considered to be eternal. This is but the only difference between the two.

According to the Yogâchâr philosophy, the world has no real existence. The soul alone has real existence. The world that we see is an illusion; it is untrue, because there are no means of obtaining valid knowledge or proof thereof. There are no cognizable defining characteristics. Without means of valid knowledge and without characteristics, how could we accept any substance as true? Âchâryâs who consider the universe as true or real have questioned this doctrine as follows: those substances which we can actually see in front of us come within the ambit of our direct experience. How can we, then, say that they are not substances at all? How can we term them as illusory? Therefore, the Universe is real and true.

This is answered as follows. According to this tradition, as a result of the intellectual strength derived from the four thoughts in the mind or mind constructs of momentariness, sorrow, self-nature, and emptiness, all the 'vâsanâs' or 'subconscious impressions from the past which constitute latent tendencies' get destroyed. In consequence, the different aspects of the various sense-objects which give rise to illusory knowledge are all dissolved. False knowledge disappears. Pure knowledge is born. The Âtma ceases to exist because it is also wiped out. That is itself 'moksha' or 'final release from samsâra or the bondage due to Karma'. This tradition has the following Chief Âchâryâs or Preceptors:-

दिडनाग - *Didanâg* - (The Founder of Buddhist Logic) whose works include 'Pramân Samucchay Tathâ unki Vritti', 'Âlamban-Pariksha', 'Hetumchakranirnaya',

Trikalapariksha', 'Nyâyapradesh' etc.

धर्मकीर्ति - **Dharmakirti** – His works include, 'Pramânavârtik', 'Pramânavinischaya', 'Nyâyabindu', 'Hetubindu', 'Vâdanyâya', 'Santânântarasiddhi' etc.

वसुबन्धु - **Vasubandhu** - He wrote the treatises such as 'Sadharmapundarik Tiika', 'Mahaparinirvân-Sutrâ Tiika', 'Vajrachhedakâpragnyâpâramita Tiika', etc.

स्थिरमति - **Sthiramathi** - (Diciple of Vasubandhu) whose works include the commentaries on all Vasubandhu's works. Mytrayanath – Abhisamyalankârîka, etc.

आर्य असंग - **Ârya Asang** - His works include, 'Mahâyânasamparigrah', 'Yogâchârbhumishâstra', 'Mahâyân Sutrâlankâr' etc.

Apart from the above mentioned Âchâryâs, there were **Shankar Swâmi** and many other main Preceptors.

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SAUTRÂNTIK DARSHANAM (PHILOSOPHY)

“ कः सौत्रान्तिकार्थः ? ये सूत्रप्रामाणिका न तु शास्त्रप्रामाणिकास्ते सौत्रान्तिकः ।”

*“Kaha sautrântikârtha ? Ye Sutrâpramânikâ na tu
shâstrapramânikâst sautrântikaha I”*

This Sanskrit Shloka says that those who, while denying the Dharma Shâstrâs (Vedic Scriptures), accept the Sutrâs (Aphorisms) are the Sautrântiks (followers of the Sautrântik Darshana). As for the Buddhist Darshana as a whole, in this Division too, the existence of ‘Ishvara’ or ‘The Supreme God or Creator’ is not accepted. They hold that this Universe has come into being by the aggregation or assemblage of its constituent atoms or smallest units. In this doctrine, there is no need for God. According to them, as it is, the Universe is running without God. For instance, in a jungle innumerable types of plants and trees come forth, in large numbers, then grow up and eventually dry up and wither of their own accord. In the same way, for the birth of the Universe, its sustenance, and destruction, God is not deemed necessary. Thus in this Darshana, the concept of God is denied.

‘सौत्रान्तिकेन प्रत्यक्ष ग्राह्योऽर्थो न बहिर्मतः’

“*Sautrântikena pratyaksha grahayoartho na bahirmataha*”

In this Darshana, external substances such as earth, water etc are considered to be only inferable and not directly perceptible. This implies that when special knowledge like the knowledge of the pot, of the garment etc arises within us, it confirms the inference of such external substances. For external substances cannot be established by direct perception of the senses. Thus by this contention, the Sautrântik Darshana rejects the premise that external substances like earth, water etc are void or empty. They consider those to be cognizable through inference.

“उक्तञ्च - अर्थोऽस्ति क्षणिकस्त्वसावनुमितो बुद्ध्येति सौत्रान्तिकः”

“*Uktauch – arthoasti kshanikstvasâvanumito buddyeti sautrântikaha I*”

Similarly, it is mentioned in the ‘Sarvasiddhânth Sangraha’ that –

“नीलपीताभिश्चित्रैर्बुद्ध्याकारैरिहान्तरैः ।

सौत्रान्तिकमते नित्यं बाह्यार्थस्त्वनुमीयते ॥”

“*Neelapeethâbhishichitroubuddhayâkârairihântariah Sautrântikamate nityam brahaiyârthastvanumiyate*”

Blue, yellow and other colours are the signs or aspects of strange substances and they are inferred by internal cognition or knowledge.

THE INTERPRETATION OF TRUTH

This Darshana has accepted that the World is real or true. This is because the World is momentary and, according to it, that which is momentary alone can be true. They say that verily this is the hallmark of truth. "एवं अर्थ क्रियाकारित्वं सत्यत्वम्" "*Evam artha kriyâkâritvam satyatvam I*" which means that alone is the truth which is an object, which has activity or appearance, and which has the ability to perform a function. Thus a substance which is endowed with activity or appearance is true. The World is filled with activity, hence the World is true. The flow of thoughts of the mind 'for instance, is also true because in that too there is continuous activity. However, according to this interpretation of truth, the âtma is not true because it is without action.

NIRVANA

The aim of all 'jivâtâmâs' or souls is to attain nirvâna or final liberation from worldly existence due to the bondage of Karma. The literal meaning of the word 'nirvâna' is 'that which has been extinguished'. Nirvana implies that the fire of the 'vâsanâs' or 'the impressions from the past which give rise to latent tendencies' has been put out or extinguished. This is equivalent to reaching the state of true wisdom. The Buddhist Doctrine says that in the state of nirvâna, the âtma or soul ceases to exist. In other words, the flow of consciousness also ends. It is just like the light of the burning lamp which is automatically put out as soon as the oil runs out. In the same way, when the oil in the form of the 'vâsanâs' is exhausted, the flow of consciousness of

the mind ends by itself. This is verily called 'nirvâna'.

The Chief Âchâryâs of this Tradition are:

Kumarlâth - This Âchârya was a resident of Taxashila. He was the author of a treatise called 'Kalpanamandatikâ'.

Sreelâbh - He wrote the 'Sautrântik Vibhasha'.

Yashomitra - He has written a commentary clarifying the meanings of the Abhidharmakosh'.

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VAIBHÂSHIK DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

“ऽप्रत्यक्षामनुमानं च प्रमाणद्वितीयं तथा ।

चतुष्प्रस्थानिका बौद्धाः ख्याता वैभाषिकदयः ॥”

*“Pratyakshamnumânam cha
pramânadvitiam tathâ*

*Chatushprasthânika baudhhâha khyâth
vaibhâshikâdayaha ”*

Some followers of Buddhism are well known as Vaibhâshiks. The fundamental philosophical text of this tradition is the celebrated and profound commentary written by the son of Ârya Kâtyâyani on the ‘Gyânprasthânsâstra’ which came to called ‘Vibhâsha’. As this work is accepted in this tradition as the most valid source of knowledge, the tradition itself came to be called as ‘Vaibhâshik’.

“वैभाषया दिव्यान्ति चरन्ति वा वैभाषिकाः । विभाषां वा वदन्ति वैभाषिकाः। ”

“Vibhâshaya divyanti charanti vâ vaibhâshikâha I

Vibhâshâm vâ vadanti vaibhâshikâha II’

In this manner, Yashomitra has written very clearly throwing light on this Darshana. The older name of the Vaibhâshik Darshana is 'सर्वास्तिवादी' 'Sarvastivâdi' because they accept the existence of everything. In their doctrine, fundamental elements such as earth, water, fire, air, etc and other external material manifestations of these elements as also the mind and the internal manifestations of the mind can all be cognized and proved through direct perception. Only after direct perception, can any substance be proved through inference. In other words, only if a substance is directly perceived through the senses can something can be inferred about it. Thus, the proof of external substances can be attained through direct perception and those of internal ones through inference.

In the Sautrântik Darshana, external substances cannot be cognized through direct perception by the senses but only by inference. On this premise, the Vaibhâshiks contend that until external objects are not fully accessible and attainable through direct perception, their existence cannot be proved through any other means. It must first be cognized by direct perception. Only thereafter, can anything be inferred about it. Take the case of a person who has never before cognized fire directly. Such a person would not be able to infer the possible presence of fire on the basis of the smoke being seen by him. This is because he has never perceived both fire and smoke as companions of the same event. In the absence of any cognitive association with any external substance in the conceptual world of the mind, that particular external substance can never be grasped or retained. Thus only after external substances are accepted through direct perception

can they really materialise.

The Chief Âchâryas of this Tradition are as follows:-

Vasubandhu - He is the author of such texts as 'Paramârthasaptathi', 'Tarkashâstra', 'Vâdviddhi' etc.

Sanghabhadra - He has written works called 'Kutiyâ', 'Abhidharma', 'Nyâyânusâr or Koshkarka', 'AbhiDharmâsamayadeepika' and others.

In this manner, in Buddhist Religious Philosophy, the supreme goal of man's life has been described from four different philosophic viewpoints. These are individually famous as Bauddh Mâdhyamik, Yogâchâr, Sautrântik, and Vaibhashik respectively. These four stand firmly upon the solid foundations of their respective doctrines. To sum up, we may say that the Bauddh Mâdhyamik tradition believes that everything in the Universe is empty. Yogâchâr holds that only external substances are empty. The Sautrântik doctrine says that external substances are cognised through inference. Vaibhashiks believe that external substances are known through direct perception.

Thus we see that because of four differing profound intellectual viewpoints, each approach was accorded the status of a separate Darshana. Now, therefore amongst the six Nâstika Darshanas, Chârvak is the first, the second, third, fourth, and fifth are Mâdhyamik, Yogâchâr, Sautrântik, and Vaibhâshik counted in that order while the sixth is the Jain Darshana. This is how the six nâstik darshanas are reckoned in the Bharathiya System of Philosophy.



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JAIN DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

The Meaning of the Word “Jain”

The word “jain” is derived from the word “jin” which is formed from the verb “ji” which in turn means ‘to win’ or to “overcome”. A “jin” is one who is victorious. That is to say, one who has brought under self-control the flow of the wandering mind.

The Founders of the Jain Darshana

The founders of the Jain doctrine are said to be the 24 Tirthankars which means those who have crossed the ocean of worldly life. Of these, according to the opinion of Jain scholars, the first founder of the doctrine is ‘आचार्य ऋषभदेव’ *Āchārya Rrushabdev*. However, Bhagawan Mahāvīr the 24th Tirthankar is said to be the most influential of the exponents. A Tirthankar alone is called a ‘जिन’ ‘Jin’ or one who has conquered anger and similar

defects or faults which are 18 in number. Those people who worship or adore the holy 'Jins or Tirthankars' are called 'जैन' 'Jains'.

People of this religious faith believe that an infinite number of Tirthankars have arisen in their traditional order in the past and will continue to do so in the future as well. However, it is believed that in the current age, there have been 24 Tirthankars in the Jain order. They lived in succession in their respective clearly established times. This flow of the Tirthankars existed in the past and will continue in the future too. However, the 24th Tirthankar was Vardhmân Mahâvir who lived in 60 BC. Tirthankars are themselves not God but human beings who through successive births in countless wombs developed the highest qualities of karma, penance & religious austerity, knowledge, indifference to worldly attractions etc and thereby attained the status of Tirthankars. However, in this religious faith, the Tirthankars are worshipped as God virtually. This is because, according to Jains, there is no God as such, who is the Creator of the Universe, and who bestows the fruits of karma.

The Concept of Moksha in the Jain Doctrine

In the Jain faith, release from the bondage of Karma is itself considered as moksha. Eight main categories of Karmas are believed to be the cause of bondage as follows:-

1) 'अनावरणीय कर्म' '**Gnânavarneeya Karmas**' (Knowledge Obscuring Karmas) which are of five types namely, '*Shrut*' (Scriptures Study-Knowledge Obscuring Karmas), '*Avadhi*'

(Clarivoyant or Remote-Knowledge Obstructing Karmas), '*Man-Paryâya*' (Telepathic or Mind-Reading Knowledge Obstructing Karmas), '*Mati*' (Sensory- Knowledge Obstructing Karmas), and '*Kewal*' (Omniscient or Unlimited Knowledge Obstructing Karmas) are the five types of knowledge obstructing Karmas.

2) 'दर्शनावरणीय कर्म' **Darshanavarneeya Karmas** (Perception Obscuring Karmas) – These Karmas obstruct all types of knowledge which are obtainable through direct perception.

3) 'अंतराय कर्म' **Antarâya Karmas** (Desirable Internal Qualities Obstructing Karmas) – Desirable internal qualities such as '*dâna*' (charity), '*bhoga*' (enjoyment), '*lâbha*' (earning or profits) etc which constitute man's internal strengths and which help him to perform good actions and attain desirable ends, are obstructed by these Karmas.

4) 'मोहनीय कर्म' **Mohaneeya Karmas** (Deluding Karmas) – These Karmas obstruct the soul's efforts to acquire right faith and perfection in right conduct and also delude the personality and character.

5) 'आयुषकर्म' **Âyush Karmas** (Life-Span Karmas) – These determine the life-spans of human beings, animals, as well as those of the denizens of hell and heaven.

6) 'नामकर्म' **Nâm Karmas** (Body-Personality Characteristics Karmas) – The Nâm Karmas determine the characteristics of the body an individual's soul will occupy together with personal qualities and characteristics.

7) 'गोत्रकर्म' **Gothra Karmas** (Birth-Status Determining Karmas) – These Karmas determine whether an individual will be born in a family of high or low rank and status.

8) 'वेदनीय कर्म' **Vedneeya Karmas** (Worldly Pleasure or Pain Karmas) – These are Karmas which give rise to pleasure or pain. They obstruct the natural tendency towards happiness that is inherent in the self.

Freedom from the bonds of Karma constitutes the highest and best path to Moksha. In the lexicon of this Darshana, the means towards this end is called 'Triratna' or 'The Three Jewels'. Moksha can be secured only by these means.

THE THREE JEWELS

All the precepts or rules of observance of this Darshana are founded on three principles, namely

- (1) 'सम्यक्दर्शन' **Samyaktarshan** (Right Perception)
- (2) 'सम्यक्ज्ञान' **Samyakyân** (Right Knowledge)
- (3) 'सम्यक्चरित्र' **Samyakcharitra** (Right Conduct), which are termed as 'The Three Jewels'. All three act together to clear the path to Nirvâna (the final release from the bondage of worldly existence leading to the highest bliss). They do not act separately or individually to open up the path to Moksha. For instance, they do not operate on the basis of 'तृणारणिमणिन्याय' '*Trunârnimaninyâya*' or 'The Straw-Fire-Loadstone Logic'. Thus 'trun' or 'straw' can be a cause of fire. Similarly, 'arani' or 'a piece of wood or flint' can independently be the cause of a fire

and likewise, ‘mani’ or ‘loadstone’ can, of its own accord, be used to make a fire. All three together do not collectively constitute the cause of a fire but each of them individually has the potential to start a fire. The ‘Three Jewels’ do not conform to the ‘*Trunâranimaninyâya*’ but to the ‘*Dandachakradi nyâya*’ or ‘The Logic of the Effort-Wheel’. For example, physical energy, the potter’s wheel, thread, clay etc have to act together to manufacture a pot. In the same way, the ‘The Three Jewels’ operate jointly to prepare the path to Nirvâna. Therefore, in this Darshana, these three are regarded as the means for attainment of Nirvâna.

1. ‘सम्यकदर्शन’ **Samyak Darshan** (Right Perception) – According to the Jain Darshana, the nature of all Jeevas etc as well as of all substances should be ascertained by viewing and examining them in precisely the same form in which they exist according to the Laws of Nature. One should have true and firm conviction in the Principles of Jainism, as they are, along with reverence or belief. Belief does not imply blind faith. A totally integrated approach is involved.

2. ‘सम्यकज्ञान’ **Samyak Gyân** (Right Knowledge) – When the knowledge of ‘*Jivas*’ (Living Beings), ‘*Ajivas*’ (Non-Living Matter), ‘*Asrava*’ (Influx of Karmas), ‘*Bandh*’ (Bondage of Karmas), ‘*Sambandh*’ (Bondage of Attachments), ‘*Nirjar*’ (Eradication of Karmas), and ‘*Moksha*’ (Final Liberation), as they are in their natural state, is acquired free of delusion, it is called as ‘Samyak Gyan’. This knowledge is of 5 categories – ‘*Mati*’ (Sensory), ‘*Shruti*’ (Study of Scriptures), ‘*Avadhi*’ (Clairvoyance), ‘*Man-Paryâya*’ (Telepathic), and ‘*Kevala*’ (Omniscient).

3. 'सम्यक्चरित्र' **Samyak Charitra** (Right Conduct) – When the stock of all worldly Karmas get exhausted, in the case of that determined person endowed with faith and knowledge, in order to destroy sins, the discarding of all sinful Karmas is termed '*samyakcharitra*'.

DISCUSSION ON KARMAS

This Darshana is one of the most energetic and firm advocates of the Âtma, and even amongst them, it is extremely pro - Âtma. Every Jiva is considered inherently accomplished and perfect. Not due to any trick or title given but due to its own power and sway. This Darshana regards the Jiva as the doer and the enjoyer. The fruits of the Karmas of every Jiva are inevitable. These fruits cannot be destroyed without enjoying or suffering them. One has to pay the penalty for one's own Karmas. Each Jiva gets the fruits strictly according to its own Karmas and there is no reality like Ishwara in between, who dispenses the fruits of the Karmas.

Hence, God is not the arbitrator or dispenser of the fruits of Karmas. As the Jiva performs Karmas, so will the Jiva reap the fruits thereof in strict accordance with the Karmas done, for this Darshana does not accept that there exists any reality such as Ishvara in between who controls the allotment of the fruits of Karma. The doctrine of Karma is quite clear. Karma does not spare anyone.

THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE

In the Jain Darshana, knowledge is given as much importance as austerity and penance. In this Darshana, the following tenets are generally accepted:-

1. God is not the Creator, Upholder, and Destroyer of the Universe.
2. The Âtma does exist. There is a different âtma in every body. Hence, the principle of multi-âtmās and not one single-âtma is accepted.
3. The Âtma is capable of contracting and expanding. Hence, in a smaller body, the âtma is smaller and in a larger body, it is proportionately bigger. For instance, in the body of an ant, the âtma is ant-sized whereas in the body of an elephant, the âtma is elephant-sized.
4. The Universe is real but it has no creator. The Universe is without a beginning and an end.
5. The doctrines of life-after-death, merit-sin, the worlds of hell-heaven etc are considered as real or true.
6. There is moksha (final liberation) but until all the karmas are completely destroyed, moksha cannot be attained. The Digambara Sect believes that nudity is essential for ensuring the destruction of all Karmas. For this reason, they hold that if you are born as a female, you cannot strive for moksha and only if you are born as a man can your efforts to attain moksha meet with success.
7. The Tirthankars are themselves worthy of worship in the form of God. The Tirthankars are perfect, all-knowing, and fully accomplished. According to the interpretation of this doc-

trine, a jiva or âtma alone becomes a Tirthankar after performing great deeds.

THE FIVE-GREAT VOWS

“सर्वथावद्ययोगानां त्यागश्चारित्रमुच्यते ।
कीर्तितं तदहिंसादिव्रतभेदेन पञ्चधा ॥
अहिंसासूनृतास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाः”

“*Sarvathâvadyayogânâm tyâgaschâritramuchyate
Kirtitam tadahimsâdivratâbhedenâ panchhadhâ
Ahimsâsunrutâsteyabrahmacharyâparigrahaha* ”

On the basis of the differences between Ahimsâ and other vows, five categories of vows have been accepted. These are ‘अहिंसा’ ‘*Ahimsa*’ (Non-Violence); ‘सत्यव्रत’ ‘*Sunrut*’ (Truth); ‘अस्तेयव्रत’ ‘*Asteya*’ (Non-Stealing); ‘ब्रह्मचर्यव्रत’ ‘*Brahmâchârya*’ (Chastity/Celibacy); and ‘अपरिग्रहव्रत’ ‘*Aparigraha*’ (Non-Attachment/Non-Possession).

‘अहिंसा’ **Ahimsâ** (The Vow of Non-Violence)— Not causing sorrow to any human being, animal, bird, leaf, tree or any form of life whatsoever is termed Ahimsâ.

‘सत्यव्रत’ **Satyavrat** (The Vow of Truthfulness)—A vow taken to utter speech which is dear, agreeable, proper, and which conforms to the truth, is termed ‘sunrutvrat or satyavrat’ or ‘the vow of truthfulness’. That speech though truthful is yet deemed untrue if it is not dear and not conducive to the good.

‘अस्तेयव्रत’ **Asteyavrat** (The Vow of Non-Stealing) – Not taking any article belonging to anyone unless given by that person which implies not stealing anything is defined as the ‘Asteyavrat’.

‘ब्रह्मचर्यव्रत’ **Brahmâchâryavrat** (The Vow of Celibacy/Chastity) – To vow to sacrifice all heavenly and greedy/lustful desires enjoyable by the three means namely ‘Krut, Anumat, and Karit’ (Mind, Speech, and Action) is the “Brahmâchâryavrat”.

‘अपरिग्रहव्रत’ **Aparigrahavrat** (The Vow of Non-Attachment or Non-Possession) – The vow to sacrifice of the desire to possess anything at all is the ‘Aparigrahavrat’.

The observances of these five vows are considered wholly and completely necessary.

‘SAPTABHANGI’ OR ‘SEVENFOLD REFUTATION’

In the Jain Darshan, we have the famous ‘Saptabhangi Nyâya’ or ‘The Sevenfold Refutation Arguments’ on the basis of which the doctrine of manifold aspects has been established. These are –

1. ‘स्यादस्ति’ *Syâdasti*—”in some ways it is”
2. ‘स्यान्नस्ति’ *Syâdnâsti*—”in some ways it is not”
3. ‘स्यादस्ति च नास्ति’ *Syâdasti cha nâsti*—”in some ways it is and it

is not”

4. ‘स्यादवक्तव्य’ *Syâdavaktavya*—”in some ways it is indescribable”

5. ‘स्यादस्ति चावक्तव्य’ *Syâdâsti châvaktavya*—”in some ways it is and it is indescribable”

6. ‘स्यान्नास्ति चावक्तव्य’ *Syâdnâsti châvaktavya*—”in some ways it is not and it is indescribable”

7. ‘स्यादस्ति च नास्ति चावक्तव्य’ *Syâdasti cha nâsti châvaktavya*—”in some ways it is and it is not and it is indescribable”

Accordingly, in the Jain Texts of Logic, the above set of arguments or propositions have been set out in a collection of seven phrases which is called the ‘*Saptabhangi Nyâya*’. The word ‘bhang’ means breaking up or destroying something which, in this context, refers to the collection of standpoints given above. Thus ‘*Saptabhangi Nyâya*’ refers to the collection or assembly of viewpoints such as existence and non-existence and such like conflicting viewpoints together. Excepting the Jains, all other doctrines are absolutistic or monistic who regard their doctrines as definitive. These are of seven types of predications, and logic by which these are broken up or refuted is collectively termed ‘*Saptabhanginyâya*’.

THE MAIN RELIGIOUS GROUPS OF THE JAIN FAITH

DIGAMBAR AND SHWETÂMBAR SECTS

In the Jain Faith, there are two main sects – Digambar and Shwetâambar. These two sects emerged and became prevalent only

after the passing away of Bhagawân Mahâvir Swami.

There is not much difference between these two sects as far as their doctrines are concerned but there are considerable differences as regards actual practice. Digambar followers do not wear any clothes and remain totally nude. The Shwetâmbar sect is of the opinion that it is not practical to remain totally nude all the time. Further, they believe that it is also abnormal and impractical to keep the idols of the Tirthankars in the nude state. Therefore, this led to the beginning of the Shwetâmbar sect. In this order, the idols of the Tirthankars are dressed in white clothes and made to look presentable. There are greater numbers of Sâdhus (Monks) and Sâdhvis (Nuns) in this Sect. In the Digambar Sect, the idols of the Tirthankars are kept in the nude and worshipped, whereas in the Shwetâmbar Sect the idols of the Tirthankars are suitably clothed and adorned and worshipped.

There is another difference in the tenets of these two sects. The Digambar Sect avers that a female cannot become a Tirthankar and consequently she cannot get 'mukti' or 'liberation' whereas the Shwetâmbar Sect does not accept this. They say that the 19th Tirthankar named Malli was a woman. She is counted amongst the Tirthankars. Hence, women have the right to participate in religious practices and women can also get 'mukti'.

Sometime later, another sect came into being which became well known as 'Sthânakvâsi' (those who do not worship in Temples but in 'Sthâns' or Places called Prayer-Halls). In this order, white clothes are worn but there is no worship of idols. They believe that there is no scriptural authority for idol worship

and as the idols cannot protect themselves in any case, how could they protect others? Therefore they have no faith in idol worship. They also feel that it is not mandatory to worship idols in the spiritual life. Out of this sect, another sub-sect arose which came to be known by the name of 'Terapanthi' (a 'panthi' or sect which follows 'tera' or thirteen principles stressed by Âcharya Bhikkanji). In both these sub-sects the numbers of Sâdhus and Sâdhvis are very large. All the Sâdhus and Sâdhvis tie a white strip of cloth to cover their mouths so that small or tiny insects may not be swallowed accidentally and they remain ever watchful.

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DARSAHN

Before we introduce the six âstik (Vedic) darshanas, it is essential to know what exactly is ‘vaidik tattvagyân’ or ‘the vedic knowledge of the truth or reality’. A brief explanation of the vedic knowledge of truth or reality is as follows.

‘Vaidik Tattvagyân ‘or ‘Vedic Knowledge of Truth or Reality’

The Vedic Knowledge of the Truth or Reality lies at the very root of the Vedic Dharma and the Vedic Faith or Tradition. Without knowledge of the truth or reality, neither Dharma nor the Faith or the Tradition can survive and last. Bhagwân Sriswaminarayan in his ‘Vachnâmrut’ has said that without knowledge, the Faith or Tradition cannot survive. Therefore, ‘Vaidik Tattvagyân’ is regarded as an indispensable part of Dharma. If Dharma upholds or maintains some substance or living being, then ‘Tattvagyân’ or ‘Knowledge of the Truth or Reality’ reveals the inherent form and nature of that substance or living being and its secrets. Dharma teaches us about life and Tattvagyân teaches us

about death. Dharma and Tattvagyân are as closely related to each other as Life is to Death. Without life, death is not possible, and without death life is impossible. In the same way, without Dharma there is no Tattvagyân, and without Tattvagyân, there is no Dharma. Both together take the Jivâtma or the Soul beyond life as well as death. They bestow immortality and everlasting bliss. Tattvagyân are the roots and Dharma constitutes the branches. Without the roots, the branches cannot exist, and without the branches, the roots cannot exist. These two are not different actually. We cannot separate them even if wish to do so. Some people may think, “We are gyânis (those who possess true spiritual knowledge). We are Pundits. We are Scholars. What need do we have of Dharma?” Or some people may say, “We are dhârmiks (those who truly adhere to Dharma). Why do we need Tattvagyân? Without Tattvagyân, we shall obtain immortality.” Both groups of people who think in this manner are under a delusion.

THE USEFULNESS OF TATTVAGYÂN IN DAILY LIFE

Tattvagyân is like a seed of origin in all the practical daily necessities of man. In a man’s life, when from moment to moment, he is attacked by matters beyond sensory perception; Tattvagyân alone defeats the extra sensory objects and protects his life, and reveals to him the secrets of death, immortality, the true nature of the self, the creator and the creation. When in a man’s life, he becomes desirous of learning about some topic or becomes curious to know about something, Tattvagyân alone helps him to realise that desire to learn or satisfies that curiosity. With

Tattvagyân, a man's life acquires a progressive outlook. It finds articulation. It gets a direction conducive to the good. This leads to freedom from bondage and advancement towards the highest goals of life.

Certain doubts and questions pertaining to right knowledge often arise in the minds of people whose answers they have to seek by themselves. The explanations apparently contained in the examples of salvation or deliverance of someone else is of no use here. It is only with the help of Tattvagyân or Right Knowledge of the Truth or Reality, can one search for satisfactory answers to such questions.

The questions pertaining to knowledge of the truth or reality which arise in the mind by themselves could be as follows. What is this Universe? Does the Universe have any mystery or secret behind it or not? Is the Universe real or just a dream? Is the Universe true or merely an illusion or a hazy reflection? Does the Universe have a creator or not? If there is a Creator, then what is the Creator like? What is the essential form and nature of this Creator? Is there any mutual relationship between the Creator of the Universe and the Jivâ or the embodied soul? If so, then what is the nature of this relationship? Are there any means of obtaining freedom from the cycle of births and deaths? Is there any truth like the Brahman? If so, then what is essential form and nature of 'Brahman' or 'The Absolute Reality'? Is it 'nirguna' (attributeless and indeterminate) or 'sahguna' (with attributes and cognizable)? What is the difference between the 'Nirguna' and the 'Sahguna' Brahman? What is material nature? What is the

mind? What is the nature of the truth of the Âtma (The Self or the Soul)? What is life? What is death? Why do we have very limited knowledge? Why are we entangled in happiness and sorrow? Will this created Universe ever end or never? If this Universe is to end, then how will it end and when?

The process of searching for and discovering the answers to such questions is itself Tattvagyân. No sooner Tattvagyân or Knowledge of the Truth or Reality is acquired, and then all the answers to all these questions are found automatically. In other words, all such problems can be resolved only through Tattvagyân.

TATTVAGYÂNTEACHESABOUTDEATH

No matter how happy a human being might be, he or she still shows fear when death is mentioned. No man desires that his death should occur. He is ever desirous of living. This is because the face of death appears to be very fearsome. But the truth is that death is but the first step in the ladder to reach Tattvagyân. Death is not some anecdotal entity heard from the grandmother. Death is the honourable measure of life. Now, he who acquires Tattvagyân attains the state of complete satisfaction. He is no longer afraid of death. The Man of Knowledge of the Truth or Reality declares – “O Mankind! There is a higher and immortal life beyond this perishable existence. So do not be afraid of death. Death is no one’s enemy, death is essential and unavoidable. Death is true. It is ancient and eternal. Death alone can grant us eternal life beyond. It can liberate us from worldly existence. Therefore, be not fearful of death. Await death pa-

tiently. Treat death with respect.”

In this manner, the Man of True Knowledge becomes fully self-satisfied and goes beyond death.

THE DIFFERENT DARSHANAS OF TATTVAGYÂYAN

It is absolutely essential for those who are desirous of acquiring Tattvagyân and those who are striving for perfection to clearly understand the nature of the relationship between the Jivâ and the Paramâtma (Absolute Reality). So far, great efforts have been made by the ‘Tattvagyânis’ (Knowers of the Truth), ‘Rishis’ (Transcendental Sages), ‘Dharmachintakas’ (Thinkers of Dharma), Âchâryâs (Preceptors), and ‘Dharmaveers’ (Champions of Dharma) to explain the nature of the relationship between the Jiva and the Paramâtma as well as between the Paramâtma and Creation (The Material Universe). Each one of them has described the right way based on personal experience and in a manner bearing in mind the intellectual capabilities of the people of their respective times. Therefore, Tattvagyân was not restricted to just preaching but reached the level of practical experience. Thus the edifice of Tattvagyân, made perfect by such direct experience and suitable for expression in pithy aphorisms, is standing on solid pillars in the form of the Vedas. The creators of this edifice of Tattvagyân, so complementary to and so closely following the Vedas, were the Seers of the Truth, namely the Rishis. These Rishis revealed simpler and easier ways to comprehend this Tattvagyân. As a result, numerous separate Darshanas and Sects/Traditions came into being. Among them in general, there are six main Darshanas.

THE SIX DARSHANAS AND THEIR ÂCHÂRYÂS

The main message of the Vedas is the revelation of the absolute truth. But this message of the Vedas is extremely vast, and diffused. It is eternal. It is not at all easy for the average intellect to understand the import of the Vedas. Therefore, the Âchâryâs who adored the Vedas, in order to explain the message of the Vedas more easily, revealed paths which follow the teachings of the Vedas in simpler terms. The flow of thoughts from all the Âchâryâs, each according to his own personal experience, and in accordance with the intellectual capacity of the people to understand and assimilate the teachings, formed doctrines which we now recognise as the Darshanas. Thus there are many Darshanas which follow the Vedas. However, here we shall generally deal with Sânkhya, Yoga, Nyâya, Vaisheshik, Purvamimâsa, and Uttarmimâsâ.

1. The First Âchâryâ of Sânkhya Darshana is **Maharishi Kapil.**
2. The Âchâryâ of Yoga Darshana is **Bhagawan Patanjali.**
3. The Âchâryâ of Nyâya Darshana is **Gautam Rishi.**
4. The Âchâryâ of Vaisheshik Darshana is **Maharishi Kanâd.**
5. The Âchâryâ of Purvamimâsa is **Âchâryâ Vyâs's disciple Jaimini.**
6. The Âchâryâ of Uttarmimâsa is **Bhagawan Bâdarâyan.**

All these Âchâryâs showed the way to reach the same truth, each according to his individual viewpoint.

SINGLE GOAL & DIFFERENT ROUTES

The aim or the goal of all the Darshanas founded by the Âchâryâs is the same. Just as there are different routes to reach the same town and there are also different means of travelling. But all the roads take the traveller to the same town. There are no restrictions on travelling by any specific route. But it must be remembered that the traveller's aim should be fixed on the same town.

Though the banks of a river are different from place to place, the flow of water is the same. Sitting by the side of any bank, a thirsty person can satisfy his thirst by drinking water. Exactly in the same manner, through the medium of any Darshana based on the Vedas, one can know the Truth and the Paramâtma provided the aspirant's goal is certain.

In order to reach the Supreme Truth, while some may desire to adopt the Bhaktimârg (Path of Devotion), others may choose the Yogamârg (Path of Yoga), still others may reach by Karmayoga (Path of Selfless Action). Some may travel on the Gyânâmrg (Path of Knowledge) in search of the truth. For this reason, because the minds and ways of thinking of men are varied, the Âchâryâs who could see the past, present, and future clearly, by means of different Darshanas showed different suitable paths. Despite the fact that each Darshana has its own unique and special features, there is unity in all the Darshanas. They are steps of the same ladder. Therefore for the people of Bharat in general, and for the followers of the Vaidik Dharma in particular,

it is essential to put into practice the teachings of the Vaidik Darshanas so as to avoid a context where intellectual differences and confusion have arisen in the mind. Even in the case of such people, if the fundamental sutrâs of all the Darshanas are practiced properly, Tattvagyân will become clear, and rising quickly above the level of contradictory and confusing knowledge, they will find the search for the Supreme Truth rendered simpler.

Common Aspects of the Darshanas in Sets of Two Each

The basic tenets of the six Darshanas are grouped into three scriptures as follows:-

1. Sâmkhya and Yoga precepts are together known as Sâmkhyashâstra (Sâmkhya Precepts).
2. Nyâya and Vaisheshik are jointly known as Tarkshâstra (Precepts of Logic & Reasoning).
3. Purvamimâsa and Uttarmimâsa together known as Mimâmsashâstra (Precepts for Inquiry/Investigation).

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SÂNKHYA DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

“तत्त्वद्वयं स पुरुषः प्रकृतिर्द्वितीया
धत्ते गुणानपि च सत्त्वरजस्तमांसि ।
सर्वं जगच्चलति तत्परिणामरूपं
तत्सांख्यकारमिह तं कपिलं नमामि ॥”

“*Tattvadyam sa purushaha prakrutirdvitiya
dhatte gunânapi cha sattvarajastamânsi I
Sarvam jagachhalati tattparinâmaroopam
tattsânkhyakârmiha tam kapilam namâmi II*”

The word ‘Sânkhya’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘sankhya’ (enumeration, reckoning). How many truths are there and which truth abides where? In this Darshana, an accurate enumeration of these truths has been determined. Consequently, this Darshana was named ‘Sânkhya’. There could be another reason and that is that one of the meanings of ‘Sânkhya’ is deliberation or reflection upon matters pertaining to the truth. And this

Darshana contains such deliberation and contemplation upon truths.

In this Darshana, Pratyaksh (Direct Perception through the Sense-Organs), Anumân (Inference or Cognition following some other Knowledge), and Shabda (Verbal Testimony) are the three accepted pramânâs (sources of valid knowledge or methods of knowing truly). For instance, the Nyâyikâs (Followers of the Nyaya Darshana) have accepted four Pramânâs, the Mimâsakâs (Followers of the Mimâsa Darshanas) have accepted six pramânâs. Similarly, in the Sâmkhya Darshana, three Pramânâs have been accepted as valid.

Founded by Maharshi Kapil, this Darshana is the most ancient. It is a matter of regret that not a single text or treatise written by Maharshi Kapil, Âsuri, Panchashik, and others are available today. A text written by Ishwar Krishna called the 'Sâmkhyakârîka' is the principle reliable source of knowledge in this Darshana. It is written in Aryan Chand (A Type of Ancient Sanskrit Poetry Meter) and contains 72 kârîkâs (collection of memorial verses on a philosophical subject) which renders the Sâmkhya Siddhânt (Sâmkhya Doctrine) clear and explicit.

In this Darshana, although it is customary to ascribe the authorship of the basic Sâmkhya Sutrâs to Maharshi Kapil, no evidence is available that Maharshi Kapil actually wrote it. Therefore, this work is not as authoritative as the Sâmkhya Kârîkâs. Scholars feel that some learned person might have written the Sâmkhya Sutrâs and Sâmkhyasamâs Sutrâs in the name of Maharishi Kapil. This is because there is no mention of these two texts

in any treatise written prior to 1500 A.D. Therefore, whatever knowledge we have of the Sâmkhya Doctrine today is based on the Sâmkhya Kârikâs and latter Texts which have been preserved.

The Sâmkhyâ Doctrine is as follows:-

The Sâmkhyâ Darshan accepts 24 Truths of Prakriti (Insentient Nature) and the 25th is the Purusha (The Conscious Self or the Soul). The 25 truths are as follows:-

“मूलप्रकृतिरविकृतिर्महदाद्याः प्रकृतिविकृतयः सप्त ।

षोडशकस्तु विकारो न प्रकृतिर्निविकृतिः पुरुषः ॥ ”

“*Mulaprakruti avikrtih mahâdâdhya prakrutivikrutayaha
sapta I*

*Shodashakah tu vikârâha na prakrutih na vikkrutihi
prushaha II”*

“Primordial Nature is changeless. Mahat (the Great Principle or Buddhi or Intellect) and others, forming a group of seven, are both evolutionary and products of evolution. But the sixteen (five organs each of the senses and action, 5 gross elements, and the mind) are merely the products of evolution and the Purusha neither evolves nor is it the outcome of evolution.”

The 24 Truths or Realities of Prakruti are as follows:-

- 1) **Mula Prakruti** (Unmanifest Primordial Matter).
- 2) **Mahat Tattva** (The Great Principle i.e. Buddhi or Intelligence).
- 3) **Ahankâr** (The Ego). Next come the the 5 Tanmâtras (subtle

sensations generated by the five gross-elements perceivable by the sense-organs).

- 4) **Shabda Tanmâtra** (sound).
- 5) **Sparsha Tanmâtra** (touch).
- 6) **Rupa Tanmâtra** (light).
- 7) **Rasa Tanmâtra** (taste).
- 8) **Gandha Tanmâtra** (smell).

Next are the 5 sense-organs.

- 9) **shrotra** (hearing).
- 10) **Tvak** (touching).
- 11) **Chakshu** (seeing).
- 12) **Rasna** (tasting).
- 13) **Grâna** (smelling).

Then we have the 5 organs of action.

- 14) **Vâk** (speaking).
- 15) **Pâni** (grasping).
- 16) **Pâda** (locomotion).
- 17) **Pâyû** (excretion).
- 18) **Upastha** (reproduction).
- 19) **Man** (mind). Lastly, we have the Panchabhut (five gross elements of matter).
- 20) **Prithivi** (Earth).
- 21) **Jal** (Water.)
- 22) **Tej** (Fire.)
- 23) **Vayu** (Air.)
- 24) **Akesh** (Ether.)

In this manner, primordial nature (insentient matter) itself plus the 23 Truths evolved out of it together make up the 24 Truths and the 25th is the Purusha or the Âtma (The Transcenden-

tal Self or Pure Consciousness). Thus we have 25 Truths in all.

In the Sâmkhya philosophical treatise, the 25 Truths mentioned above have been classified as follows – 1. Some entities are purely primordial matter. 2. Some entities are both primordial matter as well as entities evolved out of it. 3. Some entities are exclusively those which have evolved out of primordial matter. 4. Some entities are neither primordial matter nor an entity which has evolved out of primordial matter (Purusha).

In this Darshana, fundamentally there are only two truths or realities. They are Prakruti and Purusha. The Purusha is chetan (a sentient, conscious entity) and Prakruti is jada (insentient inert matter). All actions in the world are also jada. In the functioning of the Universe, the Purusha cannot be the cause of any substance or entity. The Purusha is actionless. It is only the witness. Prakruti is the sole cause of whatever there is in this Universe perceptible or hidden.

PRAKRUTI

The existence of the three Gunas namely, Sattva (an aspect of physical reality which is pure and fine and leads to happiness and harmony), rajas (an aspect of physical reality which causes desires, ambitions and restless activity), tamas (an aspect of physical reality which leads to indolence and inertia) in a state of harmony or dynamic equilibrium is called Prakruti. These three gunas exist in a state of harmony or dynamic equilibrium before the creation of the Universe. During the period of existence of the Universe, the three gunas are in a state of discord or agitation

or instability. In the process of creation, the first to be made is the Mahat Tattva (Buddhi or Intelligence). From Mahat Tattva is created Ahankâr (Ego), from Ahankâr the five Tanmâtrâs (subtle sensations) – Shabda (sound), Sparsha (touch), Rupa (light), Rasa (taste) and Gandha (smell). The bodies of plants, animals, human beings, insects and others are made from the five tattvâs (Pancha bhutas). In fact everything included in the creation is made out of the Pancha bhutas.

The Characteristics of Prakruti

That which comes before creation is Prakruti. Prakruti is ancient and eternal, all pervading, immovable, unique, without a beginning, and without a cause. Prakruti alone is the sole and independent cause of the Universe. If at all Prakruti is dependent anything, it may be its own nature characterised by the three gunas. From its three gunas, Prakruti makes creations based on sattva, rajas, and tamas gunas. And the three gunas have a mutual relationship.

The Attributes of Prakruti

Unmanifest Prakruti is without any form. Its first manifestation is Mahat (Buddhi) which gives birth to Ahankâr. Ahankâr is an off-shoot of Buddhi. The Five Sense-Organs as well as the Five Tanmâtrâs emerge from Ahankâr. And Buddhi, Ahankâr, and the Five Tanmatras are all the work of Prakruti. In fact, from Buddhi to the Panchamahâbhut, all of creation is the evolution of Prakruti and its spread. The cause of all these can be inferred by

surveying the effects thereof.

THE THREE GUNAS

According to the Sâmkhya Darshana, Prakruti is composed of three Gunas. Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas are the three Gunas. The meaning of the term 'Guna' is 'Sutrâ' (logic, precept or a thread). These three Gunas are the mediating truths of Prakruti. The Purusha is bound by these truths alone. The Universe which is manifested from Prakruti is also bound by these Gunas alone. In all substances, however, these three Gunas evidently do not subsist in equal measure.

Just as Brahman is full of infinite and all pervasive bliss according to Vedânta, in Sâmkhya, Prakruti is pervaded by the three Gunas. The three Gunas exist together for all times. Between themselves, they mutually constitute both the source of support and that which exists on some support or is fit to be supported. Just as the lamp exists only when the wick, the oil, and the light co-exist together, in exactly the same way, the manifestation or rise of the three Gunas alone is creation and their disappearance alone is dissolution or complete destruction of creation.

The Gunas are knowable substances. The Purusha is the Knower or the Witness. As soon as the evolution of Prakruti begins, the first Mahatattva (Great Truth) which is Buddhi (Intellect) is produced. Ahankâr, which is the agency of action, is created out of Buddhi. From Ahankâr is created the Mind, which carries out all the work of Ahankar through the Karmindriyâs (Organs of Action). This is matter of trial and error. Both to gather experiences as well as perform karmas are the tasks of the

Mind. As per the Sâmkhya Doctrine, the Mind creates the Panchaprânas along with the Indriyâs (Organs). In other words, the Prâna is a change of form or a derivation of the Indriyâs alone. As per Vedânta, the Prâna has been regarded as a separate Truth or Reality. But in this Darshana, the Prana is considered as just a modification or derivation of the Indriyâs. Without the Indriyas, the Prana has no basis for a separate existence.

The Characteristics of the Gunâs

In every sentient or living being, these three Gunâs (Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) exist in unequal proportions. When the proportion of sattva gunâ is more, then people have a peaceful disposition and are more inclined towards divinity and God. When the Rajas Guna predominates, men undergo a transformation towards attraction and aversion. And when the Tamas Guna is on the ascendant, they become careless, indolent, and inactive.

PURUSHA

Purusha is completely separate and different from Prakruti. It has no beginning. It has no end. It has no attributes. It is extremely subtle. It is all pervasive. It is different from Buddhi (Intellect), Mind and the Organs. It is also beyond space, time, and the sense of agency in any action. It is the ancient and eternal witness. It is whole and imperishable. It is of the form of pure consciousness. The Purusha is not the doer but the one who experiences though it also only the witness. Consequently, it experiences happiness and sorrow. If the Purusha is not the doer

and also not the one who experiences anything but just a witness, then it would be like a piece of clear glass through which one can see the same colour as that of the object kept below it. In reality, the clear glass has no colour of its own for it is by itself colourless. In the same way, the Purusha is basically not connected with Prakruti but after it is born in this world, it becomes intimately connected with Prakruti. This is how the Purusha has become entangled in Prakruti. Actually, the Purusha has been called the Witness, the Seer, the Mediator, and the Emancipated, the Unconcerned etc in the Sâmkhya Scriptures. But when it is in conjunction with Prakruti, it experiences happiness and sorrow. Once it acquires enlightenment and wisdom through the knowledge of discrimination, it is able to attain Moksha. Moksha is the Purusha's ultimate goal. Until Moksha is secured, the Purusha will continue to rotate in the worldly-wheel (cycle) of life and death and it will continue to derive the fruits of its actions.

ISHVARA OR GOD

Godless Sâmkhya or Sâmkhya without Ishvara

There are two Schools in the Sâmkhya Darshana. One is Atheist or Godless and the other is Theist or Believers in God. For the followers of the Godless Sâmkhya School, the Kârikas are very clear about God' stating explicitly that for obtaining both Birth as well as Moksha, there is no necessity for God. For the process of creation and its subsequent evolution also, God is not required. The Karmas themselves dispense the fruits to the Purusha. Therefore God is not required to control and direct the

dispensation of the fruits of Karmas. With enlightenment, the Purusha can attain Moksha of its own accord. (*Moksha will be discussed subsequently*). This School feels that it is necessary to have faith in the words of Kapil and other all-knowing men. Thus, according to this particular School of Sâṅkhya, the Purusha can, of its own accord, live as well as secure Moksha. In the opinion of other Doctrines, the outright rejection of God in this manner is the biggest blunder of the Sâṅkhya Darshana. They feel that not only is Prakruti unable to act independently but that it acts according to the will of Ishvara. Therefore, the creation and evolution of the Universe is carried out through Prakruti according to the will of Ishvara and not independently by Prakruti.

THEIST SÂṅKHYA OR SÂṅKHYA WITH ISHVARA

There is another School of Sâṅkhya which is famous by the name of 'Seshvara Sâṅkhya' or the Theist Sâṅkhya (Sâṅkhya with Ishvara). This sub-sect is the one which believes in God. Along with the various tenets of the Sâṅkhya Doctrine, it accepts Ishvara also. The founder of the theistic Sâṅkhya Doctrine is *Bhagawan Patanjali*. This doctrine is famous by the name of *Patanjali Yoga Darshana* (This Darshana will be discussed at length subsequently). In this Darshana, it is stated that Ishvara is not made of any reality or substance out of which life is created because living beings are subject to sorrow and pain and they are also not free from the results or consequences of their actions. Whereas, Ishvara is forever free from sorrows and pain, from the fruits of karmas, as well as from the effects of sub-conscious impressions of past actions on the mind. The liberated Purusha

also cannot become Ishvara because it is stated in the Scriptures that Ishvara is the Guru of even liberated Purushas. Further, all liberated Purushas have become free at some point of time or the other from their previous states of bondages whereas Ishvara has been ever free. He is also ever separate and independent of Time and Prakruti. He is the Master of All. He is the Ruler and the Controller of All. Adoring and worshipping Ishvara in this way, people can obtain moksha.

The Relationship between Prakruti & the Purusha

“पुरुषस्य दर्शनार्थं कैवल्यार्थं तथा प्रधानस्य ।

षड्बन्धवदुभयोरपि संबन्धस्तत्कृतः सर्गः ॥ (सां.का.२१)

“*Purushasya darshnârtham kaivalyârtham
tathâ pradhânasya I*

*Pangu andhavat ubhayo api samyogah
tat krtah sargah II*

“For the sake of showing Primordial Nature to the Purusha and for the purpose of (his) emancipation (there is a union between the two) like that of the lame and the blind, from the union between both of them proceeds creation.”

The relationship between Prakruti and the Purusha is like that of the lame and the blind who have a mutual need for each other. This is because Prakruti herself is the object of enjoyment. So she awaits with hope and expectation the coming of the enjoyer in the form of the Purusha. The Purusha too, not possessing the knowledge of discrimination, experiences sor-

row-happiness which is the inevitable outcome of its intimate contact with Prakruti. But why does the Purusha need Prakruti in any case? The answer to this question is given with profound insight in the above Sânkhya Kârîka. For instance, consider two persons, one lame and the other blind, who are traveling as part of a group. Due to some calamity of divine origin, the two of them get completely separated from the group. The poor chaps wander about separately in fear when due to divine providence they accidentally meet each other. The blind man is able to walk and the man who is lame is able to see. Together they work out a way of reaching their destination. The blind man carries the lame fellow on his shoulders and the lame man guides the blind man along the route to their desired destination.

Similarly, the cause of creation can be attributed to the Pradhân (Primordial Prakruti) and the Purusha coming together because of their mutual expectations. As stated earlier, the Pradhân looks forward to the Purusha with hope and expectation in order to exhibit all the Karmas. The Purusha looks forward to the Pradhân with hope and expectation for the sake of attaining kaivalya. In this way, their mutual relationship from which creation takes place can be compared to that of two persons, one who is the lame and the other who is blind. The lame person does not have the power of movement. He therefore looks forward to meeting an individual capable of walking who can help him to go his intended destination. The blind person does not have the capacity to see. And he is eager to get the help of a lame person who can see. Here, since the Purusha is inherently actionless, he is like the lame person, and the Pradhân being insentient is like

the blind person in our analogy. Just as the blind person is able to travel on the desired path In association with the lame person, due to the relationship with the Purusha, the Pradhân is able to evolve. Just as the lame person is able to reach the desired destination with the help of the blind person, the Purusha due to the association with the Pradhan is able to use the knowledge of enlightenment to secure moksha. In this context, other Darshanas have said as follows.

The Buddhist Doctrine of Cause & Effect

The Buddhist Doctrine of Cause & Effect stipulates that until any substance, which is the cause is not fully destroyed, the corresponding substance, which is the effect, cannot arise. This is because as long as the causal substance exists, how could its effect arise? For instance, only after the seed ceases to exist can the plant sprout. Likewise, only after the ball of clay loses its identity and existence, can the earthen-pot come into being. In this manner, more and more substances in the nature of effects arise as the corresponding former causal substances are destroyed. The Buddhist Doctrine of Momentariness as well as the nature of Cause & Effect is explained in this manner.

The Concepts of Cause & Effect in Nyâya & Vaisheshik Doctrines

The Nyâyik and Vaisheshik Darshanas follow the *Asatkâryavad Doctrine*. They contend that within the cause, the effect or the result cannot subsist from the beginning itself. For

example, within the ball of clay, the earthen-pot cannot exist from the outset. This means that in mud, the earthen pot is untrue, for otherwise both would have the same name or they would both be considered different words with the same meaning. Within atomic and similar causes, the macro-effects represented by combinations of atoms cannot inhere. From causes like atoms and others at that level, the much larger effects arise in an entirely new form. It is not correct to say that only after the causal substance is destroyed, can the effect arise. The causal substance continues to exist while the effect comes into being in a totally new form.

The Concept of Cause & Effect in the Advaita Doctrine

According to Advait Vedânta, Brahman is the sole truth, and all substances existing in this World are false. Due to ignorance, the nature and properties of the entire World appears to be superimposed on the Brahman. Just as in darkness, we see the illusion of a snake in a rope. When there is illumination, the illusion is dispelled and we come to know the rope actually as a rope. When the fetters of Mâyâ are broken by means of the Knowledge of the Truth, and the Mind is established in the awareness of the Highest Spiritual Truth which is Brahman, the entire well-known World at large will appear as an illusion. This means that the cause (Brahman) is the Truth but the effects (world at large) are the aggregate of the Brahman and not the consequence or result. Because it is illusory, the effects have no spiritual existence, no spiritual domain, but only worldly existence and sway. In Nyâya and Vaisheshik Doctrines, the eternal, unchangeable nature of substances is accepted. This is so in the case of Sâmkhya also. However, in Vedânta, substances are considered unreal or illusory.

**The Refutation of the Cause & Effect Doctrine &
'Satkâryavâd'**

The Sâṅkhya System, the tenet of 'Satkâryavâd (cause & effect being different temporal aspects of the same thing or the pre-existence of the effect in the cause) has been accepted. They say that he who accepts the proposition that something true can emerge from something false, is not a reliable advocate or authority for his side. This is because whatever is false or unreal is beyond description like the horns of a rabbit which has no existential reality. The import of this is that firstly, an unreal or false substance cannot be the causes of anything for how could any substance give rise to any effect when that substance itself has no existence? Secondly, it is impossible for the true and the untrue to have a relationship because the untrue category is formless and the true category has some tangible form. The idea of the earthen-pot which originated previously may alone be the material cause of the earthen-pot that is to occur subsequently but when non-existence or non-entity, being untrue and formless, cannot have any mutual causal relationship with any future effect, then how could the contingency arise of something being the natural or material cause and something being the appropriate effect thereof? Now therefore, the untrue or unreal cannot be the cause of the true or the real. Therefore this tenet of cause and effect is incredible and unacceptable.

The Sâṅkhya Doctrine accepts the tenet of 'Satkâryavâd' in the process of creation. It is the belief of Sâṅkhya that just as the cause is real or true; in the same manner the effect is also real

or true. The term 'cause' in this context implies 'upâdân kâran' or a cause which is itself transformed into an effect. For example, the natural, immediate cause of the earthen-pot is mud. This mud existed before the pot was created and the pot came into being subsequently. In other words, previously the pot was untrue or unreal; subsequently the potter made the pot from the mud, and the pot became a reality. Keeping this viewpoint in mind, it is stated in the Nyâya and other Shâstras that out of a true or real cause an unreal or untrue effect arises. In other words, from an existing truth (mud), an untruth (the pot at that point of time) came into being. In Sâmkhya, we find a statement diametrically opposed to this Doctrine. The Sâmkhyans contend that from the real or the true only the real or the true can arise. In reality, nothing is created. That which was not within our experience earlier comes within our experience now. We call that alone as a substance that has come into being. This like some substance which is hidden behind a curtain, and when the agent draws the curtain aside, the substance can be seen. In the same way, the effect is already hidden in the cause, the agent merely exposes it. The agent actually does not create it. He merely makes it visible. When the effect was invisible, even then it was present in the cause. Therefore, like the cause, the effect is also true or real.

This line of argument or debate is also called 'parinâmavâd' (the transformation argument). The term 'parinâm' *impels* that the material cause itself gets transformed into the form of the effect. "सर्वे हि परिणामिनो भावाः ऋते चितिशक्तेः" "*Sarve hi parinâmino bhavaha hrute chitishakteha*" which means that with the exception of the truth of the animate thing or the life principle, every-

thing else is subject to conversion or transformation. This transformation to future states takes place all the time. The followers of Nyâya say that from milk is created curds but the Sâmkhyans say that milk is transformed into the form of curds. In other words, the milk gets converted into curds. In the Nyâya Doctrine, milk is the material cause and curds are the effect thereof. In the opinion of Sâmkhya, milk merely changes form into curds. Hence there can be no presumption of the rationale of cause and effect. And because, the milk gets transformed into the shape of curds, this logic is called 'parinâmavâd'.

The Concept of 'Moksha' in Sâmkhya

In the Sâmkhya Doctrine, the attainment of 'moksha' is not regarded as the attainment of anything particularly special because when the Purusha, with the help of the knowledge of discrimination, frees itself from prakruti that by itself is deemed moksha. Although, it is Prakruti which is subject to bondage and not the Purusha, yet it appears as if the Purusha is in bondage. It is because of this ignorance that the Purusha is unable to remember that it is different from prakruti. This is called bandhan (bondage). And when with the help of the knowledge of discrimination, the knowledge of the differences is clearly understood, that is moksha. In the Sâmkhya Teaching, moksha does not mean reaching a formless state with no attributes. It is separation from Prakruti which is verily moksha.

The main aim of Sâmkhya is to free the Purusha from the bonds of Prakruti. After understanding the true nature of the 24

Truths as they really are, the subsequent realisation that the 25th Truth is not bound by these 24 Truths is the very knowledge which secures mukti (freedom or moksha). Actually, the Âtma-Purusha is not bound nor is it free nor is it caught up in the wheels of birth & rebirths. It is Prakruti which is subject to rebirths.

Just as some dancer takes leave from the stage after entertaining an audience, in the same manner, Prakruti and Purusha after exhibiting their forms, take leave by themselves.

* * * * *



YOGA DARSHANA

“चित्तस्य वृत्तिमनुरुध्य सुसाधनाभिर्जीवः

समाधिमधिगच्छति यन्मतेन ।

योगास्तथा वसुमिता अधियोगशास्त्र,

येनाश्रिता मम पतञ्जलये नमोऽस्मै ॥” (ऋषिः)

“*Chittasya vrittimanurudhhya susâdhanâbhirjivaha
samâdhimadhigachhati yanmatena I
Yogâstatha vasumitâ adhiyogashâstra
Yenasritâ mama patanjalaye namoasme II*”

The Theist Sânkhya Darshana founded by Maharishi Patanjali and the Doctrines of Munis (Sages) like Hiranyagarbha, Yagnyavalkya and others, will now be discussed. The Sankhya Darshana propounded by Sage Kapil is called ‘Nirishvara Sânkhya’ (Atheistic Sânkhya or Sânkhya without Ishvara). This is because in their Darshana, they do not accept any entity whatsoever called God. The Yoga Darshana however, while concurring with all the views about Ishvara given in Sankhya Darshan, nevertheless holds a differing viewpoint with regard to Ishvara. They accept Ishvara

as a unique form of Purusha. Hence this Darshana is well known by the name of 'Sveshvar Sankhya' (The Theistic Sânkhya or Sânkhya with Ishvara). Since the Sânkhya and Yoga Darshanas have congruent views with regard to all other tenets, these two are called as 'समानतंत्र' 'Samântantra' (similar or allied esoteric treatises). They are complementary to each other. Whereas a critical examination and analysis of the doctrine is contained in the Sânkhya Darshana, the Yoga Darshana examines the practical aspects of the same doctrine. The etymology or derivation of the term 'yoga' is from the verbal root 'yuj' (to yoke or to join). "युज्यते अनेन आत्मना सह इति योगः" "*Yujyate anena âtmana saha iti yogaha* I The aim of Yoga is to yoke the Jivâtma with the Paramâtma. The first and foremost vision of the older Yoga Darshana was centred on the Hiranyagarbha (golden womb regarded as the source of creation of the manifest universe). However, Patanjali through the Yoga Sutrâs enunciated by him, made the Yoga Darshana all encompassing. The Yoga Sutrâs are the most ancient available sacred text of Yoga Darshana.

This Darshana was propounded around the First Century BCE. This is the opinion of most analysts. Patanjali was born in a place near Peshwar (now in Pakistan). This Rishi has written explanatory treatises on the great texts of the Vedas, Mahabhashya (Grammar) and Yoga. Maharishi Patanjali has been praised in the following shloka written by someone:-

“योगेन चित्तस्य पदेन वचां मलं शरीरस्य च वैद्यकेन ।

योपाऽकरोत् तं प्रवरं मुनीना पतंजलिं पांजलिरानतोऽस्मि ॥”

“*Yogena chittasya padena vâchâm malam sharirasya cha vaidyakena I*

*Yoh apâkarot tam pravaram muniinâm patanjalin
 pânjalirântoasmi II*

This shloka states that by means of Yoga, the mind is rendered pure and wholesome, by means of Mahâbhâshya (Grammar) speech is rendered pure and wholesome, and by means of the Vaidya (âyurvedic practitioner) the body is made pure and wholesome. Let there be salutations with joined hands to Bhagawan Patanjali who is instrumental in the purification of the mind, speech, and body, all the three in this manner. The fundamental sacred text of this Darshana is the 'पातञ्जलयोगदर्शन' 'Pâtanjalayogadarshana' composed by Maharishi Patanjali. In this there are Four Chapters or Books called 'Samâdhi' (state of perfect blissful, spiritual absorption of thought); 'Sâdhan' (discipline or practice); 'Vibhuti' (might or greatness); and 'Kaivalya' (state of being absolutely and complete free and alone).

In the First Book

'योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः' '*Yogaschittavrittinirodhaha*' – Arresting the ideational-choice making movements of the mind is Yoga. After giving out the characteristic definition of Yoga in this Sutrâ, instructions with regard to Samâdhi have been given in great detail. In the Yoga Treatise, two types of Samâdhi have been mentioned— "*Sampragnyât*" (conscious samâdhi) and '*Asampragnyât*' (supraconscious samâdhi). Separating oneself from all doubts, misapprehensions, contrariety, to remain completely absorbed in the inherent nature of the comprehended object is called Sampragnyât Samâdhi. In the state of Asampragnyât Samâdhi, the distinction between the one meditating and the object of meditation, namely God, is obliterated.

In the Second Book

‘तपः स्वाध्याययेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोग’ (पातयो. सी. २-१) “*Tapaha svâdhyâyayeshvarapranidhânâni kriyâ yogaha*” (Pat. Yo. Su 2/1) – Offering all of one’s karmas to Ishvara alone is ‘Kriyâ Yoga’ (Yoga in Action). Despite following the teachings of the Sutrâs so far, if an individual has still not been able to yoke himself to the state of samâdhi, for such a person certain practical aspects of Yoga comprising of five means which are externally acting such as abstentions, etc have been prescribed.

In the Third Book

‘देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा’ “*Deshabandshchittasya dhâranâ*” – When the mind is held within the emptiness of space, it is called ‘dhâranâ. In this Third Book, injunctions have been given regarding the practice of ‘dhâranâ’, ‘dhyâna’ (single-minded, steadfast meditation), and ‘samâdhi’.

In the Fourth Book

‘जन्मौषधिमन्त्रातपः समाधिजाः सिद्धयः’
 “*Janmâushadhimantratapaha samâdhijâha siddhaha*” – As this Sutrâ explains, in this Book, five types of siddhis (extraordinary accomplishments or superhuman powers or faculties) namely ‘janma’ (by birth), ‘aushadhi’ (by medicinal herbs), ‘mantra’ (by incantations), ‘tapaha’ (by severe austerities), and ‘samâdhi’ (spiritual absorption), have been explained at length by Maharishi Patanjali. He has also clearly pointed out that the supreme goal is ‘kaivalya’ (the state of being completely free and absolutely alone).

Maharishi Patanjali has given a detailed account of ‘Ashtâng Yoga’ (eight-limbed yoga) in this Darshana of his. ‘यम नियमासन

प्राणायाम प्रत्याहार धारणा ध्यान समाधयोष्टाङ्गानि' (योग. सू. २-२७) “*Yama niyamâsana prânâyâma pratyâhara dhâranâ dhyana samâdhayoh stâvangâni*” (Yog, su, 2/29). These eight limbs pertain to various appropriate rules for training and practice. Out of these, five are termed as ‘Bahirang Yoga’ (literally meaning Yoga which colours the exterior, external means or externally acting). These are ‘**yama**’ (restraint or abstentions), ‘**niyama**’ (observances), ‘**âsana**’ (body posture & discipline), ‘**prânâyama**’ (breath-control), and ‘**pratyâhâr**’ (abstraction) which are external means or externally acting because after making the mind stable and firmly rooted, one can sequentially reach the state of ‘*samâdhi*’. Here, ‘**dhârana**’ (concentration), ‘**dhyâna**’ (single-minded meditation) and ‘**samâdhi**’ (spiritual absorption) are the three internally acting practices or internal means of Yoga.

Let us now analyse ‘yama’, ‘niyama’, ‘âsana’, ‘prânâyama’, and ‘pratyâhâr’ briefly.

‘यम’ YAMA

The Seers of Yoga Darshana accept ‘*Âhimsâ*’ (non-violence in thought word, and deed), ‘*Satya*’ (truthfulness in word and thought), ‘*Asteya*’ (non-covetousness), ‘*Brahmachârya*.’ (Celibacy), ‘*Aparigraha*’ (non-possessiveness) as the five abstentions. These great vows are the Emperors of all Vows. These vows become great vows only when they are not bound by the limitations of caste, country, period and time.

‘अहिंसा’ AHIMSÂ

Ahimsâ means that at all times and forever, one should not cause any kind of injury or suffering to any living creature. The intellect is the controller of ideas like ahimsa, cruelty, etc. It alone decides what is good or bad and then conditions the speech

and the mind and makes them act also. Therefore, the abandonment of cruelty in thought, word, and deed for all times is complete form of ahimsâ.

‘सत्य’ Satya

Satya is the second limb or portion of Yama. Whosoever is the same in thought, word, and deed, whose speech has an agreeable purpose, whose mind infers anything exactly based on what is actually seen and who comes to any conclusion only with the help of the intellect or who speaks with the same voice and concentrates on the intellect, is regarded as truthful. It implies that when the speech, conduct, etc of a man who while enlightening another individual according to his own knowledge, is found to be treacherous or which is meant to cause delusion, even towards such a man, to show compassion or in other words not to harbour a murderous attitude. That speech which causes pain or injury to any living being is not accepted as truthful; in fact it is a sin. Such truthfulness in the garb of merit can only result in trouble. Thus, after careful examination of all aspects, speech uttered which is conducive to the good of all is alone truthfulness. There can be no other clarification of truthfulness more lucid than this one.

‘अस्तेय’ ASTEYA

Asteya is the third limb of the practice of Yama. The term ‘*steya*’ means ‘to make one’s own anything unauthorised’. Discarding this tendency in thought, word, and deed as well, is called ‘*asteya*’. Seizing or accepting anything belonging to another in violation of the injunctions of the Scriptures is ‘*steya*’. Not entertaining the slightest thought about taking anyone else’s property is defined as ‘*Baudhik Asteya*’ (Non-Covetousness of the

Mind). Not discussing anything about seizing or taking anybody else's property is termed '*Vâchik Asteya*' (Non-Covetousness of the Mind). In accord with the practice of asteya in one's thought and speech, not using one's body in any activity to steal, rob or otherwise take possession illegally in any other manner, anything belonging to another is called '*Shâirik Asteya*' (Non-Covetousness of the Body).

‘ब्रह्मचर्य’ **BRAHMÂCHÂRYA**

This fourth limb of Yama is of great importance. In this Doctrine, considerable emphasis is laid on the observance of ‘Brahmâchârya’ (celibacy or continence). The term ‘Brahmâchârya’ implies the practical observance such a mode of life as well conduct as will continuously take the aspirant closer and closer to God. The observance of Brahmâchârya should be in thought (mind), word (speech), and deed (bodily).

‘बौद्धिक ब्रह्मचर्य’ ‘*Baudik Brahmâchârya*’ (celibacy/continence of the mind) – Not allowing any sensual thought to form or take root in the mind constitutes abstention with regard to celibacy/continence of the mind.

‘वाचिक ब्रह्मचर्य’ ‘*Vâchik Brahmâchârya*’ (celibacy/continence of speech) – Keeping one's speech under control, never discussing sensuous topics is deemed abstention by celibacy/continence of speech.

‘शारीरिक ब्रह्मचर्य’ ‘*Shâirik Brahmâchârya*’ (celibacy/continence of the body) – Observance of celibacy/continence with

respect the organs of generation and other organs of the senses is deemed abstention by celibacy/continence of the body.

‘अपरिग्रहः’ APARIGRAHA

This is the fifth limb of Yama. ‘*Aparigraha*’ (non-possessiveness, non-hoarding) should also be observed with regard to all the three aspects, namely thought, word and deed. Non-acceptance of objects of enjoyment is also ‘*Aparigraha*’. Not acquiring and hoarding things like wealth, grains, articles, land etc more than what is actually necessary is termed the abstention by practicing non-possessiveness and non-hoarding.

‘नियम’ NIYAMA

Maharishi Patanjali considers ‘*Niyama*’ (rules of observance) as the second limb of Yoga. This limb is also divided into five categories. ‘*Saucha santosh tapaha svâdhyâya ishvarapranidhânâni niyamâha*’ (Yog.2/32). Maintenance of the purity/cleanliness of the mind and the body is ‘*Saucha*’. Not having greed or burning desire is ‘*Santosh*’ (contentment). The disciplining of the body means of fasting and other austerities is ‘*Tapaha*’ (austerity, self-discipline). Regular recitation of the Vedas and other Holy Texts in the prescribed manner is called ‘*Svâdhyâya*’ (self-study). Surrendering or handing over all your karmas to Ishvara is called ‘*Ishvarapranidhan*’.



NYÂYA DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

“निःश्रेयसाधिगतिरत्र तु षोडशानां
ज्ञानात्प्रमाणमिह वेत्ति चतुष्टमं यः ।
ईशा जगत् सृजति यस्य मते स्वतन्त्रो
न्यायप्रवर्तकमहामुनये नमोऽस्मै ॥”

*“Nihareyasâdhigatiratra tu shodshânâm
Gnyânâtpramânamiha veti chatustham yaha
Isha jagat srujati yaysya mate svatanthro
Nyâyapravartakmahamunaye namoasmâi ”*

A tenet of Nyâya Darshana is that when knowledge of the truth or reality is acquired then moksha is attained. In this state, all forms of happiness-sorrow are completely destroyed. A second name of this Darshana is ‘Akshpâd’. The main scriptural text of the Nyâya Darshana is the ‘NyâyaSutrâs’ which contains five Books or Chapters and was written by Bhagawan Gautam.

In the Vedic tradition, the Nyâya and Vaisheshik Darshanas

are given considerable importance. Nyâya Darshana's Âchârya is Bhagawan Gautam and the Âchârya of Vaisheshik Darshana is Kanâd Rishi. In both these Darshanas, the sources of valid knowledge and the topics to be proved or discussed have been dealt with extensively. Both these Darshanas differ in their fundamentals but in the present times, they appear to be almost alike. But both follow the analytical methodology for investigation of the truth.

THE AIM OF NYÂYA

The main aim of Nyâya is to enter into the investigation of any topic by first considering the etymology of the fundamental constituents defining that topic. Topics pertaining to right knowledge should be tested using the tenets of logic. Spiritual questions should be pondered with discrimination, distinguishing truth from falsehood. In the Nyâya Darshana, the Science of Psychology, the Science of Logic, The Science of Spirituality, and the Vedânta Scriptures have been discussed. Nyâya Darshana is also called 'Tattva Vidya' (Science of Knowledge) or 'Vâd Vidya' (Science of Discourse or Debate). 'Tarka' (Dialectics & Logic) is a special part of Nyâya. It should be noted that Nyâya is not just the Science of Dialectics & Logic but it is a Science of Analysis, Reasoning & Judgement. Therefore, Nyâya Darshana is regarded as the seed of progress in all fields. The aim, characteristics, and scrutiny of all substances have been done in this treatise. The dictum that we should accept whatever is written in the various Treatises or Texts without thinking is unacceptable to the Nyâyikâs (followers of Nyâya). Whatever is written in a Treatise or Text

should be supported by the Vedas. It should satisfy logical analysis and reasoning. The methods of revelation of all the Darshanas have been influenced by the Nyâya Darshana. All the Darshanas are compelled to seek the help of the Nyâya Darshana.

It is said in Sanskrit –‘कणादं पाणिनीयं च सर्वशस्त्रोपकारकम्’ “*Kânâdam pâniniyam cha sarvashâstropakâram I*”. It means that the Sciences of Nyâya of Kanâd and Grammar of Panini are indispensable for understanding all the Darshanas. Nyâya is a pillar of support in the study of Sanskrit. It is the entrance door for all knowledge of truth or reality. Without study of Nyâya, the mind cannot become sharp as well as subtle or very fine. Without a subtle or very fine mind, it would be difficult to comprehend the Vedas. It is mentioned in the Upanishads – “दृश्यते त्वग्रया बुद्ध्यया सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः” “*Drishyate tvagrayâ buddhyâ suksmayâ suksmadarshibhihi I*”. This means that without a very fine and subtle vision, the extremely subtle and minute form of the Âtma cannot be experienced.

Nyâya Shastra contains the requisite scientific methodology for due consideration and deliberations on all the systems of logic, doctrines, the knowledge of truth or reality etc contained in the entire corpus of human knowledge. The main tenet of Nyâya is the preservation of all the doctrines of creation. Nyâya strives to understand the special nature of the various substances or entities of creation such as the ‘panchabhutas’ (the five fundamental elements), ‘kâla’ (time), ‘disha’ (space), ‘prakruti’ (insentient matter), ‘kâran chit’ (causal mind), ‘anu’ (the atoms), and the experience of the ‘âtma’ (the soul), etc.

A tenet of this Darshana is that by Ishvara's design this Universe has been built up from atoms. Therefore, in this Darshana, Ishvara has been accepted as the Creator.

Padarthâs

This Darshana has accepted seven padarthâs (categories of realities) and four sources of valid or true knowledge. The padârthâs are 'dravya' (the repository of qualities & energies or substance), 'guna' (quality), 'karma' (past deeds or actions or motions), 'sâmânya' (uniformity or generality), 'visesh' (particular variety or individuality), 'samvâya' (inherence), and 'abhâva' (negation or nothingness or non-being).

Dravya

Dravya (substance) is of nine types. 'Prithvi' (earth), 'Jal' (water), 'Tej' (fire or light), 'Vâyû' (air), 'Âkâsh' (ether), 'Kâla' (time), 'Dishâ' (space), 'Âtma' (soul), and 'Man' (mind).

Guna

The Gunas total 24 in number. These are 'Roopa' (form or colour), 'Rasa' (taste), 'Gandha' (odour or smell), 'Sparsha' (touch or tangibility), 'Sankhyâ' (numbers), 'Parimân' (measure or dimension), 'Pruthaktva' (distinctness or individuality), 'Samyoga' (conjunction), 'Vibhâga' (division or disjunction), 'Paratva' (distance, degree, or level), 'Aparatva' (proximity), 'Gurutva' (gravity or weight), 'Dravatva' (fluidity), 'Sneha' (viscosity or stickiness), 'Shabda' (sound), 'Buddhi' (cognition or knowing), 'Sukha' (pleasure or happiness), 'Dukha' (pain or sorrow), 'Ichhâ' (desire or longing), 'Dvesha' (aversion or hatred), 'Prayatna' (effort or striving), 'Dharma' (good conduct or merit), 'Adharma' (bad conduct or demerit), and 'samskâr' (faculty of impression or self-reproductive quality).

Karmas

Karmas (past deeds or actions or motions) are of 5 types – ‘*Utkshepan*’ (elevation or throwing upward), ‘*Apkshepan*’ (depression or throwing downwards), ‘*Âkunchan*’ (contraction), ‘*Prasâran*’ (dilation or expansion), and ‘*Gamanâni*’ (general motion).

Sâmânya

Sâmânya (universality or generality) are of two types – ‘*Param*’ (higher) and ‘*aparam*’ (lower).

Visesh

Substances in this category are eternal.

Samvâya

The ‘*Samvâya*’ (inherence) category is unique.

Abhâva

Padârthas belonging to the ‘*Abhâva*’ (negation or nothingness or non-being) category are of 4 types – ‘*Prâgabhâva*’ (antecedent or non-productive negation or non-being), ‘*Pradhvamsa Abhâva*’ (consequent or destructive negation or non-being), ‘*Atyantâ Abhâva*’ (absolute or ultimate negation or non-being), and ‘*Anyonya Abhâva*’ (reciprocal or disjunctive negation or non-being).

Thus the Nyâya Darshan accepts the seven padârthas as described above.

Pramânas

Pramânas (means or sources of valid or right knowledge) are of 4 types – ‘*Pratyaksh*’ (direct perception), ‘*Anumâna*’ (inference), ‘*Upmana*’ (comparison), and ‘*Shabda*’ (verbal testimony).

Pratyaksh

That knowledge, which is obtained through the organs of perception and due to proximity of substances, and further which is free from delusion and is inherently conclusive like the knowledge of a pot obtained by seeing it through the eyes, is called ‘*Pratyaksh*’ (direct perception).

Anumâna

Anumâna is the inference drawn from recollection, reflection, and consideration of the ‘*ling*’ (symptoms or the evidence). That which gives knowledge or understanding of the substance with the help of ‘*vyâpti*’ (inherent relationship between cause and effect) is termed ‘*ling*’ or ‘*hetu*’ (cause). ‘*Vyâpti*’ is the principle of concomitant relationship that exists between cause and effect like the presumption that wherever there is smoke there must be an underlying fire. In this manner, using the principle of concomitant relationship, seeing the symptoms we establish ‘*sâdhya*’ or the cause.

Upmâna

‘*Upamâna*’ (analogy or comparison) is the use of existing knowledge of the relationship between a word and a particular substance, by remembering which, we are able to derive knowledge of a new substance similar to the given substance.

Shabda

‘*Shabda*’ (*verbal testimony*) – The words uttered or statement made by a reliable spokesman (trustworthy) is called ‘*Shabda*’. For instance, after listening to the words of the Vedas on the Âtma, when one gets knowledge of the Âtma, it is the ‘*Shabda*’ source of right knowledge.

Thus, the four pramânas as described above are accepted in Nyâya Darshana.

Nav Dravya (The Nine Dravyas)

Amongst the nine 'Dravyas' (substances which have different states/modifications or which serve as the substratum of all the respective associated states/modifications), five are the 'panchamahâbhuts'. Amongst these, four such as the earth etc are eternal at the atomic level but transitory or perishable the practical aggregate level. The fifth one 'Âkâsh' is eternal. 'Kâl' (time), 'Disha' (space), 'Âtma' (soul), and 'Man' (mind) are also eternal. 'Kâl' is unitary and a continuous whole but for practical purposes, it is divided into past, present, and future.

Space also is a continuous whole but for practical purposes, space has been divided into ten directions. We use the various directions such as east, west, north, south etc artificially divided by us for practical usage. Therefore, as such, space has no particular preferred orientation.

Âtma (soul) is of two types. They are the 'Jivâtma' (soul) and the 'Paramâtma' (Supreme Soul or God). The Jivâtma is different in every body, and it is eternal. It has limited knowledge.

The Paramâtma is one only and unique. He is all knowing. He is all pervading. He is all powerful. In this manner, Nyâya Darshana accepts that the Jivâtma and the Paramâtma are two separate and distinct entities. Nyâya Darshana is a proponent of duality. This concept of duality has been accepted Sâṅkhya, Yoga, Mimâsa and all the other Vishnava Drshanas.

Ishvara

Nyâya recognises the existential reality of God. God dispenses the fruits of karmas to every sentient being strictly according to their respective karmas. The operation of this principle is not directly visible; nevertheless, it takes place according to the will of Ishvara and under His stewardship. Ishvara alone is the Creator of the Universe, its Upholder, and Destroyer. However, Ishvara is but the symbolic cause. The natural or effective cause is the atomic system. Certain Darshanas regard Ishvara as the symbolic as well as the natural or the effective cause. But the followers of Nyâya consider Ishvara as only a symbolic cause and attribute actual creation to the atomic system. Actually, according to this Darshana, Ishvara is a special Âtma endowed with suitable power who runs the Universe. He is all pervasive. He is of the nature of existence, knowledge, and bliss of infinite endowment. He is forever free of false knowledge, delusion, carelessness, negligence, errors, and is yoked to learning and effort. The process of creation as confined to the aggregation of atoms also takes place according to Ishvara's wish alone.

Jivâtma

According to the Nyâya Darshana, the Jivâtma (soul) is but a 'dravya' (substance). It is ancient and eternal. This means that it is without a beginning and without an end. Desire, aversion, intention or resolve, sorrow, happiness, intellect, and knowledge are qualities or attributes of the soul. The Âtma experiences ego-consciousness. Without the Âtma, no organ of the body can function. The Âtma alone runs the body. The organs of the body are present only in the form of certain available means or tools for a purpose. Without the Âtma, the organs become useless or

unusable. For instance when an object is seen with the eyes, its cognition is by the Âtma and not by the eyes. Even after the eyes are shut, the mental recollection, “I saw such an object” is due to the knowledge acquired by the Âtma only. In other words, knowledge is an attribute or quality of the Âtma. The body perishes, but despite the destruction of the body the existential reality of the Âtma continues which means that the Âtma is everlasting.

The Parmânu (Atomic)

Hypothesis of Nyâya

In the Bharathiya Darshana Tradition, followers of all Darshanas consider that amongst Prakruti or Purusha or Ishvara, one of them is the chief or the principle cause of the creation of the Universe. For instance, Sankhya holds that Prakruti is the principle cause for the emergence of the Universe. Mimâmsa Darshan contends that the prakruti endowed Paramâtma alone is the principle cause of the birth of the world. However, the Âchârya of Nyâya Darshana, Kanâd was the first to declare that the creation of the Universe is not due either to Prakruti or prakruti endowed Paramâtma but due to the inherent atomic system. It was Maharishi Kanâd who first proposed that the smallest reality, defined as anything which has no constituent parts or which cannot be sub-divided further, is the atom. In this manner, the science-minded Rishis of Bharath were the first to propound the Atomic Theory of Matter. When two atoms combine, they form a ‘dvayanuk’ (a molecule of two atoms or a dyad, namely the principle of a pair), when three combine, we get a ‘trasarenu’ (a triad

molecule), and when four combine, we get a 'chaturnak' (quadru-ple molecule). In this manner, innumerable atoms and molecules as described above combine with each other to form the earth, the moon, the sun and the stars whose movements are visible to us. When they separate, it results in the destruction of the earth and other heavenly bodies. The concept of creation through atoms has been acknowledged in the Buddhist and Jain Darshanas. But Maharishi Kanâd alone has presented a refined and sophisticated atomic theory.

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VAISHESHIK DARSHANA

“भावाः षडेव मुनिना विहिता, तदन्ते
चान्योऽप्यभाव इति सप्तपदार्थशास्त्रम् ।
सामान्यवर्णनपरोऽपि विशेषरूपोऽसौ
नित्यमेव जयति प्रथितः कणादः ॥” (ऋषि)

In the Vedic Tradition, Nyâya and Vaisheshik Darshanas are given considerable importance. The Âchârya of Nyâya Darshana is Bhagawan Gautam and the Âchârya of Vaisheshik Darshana is Kanâd Rishi. In both these Darshanas, the various means of valid or right knowledge have been discussed at length. Both Darshanas are fundamentally different but in the present times, they appear to be alike. Both contain an analytical approach to the investigation into and the refinement of the knowledge of the truth.

With regard to the nature of the soul, its ‘dharma’ (code of right conduct), and the creation of the universe from atoms, these two Darshanas, have the same tenets. However, the main thrust of Vaisheshik Darshan is the analysis of objects and investigation of practical experiences.

The term ‘Vaisheshik’ has originated from the word ‘Vishesh’ (particular variety or individuality or special). Kanâd Rishi has accepted six ‘padârthas’ (category of realities), one of which is ‘Vishesh’. Although other Darshanas do not recognise such a ‘padârtha’, because the Nyâya and Vaisheshik Darshanas accept this particular ‘padârtha’, the latter Darshana came to be named as ‘Vaisheshik Darshana’. ‘Vishesh Padârthas’ are not accessible through the sense organs or by experience. They can only be grasped by the intellect.

The Sutrâs of Kanâd Rishi

There are ten chapters in the Kanâd Sutrâs. The first chapter contains a description of the padârthas (categories of reality). In the second, the ‘dravyâs’ (substances) are discussed. In the third, the ‘âtma’ (soul) and ‘buddhi’ (intellect) are analysed. In the fourth, the body and its constituents have been considered. In the fifth, the tenets of karma have been revealed. In the sixth, Dharma as expounded in the Shrutis (heard scriptures) has been described in detail. In the seventh, ‘samvâya’ (inherence or the relationship between the whole and its constituents, qualities and modifications) is examined. In the eighth, there is a discussion about knowledge and its nature and forms. In the ninth chapter, special knowledge has been dealt with, and the tenth, contains a description of the qualities of the Âtma.

In this Darshana, the main emphasis is on ‘padârthas’. Nevertheless, Rishi Kanâd has commenced his sacred treatise with ‘Dharmajignyâsa’ (inquiry into dharma). This is because in order to understand the true nature of substances, knowledge of dharma

is a fundamental prerequisite.

Padârthas

Vaisheshik Darshana like Nyâya accepts seven types of 'Padârthas' (categories of reality). These are 'Dravya', 'Gunas', 'Karma', 'Sâmânya', 'Visesh', 'Samavâya', and 'Abhâva'. It may be noted that 'Dravya', 'Guna', and 'Karma' belong to the 'Dravya' group. In other words they are exact and accurately estimated. The remainder 'padârthas' are mental constructs which are intellectual topics.

Dravya

In this category too, nine types are recognised. They are earth, water, light, air, ether, time, space, âtma, and the mind.

In this manner, just like Nyâya Darshana' Vaisheshika Darshana also accepts Guna, Karma, Sâmânya, Visesh, Samvâya, and Abhâva.

Rishi Kanâd's doctrine is that by acquiring true knowledge of the padârthas as they actually are, man will be able to arise, make progress and secure moksha or final liberation. In his treatise, Kanâd Rish has not made any mention of 'Ishvara'. According to him, the creation of the Universe is due to an unseen cause. Further, the atoms as well as the âtmas are also subservient to this unseen cause. It appears that later his disciples substituted 'Ishvara' for the 'unseen cause'. This is probably due to the fact that because the creation of the universe was hitherto attributed to an insentient and inert entity like the system of atoms which was incapable of doing anything by itself, the need

was felt to attribute creation to a sentient being. And that could only be a sentient Ishvara. For this reason, Ishvara is accepted in this Darshana. It is by the wish of Ishvara that activity in the atomic system begins, and therefore the atoms are dependent upon Ishvara.

Thus by acknowledging the reality of the Jivâtma as well as Ishvara, Vaisheshik Darshana is an advocate of duality.

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PURVA MIMÂMSA DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

“वेदोक्तकर्मसरणिः स तु यागरूपो
विध्यर्थवादयुगलं परिलम्बवानः ।
धर्मो भवेत्किल ततो जननान्तरेषु
कर्मैव सर्वमिति जैमिनये नमोऽस्तु ॥” (ऋषि)

The aim of both the Purva Mimâmsa (deliberation on and investigation into the prior portions of the Vedas) and the Uttara Mimâmsa (deliberation on and investigation into the concluding parts of the Vedas) is to unravel and make clear the mysterious and complex hymns of the Vedas so as to facilitate proper interpretation of the Vedic Texts. The Purva Mimâmsa was composed in connection with the injunctions or commands contained in the prior portions of the Vedas, namely the ‘Karmakând’ (ritualistic portion of the Vedas) while the ‘Uttara Mimâsa’ was written bearing in mind the hymns in the concluding parts of the ‘Shrutis’ (heard scriptures) relating to ‘gyân upasana’ (adoration and pursuit of knowledge).

The 'Karmakând' described in the opening part of the Vedas has been discussed in the Purvamimâmsa. The Purvamimâsa comes first not just chronologically but from the development or evolutionary aspect also, Purvamimâsa comes before the Vedânta Darshana of Uttaramimâmsa. We shall now take up the discussion on Purvamimâsa.

The Âchârya of this Darshan is Maharishi Jaimini. He is the founder of the Purva Mimâmsa Scriptural Science.

The Mimâmsa Scriptural Science as a whole consists of twenty chapters. Of these, sixteen deal with Purvamimâsa and the remainder four only pertain to Uttaramimâsa. The meaning of the term 'Mimâsa' is 'deliberation or the exercise of judgment or reason'. In the main, this Mimâsa deals with the 'Karmakânda' (ritualistic) topics. Consequently, it presents difficulty in comprehension as it is pregnant with esoteric and enigmatic teachings. This scriptural treatise is largely the province of the Brahmin priests. From the point of view of Hindu custom and practice, this Mimâsa Darshana is very useful. The mission of this Mimâsa doctrine is to examine the mutual connection and applicability of all opposing or contrary doctrines in various heard scriptures and thereby firmly establish the validity of the Karmakânda.

This Darshana was propounded to enable the correct interpretation and practice of the many enjoined karmas like 'yagnya' (sacrificial rites), 'homa' (offerings into a consecrated fire), etc, the intent performers, the authorities, the opportune times and

other related topics.

Shabar Swami has written a ‘Bhâshya’ (traditional classical commentary quoting and making clear each term) on this scriptural science. Kumârila, the guru of Bhavabhuti, has written a ‘vartik’ (detailed commentary on whatever is mentioned, not mentioned and wrongly mentioned) on both the Jaimini Sutrâs as well as the Shabar Bhasya. After this, many commentaries and monographs were written.

The Indifference to Ishvara

Jaimini restrains or puts a stop to dialectics concerning the intellect as well as Ishvara. He regards the Vedas alone as Ishvara. There is no God other than the Vedas. The Vedas are ancient and eternal. The Vedas are independent. The Vedas themselves constitute the valid source of right knowledge. It needs no other source of right knowledge.

The foundations of Dharma are the Vedas. All Doctrines are also based on the Vedas. Since all the doctrines, with the aim of revealing their viewpoints through the Sutrâs of their respective sacred texts, begin their opening Sutrâs with, ‘अथातो धर्मजिज्ञासा । अथातो भक्ति जिज्ञासा । अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा’। “*Athâtho dharmajignyâsa I Athâtho bhakti jignyâsa I Athâtho brahma jignyâsa I*” (Now therefore the inquiry into Dharma/ Now therefore the inquiry into Bhakti/ Now therefore the inquiry into Brahman) and similar Sutrâs ; it is clear that whether one performs sacrificial rituals or practices devotion, or acquires knowledge of the Brahman, it should be right in accordance with the Vedas. According to the

tenets of Purvamimâsa, the fruits of the performance of ordained karmas yields dharma. In this system, there is no need for Ishvara.

Mimsakâs (followers of Purvamimâsa) are not proponents of one supreme Ishvara. They are advocates of multiple Gods. In one portion of the Purvamimâsa, many different Gods have been pointed out. Oblations of sacrificial rites are to be offered to these Gods. Here, there is no necessity for a supreme Ishvara. For the proper observance of Dharma also there is no need for one supreme Ishvara. This is because, by giving these Gods all the oblations and offerings, Dharma can be properly observed. They believe in propitiating different Gods, 'Grahas' (planetary deities), 'Yakshas' (a class of demi-gods or spirits of nature), 'Râkshasâs' (Demons), 'Bhut-Pretâdi' (ghosts, manes, and other spirits), and in overcoming their difficulties or troubles by making sacrifices. The acceptance of 33 crores of Gods in the Hindu Dharma is basically due to the awareness generated by the Mimâsakâs.

The Eternal Nature of the Vedas

The Vedas are not subject to time. They have no epoch or era. Consider for instance, a book about which certain questions are usually asked like when was it written, where was it written, and so on. Such questions are easily answered by providing information about the period and the place, etc. Many have asked similar questions about the period and the place pertaining to the composition of the Vedas. There is but one answer to that. The Vedas are timeless. It is ancient and eternal. It is without a beginning and an end. It did not come into being like other books.

That which has no beginning is ‘*anâdi*’ (without a beginning) and that which has no end is ‘*anant*’ (without an end). Just as the Vedas are without a beginning, the Vedas have no end either. They can never come to an end. In other words, the Vedas can never be destroyed. Yes, the Vedas can remain temporarily hidden or become lost or concealed from view. But given the opportune moment and the right Purusha, they will always emerge again and spread far and wide.

The Vedas are of Divine Origin

The Vedas have not been created or written by any ‘Purusha’ (mortal being). God himself has sung the Vedas from his lotus lips. Therefore the Vedas are not of mortal origin. For instance, whatever works we see in the world has some human being or the other who is the ‘*karta*’ (agent of action or the doer) behind those works or actions. Hence such works are called ‘*paurusheya*’ (of human origin or agency). But the work done by Bhagawan cannot be of mortal origin.

The Vedas are therefore not the creation of any purusha. Therefore they are ‘*apaurusheya*’ (of divine origin).

The Doctrine of ‘Apurva’ (Link between Karma & Fruits)

Âchârya Jaimini’s tenet is that the fruits of karmas automatically accrue to the doer. God is not needed in this dispensation. This is because if someone observes an aspect of Dharma, a corresponding ‘*Apurva*’ (a potential, imperceptible force which will act as the essential link between the work and the ordained

fruits thereof) is created. It is this 'shakti' (potential force) which allots the fruits of karmas. That 'Shakthi' is called 'Apurva'.

However, this 'Apurva' tenet has been opposed by most thinkers. Their contention is that the so called '*Apurva Shakti*' (potential force) is itself 'jad' (inert non-sentient matter). In that case, how could it dispense the fruits of actions? But the Mimâsakâs initially regarded this reasoning as subsidiary or of secondary importance. Subsequently, they accepted that the 'apurva' force that arises is in a sense given direction by Ishvara. This was as far as the Mimamsa went with regard to according a place for Ishvara.

The Âtma

The Âtma is entirely different from the body, the sense-organs, and the intellect. It is the 'kartâ' (agent) and the (bhoktâ), the one who experiences or the enjoyer. In order to experience the joys and sorrows of the body, it is but a temporary resident therein. The sense-organs are only instruments which enable this experience. Yoked to the intellect, the Âtmas acquire knowledge. The Âtma experiences both internal as well as external joys and sorrows. The body is the creation of Prakruti. The Âtma runs the body. Nevertheless, the Âtma is distinctly different from the body. It is the 'drushtâ' (seer) and the enjoyer. It is omnipresent. It is eternal. It is indestructible. It is countless in number. With the destruction of the body, it does not get destroyed.

Moksha

The Mimâmsa Treatise is a proponent of the philosophy of karma (action). The fruits of karma must necessarily be suf-

ferred or liquidated by experiencing. Karmas in accordance with Vedic injunctions yield happiness while those against, cause sorrow. That in itself is termed 'Punya' (merit) and Pâp' (sin or demerit). The place for experiencing the fruits of merits is "Svarga" (Heaven) and that for sin is "Narka" (Hell). Hence, in the Mimâmsa belief, apart from this World, there is acceptance of other worlds like Heaven and Hell. The concept of Moksha as given in the Uttaramimâmsa is not accepted here. Nevertheless, Rishi Jaimini considers the attainment of Svarga as moksha. Svarga alone is the goal of worldly existence. Dharma alone is the means of attaining Svarga. And the Vedic Karmas such as 'Yagnya' (sacrificial rites) etc alone constitute Dharma. The Âtmas of those who have performed all ordained Vedic Karmas alone ascend to Svarga. By means of karmas performed in the form of sacrificial and other rituals as per Vedic injunctions, moksha in the form of Svarga is obtained. But this moksha is not everlasting. This is because, no sooner the fruits of the karmas get exhausted, one has to return to the 'mrutyu lok' (the world where there is death or the perishable world). This contention of Rishi Jaimini is a noteworthy line of thought. But after that, according to the line of thinking by other Mimâmsaks like Kumaril and Prabhakar, the Âtma's realisation of its own true nature is moksha.

The Redundancy of Sanyâs (Total Renunciation or Asceticism)

The Mimâmsakas have not accepted the necessity of 'sanyas' (total renunciation or asceticism). They consider that, both for obtaining knowledge as well as moksha via knowledge, the very concept of sanyâs is meaningless and fruitless. This is because the only means of securing moksha is the performance of

karmas like yagnya etc. The various utterances in the Vedas concerning 'vidhi' (sacred precepts or rules of observance) and the 'nished' (prohibitions) are proofs or valid means of right knowledge in their own right. Other utterances are only explanatory in nature. They do not carry any special importance. Therefore, one's entire life should be spent in performing 'agnihotra' (vedic ritual of offering oblations in a consecrated fire for desired ends, healing etc). However, in the Sanyâsi's state it is definitely impossible to perform agnihotra karmas. Hence, the Mimâmsakas have not accepted the concept of sanyâs. Now then, being in 'grahasthâshram' (the householder's state) the continued performance of agnihotras for securing Svarga is the chief aim of life.

Mimâmsa Darshana in Brief

The Âchârya of the Mimâmsa Darshana is Jaimini Muni. He regards the Vedas alone as Ishvara. For him, that verily is the supreme truth. The supreme goal of life is the attainment of heaven. The observance of Dharma is the means of attainment of heaven. The various karmas like yagnya, etc, which are in accordance with the Vedas, constitutes Dharma. The Âtma alone is the doer and the enjoyer. It is omnipresent and countless. It is mysterious. The Universe is without a beginning.

One gets the feeling that this Darshana is not fully satisfactory or lacking in some essential aspects. This is because, in this Darshana, there is no discussion about the real nature of Truth, the Âtma, and Prakruti. The Mimâsakas have not been able to go beyond the Karmak ânda and the pursuit of heavenly happiness.



UTTARAMIMÂMSA DARSHANA (PHILOSOPHY)

Amongst the Vedic Darshanas, the sixth and final Darshana is the Uttaramimâsa Darshana. Its other name is ‘Vedânta Darshana’. The meaning of the term ‘Vedânta’ is ‘the end of the Vedas’. Here the word ‘anta’ implies ‘the essence or esoteric philosophy’. In other words, this is the Darshana which tells us about the essence or the philosophic teachings of the Vedas. This Darshana deals with the doctrines propounded in the Upanishads. The main set of sacred texts of this Darshana is called ‘*Prasthânatraya*’ (literally three points of departure but in this context it refers to three canonical sacred texts). Amongst these, the foremost is the ‘*Brahma Sutrâ-Shâririk Sutrâ*’ (the aphorisms dealing with Brahman & the aphorisms dealing with the Âtma living in the body) composed by Krishnadvaipâyan Bâdarâyan. In this Veda Darshana, mantras pertaining to adoration and worship and those concerning pursuit of knowledge have been duly connected and explained.

It is generally agreed that the ‘*Prasthânatraya*’ comprises of the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutrâ, and the Srimad Bhagavad

Geetha. Many pioneering Âchâryas have written commentaries on the Prasthânatraya in the light of their doctrinal perspectives. In the present age, the oldest available commentaries are those written by Âdi Shankarâchârya.

Prior to Shankarya, commentaries on the Prasthânatraya had been written. Evidence of this is contained in Shankarâchârya's own commentaries in which he has made a mention of the earlier commentaries.

Amongst the 100 foremost Vedânta texts, the most important is the Brahma Sutrâs written by Maharishi Bâdarâyan. Therefore, let us first learn about the Brahma Sutrâs.

Bhagawan Bâdarâyan's (Bhagawan Vyâsa) Brahma Sutrâs

The Brahma Sutrâs which showed the way to the true knowledge of the Brahman was composed by Bhagawan Vyâsa. This sacred treatise is also called 'Shâiririk Sutrâ'. Its main topic is to enquire into and make clear the true nature of the Paramâtman (The Supreme Âtma or God), both without attributes and with attributes. According to Shakarâchârya, the total number of Sutrâs is 555. Whereas Sri Râmânujachârya and other Âchâryas believe that it is 544. Sribhagavadpâda Sri Shankarâchârya, Srimadrâmânujâchârya, Sri Madhvâchârya, Sri Nimbârkâchârya, Sri Vallabhâchârya, Sri Yadavprakâsh, Keshav, Neelakanta Swami, Baldev, Vidyânbhikshu, and Sriswâminârayan Bhagawan's disciple Srimuktânand Swami, and others are the chief commentators on the Brahma Sutrâ.

All these Âchâryas have interpreted the meanings of the

Sutrâs in the light of their respective doctrinal perceptions and made their own compilations of the meanings accordingly. Amongst these commentaries, the Bhâshya written by Sri Shankarâchârya seems to have been most widely propagated probably because it was the earliest. The Brahma Sutrâs is mainly a treatise on devotion and accomplishment. In this treatise, written to inquire into the real nature of Brahman, there is discussion of related contextual topics but the main thrust is on the understanding of the real nature of Brahman.

This treatise has four ‘*adhyâya*’ (chapters). These are titled ‘*samanvaya*’ (coordination and integration of all the passages of the major Upanishads), ‘*avirodhi*’ (the refutation of contrary doctrines), ‘*sâdhanâs*’ (endeavours to attain moksha), and ‘*phala*’ (the fruit to be sought, namely moksha). The first chapter discusses the Brahman, the Jivâtma, and the Universe, where do all three stand with respect to one another, and their mutual relationships. In the second chapter, Sânkhya, Yoga, Vaisheshik and other Darshanas have been refuted. In the third chapter, there is a discussion regarding the seekers of knowledge of the Brahman. The fourth chapter throws light on the fruit which results from the knowledge of Brahman. All the chapters contain 4 ‘*pâdas*’ (sections) each. In all the *pâdas*, different topics have been discussed. In the first chapter; the first four Sutrâs namely; “*athâtho brahmajignyâsâ*” [now therefore the inquiry into Brahman], “*janmâdhyasya yataha*” [(from Brahman proceed) the origin and other things (like sustenance & dissolution also) of this (Universe)], “*shâstrayonitvât*” [the scriptures (alone) being the means of right knowledge (concerning Brahman)], “*tattu samanvayât*”

[but (the fact) that (Brahman is to be known only from the scriptures and not independently is established) because it is the main purport (of all Vedânta Texts)]; are Sutrâs of great importance.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE ÂCHÂRYAS

- Sri Shankarâchârya's Doctrine - **Advaita**
 Sri Râmânujâchârya's Doctrine - **Vishisthadvaita**
 Sri Madhvâchârya's Doctrine - **Dvaiata**
 Sri Vallabhâchârya's Doctrine - **Shabdâdvaita**
 Sri Nimbârkâchârya's Doctrine - **Dvaitadvaita**
 Sri Kantâchârya's Doctrine - **Shivadvaita**
 Sri Bhâskarâchârya's Doctrine - **Bhedâbhed**
 Sri Chaitanyamahâprabhu's Doctrine
 - **Achintyabhedâbhed**

Thus in the Vedânta Darshanas, we have different streams of thought. However, all the Âchâryas have based their thinking on three sacred texts called the 'prasthânatraya' (Upanishads, Geetha, and the Brahma Sutrâs). Though these doctrines are different from each other, all of them are based on the determination of the true nature of three realities, namely Ishvara, Mâyâ, and the Jivâtma. In order to explain the true nature of these three realities, the path that each Âchârya expounded on the basis of his personal experience became a separate Doctrine. All the Âchâryas have accepted the Shrutis (heard scriptures) and the Prasthânatraya as sources of valid knowledge. Therefore the Doctrines of all the Âchâryas are Vedic and the sources of their valid knowledge lie in the Vedic Traditions. In the age of the

Buddha and Mahavir, non-Vaidic beliefs had spread far and wide. Almost everyone had become a ‘shunyavâd’ (believer or proponent of emptiness or nothingness). Atheism had also spread because the Vedâs, Ishvara, the Âtma, etc were not being accepted as true. Then, Shankarâchârya was born in this world, and by his abiding faith in God and his intellectual prowess, he was able to defeat the proponents of emptiness in various debates, and out of that very emptiness or void, he created a Brahman. He declared most emphatically and convincingly the truth of Brahman. The Vedic Traditions were re-established. After this, the incarnation of Sri Râmânujâchârya took place. Sri Râmânujâchârya affirmed the

reality of the Brahman, the Universe, and the Jiva. Thus the Vedic Traditions which Sri Shankarâchârya re-established were further strengthened and carried forward by Sri Râmânujâchârya, Sri Madhvâchârya, Sri Vallabhâchârya, and others. It is clear from this that the doctrines of all the Âchâryâs were essentially the same, and that was to impart Vedic Knowledge and show the Vedic Way. Yes indeed! But because the methods of imparting Vedic Knowledge were different in each case, apparently different traditions came into being.



Sri Shankarâchârya

Sri Shankarâchârya was born in a pious Brahmin family in the State of Kerala. His mother and father had performed severe austerities and penance to propitiate Bhagawan Shankar and had sought the boon of an extremely intelligent and effulgent son. With his most extraordinary genius and splendour, Sri Shankarâchârya completed the study of all the truths contained in the Vedas and the Upanishads by the age of five. He observed that throughout Bharath, Vedic Knowledge had disappeared and everyone was abandoning Vedic Knowledge and becoming proponents of 'shunyavâdi' (emptiness or voidity). At the age of sixteen, that sanyâsi who was verily Vedic –Dharma incarnate, set out to re-establish the lost Vedic Dharma. On the one hand, throughout the Land of Bharath, the Buddhist Doctrine with its tenet of emptiness or voidity was widely prevalent. On the other, there were the greedy and bogus so-called priestly-class who were engaged in the sacrifice of living beings in sacrificial rites for the sake of obtaining material happiness. Atheistic people who did not believe in Ishvara and rebirth were preoccupied in the enjoyment of various pleasures. In these circumstances, he engaged in discussions and debates about matters based on the Vedas

and hoisted the Victory Flag of the Vedic Dharma across the length and breadth of Bharath from the West to the East and from the North to the South. He wrote commentaries on the most sacred and profound holy texts such as the Brahma Sutras, Upanishads, and the Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

In order to make sure that the Vedic Dharma remains awake and watchful for a long, long time to come, he established four 'Peethas' or 'Mathas' (seats of monastic life and learning) in the four corners of India. In the East, in Jagannath, in the West at Dwarka, in the North at Joshimath, and in the South at Sringeri. Even today, the 'sanyasi' (monastic) traditions are maintained in these four 'Mathas'.

The Advaita Doctrine of Sri Sankaracharya

“ब्रह्मैव सज्जगदिदं तु विवर्तरूपं
मायेशशक्तिरशिखं जगदातनोति ।
जीवोऽपि भाति पृथगत्र तथैव चैकोऽ-
द्वैताश्रितं शकु नमाम्यश्च शंकरं तम्” ॥ (ऋषिः)

*“Brahma eva sat jagatidam tu vivartarupam
Mâyoshashakthirakhilam jagadâtanoti
Jivoapi bhâti prutagatra tatiava chauko
advaitâshritam khalu namâmyashcha shankaram tam”*

“श्लोकार्थेन प्रवक्ष्यामि जदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।
ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥”

“*Shlokârdhana pravakshyâmi yaduktam granthakotibhihi
Brahmastayam jaganmithyâ jeevo brahmaeva nâparaha* ”

“Whatever is written in crores of sacred texts that I shall tell in half a shlokâ.

Brahman is the truth, the Universe is an illusion, and the jivâ alone is the Brahman for they are not different.”

**The One & Only ‘Nirguna’
(Attributeless) Brahman**

According to Sri Shankrâchârya’s doctrine, the Parabrahma is without attributes, without form, undifferentiated, imperishable, everlasting, and the non-doer. Existence (being), consciousness, and bliss are not the attributes of Brahman but verily Brahma is of the very nature of existence-consciousness-bliss. In reality, Brahman is without attributes, but the attributeless Brahman appears as a Brahman with attributes (name, form, etc) due to the power of Mâyâ (a potential power of Brahman which can cause illusions). Thus there are no two Brahman, with and without attributes. There is but one attributeless Brahman.

On the basis of the following shlokâs:-

“सदेव सोम्यंदमेव आसीत् । एकमेवाद्वितीयम् । नेह नानास्ति किंचन ।”

“*sadeva somyodameva âsita I ekamevâdvitiyam I neha nânâsti kinchan I*

and other similar statements made in the Vedâs, this Advaita Doctrine has been propagated. This doctrine contends that without differences as to the same class, as to different classes, as to arising by itself or in other ways, only the attributeless Brahman

exists. Apart from Brahman, nothing else exists. In other words, Brahma is 'advaita' (non-dual). That is how this doctrine got the name 'Advaita' (non-dual). The implication of the advaita doctrine is given by the following shloka:-

“द्विधा भावो द्वैतम् । अविद्यमानो द्विधा भावो यस्मिन्तत् तदेव सिद्धान्तः”

“ *Dvidhâ bhâvo dvaitam I avidyamâno dvidhâ bhâvo yasmimstat tadeva siddhânta I*

This means that there is no duality, no plurality, and no variety.

The Universe

According to Shankarâchârya's tenets, the Universe is not a manifestation of some part of Brahman but it seems to be there for practical usage. Due to Mâyâ (delusion or ignorance), we see the Universe as such. In reality, only Brahman is there. Mâyâ cannot be real because once knowledge arises, Mâyâ disappears. Therefore Mâyâ is unreal.

The Nature of the Jiva & the Means of Moksha

The Jiva is only relative truth, being one of two entities who have a mutual need or interest. In reality, it is not different from the Brahman. Because of ignorance only, the Jivâtma considers itself as separate from Brahman. Again, due to ignorance, that the Jiva considering the body and the sense-organs along with itself as its own self, begins to accept and differentiate between entities such as 'Deva' (God), 'Manushya' (human beings), 'Shudra' (a member of the working caste), 'Murkha' (a Fool), 'Vidwân' (a Scholar), 'Sukhi-Dukhi' (a happy or sad person), 'Kartâ' (a

doer), ‘*Bhokta*’ (an Experiencer or Enjoyer). The identification of the intellect with the *Âtma* is itself called erroneous knowledge. Ignorance alone is the reason why the Universe appears to be real. Because of *Mâyâ*, we seem to differentiate between life and the world. In reality, there is but one Brahman who is ‘*akhand*’ (whole), ‘*shuddha*’ (pure), ‘*buddha*’ (all knowing), ‘*nitya*’ (eternal), ‘*niranjan*’ (blemishless), ‘*vigyânânandghana*’ (a mass of consciousness and bliss), and the symbolic ‘*âtmatattva*’, (truth of the *Âtma*). This is spiritual knowledge or plurality or the knowledge of *Mâyâ* (cosmic illusion). The Upanishads declare ‘*तत् त्वम् असि*’ “*Tat tvam asi*” or “*That thou art*”. This is just like waves which arise in the ocean which look different initially, but when they subside, they merge with the rest of the ocean. Pots baked from the mud of the earth may be of innumerable sizes and shapes but in reality, they all constitute mud alone. In the same manner, this world which can be perceived by the sense organs in different forms is nothing but the pure, all knowing, and the one and only Brahman. This realisation alone is knowledge. So long as this knowledge is not realised, the mass of accumulated false knowledge is not destroyed. Consequently, the realisation that ‘*मैं ही ब्रह्म हूँ*’ “*Main hi Brahmâ hun*” or “*I alone am that Brahman*” also does not arise. The *Jivâtma* continues to regard himself to be of a form and nature different from the Brahman due to *Mâyâ* (ignorance or false-knowledge). ‘*Shravan*’ (hearing), ‘*Manan*’ (meditation or contemplation), and ‘*Nidhidya’san*’ (repeated recollection or remembrance) are the means of acquisition of wisdom. When the inquisitiveness or desire to know the truth of the *Âtma* arises firmly, then by constant practice and observance of one’s *Dharma* appropriate to one’s ‘*varnâshrama*’ (the class and

stage of a person), results in complete purification of all of one's internal aspects. Because of this purification, one gets release from ignorance and false knowledge. Consequent to this release from false knowledge, the feeling that the Jivâtma is different from the Paramâtma and such other delusions are completely removed and both merge into one. This is called '*mukti*' or 'final release from bondage'.

The Advaita Doctrine

Founder:- Bhagawân Sri Shankarâchârya

Birth:- Samvat 845 (disputed)

Doctrines:-

- (1) "**Brahma Satyam**" - Brahma alone is truth.
- (2) "**Jaganmithya**"- The Universe is illusory & false.
- (3) "**Jeevo Brahmaeve nâ aparaha**" - The Jiva alone is Brahma, there is nothing else apart from Brahma.

The Means - Dirt/filth, confusion/perplexity, and the covering obscuring knowledge to be removed one by one. With enlightenment; with freedom from worldly desires or passions; with the seven forms of wealth, namely, '*shama*' (quiet of mind, indifference), '*dama*' (self-restraint), '*titiksha*' (forbearance), '*shraddha*' (faith), '*samâdhân*' (religious meditation), '*uparti*' (indifference), and '*mumukshutâ*' (desire for final release); with these four categories of attainments, taking refuge in a Guru and taking instruction. With the help of '*shravan*' (hearing), '*manan*' (contempla-

tion), '*nididhyâsan*' (constant remembrance), experiencing the direct knowledge of 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि' "*aham brahmâ asmi*" (*I am Brahma*).

The Goal - Attainment of the Brahman as it is or the World of Brahma, attainment of 'Kaivalya' (eternal emancipation, beatitude).

The Accepted Texts - The 'Prasthânatraya' (The Upanishads, Brahma Sutrâ, and Srimad Bhagavad Gita), the Fifteen other Texts of Vedânta.

* * * * *



Sri Râmânujâchârya

Yathirâj (The King of the Ascetics) Sri Râmânujâchârya was born in Vikram Samvat 1074 in South India in Bhootpuri (Sriperembuddur). His father's name was Keshava Somayaji and his mother's name was Kântimati. This great Âchârya was the incarnation of Bhagawân Srisankarshan Sesh (Sesh Nâg or the Primordial Serpent). At a young age, he completed the studies of the Vedas and the 'Vedângâs' (Upanishads). Sri Râmânuja commenced his initial studies under Guru Yâdavaprakâsh. Yadavaprakâsh was astonished at Sri Râmânujâ's intellectual splendour and genius. During the course of the studies of Vedânta, at times Yadavaprakâsha would find it difficult to answer Sri Râmânuja's questions. Gradually the fame of Sri Râmânujâ's scholarship and learning spread far and wide. Sri Yamunâchârya was a great scholar and the crown jewel of the sages. When he heard about Sri Râmânujâ's intellectual prowess, he came down incognito to personally observe Sri Râmânujâ in secret and was immensely pleased with Sri Râmânujâ's splendour and genius. However, the intellectual brilliance of Sri Râmânujâ was not to become the cause of Sri Yâdava Prakâsha's satisfaction.

One day, Sri Râmânûja was tending to his guru Sri Yadava Prakâsh. Just then a certain disciple expressed a desire to know the meaning of the Upanishadic mantra, 'तस्य यथा कप्यासं पुण्डरीकमेवमक्षिणी' "*Tasya yathâ kapyâsan pundarikam evam kshini*". Explaining the meaning of this mantra, Sri Yadava Prakâsha said that both the eyes of that Parama Purusha Parmâtma are like the buttocks of a monkey. When Sri Râmânûja heard this explanation, attributing to the mantra the use of base or a common place similie to describe a profound aspect of the Lord, he was deeply upset. Sri Râmânûja told his Guru that such a description; in which the beauty of the face of the lotus eyed Paramâtma who is endowed with every wealth, happiness prosperity, good fortune and who is the embodiment of all beauty; whose image is pervaded with truth and bliss; is compared to the buttocks of a monkey, is a sinful transgression against the Paramâtma. Hearing these words of the young boy, Sri Yâdava Prakâsha started laughing and said that, "I too am unhappy with your arrogance. If you are so proud of your knowledge, then tell us what the real meaning of this mantra is." Thereupon Sri Râmânûja said with the utmost humility, "With your blessings, I shall explain the real meaning of this mantra. The meaning of 'कप्यासं' "*Kapyâsam*" is not the degrading aspect of a monkey but it is 'कं जलं पिबतीति कपिः' "*kam jalam pibati kapihi*". The reference is therefore to Surya (the Sun). And from the progressive verb 'asa is derived the the word 'âru', which in turn implies that the word 'kapyâsam' actually refers to the lotus which is transformed by the Sun. In this way, the eyes of the golden-hued Purusha which are endowed with so much beauty; and who is in the centre of the 'savitrumandal'; are compared to the Lotus which is brought to full bloom by the

Sun.” This is one example of how Sri Râmânûja had already begun to give the correct interpretation of Vedic mantras even when he was a student.

After completing his studies, Sri Râmânûja went to his mother at Kanchi. There he began to serve his mother. One day, Sri Mahâpurna Swami came to that place from the Srirangam region bearing a message from his Guru for Sri Râmânûja. He told Sri Râmânûja, “Sri Yamunâchârya remembers you a lot and desires that you should meet him.” Having received this message, Sri Râmânûja immediately set out from his house to meet Sri Yamunâchârya in person. However, even before Sri Râmânûja could reach the Srirangam Region, Sri Yamunâchârya passed away. Preparations had already been made for the last rites when Sri Râmânûja arrived there and he viewed the body with concentration and deep thought. It was noticed that the three fingers of one hand were folded and closed. The devotees present explained that the Âcharya had counted three unfulfilled tasks before discarding his mortal remains. Hence the three fingers are folded. By the power of his devotion and faith towards the Guru, Sri Râmânûja was able to divine which three unfulfilled tasks had been left behind by the Âchârya.

Sri Râmânûja made the first sankalpa (solemn resolve) as follows:-

“संगृह्य निखिलानर्थान् तत्त्वज्ञानपरः शुभम् ।
श्रीभाष्यञ्च करिष्यामि जगरक्षण हेतुना ॥”

*“Sangruhya nikilânarthân tattvagnyanaparaha shubham ।
Sri Bhâshyancha karishyâmi jagrakshana hetuna ॥*

One finger opened up and straightened out

The second ‘sankalpa’ was made as follows;-

“अहं विष्णुमते स्थित्वा जनानज्ञानमोहितान् ।

पञ्च संस्कारसम्पन्नान् द्राविडाम्नाय परगान् ॥”

*“Aham Vishnumate stithvâ janânagnayânmohitân I
Panch samskârsampannân dravidamnâya paragân
Prapattidharma niratân krutvâ rakshâmi sarvadâ*

The second finger then opened up and straightened out.

“जीवेश्वेरादीन् लोकेभ्यः कृपया यः पराशरः ।

संदशयन् तत्स्वभावान् तदुपायगतीस्तथा ॥

पुराणरत्नं संचक्रे मुनिवर्यः कृपानिधिः ।

तस्य नाम्ना महाप्राज्ञ वैष्णवस्य च कस्यचित् ॥

अभिधानं करिष्यामि निष्क्रयार्थं मुनेरहम् ॥”

*“Jeeveshvarâdiin lokebhyaha krupayâ yaha parâsharaha
Sandarshayan tatsvabhâvân tadupâyagatiistatha I
Purâna ratnam sanchakremunivaryahakrupânidhihi
Tasya nâmnâmahâpragnya vaishnavaya kasyachit
Abhidânam karishyâmi nishkayârtha muneraham I”*

With this, the third vow, the third finger also opened. Seeing this amazing incident, everyone started saying that the Âchârya Tradition can be maintained only by Sri Ramânujâchârya. After performing the last rites of Sri Yamunâchârya, Sri Râmânuja returned to Kanchi. At Kanchi, Sri Râmânujâchârya began to serve Sri Varadaraj Bhagawan. A few days later, on Sri Vardaraj Bhagawan’s command, he left for the Sriranga Region. At the same time, Sri Mahâpurna had set out from Srirangam to meet Sri Râmânujâchârya. They met each other enroute at

Madurântakam. Sri Mahapurna Swâmi was the Chief Disciple of Sri Yamunâchârya.

At Madurântakam itself, Sri Mahâpurna initiated Sri Râmânujachârya into the five-fold Samskâra including the three rahasya-mantras (secret chants). Thereafter, both of them proceeded to the Sriranga Region and arrived there. Both began to worship and serve Sriranga Bhagawan and also stayed together. During that time, Sri Mahâpurna taught Sri Râmânujâchârya three thousand compilations (of sacred texts) with meanings.

Mantrarahasya Diksha

Sri Râmânujâchârya had been initiated as a Sanyâsi by none other than Bhagawan Varadaraj himself. After becoming a Sanyâsi, he began to teach Vedânta to numerous disciples. One day, Sri Mahâpurna Swami told Sri Râmânujâ that there was a most exalted Vaishnava named Ghostipurna who was a great scholar and that Sri Ramânujâ should learn the ‘*mantrarahasyârth*’ (meanings of the esoteric and most secret mantras of Vaishnavism) from him. According to the command received, Sri Râmânujâchârya proceeded to a place in Srirangam Region (Tirukkottiyar) where, after several efforts, he was finally able to obtain initiation into the ‘*rahasyamantrâs*’ from Goshtipurna Swami. Goshtipurna Swami also agreed to teach these Mantras to Sri Râmânujâchârya because he felt that Sri Ramânujâ was most worthy and fully entitled to receive the secret knowledge contained in those Mantras. He told Sri Râmânujachârya not to reveal the secrets of these Mantrâs to anyone else. But Sri Râmânujachârya had come to

know about the powerful effect of these Mantras, in that anyone, even a sinful Jiva, who hears these Mantras even once, can get liberation from this life and reach the highest realms of Bhagawan. In order to uplift everyone and to reveal it to all people, Sri Ramânujâchârya climbed the Gopuram of the Temple and began reciting the secret mantras just taught to him. When Goshtipurna Swami learnt of this, he was furious and told Sri Ramânujâchârya that the he would have to endure the sorrows of Hell for an endless period of time. Then Sri Râmânujâchârya answered most respectfully that if thereby thousands of people could secure the joy of moksha, he was quite willing to go to Hell all by himself.

“पतिष्ये एक एवाहं नरके गुरुपातकात् ।

सर्वे गच्छन्तु भवतः कृपया परमं पदम् ॥”

“Pathshye eka evâhum narke gurupâtakât ।

Sarve gachantu bhavataha krupayâ param padam

Listening to these words of great compassion uttered by Sri Râmanujâchârya, Goshtipurna Swami was immensely pleased and he gave his blessings to Sri Râmânujâcharya.

One day, Sri Ramânujâcharya remembered the three vows which were the last wishes of Sri Yamunâcharya. He made a solemn resolve to fulfill the three wishes of his Âchârya. First of all, Sri Ramânujâcharya wrote the Sri Bhâya on the Brahma Sutrâ composed by Sri Bâdarâyana. Thereafter, he travelled throughout India and preached the tenets of the Vishnu Faith and Vishnu devotion. He named his disciple Kuresh's son as Parâshar. Due to his association with Sri Râmânujâcharya, Prashar became a

very great scholar. By the command of his Âchârya, he wrote a bhâsyam on the Vishnu Shasranama (The Thousand Names of Bhagawan Vishnu). Thus Sri Râmânjâcharya fulfilled all the three last wishes of Sri Yamunâcharya.

“गीताभाष्यम् भाष्यवेदान्तभाष्यं सारं दीपं किं च गद्यत्रयं च ।
वेदार्थनां संग्रहं नित्ययोगं प्राहैतान् यस्तं यतीन्द्रं भजेऽहम् ॥”

“*Geeta bhâshyam bhashyavedânta bhâshyam
Sâram deepam kim cha gadyatravam cha I
Vedârthânâm sangraham nityayogam
Prâhaitân yastam yatindram bhajeaha II*”

Sri Râmânujâcharya himself compiled nine sacred texts for the welfare of mankind which are as brilliant as nine exquisite jewels. These are as follows:-

- (1) वेदार्थसंग्रह - Vedârtha Sangraha
- (2) भगवद्गीताभाष्यम् - Bhagavadgeetâbhashyam
- (3) श्रीभाष्यम् - Sreebhasyam
- (4) वेदान्तदीप - Vedântadeepa
- (5) वेदान्तसार- Vedântasâra
- (6) शरणागतिगद्यम् - Sharanâgatigadyam
- (7) श्रीरंग गद्यम् - Sri Ranga Gadyam
- (8) श्रीवैकुण्ठगद्यम् - Srivaikunta Gadyam
- (9) नित्यग्रन्थ - Nityagrantha.

Thus through Bharath (India), Sri Râmânujâcharya propagated devotion to Bhagawan Vishnu and the tenets of Vishistâdvaita Darshana. After visiting 108 places located throughout entire

Bharath Desh, he returned to the Sri Ranga Region and began to reside in close proximity to Bhagawan Govindaraj. In order to ensure the continued propagation and spread of devotion to Sri Vishnu and the Doctrine of Vishistadvaita, he nominated 72 disciples for this purpose. Even today, that tradition is being maintained.

The Special Qualities of the Âchârya and his Largeheartedness.

He gave people of the lower castes who had been shunned for thousands of years, the right to serve Bhagawan and practise devotion to him. Even today, their descendents continue to worship and serve the Lord with devotion. This one hundred percent pure Âchârya explained to an agitated and displeased society that if any human being desires to serve the Lord and to practise devotion to Him, Bhagawan surely accepts his or her devotion. Everyone has a right to attain mukti (final liberation). In this Râmânuja Order (Vaishnava- Sri Religious Tradition), everyone has equal rights to the devotional service of the Lord and this is the uniqueness of this Tradition.

The Vishistâdvaita Doctrine

Vishistâdvaita believes that the one non-dual Brahman is endowed with infinite auspicious qualities. According to Sri Sankarâchâryâ's tenets, Brahman alone is the real truth and Universe is an illusion (unreal or untrue). Apart from Brahman everything else is illusory (unreal or untrue). The Jiva (soul) is not an independent (of its own accord) truth. When in ignorance or

when enveloped by ignorance, one gets the impression that the Jiva exists. Actually, when this ignorance is eliminated or removed, then the realisation arises that “I alone am Brahman”. The Universe is not a reality separate from Brahman. The Universe at large, which we observe is a dream, an illusion. Therefore, Brahman alone exists in reality and it is ancient and eternal.

Sri Râmânujâchârya accepts three truths as valid. They are Brahman, Jivâtma and Maya (The Universe) are the truths defining the Brahman. The Jivâtma is again real or true and the Universe also, being an attribute or qualification of Brahman’ is like Brahman, also a truth or reality and everlasting.

The Truth or Reality of Brahman

In Sri Râmânujâchârya’s philosophy of religion, Brahman qualified by sentient and insentient creation in both the ‘*sthula*’ (expanded) and ‘*sukshma*’ (subtle) states, is alone Ishvara (Supreme Lord or the Parabrahman). In other words, the Jivâtma and the Universe form part of the ‘*Sharira*’ (body) of Brahman. Brahman is the indwelling soul of everyone. Sri Shankarâchârya has accepted the existence of only ‘*Nirguna Brahman*’ (Brahman without name, form or any attributes whatsoever). But Sri Râmânujâchârya has not accepted any such differentiation of the Brahman such as ‘*Saguna*’ (with attributes) and the ‘*Nirguna*’ (without attributes) Brahman. Brahman is always with attributes and is always characteristically or distinctly different. The Jiva forms a ray (integral part) of Brahman. Mâyâ (prakruti or inert matter) is the power or potency of the Brahman. The Brahman is the repository or store house of boundless, infinite and whole-

some auspicious qualities/ attributes like ‘*Sarveshvaratva*’ (the Supreme Deity or the Supreme God of all) ‘*Sarvaseshitva*’ (Lordship of all, the Master or Ruler of everything), ‘*Sarvakarmarâdhyatva*’ (to whom all actions are done to propiate and please), ‘*Sarvakarmaphalapradatva*’ (who dispenses the fruits of all actions), ‘*Sarvakâryotpâdakatva*’ (who is the generator or originator of all causes), ‘*Samastadravya Shariratva*’ (whose body includes all substances) etc which constitute his attributes are His distinguishing marks. The special or distinctive dormant aspect of the Brahman wherein the sentient and insentient are in the subtle or dormant state is the ‘upâdâna kârana’ (material cause) of the Universe while Brahman’s potential aspect characterised by will/resolve is the efficient or instrumental cause of the creation of the Universe. This means that the Brahman is the undifferentiated efficient or instrumental as well as the material cause. The same Brahma is the creator of all creation, the dispenser of the fruit of all Karmas, the controller and the inner self of everything. He is referred to by names such as Brahman, Ishvara, Nârâyana, Vishnu etc.

Ishvara is the creator, upholder and destroyer of all. He exists in various existential manifestations such as ‘*Para*’ (The Supreme or Eternal Transcendent Form), ‘*Vyuha*’ (Material or Manifested Forms derived from the ‘*Para*’ form), ‘*Vibhava*’ (the ‘*Avatâras* or Incarnations), and ‘*Antarayâmi*’ (The Inner Self of all Souls as well as the Beatific Presence of the Godhood Principle enshrined in every heart). He is the bearer of the ‘*Shanka*’ (Divine Conch), ‘*Chakra*’ (Discuss) and ‘*Gadâdhâri*’ (Holder of the Mace) and has Four Arms. Sri Devi and Bhudevi always abide

in Him, and he is endowed with superhuman glory and powers not only related to his play or sport but also those of transcendental divinity. He is adorned with a crown, garlands and other embellishments.

The Doctrine of Vishistâdvaita

According to the foregoing concepts, the nature of the relationship between Ishvara and ‘Chit-Achit’ (Sentient and Insentient Entities) is similar to the mutual relationship that exists between the Âtma and the Body. Thus sentient and insentient entities together form the body of the Ishvara. It follows that both sentient and insentient entities are special and distinctive attributes of Ishvara. Attributes always co-exist with the characteristic differences or distinctions. Thus, the attributes endowed with characteristic differences or in other words ‘*vihista*’ (distinctive or special or distinguished) is a term that also connotes the underlying unity of all differentiations. Brahman (Ishvara) is therefore a special or distinctive form of a non-dual entity because both sentient and insentient beings are not separate/apart from the corporeal (the one having a body) Ishvara.

Sriman Nârâyana alone is the Creator of the Universe

Who is the creator or maker of this World? How was it created? When was it created? With regard to these questions, different doctrines of the various Darshanas accept different precepts. However, in the Vishistâdvaita Darshana, it has been established clearly on the basis of the ‘Srutis’ (The Heard Scriptures) and ‘Nyaya’ (The Science of Logic and Reasoning) and expounded

accordingly that the one and only Shriman Nârâyana is the undifferentiated efficient or instrumental as well as the material cause of the creation of the entire Universe.

There are numerous Darshanas in Bharat. Amongst these, only twelve have been accorded special importance by Indian Scholars. Six of these are Non-Vedic and six are Vedic.

The Non Vedic Darshanas

These are Chârvak, and Buddhism consisting of four branches namely Sautrântik, Vaibhâshik, Yogâchâr and Mâdhyamik, and, lastly, the Jain Darshana.

1. In the Chârvak Darshana, the very concept of cause and effect has not been recognised as such.

2. According to all the Four Schools of Buddhism everything is void or zero, and therefore there is no clearly definable efficient /instrumental cause or a material cause. Consequently, in this Darshana as a whole, there is no discussion about the cause of the Universe.

3. According to the Jain Darshana, the Universe has no beginning as such. Therefore there is no necessity of any underlying cause.

VEDIC DARSHANAS

These are Nyâya, Vaisheshik, Sânkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimâmsa and Uttara Mimamsa. Amongst these, from the conceptual point of view, Nyâya and Vaisheshik Darshana together form a Nyâya Darshana, as it were. The Sânkhya and the Yoga Darshanas, both together constitute a Sânkhya Darshana. And the Purva Mimâmsa and Uttara Mimâmsa Darshana jointly form a

Mimâmsa Darshana. Thus we see that amongst the Bharatiya (Indian) Vedic Darshanas, there are essentially three main Darshans.

1. According to the Nyâya and Vaisheshik Darshanas, the system of atoms is the material cause of the Universe and Ishvara is the efficient cause thereof.

2. As per Yoga (Theistic Sânkya) Darshana, Ishvara is the 'Sakrut' (Joint) (but not independent) cause along with 'Pradhân' (The Primordial Dormant Inert Matter)

3. According to the Atheistic Sânkhya Darshana, Prakruti (Insentient Matter) is the independent material cause of the Universe.

4. The Dvaita Doctrine contends that the atomic system is the material cause of the Universe and the Paramâtma is the efficient or instrumental cause thereof.

5. The Advaita Doctrine's contention is (*Brahman Vivartavâd* or The Argument that everything is an Illusory Form of Brahman) "*Brahmeva jadâtmana vivartate*" or "Brahman alone in various altered states appears as all matter/âtmas in the Universe".

6. According to Vishistâdvaita Darshana, Sriman Nârâyana is the undifferentiated efficient, instrumental as well as the material cause of the Universe.

Six non-Vedic Darshanas have not accepted the concept

of cause and effect with regard to creation. Therefore instead of discussing them further, we will now examine the tenets of cause and effect which have been established by the different Vedic Darshanas. On the basis of the Nyâya (Logic) which are in accordance with the relevant Sutrâs (Aphorisms of Sacred Texts)

1. Nyâya and Vaisheshika Darshanas:

Inference of the cause after due examination of the effects is to establish or prove validity through universal experience. Accordingly, if the form and nature of the Universe is the effect, then surely it should have some effective cause and some material cause or the other. On the basis of this experience, the Nyâya and Vaisheshika Darshanas have inferred that with regard to the effect which is of the shape of the world, the material cause is the atom (atomic system) and the efficient /instrumental cause is Ishvara. In this way, this Darshana has established its relevant tenets on the basis of the logic of inference alone.

2. Yoga (Theistic Sânkhya) Darshana:

In this Yoga Darshana founded by Maharishi Patânjali, the cause of the Universe is Prakruti (Insentient Matter) but it is not totally independent because it is the joint cause along with Paramâtma. Thus Prakruti is the material cause and Paramâtma is the efficient /instrumental cause of the World. As Ishvara has been accepted in this Darshana, it has become famous by the name of 'Sveshvar Sânkhya' or 'Theistic Sânkhya'.

3. Sâṅkhya (Atheistic Sâṅkhya) Darshana:

In this particular Sâṅkhya Darshana established by Kapil Muni, Prakruti alone is the independent material cause of the Universe. In this Darshana, the 'Sruti' (Heard Scriptures) and 'Nyâya' (Science of Logic) are considered as the means of valid or right knowledge. 'सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत्' "*Sadeva somyodamagra âsita*". In the Sruti, the word 'sat' (that which really exists; the really existent truth) which indicates the truth, is alone the cause of this Universe. That 'sat' word indication is the reality which is Prakruti. Therefore a lump of mud or iron etc., have been given as examples of the substances made by Prakruti.

"यद् द्रव्यम् यद् कार्यवस्थाम् तत् भावम् तदेव द्रव्यम् कारणवस्थाम्" "*Yat dravyam yat bhâvam cha kâryavasthâm Tat bhâvam tadeva dravyam kâranavastham I*"
 "कार्यानुगुणेनैव कारणेन भवितव्यम्" "*Kâryânugunenaiva kârṇena bhavituyam I*"

By this logic, as the effect is so must the cause also be. In the same way, because the effect in the form of the Universe is of the nature of 'sattvâditrigunâtmak' (of the nature of satvâ etc which are the triad of Gunas or Qualities), the cause must also be of the nature of 'Satvâditrigunâtmak' and 'Prakruti' ('Pradhan' or Primordial Insentient or Inert Matter) is 'Satvâditrigunâtmak'. Hence, Prakruti only is the material cause of the World. Thus Sâṅkhya contends that Prakruti is to be regarded as the independent material cause of the Universe.

Vishistadvaita Darshana

According to the Vishistâdvaita Darshana, Srîman Nârâyana, who is distinguished or qualified by sentient and insentient entities, is the undifferentiated efficient /instrumental as well as the material cause of the Universe. In Bhagawan Sri Râmânujâchârya's Darshana, since the 'tattvatraya' (triad of truth and reality that is the Paramâtma, the Jivâtma and Prakruti) are eternal, this triad would remain in concord in '*shrustikâl*' (at the time of creation) as well as in '*Pralayakâl*' (Time of Dissolution). Nevertheless there would be '*ekatva*' (unity) at the time of dissolution and '*nânatva*' (plurality/differentiation) at the time of creation. The term '*ekatva*' (unity) implies the absence or want of '*Nâm-Roop*' (name and form). Characterisation or differentiation on the basis of '*Nâm-Roop*', describes the states of separation /plurality, unity and the causal state. Bhagawan Sri Ramânujâchârya says that this Doctrine stands proved on the basis of the words of Vedânta which were propounded with inherent logic.

Purvamimâmsa is famous as being endowed with the power and lustre of the word '*Nyâya*' (Science of Logic and Reasoning). Therefore when we ponder on the words of the Vedânta based on *nyâya* as described in the Purvamimâmsa, it becomes clear that Srîman Nârâyana, distinguished by sentient and non-sentient entities, is the undifferentiated efficient /instrumental as well as the material cause of the Universe. '*सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत्*' '*Sadeva sowmyodamagra âsiit*'. In this Shruti, 'Sat' (being) is the word which points to the Brahman alone because,

“यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।
 यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । तद्विजिज्ञासव्स । तद्ब्रह्म । ” *yato vâ imâni bhutâni
 jâyante I Yena jâtâni jeevanti I yatprayantya bhisamvishanti
 I tad vijignyâsasva I tadbrahmaha*”

I We should develop the desire to know that all knowing, all powerful Brahman who has been proved to be sole creator by the Statements of the Vedas which deal with causality.

“ईक्षतेर्नाऽशब्दम् तन्निष्ठस्य मोक्षोपदेशात् प्रतिज्ञाविरोधात् एवं तदैक्षत बहुस्यां
 प्रजायेय एकोऽहं बहुस्यां प्रजायेय स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा स इमांल्लोकानसृजत स
 ईक्षां चक्रे स प्राणमसृजत ”

“*Ekshaternâshabdham tannishtasya mokshopadeshât
 pratignyâvirodhât
 evam tatdaikshat bahusyâm prajâyeya ekoaham bahusyâm
 prajâyeya
 sa eekshat lokannu srujât sa imâm lokkânsrujat sa
 eekshâmchakre sa prânam srujat*”,

and other similar verses deal with the causality of the Universe, and further it is rendered clear by the Shrutis, that creation takes place only after due consideration and proper resolve. Therefore, neither the Atomic System nor Prakruti has been accepted as the material cause of the Universe. This is because they do not have the capability of making a resolve to create anything. They are insentient (inert) substances or entities. Hence, because it is established in the Vedas-Vedântas that in all the processes of creation, the concept of ‘*eeeksha purvak*’ (with prior consideration) is implicit in any resolve regarding creation, it follows that the capacity to make such a resolve can be found only in the Brahman (Sriman Nârâyana).

The Dream-State in Vishistadvaita

In this context certain questions can arise as follows:-

(1) What exactly is a dream? (2) Who actually sees or views a dream? (3) Why do dreams occur? (4) Who creates dream? (5) Why are dreams created? (6) Are dreams real?

There are three states of existence of a Jiva (Sentient Being) namely '*Jâgrut*' (State of Being Awake), '*Svapna*' (the dream state) and '*Sushupti*' (State of Deep sleep). The state in which external actions are performed is called the '*Jagrut Avasthâ*' (State of Awakening). The state in which dreams are seen during sleep is called the '*Svapnâvasthâ*' (The Dream State). The state of deep sleep is called '*Sushupti*'.

This has been the understanding regarding the subject of dreams since ancient times and it has astonished all students of this subject. Even today for psychologists and researchers, this field is full of surprises. In this world, every individual, whether intelligent or ignorant, great or humble, all of them have, in their lives, experienced some dream or the other which after some time has surely come true before them in real life. The dream-state is one strange state regarding which various Bharthiya Seers have propounded their respective doctrines. However, in the Vishistadvaita Darshana, just as the external world is considered as real and subject to the experiencing or enjoyment of the fruits of karmas, the dream state is also considered as real and each and every Jiva is bound to experience the results of karmas in this state also.

If we seek answers to the above mentioned questions in consonance with the appropriate Sutrâs and on the basis of peo-

ple's experiences, then the fact that the dream state is real and that the fruits of karmas are experienced therein, will both be proved.

There are many Darshanas in Bharat. Amongst these, if some Darshanas consider dreams as illusory, some others regard it as baseless. If some feel that dreams are indescribable, still others consider it as true (actually real).

We shall now examine the nature of dreams based on the scriptures and on the personal experiences of various people,

In Advaita Vedânta it is said that, '*brahma satyam jaganmithya*' which means that aside from Brahman, everything else is a mirage or an illusion.

In Vishistadvaita Vedânta it is held that:-

(1) For every individual, dreams are separately created
 (2) The Jivâtma sees these dreams (3) Each Jivâtma sees dreams in accordance with its own related karmas (4) Dreams are created by the Paramâtma to enable each Jiva to enjoy or experience the fruits of individual karmas. (5) Just as the external world is found to be real in the state of awakening, in the same manner the world in the dream state is also true.

Actually, the Jivâtma has four overall states of being/existence. These are '*Jâgrat*', '*Svapna*', '*Shushpti*', and '*Turiya*' (the Fourth State). In each of these states, the Jivâtma experiences joys or sorrows according to its karmas. Amongst these states, dreaming constitutes one such state of existence. It is

called the Dream State. The Paramâtma creates dreams so that the Jivâtma can thereby experience the fruits of its karmas. In Vishistâdvaita, dreams are regarded as real.

**The Paramâtma alone is
the Creator of the Dreams.**

The Paramâtma alone is the one who creates all the topics that arise during the period of the Dream State. If the Jivâtma, who sees the dreams in the dream-state, had the ability to create those dreams, then it would, of its own choice, always create happy dreams instead of fearful and unhappy dreams. But this is not case, because sometimes the Jivâtma experiences dreams filled with sorrow or unhappiness. Therefore, only the Paramâtma creates dreams in accordance with the karmas. The Bruhadâranyakopanishad Sruti says –

“न तत्र रथा न रथयोगा न पन्थानो भवन्ति । अथ रथान् रथयोगान् पथः सृजते । न तत्राऽनन्दा मुदः प्रमुदो भवन्ति । अथानन्दान् मुदः प्रमुदः सृजते । न तत्र वेशान्ताः पुष्करिण्यः स्रवन्त्यो भवन्ति, अथ वेशान्तान् पुष्करिण्यः स्रवन्त्यः सृजते । स बि कर्ता ।
(बृ. उ. ६-३ १०)

“*Na tatra rathâ, na rathayogâ, na panthâno bhavanti, atha rathân rathayogân pathaha srujate; na tatrânandâ mudaha pramudo bhavanti, athânandân mudaha pramudaha srujate; na tatra veshântâha pushkarinyaha stravantyo bhavanti, atha veshântân pushkarinihi stravantihi srujate ; sa hi kartâ I* (Bruh. U. 4-3-10)

“There (in that state) exist neither chariots nor whatever is to be yoked to the chariots (animals) nor roads. Yet the chariots, whatever is to be yoked

to the chariots,

and the roads are created. There (in that state) are no joys, delights and raptures.

Yet the joys, delights, and raptures are created. There (in that state)

are neither any pools, nor tanks nor rivers. Yet the pools, tanks and rivers are

created. He alone is the Doer.”

The meaning is that in a dream, although there are no chariots, no horses, and no roads, yet the Paramâtma creates the chariots, the horses and the roads. In a dream, there is no joy, no delight, and no rapture but the Paramâtma creates all these. In that state, there are no buildings, no springs, and no waterfalls but the Paramâtma creates all these. He is alone is the Creator of the Universe.

“एवं मायामात्रं तु कात्स्न्येनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात् ॥ ३-२-३ ॥

“*evam mâyamâtram tu Ratvanyernânbhivyaktasvarupatvât*”

This Sutrâ tells us that Paramâtma alone creates those amazing things by his true resolve. And Paramâtma alone is the creator of dreams. This is supported by a verse of the Kathopanishad which says,

‘य एषु सुप्तेषु जागर्ति कामं कामं पुरुषो निर्मिमाणः (कठोपनिषद् २-५-८)

“*Ya esha supteshu jâgarti kâmam*

kâmam purusho nirmimâna. (Kath. U. 2-5-8)

“य एषु सुप्तेषु जाग्रति तदेव शुकं तद् ब्रह्म तदेवाऽमुच्यते ॥”

Ya Eshu supteshu jagrati Tadeva shukram tad Brahma tadevâmrutamuchyate

“This Purusha while (we are) asleep keeps awake making various desirable objects. Verily that alone is pure, that is Brahman and that alone is called the immortal”

In this manner, the Parampurusha Paramâtma is the one who creates dreams. The Jivâtma does not create any dreams because at the time of the dream, the Jivâtma is unaware of anything. Therefore the Jivâtma cannot be the creator of dreams. Thus it is proved in consonance with the Shâstrâs (Scriptures) that the Paramâtma is the creator of all dreams.

Why does the Paramâtma Create Dreams? And what Types of Dreams does He create?

Although the Paramâtma is the creator of all dreams, the Jivâtma is the one who sees and experiences those dreams. When all the sense-organs are concentrated in the prâna, then from the state of deep sleep coming to the prâna state, the Jivâtma sees the dreams. It may be said that whatever the Jivâtma has seen or heard in the state of awakening, he sees and hears the same in the dream state. But there is no rule that whatever one sees and hears in one’s life, one should always see the same in a dream because there are some dreams in which we see and experience things we have never before seen or heard or which have never occurred earlier. Such experiences do happen in a lifetime.

As the Jivâtma performs Karmas in the state of wakefulness, even so it receives the fruits thereof in the same state of

wakefulness. However, certain karmas bearing merit or sin performed by the Jivâtma are such that their appropriate fruits cannot be experienced in the state of wakefulness. Therefore the Paramâtma creates situations in the dream state such that happiness or sorrow caused thereby can be experienced by that Jivâtma alone who is seeing those dreams and by no one else. This is because such experiences are generated only during the period of the dreams and they last only as long as the dream continues. Take the case of someone who has performed a degree of meritorious karma whose appropriate fruit is that he should become a King for a few moments and enjoy the resulting happiness or consider the case of another person who has performed a sinful karma whose fruit is such that he should experience some fearful sorrow for a few moments only. Is there any country in which any Jivâtma could become the King for some moments only and experience the resulting happiness? Or experience a most fearful sorrow only for a few moments? This is not possible in the state of awakening. Under these circumstances, in order to enable a Jivâtma to experience the happiness of being the King for a few minutes, the Paramâtma who is the dispenser of the fruits of all karmas creates a dream world, and in that the Paramâtma, appropriate to the karmas, creates a country, a city, servants, maids, palaces and other things endowed with grandeur, wealth and show. That dream world can be seen or experienced be seen or experienced only by that Jivâtma who is to get the commensurate fruits of its Karmas. There, for instance, for some fleeting moments only, the Jivâtma becomes a King and enjoys that happened and gets the fruits of his very little merit. And for that Jivâtma who has committed a little sin, such circumstances are created in which

the Jivâtma experiences for a few moments only, same terrible sorrow and thereby gets the fruits of sinful Karmas in the dream state.

In this way, to enable every Jivâtma to experience the fruits of its own karmas, the Paramâtma creates strange, wonderful or terrible dreams strictly in accordance with every Jivâtma's individual karmas. Therefore, bad dreams are the fruit of bad karmas, and good dreams are the fruits of good karmas. Thus the Paramâtma creates dreams to dispense the fruits of karmas in the case of every Jiva.

Are Dreams Real ?

Various Darshanas have their own respective tenets with regard to the subject of dreams. If some consider dreams to be unreal or illusory, some others contend that it is baseless. If some believe that dreams are indescribable, then others consider it as true (real). In Vishistâdvaita the Famous Doctrine of Realism has been accepted. This well known doctrine is supported by the concepts of 'The Three Instrumental Causes' or 'The Five Instrumental Causes' as given in the Upanishads, which is acceptable to all Darshanas. These are the fundamental proofs of the reality of Dreams. Thus, just as the World of Brahman is real and can be experienced as the fruit of karmas, so too the Worlds of dreams are true and can be experienced by every Jivâtma in accordance with its own karmas.

The Concept of Brahman in the Doctrines of Sri Shankarâchârya and Sri Râmânujâchârya and Discussion on the Comparative Differences in Viewpoint

In Sri Shankarâchârya's Doctrine

1. Brahman is alone and is the non-dual reality.
2. The Brahman is completely devoid of all differences pertaining to kind or class or species, or of outcasts or non-class or kind and of difference within itself.
3. The Brahman is without distinctions and without attributes.
4. Because of the deceptive limitation imposed by Mâya (the illusory power of the Lord), Brahman is called Ishvara and because of the deceptive limitation of ignorance or false knowledge, Brahman is called the Jiva.

In Sri Râmânujâchârya's Doctrine.

1. Brahman differentiated from the sentient and non-sentient entities that form his body, is the truth. Apart from the Brahman and sentient and non-sentient entities that form part of his body, there is no other truth or reality.
2. Even though the Brahman is devoid of distinctions of class/kind/species and of non-class or outcastes, he has differences generated from within him.
3. The Brahman is possessed of excellent/superior distinctions or specialities. In other words Brahman is 'saguna' (with attributes). He is endowed with every imaginable auspicious quality and free of all worldly attributes.
4. The Brahman alone is Ishvara. The Jiva and the Universe are different from the Brahman and are also eternal. Thus the Brahman, the Jiva and the Universe, all these three truths or realities are eternal.

The Jiva

According to Sri Râmânujâchârya's tenets, the Jiva and the Brahman are not the same truths. The Brahman is a sentient truth or reality and the Jiva is also a sentient truth or reality, and therefore Brahman and the Jiva do not possess differences of class/kind/species. However, they do have distinctions that arise from within themselves. For instance, the Jiva is a part of the Brahman's body and the Brahman is the body, as it were. If the Brahman is all mighty and all pervading, the Jiva is atomic. Brahman is the whole and the Jiva is a part thereof. The Brahman is the Lord and the Master, and the Jiva is the Servant. The Brahman is all knowing, and the Jiva has very limited knowledge. The Jiva is differentiated by the body, the sense organs, the prâna etc. The Jiva is everlasting. In every body, there is different Jivâtma. In other words, the Jivas are infinite in number. Actually, the Jiva's inherent nature is full of bliss, knowledge, and happiness but due to ignorance or false knowledge, due to deceptions/limitations of the World, and due to indulgence in worldly enjoyments, it is unhappy. The Jiva alone is the doer, the enjoyer and the indweller of the corporeal body. Differences of location are the reason for categorisation of Jivas as 'Baddha' (Bound in Samsâra), 'Mukta' (Liberated Fully), 'Nityas (The Ever-free) and so on.

The Universe

In Sri Ramânujâchârya's Doctrine, the Universe is not a mirage or an illusion, but it forms the body of Brahman. The Universe is true and real but it is subject to transformation. The Universe is the Brahman's body. The Brahman and the Jiva are

sentient truths but Prakruti is an insentient truth. It is the will of Ishvara that according to the karmas of the Jivâtma, that prakruti assumes the form happiness or sorrow. Prakruti has no capability to do anything at all independently.

Prakruti is devoid of knowledge and of a nature subject to change. It is also famous by the name of ‘Achit’ (Insentient Matter). In this truth or reality are included the ‘Panchmahâbhut’ (Five Primordial Elements) such as earth, water, fire or light, air, and ether. The means of enjoyment/experiencing the triad of all pervasive powers are also included in Prakruti. The ‘Achit Tattva’ (insentient truth or reality) is divided into 3 types as follows:

1. **‘Suddha Sattva’** (Pure Sattva)
2. **‘Mixed Sattva’** (Mixed Sattva)
3. **‘Sattva Shunya’** (Completely devoid of Sattva)

Suddha Sattva

The bodies of the Paramâtma, the Nityâtmas, the Muktâtmas etc, their places of enjoyment as well as the means of enjoyment, and the Heavenly Worlds are all of Suddha sattva not being of worldly origin.

Mishra Sattva

The entire Universe is made up of ‘Mishra Sattva’ i.e. a mixture of sattva, rajas and tamas gunas (qualities) and is a Sattva predominant insentient truth.

Sattva Shunya

‘Kala’ (Time) is considered a ‘Sattva Shunya’ (completely

devoid of Sattva) type of insentient reality.

In this manner the insentient substances of the entire Universe have been classified amongst the insentient truths.

The Attainment of Mukti

Bhagavadpâd Sri Râmânujachârya closely follows the concept of the Grace of God (Divine Grace) and the Words of God in the matter, in explaining the means of securing mukti.

By properly observing the Dharma prescribed in the Vedas, the body becomes duly purified and after the body is purified, the desire to know about Brahman arises. According to this belief, before ‘*Gnyân-mimâmsa*’ (Enquiry into Knowledge), the Study of ‘*Karmamimâmsa*’ (Deep Reflection on Work/Duties) is essential. From knowledge acquired by right action arises devotion. Devotion to the Lord in the form of remembrance of Ishvara like the uninterrupted flow of a stream of oil alone becomes the cause of mukti (final liberation) but without taking refuge in God, firm and exclusive devotion to God cannot develop. Therefore Bhagawan has said,

“देवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते” ॥ (गीता -७-१४)

“*Daive hi esha gunamayi mama mâya duratyayâ I*

Mâm eva ye prapadhyante mayametâm

tarantite II” (Bhg. Gita 7/14)

“This divine Mâyâ of mine endowed with the Gunas is hard to traverse l

Those who take refuge in me alone can swim across this Mâyâll”

“सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्य मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः” ॥ (गीता-१८-६६)

“*Sarvadharmân parityajya mâmekam
sharanam vraja ।*

*Aham tvâ sarvapâpebhyoh mokshyishyâmi
mâ shuchaha ॥ (Bhg. Gita. 18/66*

“Surrendering all Dharmâs, in me alone, do seek refuge. Thee I shall release from all sins, grieve not ॥”

Thus the Lord has said clearly that so long as the Jivâtma does not take refuge in the Paramâtma and under illusory pride as well as sense of independence continues to strive for mukti, for such a Jivâtma mukti is very difficult to obtain.

And the Lord has also stated:

“न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः” ॥ (गीता ७-१५)

“*Na mam dushkrutinu mudaha Prapadhyante narâdhamâha I
Mâyayâ apahrutagyana asuram Bhavamâshritâha II*” (Bhag. Gita. 7/16)

“*They do not seek refuge in me, those Evil-doers, the foolish, and the lowest of men They whose knowledge Mâyâ has been taken away, who are of a demonic nature*”

Jivas enveloped by Mayâ do not understand ‘*Sharanâgati*’ (the taking of refuge in the Lord) and such unhappy Âtmâs, wandering again and again in worldly cycles, get exhausted.

Therefore it is said that-

एवं संसृतिचक्रस्थे भ्राम्यमाणे स्वकर्मभिः ।

जीवे दुःखःकुले विष्णोः कृपा काप्युपजायते ॥ (गीता)

*“Evam samsrutichakrasthe bhrâmyamânosvakarmibhihi
Jeevo duhakule vishnoho krupa kâpyapajayate*

Thus by such causeless and spontaneous grace alone, is the Jivâtma shown the path to ‘*Sharanagathi*’, (total surrender or the taking of refuge in Ishvara).

The Means for Mukti

Thus ‘*Sharanâgati*’ has not been actually accepted as the direct means for mukti. Consequent to ‘*Sharanâgati*’, the Jivâtma only realises that he is of the nature of truth and performs all its duties, and deep within itself accepts the fact that it is dependent upon the Lord everywhere. Thereafter, he always conducts himself in a manner which will bring pleasure to the face of Bhagawan. Gradually, the Jivâtma gets absorbed in the realisation of ‘*Vishwabandhutva*’ (the Bondage of the Universe), ‘*Sheshatva*’ (the feeling of being a loving and devoted servant), ‘*Ananyâshrayatva*’ (conviction that there is no other proper refuge), ‘*Ananya Bhogyatva*’ (that there is none else to fit to take delight in or to experience), and just like the tender flowers worthy of being offered at the Lord’s feet, even so the Jiva models its entire life. Then the Lord alone is the ‘*Upâya*’ (means) for mukti. Thus, it is only due to the causeless and spontaneous grace of the Lord, that the Jiva’s upliftment and eventual mukti is possible. This is the Sampradâya’s essential secret.

The Doctrine in Brief

The Main Founder:- Sri Râmânujâchârya

Birth:- Vikram Samvat 1075

Tenets:- The Brahman is real. The Universe (Prakruti) is not illusion but subject to transformation and being a part of Brahman, it is also true & real. The Jiva is atomic and is true & real.

The Means:- Devotion to Sri Vishnu yoked to Karma or to Knowledge, and 'Sharanâgati'.

Mukti:- Attainment of Vaikunta (the Realms of Sri Vishnu).

Mukti is of four types:-

(1) '*sâlokyâ*' (identity of abode in which the Jiva resides in the same realm as Bhagawan).

(2) '*sârupyâ*' (in which the Jiva assumes the same form as Bhagawan leading to transformation and deification).

(3) '*sâshthi*' (in which the Jiva is in 'sâmipyâ' (close proximity) to Bhagawan which leads to fellowship).

(4) '*sâyujyâ*' (in which the Jiva is in intimate union with Bhagawan and enjoys the bliss of communion).

Main Texts:- The Sri Bhâshyam on the Brahma Sutrâs; Harivamsha; The Mahâbharathâ & the Vishnu Purânâs; and all the Scriptures as well as the 'Tattvatrayam' & other Holy Texts which expound and establish devotion to Sri Vishnu.



SRI MADHVÂCHÂRYA

Sri Madhvâchârya was born after Sri Râmânujâchârya. After the Advaita Doctrine of Sri Shankarâchârya, the Vishistâdvaita Doctrine of Sri Râmânujâchârya was propounded. Under the powerful influence of this Darshana, Vedic knowledge and devotion to Sri Vishnu began to spread like a flood. In order to strengthen these paths of knowledge and devotion, two Âchârya were born in the 12th Century. One was Nimbârkâchârya and the other Madhvâcharya. Both were Âchâryas of the Vaishnava Faith. Nimbârkâchârya propounded the 'Dvaitâdvaita Darshana and by advocating a new form of the Path of 'Premalakshana' (Loving Devotional Service), he made it easier for devotees to practice devotion to God. This Tradition was propagated mostly in the North of India.

In this millennium, in the year 1238, in the southern part of Udipi in Southern Karnataka, in Pâjak area of Bele Village, Sri Madhvâchya was born in a Tulu Brahmin Family. His father's name was Madhyageha. His father was a scholar of the Vedas & the Upanishads. His mother's name was Vedavati. Sri Madhvâchârya's childhood name was Vâsudev. Even as a youth, he was initiated into the order of Sanyâsis by Achyutaprekasha.

He was then named Purnapragnya. After becoming a Sanyâsi, Purnapragnya studied the Vedas and other Scriptures under Achyutapreksha. During the course of these studies, questions posed by Purnapragnya regarding logic and reasoning would often perplex his Guru. In attempting to answer such questions, Achyutapreksha who was a follower of the Advaita Doctrine, found that his knowledge was scattered and inadequate. However, he was immensely pleased with Purnapragnya's great scholarship and brilliance, and bestowed upon him the title of 'Vedânta Sâmrât' (The Emperor of Vedânta). Around this time, Purnapragnya became famous by the name of Ânandatirtha. Sometime later, Ânandatirtha accompanied his Guru on a pilgrimage. They visited various holy places. Enroute, they had debates and discussions regarding the Shâstras with many Scholars and Learned Men. Because of their own learning and intellectual brilliance, they were able to defeat many Scholars, and in due course reached Trivandrum. At that place, there was a debate with Vidyâshankar of Sringeri Matha. Thence, after visiting the Holy Region of Srirangam, they returned to Udupi. Here, Ânandatirtha wrote a Bhâshya (Commentary) on the Bhagawad Geetha and founded the Dvaita Philosophy of Religion. Subsequently, he wrote a Bhâshya on the Vedânta Sutrâs.

Taking this Bhâshya along with himself, he set out on a pilgrimage to Kâshi. At Kâshi, he held discussions with many Scholars on various aspects of the Scriptures. Thereafter, he proceeded to Haridwar and stayed there engaging himself in fasting, vow of silence, and intense meditation. Sometime later, he set out on a pilgrimage to Badarikâshrama (Badrinath). There he pondered deeply over the Scriptures and in the process, he crystal-

lised the tenets of the Dvaita Doctrine. From Badarikâshrama he returned back to Haridwar. Although he had initially composed the Commentary on the Brahma Sutrâs at Udipi, at Haridwar he was able to refine it further on the basis of his discussions at Kâshi and his own deep reflections at Badarikâshrama, and gave the Commentary a firm and definitive shape. At the same place, Ânandatirtha accepted a disciple of the faith, and after initiating that disciple into the order of the Sanyâsis, named him Padmanâbhatirtha. Later, the same disciple was to become the successor.

The Âchârya built a Temple to Sri Krishna at Udupi. This temple is considered to be the main centre of pilgrimage for followers of the Madhvâ Traditional Order. This Âchârya lived on Earth for 79 years, 6 months and 20 days. But under what circumstances did his demise actually take place? Where did it take place? No evidence regarding these questions have been found so far but it is known that after nominating Padmanâbhatirtha as his successor, and after handing over the care of the Sri Krishna Temple at Udupi to eight of his disciples, the Achârya left Udupi one day without informing anyone. Some scholars are of the opinion that, according to old history, the Âchârya may have proceeded to Badarikâshrama and may have expired there.

THE DOCTRINE OF SRI MADHAVÂCHÂRYA

Just as the doctrine of Sri Râmânujâchârya is famous by the name of Sri Vaishnava Tradition, the doctrine of Sri Mâdhavâchârya is well known as the 'Sadsampradâya' (The True Tradition). Whereas, the Sri Râmânujâ Tradition is based on the trio of different truths, the Sri Mâdhavâchârya Tradition is based

on the five different truths.

Brahman

The Paramâtma is endowed with infinite auspicious attributes. Compared to Sri Lakshmi and the Jiva, the attributes possessed by the Paramâtma such as knowledge, power, bliss etc are infinitely larger. He is the 'Karta' (doer or instrumental agent) of the eight- fold activity of creation, maintenance, destruction, control, knowledge, repetition, bondage and liberation. He is entirely different from inert, insentient matter, the Jivas, and Prakruti (considered as Mahalakshmi here). All the limbs/aspects of Bhagawan are pervaded with knowledge and bliss. Whereas the bodies of human being are full of bones, flesh etc the body of the Paramâtma is filled with auspicious attributes like knowledge etc to an infinite degree. Bhagawan is by himself completely independent. There is but one Ishvara. Vâsudev, Sankarshan, Padhyumna, and many other forms are adopted by Him alone.

Sri Lakshmi

Sri is different from the Paramâtma. but is dependent upon the Paramâtma. She is the 'charanasewak' (loving, devoted, and intimate servant) of Ishvara. She is eternally liberated. She is free of the corporeal body which means that she possesses a divine, transcendental image or form. She is all pervading in space and time like the Paramâtma.

Jiva

The Jiva is associated with worldly or material life. In its worldly existence, it is subject to defects like ignorance etc. Jivas are infinite in number. Jivas can classified into three categories,

namely 'मुक्तियोग' '*Muktiyogya*' (those fit to attain mukti or liberation), 'नित्ययोग' '*Nityasamsâri*' (those who are ever transmigratory), and 'तमोयोग' '*Tamoyogya*' (those who have base or vile qualities and deserve to be consigned to hells and other dark worlds of existence).

'मुक्तियोग जीव' '*Muktiyogya Jivas*' are of five types, namely, Gods, Rishis, Manes, Emperors like Raghu and others, and the '*Uttam Manushya*' (Best of Humans).

'उत्तम मनुष्य' '*Uttam Manushyas*' are of two types, namely, '*Chaturguna Upâsaka*' (those who worship/adore four qualities of the Paramâtma) and '*Ekaguna Upâsaka*' (those who worship/adore one quality of the Paramâtma).

'नित्यसंसारी' '*Nitya Samsâri*' (Ever Transmigratory) Jivas are always trapped in worldly life, and experience pleasure and pain throughout. They are innumerable and keep moving between heaven, earth and hell all the time.

'तमोयोग' '*Tamoyogya*' (Those with Base/Vile Qualities) Jivas are of four types, namely, '*Daitya*' (demons who are sons of Diti), '*Râkshasâs*' (demons, goblins in general), '*Pishâchas*' (evil/malevolent spirits), and '*Adhamas*' (low, mean, despicable humans).

'मुक्तियोग' '*Muktiyogya*' Jivas take pride in Brahman.

'नित्यसंसारी' '*Nitya Samsâris*' take pride in rebirth and '*Tamoyogya Jivas*' are proud of the Age of Kali.

Prakruti

This tradition holds that Prakruti is the material cause of

the Universe. It is also verily the material cause of Time and the Gunas. This Prakruti is of inert, insentient nature, and it is eternal and 'avyâpta (non-pervasive). Its presiding deity is Goddess 'Ramâ'. Prakruti is the 'lingasharir roop' (of the form of the subtle frame or body) of all Jivas and is at the same time different from the body. The creation and expansion of the three gunas as well as elements such as 'Mahat' and others are due to this Prakruti alone.

Of the three gunas mentioned above, the 'shuddha sattvaguna' (the pure quality of sattva) is of use for the 'lilâsharir (the body meant for sport or pastime) of the liberated Jivas. Creation proceeds from the 'Rajoguna' (the quality of Rajas whose main characteristics are activity and passion). The Presiding Deity of Sattvaguna is Goddess Lakshmi, that of the Rajoguna is the Deity of the Earth and Sri Durga is the Deity of Tamasguna. Out of these three Gunas, 'Mahat' (The Great Principle or Buddhi or Intellect) emerges and it is the body of Brahma. From 'Mahat' arises 'Ahankâr' (The Ego Principle). Ahankâr has three forms, namely, 'Vaikârik' (the principle of evolution and expansion), 'Tejas' (the principle of light/energy and 'Tamas' (The Principle of Indolence & Delusion). Of these, the Deity of the Principle of Evolution and Expansion is Sri Garuda. The Deities of 'Tejas' is Sri Sesh and that of 'Tamas' is Sri Rudra.

The Concept of Moksha or Final Liberation

'Upâsana' (Worship and Adoration) is the main expedient for securing 'moksha'. There are two aspects of 'upâsana', one is the form of adherence to and practice of the injunctions contained in the Scriptures and the other is of the form of medi-

tation. Continuous study of the Scriptures results in knowledge as it actually is. Meditation is the setting aside of all thoughts related to material aspects of life and focusing one's thoughts entirely upon Bhagawan. This alone is called '*Nidhiabhyâs*'. Reflection upon the Scriptures, listening and recollection, gradually dispels ignorance, doubts, and illusory or false knowledge. The conviction expressed by the phrase "*that is exactly so*" is also called '*Nidhiabhyâs*'. In this manner, through '*Nidhiabhyâs*' we get the higher or divine knowledge. And from such knowledge, we develop intense devotion.

The Dvaita Doctrine (in brief)

The Founder : Sri Madhvâcharya born in Samvat 1255

The Tenets: Brahma, the Universe and the Jiva are three different and separate Truths/realities

The Means for Liberation: '*Navadha*' (Nine types of Devotion) endowed with '*karma*' (right action/conduct) and right knowledge.

The Attainments or Results: To proceed to Vaikunta (The Celestial Abode of Sri Vishnu) and to serve Bhagawan in the spirit of a true servant.

The Recognised/Accepted Texts: The Dvaita Commentary on the Brahma Sutra; The Srimad Bhâgawatam, The Vishnupurana, The Vishnusahasranâma, and other Scriptures and Purânas which generate devotion to Sri Vishnu.



SRI NIMBÂRKÂCHÂRYA

In South India, Sri Râmânujâchârya brought into practice the ‘Sri Sampradâya’ (The Religious Tradition in which Sri Mahâlakshmi plays the pivotal role of the mediatrix in the redemption of the jivas) and was responsible for spreading and expanding the Vishistâdvaita Darshana. Sometime after Âchârya Râmânujâchârya, Sri Nimbârkâchârya, who had generated a flowing current of devotion sweeping everybody around Mathura, began to worship, adore and serve Sri Radha Krishna. He was the originator of ‘Premalakshan Bhakti’ (devotion with intense love as its main feature) and the Âchârya (Preceptor) of the Doctrine of Dvaitâdaita. He was a Âchârya of the Vaishnava Tradition. This Âchârya was born at Arunâshrama near Vaiduryapattana on the banks of Godavari River in the Telugu Region of India. Sri Nibârka was born in the 11th Century, soon after Sri Râmânujâchârya but before the advent of Sri Mâdhvâchârya. He is considered to be an incarnation of Surya Deva (The Sun God). His father’s name was Arunamuni and his mother’s name was Jayanti Devi. Although Nimbarkâcharya’s birth took place in South India, he spread devotion to Vishnu around Mathura. Even today, this Tradition is largely prevalent in North India, in and around Mathura and parts

of Bengal. It has not been possible to ascertain the exact year of Nibârkhâchârya's birth despite all the research so far. But there is sufficient evidence to indicate that his birth took place after Âchârya Râmânunjâchârya. Âchârya Nibârkhâ's disciple, Harivyâsdev has written in one of his texts that the Âcharyâ's birth took place on the auspicious third day of the half of the lunar month of Vaishâk. But the year of birth has not been mentioned therein. Scholars say that the Âchârya lived on the earth in the year Samvat 1164. The Âchârya has written a treatise on the Vedânta Sutras called the 'Vedântapârijâtasaurabh'. He has also written a sacred text called the 'dashashloki' or 'Sidhânta Ratna'.

The Doctrine of Dvaitâdvaita Brahma

The Universe, the Jiva and Brahman are the objects of enjoyment/experience, the enjoyer/the one who experiences and the controller respectively. They are actually different from each other. The inherent form or nature of the Universe as well as the Jivas as also their present states and future transformations are all dependent on the will of Brahman and are pervaded by the Brahman. In this way, the Universe and the Jivas exhibit identity with the Brahman. It is by the desire and resolve of Ishvara, who is beyond thought, who is eternal, and who is a past master in generating events that have not happened before, that the Universe is created. Therefore the Universe is the consequence of Brahman. Sri Râmânunjâchârya's Doctrine states that the Brahman is the one efficient cum material cause. This tenet is explained by Nimbârkhâcharya as follows: Sentient and insentient substances in their subtle states and in possession of their inher-

ent powers are created in the most fundamental form by the Brahman using his own powers, and therefore Brahman is the material cause. Further, because Ishvara gives Jivas knowledge about the fruits of their karmas which they must necessarily enjoy or experience, having become otherwise unfit for true knowledge being bound helplessly by their past deeds and suffering contraction of remembrance (of auspicious things) and, further because Ishvara also introduces to the Jivas the means for such enjoyments/experiences, He becomes the efficient cause as well.

Jiva

The Jiva (individual soul) is of the intrinsic nature of knowledge, self-luminous, of the nature of consciousness/intelligence and atomic in size. It is also the knower, the doer, and the enjoyer/ or the one who experiences. It is entirely dependent upon Sri Hari. In each body, the Jiva is quite different from the other which means that the Jivas are innumerable.

These essential characteristics of the Jivas are obscured by Mâya since times without a beginning. As a result, each Jiva is unable to recognise its true nature. Nevertheless, by God's grace devotees can realise their true inherent nature. Jivas are of three types. These are '*baddh*' (bound), '*mukta*' (liberated) and '*baddha-muktha*' (bound-free). All jivas are the Paramâtma's '*sphulinga*' (a flame or spark of a fire). Just as '*Sphulingas*' arises from a fire, just as waves arise in the ocean, in the same way, Jivas arise from the Paramâtma. Therefore Jivas are both different from the Paramâtma and identical too. Since the Jivâtma is embodied, it is different from the Paramâtma but because the Jivâtma within the

body has arisen from the Paramâtma, like the spark of a fire or waves of the ocean, the Jivâtma also has an essential identity with the Paramâtma.

The Universe

In the opinion of Nibârkhâcharya, the Universe is not an illusion but is real and true. It is the consequential effect of Brahman. Without the Brahman and by itself, the Universe has no independent existential reality. From this point of view we may say that the Universe is, in a way, not real. The 'Pradhân Tattva' ((truths about primordial matter) are three in number as follows:-

(1) 'अपाकृत' '*Aprâkrut*' (non-material, spiritual stuff which is the eternal superhuman creation of Ishvara)

(2) 'प्रकृति' '*Prakruti*' (inert, insentient matter) endowed with the 'sattva', 'rajas' and 'tamas' gunas.

(3) 'काल' '*Kala*' (Time).

Just as the countless Jivas are eternal, these three truths are also without a beginning or an end.

Discussion on Moksha

Ignorance is without beginning and eternal. Karmas impelled by ignorance or obscure the pure nature of the Jivâtma. It is only by the merciful grace of Ishvara that it becomes possible for the Jivâtma to dispel ignorance. Ishvara's merciful grace manifests itself from constant loving devotion.

Prapatti (self surrender to God) or delivering/ entrusting the Âtma or the Self to Ishvara is the only way to moksha (final liberation from transmigration and worldly existence). Even in

the state of moksha, the Jivâtma remains distinct from Ishvara. Nevertheless, because the Jivâtma is, at the same time, a projection or an emanation of Brahman, it is identical with the Brahman. This is the essence of the ‘*Bhedâbhed*’ (difference in non difference) Doctrine. In the state of moksha, the Jivâtmas are identical in form with the Brahman but they do not get dissolved into Brahman nor do they get fully absorbed in Brahman and further, the processes of creation of the Universe as well –its dissolution remain the domains of action of the Brahman and not the Jivâtmas.

Hence, viewed from this perspective, Brahman and the Jivas are different realities but because the Jivas has been created out of Brahman, they are also non-different from the Brahman.

The Dvaitâdvaita (Duality in Unity) or Bhedâbhed (Difference in Non-Difference) Doctrine in Brief

Founder: Sri Nimbârkâcharya

Birth : Eleventh Century

The Tenets: The Universe, Jivas, and Brahman are the objects of enjoyment/experience, the enjoyer/experiences, and the controller in that order. Despite the fact that all are different, the Jivas and Prakruti are dependent on the Brahman and subsist in the Brahman.

The means for Moksha: the singing of hymns and devotional songs and worship of the Parabrahman Purushottam (The

best of Purushas) (Radha-Krishna), the Nine Forms of Devotion to Sri Krishna Mukti: There are four types of mukti which consists of service to Bhagawan in Vaikunta in the spirit of a loving and devoted servant.

Accepted Texts: The ‘Vedântapârijâtasauraha’ commentary on the Vedântasutras, the Srimad Bhâgavatam and other Sacred Texts/Purânas which generate devotion to Sri Krishna Paramâtma..

SHUDDHÂDVAITA SIDDHANTA

(Doctrine of Pure Non-Dualism)

The founder of the ‘Pushti Mârg’ (The Path of Grace) Sri Vallabhâcharya was born at Champâranya near Kashi (Varanasi) in Samvat 1565 on Vaishak Krishna Ekâdasi (in the lunar month of Vaishak on the auspicious eleventh day of the dark half) to a Telugu Brahmin couple who hailed from Kânkarvâd village in South India. His father’s name was Sri Laxmanbhattaji and his mother’s name was Yellamâgaru. He was also known by the name of Sri Mahâprabhuji or Sri Âchâryacharan. He is said to be an incarnation of ‘Vaisvânarâ’ (Agni or God of Fire). He was a master of all the Vedic Scriptures. He was initiated into the ‘ashtâdshâkshargopâlamanttra’ by Sri Bilvamangalâchârya of the Sri Rudra Sampradâya. He was initiated as a ‘tridandi sanyâsi’ by Swami Narayanendrathirth. He was married to Mahalakshmi the daughter of Sri Devabhataji and in due course two sons were born- Sri Gopinath and Vittalnath. Sri Mahaprabhu made three all-India pilgrimage tours wearing only a dhoti and a shawl. Because of his scholarship, simplicity, an attitude in which service

was considered the highest and such other qualities, he was duly honoured by Rajas and Maharajas in their Kingdoms whichever he visited. Once in an assembly of scholars in the Vijayanagara Kingdom of Krishnadevarâya, there were debates and discussions on the meanings of the shâstras between pundits of different faiths which went on for 28 days and in the end, Sri Mahaprabhu emerged victorious. Subsequently, he set out to propagate and spread devotion to Sri Vishnu Bhagawan.

To fit and deserving aspirants for knowledge, he gave the 'nama-nivedan mantra' and initiated many into the faith. Amongst them 84 initiated devotees are important. Each of those places where Sri Mahaprabhuji conducted the systematic recitation of the Srimad Bhâgavatam is considered as Sri Mahaprabhuji's 'baithak' (a sacred sect, a place where people gather to listen/converse). Of these, the maximum number of such 'baithaks' are in Rajasthan and Gujarat. As such there are 84 main 'baithaks'. The most important 'baithak' of the Vallabhâchârya Tradition is Nâthdwar in Rajasthan. In 1576, with the help of Purnmal Khattri, it was built in a very grand and beautiful style. There, even today, the service of the Lord is carried out according to the age-old customs of this Tradition. Among the numerous texts written by Sri Vallabhâchârya are 'Prasthânatrâyi Vyâsutra Bhâsya' (Anu Bhâsya), 'Geetha Bhasya', 'Upanishad Bhâsya', 'Jaimini Sutra Bhâsya', 'Bhâgwad Tikka Subhodhini', 'Pushti Pravâha Maryâda', 'Siddhânta Rahasya' etc.

Before terminating his existence on this Earth in three and a half shlokas (verses) he advised his sons and those serving

him to serve the Lord. In this Traditional, 'Bâl Krishna' (Lord Krishna in childhood form) is mainly worshipped. Devotees awaken in themselves 'vatsalyabhâva' (the sentiments of tenderness and affection which parents feel for their off-spring) by worshipping and serving the childhood form of Lord Sri Krishna. The Grace of the Lord and devotion to Him are considered most essential in this Tradition.

The Doctrine

Essentials of the doctrine of Sri Vallabhâchârya are contained in the following verse:

“सद्रुपं कृष्णरूपं जगदिदमखिलं ब्रीहिसूच्यप्रकाल्पो
जीवोणुः सच्चिदात्मा व्रजपतिचरणे सर्वसारैव भक्तिः।
साकारं ब्रह्मतद्यद् व्रजभूवि रमते सच्चिदानन्दरूप-
मित्याकारप्रकारो विलसतु सततं वल्लभाचार्यमार्गः॥”

*“Sadrupam Krishnarupam jagadidamakhilam
brihisuchyaprakalpo jeevonuhu
Vrajapaticharane savvasâraiva bhaktihi I
Sâkâram brahmatadyad vrajabhuvi ramate
schitdânandarupamithyâkâraprakâro
Vilasatu satatam Vallabhâchârya margaha II”*

The whole Universe is real; it is Sri Krishna's own form. Existence and bliss are hidden in it. The atomic Jivas are also part of Him. The Lord of Vraja (Sri Krishna Paramâtma) is both the means and the fruit (end) to be attained. Sri Krishna who is existence –consciousness- bliss personified, who is an unimaginable mass of bliss and who indulged in divine sports and dalli-

ances in 'Vraja Bhumi' (The Holy Land of Brindavan, Mathura and surrounding areas), is verily the Parabrahman himself. In this manner, let the Shuddhâdvaita Doctrine grow and flourish in the hearts of the devotees.

According to Sri Vallabhacharya, there are three acceptable truths or realities namely Brahman, the Universe and Jivas.

Brahman

Lord Sri Krishna exists at all times everywhere. He is all knowing and all pervading. The perishable Universe is the primordial material manifestation of the Lord. All contrary or hostile Dharmâs are also part of the Lord. This means that all Dharmâs have divine elements in them. Despite being completely independent, the Lord is dependent upon his devotees. Even though the Lord is birthless, He takes birth in the Universe countless times. Although He is 'Atmârâm' (a yogi who is completely content with the knowledge of the self or the realisation of the Self), he yearns for His devotees. Three forms of Brahman have been described. These are 'Âdhidaivik' (of divine origin), 'Âdhyâtmik' (relating to the self, spiritual) and 'antaryâmi' (the inner controller). Accepting Purushottam Sri Krishna alone as the Parabrahman, contemplation of innumerable beautiful forms and delightful sports has been regarded as the hymns for the manifestation of bliss in one's life. The Universe is the ground for the Brahman's sports and dalliances. The entire Universe is the Brahman's own creation caused by His sporting activities.

‘समो मशकेन, समो नागेन ।

अणोरणीयान् महतो महीयान् ॥

’ “*Samo mashkena, samo nâgena l*
Anorniyân mahato mahiyân ll”

Forms smaller than the smallest particle and bigger than the biggest are assumed by the Lord. The Lord is free of all material aspects. The Paramâtma is the doer of everything, the enjoyer of everything and all Scriptures, Doctrines and Sciences are vested in Him.

Jiva

Whenever the desire arose in the Lord to indulge in some sport or dalliance, concealing his supremely blissful nature, He manifested himself as His Ray or Emanation, in the form of a Jiva. In the embodied state in worldly life, along with its blissful nature, the Jiva's other virtues such as its glory etc all disappear. With the disappearance of 'aishvarya' (glory, grandeur), 'veerya' (strength, power), 'yash' (fame, renown) and 'sri' (fortune, prosperity), other qualities such as 'parâdhinata' (dependence, servility), 'deenata' (poverty, apathy, meekness) and all such inferior, mean or vile qualities arise in the Jiva. With the disappearance of knowledge and detachment, attachment to worldly things increased. In other words, the Jiva turns away from 'aishwarya', 'veerya', 'yash', and 'sri' and becomes attached to 'parâdeenatha', deenata, and 'sarvahinatva'.

“ममैवांशं जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः”

In the Srimad Bhagavad Gita (ch 15/7), Bhagawan himself said that in the World, the ancient and eternal Jivâtma is a part of Him (a ray or emanation).

“एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यः”

“Esho anurâtmâ chetasâ veditvyaha”

It has been said in the Shruti as stated above that this Jiva is atomic in size and can be realised through consciousness.

“वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधाकल्पितस्य च ।

जीवाऽणुः स च विज्ञेयः सोऽनन्त्याय कल्पते” ॥

“*Vâlâgrashtabhâgasya shatadhakalpitasya cha
Jeevâanuhu sah cha vigneyaha so anantyâya kalpate* ”

An indication of the size of the Jiva can be had from the fact that it is a hundred times smaller than the front tip of a strand of hair. Nevertheless, it exists as if it pervades the entire body. This is like the lamp which is stationary at one place but its light spreads far all around. Just like the flame of a fire, the Jiva has separated from the Paramâtma as His emanation. From a fire, thousands of flames emanate and sparks are thrown out, and yet the strength of the fire does not diminish thereby. In the same manner, innumerable Jivas emanate and separate out from the Paramâtma. but the Lord continues to be all powerful. Consciousness subsists in the Jeeva just like the fragrance present in a flower and soothing coolness in sandalwood. The Universe, the Jivas, and the Lord are eternal truths. Jivas are considered to be of three types, namely, ‘*Pushti Jiva*’, ‘*Maryâda Jiva*’ and ‘*Pravâha Jiva*’.

‘*पुष्टिजीव*’ ‘*Pushti Jivas*’ exist completely depending completely upon Bhagawan’s grace and become eligible to participate in the Lord’s eternal sports and pastimes.

‘*मयादा जीव*’ ‘*Maryâda Jivas*’ are those who follow the sacred precepts and rules of the Vedas and eventually attain various higher worlds.

‘*प्रवाह जीव*’ ‘*Pravâha Jivas*’ are those who remain engrossed in the world and wordly life and always hanker for enjoyment of wordly happiness.

In determining the nature of the relationship of Brahman with the Jivas and Universe, Srivallabhâchârya contention was that the Jiva is a real part of Brahman and the World is also a real part of Brahman. Because there is no difference between the part and the whole, the Jivas, the Universe, and the Brahman are not different from each other. The only difference is that in the Jiva that portion, which is a part of the Brahman's bliss, remains covered and hidden whereas in the case of inert matter both the portions representing Brahman's bliss as well as consciousness remains hidden.

The Material World or the Universe

The World is real because the Lord has himself assumed that form.

'सत् एव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत्'

“*Sat eva saumyedamagra â sit I*”

O saumya! This world is real-it is the form of Krishna

'स आत्मानं स्वयमकुरुते'

“*sa âtmânânam svayamakurute I*”

The Lord himself has assumed the form of this World.

'सहैतावानास' “*sa hai tâvânâsa I*”

Because a desire arose in Him to engage in sports and dalliance, the Lord assumed the form of the Universe.

'सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म' “*Sarva khalvidam brahma I*”

This Universe that we behold is a form of the Brahman.

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभव ॥ (गीता अ. ७ -६)

“*Aham krutsnasya jagataha prabhavaha II*”

I am the originator of the entire Universe (Gita 7/6)

In Sri Vallabhâchârya's doctrine, there is a clear distinc-

tion between the Material World and Wordly life. The Material World is not an illusion, it is real and true. The Material World is a form of Ishvara. However, wordly life is an illusion, of the form of a delusion. Wordly life is defined in terms of the 'Ahambhava'; the Jivâtma forgets its basic nature which is akin to Brahman. Ishvara is both the material as well as efficient cause of the World. Ishvara creates the World, by His will or resolve but does not undergo any change in His essential form. He is alone as the Creation and He is alone also the Creator.

Shuddhâdvaita (In Brief)

The Founder : Srimad Vallabhâchârya

Birth : Samvat 1401

The Doctrine: The Brahman is true, the Universe is true and the Jiva is a part of the Brahman.

The Means: 'Navadhâ Bhakti' (The Nine-Forms of Devotion); 'Sevâvidhi' (The Prescribed Ways of Service) ; 'Sharanagati' (Complete surrender to God) ; and upâsana' (Worship and Adoration). Devotion filled with love and particularly the worship and adoration of the childhood forms of Sri Krishna Paramâtma.

Muktidham: (The Abode of Liberation): Golakvâsa

The Accepted texts: Prasthâchatushtaya (Upanishada, Vyâs sutras, srimad Bhagavadgita, and Srimad bhagavatam and other Sacred Texts of the Sampradâya)



THE RÂMÂNANDI TRADITION

There is no clear record of the life-history of Râmânandaji but according to a text written by devotees, Râmânandaji hailed from South India. However, as per “रामानंददिविजय” “Râmânand-Digvijay”, Râmânandaji was born in Samvat 1356 in the holy place of Prayâg. His father’s name was Punyasadan and his mother’s name was Susheela Devi. They belonged to the Kânyakubja Brahman clan. For many years the Brahmin couple had no issues. After the observance of many vows, Râmânandaji was born to them. Right from birth, Râmânanda had extraordinary lustre and splendour. After performing Râmânandaji’s upanayanam, his parents sent him to Kâshi (Vâranâsi) for study of knowledge under Râghavânandji. Seeing the young boy’s intellectual brilliance, Sri Râghavânandji was astonished. When Sri Râmânand Swami was victorious against other Pandits in the interpretation of the meanings of the Holy Scriptures, his Guruji was very pleased. After Sri Râmânanda completed his studies, his Guru accorded permission for ‘Samâvartam’ (the return of the pupil to the householder’s life) and instructed the pupil to accept the householder’s life. At that time, Sri Râmânand’s parents had also come to kâshi. They were very happy to see their son’s scholarship and

brilliance. They also asked Râmânand to marry in accordance with his Guru's command. However Râmânandji was already free from the bonds of 'samsâra' (worldly existence). He sought permission from his parents to take 'sanyâsa (renouncement of worldly life). With the permission of the parents, Sri Râghavânandji duly initiated Ramanandji into 'sanyâsa' and told him to keep travelling from region to region spreading devotion to the name of Sri Râma. After initiation, Râmânand Swami began to practice devotion to 'रामनाम' 'Râma Nâma' (devotion to the name of Sri Râma and all the devotional feelings arising there from) along with yoga, meditation, and penances/austerities. According to Sri Nâbhji composer of the above mentioned Text for Devotees, Sri Râmânandji belongs to the Sri Râmânujâchârya order. The traditions of both the Achâryâs are famous by the name of 'Sripradâya' (A Religious Tradition which accords a unique place to Goddess Lakshmi). Both Religious Traditions accept the Tenets of Vishistâdvaita. Nevertheless, there are differences in observance, and certain other distinguishing aspects. In the Sri Râmânujâchârya Tradition, the original founder of the Tradition is considered to be Lakshmiji, and the original founder of Sri Râmânandji's Tradition is accepted as Jânakiji. Seethaji first gave the mantra-initiation to Hanumânji. Hanumânji initiated Maharish Vashista. Thus, one by one in succession, Sri Râmânandji came to be initiated in that tradition. In the same manner, in the Sri Râmânujâchârya Tradition, Lakshmiji gave the first mantra-initiation to Vishvaksena who in turn initiated Sri Shatâri Swami. Following this order of succession, Sri Râmânujâchârya received the mantra-initiation. Whereas, in the Râmânandaji Tradition, the Presiding Deity is Sri Râmachandra Prabhu, in the Sri

Râmânujâchârya Tradition, it is Sriman Narayana. In the application of 'tilak' (vermillion marks) there are differences between the two. In the Râmânandji Tradition, devotion, austerities/penances, and worship/adoration are given special importance whereas in the Sri Râmânujâchya Tradition, devotion, knowledge, worship, personal cleanliness and purity are considered to be the primary means for accomplishment.

Rânandji was a 'Tridandi' (who holds a triple-staff which symbolises that the holder has dedicated his speech, body, and mind entirely to the service of the Lord) Swami. He belonged to the Vaishnava Faith, and the Vishistâdvaita Darshana was his life's vision and purpose.

Sri Râmânandji Swami fully accepted the Vishistâdvaita Doctrine of Sri Râmânujâchârya alone. While teaching and instructing devotees, he has said that, "To go to the holy abode of Sri Râmachandra is the purpose of devotion for Vaishnavâs. Bhagawan Râmachandra alone is verily Brahman. The true knowledge of Brahman alone is the expedient for securing moksha. The Shrutis contain cosmic/transcendental knowledge such as the knowledge of the Brahman etc and these should be understood in terms of the language of devotion. 'Vedana' (knowledge or perception), 'Dhyâna' (meditation), and Upâsana' (worship and adoration) are terms which indicate devotion alone. This very devotion is the means of attaining the Supreme Person. 'Yama' (yogic restraints), 'Niyama' (self-regulation), 'Âsana' (yogic postures), 'Prânâyama' (control of the life-force), 'Pratyâhâra' (control of the senses), 'Dhârana' (concentration), 'Dhyâna' (meditation), and 'Samâdhi' (total absorption) are the eight limbs of

Bhaktiyoga (the Yoga of Devotion). Constant remembrance of God like the uninterrupted flow of oil is verily bhakthi. Bhakthi is the epitome of the knowledge of the Brahman contained in the Upanishads. There is another form of Bhakthi as exemplified in the Purânas (Ancient Religious Texts) in which there are nine forms of devotion such as ‘*Archana*’ (worship/adoration), ‘*Vedana*’ (praise/salutation) and others. Shabari, Guha, Kapi, Prahlad and other devotees practiced the ‘Paurânîk’ form of devotion and attained the highest abode.

Sri Râmânandji wrote the Ânandabhâshya on the BrahmaSutrâ, the Srimadbhagavadgeetha Bhâshya, the Vaishnavamatâbjasâr, Sri râmârchanapadhati, and other texts in Sanskrit. Sri Râmanandji’s disciple, Sri Tulsidâs wrote the Râmayan and other Texts in Hindi.

Thus, whereas Sri Râmânujâchya specially propagated devotion to Sri Vishnu in Southern India, Sri Râmanandji propagated devotion to Sri Râma in the North.

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SHRI CHAITANYA MAHÂPRABHU

The Doctrine of Achintyabhedâbhed (Inconceivable Difference in Unity)

Gaurang or Chaitanya Mahâprabhu became a great Vaishnava Âchârya of Northern India. This Âchârya of Sri Krishna Bhakti in the Vaishnava Tradition was born in the village of Navadeep in Bengal in the year Vikram Samvat 1542 (1486AD) on the Full Moon Day of the Month of Phâlgun in the evening in Simha Lagna when there was an eclipse of the Moon. His father's name was Jagannâth Mishra and his mother's name was Shachidevi. Chaitanya Mahâprabhu's boyhood names were Chaitanya Deva and Nimâyi. The Swami was very fair complexioned and therefore he came to be called Gaurang (Fair Coloured).

Navadveep is a famous place in Bengal. At that time, the Muslim invasion of India was underway. Navadveep happened to be the Capital of Bengal. There was a Centre of Learning (University or College) in that place. Students from all parts of India would come there to pursue their studies. Sri Gaurang was extraordinarily intelligent. He studied under Sri Vâsudev Sârvaabhauma Bhattachârya. Within a short time he completed his studies of Nyâya Shâstra. Thereafter, he was married to a girl

called Vishnupriya. After marriage, he began to attend to the householder's duties because his father had expired when Gaurang was still a student and his elder brother Vishwaropa had, much earlier, taken sanyâsa (joined the order of sanyâsis). Consequently, Sri Gaurang began to look after his mother. Even as a householder, Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu would be engrossed in the worship and adoration of Sri Krishna. Then at the age of 24, he abandoned the householder's life and became a sanyâsi (one who belongs to the order of those who have formally renounced everything in life). His Guru's name was Sri Keshavabhârathi. After becoming a Sanyâsi, when Sri Gaurang (Sri Chaitanya) Mahâprabhu reached Puri and beheld Sri Jagannâthji (The Presiding Deity of Jagannâth Puri Temple), he was so overwhelmed with loving devotion that he became intoxicated with love for the Lord and began dancing and singing devotional songs and presently, while doing so, fell down unconscious within the Temple. Soon after becoming a Sanyâsi, for about 6 years, he went on pilgrimages to different parts of India. He propagated devotion to Sri Krishna. He would often be completely absorbed in singing the hymns of Sri Hari and worshipping the Lord. Till the very end of his life, like an intoxicated person, he would constantly chant the names of Sri Krishna Paramâtma. Two Âchâryas named Nityânand and Advaita would always be by the side of Chaitanya Swami. The Swami established the Order of Succession of Âchâryas of his Tradition and appointed both these Âchâryas as Heads of the Order. In accordance with Swamiji's commands, both these Âchâryas began to teach the Precepts of their Swami's Doctrine. The Chief Disciples of Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu were Roop, Sanâtan, Jeev, Raghunâth Bhatt, Raghunâth Das, and Gopâl Bhatt.

The Doctrine

In this tradition, the Deity of Worship is Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is Bhagawan himself. It is Sri Krishna Paramâtma alone who manifests himself in the form of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahâdeva, and creates, sustains, and destroys the Universe. From Age to Age, He incarnates upon this Earth to establish Dharma, to destroy Adharma, and to protect the people. Sri Krishna (Vishnu Bhagawan) is the Supreme Truth. He is the infinite ocean of love and compassion. He is without a second. He is existence-consciousness-bliss personified. Since He is beyond Mâyâ (The Lord's own power of illusion), He is 'Nirguna' (without attributes). He is all- knowing and all- powerful. And because he is the repository or storehouse of auspicious qualities which are endless in magnitude, He is also 'Saguna' (with attributes). Through His 'Parâshakti' (omnipotent higher powers), He invokes his 'Aparâshakti' (lower powers) and the 'Âdhyashakti' (the first potential power of creation) and through these He creates the Universe. From this perspective, the Paramâtma is both the material as well as the efficient cause of the Universe.

The two truths, namely, the Universe and the Jivas are entirely supported by Ishvara and completely dependent upon Him. However, they are both different as well as identical with Ishvara. The nature of this difference as well as non-difference at the same time is considered in this Doctrine to be beyond thought or inconceivable, and therefore, this Darshana is named 'Achintyabhedâbhed'.

Ishvara's Secret & Inconceivable Powers

This is similar to the analogy of the light present in the Sun and the heat present in a fire. In the same manner, Sri Krishna Paramâtma possesses His powers. These powers have no independent existence. They are dependent upon Ishvara. The nature of the relationship between Ishvara and his powers can best be described by the term '*Bhedâbhed*' (Co-Existent Difference and Non-Difference).

The 'Shaktis' (Powers or Potencies or Energies) of Ishvara are of three types, namely, '*Chittashakti*' (Innate Potency or Power), '*Jivashakti*' (The Jiva Potency), and '*Mâyashakti*' (The Power of Illusion). These powers can be described respectively as '*Antarang*' (Inward Acting), '*Tatastha*' (Peripheral or Marginal), and '*Bahiranga*' (Extraneous or External). The '*Chittashakti*' is used to create '*Vaikunta*' (Celestial Abode of Sri Hari). In Vaikunta, there is only '*Shuddha Sattva*' (Non-Material, Incorruptible Spiritual Stuff). '*Mâya*' cannot make any ingress there.

Jivas are brought into existence by means of the '*Tatasthashakti*' (The Jiva Potency). Ishvara sets into motion the creation of the Universe from the '*Mahat Tattva*'. Further proliferation and expansion is done by Brahmaji. Men who have realised the ultimate knowledge behold Sri Krishna in the form of the Parabrahman. Sri Krishna Yogis come to know Sri Krishna in the form of the Paramâtma while Devotees come to know Him in the form of Bhagawan. Countless forms are assumed by

Bhagawan which are classified into three categories, namely, ‘*Svayamroopa*’ (His Transcendental Form), ‘*Tadokâtmaroopa*’ (The Forms Emanating from That), ‘*Aveshtarooopa*’. ‘*Matsya*’ (Fish), ‘*Kurma*’ (Tortoise), and ‘*Narasimha*’ (Man-Lion) are examples of his incarnations for sport. Rishi Sanatkumar, Nârada Muni, Emperor Pruthu, Brahma, Sri Sesh (The Primordial Serpent) and others are examples of ‘*Aveshta*’ incarnations. Prosperity, glory, power and might are vested in them alone. Rishi Sanatkumar has the power of knowledge, Narada Muni has the power of devotion, Brahma has the power of creation, and Sri Ananth (Lord Sesh) has the power of upholding.

Devotion is the Means for Liberation

In this Tradition, loving devotion is accorded the highest importance. Devotion to God is considered to be the only means of attaining final liberation. Mahâprabhu Chaitanya would teach devotees that every person has equal rights to practice devotion to Bhagawan. People of every caste or creed can purify themselves through devotion. Following this tenet, Chaitanyaswami initiated people from the lower castes into the faith and made them his disciples. Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu’s tenet was that loving devotion occupies the highest place. There are five types of ‘bhâvas’ (sentiments) which give characteristic flavour to Loving Devotion. These are ‘*Shânta*’ (of the nature of serenity or peacefulness), ‘*Dâsya*’ (of the nature of loving servitude), ‘*Sakhya*’ (of the nature of close companionship or friendship), ‘*Vâtsalya*’ (of the nature of tender love and care which parents feel for their offspring), and ‘*Mâdhurya*’ (of the nature of sweet

& blissful union). The sentiment with which Rishis like Sanat, Sanandan and others practised devotion is of the nature of '*shânta bhâva*'. The sentiment which most ordinary folks express their devotion is called '*dâsya bhâva*'. The feeling of devotion in the Pândavas is called '*sakhâ bhâva*'. The sentiment with which Nandji and Yashoda expressed their devotion is termed '*vâtsalya bhâva*'. The fifth one, namely '*mâdhurya bhâva*' has been hailed by Chaitanyaprabhu as the best of all. Radha and other Gopis served the Lord with the '*mâdhurya bhava*'. Chaitanya Prabhu too practiced devotion to the Lord with his mind and body immersed in the '*mâdhurya bhâva*'.

In this Tradition, the chanting of the names of the Lord is considered the most important devotional activity. In the Kali Yuga, the recollection or remembrance of the Lord's names is deemed as an excellent expedient for all aspirants.

“हरेर्नाम हरेर्नाम हरेर्नामैव केवलम् ।

कलौ नात्येव नास्येव नास्त्येव गतिरन्यथा” ॥

“*Harernâma harernâma harernâmaeva kevalam I
Kalau nâthyeva nâsyaeva nâstyaeva gatiranyatha*”

In this way, the remembrance or recollection of the names of the Lord has been regarded as the best means available. In addition to the remembrance of the Lord's names, fasting, dancing and such other means numbering 64 in all have been considered acceptable. The service of the Guru has also been accorded considerable importance in this Tradition. The trio of Ishvara, the Guru, and Mantra have been accepted as one.

Thus in this Traditional Order, the Guru is given due importance. It is enjoined that the words of the Guru should be deemed as the words of the Lord himself and accorded due importance. The Goswamis in the traditional order of succession alone are considered to be eligible to be installed as Gurus. Brahmachâris (celibate aspirants) are eligible to join the order but only married men can become Âchâryas who head the organisation.

Sri Chaitanyamahâprabhu has preached a 32 syllable 'târabrahmaharinâm mahamantra' (a great mantra consisting of the Brahman Sri Hari's names which constitute a means of deliverance from the bondage of samsâra) with the intention of uplifting Jivâtmas in this Kali Yuga. This mantra is as follows:

‘हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे ।

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे’ ।

*“Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Râma Hare Râma Râma Râma Hare Hare”*

In this Tradition, it is the practice to apply a high 'tilak' (traditional marking) of 'gopichandan' (the sacred soil of Dwarka or Brindavan) on the forehead. On both the hands, the chest opposite the heart and other areas of the body are stamped with the words 'Radha Krishna' and they also carry the 'japamâla' (rosary, beads for chanting).

Literature pertaining to this tradition is available in Sanskrit and Bengali. Roop and Sanâtan Goswami have written many Texts. Some of these are, 'Vidgadhamâdhav', 'Ujjwalneelamani',

‘Dânakelikaumudi’, ‘Bahustavâvali’, ‘Ashtadasha Leelâkând’, ‘Padmâvali’, ‘Govindabirudâvali’, ‘Laghubhâgavata’, ‘Bhaktirasâmrutasindhu’, ‘Vrajavilâsavarnan’, ‘Geethâvali’, ‘Vaishnavatoshit’, ‘Haribhaktitivilâs’, ‘Bhâgavatâmrut’, and ‘Siddhântasâr’. Even today these texts are accorded the status of ancient holy texts.

Moksha

In this Vaishnava Faith, Mukti is considered to be of two types. One is ‘Aishvarylâbh or Svargabhog’ (the acquisition of wealth, prosperity & power or the enjoyment of heavenly pleasures) and the other is residence in Vaikunta. Devotees, who reach Vaikunta by means of worship and adoration of the Lord, will never get trapped again in the cycles of births and deaths and transmigration. Four types of Mukti have been accepted. However, ‘Sayujyamukti’ is given maximum importance.

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SHREE SWÂMINÂRAYAN

TRADITION (PHILOSOPHY)

The Purpose of

Shree Swâminârâyan Bhagawan's Incarnation

'श्री उद्धव' Sri Uddhav (Sri swâminârâyan) Tradition mainly propagates and promotes the '*Bhaktimârg*' (The Path of Devotion). However, all the four means of securing moksha (final liberation), namely, '*Dharma*' (Right Conduct), '*Gyân*' (Right Knowledge), '*Vairâgya*' (Dispassion, Detachment), and '*Bhakti*' (Devotion) have been considered necessary. Moksha cannot be obtained by any one of the means for all the four means are necessary in life. Adherence to '*Dharma*' will bring one's life under control. '*Bhakti*' will increase one's love for Bhagawan, '*Vairâgya*' will loosen one's delusion and attachment to worldly life, and '*Gyân*' will enable one to recognise Bhagawan. Thus, only by becoming fully proficient in all the four expedients, one can attain divinity. In the '*Vachanâmrut*', Sriji Mahâraj repeatedly discusses '*Dharma*', '*Gyân*', '*Vairâgya*', and '*Bhakti*' and also mentions that all these four expedients should be followed with firm resolve.

In order to rekindle and awaken ‘*Dharma*’, ‘*Gyân*’, ‘*Vairâgya*’, and ‘*Bhakti*’ amongst the people, Bhagawan Himself incarnates upon this Earth. Bhagawan has said in the Gita –To eradicate ‘*adharma*’, to establish ‘*dharma*’, to protect holy men, and to destroy evil doers, I incarnate myself on this Earth. There was a time when in Bhâratvarsh, ‘*adharma*’ was spreading everywhere. Gurus of the Faith had begun to rob people in the name of righteous conduct. More and more people had begun to adopt the ways of immorality and unrighteousness. Vedic Scholars had started selling the Vedas. Kings whose duty it was to protect their subjects had started devouring them. In this way, the rule of lawlessness and criminal conduct had begun to spread everywhere throughout the entire land of Bhârath. Demonic people had begun to cause pain and unhappiness to saintly and pious persons. Under such circumstances, in accordance with the promise given in the Gita, Bhagawan incarnated Himself on the Earth in the form of Bhagawan Swaminârâyan.

It was sometime in the morning. Sri Naranârâyan Rishi was meditating while seated on a platform under a Badari Tree (a kind of berry tree which grows in abundance in Badrinath area) in Badarikâshrama. Just then, after completing a pilgrimage around Bhâratvarsh, along with Dharma and Murthy, Rishis Uddhava, Gautama, Garga, Maitreya, Pipplâda, Bruhaspati, Yâgnyavalkya, Vishvâmitra and other Rishis came to Badarikâshram to see Bhagawan Sri Nârâyana who welcomed the host of Rishis with folded hands and enquired from them the purpose of their visit.

The Rishis in a voice full of compassionate explained the

reason for their visit – “O Best of Munis! We have come here after a tour of the whole of Bhârathvarsha. Adharma has spread everywhere in Bhârathvarsha. ‘*Dharmagurus*’ (Gurus of the Faith) are robbing the people, and taking them on the path of ‘*Adharma*’ (unrighteous conduct). Scholars have started selling the Vedas. Kings whose duty it is to protect their people and Gurus whose duty is to give proper guidance, have begun to exploit and rob the people. Thus the rule of ‘adharma’ has spread throughout the Land of Bhârathvarsha. Demonic and evil-minded forces have started inflicting much pain and sorrow on Bhagawan’s devotees.”

Listening to the message conveyed by the gathering of the Rishis, Sri Naranârâyan Rishi made a mental resolve to incarnate upon the Earth in order to re-establish ‘Dharma’, and to eradicate ‘Adharma’ and protect good and saintly persons. At that moment, as per Rishi Naranârâyan’s own wish Durvâsa Rishi arrived at that august gathering. However, all the other Rishis were totally immersed in beholding Sri Naranârâyan Rishi and listening in rapt attention to his ‘amrutavâni’ (speech filled with nectar, as it were). Consequently, none of the Rishis turned their attention towards Durvâsa Rishi. Durvâsa Rishi waited quietly for some more time but still no one at that gathering welcomed him. He became filled with rage and roaring like a lion, he said, “O arrogant and disrespectful Rishis! By not properly welcoming and duly honouring a Rishi of my stature, you have all shown gross contempt and disrespect towards me. Therefore, as a consequence of this affront, **I hereby curse you all to be incarnated as human beings in the perishable world.**” Hearing this sudden and most unexpected speech, the host of Rishis were filled with fear. Con-

soling the Rishis, Sri Naranârâyan said, “Do not worry. The Rishi’s curse is applicable to me also. Therefore, I shall also incarnate upon the Earth in Bhârathvarsha along with you all. We shall establish Dharma and protect the devotees.” Considering the circumstances as sufficient cause for incarnation upon the Earth, Bhagawan resolved to be born in the form of Shree Swâminârâyan as the son of Dharmadeva and Bhaktimata.

An Account of the Life of Shree Swâminârâyan

Shree Swâminârâyan was born on Monday, 2 April 1781 AD at Chupaiyâ Village (near Ayodhya, UP). His childhood name was Ghanashyâm. His mother’s name was Sribhaktidevi and his father’s name was Sri Dharmadeva. Both Dharmadeva and Bhaktidevi would practice devotion to Sri Krishna. Some wicked and depraved people started troubling them without any reason. To avoid this, they moved Vrindvan. There, along with Marichi and other Rishis, they began to worship and adore Bhagawan Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna was very pleased with their worship and devotion, and appearing before them in his divine form, He told them that He would incarnate (consequent to the curse of Rishi Durvâsa) as their son and protect them from sorrows and difficulties. He would eliminate ‘Adharma’ and re-establish ‘Dharma’. Thus, after revealing His presence and giving a solemn promise, Sri Krishna Paramâtma disappeared from view.

Thereafter, Dharamadeva and Bhaktidevi returned to Chaupaiyâ began to practise devotion to Sri Krishna. On the ninth day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra in the Samvat Year

1837 (2 April 1781 AD), at about 10 at night, the human incarnation of Sri Krishna Paramâtma manifested Himself from Dharmadeva and Bhaktidevi. With the incarnation of Bhagawan, the surroundings everywhere became sanctified and auspicious. Sainly persons, devotees, god fearing people were very pleased and wicked and vile people began to feel unhappy. Demons like Kotrâu and Kâlidutta repeatedly came to Chupaiya to inflict suffering on Dharmadeva, Bhaktidevi and the infant Lord. One of the missions of the Lord's incarnations is to punish the demons and the wicked people. Therefore, the infant Lord destroyed Kâlidutt and other similar demons. The repeated oppression and outrages did not portend well and so the parents left Chaupaiya Village and began to live at Ayodhya. The Father, Dharmadeva was a great scholar. The Youthful Lord studied the Vedic Scriptures under his own father. He began to serve His parents and also pursue further studies of the Shâstras (Scriptures & Sciences). After his parents ascended to the imperishable abode of Sri Hari, he left his house and his people at the age of eleven and with the aim of safeguarding devotion, he began a pilgrimage of Bhârathvarsha right up to the impenetrable Himâlayas. During this time, he became famous by the name of Neelakantavarni. He entered the divine territory of the Himâlayâs. After visiting many sacred places of pilgrimage in the Himâlayas, he arrived at Muktinath (Pulâshrama). Here Sri Neelakantavarni performed severe '*tapasya*' (practice of austerities, penance, and self-control). Thereafter, Varniraj left the harsh confines of the Himalayas. Travelling through many regions and teaching and counselling many Kings on the way, he gradually moved from Northern India to Southern India. On the way, he held debates and discus-

sions with numerous logicians and scholars of various doctrines and instructed them about the monotheistic Vedanta dharma. It was as if Bhagawan Himself was moving about on Earth. Purifying the Earth with his holy feet wherever he went, he proceeded on foot, all by himself, on a pilgrimage to various places from the Himalayas, through Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Burma, Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Mahârastra, Gujarat and other regions, and travelling thus he arrived at Lojgaon in Saurâshtra. In that village, there was a big monastery of Udhhâvatâr (incarnation of Sri Uddhava) Sadguru Srirâmânand Swami. There the Swami himself was residing together with Sri Muktânand Swami and other disciples numbering 50. However, when Srineelakantavarni arrived at that monastery, at that time Sri Râmânand Swami happened to be staying at Bhujnagar (Kutch). Observing the extent of the devotion to Sri Krishna displayed by the inmates in this Ashrama, so deeply endowed with right conduct, knowledge, and dispassion, Srineelakantavarni decided to stay there itself. Sri Muktânand Swami and other disciples numbering 50 in all were astonished to see the 18 year old Varniraj's extraordinary mental felicity, exceptional brain power, majesty, influence and loftiness. Before Sri Muktânand Swami, Varniraj expressed his desire to behold Sadguru Srirâmânand Swami. Sri Muktânand Swami assured him that the Sadguru Swami would come there in a few days time and advised him to stay on and await his arrival. Sri Neelakantavarniji trusted Sri Muktânand's words and continued to stay on in the Ashrama performing various services while awaiting the arrival of Srirâmânand Swami.

A few days later, Srirâmânand Swami arrived at a village

called Piplâgaon. Srineelakantavarni, Srimuktânand Swami and other saintly persons proceeded to Piplâgaon and were blessed to behold the Guruji. Sadguru Srirâmânandswami upon seeing Srineelakantavarni instantaneously recognized him –“He is the incarnation of Sri Krishna Bhagawan himself. Now the purpose of my own incarnation is achieved.” Subsequently, for the general good of mankind, and in accordance with the traditions of the faith, he gave divine initiation to Sri Neelakantavarni and he gave him two names, ‘सहजानंद’ **Sahajânand** and ‘नारायणमुनि’ **Nârâyanamuni**. Some days later, after handing over charge of the Uddhava Tradition to the eighteen year old resplendent Brahmachari Sahajânand Swami, Sadguru Sri Râmânand Swami left for his own heavenly abode. Thereafter, Sahajânand Swami embarked upon the propagation of the Vedic Dharma.

Why did devotees begin to worship Srishajânand Swami in the form of Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan? If you wish to know the answer to this question, it would be necessary for you to understand what the state of Bhârathvarsha was like in the age of Srisahajânand Swami. What exactly did he do and what were his achievements at that time? In what manner did he reform our society? What were the various types of people to whom he gave a new life? It is essential to know the answers to all these questions first. What were the circumstances prevailing in Bharat Desh in his times? What was the condition of Gujarat and Rajasthan in particular? Let us first briefly survey these aspects.

After the fall of the Mughal Empire, the Maharatta Rule also began to weaken gradually. In the end, at Panipat the fourth

war was played out. In this battle, the English comprehensively defeated the Maharattas. After this, a greater part of India was taken over by the English. Despite that English rule did not cover the whole of India. There were many parts of India in which the ruling Rajas still considered themselves absolutely independent and under nobody's control and were inflicting suffering on their subjects and robbing them. Even during calamities, they would not help or protect the citizens. In such Kingdoms, law and order had deteriorated completely. Lawlessness and disregard for any kind of governance had spread everywhere in these regions. People had become very fearful. There was anarchy and injustice on all sides. In these circumstances, Bhagawan Swaminarayan organized a moral force of 500 '*paramâhamsas*' (literally 'supreme swans' who are vedic symbols of purity and transcendental qualities, in practice it refers to 'enlightened spiritual teachers') and thousands of devotees and with the permission of Sri Hari set out to go from village to village to awaken the people and regenerate their faith.

There were 500 Paramâhamsas with Bhagawan Swaminârâyan. In lawless Gujarat State, the Rajas who were supposed to protect the subjects had become exploiters of the people. Keeping this deplorable state of the common people, Bhagawan Swaminârâyan set out with the 500 Paramâhamsas to go from village to village for the welfare of the people. He taught people the importance of mutual friendship, trust in good people, religious faith, morality, non-violence and other values, and in addition arranged the construction of the most essential sources of water such as wells, ponds and tanks. He joined hands with the

people and he worked alongside them, and gave them much encouragement. The people were greatly impressed with these measures and began to accept that Dharma was the most important thing in life. The Rajas were also influenced by Sri Swaminârâyan words and deeds and they began to consider their duty as most important. Thieves, dacoits, and robbers discarded their wicked ways and took refuge in Sriswaminârâyan. The English (East India Company) Government praised the work of Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan. Thus, once again lawful governance, religious faith and right conduct, morality and truthfulness prevailed. As a result, in the kingdoms concerned, everywhere happiness, peace, and absence of fear began to spread.

In this way, the Vaidik Dharma was re-established. Sri Hari gave a thought as to how this Vedic Dharma could be preserved for future generations, and so that the Vedic Dharma should continue firmly as a Tradition, he initiated the ‘satsang’ (association with the good, keeping the company of the pious) tradition. A human being or an animal, deficient in some part or organ of the body, cannot be regarded as a whole or a complete being and cannot realize its full potential in life. In the same manner, without religious faith & right conduct, right knowledge, dispassion, and devotion, we cannot develop our divine faith fully and achieve our full spiritual potential. For this reason, Sri Swaminârâyan laid particular stress on ‘satsang’ so that these four essential limbs of the faith may mix and cooperate with each other. In order to make sure that the ‘satsang’ tradition should continue firmly without interruption, he started four traditional practices to be followed by successive generations in the Faith, namely,

‘शास्त्रपरंपरा’ ‘*Shâstra Parampara*’ (The Tradition of the Scriptures),
 ‘मंदिर परंपरा’ ‘*Mandirparampara*’ (The Tradition of Temples & Worship),
 ‘आचार्यपरंपरा’ ‘*Âchâryaparampara*’ (The Tradition of Preceptors),
 and
 ‘संत परंपरा’ ‘*Santaparampara*’ (The Tradition of Saints & Holy People)

Such was the stress laid on ‘satsang’ by means of these four traditions that in the term ‘Sriswaminârâyan Sampradâya’, instead the word ‘Sampradâya’ (Religious Group or Sect or Faith) the term ‘Satsang’ began to be used, and those following this path began to be called ‘Satsangis’ (those practicing satsang).

Thus Bhagawan Swaminârâyan fulfilled the purpose of his incarnation by establishing the ‘bhagavaddharma’ (the divine faith). Then at a place called Gadapur, after giving his last divine message to his saints and devotees, on Wednesday, the 10th Day of Jyestha Shukla in the year Vikram Samvat 1776 (1-6-1830 AD), he disappeared from view. Thus Bhagawan Sri Swaminârâyan lived on this Earth for exactly 49 years, 2 months, and 1 day and during the course of his life, he uplifted and redeemed many Jivas and also showed the right path for all new generations to come.

The Vishistâdvaita Doctrine

It may be asked that the Knowledge of the Truth which Sri Hari accepted as valid, in other words the doctrine (True Knowledge) as described in the ‘Vachanâmrut’, ‘Shikshatri’, and ‘Satsangijivan’ and other main Holy Texts of the Faith, is based

on the tenets propagated by which Âchârya? In this connection, in the various texts ‘Shikshâpatri’, ‘Vachnâmrut’, ‘Satsangijivan’ and other texts acknowledged in the Sampradâya as valid sources of true knowledge, Sri Hari has stated as his own opinion as follows-

“In what manner should we view and understand the Guruparampara? Uddhavaji was himself in the form of Sri Râmânandswami and in the Srirangakshetra (The Region around Srirangam), Sri Râmânandswami was initiated into the Vaishnava Faith in the dream state by none other than Sri Râmânujâchârya himself. Therefore the Guru of Sri Râmânandswami is Sri Râmânujâchârya and we are the disciples of that Sri Râmânandswami. We should understand the Guruparampara in this way.” [Vachanrut. Badtâl. 17].

Thus acknowledging Sri Râmânujâchârya as the Founder Âchârya, and writing “*Matam vishistâdvaitam me*” (our doctrine is Vishistâdvaita) in the ‘Shikshâpatri’ and accepting the doctrine propagated by Sri Râmânujâchârya as his own doctrine, he goes on to write further in the ‘Shikshâpatri’ that –

“शारीरिकाणां भगवद्गीतायाश्चवगम्यताम् ।

रामानुजाचार्यकृतभाष्यात्मिकं मम” ॥ (शिक्षा. १००)

*“Sharirakânâm Bhagavadgitâyâschavagamyatâm I
Râmânujâchâryakrutbhâshyâmâdhyâtmikam mama*
[Shiksha. Shloka.100].

The Commentaries written by Sri Râmânujâchârya on the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita have been ac-

cepted in this Faith as Spiritual Scriptures. And Sri Râmânujâ's tenet is that the Jiva, Mâyâ, and the Purushottam, all the three are eternal truths.....(Sri Swaminârâyan has written) – “ And Sri Râmânujâ's doctrine is like this – The Jiva, Mâyâ, and the Purushottam, all three are eternal, and the Purushottam exists, and He is the Controller of the Jiva and Mâyâ, and He is the cause of everything, and in His imperishable abode, He always resides in His transcendental form, and all incarnations are His alone, and such a Purushottam Nârâyana should be adored and worshipped by Jivas..... in this way we can understand Sri Râmânujâ's perceptions I (Loyâ. 14) And that Purushottam Bhagawan who has been described by Râmânujâswami as being beyond the perishable – imperishable, in that very Purushottam Bhagawan we have full devotion I (Va. Loyâ 14).

About this topic, in the ‘हरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु’ ‘Harivâkyasudhâsindhu’ it is written –

“अनेन रामानुजाचार्योक्तरीत्या भगवत्स्वरुपावबोधोममाभीष्टोऽस्तीति सूचितम्”

“Anena Râmânujâchâryoktareetya

Bhagavadsvaroopâvabodhomamâbhishtoastiti suchitam”

“The manner in which we should obtain true knowledge of Bhagawan's form as explained by Sri Râmânujâchârya is, to me, most desirable.”

And,

“च मया मतानामष्टानां मच्छास्त्राणामपि स्फुटम्

अयमेवाशयोऽस्तीति बुद्धिमद्धिर्विभाव्यताम् ॥”

“Cha mayâ matânâmashtânâm sachâstrânâmapi sphutam

Ayamevâshayoastiti buddhimaddhirvibhâvyatâm ”

Thus Sri Hari urges wise people to conceptualize the doctrines of eight true scriptural texts and his own doctrine into one integral whole and accept it as such. The doctrines according to the above mentioned eight excellent and special scriptural texts accepted as his personal preference and his own highest truths in essence, have all been described by Sri Hari himself in the ‘Satsangijivan’, ‘Shikshâpatri’, ‘Vachnâmrut’ and other sacred texts.

In order to protect the Vedic Dharma and to destroy Adharma, Bhagawan himself incarnates on this Earth. The Vaidik Dharma has been propagated and established by Bhagawan through his innumerable incarnations such as Bhagawan Srirâma, Sri Krishna, and others but whenever Adharma increases and Dharma deteriorates then either Bhagawan himself incarnates again or liberated souls like Srishankarâchârya, Srirâmânujâchârya, Srimadvâchârya, Srivallabhâchârya and other such Âchâryas and many devotees incarnate upon the Earth and protect the Vedic Dharma. In the Age of Kali, Dharma had often been safeguarded and Traditional Systems of Faith duly established through various Âchâryas and Devotees but once again, in the 18th Century, the influence of Adharma was spreading rapidly while Dharma had begun to disintegrate, and wicked people had started inflicting pain and sorrow upon devotees and pious people. Then according to the promise given in the Bhagavad Gita –

“यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत !

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

“Yadâ yadâ hi dharmasya glânirbhavati bhârata!

Abhyuthânamdharmaṣya tadâtmânâṁ srujâmyaham

“Whenever there is a decline in Dharma, O Best of Men (Arjuna) and there is proliferation of Adharma, then do I incarnate myself”

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥” (गीता अ.४)

*“Paritrânâya sâdhunâṁ vinâshâya cha dushkrutâm
Dharmasamsthapanârthya sambhavâmi yuge yuge”*

“For the protection of the good and the pious and for the destruction of the wicked, and with the aim of establishing Dharma, I take birth from Age to Age” [Gita 7 & 8 /4]

According to this solemn vow, verily Bhagawan himself, assuming the form of Bhagawan Swaminârâyan and incarnating himself on the Earth, played an absolutely vital role in re-establishing Vedic Dharma and ‘Vishnubhakti’ (Devotion to Sri Vishnu). That doctrine which was initially taught by Srîman Nârâyan, originated by Sri Lakshmi, and founded by Sri Nâthamuni, Sri Yamunâmuni, Sri Râmânujâchârya, Sri Râmânandswami and other Âchâryas is the Visishtâdvaita Doctrine which is wholly beneficial to mankind and in accordance with the Sutras (Scriptures). Accepting this Visishtâdvaita Doctrine as his own doctrine, Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan has written as follows in the ‘Shikshâpatri’ composed by him –

“मतं विशिष्टाद्वैतं मे गोलोको धाम चेप्सितम् ।

तत्र ब्रह्मात्मना कृष्णसेवा मुक्तिश्च गम्यताम्” ॥ (शिक्षा १२१)

*‘Matam visihistâdvaitam me golokka dhâm chepsitam
Tatra brahmâtmânâ Krishnâsevâ muktishcha gamyatâm II*

 Making his own liking or preference clear in the ‘Vachnâmrut’, he has said –

“Even as Sri Râmânujâswami has described the Purushottam Bhagwan who is beyond the perishable and the imperishable, that same Purushottam Bhagawan is adored and worshipped by me, and I have devotion to that Purushottam Bhagawan just like the Gopis and I have dispassion just like Sri Shukaji and Shri Jadabharath, and fully established in the self also. This is my meaning and my personal preference.” [Vachanâmrut. Loya Prakaran 14]

Thus, the Deity of choice for adoration and worship has been made explicit.

The Definition of the Truths

Accepting the existential reality of the truths just like Sri Râmânujâchârya, Bhagawan Sri Swaminârâyan has also accepted the reality of three truths. These are Sentient Beings, Non-Sentient Matter, and Ishvara. As stated in the ‘Vachanâmrut’ –“जीव, ईश्वर, माया, ब्रह्म परब्रह्म” (ग.प्र.प्र.७) “Jiva, Ishvara. Mâyâ, Brahma, and Parabrahma, these five categories (metaphysical entities) are without a beginning” [Ga.pra.pra.7]

“पुरुषोत्तम, पुरुष, ईश्वर, जीव और माया (ग.म.प्र ३१) “*Purushottam, purush, Ishvara, Jiva, and Mâyâ*, these five categories are without a beginning. [Ga.ma.pra.31]. the five categories of metaphysical entities without a beginning which Sri Hari has mentioned can

be grouped into three categories as follows:-

1. **Parabrahman** – Is well known by names such as Purushottam Bhagawan, Nârâyana, Paramâtma, Parameshvar, Vishnu and others.

2. **Brahma** – Aksharabrahma, Aksharadhâma, Vishvaksena, and Nityamuktapurusha are the imperishable types of Jivas in this category.

3. **Mâyâ** – Is the potency or power of Bhagawan.

4. **Ishvara** – This includes Brahma and other Jivas who are endowed with wealth, prosperity, power and might and are of the nature of officials.

5. **Jiva** – Those who are in worldly existence such as human beings, animals, birds etc are the aggregate of Jivas which are born from four types of wombs.

Chit (Jivâtma)

Bhagawan Swaminârâyan has called Jivas as Chit (Sentient Beings) and considers the Jivâtma as unique and unusual despite the fact that it possesses its own form of body, mind, prâna, intellect etc. The pristine self-nature of the Jiva is one of ‘apahatapâpma’ (with all its sins destroyed), ‘vijara’ (free from decay), ‘vijighasya apipâsa’, ‘satyakâma’ (lover of truth), and ‘satyasankalpa’ (of true resolve). Endowed with these eight unique qualities and becoming active, it remains in a state of bliss forever in the smallest state (atomic), unmanifest, incomprehensible, formless, and changeless entity based on pure consciousness. It remains under the control of Ishvara, dependent upon

Ishvara's support, and under Ishvara's Lordship. However, in the worldly state, when it is covered by the qualities and tendencies of Mâyâ, it shines in an altogether negative and opposing state. The Jiva is dependent upon Ishvara for all its actions and he has accepted the Jiva to be a part of the Brahman. Acknowledging the existential reality of both the Jiva and the Ishvara, he says that the closeness of their mutual relationship is so deep that it cannot be fathomed in the following states. These states called 'Navavidhasambandh' are as follows:-

1. Master-Servant Relationship.
2. Protected-Protector Relationship.
3. Father-Son Relationship.
4. Servant-Master Relationship.
5. Husband-Wife Relationship.
6. Knower-Object of Knowledge Relationship.
7. Body-Soul Relationship.
8. The Support-Supporter Relationship.
9. The Enjoyer-Enjoyed Relationship.

Along with this, the Jiva has been called as atomic in size. 'एष अणुः आत्मा' (मुण्डकोपनिषद्) '*Esha anuhu âtma* [Mundakopanishad]. "बालाग्र शतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य भागो जीवस्य (श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद्) "*Bâlâgraha shatabhâgasya shatadah kalpitasya bhago jivasya svaroopam anumâtram syât I*" [Svetâshvataropanishad]. In accordance with these Scriptures, Bhagawan Swaminârâyan has said in the 'Shikshâpatri' –

“हृत्थोणुस्सूक्ष्मश्चिद्रूपो ज्ञाता व्याप्याखिलां तनुम् ।

ज्ञानशक्त्या स्थितो जीवो ज्ञेयोच्छेद्यादिलक्षणः (शिक्षा.१०५)

“*Hrutthonursukshmathchidrupo gnyâta vyâpyâkhillâm
tanum I*

Gnyâshaktyâ stitho jeevo gneyochchedhyâdilakshnaha II”

[Shiksha. Shloka 105]

Thus, despite being atomic in size, the Jivâtma pervades like the light of the lamp, residing in the region of the heart, by means of the ‘dharmabhutagnyâna’ (attributive consciousness as distinguished from substantive consciousness), pervading the whole body uniformly, experiences all the happiness and sorrow, and as opposed to this, Ishvara is said to be ‘vibhu’ or all pervading. The Jiva is endowed with limited knowledge and limited power. In this manner, the nature of the Jiva is specially that of the servant (of the Lord) and the knower.

Achit

(Mâya, The Universe, and Primordial Matter)

According Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan, Mâya or the Universe is neither an illusion nor is it ‘anirvachaniya’ (indescribable) and ‘tuchha’ (worthless or insignificant) substance. That which cannot be described is termed ‘anirvachaniya’. By the mere usage of the term ‘anirvachaniya’, the Universe does not become illusory, it is strange but it is real and true. It represents the unimaginable power of Bhagawan. And since the Prabrahman is eternal, His powers are also eternal.

त्रिगुणात्मा तमः कृष्णशक्तिर्देहतदीययोः” (शिक्षा. १०६) “*Trigunâtmatamaha Krishnashaktirdehatdiyayoho”* [Shiksha.106]. “माया

वयुनम् ज्ञानम्” “*Mâyā vayunam gnyânām*” [Sri Bhâshya]. By describing *mâyā* as that which makes knowledge apparent or makes knowledge clear, Sri Râmânujachârya and Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan have proved that the Universe is true according to the Scriptures.

Ishvara

The views of both Sri Râmânujachârya and Bhagawan with regard to Ishvara are the same in that Ishvara is of the form of Truth and Knowledge, and is true and endowed with unique attributes like knowledge etc, and is the in-dweller of all, and the one who dispenses the fruits of actions to all. The entire Universe composed of inert matter and sentient beings is real and true and forms the body of Ishvara. Now therefore, these are under the control of Ishvara, dependent entirely upon Ishvara for support and subservient to Ishvara. Ishvara is the soul of the entire Universe and therefore, He is the Controller, the Supporter and the Master of the whole of the Universe. In a shloka of the ‘Shikshapatri’, Bhagawan Sriswaminârâyan has called this Doctrine the Nature of Ishvara and His Works:

“हृदये जीववज्जीवे जोऽन्तर्यामितया स्थितः ।

ज्ञेयः स्वतंत्र ईशोऽसौ सर्वकर्मफलप्रदः ॥ शिक्षा. १०७)

“*Hrudaye jeevavajjeeve joantaryâmitayâ stitaha I*

Gneyaha svatantra eeshoasau sarvakarmaphlapradaha II”

[Shiksha. 107]

The Shrutis make the same meaning clear. “*Yasyâ pruthvi shariram I*” (whose body is the earth); “*Yasyâtma shariram I*” (whose body is the *âtma*); “*Yasyâgni shariram I*” (whose body is the fire); “*yasyântariksha shariram I*” (whose body is the sky); “*yasya vâyu shariram I*” (whose body is the air); “*Yasya dhau*

shariram I” (whose body is the the water); “*Yoh mrutyumantare sancharan, yasya mrutyuhu shariram, yam mrutyurnaved, esha sarvabhutantarâtmâpahatpâpmâ divyo deva eko Nârâyana* I” (who is hidden within death, whose body is death, whom death does not know, that inner-self of all who is the destroyer of all sins and that resplendent divinity is the one and only Nârâyana). In other words, this Earth, water, fire, air, sky, the âtmâs and everything else is that Paramâtma’s body or “*Jagat sarvam shariram te*” (the entire Universe and everything in it is His body). All this Universe comprising of inert, insentient matter as well as sentient beings is the Paramâtma’s ‘tanu’ (body). Thus the Shrutis and Smritis declare that Ishvara is the Ruler and Controller of all sentient and sentient entities and impels them in their various actions. Creation and destruction are but Ishvara’s sports.

“*Lokavattu leelâkaivalyam I*” (But (Brahman’s creative activity) is merely His pastime) [Brahma Sutra 2-1, 33]; “*Leelâ hareridam sarvam I*” (all these are but Sri Hari’s sports) [Visnupurânam]; “*Bâlaha kridankairiva modate Bhagawan I*” (Bhagwan takes delight in creation as if it is a child’s play).

Thus, we see that Bhagawan creates the Universe for his sports and pastime, as it were. Clarifying the nature of relationship between Ishvara, conscious and unconscious entities or in other words, the Jivas and the Universe, he has stated that this relationship is of the nature of ‘*avinâbhâva*’ (inseparable like the relationship between that which is pervaded and that which pervades or between the fire and the smoke.) It is an entirely internal and core relationship. In one part, he has said that the relationship between Ishvara and the Jivas-Universe is like the

relationship between the Jiva and its Body made from the 'Panchabhutâs'. Thus the trio of substances namely Ishvara, sentient and insentient entities have been duly accepted.

Thus the unity and singular aspect of the substantive Ishvara endowed with the Sentient and Insentient Entities as His attributes is clearly established. That is why this Doctrine is called 'Vishistâdvaita'. 'द्वयोर्भाव द्विता । द्वितैव द्वैतम् । न द्वैतम् अद्वैतम् । विशिष्टञ्चेदम् अद्वैतम् विशिष्टाद्वैतम्' ।

“Dvayorbhâva dvitâ I Dvitaeva dvaitam I Na dvaitam advaitam I Vishistanchedam advaitam vishistâdvaitam”. Thus the Universe composed of Sentient and Insentient entities forms the body of the Parabrahman. This is similar to the Jiva's body composed of the 'panchabhutâs'. On the basis of the Vishitâdvaita Doctrine, the proponent of the Path of Devotion, Bhagawan Sri Swaminârâyan, following Sri Râmânujâchârya's tenets, laid stress on devotion to Sri Vishnu endowed with the spirit of loving servitude.

The Means for Moksha

In this Traditional Faith, four main means are firmly advocated. These are 'धर्म' 'Dharma' (Religious Faith & Right Conduct), 'ज्ञान' 'Gnyân' (Right Knowledge), 'वैराग्य' 'Vairâgya' (dispassion), and 'भक्ति' 'Bhakti' (devotion). For instance, if in some Traditional Faith knowledge is accorded the highest importance, in some other Tradition dispassion alone is considered important. Some Tradition has adopted only the Path of Devotion but in this Tradition Dharma, Gyân, Vairâgya, and Bhakti, all four means are regarded as essential. Bhakti has been accepted as a form of service. 'सेवामुक्तिश्च गम्यताम्' "Sevâmuktischa gamyatâm" [Shikshatri], Bhakti

in the form of loving service is the main means. But Dharma, Gnyân, Vairâgya, and Bakhti, all these four means have been accepted as expedients for securing moksha but if all the four means were to be merged into one extraordinary bhakti then this one means in the form of Bhakti will secure moksha. In the sacred text

‘Vachanâmrut’, Sri Hari has said that – *“Then Sriji Mahâraj said – in our Uddhava Tradition, if the four aspects of Gnyân, Vairâgya, Dharma, and Bhakti were to be found in someone, that person would be a most singular devotee, and in our Satsang (the company of pious and holy people), such a devotee would be fit to be called the first and foremost. However if the four (means of moksha) were not be fully present, then which is that single means, which is the best among the four means, which if alone were to be present (in that devotee), the remaining three would merge therein? Then, Gopâlnandanswami and Muktnandanswami said that – Mahâraj! Such a single means is Dharma; for if Dharma alone is present then the other aspects would also come to that person. Then Srijimahâraj said – if Dharma were to be present in a person, however indifferent or opposed that person might otherwise be (with regard to devotion to God and other means), would such a person still be considered first-ranked or foremost in the Satsang? Listening to this, no one was able to give an answer. Then Sriji Mahâraj said – if devotion to God were to be present along with realization of the Greatness & Glory of God and personal faith and dispassion, then too such a person would not fall from (the observance) Dharma because he who knows the Greatness & Glory of God would think that if*

Brahma and all other Gods abide by Bhagawan's commands then how could the same Bhagwan's commands be any the less applicable to me? Realizing this, he would remain obedient to Bhagawan's injunctions without a break.

Then Shukamuni said – if one type of devotion together with realization of the Glory of God is considered complete in itself (as a means), then why has Bhakti alone not been advocated (as sufficient means) and why have all the four aspects been advocated? Then Srijimahâraj replied that – if there is devotion to God along with intense knowledge and realisation of God's Greatness and Glory, then in this Bhakti, the other three (means) would come into it but if it were to be normal Bhakti, then in the one the other three would not come. Therefore, if there be Bhakti in a person which is devoid of these four means such a Bakhth would be called a singular or unique devotee. This form of extraordinary devotion was in Pruthuraja, and when Bhagawan asked him to seek a boon, he asked for ten thousand ears to listen to the divine stories of Bhagawan but did not ask for anything else. And those Gopis, who were not allowed to take part in the Râs Leela, gave up their lives and went to Sri Krishna – if there is such a unique and extraordinary devotion then gnyân and the other three would (automatically) come into this one Bhakti.”
[Vachnâmrut. Vadtâl3].

Thus in this Tradition, the importance of all the four means have been explained but extraordinary devotion has been accepted as the most important expedient for 'मुक्ति' Mukti.

