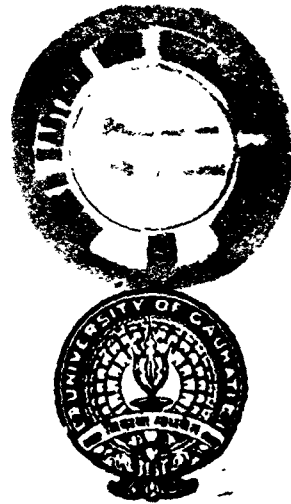


# **RĀMĀNUJA'S CONCEPT OF GOD**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PART  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
PHILOSOPHY IN PHILOSOPHY  
OF GAUHATI UNIVERSITY**



By—  
**SMT. KIRAN GOSWAMI, M.A.**  
LECTURER,  
TINSUKIA COLLEGE  
1992

Alu!

DS  
181.483  
GOS

AT NISAP  
103169  
M 213299  
~~13/9/2000~~

To  
The Controller of Examinations  
University of Gauhati  
Guwahati, Assam.

Sir,

I am pleased to forward herewith a dissertation entitled "Rāmānuja's Concept of God" submitted by Smt. Kiran Goswami for the M.Phil Degree in the University of Gauhati for adjudication. It is certified that the research work has been carried out entirely by Smt. Kiran Goswami under my guidance and supervision and that no part thereof has been submitted to this or any other University in any form for any research degree.

Smt. Kiran Goswami has fulfilled all the requirements under the M.Phil regulations of the University of Gauhati.

Yours faithfully,

*D. K. Chakravarty*

( D. K. Chakravarty )  
Prof. and Head,  
Department of Philosophy,  
University of Gauhati,  
Guwahati, Assam.

**PROFESSOR AND HEAD**  
**Department of Philosophy**  
**University of Gauhati.**

## P R E F A C E

The dissertation entitled "*Rāmānuja's Concept of God*" is written as the partial fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Philosophy degree in Philosophy.

In this dissertation I have attempted to present in a brief way the concept of God in Rāmānuja based on the view of Prasthānatraya i.e. the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā and the Brahmasūtra. Rāmānuja accepts Saviśeṣa Brahman or the Personal Supreme Being endowed with attributes as the Ultimate Reality of Philosophy on the strength of the scriptural texts. The Philosophy of Rāmānuja is a Philosophy of devotion to a Personal God.

The introductory chapter of this work is prepared from the point of view of Prasthānatraya. The second chapter deals with the concept of God in Rāmānuja in the light of Prasthānatraya. In the third chapter, discussion centres round the relation between God, individual soul and the World. In the conclusion a summary of the dissertation is presented with an emphasis on devotion to a Personal God.

In preparing this dissertation, I am really indebted to Prof. Dr. D.K. Chakravarty, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Gauhati University, but for whose guidance and affectionate encouragement this work would not have been possible.

I also record my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Nilima Sarmah, Dr. Sibnath Sarmah, Dr. Girish Sarmah, Dr. Manisha Baruah, Dr. Begum Bilkish Banu and Sjt. Saurav Pran Goswami for their kind suggestion.

I am also grateful to the Principal of Tinsukia College who has encouraged me by granting necessary leave for my study.

My words of thanks will be incomplete if I do not express my gratitude to every member of my family specially my parents Dr. Baikuntha Goswami and Smt. Nilima Goswami and my husband Mr. Devajit Borah, without whose help and co-operation, I would never have been able to complete my work.

It is also a pleasure on my part to offer my gratitude to the Librarian and Staff of Gauhati University Library for their kind help and co-operation.

Finally, I also offer my thanks to Mr. N.K. Sarma and Mr. S. Deka, of Classic Corner for sincerely typing out this dissertation work.

  
( KIRAN GOSWAMI )

## CONTENTS

		Page	No.
	Preface	I	II
	Abbreviations	IV	
Chapter I	Introduction	1	22
Chapter II	Nature of God	23	46
Chapter III	God, Individual and World	47	74
Chapter IV	Conclusion	75	94
	Bibliography	95	98

**ABBREVIATIONS**

B.C.R.B.	:	Bhagavad Gītā Rāmānuja Bhāṣya
B.S.	:	Brahma Sūtra
B.U.	:	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
C.U.	:	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
K.U.	:	Kathā Upaniṣad
M.U.	:	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
R.B.	:	Rāmānuja's Commentary on Brahma Sūtra
S.U.	:	Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad
T.U.	:	Taittirīya Upaniṣad
T.M.K.	:	Tattva Mukta Kalāpa

\*\*\*\*

## CHAPTER-I

### INTRODUCTION

The Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, and the Brahmasūtra, technically known as three prasthānas, together with their commentaries, are regarded as the foundation of the Vedānta philosophy. The ultimate reality has not only external or objective stages but also internal or subjective stages. The subjective stages consist of faith, knowledge and discipline. These three stages are represented by the prasthānatrayas of the Vedānta vis., the Upaniṣads, the Brahmasūtras and the Bhagavadgītā.<sup>1</sup> The prasthānatrayas also deal with the objective stages of the ultimate reality. So if we want to have the nature of the Vedāntic concept of ultimate reality, the prasthānatrayas must be taken into account. Otherwise our knowledge of the same will be incomplete.

The Upaniṣads are considered as the source books of all the systems of Indian Philosophy. Therefore it is not an exaggeration to say that the Upaniṣads are the basic springs of Indian thought and culture. They have encouraged not only the orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy but also some of the so-called heterodox schools like those of Buddhism. The Upaniṣads according to R.E.Hume, occupy an honoured place in the "endeavour to grasp the fundamental truths of being" i.e., "of ultimate reality".<sup>1</sup> They mark the climax of the Vedic thought and are therefore called the Vedānta. The term 'Upaniṣad' is meant to signify all such teaching as was both sacred and secret, and could be communicated only through a direct personal relationship. The true meaning of the term 'Upaniṣad' is 'the Real of the real' (satyasa satya).<sup>2</sup> This real of the real clearly indicates ultimate reality. Etymologically it means 'to sit near' (a guru) with deep respect, for which the

word 'secret' is often associated with the term. We find similar expressions e.g., 'the secret message' (guhyaādesā), 'the supreme secret' (paramam guhyam), in many other Upaniṣads which put emphasis on the need to treat such teaching as highly esoteric and sacred. Every Indian considers the Upaniṣads "as an authoritative compendium of Indian metaphysical teaching."<sup>3</sup>

The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads gives us the concept of Supreme Reality which is the Absolute. This absolutism is the central topic of discussion of almost all the Upaniṣads written and commented. The Upaniṣads are the concluding portions of the Vedas. The reason why the Upaniṣads are called the end of the Vedas is that they picture the central aim and teachings of the Veda. The contents of the Upaniṣads is Vedānta Vijnānam, the wisdom of the Vedānta.<sup>4</sup>

The Absolute contained in the Upaniṣads is one without a second (ekam evādvitīyam)<sup>5</sup> and consists of the relativity of the multiplicity. This multiplicity of the universe, which we perceive, is, as a matter of fact, not many, but one Brahman, the Absolute. According to the Upaniṣads, 'All this is Brahma, sarvam khalva idam brahma'<sup>6</sup> We, the finites fail to grasp the Infinite who is our container and sustainer, within us and without us.

The Polytheistic approach of the Pre-Upaniṣadic Vedas has been ritualistic and ceremonial. The Upaniṣads enabled the Indian thinkers to rise above sheer ceremonialism and to meditate on the nature of ultimate reality. In the Pre-Upaniṣadic ages the one Brahman which is one without a second was known and worshipped in the form of various gods and goddesses. The Vedic seekers of truth were very much attracted by the natural powers of the Supreme. They were acquainted only with the cosmic powers of the universe. The

power behind the cosmos was not clearly known until the age of the Upaniṣads. The seers of the Vedic period could not differentiate between the eternal and the temporal. The Pre-Upaniṣadic religion of the Veda is based on the ritualism or the karma kānda. The Vedic conception of Reality as 'tad ekam' - that One-is sought to be replaced in the Upaniṣads by the absolute unity of 'ekam eva advitīyam' - only the one, without the other.

From the Upaniṣadic point of view, the ultimate Reality is Brahman. Etymologically 'Brahman' means 'to grow' or evolve. According to the seers of the Upaniṣads the Being which we come from, live in, return to, is absolutely one. This oneness of the Supreme Reality Brahman has been unanimously accepted by all the Upaniṣads. Brahman which is the Supreme Reality is beyond the notion of subject and object, time and space, cause and effect. It is both immanent and transcendent. This immanent Brahman is known as our ātman or inner self. Dr. Radhakrishnan describes this universality of Brahman- "Brahman, the first principle of the universe is known through ātman, the inner self of man. In the Satapatha Brāhmana and Chāndogya Upaniṣad, it is said : 'verily this whole world is Brahman', and also 'this soul of mine within the heart, this is Brahman.'"<sup>7</sup>

After asserting the oneness of this Brahman, the Upaniṣads try to explain the various aspects of it. To find all the answers of the Infinite is not easy. When man rises in levels of experience and consciousness, he becomes aware of the higher reality, Brahman. Brahman cannot be perceived by the senses because it does not possess perceptible properties. Brahman also cannot be known by concepts because the categories of understanding are not applicable to it. It cannot be described in language and communicated to others in the usual way. Yajñavalkya says about Brahman, the Supreme self :

"neti neti ātmā ; agrhyah, na hi grhyate. Self is not this, not this; He is incomprehensible for He is never comprehended."<sup>8</sup>

In Upaniṣads Brahman is described in two ways- Nirguṇa and Saguṇa. Nirguṇa Brahman is formless, transcendent, unconditioned, beyond our reach. The Saguṇa Brahman is formed, immanent, conditioned, accessible. Saguṇa Brahman as God is not a different existence but is Nirguṇa Brahman on a lower plane. Saguṇa Brahman is the cause and governor of the world and becomes accessible to men as the object of worship. Nirguṇa Brahman, on the other hand, being beyond all attributes, cannot respond to the needs and prayers of men.

The distinction between eternity and temporality, Nirguṇa Brahman (without attributes) and Saguṇa Brahman (with attributes), the Absolute and the relative, the transcendent and the immanent, are the truth which the Upaniṣads attempt to explain. The distinction between what is phenomenal and what is noumenal was made in the Upaniṣads. In the Upaniṣads the Saguṇa Brahman stands for phenomenality and the Nirguṇa Brahman stands for noumenality. Any kind of monistic theory is bound to ascribe a lower status to the manifold world. The Upaniṣads are also no exception to it. According to the Upaniṣadic concept of Reality, whatever exists has some reality in it. The material world is not totally unreal, but enjoys only a limited reality. There are levels of reality, the sense world being a lower one. When viewed from the intellect's inner eye, the physical universe is real ; when viewed from the soul's inner eye it is real, but only as Brahman. This is the true significance of the statement, "All this is verily Brahma."<sup>9</sup>

The Upaniṣads assert the oneness of the ultimate Reality. But to

assert oneness does not necessarily mean to deny manyness. Similarly to assert the infinity of ultimate reality does not mean to deny finiteness. Manyness and finiteness may not be final, but not non-existent. They also possess existence; but this existence is a borrowed one.

In the Upaniṣads to create means to become and becoming is non-different from being. But becoming is not illusory. It is the manifestation of being which lies hidden from us. Manifestation is not illusory. So the manifested form of reality is its phenomenality and the hidden form is its noumenality. Phenomenality and noumenality are not two diametrically opposite phases, but two sides of the same thing.

It has already been said that the Upaniṣads deny the independent status of the world i.e. it does not exist apart from Brahman. Brahman in the Upaniṣads stands for the whole reality including the world, and without this presupposition of Brahman the world remains unexplained. So Brahman is necessary to explain the world. The dualism between Brahman and the world is explained through the principle of māyā. Māyā is the chord which links Brahman with the world. Māyā as cosmic illusion is another significant concept in the Upaniṣads. This Māyā or Śakti is Brahman's power which no one knows except Brahman. The temporal world is Brahman's Māyā and it is so i.e. appearing and disappearing because Brahman wants it that way. It is not possible for the finites to know the mystery of the infinite. In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said- "Brahman was one and He decided to be many, to be born so-kāmayata bahu saym prajāyeyeti."<sup>10</sup> This creation is the līlā or sport of the creator Brahman who does so independent of everything.

The Māyā doctrine does not declare that the world is absolutely

illusory or unreal but only that it is not real as Ultimate Reality. It is real from an empirical standpoint or for those who rely on sense experience. It is not for those who have transempirical consciousness. The world appears to be illusory to those who have realized Brahman in personal experience but not to others living on the phenomenal world. According to the Upaniṣads, the idea of self or Ātman is the only way of realization of Brahman.

The realization of Brahman is possible only through intuition. Brahman cannot be known as an object of knowledge because it is the same as the knowing self. Its objectification or categorization is thus impossible. By knowing the oneness of Ātman and Brahman, individual self and universal self, one can arrive at the conclusion that Ātmajñāna is Brahmajñāna. This realization can be attained only through intuition which is suprasensible experience. Brahman can only be felt in an intuitive, personal, living experience of identity with it. Thus the sages declared that Ātman and Brahman are not two different realities, but are two different aspects of one and the same unchanging reality underlying the changing world of phenomena. Here is reached the loftiness of the Upaniṣadic wisdom : Tat Tvam Asi (That Thou Art), Aham Brahma asmi ( I am Brahman ); Ayam Ātmā Brahma (The self is Brahman), Prajñanam Brahma (Pure consciousness is Brahma).

The theistic religion implicit in some of the Upaniṣads, reinforced by popular cults and by an emphasis on bhakti or loving adoration of God, led to a different valuation of mysticism in the Bhagavad Gītā. In the Bhagavad Gītā the very word 'Brahman' stands for ultimate Reality. The world of Māyā functions in accordance with the will of that Brahman. Everything that we know and we do not know depend on Him. The world will not come to exist automatically against the will of the supreme.

The Bhagavad Gītā in the line of Upaniṣads, analyses the problem of ultimate reality in two ways : subjective and objective.<sup>11</sup> The subjective principle is designated by the Ātman while the objective principle by the term Brahman.<sup>12</sup> Ātman exists behind all the fleeting changes of our psychical body, while Brahman exists behind the fleeting changes of the world. Both of them are infinite principles.

The world and the individual souls are finite existences. So the Gītā also faces the problem of the relation between infinity and finiteness. In describing this relation the Gītā holds that there is no opposition between infinity and finitude.

The philosophy of the Bhagavad Gītā may also be characterised by the non-dualism of the Upaniṣads. The Bhagavad Gītā supports this view of the Upaniṣads in many passages. The supreme is said to be "unmanifest, unthinkable and unchanging" -(avyakto 'yam acinto' yam avikaryo 'yam ucyate').<sup>13</sup> He is parā or transcendent and aparā or immanent, both inside and outside the world-(bahir antas'ca bhūtānām).<sup>14</sup>

Gītā's aim is not to discuss metaphysics, but to adapt metaphysics in the daily life of man. For metaphysics it entirely depends on the Upaniṣads. But Gītā seems not to be satisfied with the Upaniṣadic concept of Nirguṇa Brahman. Therefore it posits before us an all powerful Saguṇa Brahman who seems to surpass even Nirguṇa Brahman.

The Bhagavad Gītā seems to be much more interested in a theistic God than in the Absolute Brahman. The philosophy of the Bhāgavad Gītā may be regarded as the philosophy Puruṣottama. The concept of Puruṣottama takes over

both the concepts Brahman and Īśvara. It does not present before us an impersonal Brahman, which cannot draw our devotion. We like such a God who participates in our activity and becomes companion of our happiness and suffering. Kṛṣṇa stands for such a God. Although reality is the Upaniṣadic Brahman, God, Kṛṣṇa is the personal Being of the Bhāgavat religion of the Mahābhārata. It popularises the concept of Saguna Brahman of the Upaniṣads while at the same time not denying the concept of Nirguna Brahman. The voice of God declares, 'This is my word of promise that he who loveth he shall never perish.'<sup>15</sup> It is through devotion and love that a man can reach his God. The only pre-requisite of attaining a loving communion with the Supreme Being is purity of heart.

Gītā lays emphasis on the supreme as the personal God who creates the perceptible world by his nature (prakṛti). The personal Īśvara is responsible for the creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. As the Taittirīya Upaniṣad says- The Supreme is that "from which these beings are born, that by which they live, that into which, when departing they enter."

The wheel of creation continues to revolve under the guidance of God. The world is brought into existence by God's power of Yogamāyā. In the Gītā the concept of māyā is conceived as twofold in character, namely, as the veil of reality, and the creative power of God (Yogamāyā). But the imperfections of the world cannot in any way affect the creator.

The starting point of Gītā's theism may be traced far back as the Puruṣa-sukta where it is said that one quarter of the Puruṣa has spread out as the cosmic universe and its living beings, while its other three quarters are in the immortal heavens.<sup>16</sup> God is not only immanent but also transcendent.

The immanent part which forms the cosmic universe is an emanation or development from God. Though Brahman is again and again referred to as the highest abode and the ultimate reality, yet God in his super personality transcends even Brahman.

The important point in which the Gītā differs from the Upaniṣads is its introduction of the idea of Avatāra or Divine Incarnation. Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches the idea of Avatāra to Arjuna in the battle field when Arjuna forgets that his master is not an ordinary man, but the supreme in the form of a man. Lord Kṛṣṇa says :

"Yadā-yadā hi dharmasya  
glānir bhavati bhārata  
abhyutthānam adharmasya  
tadā, tmānam srjāmyaham."<sup>17</sup>

Whenever there is decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, O Bharata (Arjuna), then I send forth (create, incarnate) myself.

The belief in divine incarnation, God in man, is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy. From the very beginning of Indian philosophy, to the present days, the scripture says that there have been already ten divine incarnations in the land of India. The reason behind incarnation is known to the Infinite only. Lord Kṛṣṇa further says :

"Paritrānaya sādḥūnām  
vināsaya ca duskṛtam  
dharmasamsthāpanarthāya  
sambhāvami yuge-yuge."<sup>18</sup>

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of righteousness, I come into being from age to age.

As a creator, the supreme will have to maintain law and justice, and for this reason, he will have to protect the just and punish the unjust. That is the reason of the Divine Advents of the earth. The Divine Incarnation has some celestial purposes. Whenever there is a dispute between good and evil, the supreme judge interferes to settle it by siding the good against the evil. The Bhagavad Gītā is the teaching of Kṛṣṇa, one of the divine incarnations, to his disciple Arjuna.

The Bhagavadgītā is a trinity of Vedāntic monism, Sāṃkhya dualism and Yoga activism. It combines the metaphysical idealism of the Upaniṣads with the theism of the Bhāgavata. It tries to acquire the knowledge (jñāna) of the Supreme through devotion (bhakti) on the solid foundation of action (karma). It does not merely teach the dry absolutism of the impersonal Brahman. It also teaches the sweet devotion of the personal God, Puruṣottama, the person of the persons. The God in the Gītā is not a God of abstract philosophy but a God with whom man could establish a personal relationship. The immutability of the Absolute and the activity of the Īśvara are both taken in the concept of Puruṣottama. Gītā considers the conception of a personal God to be more useful for religious purposes.

The Gītā without Yoga is merely Upaniṣadic idealism or Sāṃkhya dualism and not the Yoga śāstra (the science of knowledge, devotion and action) as taught by Kṛṣṇa. While explaining the character of a Yogin "Lord Kṛṣṇa says that a perfect Yogin, who has subdued all his desires and has centralised all his thoughts on inner self through strict physical and mental

discipline sees the universal self in all being and all beings in the universal self."<sup>19</sup>

"He whose self is harmonised by yoga seeth the self abiding in all beings and all beings in the self; everywhere he sees the same."<sup>20</sup>

In the Gītā Lord Kṛṣṇa has united Sāṃkhya plurality of souls with Vedāntic Absolute Brahman in an excellent manner. The supreme spirit and individual spirits have been existing together from the time immemorial, the latter being dependent on the former. In his interpretation of the Sāṃkhya dualism Śaṅkara says that the liberated individual souls are as free as the Supreme. They are close to avatāra or the divine incarnation.

According to the Gītā this phenomenal world of our existence is a reality. Whatever exists has some reality. If we want to reach the permanent reality, we need not deny the changeable one but to detach from it. The theory of detached action or niskāma karma yoga is the fundamental philosophy through which the Gītā tries to synthesise the trinity of Yoga, Sāṃkhya and Vedānta.

Gītā speaks of three paths to salvation- the way of action or the karma-yoga, the way of knowledge or the jñāna yoga and the way of devotion or the bhakti yoga. Of these three paths bhakti is praised in the Gītā as being the best. Through this path of devotion the devotee has simply to surrender himself to his personal God or Īśvara. Absolute self surrender and the dedication of all works to God mark the conduct of a true devotee. Thus the Gītā lays down for the first time the foundation of the teachings of Bhāgavata-purāṇa and of the later systems of Vaiṣṇava thought, which

elaborated the path of bhakti and described it as the principle method of self-realization.

Brahmasūtra which is said to be the summary of the Upaniṣads tries to define and describe the ultimate reality Brahman. The book begins with the sūtra of Brahman knowledge- "athato brahma jijnāsā, now therefore the desire to know Brahman."<sup>21</sup> Thus the first sūtra of the Brahmasūtra undoubtedly explains that the text is aiming at the knowledge of Brahman, the supreme reality. Bādarāyana is the author of the Brahmasūtra. The Brahmasūtra is also known as Vedānta sūtra or Sāriraka sūtra as it deals with the vedic thought and the knowledge of the self. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan "The Brahmasūtra is the exposition of the philosophy of the Upaniṣads. It is an attempt to systematize the various strands of the Upaniṣads which form the background of the orthodox system of thought."<sup>22</sup>

The Brahmasūtra holds that Brahman is the ultimate Reality from which the origin, subsistence and destruction of the world proceeds- "Janmādasya Yatah."<sup>23</sup> Thus Brahman is the cause, the sustainer and the end of the world. There is nothing logically before him and beyond him. According to the Vedāntic dualists and non-dualists, Brahman is within and without everything we perceive and we do not perceive. Chāndogya Upaniṣad says : "Sarvam khalu idaṁ brahma- This whole world is Brahman."<sup>24</sup> All this is Brahman means that the Supreme Reality is both the material cause (Upādāna-kāraṇa) and efficient cause (nimitta-kāraṇa). The world is so orderly that it could not come from a non-intelligent source. Brahman is the intelligent source of the universe. The Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya cannot be the source of all these.<sup>25</sup> This proves that the ultimate Reality is spiritual, not material; and as it is of spiritual nature, it is identical with the self.

The Pradhāna or Prakṛti is not the self, for it is proved that in deep sleep the individual soul enters not into Prakṛti but into the self. The fact does not however lead to the conception that the individual soul and the self are identical.<sup>26</sup> But the union of the two is possible and it is possible only when we assume that the universal self is blissful.<sup>27</sup> Again this is possible when the intuition of transcendental truth is revealed in the individual soul.<sup>28</sup> Through this intuitive knowledge it is realised that 'I' is the Supreme Brahman.

The Brahmasūtra maintains a difference between the individual soul and Brahman.<sup>29</sup> But Śaṅkara maintains that this difference is apparent while Rāmānuja speaks of this difference as real. On the strength of the scriptures Bādarāyana argues that the selves have different characteristics, and therefore they are different.

According to Bādarāyana, Brahman is the indwelling spirit of all including the gods. Our limited senses are incapable to grasp the unlimited power of the Supreme. "Satyam, jñānam, anantam brahma, Brahman, the truth, the knowledge, the Infinite"<sup>30</sup> is beyond the comprehension of the finite intellect. We can have a glimpse of Him through intuition and not through the senses.

The Brahmasūtra maintains that the world goes on even though sometimes there is a pause. Though the world is dissolved sometimes it is again created with similar names and forms. The life principle behind the world existence is Brahman, for He is capable of making the world tremble.

Bādarāyana also maintains that the world which we have now is

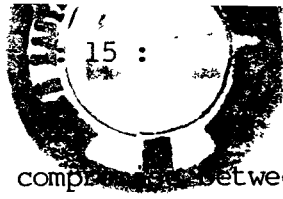
different from the very nature of Brahman. It is the effect of Brahman. Brahman is admitted to be the cause of the world in the same sense in which milk is transformed into curd or water is transformed into ice. The two are different as the sea-water and the sea waves are different. When Brahman creates the world He does not do so with a motive or feeling a need for it, for He is well sufficient. According to Bādarāyana Brahman creates the world out of sheer fun. "lokavat tu līlā kaivalyam."<sup>23</sup> Creation for Brahman is a sportive activity.

The Brahmasūtra further holds that Brahman, although non-active can create the world. It has the power to move others, although it itself does not move. He is the unmoved mover in the words of Aristotle.

Bādarāyana supports the theory of modification (parināma-vāda) although the same has been refuted by Śaṅkara. As Bādarāyana does not find any difficulty in holding the ultimate Reality as both unity and difference, his view of parināmavāda does not destroy the very nature of Brahman as a changeless being. Śaṅkara, however, admits parināma only with Prakṛti, not with Brahman, for which he presents the vivarta view.

The Samanvaya sūtra of Bādarāyana is very much significant. This sūtra indicates that Brahman is the principal purport of all the Vedāntic texts. This is one interpretation. According to another interpretation, the word samanvaya means all-pervasiveness, and this character qualifies Brahman to be the cause of the world.<sup>32</sup>

From the point of view of finite beings, sat-cit-ānanda or Existence-Consciousness-Bliss has been considered the nature of Brahman. "This



sort of concept is a kind of compromise between the positivists iti-iti, this and that, and negativists neti neti, not this and not that."<sup>33</sup>

Of the prasthānatrayas the Upaniṣads build the very foundation of the Vedāntic philosophy. The other two are simply carrying on the Upaniṣadic thought in a specific manner. The Vedānta as a system starts from the commentary of Brahmasūtra by Śaṅkara.

When we come to the question of ultimate Reality in the Upaniṣads, we face a problem of "a double voice" in which they speak.<sup>34</sup> This double voice is the voice concerning the nirguṇa Brahman and the voice concerning the Saguṇa Brahman. Śaṅkara emphasises the first view while Rāmānuja the second view. Dr. Radhakrishnan says that while interpreting the prasthānatrayas Śaṅkara is adopting the logic of the Mādhyamika Buddhist and Rāmānuja is adopting the logic of the Nyāya theism.<sup>35</sup>

The most important name in the modern development of Advaita Vedānta is that of the illustrious philosopher, Śaṅkarācārya, who is thought to have flourished in the 8th century. The brilliant Śaṅkara lived only thirty two years and not much is known of his brief career. It has been said that the country of Kerala on the Mālabār coast produced this famous teacher who was one of the greatest philosophers of India. Śaṅkara came of a Brahmana family of Kaladi. He was an ardent Vedāntist and the most powerful exponent of pure monism which he brought forward in his commentaries on the various Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā and the Brahmasūtra of Badaṛayana.

Śaṅkara's Advaita is based on the Upaniṣads. One of the most important and famous commentaries on the Brahmasūtra is by Śaṅkara, where he

10/31/69

is out to reject not only the theory of modification of prakṛti of Sāṅkhya but also the theory of transformation advocated by Bhaṭṭaprapaṅca. To him, the world is neither the transformation of the prakṛti nor of Brahman. It is only the appearance of Brahman. The central doctrine of the Advaita system is that Brahman is the only reality, all else being illusory appearance. Śaṅkara expresses his thought in half of a verse- "Brahma satyam jagan mithyā jīva brahmaiva -na-parah". Brahman is the ultimate Reality, the world of multiplicity and plurality is false and Brahman and ātman are non-different reality.

To Śaṅkara Brahman is the Ultimate Reality or world-ground which grows into the universe. He defines Brahman as :-

nitya śuddha-buddha-mukta  
jñānasvarūpa-jagatkāraṇam.

Brahman is pure, eternal, wise, free, consciousness and the cause of the universe. Brahman is also defined as Saccidānanda. Brahman is pure existence, pure consciousness and bliss.

Śaṅkara postulates two standpoints of viewing the ultimate Reality - the absolute (paramārthika) and the relative (vyavahārika). The supreme truth is that Brahman is non-dual and relationless. It alone is, there is nothing real beside it. But from the empirical standpoint which we adopt when we speak of Brahman, it appears as God, the cause of the universe, as what is related and endowed with attributes.

According to Śaṅkara, there is no real causation. The world is but an illusory appearance in Brahman, even as the snake in the rope. Śaṅkara accounts for the illusory appearance of the world in Brahman by means of

Vivarta-vāda (the theory of illusory appearance) which is to be distinguished from parināma-vāda (the theory of transformation).

The ultimate reality, which is unconditioned, and is without attributes and qualifications, is called God when viewed in relation to the empirical world and empirical souls. Brahman is the same as Nirguṇa (attributeless) and Saguṇa (with attributes). There are two forms of Brahman and not two Brahman, Brahman as it-is-in-itself and Brahman as it-is-in-relation to the world. Śaṅkara holds that Brahman and God are one and the same. Brahman is ultimate reality, devoid of and beyond attributes- the Nirguṇa Brahman or the Absolute in Western philosophy. God is less than Nirguṇa Brahman. He is penultimate reality characterised as creator, sustainer, and governor of the universe, real only in relation to the world and individual souls. God is Saguṇa Brahman possessing knowledge, power, goodness and such qualities in superlative degree. From the transcendental point of view, however, even God is not real or is an appearance or an existence of a lower order because, whatever has qualities has limitations and belongs to the level of phenomenal reality. Śaṅkara maintains that only the highest Brahman devoid of attributes is real and only knowledge of Nirguṇa Brahman (self realization) leads to liberation.

God is thus conditioned Brahman and the conditioning principle is māyā. The principle which accounts for the appearance of the world of plurality in the non-dual Brahman is māyā or avidyā. The concept of māyā necessarily follows from the concept of Nirguṇa Brahman and it is well known that it plays a very important role in Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta.

The world is regarded as māyā or appearance, since it is not the

essential truth of the ultimate reality viz. Brahman. For Śāṅkara, the world is not evolved or produced but seems to be so on account of limited insight (avidyā). Avidyā is the instrument of adhyāsa or superimposition of the world on Brahman. Brahman does not change into the world. It somehow appears as the world as the rope appears as the snake.

Śāṅkara's interpretation of the relation between Brahman and the world is based on the concept of Adhyāsa which means superimposition. The world is superimposed upon Brahman and is seen by the perceiver where it does not actually exist. Avidyā is the instrument of adhyāsa or superimposition of the world on Brahman. It is the only explanation and hence claims to truth. Left to itself, Brahman could not be the cause of the world ; hence there is the ontological mechanism of avidyā or adhyāsa which is responsible for the being of the world. Śāṅkara calls it atasmin tadbuddhi- the experience of something where it is not.

The exact relation of Brahman and avidyā is difficult to say. Avidyā is indescribable (anirvacanīya). It must somehow be hanging over in Brahman- for there is nothing other than Brahman ultimately. But it surely is not the real characteristic of Brahman. That is why it is called tatāstha-lakṣaṇa of Brahman. Experiencing the world in stead of Brahman is due to ignorance ; and when, real knowledge dawns upon a person, he ceases to perceive the world as a real thing. Viewed from the level of Brahman, there can be naught but Brahman. One must realize his identity as Brahman for Brahman is knowledge. According to Śāṅkara, Brahman realisation means self-realisation. The greatest good of man lies in the realization of Brahman in man.

Among commentators who dissent from Śāṅkara's interpretation of

Vedānta the chief one is Rāmānuja (11th century). Rāmānuja was the son of a Brāhmaṇa who lived in a village near Madras. He refutes the absolute monism of Śaṅkara, denies the unreality of the world, and lays emphasis on Bhakti as a means of salvation. For Rāmānuja Brahman is the highest reality, in spirit, but with attributes, "Brahman is also self consciousness with knowledge of Himself and similar to Christian teaching, has a conscious will to create the world and to bestow salvation on his creatures- a concept that is alien to Vedānta."<sup>36</sup>

While Śaṅkara's philosophy is called non-dualism (advaita), Rāmānuja's is called the non-dualism of the qualified Brahman, or simply qualified or modified non-dualism (viśiṣṭādvaita). Śaṅkara maintained the doctrine of the non-dualism of the indeterminate Brahman (nirguṇa or nirviśeṣa Brahman). But Rāmānuja upheld the doctrine of the non-dualism of the qualified or determinate Brahman (saguṇa or saviśeṣa Brahman). The Brahman is not devoid of determinations or characteristics. It is qualified by the ātmans and the material world, which together constitute the body (śarīra) of Brahman.

Rāmānuja differs from Śaṅkara by identifying God with Brahman. Brahman is God with whom souls can enter into a personal relationship by love and devotion. For Rāmānuja, individual souls and the world are real as parts and manifestations of the same Brahman. They are real as modifications of transformations of God or Brahman. Rāmānuja believes in the causal theory of Parināmavāda according to which the effect is an actual transformation of the cause, just as curd is nothing but transformed milk. The world and souls, being dependent on Brahman cannot exist without and apart from it. The school of Philosophy that Rāmānuja established is known as viśiṣṭādvaita or qualified monism. His followers are known as Srī Vaiṣṇavas.

Rāmānuja believes that knowledge is insufficient for attaining Moksa. What is needed is complete surrender (prapatti) and pure, unqualified devotion to God. The part of devotion emphasised by Rāmānuja was taken up by later Vaiṣṇava Saints and has become widespread and popular up to this day.

\*\*\*\*\*

REFERENCES

1. R.E. HUME, The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads. P. Vii.
2. B.U., 2.1.20
3. R.E. HUME, P. vii.
4. M.U.3. 2.6.4.C.U. 6.2.1.
5. C.U. 6.2.1.
6. C.U. 3.14.1.
7. S. Radhakrishnan. The Principal Upaniṣads. P. 77.
8. B.U. 4.4.22.
9. C.U. 3.14.1.
10. T.U.11.6.1.
11. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I., P. 533,
12. Ibid. P. 538.
13. S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavad Gītā. II. 25. P. 109.
14. Ibid. XIII, 15, P. 307.
15. Ibid. IX. 31.
16. Pādosya visvā bhūtāni  
tripād asyāmṛtamdivi  
puruṣa-sūkta.
17. The Bhagavad Gītā. IV. 7.
18. Ibid. IV. 8.
19. Jha, R.C. Vedāntic and Buddhist Reality. P. 89.
20. The Bhagavad Gītā, VI-29
21. B.S. 1-1-1.
22. S. Radhakrishnan, The Brahma Sūtra, P. 21.
23. B.S. 1-1-2.
24. C.U. 3.14.1.

25. B.S. 1.1.5. Sāṅkara's Interpretation.
26. Ibid. 1.1. 17, 1.1.21.
27. Ibid. 1.1.19.
28. Ibid 1.1.30.
29. Ibid. 2.6.
30. B.S. 1.3.39.
31. ibid. 2.1.33.
32. A Sastri, 'Brahma-Mīmāṃsā', H. Bhattacharyya, ed. the Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. III, P. 191.
33. R.C. Jha, Vedāntic and Buddhist Reality. P. 62.
34. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1. p. 675.
35. Ibid., P. 259.
36. Ruth Reyna-Introduction to Indian Philosophy, P. 188.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CHAPTER - II

### NATURE OF GOD

Rāmānuja, the Vaiṣṇava saint and philosopher was the founder of the school Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. The word 'Viśiṣṭādvaita' signifies that the ultimate Reality is an integral whole consisting of the cit or the sentient beings and acit or insentient matter, both of which constitute the body of Īśvara. Rāmānuja admits three entities viz., Īśvara, who is the supreme Reality, cit which are the individual souls (jīvas) and acit, the matter. Cit and acit depend upon Īśvara for their existence, and as such they are subservient to them. Īśvara is the basis (ādhāra) of the entire universe consisting of cit and acit. His system is unique in which Rāmānuja conceives the relation between cit, acit and God. The cit and acit constitute the body of Īśvara, while Īśvara Himself is the self of them. The relationship is called 'śarīra-śarīri-bhāva sambandha'. Both soul and matter are inseparable from God as attributes are from substance (apṛthaksiddhi). These are the two cardinal principles which constitute the distinguishing factor, Viśiṣṭādvaita system of philosophy. Although there are three different real entities, they form an organic unity. The highest reality is a qualified Brahman (Īśvara) endowed with innumerable auspicious qualities.

Rāmānuja rejects the concept of Nirguṇa Brahman and holds that the ultimate Reality is only Savīśeṣa Brahman which is the same as the personal God of religion. The Absolute is an organic unity, an identity which is qualified by diversity. Reality is one or advaita, but it is not indeterminate or nirviśeṣa but qualified or viśiṣṭa - qualified by the conscious souls and non-intelligent matter. While Śāṅkara's philosophy is called non-dualism (advaita), Rāmānuja's is called non-dualism of the qualified Brahman or simply

qualified or modified non-dualism (viśiṣṭādvaita).

Advaita philosophy received the first polemic attack from Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja considered the eternal blissful Brahman as the highest reality. But his advaita was different from Śāṅkara for the world in his view was not an illusion. The significance of Rāmānuja's doctrine lies in the fact that it accords reality to both the universe and the individual selves. In Śāṅkara's system the universe consisting of the individual selves and matter is regarded as illusory (māyā). Rāmānuja disproves the theory of māyā and establishes the reality of the universe. He also maintains the oneness of the Reality as an integral whole without sacrificing the individualities of the selves as well as matter.

The philosophy of Rāmānuja is a form of religio-philosophy based on the bhakti-cult of Vaiṣṇava religion. Another contribution of<sup>32</sup> Rāmānuja's philosophy is the identity established between the absolute of the Upaniṣads and the personal God of the religion. The Brahman is no other than the Puruṣottama who is characterised by unlimited auspicious qualities such as knowledge and power. He has a divine form and has as His body, the eternal souls and matter. He is everywhere in the universe and also resides in the hearts of individuals (antaryāmī). He named his Lord Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa. "Rāmānuja's philosophy of the Absolute is derived from the philosophy of the advaitavāda whereas his theistic view is an offspring of the theistic philosophy of the Ālvars".<sup>1</sup>

The philosophy of Rāmānuja is a philosophy of devotion to God. The Brahman of the Upaniṣads and the Brahmasūtra and the Bhagavān of the Bhāgavata is also the creator. The Gīta repeats and Rāmānuja reiterates the same.

"Fatherhood of God implies fraternity of humanity resulting in love and regard everywhere in the creation on the one hand, and in deep devotion to the creator on the other".<sup>2</sup> Rāmānuja has said that the knowledge of God must be of the nature of devotion and by doing so he has proved that the highest reality which the devotee worships is not different from the highest reality which a metaphysician seeks to know.

Rāmānuja belonged to Śrīsampradāya<sup>3</sup> of the Vaiṣṇava sect which is more philosophical than religious. He was born in 1017, in Sriperumbudur, a village in Chingleput district which is about thirty six miles to the south of the city of Madras. Rāmānuja was trained by Yadavaprakāśa, who was an adherent of Śaṅkara. He could not support the interpretations of Yamunācārya, who is regarded as the predecessor of Rāmānuja. He spent most of his time in Srirangam in teaching, preaching and carrying on his religious activities. He spent last part of his life in Conjeevaram and continued his usual devotion to God.

Rāmānuja who came after Yamunācārya further developed and strengthened the Viśiṣṭādvaita system of philosophy.<sup>4</sup> He wrote Vedāntasāra, Vedārtha Saṅgraha, Vedānta dīpa and composed his commentaries on Brahma-sūtra and the Bhagavadgīta. Rāmānuja defended theistic Vedānta, conception of personal God and also proved that the Advaitic interpretation of the Brahma-sūtra and the Bhagavad Gītā is not correct. Thus he formulated the doctrine of qualified non-dualism as against of Śaṅkara's unqualified non-dualism. As Rāmānuja was Vaiṣṇava, he rested the doctrine of Vedānta within the tradition of Vaiṣṇavism and wanted to maintain the doctrine of bhakti or love of God, in the face of the monism of the other schools.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The antecedents preceding the philosophy of Rāmānuja are some of the theistic Upaniṣads, portions of the Mahabhārata including the Narayaṇīya section, the Bhagavad Gītā, Viṣṇu Purāṇa, the Vaiṣṇava Āgamas, the works of the Ālvārs and the Achāryas. And also the R̥g-Veda's Puruṣa sūkta is the foundation of the Vaiṣṇava school. Rāmānuja attempts to reconcile the thoughts of the Upaniṣads, the Gītā and the Brahmasūtra with the faith and belief of the Vaiṣṇava saints.

The chief of the teachers who influenced Rāmānuja are Nāthamuni and Yamunācārya. Rāmānuja's system has been developed on the basis of the teachings propounded by eminent thinkers of the ancient lore such as Bodhāyana, Taṅka, Dramida and Guhadeva. Rāmānuja himself states in clear terms at the beginning of his Srī Bhāṣya that he is commenting on the Vedāntasūtra in accordance with the doctrines contained in the Bodhāyana-Vṛtti, which had been preserved from the ancient past by his earlier Acāryas. Bodhāyana, was the Vṛttikāra of the Brahmasūtra from the devotional point of view. Dramidachārya wrote a commentary on that and sage Taṅka composed a brief exposition of the same. However, the works of these particular thinkers are not available and their influence on Rāmānuja's thought can be understood only on the basis of Rāmānuja's statement alone. Apart from these thinkers, there were other systems of thought which did exercise their influence on Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja also quotes Bhāskara and Yadavaprakāśa. According to the tradition, the latter was Rāmānuja's teacher.

Rāmānuja is very much influenced by the Ālvārs who had implicit faith in the graceful nature of God. Rāmānuja was greatly indebted to the

Ālvārs for the development of the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Ālvārs of South India constituted a school of Vaiṣṇava mystics and saints who used to compose devotional songs of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa in Tamil language. "Since they remained deeply absorbed in devotion all the time, they came to be known by the name Ālvārs, a Tamil word suggestive of their state of love".<sup>5</sup> The love of God and the spirit of self-surrender which were the prominent features of the bhakti yoga of the Bhagavad Gītā developed gradually into intense passionate love of the Ālvārs. "They used to look upon Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa as their lover and master and were eager to depend on Him in the manner of a woman depending exclusively on her lover."<sup>6</sup> Self-surrender, according to them, is the most suitable means to the Divine communion. God's grace can be attained by self-surrendering attitude alone.

The collection of the hymns of the Ālvārs, consisting of four thousand verses, is called Naḷāyire-divya-prabandham. Though it was written in Tamil language, it was held by the devotees in the same esteem as the Vedas, was considered to be a religious authority and was source of inspiration for devotion.

The Ālvārs were succeeded by the theologian philosophers called the Achāryas who provided a philosophical basis for the personal theism of the Ālvārs and tried to combine their doctrine of bhakti with karma and jñāna. Nāthamuni<sup>7</sup>, the compiler of Prabandham of the Ālvārs, was the first Achārya. According to Vedānta Desikā, Nāthamuni was the first exponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita as a system of philosophy.<sup>8</sup>

Yamunā was the second Achārya and was called Ālvandara or a king among the devotees. He wrote a few independent works. Yamunācārya<sup>9</sup> in his

Siddhitraya stated that there are different substances - the omniscient and omnipotent Īśvara, self conscious souls and material world. He also, agreeing with the Nyāya, tried to prove the existence of God as the cause of the world which is an effect. Rāmānuja, however, tried to improve upon Yamunācārya by stating that the souls and the world are distinct substances but merely form the body of God. And the existence of God cannot be proved by any argument in the way in which we can prove the existence of a mundane object. His existence is proved through the way of faith and scriptures.

Yamunā gave philosophical expressions to the devotional thoughts of the Ālvārs and emphasised the conception of bhakti. His Stotra-ratna expresses the doctrine of prapatti in beautiful devotional verses<sup>10</sup> and Rāmānuja is said to have become deeply attracted towards Yamunā after hearing these hymns.

The Pañcarātra doctrines can be traced to the Puruṣa-sūkta of the Ṛg Veda, where according to the Satapatha Brāhmana Nārāyana, the great being, performed the Pañcarātra sacrifice and attained his purpose. Nārāyana is the highest divinity and all other gods are subordinate to Him. Pañcarātra Āgamas form the most important source of the Vaiṣṇava religion and philosophy as these literatures seek to establish the exclusive supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu or Nārāyana and also put the greatest emphasis on devotion to Him alone. The Vyūhas and Vibhas of God mentioned by Rāmānuja in the Sri Bhāṣya were already present in the Pañcarātra literature. The Pañcarātra literature is, however, held to be sacred and authoritative by all the Vaiṣṇavas. The fact that Rāmānuja has not interpreted bhakti merely as emotion of love and respect devoid of knowledge, shows a very sharp influence of the Pañcarātra thoughts on him.

In the R̥g Veda, Viṣṇu is a solar deity regarded as the pervader, having his place in the supreme heaven.<sup>11</sup> The cult of bhakti upholding Viṣṇu as the Lord of the universe, had its origin in the R̥g Veda.<sup>12</sup> He was supposed to be the creator and protector of the whole universe. The idea of ātmanivedan as a golden means to the attainment of God<sup>13</sup> is also present in the R̥g Veda. Thus we have seen the bhakti cult had its origin in Vedic literature.

Rāmānuja founded his philosophy of the Viśiṣṭādvaita on the teaching of the Upaniṣads. In accordance with Upaniṣadic teaching, Rāmānuja developed his fundamental conception of the Absolute as a Triune unity. The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad tells that there are three eternal and ultimate entities which constitute the Absolute and these are powerless and ignorant soul, the powerful and all knowing God, and eternal Prakṛti that exists for the enjoyment of the individual soul.<sup>14</sup> On the basis of the Upaniṣadic truth, Rāmānuja formed his theory of God or Saguṇa Brahman and ascribes to it the Supreme Reality.

The cult of Viṣṇu found full support in the great epic, the Mahabhārata. Apart from the Gītā, the Mahabhārata contains several other portions such as Anu-gītā, the Viṣṇu-sahasranāma etc. which have popularised the Viṣṇu cult to a great extent. The section called Nārāyaṇīya in the Sāntiparva is the exposition of the Vaiṣṇava point of view.

The Bhagavad Gītā, according to Rāmānuja, is a magnificent exposition of personal Theism, Bhakti and Saranāgati which are the special features of his Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. The Gītā holds that the Highest Reality is a personal God endowed with innumerable auspicious qualities.<sup>15</sup> God is the supporter of all the jīvas, they are in Him and He is their upholder.<sup>16</sup>

He is the soul of all living beings.<sup>17</sup> All beings constitute the body of God. The Bhagavad Gītā has supported to a great extent Rāmānuja's doctrines of bhakti and prapatti. The Gītā explicitly declares Kṛṣṇa, the charioteer and guide of Arjuna as another form of Viṣṇu. In 'Hinduism through the Ages' Dr. D.S. Sharma has remarked :

The fountain of Vaiṣṇava-bhakti rises in the Gītā, passes through the songs of the Ālvārs, gathers its waters in the system of Rāmānuja and flows out later ... in varied streams all over India.<sup>18</sup>

In his Srībhāṣya, Rāmānuja has abundantly quoted from Viṣṇu Purāṇa. The Highest Reality referred to in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa is named as Vasudeva or Viṣṇu. The teaching of Viṣṇu Purāṇa is advaita as it has admitted as ultimate one Spiritual Reality who is characterised by innumerable auspicious qualities and who is free from all imperfection.

The special merit of Rāmānuja is to synthesise reason and revelation or Yukti and Śāstra. He is of the opinion that reason should be used only to strengthen the Śāstras and not to refute them. So Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda has admitted God as the ultimate source of the whole universe and has also described Him as the supreme goal of religion.

In his Srībhāṣya Rāmānuja laid the foundation of his philosophy known as Viśiṣṭādvaita vedānta. According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita vedānta, the ultimate reality referred to in the Upaniṣads is the personal God of religion. It rejects the theory of two Brahman admitted by the Advaita Vedānta - the higher Brahman (parā) and the lower Brahman (aparā). There is only one Brahman who, as the Vedānta Sūtra clearly states, is the creator of the universe<sup>19</sup> and who is qualified by infinite auspicious qualities (ananta-kalyāṇa-guṇa-

visiṣṭa). Such a reality is no other than the personal God of religion. Thus Rāmānujaṣ, asserts at the very outset of his commentary on Brahmasūtra that the term Brahman denotes Puruṣottama, the supreme person or self, who is essentially free from all imperfections and possesses infinite auspicious attributes of unsurpassable excellence.<sup>20</sup> Rāmānuja calls Brahman Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa.

The most usual name of God in the devotional philosophy of Rāmānuja is Viṣṇu. This word as well as some of its synonyms suggest God's immanence in man and nature. Viṣṇu is the object of adoration with Rāmānuja as is evident from the invocations with which he begins his writing.<sup>21</sup> The word is found even in the Ṛg Veda, the earliest scriptures of the Hindus. It means that which pervades everything (Viṣṭar Vyāptam). As regards Viṣṇu who is included in Trinity of Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra, the Purāṇas say that Nārāyaṇa assumed the form of Viṣṇu for the protection of all beings.<sup>22</sup> The descent of Viṣṇu into the Trinity, Rāmānuja concludes finally is due to this wish and sport and aims at the good to the world.<sup>23</sup> For Rāmānuja, Brahman which Upaniṣadic teachings centres round is none else than Viṣṇu.<sup>24</sup> The word has several other senses viz, the sun, fire, etc. but in religio-philosophy of Rāmānuja's Viṣiṣṭādvaita, it denotes the Supreme Reality.

Another term used in lieu of Brahman is Nārāyaṇa. The term Nārāyaṇa is accepted because it implies the essential characteristics of Brahman as taught in the Upaniṣads. According to the etymological meaning of the word, Nārāyaṇa is one who is the ground of the entire universe of cit and acit (nārāṇām ayanam) and who is immanent in all (nārāḥ ayanam yasyasah).<sup>25</sup> The Subālā Upaniṣad describes Nārāyaṇa as antarātma<sup>26</sup>, the inner controller of all being which is clear from the scriptural text which says : 'After creating it,

the same (Brahman) entered into it.' The Antaryāmi Brahman also signifies the same truth. On the basis of these authorities it is asserted that Para Brahman or the Absolute of Upaniṣad is the personal God under the name of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa as described in the Upaniṣads, Purāṇas etc. He is the sole creator of the universe. He sustains and controls the universe and He is the one who causes the dissolution of the universe as declared in the Vedāntasūtra based on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad.

Śaṅkara makes a distinction between Brahman as it is in itself and Brahman as is conceived by us in relation to the world. The former is called Para or higher Brahman and the latter Apara or lower Brahman. The former is called Nirguṇa Brahman and the latter Saguṇa Brahman. Śaṅkara denied all attributes to the Higher Brahman and held that it is the Lower Brahman that possesses attributes.

In the philosophy of Rāmānuja, no distinction has been made between Nirguṇa Brahman and Saguṇa Brahman. To him Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa is the Highest Reality and is Saguṇa by nature. "It may however be noted here as repeatedly stated by Rāmānuja in his Śrībhāṣya that the concept of nirviśeṣa-vastu, an entity totally devoid of all differentiation, whether it be a physical object or consciousness or even the Ultimate Reality, is untenable both on logical and metaphysical grounds".<sup>27</sup> From the metaphysical point of view, the creation of the universe which constitutes an important function of Brahman cannot be explained satisfactorily in respect of a Nirguṇa Brahman. To overcome this difficulty the Advaitins describe Saguṇa Brahman as the cause of the universe who is conditioned by Māyā or Cosmic ignorance. The doctrine of Māyā, on the basis of which Śaṅkara explains Īśvara, Jīva and the material world is self-contradictory. According to Rāmānuja, the nature of an object can be conceived

or understood only in terms of its essential characteristics. Nirguṇa Brahman beyond all thought and speech is a metaphysical abstraction. Rāmānuja is of the opinion that Nirguṇa Śrutis deny the inauspicious qualities in Brahman while Saguna texts describe Brahman as the home of all auspicious qualities. Rāmānuja attaches equal importance and value to both Saguna and Nirguṇa in the sense that sattva, rajas and tamas do not exist in his essence (svarūpa) and Saguna is the sense that all auspicious qualities belong to Him".<sup>28</sup> .. Thus Rāmānuja identifies Brahman with Viṣṇu without any intellectual contradiction. The Absolute of philosophy and the God of Religion cannot be different. Rāmānuja tried to justify Pañcarātra theism by means of Upaniṣadic Absolutism.

According to Rāmānuja, Brahman conceived as Saviseṣa implies that it also possesses a bodily form (vigraha) and is qualified by attributes (guṇa) and the properties (vibhūti) which consists of the transcendental realm as well as the phenomenal universe of soul and matter . In so far as the body of Brahman is concerned, it is not subject to Karma as the bodies of the bound individual souls. Īśvara assumes the bodily form out of His free will for the benefit of the devotee. The bodily form assumed by Īśvara in his eternal abode is nitya. It is constituted of pure saṁtīvika stuff known as śuddha sattva.

Regarding the svarūpa of Brahman we find different statements in the Upaniṣads. The Taittirīya Upaniṣad says - "satyam jñānam anantam brahma, Brahman the truth, the knowledge and the infinite."<sup>29</sup>

The same Upaniṣad describes Brahman as ānandam or bliss.<sup>30</sup> The Upaniṣads also speak of Brahman as free from all imperfections (amalam)<sup>31</sup> Viśiṣṭādvaitin regards these five terms as very significant because they bring out fully the svarūpa of Brahman as well as the essential characteristics of

Brahman. These are therefore named by the Viśiṣṭādvaitin as svarūpa-nirūpakadharmas or attributes defining the essence of Brahman. Brahman is satyam in the sense that it is never subjected to any kind of modification unlike the non-sentient matter and the bound souls. Brahman as jñānam is distinguished from the released souls (muktātāmā) whose knowledge in the state of bondage is subject to contraction and expansion. Brahman is anantam in the sense that he is not limited either by space or time because both space and time subsist in Brahman. Brahman as anantam is distinguished from the eternally free souls (nityas) which are monadic substance. The term ānandam means that Brahman possesses infinite bliss. Brahman is also of the essence of jñānam (jñāna svarūpa) and ānandam (ānandam svarūpa). The term amala implies that Brahman is free at all time from imperfections. It emphasises the fact that Brahman is neither subject to evil and imperfection like the individual soul nor the changes like the physical world. These five distinguishing characteristics determine the svarūpa of Brahman.

There is another definition of Brahman which is related to the creator Brahman. In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said : That from which all things are born, in which they live on being born, and unto which they enter when they perish, that is Brahman".<sup>32</sup> It refers to three fundamental functions of Brahman, viz, creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. The second Vedānta Sūtra which is introduced to answer the question relating to the nature of Brahman states that Brahman is that from which the origin etc of this universe proceeds - 'Janmādasya Yatah'.<sup>33</sup> Thus the characteristics of Brahman as the creator of the universe, is the fundamental characteristic of the Viśiṣṭa Brahman, that is Brahman as inseparably related to cit and acit. According to Rāmānuja, Brahman is the Supreme Being as organically related to cit and acit at all times - both in the state of creation and dissolution.

Thus the ultimate Reality as referred to in the Upaniṣads and Vedānta-Sūtra should be Saviśeṣa or one qualified with attributes and should also have the functions of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

Besides these five distinguishing characteristics six other important attributes are also admitted in Īśvara on the authority of Viṣṇu Purāna. These are jñāna (knowledge), bala (strength), aiśarya (lordship), virya (virility), śakti (power) and tejas (splendour).

The secondary attributes are infinite in number. Some of the important ones are omniscience, omnipotence, etc. which are useful for the act of creation. Saulabhya (easy accessibility), saūśilya (graciousness), vātsalya (love) which are useful for providing refuge to devotee; dayā and compassion and other qualities which are useful for the protection of the pious. God's auspicious qualities are eternal. They are coeval with and inherent in His being (Svarūpa) which is eternal.

Īśvara is the creator of the universe. He creates the universe in accordance with the karma of the individual souls. "The purpose of creation is twofold: compassion towards the suffering humanity and Divine Sport. Creation of the universe is a divine sport from which Īśvara derives ānanda."<sup>34</sup> It also provides an opportunity to the bounded individual souls to escape from the material world and reach the final release. The individual souls cannot strive for the spiritual goal without their being associated with the body, sense organs and intellect.

The central theme of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta is that cit (individual souls) and acit (the cosmic matter) are organically related to

Īśvara in the same way as an essential attribute is related to a substance. It is the relation of substance attribute on the basis of which Viśiṣṭādvaita metaphysics is founded. The three independent reals- Brahman, cit and acit accepted in the system constitute in a sense the substance attribute relation. According to Rāmānuja, substance and attribute are distinct but inseparable (aprthaksiddhi). When an object is cognised, it is comprehended along with its essential attributes. The implication of this is that the svarūpa of an entity cannot be known or described except in terms of its essential attributes. This principle applies to Īśvara and the universe consisting of the jīvas and the cosmic matter. Īśvara is the primary substance and in relation to Him, jīvas and cosmic matter are His attributes or modes (prakāra) in so far as the latter depends for their existence on Īśvara and are controlled by Him.

Also the relationship between Īśvara and the universe of cit and acit is conceived in the same way as the body is related to the soul. The body is regarded as śarīra in the technical sense that it depends wholly and necessarily on the soul for its existence; it is controlled by the soul and it exists for the use of the soul. "The soul is śarīrī or ātman, in the sense that it serves as the basis for the existence of the body (ādhāra), it controls the body (niyantā) and it uses it for its purpose (seśin). The same explanation holds good in respect of Brahman, and the universe, and the two are organically related in the form of body to the soul."<sup>35</sup> As He is the inner principle of all, all becomes meaningful only through Him. Although He is the indwelling principle of the whole universe of souls and matter, He is not in any way affected by worldly impurities. Just as the soul of a man is not affected by the changing states of his body in the same way, God, being the inner most soul of all beings, is not affected by sins and sorrows of life.

One of the major problems of Vedānta is to provide a satisfactory explanation of the material causality of Brahman. The Upaniṣads declare that Brahman is the material cause of the world. The Upaniṣads also declare that Brahman is unchangeable. The material causality of Brahman, therefore, needs to be accounted for without affecting the svarūpa of Brahman.

According to Rāmānuja, God is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. Both conscious soul (cit) and unconscious matter (acit) qualify Him. Rāmānuja holds that the mere svarūpa of Brahman as unrelated to cit and acit cannot become the material cause of the world. Nor can the non-sentient Prakṛti by itself be the material cause of the universe as the Sāṃkhya believes. It is Brahman associated with individual selves and cosmic matter in the subtle state (suksma-cid-acid-viśiṣṭa-brahma) that constitutes the material cause of the universe. Both cit and acit are organically related to Brahman and as such Brahman is at all times associated with them, both in the state of dissolution as well as the state of creation.<sup>36</sup> "The only difference between the two state is that in the state of dissolution cit and acit are unmanifest or indistinguishable by name and form whereas in the state of creation they become distinguishable by name and form."<sup>37</sup>

While ascribing material causality to Īśvara, Rāmānuja has admitted that the svarūpa of God does not suffer any kind of change by the act of creation and dissolution. The souls and matter are modes (prakāra) of God who is Prakārin. The changes take place in God as Prakāra, whereas God as Prakārin remains changeless.<sup>38</sup> Both cit and acit change from a subtle form to a gross form. Change in spirit and matter, however, does not take place in the same manner. While unconscious matter undergoes a change of its essential nature, there is no such modification of svarūpa in the case of souls. "It is the

'dharmabhutajñāna' of the individual souls that undergoes modification and passes from a state of absolute contraction to a state of expansion; the extent of which is determined by the law of karma."<sup>39</sup> When cosmic evolution takes place, changes take place directly in acit which actually transforms into the universe of name and form; indirectly change takes place in jīvas only in respect of its attributive knowledge (dharmabhutajñāna) but not in the svarūpa. Īśvara, the Supreme Reality always remains unaffected and immutable in essence under all conditions. God impels prakṛiti to evolve and change in accordance with the merits and demerits of the jīvas. At the time of dissolution again, the evolutionary movement of prakṛiti is stopped and its various transformations are suspended through the will of God.

Cause, according to Rāmānuja, is of three kinds : Upādāna kāraṇa (material cause), Nimitta kāraṇa (efficient cause) and Sahakāri kāraṇa (assisting cause). "The substance that undergoes changes of states in the form of effect is called the upādāna, that which causes the upādāna to undergo changes in the efficient cause, and that which acts as the assisting factor is called sahakāri kāraṇa."<sup>40</sup> God is upādāna kāraṇa in association with cit and acit, is nimitta kāraṇa as He resolves that "I shall be many". And with His quality of power and knowledge, He is the sahakāri- kāraṇa of the world.

Brahman for Rāmānuja is not only a principle but a person too. The Divine attributes and the Divine forms are essentially inseparable. "By the word 'form' he means the Deity's most beautiful man-like shape comprising eyes and ears, lips and chin, hands and feet."<sup>41</sup> Commenting on the Brahmasūtra, in the Srī-bhāṣya, Rāmānuja says that the scriptures deny to the Supreme Brahman only those attributes and bodies which are the products of prakṛiti, but they proclaim that He has supernatural (aprākṛta) attributes and form.<sup>42</sup> The Deity



3. The Incarnation - Avatāra,
4. The Immanent - Antaryāmī
5. The Consecrated Idol - Arcā

Rāmānuja, however, has mentioned in his commentary on the Brahmasūtra only three aspects : (1) Sūksma i.e. Para, (2) Vyūha and (3) Vibhava or avatāra.<sup>45</sup>

The first is the transcendental aspect. The origin of the notion of God's transcendence may be traced to the Puruṣa-Sūkta of R̥g Veda. The sacred text aims at describing the infinite glory of God by making Him transcendent. He is really not exhausted in the creation. In this transcendental aspect, the Supreme Lord resides in His eternal abode (Vaikuntha) attended by His consort Laksmi and eternally liberated souls (muktātmā). Vaikuntha is beyond time, change and modification and full of supreme bliss. He is called para or Supreme Vasudeva. But this para is not the para of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta who is indifferent to and which has no warmth of feeling for the creation. On the other hand Rāmānuja's para is an embodiment of love and grace. According to Rāmānuja all the six Divine attributes are fully manifested in the para aspect of God. "The transcendent God has His own divine life and Rāmānuja holds that it with this anthropomorphic aspect of God that a freed soul enjoys communion which is the summum bonum of human life."<sup>46</sup>

The second is Emanation (Vyūha). It is in this aspect that we conceive God as creator, sustainer and destroyer of the World. God as creator is Pradyumna, as preserver He is aniruddha, and as destroyer He is Sankarṣaṇa. In Vyūha, only two out of the six Divine attributes are manifested. "In Sankarṣaṇa, jñāna and bala alone get manifested. He exposes the scriptural

knowledge to human beings by his power of jñāna and destroys the universe by his bala. From Pradyumna emanates Aniruddha in whom energy (śakti) and splendour (tejas) predominate. He propogates self knowledge by virture of His splendour and supports the world through His energy. When Deity's prowess and supremecy come to dominate over his knowledge, power, energy and splendour, He becomes Pradyumna. He propogates righteousness through His prowess and creates the universe by dint of His supremecy."<sup>47</sup>

The third is the Immanent (Antaryāmī). God is not only busy in the work of the world, but He also pervades it . It is He who supports matter and individual souls. He is thus the indwelling principle of the universe.

The fourth is the Incarnation (Avatāra). The concept of avatāra occupies an important place in the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. The word 'avatāra' has been derived from the Sanskrit word 'avatāram' meaning descent. God interferes in the worldly affairs not directly but through His incarnation. According to Rāmānuja, the purpose of avatāra is twofold :

- (a) to establish righteousness, dharma <sup>48</sup>
- (b) to be accessible to His devotees.

God incarnates on His own accord.<sup>49</sup> He is above all karmic influence. Rāmānuja has not given the number and kinds of avatāra; but his followers have done so on the basis of Purāṇas and Āgamas. For Rāmānuja, however, Kṛṣṇa is an avatāra of Viṣṇu, the Supreme.

The fifth is the Holy Images duly sanctified. Different devotees conceive of God in different ways and make the idols of Srīviṣṇu accordingly and place them in temples and maths. God in the form of arcāvatāra is wholly dependent on His devotees for his maintenance and protection. It satisfies the

emotional need of devotee.

Regarding the existence of God, Rāmānuja maintains that Śrūti or revealed scripture is the sole authority for knowing the existence of God. According to the Naiyāyikas the existence of God can be proved by means of inference and scriptural testimony. In the opinion of Śaṅkara, God can be known by direct realization, by inference and also by verbal testimony. Rāmānuja, however, holds that the existence of God can be proved by the Āgamas only and not by any other source.

The Advaitin questions the view that Brahman is to be known through revealed scriptures. According to Śaṅkara, Brahman as the transcendental Reality is self-established (svataḥ-siddha) and is beyond all speech and thought. It cannot be comprehended by finite intellect. Brahman is therefore beyond all empirical pramānas and cognition.

Rāmānuja criticises this view. He takes the help of scriptures to prove that the reality of Brahman is based on the scriptures. The very Upaniṣads say that Brahman is only knowable by means of Śrūti. Thus the Kaṭha upaniṣad says:- "All Vedas speak of His nature."<sup>50</sup> There are several texts which say that Brahman is describable by words and also knowable."<sup>51</sup> "The Upaniṣadic texts which speak of Brahman as beyond words and thought can only mean that Brahman which is infinite cannot be described adequately by words and that it cannot also be known in all its fullness by our finite mind."<sup>52</sup>

In his commentary on Brahmasūtra, Rāmānuja has shown that other proofs which seem to establish the existence of God, finally fail to do so. God can neither be known through perception nor through inference.

God cannot be known through perception. Perception either depends on five external sense organs or on the internal sense organ, mind. External sense organs give us knowledge of those objects only which are present before us whereas God is never present before us like other objects. Mind is also not capable of giving us knowledge of God because mind can make us known only our

feelings and pain etc. God's existence cannot be proved by Yogic pratyakṣa also, this is only of the nature of memory.

God can neither be known through inference. Inference is based on Vyāpti jñāna and no Vyāpti is possible in respect of supersensuous objects. The Naiyāyikas try to prove the existence of God as the cause of the universe inferentially. The universe is an effect and must have been produced by an agent or creator called God. But this argument is also subject to criticism. The creation of the world is due to the sportive motive of God. It may be said on the basis of the scripture that Īśvara is the cause of the universe and on the strength of the śrūti text the inference may be advanced to prove the existence of God. If it be the case, it would be more appropriate to prove the existence of God on the strength of the śrūti text itself. If inference alone could prove the existence of God, śāstra would lose its significance. Anumāna cannot by itself conclusively prove the existence of the Supreme Being. Since God can never be proved by perception and inference, His existence has to be established on the evidence of the scriptural texts alone. In view of this the author of the Vedāntasūtras rightly says that śāstra alone is the Supreme authority for our belief in the existence of God- 'Śāstra Yonitvāt'.<sup>53</sup>

Thus we have seen that Rāmānuja shows philosophical maturity and religious sincerity in the interpretation of Upaniṣadic texts on the matter of God. In Rāmānuja the rift between philosophy and religion does not exist. He makes the claim of both philosophy and religion coincide. The Nirguṇa Brahman of Śaṅkara, though it is a glorious achievement of human intellect cannot satisfy the emotional nature of man. It is only through a loving communion with a personal God that man can find solace of his heart and peace of his mind. Rāmānuja's concept of Brahman, however, maintains a balance between Absolutism and Theism i.e. between philosophy and religion.

REFERENCES

1. Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja : p. xii.
2. Krishna Datta Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja : ix.
3. Srīsampradāya of Rāmānuja,  
Brahma Sampradāya of Mādhava,  
Rudra Sampradāya of Viṣṇusvāmin,  
and Sanakādisam pradāya of Nimbāarak, are the four  
Vaiṣṇava Sampradāyas.
4. S.M. Srinivasa Chari, Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 4.
5. Krishna Datta Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P. 20.
6. Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P.20.
7. Nāthamuni, flourished in the 10th century and lived mostly at Srīrangam  
..... He wrote Nyāyatattva, Puruṣanirṇaya and Yogarahasya based on  
Ālvārs songs called 'Tamil Veda' - quoted J.N. Singha. The Philosophy of  
Rāmānuja. P. 13.
8. S.M. Srinivasa Chari. Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 3.
9. Yamunā, grandson of Nāthamuni flourished in the eleventh century (918  
A.D. - 1038 A.D.) and wrote Āgamaprāmānya, Gītārthasaṅgraha, Mahā -  
puruṣa - nirṇaya, Ātmasiddhi, Īśvarasiddhi, Samvitsiddhi, Stotraratnam  
and Catuḥ sloki. See S.M. Srinivasa Chari, Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita  
Vedānta. P. 3.
10. Stotraratna, 22, quoted C.D. Sharma, A Critical Survey of Indian  
Philosophy, p.338.
11. Viṣṇoh paramam padam . Rg. V. 1, 22, 20.
12. Rg Veda 1. 22. 17.
13. Ibid. 11. 27. 5. 11. 27.
14. Śvetāsvatara upaniṣad - 1. 9.

15. Rāmānuja's Commentary on the Gītā - 15 / 19.
16. Rāmānuja's commentary on the Gītā 9 / 5.
17. Ibid : 10 / 20
18. D.S. Sharma : Hinduism Through the Ages, P. 38.
19. B.S. 1.1.2.
20. RB - 1 - 1 - 1, p. 6. quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari, Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 224.
21. Krishna Datta Bharadwaj. The Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 111.
22. Rāmāyaṇa VII - 101 - 26. quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari. Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 228.
23. K.D. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja. p. 98.
24. Ibid. p. 99.
25. Rahasyatrayasāra, Ch. 27. quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari, Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 226.
26. Subālā upaniṣad VII.
27. S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 231.
28. Priti Singha - The Philosophy of Advaita. p. 169.
29. T.U. - 1.1.1.
30. Ibid. 3.6.1.
31. B.U. 5.88.
32. T.U. 3.1.
33. B.S. 1.1.2.
34. S.M. Srinivasa Chari - Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 241.
35. Ibid. P.16.
36. RB on VS II - 3 - 18, p. 574.
37. S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. p. 247.
38. K. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja. p. 41.
39. Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja. p. 159.

40. Ibid. P. 158.
41. K. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja. P. 134.
42. Srībhāṣya - 1.1.21.
43. Priti Singha. The Philosophy of Advaita, P. 174.
44. This is the order approved by Srīnivāsadāsa. See K. Bharadwaj. The Philosophy of Rāmānuja. p. 70.
45. Srībhāṣya. 2.2. 41.
46. K. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja. P. 70.
47. Priti Singha. The Philosophy of Advaita. P. 177.
48. Gita. IV. 7.8.
49. B.G. RB IV. 7.
50. K.U. 11-15.
51. C.U. 1-6-7.
52. S.M. Srinivasa Chari-Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. P.218.
53. B.S. 1.1.3.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

## CHAPTER - III

### GOD INDIVIDUAL AND WORLD

We have already seen that there are three fundamental categories of the philosophy of Rāmānuja viz, God, soul and matter. These three are ultimate realities but the last two are absolutely dependent on God. Their relation to God is like the relation of body to the soul. Both soul and matter, therefore, are as inseparable from God as attributes are from the substance. The three form an organic unity. The highest reality is a qualified Brahman endowed with innumerable auspicious qualities.

Rāmānuja gives a distinctive doctrine of Jīva. Based on the teachings of the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta-Sūtras and the Bhagavad Gītā, he establishes that the Jīva or the individual self is an eternal spiritual entity and is distinct from the Supreme Self or Brahman. Even in the state of Mokṣa, it does not lose its individuality. Jīvas are infinite in number and they are essentially of the nature of knowledge (jñāna-Svarūpa). Though Jīva is of the nature of knowledge, it is also the substratum of knowledge emphasising the fact that it is the knowing subject (Jñātā). It is thus the agent of action (Kartā) and enjoyer of pleasure and pain (bhoktā). It is monadic in substance (anu).

According to Rāmānuja, the Jīvas which are infinite in number are not only different from one another but also from Brahman or Īśvara. Īśvara and Jīva are two spiritual entities which are absolutely real and also distinct. Rāmānuja establishes this truth on the strength of the Upaniṣadic texts. The Upaniṣadic text referring to the nature of Reality speaks of Brahman as

different from Jīva. They also describe that they are of different nature. Thus the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad says : 'There are two, the one knowing, the other not knowing, both unborn, the one is a ruler, the other not a ruler'<sup>1</sup>. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes Jīva as one caught up in bondage, whereas Īśvara is free from it.<sup>2</sup> The Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad refers to Brahman as the indweller of Jīvatman<sup>3</sup>. Īśvara is vibhū (all pervasive) whereas Jīva is monadic (aṇu). In view of these facts the Vedānta Sūtra categorically states that Brahman is different from Jīva which is subject to karma.<sup>4</sup>

The scriptural texts also speak of non-difference between Brahman and Jīva. Thus the Chāndogya Upaniṣad says : Thou art that (Tat tvam asi). The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad also says : The Self is Brahman (Ayam ātmā Brahma). The Naiyāyikas believe in absolute difference between Brahman and Jīva whereas the Advaitins maintain absolute non-difference between Brahman and Jīva. To overcome these difficulties, the theory of Bhedābhedavādins may held according to which Brahman and Jīva are both different as well as non-different.

Rāmānuja accepts neither the theory of the Naiyāyikas nor that of the Advaitins. He also rejects the theory of the Bhedābhedavādins on the ground that acceptance of this theory would imply the admission of the defects of Jīva in Brahman. On the basis of the śruti texts and the Vedānta-sūtra, Rāmānuja tries to reconcile by upholding the validity of all the texts regarding absolute difference and absolute non-difference. The author of the Vedānta Sūtra who recognizes the two conflicting views about Jīva and Brahman as different (nānā) and also non-different (anythā ca), uses the expression 'aiśā' to explain the relation of Jīva to Brahman.<sup>5</sup> While commenting on the Sūtra, Rāmānuja states that Jīva is to be accepted as an integral part (aiśā)

of Brahman in order to account for its non-difference as well as difference from Brahman.<sup>6</sup>

Now, *aṁśa* or part does not mean a spatial part of the whole, because soul as a spiritual entity cannot be spatially divided. Nor does the Infinite Brahman admit of any quantitative division. The term *aṁśa* is therefore defined by Rāmānuja as an integral part of an entity (*eka vastu eka desatvam hy aṁśatvam*). What is meant by part of a whole is that it is essential attribute of a complex whole (*viśiṣṭasya ekasya vastunah viśeṣānānam aṁśa eva.*<sup>7</sup>) Rāmānuja clearly says that if the self is regarded as a part of Brahman, the two opposite kinds of teachings of the revealed texts namely that there is difference (*bheda*) and that there is also identity (*abheda*) between *jīva* and Brahman can be reconciled. In short, as there are both difference and identity (*bhedābheda*) between the part and the whole, so also there is a similar relation between the self and God. The luminosity radiating from a luminous body such as fire or sun is a part of that body. In the same way, *Jīva* is regarded as part of Brahman.

Rāmānuja explain the relation of *Jīva* to Brahman by adopting the metaphysical category of substance and attribute and the concept of *aprthaksiddhi*. According to Rāmānuja substance and attribute are distinct but inseparable. On the basis of this metaphysical concept, Rāmānuja asserts that *Jīva* is different as well as non-different from Brahman. Brahman and *Jīva* as *aṁśī* and *aṁśa* or substance and attribute are distinct, in the same way as the light radiating is different from a luminous thing, spark from fire. It is on the basis of this that the Upaniṣadic texts speak of difference between the two. But at the same time, substance and attribute being inseparable, they constitute one entity as an integral and complex whole. Brahman as integrally

related to Jīvas is a viśiṣṭa entity and as such it is one. It is in this sense that the texts speak of non-difference between Jīva and Brahman. Thus the validity of both the bheda-śrūtis and abheda śrūtis is upheld by Rāmānuja.8

Rāmānuja also adopts the logical principle of co-ordination in determining the relation of Jīva to Brahman. The crucial statements which speak of the non-difference between Jīva and Brahman are- 'That thou art' and 'The self is Brahman'. They are technically called samānādhikāraṇa vākyas. According to the Advaitins the logical import of such statements is absolute identity. Rāmānuja does not accept the view of the Advaitins. The import of samānādhikāraṇa vākya is that though the two terms connote different characteristics, the substance denoted by them is one as characterised by the attributes. On the basis of this principle, both these Upaniṣadic texts are interpreted to mean that Jīva and Brahman are non-different. The statement, 'This is that Devadatta' asserts, for example, identity between the person seen at present and the person seen in the past. The Upaniṣadic dictum 'That thou art' (Tat tvam asi) should be understood in a similar way. 'That' stands for God, omniscient, omnipotent, creator of the universe. 'Thou' stands for God existing in the form of man, the embodied soul (acidviśiṣṭa-Jīva-sarīrakam). The identity asserted here is, therefore, between God with certain qualification and God with certain other qualification- identity of the same substance though possessed of different qualities (viśiṣṭasya aikyam). The identity implied by the text in question is of these two complexes- God as the source of the universe and God as the indweller of the Jīva. There is the identity of ground. In essence Jīvas are one with Brahman but as modes they are different. As the soul is identical with as well as different from God, the relation between them is also that of identity and difference. He

advocates "identity in and through and because of difference", that is an identity qualified by difference."<sup>9</sup> Identity-in-difference means, for him, identity of the one substance existing in two real forms- 'ekam eva vastu dvirūpam pratīyate'.

In the Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy of Rāmānuja, Jīva has been described in two ways- viz, positive and differentiative. In trying to explain the characteristics of Jīva, Rāmānuja has distinguished it from all possible things with which it may get identified through confused thinking.

In the Tattvatraya, it has been stated that Jīva cannot be identified with the body, the sense-organs, the mind or the vital airs which are the constituent parts of a psycho-physical organism.<sup>10</sup> In saṁsāra, it wrongly identifies itself with these due to ignorance and karma. There are innumerable individual souls. They are essentially same like the monads of Leibnit or the Jīvas of the Jainas, and they differ only in number.

Of the positive characteristics of the soul described by Rāmānuja and his followers, some belong to God as well and these are therefore, the common characteristics, of both God and the individual self. Besides these common characteristics the soul also possesses some other characteristics which are peculiar to itself and which are not therefore applicable to God. The common characteristics among God and Jīva are :-

- (a) Pratyaktva (inwardliness)- both Jīva and God dwell in acit.
- (b) Cetanatva (consciousness)- consciousness is the essence of both soul and God.
- (c) Ātmatva (spirituality)-
- (d) Kartṛtva (agency)-

Like God soul is also a Pratyak or internal principle in the sense that it dwells in a body. The Jīva is therefore the ādhāra of the body and the existence of the latter is dependent on the Svarūpa of Jīva. The soul possesses consciousness as its essence. As it is the indwelling and controlling principle of the body, it is called 'ātmā'. Jīva is the agent or the Kartā like God as it moves the body and the organs to various types of intellectual and non-intellectual activities.

"Rāmānuja's conception of participation of soul in God may be compared with the model dependence of soul on God in Spinoza and monadic individuality in Leibnitz".<sup>11</sup> But in the philosophy of Rāmānuja, neither the individuality of the Jīva is lost in the Absolute, nor is it being provided independent status. They are real entities as they are differentiations of God. But to realise this is not an easy task. Gītā too speaks of "the rarity of the man who knows the self."<sup>12</sup>

The most important thing to be noticed in connection with Rāmānuja's view of soul as a spiritual entity is that it is a self conscious being. The self is not only a fortuitous concourse of atoms, it is essentially a cognitive agent. It pervades the world with knowledge as the light of the lamp. 'Self-consciousness is the essential prerogative of spiritual being.'<sup>13</sup> Self-consciousness is self revealing, Svayam-prakāśa, which is not absent even in deep sleep. It is ultimate and there is no state when its existence can be doubted. The self is both self-luminous and self-conscious. Rāmānuja agrees with Prabhākara in maintaining that knowledge is self-luminous and that it reveals its object, that knowledge is a subject-object relation and as such possible only in relation to an object. But he differs from Prabhākara in maintaining that knowledge forms the essence of the self and is not its

accidental quality, that the self is not a Jaḍa substance, but a self-conscious subject and self-luminous substance. Rāmānuja agrees with Śāṅkara in holding that the self is an eternal self-conscious subject and that knowledge is its essence. But he differs from Śāṅkara in refusing to identify the self with pure consciousness. According to Rāmānuja there is nothing like pure consciousness. All knowledge involves discrimination and it is impossible to know an undifferentiated object. Consciousness is always qualified and possesses specific attributes. It always belongs to a subject and points to an object. He therefore holds that man is a knower as distinguished from mere knowledge which is the view of Śāṅkara. Soul is essentially a knower, a subject, a conscious principle. Dr. Vidyanartha says- "Rāmānuja is of the view that the self is a substance having consciousness both for its, Svarūpa and attribute, guṇa from which follows the distinction between substantive consciousness and attributive consciousness".<sup>14</sup> Knowledge always belongs to and exists for the self. Hence it is called 'dharmabhūtajñāna' or attributive knowledge. It is also substantive and constitutes the essence of the selves and of God. Knowledge is like the light, the self is like the lamp; the dharmabhūtajñāna is like the rays."<sup>15</sup> The light constitutes the essence of the lamp and cannot be separated from it. The rays belong to and proceed from the light and are subject to contraction and expansion. Through the substantive consciousness the self knows itself; it knows the objects of the world through the attributive consciousness. Thus the self, according to Rāmānuja is both knowledge and has knowledge. Knowledge is a unique adjunct of the self and is eternally associated with it."<sup>16</sup> It is all pervasive but its function in earthly existence is obstructed by karma. The self is eternal and so is knowledge. In liberation, all karmas cease and knowledge becomes all pervasive and as a result of this the liberated soul acquires omniscience like God.

Rāmānuja regards ātman as monadic (aṇu)<sup>17</sup> otherwise 'utkramana'

that is, movement from one place to another would have been not possible. The word *anu* is generally translated as 'atomic' but Schraeder says that it should be translated as 'small'.<sup>18</sup> It is small in comparison to the greatness of the Supreme Self, "The imperfection of the finite self confirms its atomicity."<sup>19</sup> Scriptures speak of soul as passing out and coming into the body which will be impossible in the case of the omnipresent reality. Rāmānuja cites the authorities of the Muṇḍaka<sup>20</sup> and the Śvetāsvatara<sup>21</sup> Upaniṣad in support of his view. The soul, though atomic in nature feels the happening in any part of the body because of its attributive knowledge (dharmabhūtajñāna). Ātman and Jñāna may be logically distinguishable but not physically separable. The Ātman without Jñāna is empty and Jñāna without ātman is blind. With the help of the conception of the atomicity of the self Rāmānuja tries to avoid Śaṅkaras' theory of all-pervasiveness which denies individuality.

From an ontological standpoint, Rāmānuja explains the relation of Jīva to Brahman on the basis of the concept of body soul relation (Śarīrasārīri-bhāva). Brahman as the material cause of the universe and ground of all existence is the ādhāra and the Jīvas are described as adheyā, that which depends on it for its existence. Soul hankers after God because God contains it. Brahman as the immanent spirit and the inner controller of the universe of cit and acit is the niyantā and Jīva is the niyāmya, one which is controlled by Īśvara. This implies that God, being the indwelling principle of the soul which is His body is the true regulator and controller of all knowledge and actions of the Jīva. Further as all things rest on God, He is the chief support of all the Jīvas. Control of God, however is not detrimental to the freedom of individual souls. "From the ethical and religious standpoint, Jīva is described as Śeṣa, as one who subserves God, and God as śeṣin, the Master of all."<sup>22</sup> This is because the soul is supported, controlled

and employed by God and has no real independence of its own.<sup>23</sup> The relation between God and soul is thus inseparable. It may be noted that Jīva is an integral part (aṁśa) or mode (prakāra) of Brahman and it is therefore distinct but inseparable from it.

Although Rāmānuja has described soul as the Niyāmya (controlled mode) of God and God as the inner ruler, he has provided spiritual freedom to the Jīvas. The Jīvas are allowed to have free choices regarding the performance of actions, but these choice of desires must be granted by God. Actual action is possible only through the approval by God of the desires of the Jīvas.<sup>24</sup> Here also God's interference is not harmful to the freedom of the Jīvas. "He will not prevent the individual from doing the action he likes best by creating any kind of obstacle : the individual is trying to go far off from God because of his vitiated personality and God, too will help him to have desires which will lead him farther away from his Lord."<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand those who remain closely attached to God will have through His grace such desires which will bring them nearer to God. The individual souls will determine the choice of desires, but these desires will be effective only through the grace of God. Thus Rāmānuja tries to make a happy compromise between Divine Sovereignty and spiritual freedom.

As the soul is free to do right action or a wrong action, it is an enjoyer of its fruits,. Human freedom cannot override the merits and demerits acquired by the human souls by their free actions. It is subject to the Law or Karma or Moral law of which God is the ruler, Thus in the philosophy of Rāmānuja, God appears as the giver of fruits of actions in accordance with the 'adr̥ṣṭa' of the individual's character. As a result of this the desires of the

individuals are determined by their past karmas or *adr̥ṣṭa*. *Adr̥ṣṭa*, being unconscious, it is guided and controlled by God. Thus the freedom of will of the *Jīvas* is subject to the control of God. He permits the soul to act freely, rewards and punishes them according to their right or wrong actions, and gives them fruit accordingly.<sup>26</sup> Because the self is a doer, it is an enjoyer and sufferer. An individual is free enough to choose his own line of action, but when such actions are performed and consequently the '*adr̥ṣṭa*' of the *Jīva* is formed, he has to reap the fruits of his karmas. Thus "man is both master and slave of his actions. He is the master of the *Kriyamāna-karmas* (action he is doing in the present life) and slave of the *pr̥arabdha-karmas* (past actions which have started bearing fruits).<sup>27</sup>

For the performance of every action, two causes are necessary. God is the common cause and the individual himself is the special cause (*asādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*). God can work only with the help of the *Jīva*'s body, mind, and sense-organs.

The soul is intrinsically blissful, pure and perfect. The apparent limitation is caused by its own karma. In the state of *susupti* (deep sleep) we realise this inherent nature of the soul. Karma is the explanation offered by *Rāmānuja* for the soul's imperfection. It is not karma as such but selfish and egoistic action. It must be noted that "For *Rāmānuja* the self is inherently perfect by which we mean that it is endowed with infinite and pure knowledge and bliss. But their infinite knowledge and bliss suffer contraction due to the corrupting influence of selfishness and egoism on them."<sup>28</sup>

The individuals souls, according to *Rāmānuja* are eternal and immutable. Birth and death means association with and dissociation from

physical embodiment. In order to reap the consequences of actions done, the soul has to be regarded as eternal. Rāmānuja holds that the eternity of soul is an essential condition for morality which is a constant need of religion.

Every finite individual has some unsharable experiences- a memory of one person cannot be transferred to other- these are the facts of life. On the basis of such experiences, Rāmānuja proves the existence of many souls. Human personality is unique in its own way. It is a spiritual centre of divinity and morality. It is a monad as well as a mode. the finite self is an aspect of glory of the Divine. Dr. Vidyarthi remarks, "Human beings are numerically different from God and have an existence whose ultimate destiny cannot be absorption or extinction in the Absolute. Rāmānuja does not make any compromise with any theory which impairs the unique status of the finite self'.<sup>29</sup> To make religion significant, the difference of soul is inevitable. Brahman comprises within itself the distinct elements of plurality which have claim in the whole scheme of reality.

Rāmānuja believes in Triune Reality of God, man and nature. He established the non-duality of ultimate Reality by arguing that God has all the cit (conscious) element and the acit (non-conscious) stuff as His modes (prakāra or śeṣa), but he made it quite clear that individual souls, matter and God have their own peculiar qualities by virtue of which they remain distinct from one another.<sup>30</sup> So, in Hegelian mode of expression we may say that "man is transcending nature and both man nature finding their ultimate reconciliation in God- a unity-in-variety". Even the texts like "tat tvam asi", 'so aham asmi' do not bridge the gulf between all pervading God and finite soul. According to Rāmānuja, Upaniṣadic assertions only mean the similarity between the nature of Brahman and Jīva and not identity. Self,

according to Rāmānuja can never be a Brahman as part can never become whole, an attribute can never become substance. The soul exists in a very subtle state before the manifestation of the world. In the state of creation the soul differs from Brahman on two major points- firstly they are atomic, hence finite and secondly they cannot participate in the act of creation and rule over the world like God.

Rāmānuja refers to three classes of soul. The first category consists of eternal souls (nitya Jīvas) who are never bound. They always remain free from karma and 'acit' and live in Vaikuntha in the constant presence of God. All the time they are rendering services to God. 'Śeṣa', 'Garuḍa' etc. are examples of such eternal souls. They enjoy bliss. The second category consists of liberated souls (mukta jīvas) who were once in bondage but who obtained release by dint of their knowledge, action and devotion. The third category consists of 'bound souls' (baddha jīvas) who are still steeped in ignorance and impure action as a result of which they are moving round the cycles of births and deaths. Baddha jīvas wander in saṁsāra because of their selfishness and egoity.

Liberation does not mean identity (tadātmya) but equality. As essence the individual souls are one with God. The Gītā says, 'people discuss among themselves and hear from others much about the soul, but none is able to comprehend it.'<sup>31</sup> Rāmānuja holds that the real nature of the soul is concealed by the will of God.<sup>32</sup> Such concealment of the real nature of the soul is universal among mankind. It is most difficult to overcome.<sup>33</sup> God constitutes the 'I' of the soul. 'I live, yet not I, but God liveth in men'. Rāmānuja is of the opinion that devotion proves to be the only way to attain liberation.

Īśvara and Jagat :

Rāmānuja holds that the universe in its multiplicity is related to God just as a body is to a soul. It is due to this immanence in the physical world and individual souls that there can be no duality in God. He is one. The universe is his body, so that all the diversities that there are in the world are contained in Him. God's relation with the universe is that of a substance with its adjuncts. But He, while being immanent in the universe, also transcends it.<sup>34</sup> For God is infinite and so much more than the universe.<sup>35</sup> He is the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the universe which is only an infinitesimal part of Him. The motive which prompts God to create a world is nothing else than sport (līlā).<sup>36</sup>

In the philosophy of Rāmānuja 'acit' or prakṛti is the material cause of the world. It is triguṇātmika like the Māyā of Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja calls Prakṛti avidyā because 'acit' is the principle that prevents the soul from realising its conscious nature. Prakṛti, being unconscious, is naturally opposed to vidyā or knowledge.

But in the philosophy of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta avidyā is the cosmic principle which causes world illusion. It conceals the real nature of Brahman, and projects the appearance of the multiform world.<sup>37</sup> It is not a mere absence of knowledge, but positive entity (bhāva rūpa) and beginningless (anādi) but removed by right knowledge.<sup>38</sup> It cannot be defined either as sat or asat, and hence its nature is indescribable (anirvacanīya).<sup>39</sup>

But Prakṛti, though called avidyā in a particular sense, is real and as such it is beginningless and endless. The only speciality about its reality is that it is real as a mode of God. It derives its substantiality and meaning

from God alone. It is the metaphysical real cause of all the modifications of the world.

One of the most fundamental problems of Vedānta is to account for the causal relation between Brahman and the universe. The Vedāntin seeks to answer how does the one Absolute become the manifold universe. In this connection Śaṅkara has put forward the theory of Vivartavāda according to which Brahman is the ultimate reality and the world is merely an appearance of Brahman. Rāmānuja proceeds to refute the Advaita view that Brahman is real but the created world is unreal.<sup>40</sup> He says that if the effect be unreal, then the Upaniṣadic proposition, 'one can know all by knowing one', would be meaningless, for in that case there would be nothing at all for us to know or there would be confusion between the real and the unreal.<sup>41</sup> The proposition, therefore, can hold good only if the 'all' be taken to be real. Rāmānuja is of the opinion that, the world that we always, see, feel and touch as real must be admitted by us as true; so it is improper to hold that the world is due to a wholly illusory principle called avidyā. Rāmānuja has raised seven-fold objections against the avidyā theory of Śaṅkara's Vedānta which are known as Saptavidhānupapattiḥ. These seven charges are-Āsrayānupapattiḥ, Tirodhānānupapattiḥ, Svrūpānupapattiḥ, Nivartakānupapattiḥ and Nivṛtṭyānupapattiḥ.

Āsrayānupapattiḥ- The first objection is that there can be no substratum for avidyā. Neither the individual soul nor Brahman can serve as a basis for the principal of illusion. Avidyā cannot reside in the individual self, for the individuality of the self is said to be the creation of avidyā. Brahman also cannot be the locus of avidyā as it is supposed to be self-luminous. If self-luminosity is believed to be covered, there will be the

cessation of the true form of Brahman, because Brahman is nothing but this self-luminous pure consciousness. Thus, as there is no locus for avidyā, it is absolutely meaningless.<sup>42</sup>

Tirodhānanupapattiḥ- The second objection is that if we believe in avidyā we have to believe also in the obscuration of pure consciousness which is really absurd. In the philosophy of Advaita Vedānta, Brahman is admitted as self-revealing (Svayamprakāśa). As Brahman is of the nature of self-luminosity and self-proved, ignorance cannot cover or veil its essence. It is as absurd as to say that darkness can hide light or that night can act as a veil on day. "How and why self-revealing pure consciousness makes itself obscure by avidyā is an insoluble riddle of Śaṅkara's Vedānta."<sup>43</sup>

Svarūpānupapattiḥ- The third objection is that avidyā itself is obscured by nature. Avidyā cannot be admitted to be real for in that case, the philosophy of Śaṅkara will cease to be a philosophy of non-dualism.

Avidyā means ignorance and ignorance means absence of knowledge. To regard ignorance as positive is self-contradictory. Moreover, if avidyā is positive, it cannot be destroyed, for a positive entity can never be destroyed. As the Advaitin admits that ignorance is removed by right knowledge, ignorance can never be positive. And if avidyā is negative, it cannot project the world illusion on Brahman. To say that avidyā is both positive and negative is to admit self-contradiction. And to say that avidyā is neither positive nor negative is to give up all logic. If the false knowledge of the false world is caused by a false avidyā, then this knowledge of the false avidyā must be due to another principle of falsity and that too, to another and so on.<sup>44</sup>

Anirvacanīyātvanupapattiḥ- The fourth charge is brought against the indescribable character of avidyā. Things of the world are always experienced either as real (sat) or unreal (asat). A thing which is different from both real and unreal (sadasadvilakṣaṇa) can never be an object of experience.

Reality and unreality are both exhaustive and exclusive. A thing must be either real or unreal. There is no third alternative. To refuse this is to refuse to think."It is of no use describing any category as anirvacanīya when such a category can never be logically established on the ground of any kind of evidence."<sup>45</sup>

Pramānupapattiḥ- The fifth charge against avidyā is that it is not supported by any pramāṇa. Since avidyā is neither real nor unreal, it cannot be known by perception, for perception gives us either an entity or a non-entity. It can not be known by inference, for inference proceeds through a valid mark which avidyā lacks. Nor can it be known through scriptures for they declare māyā as the real world producing power of God.

Nivartakānupapattiḥ- There is no remover of avidyā. The Advaitin believes that knowledge of the unqualified attributeless Brahman removes avidyā. But such knowledge is impossible, knowledge always involves discrimination and determination. Pure identity is mere abstraction. Identity is always qualified by difference and distinction. Hence there can be no knowledge of an undifferentiated attributeless thing. And in the absence of such knowledge nothing can remove māyā.

Nivṛttānupapattiḥ- This charge is against the Advaita theory of liberation. According to Sāṅkara, Brahmajñāna is not knowledge of Brahman, but

it is knowledge that is Brahman. "This is pure knowledge and this is different from the knowledge of identity. Which is called nivartakajñāna. According to Rāmānuja, this nivartakajñāna, being different from Brahman must be regarded as a form of avidyā since anything different from Brahman falls in the realm of avidyā."<sup>46</sup> Avidyā is said to be positive (bhāva-rūpa) by the Advaitin. A thing which positively exists cannot be removed from existence by knowledge. The bondage of the soul is due to karma which is a concrete reality and cannot be removed by abstract knowledge of Brahman. It can be removed by karma, jñāna, bhakti and prasāda (grace). "The ignorance of the soul is destroyed when the karmas are destroyed and when the soul flings itself on the absolute mercy of the Lord who pleased by the soul's constant devotion, extends His grace to it".<sup>47</sup>

With the rejection of Vivartavāda, Rāmānuja establishes the reality of the universe as an integral part of Brahman. This matter is closely related to the concept of cause and effect. Following the dialectic of the Buddhists the Advaitins maintain that the causal relation is untenable and as such it is not ultimately real. This view implies that only cause is real whereas the effect is illusory. On the basis of this theory Śaṅkara argues that Brahman as the cause of the world is real and the universe as an effect is illusory. In this sense cause and effect are not distinct as there are no two realities.

Against this theory Rāmānuja says that causal relation is logically acceptable and that both cause and effect are real. According to him cause and effect are different modifications of the same substance, as in the case of clay and its modifications such as pot, vase etc. As two different states of the same substance there is unity or non-difference between cause and effect. Brahman associated with cit and acit in their subtle form becomes Brahman with

cit and acit in their manifest form. This is the significance of how the 'one' becomes 'many'- the fundamental metaphysical question raised in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad.

Now, regarding the relation between Brahman and the universe, Rāmānuja accounts for the relationship both on the strength of the Upaniṣadic texts and also on the logical grounds, From the logical point of view, he adopts the metaphysical category of substance and attribute and the concept of aprthaksiddhi or inseparability that exists between the substance and its essential attributes. According to Rāmānuja, though substance and attribute are distinct by their very nature, are inseparable. An attribute cannot be separated from its substance; similarly, a substance cannot be conceived without its attributes. Just as the attribute is inseparable from the substance (aprthaksiddhi), the universe is also inseparable from the Absolute.<sup>48</sup> Brahman is the primary substance, whereas cit and acit which constitute the universe are its modes or prakāras. The universe of cit and acit is an integral part of Brahman which is entirely dependent on Brahman for their existence and also entirely subject to the control of Brahman.

From an ontological standpoint, the relation is explained on the analogy of the organic relation that exists between the physical body and soul. This is described as Śarīra-Śarīrī-Sambandha or Śarīrātma-bhāva. This means that the universe consisting of cit and acit is organically related to Brahman or Īśvara in the same way as our body is related to the soul. Īśvara is the śarīrin or the inner self, whereas cit and acit are His śarīra or the body.

The term śarīra as defined by Rāmānuja bears a special meaning and

it implies that which is regarded as śarīra should be inseparable from the soul or ātman. It means :Any substance which a sentient soul can completely control and support for its own purposes and which stands to the self in an entirely dependent relation is called its śarīra.<sup>49</sup> This definition is very significant because the concept of śarīra is applicable only to a substance in relation to a knowing subject or conscious self. On the basis of this definition Rāmānuja maintains that the universe of cit and acit stands in relation of a body to the soul. All sentient and non-sentient beings constitute the śarīra or body of Īśvara in the technical sense that the former is wholly dependent on the latter for their existence. They are completely controlled by Īśvara and they subserve the purpose of the Supreme Being. "Īśvara is called the ātman or śarīrin because He is the ground (ādhāra) for the universe, He is the controller (niyantā) and He uses it for His own purpose."<sup>50</sup> Just as Īśvara is the basis (āśraya) for the essential attributes such as satyatva, jñānatva and anantatva which are inseparably related to Him, in the same way, He is also the ādhāra for cit and acit, who is immanent in cit and acit and sustains them by His svarūpa. He is the inner self of all beings in the universe and also supports them by His will power or saṅkalpa.

"Īśvara is said to be the śeṣin of all things, because they exist solely for the fulfillment of His purposes. They are His śeṣa or those which exist to subserve the Lord."<sup>51</sup> In view of this it is described that the universe is śarīra of Īśvara.

The conception of Prakṛti as the mode of God or as the body of God has been formulated by Rāmānuja on the ground of both scriptural evidence and reason. the Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa of Bṛhādāraṇyaka Upaniṣad<sup>52</sup> states explicitly

that the nonsentient matter and sentient souls constitute the śarīra or body of Brahman. Similarly, the Subālā Upaniṣad declares that matter and soul in all their states constitute the body of the Supreme Self and concludes by saying that Brahman is the inner self of all beings.<sup>53</sup> The smṛti texts reiterate the same truth by describing the universe as tanu (body) of Brahman.<sup>54</sup> As there is body-soul relation between Prakṛti and God, nature is always alive with God who is its innermost ruler. In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, it has been stated that the whole world represents a dynamic power of God. Thus Prakṛti (acit) being the body of God or power of God, is moved into all its transformations by God Himself.

According to Rāmānuja, acit refers to that aspect of Brahman which is not the substratum of consciousness. It is the objective principle of all changes and modifications which are visible in this world.<sup>55</sup>

Prakṛti is, however, changeable matrix of the world. It passes through different stages thereby creating different transformations. In the philosophy of Rāmānuja, Prakṛti is a substance possessing sattva, rajas and tamas as qualities. It is not a equilibrated state of three types of subtle substances like sattva, rajas and tamas. Rāmānuja's conception of acit or unconscious matter is of three kinds : Prakṛti or Miśrasattva, Nitya vibhūti or Śuddhasattva and Kāla or Sattvasūnya. Of these Prakṛti is ordinary matter which makes Saṁsāra. It is an object of enjoyment (\*bhogya) and suffer change (vikāras). It forms the body of God and is more completely dependent on God than souls who have freedom of will. At the time of creation, the process of world evolution starts from Prakṛti. The process of evolution is the same as that in the Sāṁkhya. The important points of difference between the Sāṁkhya conception of Prakṛti and Rāmānuja's conception of it might be noted. Sattva,

rajas and tamas are constitutive elements of Prakṛti in Sāṃkhya, but here they are merely qualities of Prakṛti. In Sāṃkhya, these three elements can remain separate ; but here Nityavibhūti is made up of pure sattva.

In Sāṃkhya, Prakṛti is infinite, but here Prakṛti is limited from above by Nityavibhūti. In Sāṃkhya Prakṛti is independent, but here Prakṛti is absolutely dependent on God and is inseparable from Him. It is His mode or His body. It is also called Līlāvibhūti because creation is His sport. In the philosophy of Rāmānuja, at every stage of evolution Prakṛti is moved by God and it is through the will of God that Nature acquires new characteristics in the different evolutionary stages. It is due to its association with Prakṛti that a bound soul is deprived of its natural knowledge and bliss and is made to suffer miserably in the empirical life. It is also called māyā as it brings into existence enormous diversities and differences.

Prakṛti is essentially dynamic- a perpetual flux without any stagnation any where. For this reason, Prakṛti has been described as asat in the śrūti. The word asat implies (in regard to prakṛti) instability, dynamism and indeterminate nature only and not illusoriness. "Just as Śaṅkara has deduced the illusory nature of the world from the illusory nature of Māyā its material cause, in the same manner, Rāmānuja has derived the real character of the world from the reality of its material cause (i.e. Prakṛti).<sup>56</sup> The world, being a real modification of a real cause, is real. It is called non-eternal (anitya) because of its essentially mutable nature. The word 'nāsti' also refers to this essentially mutative nature of Prakṛti.

In the causal state, Prakṛti is subtle and undifferentiated ; but in the effect state, it evolves itself into numerous varieties of names and forms

constituting the empirical world. Prakṛti in the subtle state is called mūlā prakṛti and mūlā prakṛti is not of any practical use. It is because mūlā prakṛti always remains in the subtle and undifferentiated state, that it is called tamah or avyaktva. When prakṛti reaches the creative stage, it is called akṣara because of its constant changes into various gross forms. Although the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas are separately mentioned, yet they do not preserve their independent existence when they get mixed up in the form of a particular object. Their existence can be inferred only on the evidence of their effects. From the account of evolution given in the tattvatraya, it appears that this system believes in the existence of a condition of prakṛti in between its avyakta form and the form of mahat. This intermediate form is termed as prāṇagā prakṛti by Lokāchārya.<sup>57</sup> During bondage, the soul remains in a close contact with Prāṇagā Prakṛti in which the fictitious notion of self-hood is generated. The Prāṇagā Prakṛti then evolves into mahat with the three states of sattva, rajas and tamas. In the state of Prāṇagā prakṛti, Sattva predominates over rajas and tamas. From Prāṇagā Prakṛti, by a further process of change, mahat comes into being. Mahat then changes into ahaṁkāra with the three states of sattva, rajas and tamas.

Changes and diversities of Nature are so created as to adopt themselves to the spiritual progress of the jīvas. Perfection of the individual soul is the real purpose of the process of evolution. The will of God is the primary cause that produces change in nature and progress in individual soul. It is by knowing Him as the inner self of both cit and acit that everything else is known. Real cause, therefore, is the Divine Urge that creates a universe- the goal and foundation of which are Brahman itself. This is the real teleology, as it refers to God and not to an independent prakṛti as the final cause of all things and being of the world.

Time is also a form of acit. Since it is devoid of sattva, it is called sattva-sūnya. Rajas and tamas are present in kāla. It is an independent and real substance, enjoying the same status as prakṛti. It is not part of prakṛti, as is the case with the Sāṃkhyas. It exists alone with prakṛti. It has neither a beginning nor an end. This means that it is nitya like jīva and prakṛti. But it is not outside the ultimate Reality but is coexistent with Brahman. It is infinite in nature (vibhū). Like prakṛti it is jaḍa (non-sentient) and as a primary substance it also undergoes modifications in the form of moments, minutes, hours, days, months, years etc. It is feteral and three fold-past, present and future. God too arranges things of the world in accordance with the Law of Time.

We have already seen that prakṛti or the cosmic matter characterised by three guṇas is the basic source of all the things in the universe, both mental and physical. Besides prakṛti or the cosmic matter, Rāmānuja also admits the existence of transcendental matter which is known as nitya-vibhūti. It is also named as śuddha-sattva implying that it is a spiritual substance characterised only by unalloyed sattva, unlike the physical matter which has all the three guṇas sattva, rajas and tamas. It is also described as that which possesses the quality of sattva being at the same time self-lumious in character.<sup>58</sup> Vedānta Deśika also defines śuddha sattva as that which possesses sattva only as different from the substance characterised with the three guṇas.<sup>59</sup>

From the above definitions, it is clear that śuddha-sattva has two important features. First, it is ajaḍa or immaterial in the same way as Īśvara, jīva and Jñāna are. Ajaḍa implies that it is spiritual in character and like jñāna self-luminous (svayam prakāśa). The second important feature is

that 'suddha-sattva is acetana like dharmabhūta-jñāna. That is unlike self, it cannot know but manifests itself always for others (parāk). In this respect it is different from Īśvara and Jīva which are self-revealed (pratyak).

The main reason for accepting such an entity is that several śrūti as well as smṛti texts speak of the existence of an eternal abode of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa which is constituted of 'suddha-sattva. Thus Śrūti says : 'The enlightened seers always see the supreme abode of Viṣṇu.<sup>60</sup> Religious literature speaks of the existence of eternal abode for Īśvara. The abode of God cannot be made of the three guṇas which form the matrix of the phenomenal world. The stuff out of which the abode of God, His body, and the bodies of the liberated souls are made, should therefore, be different from prakṛti-the mother of this empirical world. Since 'suddha-sattva is devoid of rajas and tamas the ideal world, which is made of it, is not subject to destruction and imperfection.

it is to be noted that, the spiritual transcendental matter is called nitya-vibhūti or matter without any change, whereas the cosmic universe is described as līlāvibhūti or matter subject to constant change. However, both are the property of Īśvara as He is the ground (ādhāra) and the inner controller (niyantā) for them.

It has been stated in the śrūti that God through His will power, changed the subtle acit (matter) into gross acit, bearing different forms and names : He made cit (spirit) enter into acit as their indwelling spirit thereby manifesting Himself in the form of this meaningful world. So it is clear that cit, acit and Brahman are three different tattvas; but as both soul and matter are always associated with God, we get only one substance qualified

by two attributes.

Thus God pervades the universe in both its phases- chaos and cosmos. He also pervades all kinds of souls whether boulder or emancipated or eternal. The cause and the effect are identical- so is God in his causal and effectual states.

The identity propositions of the Upaniṣads do not simply identify between God, soul and matter or between soul and matter. On the other hand, all these propositions express emphatically the identity between Kāraṇa Brahman (Causal Brahman) and Kārya Brahman (effect Brahman). Arjuna said to Kṛṣṇa 'You enter into all things as their soul. You are therefore the All'.<sup>61</sup> 'You are the soul of all the entities, the intelligent and the non-intelligent'.<sup>62</sup>

@@@@@

'.

REFERENCES

1. S.U. - 1.9
2. M.U. 3-1-1; also S.U. 4-6
3. B.U. V-7-22
4. B.S. II - 1. 22
5. B.S. II - 3-42
6. RB II-3-45, quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari. Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. P. 213.
7. RB II-3-45 quoted Ibid. P. 214.
8. RB II-3-45, quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. P. 214.
9. Priti Singha, The Philosophy of the Advaita, P. 11.
10. Tattvatraya P. 6 quoted Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja . P. 100
11. Priti Singha : The Philosophy of the Advaita. P. 179.
12. Bhavagad Gītā, II. 29.
13. P.B. Vidyardhi : Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja P. 129
14. P.B. Vidyardhi : Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja P. 139.
15. C.D. Sharma : A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy P. 344.
16. Srībhāṣya P. 61.
17. Srībhāṣya II. 3. 23
18. Introduction to Pāñcarātra. P. 40.
19. P.B. Vidyardhi : Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja P. 154.
20. M.U. II, I. 7.
21. S.U. V. 8, 9
22. S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. P. 215
23. Varavara Muni's Commentary on Tattvatraya quoted Anima Sengupta : Philosophy of Rāmānuja. P. 104.
24. Srībhāṣya - 2, 3, 41

25. Anima Sengupta, A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P. 105.
26. Varavara Munis Commentary on Tattvatraya quoted J.N. Sinha : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 131.
27. Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 105
28. P.B. Vidyarthi : Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja. P. 158.
29. P.B. Vidyarthi : Knowledge, Self and "God in Rāmānuja . P. 166.
30. Vedārtha Saṅgraha : P. 140 quoted K.D. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 61.
31. Bhagavad Gītā : 3.2.4.
32. Srībhāṣya : 3.2.4.
33. Gītābhāṣya : 7.14 Ibid.
34. Rg. Veda - 10. 60. 1.
35. Vedārtha Saṅgraha - 131 Ibid.
36. Srībhāṣya 2. 1. 33. Ibid.
37. RBS. 11.1. 34-35.
38. Tattva - Pradipika, P. 57. quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari. Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. P. 251.
39. Istasiddhi P. 47.
40. Vedārtha Saṅgraha P. 17 quoted K.D. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 77.
41. Vedārtha Saṅgraha P. 18 quoted Ibid P. 78.
42. Srībhāṣya - 1-1-1.
43. Srībhāṣya - 1-1-1.
44. Vedārtha Saṅgraha - P. 76 quoted Anima Sengupata : A critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 118.
45. Anima Sengupta ; A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 118.
46. Ibid P. 119.
47. C.D. Sharma : A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy P. 360.

48. TMK. V-1 quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.
49. RB. II - 1- 9 P. 457 quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta P. 50.
50. S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta P. 51
51. S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta P. 274.
52. B.U. V-7.
53. Subālā Upaniṣad VII.
54. Viṣṇu Purāṇa l. 12-38; Also B.G. XV-7.
55. tattvatraya P. 34 quoted Anima Sengupta : Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 78.
56. Anima Sengupta : A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 84.
57. Srībhāṣya - 2 - 1 - 25.
58. Nyāya Siddhanjana P. 235 quoted S.M. Srinivasa Chari : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta P. 340.
59. Ibid
60. Yayurveda VI-5.
61. Bhagavadgītā - 11.40.
62. Gītābhāṣya - 11.40.

## CHAPTER - IV

### **Conclusion :**

From the foregoing account of Rāmānuja's conception of God, it follows that the ultimate reality referred to in the Upaniṣads is the personal God under the name of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa as described in the Upaniṣads, Purāṇas etc. He is the Puruṣottama or Vasudeva of the Gītā, the Nārāyaṇa of Pañcarātra and the Parambrahman in the Upaniṣads. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe which is only an infinitesimal part of Him.

While believing God to be the creator of the world, Rāmānuja also maintains that God pervades the universe just as an individual soul pervades its body. The universe being adjectively related to God, His non-dual nature remains unaffected. Not only the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, but the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas and the Pañcarātra also have provided much information about the doctrine of the immanence of God in man and nature. The theory of vyūhas is a strong evidence of the self-communicating nature of God.

All the names given to the Deity in Srīvaiṣṇavism disclose the truth implicit in the concept of Divine immanence. All names peculiar to the God of Srī Vaiṣṇavism, Viṣṇu, Vasudeva, Sivīṣṭa, Nārāyaṇa, Keśava, Puruṣa imply His immanental character, References from the Upaniṣads can be cited to strengthen the fact that God pervades in the universe. The Taittirīya Upaniṣad declares, for instance, that God created the universe and entered it afterwards<sup>1</sup>. Thus R.C. Zaehner, aptly says that the "General teaching" of the Upaniṣads" is one of an immanent God who pervades and controls the whole universe, is the whole universe, and is also the substance of the individual human soul."<sup>2</sup> That

Rāmānuja lays supreme emphasis on the immanence of God is also evident from his conception of Antaryāmīn Brahman taking His seat in the inner life of man and nature. "Rāmānuja strongly refuses to believe that the seers of the Upaniṣads could have ever intended their teachings about God, man and the world, to be interpreted in the manner of Śaṅkara and his followers."<sup>3</sup> It is because of His will immanent in the universe that the worlds do not fall nor do they crumble."<sup>4</sup>

According to Rāmānuja, God, the inner controller of man and nature is real; but no less real are men and nature. On this point Rāmānuja differs fundamentally from Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara admits two different standpoints of viewing reality. From one point of view, Reality is Higher Brahman (Para) whereas from the other, it is Lower Brahman (apara). The Para Brahman which is the ultimate reality is pure being devoid of all differentiation, the Absolute of Metaphysics. It is transcendent, supra-relational and beyond the grasp of discursive intellect. That is why it is described as Nirviśeṣa or Nirguṇa. When the para Brahman becomes conditioned by Māyā and obscured, as it were, it is called Saguṇa Brahman or the lower Brahman (apara Brahman). The apara Brahman is of lesser reality than the para Brahman. It is the Lower and not the Higher Brahman, which according to Śaṅkara, rules over and guides the animate and inanimate nature. There is neither subjectivity nor objectivity in the Higher Brahman, but the Lower one has both.

Rāmānuja, however, admits of no such distinction between these two Brahman. According to him, the Upaniṣads speak of only one Brahman which is Śaviśeṣa or Saguṇa. He believes in one type of Brahman and unlike Śaṅkara, regards Brahman and Īśvara as synonymous. The supreme of Rāmānuja i.e Brahman or Īśvara is a person but his personality is not due any illusion

(māyā). Immanence, he says, should not be confused with transformation. God's immanence in man and nature according to him, cannot mean that He is transformed into man and nature.<sup>5</sup> What is really meant is that He pervades the creation and the created. Radhakrishnan says, "The religious feeling and its object are given in one and the same experience".

The doctrine of immanence of God in man and nature as explained by Rāmānuja has been accepted by other exponents of Vaiṣṇavism. Commenting on the Brahma Sūtra 1.2.18, Mādhava says that Viṣṇu alone is the indweller.<sup>6</sup> Nimbāraka also agrees by holding that Kṛṣṇa upholds all from within.<sup>7</sup> According to Śuddhadvaita school Kṛṣṇa as indweller (antaryāmīn) pervades the world and regulates it.<sup>8</sup> The Gauḍīya school of Vaiṣṇavism holds that Kṛṣṇa as Paramātman is the immanent regulator and he is called Mahāviṣṇu. Thus the apostles of Vaiṣṇava faith have believed in the Deity's immanence in man and nature.

Rāmānuja equally establishes the transcendence of God on the strength of the scriptural texts. The Rg Veda says- "He while being immanent in the universe also transcends it."<sup>9</sup> For God is infinite and so much more than the universe.<sup>10</sup> He is transcendent though being immanent and immanent though being transcendent at the same time.<sup>11</sup> "God is, to take up the famous quote from Augustine once again, intimior intimo meo, only because he is at the same time superior summo meo-higher than the highest principle within me."<sup>12</sup>

Nor does the finite infinite puzzle raise any difficulty. The Upaniṣads declare the identity of the world with God in the sense of dependence on him and asserts that the finite is rooted in the Infinite.<sup>13</sup>

"In any system that denies the reality of the world and the self there can be no consistent theory of divine immanence nor of transcendence for there is in effect, nothing which the Absolute can transcend; nor is there anything in which he can be immanent.<sup>14</sup>

The motive which prompts God to create a world is nothing else than sport (līlā).<sup>15</sup> The term 'līlā' signifies aesthetic delight which God derives by creating the world. God is a perfect being and He has in itself nothing to seek. It fulfils Itself in giving Itself to others. Rāmānuja thinks that the world can have its origin nowhere else than in spontaneous overflow of the divine joy and recreation.

Regarding the nature of ultimate reality both Saṅkara and Rāmānuja differ greatly from each other. The former views it as unqualified, the latter as qualified. When Rāmānuja says that reality is qualified, he means that it has certain attributes. In determining the nature of ultimate reality, he takes into account the teachings contained in all the three prasthānas the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta Sūtra and Gītā and arrives at the conclusion that Brahman is Śaviśeṣa.

The first aphorism of the Vedānta Sūtra says- 'Athāto Brahma Jijñāsā',<sup>16</sup> So then there is the enquiry into Brahman. The word Brahman here means the Absolute Being, from which everything proceeds, as is made clear in the next sūtra. According to the Viśiṣṭadvaitin this aphorism is in direct conflict with the theory of Nirguṇa Brahman. The desire to know is unintelligible in respect of Brahman which is pure consciousness, devoid of all characteristics. According to Saṅkara, Brahman is not an object of knowledge (jñāna visaya). If Brahman is Nirviśeṣa and the same is also not the object of knowledge, jijñāsā

becomes untenable.

The second aphorism also creates dispute which points out that Brahman is that from which the origin etc. of the universe proceeds- 'Janmādasya Yatah'.<sup>17</sup> According to Rāmānuja it intends to define the nature of Brahman as the cause of the universe. The definition in terms of the essential characteristics of the object is impossible in respect of a Nirguṇa Brahman. The function of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe are applicable only to a Saviseṣa Brahman or personal God.

The third aphorism states that scripture is the source of the knowledge of Brahman- 'Sāstra Yonitvāt'.<sup>18</sup> If Brahman were admitted to be the object of knowledge it would become dr̥śya. The fourth sūtra also refers to the Samanvays (harmony). It means relations, This sūtra, according to Rāmānuja is not consistent with the Nirguṇa Brahman which is devoid of difference.

The two aphorisms in the ubhayalingadhikāraṇa<sup>19</sup> which are claimed by the Advaita as teaching explicitly the undifferentiated character of Brahman bring out, according to the interpretation offered by Rāmānuja, the two-fold characteristics of Brahman, viz., that it is free from all imperfections and also the abode of numerous auspicious qualities as declared by the Upaniṣads.<sup>20</sup>

The Bhagavad Gītā also does not favour the doctrine of Nirviṣeṣa Brahman. The substance of the Gītā, as is beautifully summed up by Yamunā, is that Para Brahman is Nārāyaṇa who is to be attained by means of meditation (bhakti) developed by the observance of karma and jñāna yoga.<sup>21</sup> The teachings of the Gītā right from the beginning to the end refer to a personal God

(Puruṣottama), as distinct from jīva (kṣetrajñā) and matter (kṣetra). According to Rāmānuja, the few verses in the Gītā which are offered in support of the theory of Nirguṇa Brahman bear a different meaning.

The Vedānta Sūtra and the Gītā are only derivative sources for Vedānta system, and therefore, they must be interpreted in harmony with the Upaniṣads which is the primary source. Rāmānuja's philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita rose against the concept of Nirguṇa Brahman of Śāṅkara. There are Upaniṣadic statements which describe Brahman as devoid of qualities.<sup>22</sup> There are also statements which speak of Brahman as qualified by numerous attributes<sup>23</sup>. These two kinds of statements are known as Nirguṇa Śrūtis and Saguṇa Śrūtis and there is an apparent conflict between the two. The Advaitin considers that the Nirguṇa Śrūtis are of greater validity than the Saguṇa śrūtis. Accordingly ultimate reality is an undifferentiated Being (Nirguṇa Brahman).

Śāṅkara believes that Saguṇa Śrūtis are applicable only to a lower Brahman or Īśvara. The ultimate Reality, is, according to Śāṅkara, 'One without a second' and it is Nirviśeṣa which is beyond the comprehension of the finite intellect. Every determination is negation. The moment Brahman thinks 'I will be many' negation enters into it and Brahman becomes finite infinite. Limitation implies imperfection and contradiction and the Absolute of the Upaniṣads is above all limitations and subject object distinctions. Saguṇa Brahman stands for subject object duality and is therefore less than the Absolute. It is a product of illusion and is not the highest Reality. The ultimate Reality which is unconditioned and without attributes and qualification is called God when viewed in relation to the empirical world and empirical souls. So far as we are in the empirical realm, the highest category is this determinate Īśvara who is the creator and controller of this world of

nama-rūpa.<sup>24</sup> Beyond it is the Nirguṇa Brahman who is not subject to change or mutation, creation or destruction. This is how Śaṅkara reconciles the Saguṇa texts with the Nirguṇa texts of the Upaniṣads.

Rāmānuja gives equal importance and value to both Sanguṇa and Nirguṇa Śrūtis. According to him, Sanguṇa texts ascribe the positive attributes to Brahman whereas Nirguṇa texts seem to negate the physical qualities of Brahman, there is no contradiction between these two kinds of texts. The ultimate Reality is Nirguṇa in the sense that it has no attributes in common with Prakṛti. It is again Saguṇa, because all the auspicious qualities such as bliss, beauty, compassion, omniscience belong to it. Mādhava, Nimbāraka, Vallabha and Rūpa Goswami agree with Rāmānuja in admitting the absence in God all the defects that are natural to the world of matter and individual souls and the presence in Him of all auspicious qualities.

Rāmānuja agrees with Śaṅkara when he holds that Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the world. According to him, the Supreme Reality is one and it is both Saguṇa and Nirguṇa. All auspicious qualities constitute the essence of God. God cannot be thought apart from his essential qualities viz., satyatva, jñānatva, anantatva. When it is said that Nirguṇa Brahman is beyond the comprehension of intellect, it means that the glory of Brahman cannot be comprehended by finite minds. The texts, which deny plurality simply deny the independent existence of the objects of the world. Thus Rāmānuja seeks to bring about a harmonious reconciliation between Saguṇa texts and Nirguṇa texts. Like the Nyāya system he admits the existence of a qualified God as the category of both philosophy and Religion. Rāmānuja, however, does not agree with the Nyāya in admitting God merely as the efficient cause.

Śaṅkara holds that Brahman is unqualified consciousness, because it has been characterised as 'consciousness' alone by the scriptures.<sup>25</sup> But Rāmānuja disagrees by holding that consciousness is an attribute of Brahman and that a substance possessing an attribute can not but be qualified.<sup>26</sup> The soul cannot be identified with consciousness for the simple reason that it is more than consciousness. Moreover, there is definite evidence in the scriptures to show that Brahman is unqualified. The reality is all knowing and all pervading.<sup>27</sup> Consciousness is thus one of the attributes of God.

Śaṅkara defines Brahman as self luminous (svayam prakāśa). According to the Advaitins the self luminous character of Brahman again implies that it is unqualified. To this Rāmānuja replies that even the word 'self luminous' (jñāptimatra) signifies something particular, because the root and affix of which the word consists together have a particular significance.<sup>28</sup> It is further argued by the Advaitins that Brahman is ever luminous by itself in its entirety. Rāmānuja contends that if Brahman be purely self-luminous, the super-imposition of the not-self on it is impossible.<sup>29</sup> If one specific character viz. jñāpti, however be admitted to Brahman on the authority of the sacred texts, other specific qualities mentioned in the scriptures such as bliss, infinity and truth should also be attributed to it.

For Śaṅkara, Brahman is Nirguṇa, (without qualities) nirākāra (without form), nirviśeṣa (without particularity), nirūpadhika (without limitation). Śaṅkara develops this idea of negative description of Brahman on the strength of the Upaniṣadic text. 'The eye goes not thither nor speech or mind'.<sup>30</sup> According to Dr. Radhakrishnan such negative description is dangerous as they may lead to abstract Absolute. He says - "There is danger in these negative description. By denying all attributes and relations we expose

ourselves to the charge of reducing the ultimate being to bare existence which is absolute vacuity".<sup>31</sup> The notion of Nirguna Brahman that gives a concept of a bare existence and hence and abstract reality.

According to Śāṅkara, the world is the result of the projective activity of Māyā treated as an illusory expression of God's power. The world which has its existence only in ignorance is a vivārta of God i.e. it exists only so long as the transcendental knowledge of God, the ontological reality does not arise. Śāṅkara contradicts many texts of the Upaniṣads which declare that Brahman is creator. In Advaita Vedānta creative activity is attributed to Māyā and not to Brahman. Brahman cannot be the real cause.

Creation, for Rāmānuja, is an eternal act. Brahman is the cause of creation when the jīvas and nature are in their subtle unmanifested state and He is again the effect when by their combination they assume a gross manifest state. Even in the state of pralaya, God holds jīvas and nature as His body and is different from them.<sup>32</sup> Brahman with man and nature as his Prakāras is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. "Rāmānuja says that Brahman is both the efficient and the material cause of creation in the sense that matter which is the body of the soul always changes in accordance with its moral deserts at the command of God, who because He is the necessary source and centre of such changes, must be taken to be the efficient cause."<sup>33</sup>

The Advaitic conception of Brahman as pure consciousness without causality is not accepted by Rāmānuja. It is through the will of God that Acit is differentiated into names and forms. A material cause undergoes changes of states. Matter which stands in inseparable relation to Brahman changes and

thus there is change in His states and powers. Thus through changes in matter, Brahman becomes the material cause for matter always exists as His Prakāra and has got no independent existence. God who contains the grounds of changes within Himself remains unimpaired though changes occur in Acit which is inseparably related to God.

Śāṅkara denies the world of multiplicity and plurality for the fear that it might break the integrity of Brahman. In the Vedāntāsūtra Śāṅkara remarks - The status of the world is the same as that of a dream and the whole world of names and forms which conceal the Absolute disappears like a dream as soon as knowledge arises.<sup>34</sup> In his Gīta Bhāṣya he says that the illusion of the world is due to an erroneous notion and it does not exist at all.

In Rāmānuja's philosophy, on the other hand, the world of plurality is not denied. It has been seen that the many are the manifestations of His will. Rāmānuja, like, Hegel lays due emphasis on difference and he declares Brahman not as beyond all difference but as existing among them. Brahman resolves to manifest Himself through His attributes into many. Unity and plurality are both real. The world, according to Rāmānuja, is not an illusion, but an integral part of the Absolute. The pluralistic universe is real in precisely the same sense as God is real. Radhakrishnan Says - "Creation is a necessary part of God's being. God needs it for the fullness of his beings."<sup>35</sup> According to Rāmānuja, the evolution of the world from Prakṛti takes place through the instrumentality and will power of God. That the world is not unreal is proved by this fact. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, "This world is not an illusion, it is not nothingness for it is willed by God and therefore is real."<sup>36</sup> Though the world is created by God, Rāmānuja says, it is not a chance creation; nor it is a mere superfluous manifestation of Divine

Energy. It is meaningful because this world is the place where bound souls can attain liberation which is their due. Perfection of individual souls as the śeṣa of God is the real purpose of the process of evolution.

Rāmānuja's theory of the world thus, seems to be more appealing than that of Śaṅkara. For to Rāmānuja, the world is an aspect (viśeṣaṇa) of Brahman or God. He criticises Śaṅkara's concept of māyā, which he thinks, transforms the world into an unreality. It is without that Rāmānuja regards God to be transcendently real and Śaṅkara regards Brahman to be transcendently real.

Ultimate Reality thus is neither Brahman exclusively nor it is God exclusively. There cannot be a fundamental contradiction between the philosophical idea of a God who is an all embracing spirit and the devotional idea of a personal God who arouses in us the specifically religious emotion. The former is the concept of Brahman advocated by Śaṅkara and the latter is the concept of God advocated by Rāmānuja.

Really We cannot think of Brahman, we can think only of God. Brahman is an object of intuition while God is an object of thought. Thought gives us other truths also. But God is the highest truth of thought. It may be said that Śaṅkara lays greater emphasis on the impersonal aspect of ultimate reality while Rāmānuja lays emphasis on the personal aspect of the same. But thereby they are not deviating from the original Vedāntic position of taking into account of both the aspects of ultimate reality viz., Brahman and God. While Śaṅkara emphasises on the intuitive aspect of ultimate Reality, Rāmānuja emphasises its thought aspect. It is due to their method of approach that they hold two different positions.

Brahman is the transcendental aspect of ultimate reality while God is its cosmic aspect. God takes part in the cosmic activity. If we conceive of Nirguṇa Brahman alone, then the cosmic evolution will be impossible because transcendental reality cannot take part in the cosmic activity. The cosmic import of ultimate reality is brought about by God. So when we take ultimate reality in the world context we have a God.

Rāmānuja is trying to give ultimate reality a realistic and concrete colour. We find in Rāmānuja's Absolute a unity which tolerates multiplicity. Moreover, his emphasis on the religious aspect of the ultimate reality has enabled the philosopher to popularise Vedānta among common people. Śaṅkara's philosophy is so high metaphysically that it is beyond the grasp of common people. His concept of Nirguṇa Brahman lacks religious value and for this reason it has no appeal to the common people. His Nirguṇa Brahman is simply "A blank, suggesting to us the famous mare of Orlando, which had every perfection except the one small defect of being dead."<sup>37</sup> Though Śaṅkara's Brahman has every perfection it is dead, and, therefore, the common people find no interest in it. The Absolute in abstract isolation cannot arouse religious sentiment in us. The Nirguṇa Brahman, according to Rāmānuja, "stares at us with frozen eyes regardless of our selfless devotion and silent suffering is not the God of religious insight."<sup>38</sup> The Indeterminate Brahman devoid of attributes, cannot meet the persistent demand of man's religious consciousness. The supreme object of man's religious values must be a concrete personality.

According to Śaṅkara, Īśvara is a phenomenal category which becomes as false as the jīva when considered from the transcendental point of view. Śaṅkara deprived both self and God of personality for he believed in only one

Reality which is impersonal in character. In his overzealous attempt to establish one Impersonal Brahman as the ultimate Reality, he has falsified even the creator who is so dear to the heart of the loving soul. In his anxiety therefore, to exalt Brahman over everything else, Śaṅkara relegates even the personal God to Avidyā or Nescience. What is more disappointing to the religious interest, is that the finite self has no independent status but is only a limitation of the Supreme Being.<sup>39</sup> Along with the rejection of the world of multiplicity, there is no scope for genuine worship, devotion and surrender and consequently religion becomes a fiction.

Rāmānuja has deep sympathy with the religious consciousness of common people. It gives them a God whom they can adore and worship and in lieu of that he will be kind and benevolent to them. Theistic Vedānta of Rāmānuja makes scope for the world and the individuality both. A personal God which requires a personal relationship and devotion of God requires the individuality of devotee. It is said God made man in his own image which implies that the concept of personality is the very essence of religion. William Temple says - "the heart of religion is an opinion about God... it is a personal relationship with God".<sup>40</sup>

To conceive Brahman as a person is to understand Him along with the world and finite selves. For Rāmānuja, the fact that the Brahman is person implies the reality of both the material and spiritual principles. For this reason, he defines Brahman as a Supreme Person, 'Puruṣottama' who is inherently free from all imperfections and possesses innumerable attributes of unsurpassable excellence. Personality is intelligible only in terms of self-consciousness. God in Viśiṣṭādvaita is a self-conscious principle. Thus in Rāmānuja's philosophy theism runs parallel to the monistic tendency. Brahman

is the Supreme Reality as well as an object of religious consciousness. Like the Infinity of Hegel, the personality of God is all inclusive. "His Divine Personality, consequently, is not the principle of abstract identity. The Infinite that does not leave any room for the finite Hegel said, is a false Infinite ....<sup>41</sup> Rāmānuja's Absolute is an organic unity which includes the world of finite selves as well as that of the finite things. They are accepted as real and given the status of his glories or adjectives. His approach is synthetic and not analytic. "His three cardinal principles of co-ordination samānādhikāraṇya, aprthaksiddhi and śarīra-śarīri-bhāva speak high of Rāmānuja's justification both with philosophical genius and religious aspiration. The principle of aprthaksiddhi renders God to be a person in the fullest and the truest sense of the term and synthesis is its distinct feature.<sup>42</sup>

Rāmānuja's God is Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, as Rāmānuja holds is the Deity who is invoked and highly praised in the Ṛg Veda. "Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa and Brahman spoken of in the Vedic literature and Bhagavān and Vasudeva of the epics, the Purāṇas and the Āgamas are, for him, one and the same Supreme Being".<sup>43</sup> The word Viṣṇu and some of its synonyms suggest God's immanence in man and nature. In religio philosophy of Rāmānuja, Viṣṇu denotes the Supreme Reality.

The religion of Vaiṣṇavism or Bhāgavata Dharma accepts Viṣṇu as the Highest Reality. Worship of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa and devotion to him constitute the principal means of liberation. Lord Viṣṇu is the lover and protector of human souls. He is the first and final cause of this universe. As He possesses innumerable auspicious qualities he is Saguṇa; as he is devoid of all natural and impure qualities, he is also called Nirguṇa. "A sympathetic student of Indian culture, Monier Williams goes so far as to proclaim that Vaiṣṇavism is

the truest religion in India and even person with a very little knowledge of Hinduism can understand and appreciate the contribution that stands to the credit of Rāmānuja in systematising and expanding the typically Vaiṣṇava idea of God."<sup>44</sup> For Rāmānuja God is self-conscious person which means that he is not the principle of pure and unqualified identity. Realisation of God is possible only through devotion and self-surrendering love.

According to Śaṅkara, jñānayoga is the only means to realisation of the highest truth. He maintains that knowledge helps us in realising Brahman. The release from saṃsāra, means according to Śaṅkara the absolute merging of individual soul in Brahman. Śaṅkara reiterates that the Absolute can be realised through knowledge and knowledge alone, he rejects karma and upāsāna as means of realisation. Knowledge only removes ignorance and then reality shines forth by itself.<sup>45</sup> Śaṅkara agrees with the view and repeatedly states that knowledge of Brahman is the ultimate end of every human being. Devotion, according to Śaṅkara, cannot lead us to the supreme goal. Devotion is directed to a Lower Brahman and hence it cannot bring the eternal bliss which results solely from a feeling of identity with the supreme and unqualified Brahman.

Rāmānuja, on the other hand, holds that devotion in co-operation with knowledge and action constitute the means to reach the ultimate goal of life. "Bhakti or Devotion consists of knowledge of the object of adoration and intense affection and respect for the same. Complete self-surrender, which is the essence of devotion, becomes possible only when the individual realises his own nature of God and also the nature of his own relation to God".<sup>46</sup> The spirit of self-surrender is the most essential factor to annihilate the anxieties and concentrate one's mind on devotion. It is the Bhakti or active love for the Divine coupled with self-surrender with the help of which grace

of God is attained. The Bhagavat a and Bhagavad Gītā accept self-surrender as the best way to attain the Supreme. The devotees throw themselves at the mercy of God by self-surrender. Self-surrender stands for absolute nothing or total surrender of the self. The devotee no longer feels the existence of his ego, he has no personal or independence existence; he is the mere instrument of God.

Saguna Brahman as God is immanent in the world, serves the best purpose for a devotee who aspires for the realisation of God. Parthasarathy remarks- "Faith and emotional fervour are the bedrock of popular religion. No religion that banish personal God from its system has succeeded anywhere".<sup>47</sup> Devotion enables man to have a direct communion with personal God. Devotion is possible with the God who is Saguna, Saviśeṣa and Sākāra. "Devotion is not possible without a Saguna Brahman".<sup>48</sup>

According to Śāṅkara, the realisation of a personal God is not the ultimate goal of spiritual progress. For him, devotion to the personal God is the penultimate stage of the final attainment of the Nirguna Brahman. The realisation of Nirguna Brahman is spontaneous and intuitive.

For Rāmānuja, on the other hand, devotion is the best means to attain communion with God. Bhakti, for Rāmānuja means the intensity of love for the Lord. It is the practice of the presence of God. The devotee suggests to himself, by steady mediation that God is present. Bhakti is also used to indicate the mystic communion of the devotee with the Deity. Bhakti is love but love, according to Rāmānuja the surest knowledge. In the Upaniṣads Brahman is said to be of the nature of bliss. On the strength of Upaniṣads Rāmānuja that knowledge of Brahman cannot be anything except the knowledge of love and devotion.<sup>49</sup> Devotion is an active device. For the realisation of Saguna

Brahman, devotee has to undergo certain modes of discipline.

Rāmānuja has not provided the worshipper with God but he had also shown that this Supreme Being is the possessor of infinite auspicious qualities. He is good, wise, and is very lovingly disposed towards all creatures of the world. As for man, God is supremely lovable, Bhakti consists in constantly remembering him. The constant remembrance is the same as mediation. Bhakti, again is of the nature of immediate apprehension. The eternal union with such a loving God is therefore the highest goal of one's religious life.

Rāmānuja also takes into account the aesthetic conception of God in his philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. God, is here supposed to possess superpersonality coupled with a supernatural form. He "... conceives God as Eternally Beautiful, though He is beyond Prakṛti (matter) and its attributes, in order to attract the self, he appears in the cosmos in a form of infinite beauty.<sup>50</sup> Rāmānuja emphasises the necessity of a personal relation with God, whom we can love and adore. God has been worshiped not merely as a Supreme Person, but as the one who incarnates himself for the well being of man and who share's people's joy and sorrow. God helps the devotees at the time of their troubles and difficulties. He believed in the concept of Avatāra by following the Gītā and the Purāṇas. In this way Rāmānuja seeks to establish a personal relationship with God.

Though Rāmānuja favours a complete resignation of human will to the will of God, he also made provision for freedom of will and has thus based his ethical teachings on a solid foundation. In his opinion the individual soul is

both free and dependent on the Divine will.

According to Śaṅkara the variety and multiplicity of the world originate from the principle of illusion and so are unreal. As a result, realisation of pity and love in the phenomenal world becomes absolutely impossible. Therefore, the unqualified monism of Śaṅkara leads to the utter impracticability of human love and kindness. This is the chief criticism put forward by Rāmānuja against the Advaita Philosophy of Śaṅkara.

When we discuss the philosophy of Śaṅkara we find an unhappy separation of metaphysics from religion. The highest of Metaphysics is not the highest of religion and religion itself has been included in the realm of falsity and appearance. In the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, religious worship and devotion to God have found a position inferior to the meditation of Nirguṇa Brahman. Frankly speaking, Śaṅkara has deprived God of his Godliness by reducing Him to a mere phenomenal category. God in the snare of Māyā is no God at all. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, has admitted Saguṇa Brahman as the highest category of religion and philosophy . and as such in his philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita, the gulf between philosophy and the religion has been completely bridged over. ✓

REFERENCES

1. Taittirīya Upaniṣad : 2.6.
2. R.C. Zaehner : *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*, P. 135.
3. P.B. Vidyārthi : *Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja* P. 112.
4. Vedārtha Saṁgraha with Tatparyadīpikā : P. 228., Quoted Ibid.
5. Vedārtha Saṁgraha : 116 quoted K.D. Bharadwaj, *The Philosophy of Rāmānuja* P. 114.
6. Brahma Sūtra Mādhava Bhāṣya : 1.2.18.
7. Brahman Sūtra Nimbārka Bhāṣya : 1.12.16.
8. K.D. Bharadwaj : *The Philosophy of Rāmānuja* P. 114.
9. Rg. Veda : 10.60.1.
10. Rg. Veda : 10.60.3.
11. Visya Vākya Dīpikā : P.45 quoted P.B. Vidyārthi *Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja*, P.113.
12. *The depths of the Soul* : P.268 quoted Ibid, P.114.
13. Chāndogya Upaniṣad : 6.8.7.
14. P.B. Vidyārthi : *Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja* P. 114.
15. Srībhāṣya : 2.1.33.
16. B.S. : 1.1.1.
17. B.S. : 1.1.2.
18. B.S. 1.1.3.
19. B.S. : 3.2.11.
20. B.S. : 3.2.14.
21. Opening Verse of Gītārtha : Saṁgraha.
22. Śvetāsvatara upaniṣad : 6.19, Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, 1.1.6., Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, 5.8.7.
23. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad : 2.2.7., Taittirīya , 1.1.2., Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 8.1.5., Śvet, 6.8.

24. Sankara's Commentary on the Brahmasūtra : 3.2.38.
25. Br̥hadāranyaka Upaniṣad : 4.5.13.
26. Vedārtha Samgraha : 41, quoted K.D. Bharadwaj, The Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P. 78.
27. Vedārtha Samgraha : P.41, quoted K.D. Bharadwaj, The Philosophy of Rāmānuja P. 78.
28. Vedārtha Samgraha : P.47, quoted Ibid.
29. Vedārtha Samgraha : P.48, quoted Ibid P.78.
30. Br̥hadāranyaka upaniṣad : 3.8.8.
31. S. Radhakrishnan : Idealist View of Life, P.P. 101-102.
32. Rāmānuja Bhāṣya XIII - 3, P.P. 24-25.
33. P.B. Vidyarthi : Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja, P. 98.
34. Brahma Sūtra Śaṅkara Bhāṣya : 3.2.21.
35. S.Radhakrishnan : Eastern Religion and Western Thought, P.92.
36. S. Radhakrishnan : "Fragments of a Confession", P.A. Schilpp.ed., The Philosophy of etc. P.41.
37. S. Radhakrishnan : Indian Philosophy Vol III P.683.
38. S. Radhakrishnan : Indian Philosophy Vol II, P. 683.
39. Brahma Sūtra Śaṅkarābhāṣya : 1.2.20.
40. William Temple : Nature, Man and God, P.54.
41. P.B. Vidyarthi : Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja, P.P. 178-179.
42. Priti Singha : The Philosophy of the Advaita P.P. 174-175.
43. K.D. Bharadwaj : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P. 96.
44. P.B. Vidyarthi : Knowledge, Self and God, P. 173.
45. Anima Sengupta : Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P. 130.
46. Anima Sengupta : Philosophy of Rāmānuja, P.130.
47. R. Parthasarthy : Rāmānujāchārya, P. 56.
48. T.N. Sharma : Bhaktivāda, P. 35.
49. P.B. Vidyarthi : Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja, P. 256.
50. R. Parthasarathy : Rāmānujāchārya, P. 69.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**(A)**

- Durgacharan Sāṁkhya Vedānta Tirthā : Braṁhasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya.*  
*Mādhavachārya : Viṣṇutattvavinirnaya, Rāṁkrishnan Math.*  
*Lokāchārya : Tattvatraya, Chowkhāmba Sanskrit Series, Benaras - I, 1938.*  
*Rāmānuja's Commentary on the Gītā : Ānanda Āshram Mudranālaya, Poona.*  
*Rg. Veda : Macdonell.*  
*Sadānanda : Vedānta Sāra, Oriental Book Agency, Poona.*  
*Srībhāṣya : Volume I and II, Ānanda Āshrama Mudranālaya, Poona.*  
*Srīnivāsa Das : Yatindramatadīpikā, Ananda Ashrama Mundranalaya, Poona.*  
*Vedārtha Samgraha : Published by Dr. J.Prasad, Benaras.*  
*Venkatanāth : tattva, Mukta, Kalāpa, Oriental Research Institute, Mysore.*  
*Viṣṇu Purāṇa : Basumati Sahitya Mandir, Calcutta.*

**(B)**

- Barth, A : The Religions of India, The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office,  
Varanasi - 1, 1963.*  
*Bharadwaj, Krishna Datta : The Philosophy of Rāmānuja, Sir Shankarlall  
Charitable Trust Society, New delhi, 1958.*  
*Bishop, H.Donal : Indian Thought, an Introduction, Willy Eastern Private Ltd.*  
*Buitenen, J.A.B. : Rāmānuja on the Bhagavad Gītā, Sundar lal Jain, Motilal  
Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi-7, 1968.*  
*Chari, S.M. Srīnivāsa : Fundamentals of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Narendra Prakash  
Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi- 110007, 1988.*  
*Chari, S.M. Srīnivāsa : Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita, Narendra Prakash Jain for  
Motilal banarsidass, Delhi- 110007, 1968.*  
*Chatterjee, S.C. and Datta, D.M. : An Introduction to Indian Philosophy,  
Calcutta University Press, Hazra Road, Ballygunge, Calcutta, 1968*

- Coward, Harold G. : *Studies in Indian Thought*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Bunglow Road, Jawaharnagar, Delhi-110007, 1983,
- Dasgupta, S.N. : *A History of Indian Philosophy, Volume I*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-110007, 1988.
- Dasgupta, S.N. : *A History of Indian Philosophy, Volume II*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-110007, 1988.
- Dasgupta, S.N.: *A History of Indian Philosophy, Volume III*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-110007, 1988.
- Deussen, Paul : *the Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, Banarsidass & Company, New Delhi- 110002, 1985.
- Eliot, John C. : *A Philosophy of Devotion*, Sundarlal Jain for Motilal Banarsidass, Bunglow Road, Jawaharnagar, Delhi- 7, 1974.
- Hirriyanna, M. : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin Limited, London, 1950.
- Hume, R.E. : *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*, Oxford University press, London, 1971.
- Iyer, M.K.V. : *Advaita Vedānta*, Asia Publishing House, New York, 1964.
- Jha, Ram Chandra : *Vedāntic and Buddhist Reality* Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1973.
- Mahadevan, T.M.P.: *The Philosophy of Advaita*, Ganesh & Company (Madras) Private Ltd., 1969.
- Mahadevan, T.M.P. : *Superimposition of Advaita Vedānta*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1985.
- Masih, Y : *Introduction to Religious Philosophy*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1976.
- Masih, Y : *A Comparative Study of Religions*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bunglow Road, Jawaharnagar, Delhi - 110007, 1990.

- Potter, H. Karl : *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophy, Volume III*, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi-110007, 1981.
- Puligandla, R : *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, New York, 1975.
- Redhakrishnan, S. : *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, Oxford University Press, Y.M.C.A. Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi-110007, 1988.
- Radhakrishnan, S. : *Philosophy of Upaniṣads*, George Allen and Unwin & Mecomillan and Company, New York, 1976.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *An Idealist View of Life*, Blackie & Sons, Bombay, 1979.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *The Hindu View of Life*, Blackie & Sons, Bombay, 1979.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *The Brahmasūtras*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1960.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *the Bhagavad Gītā*, Blackie & Sons, Bombay.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *The Indian Philosophy, Volume I*, Oxford University Press, YMCA, Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi-1, 1989.
- Radhakrishnan, S : *the Indian Philosophy, Volume II*, Oxford University Press, YMCA, Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi-110001, 1989.
- Radhakrishnan, S. : *The Principal Upaniṣads*, Oxford University Press, YMCA Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi-110001, 1989.
- Raja, C. Kunhan : *Some Fundamental Problems in Indian Philosophy*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, Varanasi, Patna, Madras.
- Raju, P.T. : *Indian Idealism and Modern Challenges*, Punjab University Publication Bureau, Chandigarh.
- Raju, P.T. : *The Philosophical Traditions of India*, George Allen and Unwin Limited, Ruskin House, Museum Street, London.
- Rāmānuja : *Srībhāṣya*, Translated by G. Thibaut, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1976.
- Reyna, Ruth : *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, Tata Mc Graw Hill Publishing Co. Ltd, Bombay/New Delhi.

- Schilpp, P.A. : *The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan*, Tudor Publishing Company, New York, 1952.
- Sengupta, Anima : *A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Rāmānuja*, Oriental and Foreign Book-Sellers and Publishers, Varanasi-1, 1967.
- Sharma, C.D. : *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi- 110007, 1987.
- Singh, Balbir : *The Conceptual Framework of Indian Philosophy*, The Macmillan Company of India Limited, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras.
- Singha, J.N. : *The Philosophy of Rāmānuja*, Singha Publishing House Private Limited, 39- S.R. Das Road, Calcutta, 1972.
- Singha : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, J.N. Sen, New Central Book Agency, Calcutta, 9.
- Singha, Priti : *The Philosophy of Advaita*, Sivraja Publications, Varanasi - 221001, April, 1986.
- Srinivasan, G : *Studies in East-West Philosophy*, Gulab Vazirani for Arnold Heinemann Publishers Ltd, New Delhi-16.
- Thibaut, George : *Śaṅkarācārya's Commentary on Brahma Sūtras*, Motilal Banarasidass (Sacred Book of the East Series), Delhi.
- Thibaut, George : *Rāmānuja's Commentary on the Brahma Sūtras*, Narendra Prakash Jain for Motilal Banarasidass Pvt. Ltd., Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi - 110007, 1990.
- Vidyarthi, P.B. : *Knowledge, Self and God in Rāmānuja*, Oriental Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi - 110002, 1978.
- Vidyarthi, P.B. : *Divine Personality and Human Life in Rāmānuja*, Oriental Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi - 110002, 1978.
- Vyas, R.N. : *Significant Philosophies and Readings from India*, K.D. Bhatia, Asian Publication Service, New Delhi-110005.

LIBRARY  
103169  
103169  
#####  
103169  
103169  
103169