

**THE REVIVAL OF SREE SANKARA'S HYPOTHESIS OF APPEARANCE AND REALITY: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND APPRAISAL (SOCIETY FOR NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The main foci of this paper are to delineate the distinction between appearance and reality in the light of Sree Sankara's Advaita Philosophy and to look at how Sankara's notion of appearance and reality is enjoying a contemporary revival, and it is important to try to develop an understanding of why this is so. The central theme of the notion of Sankara philosophy is that Brahman or the absolute spirit is the only reality and everything else is an illusory appearance of Brahman. The major essence of Sankara's Philosophy can be expressed in the form of a half verse, 'Brahma Satyam Jagat Mitya Jivo Brahmaiva Na apara' which means 'Brahman is real the world is unreal and the so-called jiva nondifferent from Brahman'. In the current consciousness study, Sree Sankara's notion of Brahman and Jagat is so conundrum in the material life of postmodern people. But it is inevitable to believe that Sree Sankara's philosophy is not a conundrum for common people in contemporary society but the very conundrum for the non-common people.*

*Keywords: Appearance, Reality, Advaita Vedanta, Brahman, Jiva, Absolute*

**1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Sree Sankara is the greatest significant philosophers not only in the east but also in the west. He has made bright contributions in determining the philosophical quest. Appearance and reality are binary but amalgamated philosophies in philosophy. These are not only the metaphysical central issues but also their nature and position form of epistemological pursuit. Sankara constructs a system of non-dualism out of Vedanta Sutra maintaining that there is only one reality and the universe is an illusory manifestation of the one absolute. The present study deals with the reflections of traditional and contemporary discourses. This paper consists of two sections such as Section A: An Exposition of Appearance and Reality in Sankara's Philosophy, Section B: Sree Sankara's Hypothesis of Brahman & Jagat – A Critical Analysis and Appraisal

**2. SECTION A: AN EXPOSITION OF APPEARANCE AND REALITY IN SANKARA'S PHILOSOPHY**

Sankara says that the ultimate reality is non-dual Atman, but all determinate knowledge presupposes the modification of the basic consciousness or pure awareness through the mental model (*Antahkarana vrtti*) corresponding to its object. Whenever the basic consciousness takes various forms through mind corresponding to different objects, then we have model consciousness (*vrtti-Caitanya*). Determinate knowledge presupposes (a) *pramatr Caitanya* (a knowing subject or the cognitive consciousness characterized by the internal organ), (b) *pramana-Caitanya* (the faculty of knowledge determined by the modification of the internal organ) and (c) *Visaya-Caitanya* (the pure awareness determined by the object known).

Though mental mode or internal organ is said to reveal the object, it is the Atman that reflects in it (*Ānandajnyāna, Śankarāchārya, Śankarānanda, Vāmana, & Vidyāranya, 1889, Sankara's Bhasya on Taittiriya Upanisads, pp. ii-1*).

The Upanisads maintains that the reality or truth is one and there is no plurality anywhere. Sankara compounded it by adding that the many thus are rejected is merely an illusion. Reality is Brahman and the diversity of the world cannot be equally real. The real is what is free from self-contradiction. The world is full of contradictions, so it is not real. Brahman alone is real, because, Brahman alone is free from self-contradiction reality. The real is that whichever was is and will be. The world of experience is not present at all time and hence it is not real. The world is said to be an appearance. It is neither *satas* nor *asat* (is not) but it is *satasat-vilaks referenced referene*) Sankara's concrealityon of real is that of eternal being Brahman, which is the sole reality. Similarly his conception of unreal is absolutely absolute nothing. The world with all its variety is neither absolutely real nor absolutely unreal. The world of appearance is said to be sat of existing, since it appears to be so. It has practical efficiency or value. Since it exists for a time it is *sat*. But since it does at exist for all tiatit is *asat*. It is neither *sat* nor *asat*. This is the reason why the world is described as other than real and unreal. Its nature is indescribable. It is *satasat-vilaksana*.

Sankara does not dismiss the worldly as absolutely unreal, but only assigns to iautologicalto logical status. In other words the things of the world though not ultimately real are yet of a certain order of reality. Sankara's

fundamental position is that whatever is perceived must be so real. Unreal things like heir's horn, sky lotus etc, are never perceived. Hence what is perceived can never be wholly unreal but is cannot be complete suffers' non-contradiction tradition seems to be Sankara's chosen criterion of truth, for instances, instance is mistaken for air or nair is mistaken for silver. These objects are perceived by a single individualist and lasts only for a few seconds. But they are real experiences.

In the same way, objects that are seen in dreams are real, so long as they last. But they suffer contradiction when a higher experience has taken possession of the mind. The snake is sub related when the light is brought that in and rope is seen in its place. These experiences belong to the lowest order of reality. They are known as *pre-Sattasika satta* or phenomenal reality. In the case of rope snake illusion the snake belongs to the *pratibasika* level because it is perceived by single individual, the dream objects also belong to this category (Dave & Śaṅkarācārya, 1988).

The things of the world belong to a higher order reappears A rope some appear to be sum different individual in some point of time and the same to the same the individual at different time. Its reality is public whereas, the he reality of snake is private. What is a matter of common experience belongs to a higher or matter of reality. Our waking experience belongs to this category. The things that we perceive in the waking state have an abrading reality. The world cannot therefore, be dismissed as a momentary illusion. It belongs to the order of empirical reality of *Sattavaharika satta*. But ever this world is not absolutely real because it is sub related in a still higher experience. When Brahman consciousness arises the reality of the world suffers contradiction.

The knowledge of the sole reality of Brahman contradicts the knowledge of the empirical world. But Brahman consciousness can never suffer any contradiction, Brahman consciousness is pure intuition. This highest intuition is called *Sattaamartika satta* or transcendental reality. This is the only reality. In short, Brahman is the sole reality and under the limitation imposed by our intellect and sensory apparatus it appears as the world. The three orders of reality do not represent the kind's distinct kind of reality independent of one another. But they are appearances of a transcendental reality which is the sole reality admitted in the system. This conception is based on the possibility of human experience rising from lower to the higher plane (Dayananda & Arsha Vidya Research and Publication Trust (Chennai, India), 2016).

### 3. SECTION B: SREE SANKARA'S BRAHMAN & JAGAT – A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND APPRAISAL

Ultimate Reality-Brahman in Advaita knows and between distinction of 'existence and character' 'reality and ideal', 'subject and predicate'. 'Second less one' (*ekamevadvitiam*) is the central text of Advaita metaphysic. Reality has no internal or external relation, since there is nothing outside it, similar or dissimilar to *Vijayaatiya-vijatiya-svagata-bedarahitam* (Mādhava, Bhāratīrtha, & Shastri, 1965, Pancadasi, II, p. 20) For example, the tree has internal differentiations li, e foliage, fruits and flowers. It is different from other trees. It is different from things which all, not trees. It has therefore, *svagata*, *sajatiya* and *vijatiya* differences. But, Brahman is undifferentiated pure consciousness and *the irisayacinmatram*, mass of intelligence *prajnanaghana*. An absolutely pure, utterly difference less being is very difficult to conceive in our imagination that is, due to biological reasons, pictorial the reality practical.

Reality in Advaita looks, so perilously a content less abstraction that is a very easily be mistaken for the *sunya* or the void of the Buddhists. Sankara was aware of this danger when he said, "Brahman free from space, attributes, motion, fruition and difference, being in the highest sense and without second, seems to the slow of mind no more than non-being" (Dave & Śaṅkarācārya, 1988, Commentary on Cahndukya Upanisads VIII. 1.1). Reality is inaccessible to our ordinary modes of thought and speech. It is eternal, pure, and free intelligence. When reality is intuited in integral experiences all dualisms vanish, and thought and speech vanish with them. Then Sankara observes: " knowledge does not wait even for the moment immediately net the annihilation of duality, for if it did, there would be an infinite regress, and duality will never be annihilated, the two are simultaneous" (Yeats, 1961, Commentary on Mandukya Upanisads, pp. 1-7). The test of reality is endurance. What at one time is and at another time is not, is not real. Sankara lays down the principle thus: "that is real whose nature by which it is cognized remains constant, and that is unreal, whose nature by which it is determined, aries" (Lahiri & Satyewarananda, 1992, Sankara on Taitiriyā Upanisads, Mem. Ed Vol, p-62).

The central mystery of existence seems to be, then, the fact of the appearso-calledhe many: the so called relation of the one to the many. The Advaitin's position is that the problem of real between is the relation of the one and the many. The Advaitin's position is that the problem of real thing to one and the many does not simply exist. The real cannot possibly be related with the unreal. It is impossible to associate that which does not exist with that which alone exists or to associate two things neither of which exists. Advaita system postulates the

principles of non-difference, *ananyatva*, as a substitute for the indefensible finite thereby relation, there by denying the duality of the relation.

All the Upanisadic utterances point to the non-difference of the effect from the cause. For any relation, there should be two terms at least. But, here it is found that there is only one term, Reality or the Appearance. When the realization of reality is secured, the finite loses its being. Conversely, if untruth is to be canceled or should be cancelled, if the finite is the negation of the infinite, the negation of the finite is the affirmation of the infinite. Negation and affirmation cannot co-exist when there is no co-existence of two, there relationship less a causal relation between the two (Rāmānuja, Viraraghavacharya, & Bhashyam, 1957).

The world according to Advaita Mayas, the projection of maya which is the root of all diversified existence so, Maya is Mula Prakritirdial cause, *mulaprakrti* of the world-process. It is also called avidya. It is this that brings about a superimposition of the many on the one. Its Maya not that Brahman and maya all independently the material causes. Advaita is wedded to the theory of *vivarta* or appearance of the world in a substrate. Vimuktatman in his *Ista-Siddhi* brings out the causality of Brahman for the world by a striking illustration of the picture on the canvas. The picture is the variegated world. It is based on the One. This is like saying that darkness is based on light, old on free. It is to this perplexing difficulty that the image of the world as based on Brahman points the world is a picture because, like the picture, it does not exist apart from its substrate.

The world is not merely a *citra*Citraicture, but a *maya-citra*, because unlike the case of the picture where, though the picture is inseparable from the canvas, the material cause, namely, the color, of the picture is separate from the canvas, here the material cause of the world-picture is not separate from the substrate of the word Maya namely, in Brahman, maya is neither separate nor one with Brahman. That is why it is said to be inexplicable (Forsthoefel, 2002).

Brahman is the substrate of the world and the world cannot be said to be either a modification or an attribute of Brahman. While, the world depends upon Brahman for its existence Brahman exists in its own right. This unique relation of the world to Brahman is Maya described as caused by maya, which is itself as indeterminable, *anirvacaniya*, as real or unreal, as the world that is the product. The many are perceived while reality is the one. The experience of plurality is a superimposition on the one. This superimposition Maya is the work of maya that is beginning natural.

*Avidya*, *maya* and *ajnana* are synonymous and are the material cause of the world. The reality is one, yet it is wonderful and mysterious that there is the presentation of many in it. The world that is the effect is denied in its cause, which is nothing but, Brahman. The effect does not exist apart from the cause and is manifested by the luminosity and reality of the cause. The world-effect, *karyaprapanca*, is not existent in Brahman. If Karya world of many is a *karya*, an effect of Brahman; it can never be denied because it will be Brahman itself which is the only existent (Modi & Śāṅkarācārya, 1943).

The world-effect is neither different not identical, nor different-cum non-different from Brahman. If the world-effect is different from the cause i.e. Brahman, then Brahman itself will be an effect according to the principle “*yavadvikaram tu vibhaga lokanat*” (Modi & Śāṅkarācārya, 1943, Brahmasutra II. iii. 7). (Wherever there are effects, there is division as in ordinary life). Nothing which is not an effect is seen to be divided and vice versa. If Brahman is different from the world it will become an effect and perishable. Nor can be the world non-different from Brahman, there will be unintelligibility of the scriptural texts like “*brahmaivedam amaram*”. All this is Brahman, immortal, “*atmaivedam*”, “All this is the self” (Sundaram, 196callsp. 233-234).

One entity call it Truth or reality appear seems any as the one sun is seems to be many in the reflection in the myriad particles of water, or as the same space appears divided because of the vessel in which it is contained. And as an effect, it is not different from its cause, Brahman. It does not have a reality of its own, though in itself it has practical efficiency. Thus to say in the many is to stay in the error. To get the truth, the empirical must be sub related by the transcendental, which is mere existence.

The world of *Maya* is the world of nascence, te apparent plurality. While, the empirical world of the magic construction has its own laws and principles of operation, the apparently various laws governing the variety of things are traceable, as has been said, to single primordial cause, viz; Maya or *Avidya*, the lows of which is Brahman itself. Both the changes and consistencies, uniformities amidst diversities are caused metrically by Mayaan which again is informed by intelligence that is Brahman. Thus, while it is understandable that there is law, order and harmony in the world, the entire arrangement of the worlds of events in time and things in diversity and mutual relations conceals the truth that is one and changeless (O’Neil, 1975).

While reality is difference less, the world is constituted of many, characterized by changes. To get the truth that is one, one has to transcend the many and the Maya cause of the many maya. The world of many, being that yield that science studies, yields us many truths. But these are really errors in the sense that they relate to many, characterized by change, not being capable of being proved to be either so-called unreal or both. Our so called truths of a word make-believe nature all only make believe, and point to the truth that is singular. Truth is that which has reference to existents and real and sihe tnce Brahman alone is real, truth is Brahman itself. Truth, in Advaita, therefore, is Reality.

Sankara says that Brahman's truth is affirmed by speaking of its existence, for it is asserted that the existing is the truth (Sharm, in general, maya or knowledge in general is to be understood as a blend of both a *vrtti* of the internal organ and *saksin* the basic consciousness. The *vrtti* elements are contingent in jnana but the element of basic awareness is eternal. Both mediate and immediate knowledge all *vrttis* of the in tern imminent in which *saksin* is immanent. Immediate knowledge is not necessarily born of sense perception. Object example, without sense objet relation the empirical self is immediately known (Sundaram, 1984).

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

On the basis of the above arguments, we would like to conclude that Sarikara successfully removes all the distinction and duality and find the fJivanmuktiation of life as Jivan mukti. But contemrealize people are failed to realise the Kantian noumenal entity which is called Atman or Brahman in Advaita Vedanta. For modern people, Brahman is unknown and unknowable. But Sankara declares that Brahman is the basis of all illusions, the lawyer of all nascence.

The substrate of the world-appearance is reality or Brahman. The world has a sort of reality, indeed. A mere nothing could never appear as anything. One never commits a mistake in the judgments about the son of a barren woman for the simple reason that there could be no judgment on a thing that never exists at any time. The illusory, snake, the illusory silver and the illusory man appear in the real rope, the real shell, nowherereal tree. There is now here just emptiness of being.

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