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REFLECTIONS ON REFLECTION: *KŪṬASTHA, CIDĀBHĀSA* AND *VṚTTIS* IN THE *PAÑCADAŚĪ*

The *Pañcadaśī* (The Fifteen Chapters) (*PD*),[1] is a widely-known 13th–14th century introduction to Advaita Vedānta. While primarily committed to Advaita views, it includes references to Sāṃkhya concepts (*prakṛti* and the *guṇas*) and Yogic practices (such as *dhyāna* and *samādhi*). The text covers a wide variety of material, including states of consciousness, the sheaths (*kośa*) of the self, and the nature of commenced (*prārabdha*) *karma*. It also refers to and valorizes many traditional authorities of Advaita: the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and early Advaita schoolmen Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara, and Sureśvara. The first five chapters are said to focus on discernment (*viveka*) of the real (*sat*), the next five on the illumination (*dīpa*) of pure consciousness (*cit*), and the last five on the bliss (*ānanda*) of nondual *brahman*. We shall look most closely at the middle five chapters, but Bhāratītīrtha's less than systematic nature will require us to range around most of the text.

I should mention that there is an ongoing debate about whether the *PD* and *Jīvanmuktiviveka* (*JMV*) are by the same author, as is asserted within the Advaita tradition.[2] The matter is best regarded as unresolved, but T. M. P. Mahadevan argues that there is a Bhāratītīrtha-Vidyāraṇya who authored the *PD* (and the *Vivaraṇa-prameya-saṃgraha*), and who was a teacher of Mādhava-Vidyāraṇya,[3] the author of the *JMV*.[4] Even after taking into account the different interests of the texts, I also find it unlikely that the Vidyāraṇya of the *Pañcadaśī* (who I shall henceforth call Bhāratītīrtha) is the same Vidyāraṇya who authored the *JMV*.[5]

In this essay, I shall discuss some of Bhāratītīrtha's views on "mental processing" within the light of *brahman*, that is, how the self illumines mental activity and how we come to know (and misknow) the world. Bhāratītīrtha's most distinctive conception is that of *cidābhāsa*, the reflection of consciousness, which is illumined by *brahman*/the self and then in turn appears in and illumines the mind (*citta, buddhi*, or *dhī*) and its modifications (*vṛtti*). These illuminings allow us to know particular objects. Unpacking Bhāratītīrtha's views on the nature of this process is the main purpose of this paper. I will also briefly consider Bhāratītīrtha's ideas on the role of yogic practice in knowing *brahman*,

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and his conception of various types of bliss, and how they appear in differing mental modifications.

Translating Sanskrit terms relating to consciousness is always problematic. I generally render *cit, citi,* or *caitanya* "consciousness," meaning the unchanging and ever-present field of pure self-luminous awareness (which is synonymous with *ātman*/self and *brahman*), and *citta, buddhi*, and *dhī* either "mind" or "intellect," the instrument of perceiving and cognizing; Bhāratītīrtha does not make fine distinctions among these terms. I generally translate *vṛtti* as "modification," emphasizing the change within continuing mental process, and *vāsanā* as "latent impression," stressing its imbeddedness in memory and readiness for reactualization at any moment.

In the first part of the *PD,* there is constant praise of the nondual self (*ātman*), which is *brahman,* the unknown knower, and the witness (*sākṣin,* another synonym for *brahman*/the self) of all. It is the unchanging basis of the ever transforming and ultimately illusory world. This leads naturally to the second part (chapters six through ten) which describe how we are deluded, and particularly important here, how the self/*brahman* illumines the mind and objects. The process is never put succinctly in a single place. One simple characterization states that the witness consciousness illumines the intellect (*dhī*), which then perceives (by taking the form of) objects (IV. 29–31). A longer description, which is well-known, but does not include mention of *cidābhāsa,* is from Chapter X, the lamp of the theatre, and focuses on the nature of mental manifestations in relation to the pure (self-) illumining witness. The deluded "I" imagines itself as doer, possessing a mind with both inward and outward turned *vṛttis,* the former indicating "I am the agent," the latter "this is an external object" (6–7). The witness reveals the doer, act, and object all at once, like a light reveals all in a theater (whatever is present *or* absent) (9–11). Like the theatre lamp, the witness constantly shines self-luminously whether or not the "I" or objects are present to be illumined (12–13). The intellect, seated within, goes out again and again with the senses, and this motion is mistakenly attributed to the witness (17), however there is no "within" or "without" for the pervasive, ever-shining witness, only for the intellect (20).

KŪṬASTHA AND *CIDĀBHĀSA*

Bhāratītīrtha undertakes a more focused discussion about consciousness and its reflection in Chapter VI, the "light of the picture" (*citra-dīpa*). He terms individualized embodied beings (*jīva*) as reflections (*ābhāsa*) of

pure consciousness (*cit*) (7) and the self (*ātman*) (11). These reflections appear in the mind or intellect. Unlike the untouched and unchanging self, the reflections are subject to the realm of suffering and transmigration (*saṃsāra*). Still, material objects like earth are not reflections of consciousness (9).

Bhāratītīrtha commonly uses the term *kūṭastha* ("what stands as highest") as synonym for the self (VI. 41–42) and *brahman* (237). The *cidābhāsa* appearing in the intellect is imagined as *kūṭastha*, but is really the *jīva*, which hides *kūṭastha* (23–24). One's non-discerning of *kūṭastha* is the root ignorance (*mūlāvidya*); the concealing (*āvṛti*) power of nescience gives the idea that *kūṭastha* neither shines nor exists, so it remains unknown to the ignorant (25–27).[6] *Āvidya* can conceal *kūṭastha*, but does not contradict it; it is discernment (*viveka*) and ignorance which are opposites (31–33). Nescience has another power, that of projection (*vikṣepa*); "I" is the name of the projection superimposed on *kūṭastha* (though the "I" of the wise is itself *kūṭastha/cidātma*, VII. 12–13). (VII. 38 adds that ignorance and concealing precede projection, and both belong to the *jīva*, not the self). *Kūṭastha* itself is certainly not the "I," senses, or body (VI. 50, 60). Both the consciousness reflection and objects are also wrongly superimposed on *kūṭastha* (46).

Bhāratītīrtha then proceeds to analyze the nature and role of illusory phenomenal appearance, called *māyā*. He asserts that *māyā* makes the detached *kūṭastha*/self into the manifest world, and it produces the *jīva* and god (*īśa*) by taking form as consciousness reflection. But *māyā* makes the world without truly affecting *kūṭastha* (VI. 133–134).[7] Sacred texts (*śruti*) say that the *jīva* and lord are made by *māyā* reflecting consciousness; the *jīva* being like the reflection of sky in water, and god like that reflection in a cloud (155). *Māyā* is said to be like a cloud, and the *buddhi*'s latent impressions are like drops (inhering) in the cloud, and the consciousness reflection, resting on *māyā*, exists like sky reflected in the drops (156). Bhāratītīrtha states that Sureśvara's view is also that the *jīva* is superimposed on *kūṭastha* as *īśvara* is on *brahman* (190).

In Chapter VII, the light of satisfaction (*tṛpti-dīpa*), we learn more about the relationship of *kūṭastha* and *cidābhāsa*, its reflection. The reflection of consciousness is based on *kūṭastha*, since a mere reflection is false, being only a "residue" (*avaśeṣaṇa*) of *kūṭastha* (15) – like a mirror reflection is not real and not really different from the source of reflection. When this reflection is discriminated from *kūṭastha*, Bhāratītīrtha then adds, the wise know "I am *kūṭastha*." Generally though, when one's mind is engrossed in *saṃsāra*, the consciousness

reflection does not know it is truly self-luminous *kūṭastha*. The ignorant think, "there is no *kūṭastha*; I am the doer and enjoyer." But a wise teacher will show "*kūṭastha* exists," and one can come to know "I am *kūṭastha*" by discrimination/discernment (*vicāra*) (29–31).

Bhāratītīrtha attempts one more time to clarify the true nature of the "I" (which the ignorant believe wrongly to be an limited embodied individual) in Chapter VIII. When the "I" is properly understood as *kūṭastha*, it is known as pure consciousness, the basis of the illusory *jīva* reflection joined with body and senses, and *brahman* is the basis of the illusory world (VIII. 48–49). Put another way, you (*kūṭastha* imagined as *jīva*) are that (*brahman* imagined as world). The consciousness reflection consists of both the luminous self and of doership etc. which characterize the intellect, so it is an illusion. Delusion (*moha*) exists when we don't ascertain what is the intellect, the reflection, the self, and the world – this, says Bhāratītīrtha, is *saṃsāra*. The knower of the real determines the true nature of these, and is alone liberated (*mukta*) (52–54).

Bhāratītīrtha then quotes the *Śiva Purāṇa*, which states that (the self) witnesses mental modifications and their absence (before they arise), both "I am ignorant" and "I want to know," thus both ignorance and the consciousness reflection. *Kūṭastha* is *sat*, *cit*, and *ānanda*, one, self-shining, and *śiva/Śiva* (56–59).[8]

THE NATURE OF *CIDĀBHĀSA*

Chapter VII introduces the first interesting, and difficult to untangle, epistemological notion concerning the reflection of consciousness. The self-luminous witness (*sākṣin*) is said to be pervaded by mental modifications (*dhī-vṛtti*) but not by the reflection of consciousness. In the case of a pot, both the intellect and *cidābhāsa* pervade it, and the intellect (with its modifications) removes ignorance while the reflection illumines the pot. With *brahman*, the pervasion of *vṛttis* is also needed to remove ignorance, but since *brahman* is self-illumined, no reflection is needed to reveal it (90–92). That is, both pot and *brahman* need mental modifications to destroy ignorance, but only the pot needs the illumining reflection. Bhāratītīrtha writes that both the eye (mind) and a lamp light (*brahman* through *cidābhāsa*) are needed to see a pot, but only the eye is necessary to see the (self-luminous) lamp light (93). The consciousness reflection here becomes one with *brahman*, and there is no additional illumining of *brahman*, unlike the case with the pot (94). That is, the reflection, like a sun-drenched mirror, illumines objects,

but does not itself produce anything new, reflecting the sun without illuminating it.

The question later arises as to whether the experiencer or "enjoyer" (*bhoktṛ*) is *kūṭastha, cidābhāsa*, or both. First, Bhāratītīrtha says it is not *kūṭastha,* as change is inherent in experience, and *kūṭastha* is untouched and unchanging. The reflection of consciousness, on the other hand, changes since it is subject to the transformations (*vikāra*) in the intellect. Thus, *cidābhāsa* seems to be (and is, on one level) the experiencer. But since the illusory experiencer must have a real basis, it is commonly said that the enjoyer consists of both. *Śruti* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka U* IV. 1–4), however, indicates that *ultimately* it is *kūṭastha* (or the self) alone (VII. 194–199). The love of all things ultimately resides in the love of the self (as is emphasized in Chapter XII). Bhāratītīrtha subsequently elaborates: when reality has been discriminated, the changeable consciousness reflection remains, called the sheath consisting of consciousness (*vijñānamāyā*) and the experiencer. It is produced by *māyā,* according to both *śruti* and experience; the world is a magic show (*indra-jala*) and *cidābhāsa* is included in it. He concludes that the witness observes the consciousness reflection dissolve in deep sleep, and one who discerns its destruction no longer desires to enjoy worldly pleasures (216–219). Thus, it seems that *cidābhāsa* is the (false) enjoyer (of worldly things), and *kūṭastha* is the real enjoyer, but only of the self.

Bhāratītīrtha addresses the relationship of the witness and consciousness reflection futher beginning in verse 229. He says that suffering is not naturally in *cidābhāsa,* for the real nature of consciousness is luminescence (*prakāśa*) alone (as the sun is always pure even if its reflection in water isn't). If suffering is not natural to *cidābhāsa,* how can it be in the witness? It *seems* to be there because the reflection imagines itself to be associated with subtle, gross, and causal bodies; *cidābhāsa* first superimposes the reality of the witness on itself, and then imagines these bodies are real (since part of its own "real" nature). While thus deluded, *cidābhāsa* imagines suffering in these bodies, like one feels "I am suffering" when a close family member suffers. When this delusion is discriminated (as one discriminates that a snake is truly a rope), *cidābhāsa* simply contemplates the witness (VII. 229–235). In 238, Bhāratītīrtha adds that the reflection is now like a diseased courtesan, ashamed to have its (diseased) ignorance recognized by the self. *Cidābhāsa,* now knowing the truth, avoids associating with bodies and mimics the witness (239–240). It wishes its own destruction so it can remain just as witness, but there is no release from its being a

reflection as long as the body continues, like trembling continues a while even after the "snake" is realized to be a rope (243–244).[9]

Chapter VIII, the light of *kūṭastha*, is perhaps the most interesting and important section of the *Pañcadaśī* concerning *cidābhāsa*. Bhāratītīrtha begins by stating that the body is illumined by the *jīva* (i.e. *cidābhāsa*) established in the intellect, which is itself illumined by *kūṭastha*. He compares this to a wall, illumined by the sun, which is also illumined by mirrors reflecting the sun. The mirrors, merely reflecting the sun (and likely imperfectly due to defects), seem luminous, but have only "borrowed" light; similarly, the *jīva* seems conscious ("luminous"), but it is a mere reflection, derived from the self. Bhāratītīrtha continues that *kūṭastha* shines constantly, distinct from *cidābhāsa*, both while the reflections are in the intellect and in the intervals (like deep sleep or *samādhi*) when they are absent – like the sun's constant shining on the wall, whether the mirror reflections of the sun are present or absent (1–3).

Bhāratītīrtha then describes the central epistemological process involving *cidābhāsa*. He distinguishes between consciousness in the intellect (i.e. *cidābhāsa*), which takes the form of and illumines a single pot, and *brahman* consciousness, which illumines the capacity to know ("knownness" of) pots. Before the intellect (and its concomitant modifications) rises, *brahman* illumines a pot (as unknown), and later, *brahman* illumines the pot as known. Thus the reflection of consciousness knows (cognizes) the (particular) pot and *brahman* illumines (or "knows") the pot's known- (or unknown-) ness. Bhāratītīrtha continues that the knowing of the mental modification (i.e. a specific pot cognition) must be preceded by *cidābhāsa*; when the reflection of consciousness is absent, the pot is not cognized. And then whether the pot is known or unknown is illumined by *brahman*; *cidābhāsa* is limited to producing knownness. Cognition cannot arise in the intellect without the reflection of consciousness; an intellect (and its *vṛttis*) without *cidābhāsa* is like (insentient) modifications of clay (4–9).

Thus, the process seems to unfold as follows: *brahman* illumines *cidābhāsa*, which reflectively illumines the mind and its modifications, which cognize the pot. Both *cidābhāsa* and *buddhi/dhī* are therefore, in different senses, knower *and* known. A non-luminous thing (depending on the context here, pot or intellect or reflection of consciousness) must be illumined by something luminous (*brahman*, or derivately, reflection or intellect), and even when known, the illuminated is inseparable from the knower's light, so all that is known is pervaded by the knower's light (which, except in the case of *brahman*, is itself reflected).

So, Bhāratītīrtha holds that the cognition of the pot is the result of the consciousness reflection, not pure *brahman* itself, which exists before the means of knowledge (VIII. 10). *Cidābhāsa* (along with mental modification) is needed for cognition and is different from *brahman*, which preexists cognition and illumines the knownness (and even unknownness) of the pot (13). Again, while pure consciousness ultimately illumines pot, mental modification, and reflection, the reflection with its "limited luminosity" only illumines the particular objects it cognizes (via the intellect) (14).

Taking a slightly different tack, Bhāratītīrtha then describes two kinds of consciousness in the knowing of the pot; the first is "this is the pot," arising from *cidābhāsa*, thus involving the mind and its modifications, and then "the pot is known," which arises from *brahman*'s luminosity (VIII. 15–16).[10] In verse 24, he adds that the former is not *kūṭastha* because it rises and ceases, while the latter is *kūṭastha* since it doesn't undergo change. Bhāratītīrtha continues that the reflection of consciousness, in the form of the "I" *vṛtti*, pervades desire, anger, and so on as fire pervades red-hot iron; that is, as a red-hot iron bar illumines itself, but nothing else, so mental modifications, pervaded by *cidābhāsa*, illumine only themselves (18–19).

He emphasizes that *vṛttis* are repeatedly born and destroyed (and lie latent in sleep, swoon, and *samādhi*); meanwhile, *kūṭastha* shines without break, illumining *vṛttis*, the intervals between them, and their complete absence (VIII. 20–21). Both external objects and internal *vṛttis* are illumined by the two kinds of consciousness, so they are clearer than the intervals between mental modification, which just get *brahman* illumination. Still, *vṛttis*, unlike a pot, don't have known- or unknown-ness, since they can't cognize themselves – but they do destroy ignorance (since illumined by the reflection of consciousness) (22–23). Returning to the imagery of the mirror, Bhāratītīrtha claims that sacred texts and reasoning show that the self, its reflection (*cidābhāsa*), and the mind are related like a face, its reflection, and a mirror (26), that is, the mind, like a mirror, can only reflect the originating element, the self or face, and the reflection needs that originating element to exist.

Bhāratītīrtha then deals with an objection which brings into question the necessity of *cidābhāsa*. An opponent holds that if *kūṭastha* delimited in the intellect can come and go in other domains, like air enclosed in a pot, then no reflection of consciousness is needed. Bhāratītīrtha replies that a "conscious" *jīva* does not arise from merely (any) delimitation of *kūṭastha*, otherwise *kūṭastha* delimited by pots or walls would become a *jīva*. An intellect and a wall are not of the same nature due to the

transparency (*svacchatva*) of the intellect. While both are delimitations of *brahman*, there is a consciousness reflection in the *buddhi*; the reflection is the (necessary) distinction, not consciousness (VIII. 27–31).

Bhāratītīrtha continues that the reflection (*ābhāsa*, also here *prati-bimba*) is a "slight shining" (*īṣad-bhāsana*), or perhaps better a "limited luminosity," for it shines like the original (pure consciousness whose nature is luminous) without having the characteristics of the original (unchanging detachment) due to the reflection's association with attachment and change (VIII. 32–33). Finally, Bhāratītīrtha counters the objection that the reflection is not different from the intellect since it depends on the existence of the intellect by claiming that this is equivalent to saying that the intellect is not different from the body, since the former depends on and only exists along with the latter. Dependence and co-existence do not mean identity. He adds references to *śruti* which are said to support the distinction between the consciousness reflection and the intellect (34ff.)

YOGIC PRACTICE AND *BRAHMAN* KNOWLEDGE

Another important topic when Bhāratītīrtha considers "mental processing" is the role of meditative practice in achieving the highest realization. Overall, Bhāratītīrtha endorses yogic meditation in a number of places, but consistently makes the point that while mental activity ceases during enstasis (*samādhi*),[11] which is desirable, such cessation is only temporary, unlike the highest knowledge which discerns nondual *brahman*. As IV. 39 states, only knowledge of *brahman*, not *yoga*, removes duality permanently. In XII. 81ff., Bhāratītīrtha discusses the relationship of discernment (*viveka*) and *yoga* as means to knowledge, and says both have value, but ends by asserting that while the *yogin* has no duality in *samādhi*, the *vivekin* is always free from it (XII. 87). Also, I. 55–56, 59–61 state that in *samādhi*, all action ceases, the mind lacks any modifications (*vṛtti*), like the unflickering flame of a lamp, and the net of latent impressions completely dissolves, but unfortunately, the mind rises again after enstasis ceases. IX. 117 puts this very clearly: what rises in meditation (states like *samādhi*, etc.) ceases in its absence, but (self-luminous) *brahman* realization does not cease even when all cognizing is absent. IX. 97 adds that scripture states that *kaivalya* (the end state in Yoga) is from knowledge (*jñāna*), and after liberation, meditation is optional.

In VII. 234 and 237, Bhāratītīrtha writes that after *cidābhāsa* frees itself from the illusion that it is associated with a body, it intently

contemplates the witness self, constantly practicing meditation (*dhyāna*). Still, the latter part of chapter VII reiterates that after realization, there is no need for meditation, since the body and self are no longer connected (261, also XIV. 48). "I am a man" is a delusion from latent impressions (*vāsanā*) formed over a long time, and will end when already commenced (*prārabdha*) *karma* ceases, not by meditation practice (262–263, also XIV. 49–50). The knower no longer has improper mental projection (*vikṣepa*) *or* need for *samādhi*; both these are (mere) transformations of the mind (265, also XIV. 52). All (of value) has now been attained.

Chapter Nine, the light of meditation, makes the point that liberation can arise from meditation (*upāsti* or *upāsana*) on the reality of *brahman* (1). Meditation (on *brahma-tattva*), while ultimately a delusive action, can be productive, i.e. yield the good result of liberation (13, 123). He later quotes the famous *Gītā* passage (VI. 37–45) claiming that no effort of a *yogin* is wasted (46–50), and recommends meditation (on qualityless *brahman*) for those easily distracted and weak on discernment (*vicāra*) (131–132). Yet there is a difference between perfect knowledge (*bodha*), which depends on *brahman* itself (*vastu-tantra*), and meditation, which depends on the actor (*kartṛ*). Discernment reliably brings knowledge which destroys the notion that *saṃsāra* is real and one attains liberation while living (*jīvanmukti*), feeling the satisfaction of having achieved all (74–76). Bhāratītīrtha later again shows his desire to argue both that meditation (on *brahman*) is a lesser method, but also that it will eventually bear liberating fruit: the closer to discerning knowledge meditation is, the better, although meditation on qualityless *brahman* does slowly lead to direct *brahman* knowledge (122). Ripened meditation on *nirguṇa brahman* leads to *samādhi*, which eventuates in conceptionless enstasis (*nirodha samādhi*). When all conceptions cease, only the detached self remains. Bhāratītīrtha finishes this point, however, by returning to the importance of *śruti*: Dwelling again and again on the self, knowledge of the real rises – from the sacred texts which have described the unchanging, eternal, self-luminous One (126–128). He subsequently also refers to Upaniṣadic passages which endorse meditation (on *nirguṇa brahman*) as productive of liberation (see 140–143), including the statement that when destroying the attachment to the body and seeing the nondual self by meditation, "a mortal (being) becomes immortal and attains *brahman* here" (*BāU* IV. 4. 7) (157).

BLISS, *BRAHMAN*, AND *VṚTTIS*

The last section of the text, beginning with Chapter Eleven, focuses on bliss (*ānanda* or *sukha*), culminating in the bliss of the self. A number of references to the reflection of consciousness and mental modifications also appear here. Throughout, Bhāratītīrtha refers to different blisses found in the various sheaths and states of the self (particularly that of *suṣupti*, deep sleep, in which there is restful serenity without any duality). The discussion is linked with reflections (here often *bimba*) of consciousness beginning with verse 64. Bhāratītīrtha states that the modification of the intellect which reflects bliss in the moment before deep sleep and later merges with the reflection in sleep is called *ānandamaya*. This bliss filled modification, when turned within, enjoys *brahman* bliss through the reflection of consciousness joined with modifications rising from ignorance (that is, while tranquil and nondual, sleep still is tied to ignorance). Vedantic sages say that these *ajñāna-vṛttis* are subtle, while the modifications of the intellect are manifest (or gross, *vispaṣṭa*) (64–66). He then utilizes *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* 5 to elaborate: *ānandamaya* is here said to be one, established in sleep, massed consciousness, and enjoying (*brahman*) bliss by modifications consisting of consciousness (*cetomaya-vṛttis*) (67–68). This witness state, in which the modifications of the intellect cognizing externals in waking become massed, is called the absence of sorrow (*duḥkhābhava*) since all *vṛttis* of sorrow are dissolved (70–71).

Bhāratītīrtha then asserts that there are three kinds of bliss; the highest of course is self-luminous *brahman* bliss, and the other two are derivatives of it (XI. 87–88). First, there is a latent impression (*vāsanā*) of *brahman* bliss (called *vāsanānanda*), which appears whenever there is happiness without any objects (85).[12] This impression of bliss can be seen when, for a short time after waking, one experiences this object-free happiness (74). Then, when desire ceases since (desired) objects are obtained, bliss reflects in the inward turned mental modifications (this is called *viṣayānanda*) (86). Bhāratītīrtha later adds that while *samādhi* is hard to maintain for long, even a brief moment gives the certainty of *brahman*-bliss, and having had this experience, one will disregard the mere impression of bliss during mental quiesence and will be ever devoted to the highest (*brahman*) bliss itself (119–121). He finishes the chapter describing the wise dwelling in this bliss even while acting, experiencing pleasure and pain, and in waking and dream.[13]

Chapter XII continues to delineate the highest bliss (which comes from love of the Self) and Chapter XIII further explains the bliss of nonduality. In Chapter XIV, Bhāratītīrtha describes the bliss of *brahman*

knowledge (*vidyānanda*), which, like the bliss of (obtaining) external objects (*viṣayānanda*), is a modification of the intellect. This bliss has four attributes: absence of sorrow, fulfilling all desires, and obtaining and accomplishing all (1–3).

Chapter XV expands on *viṣayānanda*, a measure (or fraction, *aṃśa*) of *brahman* bliss (1). Most interesting for us is Bhāratītīrtha's outline of three kinds of mental modifications. The first type, serene (*śānta*) *vṛttis*, are detached and peaceful, the second, turbulent (*ghora*), are greedy and desirous, and the third, dull (*mūḍha*), are deluded and fearful (3–4). *Cit*, the nature of *brahman*, reflects in all the *vṛttis*, but *brahman* appears as bliss only in the serene modifications (5). *Brahman* appears as clear or muddied depending on the modifications (like the moon in clear or muddied water). The measure of bliss is obscured due to the impurity of turbulent or dull *vṛttis*, but where there is some clarity, a measure of consciousness reflects (8–9). He then again states that underlying consciousness exists in all modifications of the mind, but bliss appears only in the the most serene ones (10–13). The connection here with the three Sāṃkhya *guṇas* is obvious. In fact, in XII. 78, Bhāratītīrtha writes that consciousness and bliss are one in *sattva vṛttis* since they are flawless (*nirmala*), but bliss is obscured in *rajo-vṛttis* due to impurity.

Bhāratītīrtha continues that all bliss is a reflection of *brahman* itself, and when *vṛttis* are turned inward, this reflection is unimpeded (XV. 19). Being (*sat*) and consciousness (*cit*) manifest in the turbulent and dull modifications. Abandoning *māyā*-related sorrow evident in these *vṛttis*, one should contemplate (*cint*) pure being and consciousness; *ānanda* is added to these in the serene *vṛtti*, and one should then meditate on all three elements of *brahman* (21, 24, 26–27). The person of dull intellect can only contemplate *brahman* mixed in everyday experience (*vyavahāra*), thus gaining the bliss of external objects (*viṣayānanda*). When detached, since the modifications are then least active, the highest contemplation is then on objectless bliss (*vāsanānanda*). This is not really meditation (*dhyāna*) but *brahman* knowledge itself. This knowledge is made firm when the mind becomes one-pointed by meditation (28–30). Thus we again see *yoga* and knowledge working together to bring liberation. Bhāratītīrtha adds that the different modifications are to be considered adventitious adjuncts (*upādhi*) which are removed by *yoga* or discernment (*viveka*). When thus purified, the self-luminous adjunctless reality of *brahman* shines nondually (32–33).

CONCLUSION

To close, let us review a few of Bhāratītīrtha's *yoga*-tinged Advaita views: we are *brahman*, and can come to know it blissfully in its reflected glory through *cidābhāsa*. What stands as highest (*kūṭastha*) is always luminous, but not always discerned. The mind with its modifications is generally ignorant of its illuming source, mistaking consciousness's reflection (the *jīva*) for the self, its basis. The wise are distinguished specifically by recognizing that their "I" is the untouched *kūṭastha*, not its derivative, the *saṃsāra*-bound reflection. The great breakthrough is ending the imagined association of *cidābhāsa* with the ever-changing body/mind (and thus suffering), and realizing its status as witness alone.

Thus, the supposed knower is known, pervaded by the pre-existing and unchanging light of the real knower. Still, *cidābhāsa* (and mental modifications) are needed for cognition of specific objects. This idea of a mental mechanism coexisting (and depending on), but not identical with, the intellect, which has "limited luminosity" causing cognition of particulars is perhaps Bhāratītīrtha's most distinctive contribution. Also interesting and "illuminating" is his mirror imagery, and reference to the witness illumining both the presence *and* absence (in sleep and *samādhi*) of *vṛttis*.

While yogic practice is valuable as it can lead to mental cessation and liberating knowledge, it is preliminary and only removes notions of duality temporarily (i.e. while in *samādhi*). Further, the highest form of meditation is that on the reality of qualityless (*nirguṇa*) *brahman*. *Brahman* knowledge through discernment is the highest path and goal, for this permanently ends false mental projection, and meditation becomes dispensible.

A final point of interest is Bhāratītīrtha's consideration of various types of bliss in the *vṛttis* in the self, including one tied to tranquil deep sleep, which is free from sorrow and duality, but retains ignorance. The momentary blisses without objects (*vāsanānanda*) and with all desires obtained (*viṣayānanda*) are, of course, only derivatives of eternal and self-luminous *brahman* bliss. While *brahman* as being (*sat*) and consciousness (*cit*) manifests in all mental modifications, bliss appears only in serene (*śānta*) *vṛttis*.

Thus, Bhāratītīrtha's reflections on reflection are a useful and novel contribution to later Advaitic theorizing about how we know (and don't know) *brahman*.

NOTES

[1] I used two editions: *Panchadashi*. Edited and translated by Hari Prasad Shastri (London: Shanti Sadan, 1965), and *Panchadashi*, English translation and notes by Swami Jnanananda Bharathi Swaminah (Madras: Sri Abhinava Vidyateertha Mahaswamigal Educational Trust, 1983).

[2] Most of the comments below also appear in my *Jīvanmukti in Transformation: Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedanta* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998), pp. 114–115.

[3] In the Sringeri *Śaṅkarācārya* tradition, Bhāratītīrtha is held to be the younger brother (tho senior in taking *saṃnyāsa*) of (Mādhava)Vidyāraṇya.

[4] T. M. P. Mahadevan, *The Philosophy of Advaita with special reference to Bhāratītīrtha-Vidyāraṇya* (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1957), pp. 1–8. See also L. K. L. Srivastava's *Advaitic Concept of Jivanmukti* (Delhi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, 1990), pp. 30–38. S. N. Dasgupta argues for joint authorship of the *PD* by Bhāratītīrtha and (Mādhava) Vidyāraṇya in *History of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), vol. II, p. 216n.

[5] In general, the *Pañcadaśī* author follows the Śaṅkara tradition of Advaita more closely than does the *JMV* author. To a degree quite different from the *JMV*, the *Pañcadaśī* emphasizes knowing the world's unreality, *cidābhāsa* (consciousness reflection) versus *kūṭastha* (self), the nature of bliss (*ānanda*) and the role of *prārabdha karma* in causing bodily continuity. On the other hand, key aspects of the *JMV* such as types of renunciation, extinguishing the mind (*mano-nāśa*) and destroying mental impressions (*vāsanā-kṣaya*), and the purposes of *jīvanmukti* are mentioned rarely or not at all. Further, the *Pañcadaśī* contains more references to key *Upaniṣadic* passages on *jīvanmukti* (such as *Chāndogya* VI. 14. 2, *Kaṭha* VI. 14–15, and *Muṇḍaka* III. 2. 9) and far fewer to the *Laghu Yogavāsiṣṭha* than does the *JMV* (though both refer to the *Gītā* often). Finally, the *JMV* is certainly later, as it refers to the *Brahmānanda* section of the *PD* twice (*JMV*, pp. 293, 388).

[6] VII. 5 reiterates that the detached *kūṭastha* is the basis of illusion, and verses 10–12 add that while fools superimpose *kūṭastha* and its reflection, the wise differentiate them.

[7] In VI. 214, he repeats that the *jīva* and lord are made by *māyā*, and states that one should not waste time determining the exact nature of these entities, since all is ultimately nondual *brahman*. See also VII. 3, which holds that the two are imagined, made by *māyā* reflection.

[8] He continues that it is free from *jīva* or *īśa*, which are made by the reflection of *māyā*, unlike the (real and detached) *kūṭastha* (59–60, 65).

[9] This is one of many places which refer to *prārabdha*, or already commenced, *karma*. For more on this, see pp. 115–120 in *Jīvanmukti in Transformation*.

[10] This latter knowing is called *anuvyavasaya*, the (after)knowledge of cognition, by Naiyaiyāyikas.

[11] Suggesting profound internal absorption, fixing together subject and "object," deeper or more intense than "mere" concentration or contempation.

[12] Reference to *vāsanās* is infrequent until this bliss of latent mental impressions is discussed. I. 60–61 state that the net of *vāsanās* is competely dissolved in *dharma-megha samādhi*, and IV. 65 asserts that the highest goal is reached when latent impressions are abandoned. XIII. 84 claims that long-standing *vāsanās* cease by the constant practice of *brahman* realization. IX. 103–104 add that one with a mind empty of *vāsanās* can act, meditate, or chant – or not. Knowing the detached self and the world as *māyā's* illusion, how can one keep any impressions in the mind? VI. 152–154 hold that all *vāsanās* inhere in *māyā*, like waking and dream are latent in deep sleep, and consciousness reflects in the intellect's *vāsanās*, that reflection

itself appearing clearly (as "I") in *buddhi*. As mentioned earlier, *māyā* is said to be like a cloud, and the *buddhi's* latent impressions are like drops (inhering) in the cloud (and the consciousness reflection, resting on *māyā*, exists like sky reflected in the drops) (VI. 156).

[13] *Brahman*-bliss is experienced in dream from impressions rising in waking (*āvidya-vāsanās* in dreams arise from those in waking as well) (XI. 132–133).

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