

CHAPTER – VIII

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MINOR UPANISADS WITH THE PRASTHĀNATRAYĪ AND SOME WORKS OF ŚRĪ ŚAṆKARĀCĀRYA

This chapter comprises of the comparative study of some philosophical concepts found in the minor Upaniṣads of AV undertaken for study with the Prasthānatrayī i.e. the major Upaniṣads, Bhagavadgītā and the Brahmasūtras and also some of the prominent works of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya like Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Bhāṣya literature of Śaṅkarācārya etc.

It is divided into topics like the Cosmological, Ontological, Epistemological Data and Concept of Mokṣa.

COSMOLOGICAL DATA

Cosmology is the scientific study of the universe and its origin and development.¹ Here I deal with cosmological references found in the Minor *Upaniṣads* of AV undertaken for study in the light of references found earlier in the texts like RV, AV, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas* and Major *Upaniṣads*. We find such references in the Minor *Upaniṣads* like *Kaivalya* (15), *Atharvaśīras* (1,5,6), *Atharvaśikhā* (2), *Ātmā* (26), *Kṣurikā* (1cd, 2ab), *Śāṇḍilya* (III.1) and *Parabrahma*.

There is an inquiry in the *Ātmopaniṣad* (26) as to how and from where is the origin of the *Brahman* (Supreme Soul) : अमुष्य ब्रह्मभूतत्वाद्ब्रह्मणः कुत उद्भवः । आत्मा-२६अब ॥ While the Supreme Reality is mentioned to be produced on his own in the *Kṣurikopaniṣad* : वेदतत्त्वार्थविहितं यथोक्तं हि स्वयंभुवा ।१कड ॥

In RV-X.72, it is declared that deities as a class were generated by Aditi, the daughter of Dakṣa. In this process of generation the deities came into being from *Brahman*, who appeared as an unreal entity as it was bereft of name and form. The deities on the other hand are endowed with distinct name and form (*Taitt. Upa.*-II.7 : असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्ततो वै सदजायत ।).

According to the *Atharvaśīras Upaniṣad*, the whole creation is generated from that Supreme one who was the One in the beginning, exists and is going to be. He entered different directions and the creation proceeds : सोऽब्रवीद् अहमेकः प्रथममासीद्वर्तामि च भविष्यामि च नान्यः कश्चिन्मतो व्यतिरिक्त इति । सोऽन्तराद्गन्तरं प्राविशत् दिशो व्यन्तरं प्राविशत् सोऽहं नित्यानित्यो . . . अथर्वशिरस्-१ ॥ न

¹ Oxford Advanced Dictionary, page 262

तस्मात्पूर्वं न परं तदस्ति न भूतं नोत भव्यं यदसीत् । सहस्रपादेकमूर्धा व्यासं स एवेदमावरीवर्ति
भूतम् ॥ ६ ॥ Similarly *Atharvaśiras* (5) glorifies the Supreme Reality as the
root source of this universe, residing in every individual being and
protects the self created universe : एषो ह देवः प्रदिशो नु सर्वाः पूर्वो ह जातः स उ गर्भे
अन्तः । स एव जातः स जनिष्यमाणः प्रत्यङ्जनास्तिष्ठति सर्वतोमुखः । एको रुद्र न द्वितीयाय तस्मै
य इमाँल्लोकानीशत ईशनीभिः । प्रत्यङ्जनास्तिष्ठति संचुकोचान्तकाले संसृज्य विश्वा भुवनानि गोप्ता ।
यो योनिं योनिमधितिष्ठत्येको येनेदं संचरति विचरति सर्वम् ।

Rgveda contains the earliest account of the cosmogonical speculations
which took concrete shape in the mind of the Vedic Seers. There are about
ten cosmogonic hymns in the *Rgveda*, which abound in profound
philosophical significance. Dr. A. A. Macdonell¹ opines “These
cosmogonical hymns are blended with mythological and theological
speculations” :

पुरुषेवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।

उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥ ऋग्वेद-१०.१०.०२ ॥

In RV there are several hymns about the creation of the world in the Xth
Maṇḍala (X.72; X.81,82; X.90; X.121 and X.129).

The creation of the world is sometimes traced to an original material as it
were. In the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (RV-X.90), we find that the gods are the agents
of creation, while the material out of which the world is made is the body
of the great *Puruṣa*. The act of creation is treated as a sacrifice in which
Puruṣa is the victim, “*Puruṣa* is all this world, what has been and shall
be.” (RV-X.90.2). In this hymn the Supreme Reality becomes the active
Puruṣa, for it is said : “From the *Puruṣa Virāt*, was born and from *Virāt*
again *Puruṣa*.” *Puruṣa* is thus the begetter as well as the begotten. He is
the absolute as well as the self-conscious I.”² Here, it is declared that ‘all
this Universe is (in reality) the *Puruṣa* alone-(both) what has been and
what will come into existence in future! This hymn postulates the
Supreme Creator as a *Puruṣa* (called *Ādipuruṣa* by Sāyaṇa) with a
thousand heads, eyes, and feet. It asserts that all this that has come into
being and that is yet to come is *Puruṣa*. “This hymn was probably
composed at a time when it appears there was a firm belief (as in *Śat. Br.*-
V.2.4.7; VI.1.1.3 and *Taitt. S.*-VII.4.2.1) that nothing great can be
accomplished without *Yajña* or *Tapas*”, states P. V. Kane.³ The hymn then

¹ Macdonell A. A. — A History of Sanskrit Literature, page 131

² Radhakrishnan S. — Indian Philosophy, page 105

³ Kane P. V. — History of Dharmaśāstra, vol. V-part II, page 1489.

proceeds to state that from that primeval *Yajña* all animals (horses, cows etc.) the four *Varṇas*, the Sun, the Moon, Agni, Indra, the Veda, Heaven and Earth were produced.

Though the RV is full of the deeds of and prayers to individual gods (such as Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Soma), the RV contains several hymns to propound that the original principle is one, that it creates the world out of itself, enters into it and inspires it. In RV (I.164.46), the sage says 'the wise speak of the one existing (principle) under various names, they call it Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan (wind-god).' There are similar such *ṛcās* in the RV. For e.g. RV-VIII.58.2 (a *ṛcā* from *Vālakhilya* hymns), states that 'the one fire is kindled in many places. The one Sun appears in the whole world, the one dawn shines over all this world and the one (principle, spirit) became all this.'

In RV-II.1.3-7, Agni is identified with Indra, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, Tvaṣṭṛ, Rudra, Draviṇodas, Savitr and Bhaga. All these *ṛcās* establish that ultimately all plurality is only a play of words, as stated in *Chān. Upa.*-VI.1.4 – वाचारम्भण विकारो नामधेयम् ।

RV X.121 declares that in the beginning *Hiranyagarbha* (the Golden Egg) was born : हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् । ऋग्वेद-१०.१२१.१॥ This hymn identifies him with Prajāpati and declare that waters were produced by Him, who was Prajāpati Himself.

We also find cosmological speculation in the ten *Rks* (X.121) addressed to the *Hiranyagarbha*. He is conferred upon as the Supreme Spirit and is so called because He remains in a golden egg as an embryo. He also bears the distinctive appellation of *Sūtrātmā* – when the Supreme Spirit, as the director of the nescience (*Māyā*), became desirous of creating the cosmic order, this *Hiranyagarbha* ultimately took its birth from Him. The five gross elements along with other differentiating adjuncts (*Upādhis*) of *Hiranyagarbha* spring forth from the Supreme Spirit. Due to His adjuncts, He is responsible for origination. According to TS (V.5.1-2) and *Śat. Br.* (VI.2.2.5), He is identified with Prajāpati, because the former resembles the latter.¹ From His birth, He is regarded the absolute Lord of the entire universe, as He upholds the Earth, Heaven and firmament (RV-X.121.9a; MS-I.13): मा नो हिंसीज्जनिता यः पृथिव्या यो वा दिवं सत्य धर्माज्जान । ऋग्वेद-१०.१२१.९(अ)

¹ प्रजापतिर्वै हिरण्यगर्भः प्रजापतेऽनुरुपत्वायेऽति । तै.स.-५.५.१-२॥ cf. प्रजापतेर्वै हिरण्यगर्भः । शत.ब्रा.-६.२.२-६॥

In the AV XIX.6, also there are sixteen verses of which the first fifteen correspond with the first fifteen verses of *Puruṣa-sūkta*, but their order is different and some of the words are also slightly changed. The *Vāj. Sam.* has all the sixteen verses of the *Puruṣa-sūkta* but it contains five more verses and a prose passage at the end.

The ṚV and *Upaniṣads* appear to postulate the first doctrine to which the Absolute enters into it when it creates the universe (*Taitt. Upa.*-II.6 – तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानु प्रविशत् । *Chān. Upa.*-VI.2.1; VI.3.2; *Bṛ. Upa.*-I.4.10). they also speak of God as ruling the Universe (*Antaryāmin*) as in *Bṛ. Upa.* (III.7); *Kauṣ. Upa.* (III.8).

This Being has twice been referred to in the *Śvet. Upaniṣad* (III.4 and IV.12). This Being is not referred to in any of the earlier *Upaniṣads*. These verses from *Śvet. Upaniṣad* clearly show how from the Supreme eminence as seen ṚV (X.121), *Hiraṇyagarbha* has been brought to the level of one of the created beings.

In this hymn (ṚV-X.121), there is an account of the creation of the world by an omnipotent God out of pre-existent matter. *Hiraṇyagarbha* arose in the beginning from the great water which pervaded the universe. He evolved the beautiful world from the shapeless chaos which was all that existed (cf. *Manu*-I.5-8; *Mait. Upa.*-V.2). By His will, He deposited a seed which became the golden germ in which He Himself was born as the Brahmā or the Creator God. “I am *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the Supreme Spirit Himself become manifested in the form of *Hiraṇyagarbha*” (*Manu*-V.9). Thus the two eternally co-existent substances seem to be the evolution of the one ultimate substratum. This is exactly the theory of the *Nāṣadīya* hymn. We find in this hymn a representation of the most advanced theory of creation. First of all there was no existent or non-existent. Here in the hymn of Prajāpati, the lord of offspring, assumes the name of *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the golden germ, and in the AV and later literature *Hiraṇyagarbha* Himself becomes a Supreme Deity. In the AV (IV.2.8) he appears as the embryo, which is produced in the waters at the beginning of creation. In ṚV (X.121), Prajapati is praised as the creator and preserver of the world and as the God – कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम । It means there is nothing in all the plurality of the Gods and that alone the one and only God, the Creator Prajāpati, deserves honour. Finally this expression is found in ṚV (X.129). It begins with the description of the time before creation. The poet imagines the state before the creation as “darkness shrouded in darkness”, far and wide nothing but an impenetrable flood,

until through the power of the *Tapas*¹ "The one" arose.

The main purpose of the hymn (X.72) is to describe the birth of the Ādityas. The RV X.72.2 states : ब्रह्मणस्पतिरेता सं कर्मरि इवाधमत् । देवानां पूर्व्ये युगेऽसतः सद्जायत । In RV X.72.4-5,8, it is said that Dakṣa was born from Aditi and Aditi from Dakṣa, that the gods were born after her (Aditi) and that from Aditi eight sons were born. The two hymns X.81 and 82 refer to Viśvakarman who fashioned the worlds. X.81-2 and 4 ask questions regarding the creation of the world.

The AV (X.7.10) also we find it stated that all forms of the universe were comprehended within the god Skambha. The AV X.7.8 puts forward Skambha (support or pillar) as the base and is identified with Prajāpati, the creator and supporter of all worlds and as having all the thirty three gods in Himself. In RV IX.86.46, Soma made for sacrifice as spoken of as Skambha. AV X.8 is the description of Jyeṣṭha Brahma i.e. the highest or oldest Brahma, who governs all, whether produced or to be produced, to whom alone heaven pertains. These two, heaven and earth, are and supported by Skambha; all this that has *Ātman*, that breathes and blinks is Skambha.

The *Śat. Br.* in many places speaks of creation. *Śat. Br.* (VI.1.1) starts by saying that "In the beginning there was here the non-existent. Then Prajāpati desired to be many. He toiled and practised *Tapas*, and being tired, he created first of all the *Brahman*, the three Vedas and so on. *Śat. Br.* XI.1.6.1 states that in the beginning there was only water. The waters wanting progeny toiled and practiced austerities.' As a result a golden egg was produced, which floated for about a year. Then Prajāpati was born breaking open the egg. He created the Gods by (the breath of) his mouth. He created Agni, Soma etc. The same story of *Hiraṇyagarbha* – golden egg – is found in *Chān. Upa.*-III.19.1-2 and *Manusmṛti* (I.5.19).

We also find such accounts of Sat and Asat in the *Taitt. Br.* II.2.3,9; II.6.2.3; II.8.8.9-10 etc. The *Kauṣ. Br.* XXVIII.1 states, Prajāpati created *Yajña*, the gods worshipped by means of *Yajña*, when it was created, they obtained the desired objects : प्रजापतिर्वै यज्ञस्तस्मिन्सर्वे कामाः सर्वममृतत्वम् । कौ. ब्रा. - १३.१॥ In VI.1, it is stated Prajāpati desirous of progeny, practised *Tapas*.

Bṛhad.-I.4.1-6, also advocates the view that in the beginning this (world)

¹ '*Tapas*' may be here have its original meaning of 'heat' or 'creative heat' or it may mean the 'fervor' of austerity. Deussen thinks both meanings may be implied.

was only the self, in the shape of a person (*Puruṣa*) etc. *Taitt.-II-1*¹ states that the creation of Ether, Air, Light, Water, Earth, Herbs, Food, Person is successively from *Brahman*, the intelligent. The unborn, the one, the eternal breaks forth into a self-conscious *Brahmā* with matter, darkness, non-being, zero, chaos opposed to it. Desire is the essential feature of this self-conscious *Puruṣa*. The last phrase, “*Ko Veda?* (who knows?)”, brings out the mystery of creation which has led later thinkers to call it *Māyā*.

In other words : He is both a transcendental and an immanent underlying principle abiding in and transcending over the entire universe and all the beings are one-fourth of Him. As it is stated in BG : विष्टभ्याऽहं इदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥१०.४२॥

It is stated in the *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad* (III.1) : that the Supreme Reality performed or practised severe penance for bringing this universe in to existence : अथैष ज्ञानमयेन तपसा चीयमानोऽकामयत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति । अथैतस्मात् तप्यमानात्सत्यकामात्रीण्यक्षराण्यजायन्तः तिस्रो व्याहृतयस्त्रिपदा गायत्री त्रयो वेदास्त्रयो देवास्त्रयो वर्णास्त्रियोऽग्नयश्च जायन्ते ।

In the TS, *Prajāpati* is frequently mentioned as creating the gods and Asuras (III.3.7.1), as creating *Yajñas* (I.6.9.1), as creating people (II.1.2.1) and animals (I.5.9.7) and desiring to create *Prajā* and performing *Tapas* for that (III.1.1.1). TS (V.6.4.2) states that all this in the beginning was water, a sea and that *Prajāpati* becoming wind floated rapidly on a lotus leaf.

Taitt. Āraṇyaka states : सोऽकामयत बहुः स्यां प्रजायेयेति स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वेदं सर्वमसृजत यदिद किंच तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् ॥८.६॥

The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* says, ‘Formerly, nothing existed - neither heaven nor atmosphere nor earth.’ Desire is the seed of existence. *Prajāpati* desires offspring and creates. In the beginning *Prajāpati* alone existed here. He thought with Himself – how can I be propagated? He toiled and practised austerities. He created living beings (*Śat. Br.-II.5.1.1-3*). The Cosmological myth in *Br.-I.2*,² states that through ‘*Tapas*’ there spring forth in succession physical entities like Water, Earth, Fire – the last having three forms : the Sun, Fire proper and wind, the last again as breath giving rise to all the worlds : Heaven, Inter-mundia and so forth.

¹ The idea of sacrifice as a means to account for creation is found in the *Brhad. Upa*.

² Belvalkar and Ranade — History of Indian philosophy, vol.II, The Creative Period, page 335.

He i.e. the *Ātman* or *Brahman*, who is Prajāpati performed penance and uttered *Bhūr* (earth), *Bhuvas* (atmosphere) and *Svar* (sky). This world form is the coarsest body of the Prajāpati and may be said to constitute his cosmic body. The sky is its head, the atmosphere its navel, the earth stands for its feet, the sun for the eye (VI.6). Then again we are told that in the beginning *Brahman* alone was the limitless one, infinite in all directions, incomprehensible and unborn. Ether was his body, and from that ether. He wakes up this world, which is only a mass of thought. It is brooded over by Him and in Him it disappear (VI.17).

Praśna-I.3 states : तस्मै स होवाच प्रजा कामो वै प्रजापतिः स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते, रयिं च प्राणं च इत्येतौ मे बहुधा प्रजाः करिष्यतेति । १.४ ॥

Ait. Upa. (III.3) mentions there was *Ātman* alone in the beginning. He created the world etc. *Tait. Upa.* (II.6)) states – The *Ātman* desired to be many and having practised *Tapas*, he created all this universe; and then entered into it.

We find the questions regarding the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe in the *Śāṇḍilya* (III.1) and *Parabrahma Upaniṣads* :

तस्मात्कथमिदं विश्वं जायते कथं स्थीयते कथमस्मिँल्लीयते । शाण्डिल्य-३.१ ॥

दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे के संप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्ति । कथं सृज्यन्ते ... क एषः । परब्रह्म ॥

Similar such question is found in *RV* (X.31.7).

In the *Nāṣadīya sūkta*, the creative process appears to start automatically and in the description of how things stood before creation, we there get perhaps the earliest germ of creation. The *Nāṣadīya* hymn (*RV*-X.129) is one of the important hymns from the point of view of Cosmogony : को अद्भ्य वेद क इह प्रवोचत् कुत आजारा कुत इयं विसृष्टिः । ऋग्वेद-१०.१२९.६ ॥ This hymn has repeatedly emphasized that the genesis of the universe is recondite and mysterious and is not comprehensible by the human intellect. In this hymn it has been proclaimed that god has created, sustains and preserves this creation. He is both the material and efficient cause of it.

In this hymn the first principle or the creator is not given any name but is simply spoken of as '*tad-ekam*', as done in the *Upaniṣads* in '*तत्त्वमसि*' and '*एकमेवाद्वितीयम्*' (*Chān. Upa.*-VI.2.1.2). Here it is proclaimed that there was that one being raised high above all gods, conditions and limitations, that

one alone breathed, the opposites-the being and non-being, did not exist.¹

Dr. P. V Kane² opines : “The creation hymns refer to a stage when there was no generally accepted theory about the origin of the world . . . But the conclusion was that there was only one principle or spirit, though called by various names. It willed to create the world and created it from Itself.”

The *Upaniṣads* depict several accounts of creation the great truth of the oneness of the world. *Brahman* is the sole and the whole explanation of the world, its material and efficient cause (*Bṛ.*-II.12.20; IV.7; I.2.14; *Tait. Upa.*-III.1; *Muṇḍ.*-I.1.7; II.1.1). The primary substance of things is represented as manifesting itself in the created existence (*Chān.*-III.39). The *Ātman* pervades things as the salt which has dissolved in water pervades the water; from the *Ātman* things spring as the sparks fly out from the fire, as threads from the spider, or sound from the flute (*Chān.*-VII.21.2; VI.2.1; *Bṛ.*-IV.5; *Muṇḍ.*-II). In *Chān.* (VI.14) we get the cosmological proof of the existence of the Supreme Being viz. that drawn from the emergence, sustenance and the future destruction of the world. The 18th and 19th section of *Chān. Upa.*, contain two cosmological parables in which an attempt is made to envisage the existence of the world as it hangs in space, and the emergence of the Sun from primeval chaotic non-being.

The *Upaniṣads* speak of the Absolute *Brahman* as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the *Bhūtas* (beings or elements or both) i.e. the *Taitt. Upa.*-III.1 – यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि जीवन्ति यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति तद् विजिज्ञासस्व । तद् ब्रह्मेति ।

Tait. Upa.-II.1 states : तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः । आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्रेरापः । अद्यः पृथिवी । . . . इदं पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा ॥

“From this *Ātman Ākāśa* sprang, from *Ākāśa Vāyu*, from *Vāyu Agni*, from *Agni* waters, from waters the earth, from earth plants, from plants food, from food man.” “There is an obvious logical order in the above sequence”, states Belvalkar and Ranade³ (compare BG-III.14,15).

¹ In many other ṛcās of the RV, different gods are referred to as creators. God Prajāpati is said to have created Heaven and Earth (IV.56.3). Indra is said to have created the Sun and Uṣas (RV-II.12.7) and to have established heaven without any beam to support, supported and spread the earth (RV-II.15.2).

² Kane P. V. — History of Dharmaśāstra, vol. V, part II, page 1492

³ Belvalkar and Ranade — History of Indian Philosophy, vol. II, The Creative Period, page 335.

Chān. Upa.-III.14.1 (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्मतज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत ।) states “All this, indeed, is Brahma, a man cultivating restraint of the mind, should meditate on that (world) as springing from, ending in and breathing on account of that (Brahma). This is the basis of BS-I.2.1 (सर्वत्रप्रसिद्धोपदेशात् ।).

The Br. *Upa.* I.4.3,4,7 has an original and significant account of creation where *Ātman* is the sole reality, out of whom the world and progeny has come into existence.

The *Chān. Upa.* (VII.10.1) tells us that all the creation i.e. the earth, midregions, heaven, gods, men, beasts and birds etc. are nothing but waters in solid form. The *Chān. Upa.* (VI.2.3-4 and VI.3.2-3) states that in the beginning Sat alone was existent, one without a second. It desired to be many and created heat (*Tejas*); from *Tejas* waters were produced, from water food. The divinity proposed to enter into these three. Here only three elements viz. *Tejas*, water and earth (*Anna* is produced from plants which spring from the earth). This is the basis of B.S. (I.4.26 – आत्मकृतेः परिणामात् ।) which establishes that *Brahman* is both *Kartṛ* (agent) and *Karma* (object) of creation. *Tait. Upa.* also speaks of the creation of *Ākāśa* from the *Ātman*, of *Vāyu* from *Ākāśa*, of *Agni* from *Vāyu*, of waters from *Agni* and of the earth from waters. Here we have five elements instead of three as in *Chān. Upa.* The *Ait. Upa.* (III.3) names the five elements and calls them *Mahābhūtāni*. So do *Praśna* (VI.4), *Śvet. Upa.* (II.12) and *Kaṭha* (III.15) where the five *Guṇas Śabda, Sparśa, Rūpa, Rasa* and *Gandha* each peculiar to the five elements from *Ākāśa* to *Prthvī* are also mentioned.

We find several cosmological references in the *Brahmasūtras*-II.3, where we get references to the origin of space (1), air (8), fire (10), water (11), earth (12), mind and intellect (15).

The origin of the whole chain of creation is Akṣara i.e. the immutable Supreme Being, as stated in the *Atharvaśīras Upaniṣad* (6) : अक्षरात्सञ्जायते कालः कालाद्व्यापक उच्यते । व्यापको हि भगवान् रुद्रो भोगायमानो यदा शेते रुद्रस्तदा संहार्यते प्रजाः । उच्छ्वसिते तमो भवति तमस आपोऽप्स्वङ्गल्या मथिते मथितं शिशिरे शिशिरं मथ्यमानं फेनो भवति, फेनादण्डं भवत्यण्डाद्ब्रह्मा भवति, ब्रह्मणो वायुः वायुरोकार ॐकारात्सावित्री सावित्र्या गायत्री गायत्र्या लोका भवन्ति । We find the reference that when Rudra sleeps, it is the time of dissolution. Similar reference is found in BG-VIII.18 :

अव्यक्तादव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसञ्ज्ञके ॥

In the hymn addressed to time (Kāla), the seer has declared that time is identical with the Supreme Spirit (AV-XIX.53; Viṣ.Pu.-III.17-25; V and XXXVIII.58).

So the assertion of the Kāla-hymn that this universe has originated from Kāla is equivalent to maintain that it is the manifestation of the Supreme Divinity. Even in *MBh.Śānti parva* CXXXIX-49-52, we find that the origination, preservation and the ultimate destruction of this phenomenal world take place in *Kāla*. The whole cosmic order remains enchained in its ever revolving wheel which moves on incessantly. Even BG (XI.32 and X.33) identifies it with the Supreme who has set out to destroy the whole creation :

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।

ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥भ.गी.-११.३२॥

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ।भ.गी.-१०.३३(क,ड)॥

All things are enumerated as originating from *Kāla*, thus *Brahman*, thus *Tapas* (asceticism), *Prāṇa* (breath of life), and so on (AV-XIX.53,54).

AV-X.2 enumerates one after the other, all the limbs of man and asked who has created them? AV-XI.8 describes the origin of man through the contact of psychic and physical factors, which are dependent upon *Brahman*. Thus *Brahman* is the first cause of existence (AV-XI.8). In AV-XII.1 Mother Earth is extolled as the creator, supporter and preserver of everything earthly.

In *Muṇḍaka*-I.1.7-8, the creation starts with the Immutable, which, through fervour, produces *Anna*, food or the material constituent of the universe. From *Anna* proceeds breath or energy, from breath mind and the whole psychical world, from mind the 'truth', i.e. to say, the concrete, tangible, physical world, including all the regions, and all the activities (*Karman*), which leads to immortality. This account distinctly recognises matter, energy, and consciousness as the three essential steps of creation, which it regards as real and identical with Reality. The *Muṇḍaka*-II.1.1-9, we commence with the Immutable (*Akṣara*), the divine and formless person (*Puruṣa*), who creates, first, the *Prāṇa*, the mind etc. (*Taitt. Br.*-II.2.9; *Chān.*-VI.2-6):

The origin of *Prāṇa*, mind all the sense organs and the five gross-elements (earth, water, light, air and ether) is said to be from the Supreme Reality in the *Kaivalya Upaniṣad* (15) :

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।

खं वायुर्ज्योतिः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥

Similar reference is found in the *Atharvaśikhā Upaniṣad* (2), where all the organs and gross elements are said to be produced from Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Indra : ब्रह्मविष्णुरुद्रेन्द्रा संप्रसूयन्ते सर्वाणि चेन्द्रियाणि सहभूतानि करणं सर्वमैश्वर्यं संपन्नं शिवमाकाशं मध्ये ध्रुवस्थम् ।

AV XI.4 (26 verses) is addressed to *Prāṇa*, glorifying Him as the Lord of all. *Prāṇa* is called as Prajāpati here.

In BS-II.4.1, origin of *Prāṇas* is referred to. In Br. II.3.9, origin of *Brahman* is denied as (असम्भवस्तु सतोऽनुपपत्तेः ।) *Brahman* being mere existence, cannot certainly originate from that pure existence Itself. Similarly the individual soul has no origin on account of its eternality (*Br. Sū.*-II.3.17).

Gauḍapādācārya considers the source of all beings as *Prāṇa* (I.6-9) :

प्रभवः सर्वभावानां सतामिति विनिश्चयः ।

सर्वं जनयति प्राणश्चेतांश्चक्षुर्गुरुषः पृथक् ॥१.६॥

There are nine different theories of creation referred to by Gauḍapāda : (1) *Prāṇavādins*, (2) *Puruṣavādins*, (3) *Vibhūtivādins* (*Pariṇāmavādins*), (4) *Svapnamāyāvādins*, (5) *Ichhāvādins*, (6) *Kālavādins*, (7) *Bhogavādins*, (8) *Kriḍāvādins* and *Svabhāvavādins*.

The *Manusmṛti* has several theories on creation. In I.5-19, we have the first theory : this (universe) existed in the form of darkness, was unperceived, unknowable. Then the divine self-existent appeared with irresistible power, dispelling darkness and making all this including the great elements discernible; he shone forth of his own (will). The seed became a golden egg, equal in brilliance to the sun and in that egg he himself was born as Brahmā, the progenitor of the whole world. He is called Nārāyaṇa :

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः ।

ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायणः स्मृतः ॥मनु-१.१०॥

This theory combines the ideas contained in RV (X.129.1-3) and *Śat. Br.* (XI.1.6.1) and *Chān. Upa.* (III.19.1-2). In first I.21, Manu states that *Hiranyagarbha* in the beginning of creation assigned names, peculiar activities and conditions to all.

As regards the cosmological hymns in the AV, P. V. Kane¹ states : “The AV has some hymns on creation, which are verbose, repetitive and do not possess the depth, philosophy and terse style of the hymns of RV.”

Similar opinion is of Winternitz,² who states : “We must not look upon the theosophical and cosmic hymns of the AV as representing a step in the development of Indian philosophy. The productive thoughts of the truly philosophical hymns of the RV have attained their further development only in the *Upaniṣads* and the philosophical hymns of the AV can in no way be regarded as a transition step from the oldest philosophy to that of the *Upaniṣads*. “They stand”, as the Deussen says, “not so much inside the great course of development, as rather, by its side.” . . . It may be said that the Atharvan poet is not the originator of these ideas that he has only utilised for his own purposes the ingeniousness of others”

We find in them certain common and outstanding features of the major cosmological references:

- (1) The starting point of the cosmological process is almost everywhere, some First Principle, is variously named. As it is stated in RV – एकं सद्भिषा बहुधा वदन्ति । *Taitt. Upa.*-III.1 – यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, येन जातानि जीवन्ति, यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । and the effect of knowing and realising it in *Chān. Upa.*-VI.1.3 – येन श्रुतमश्रुतं भवत्यमतं मतमविज्ञातं विज्ञातम् ।
- (2) This creative principle, by desiring it or willing it, by practising *Tapas*, by exercising its innate power (*Śakti*), or spreading its cosmic illusion (*Māyā*) makes itself into two, being either a consort of the opposite sex as in *Bṛ.*-I.4.3 or the totality of the external creation referred to as “*Bhūtāni*” (*Chān.*-I.9.1) or “*Sarvam*” (*Bṛ.*-I.4.10) or “*Yad idam kim a*” (*Taitt.*-II.6), or “*Sat*” (*ibid.*-II.7) or “*Tamas*” (*Mait.*-V.2) or entities like *Prāṇa* (*Praśna*-VI.3) or the complementary and inseparable pair of “*Rayi* and *Prāṇa*” (*ibid.*-I.4) or the self-evolving triad of “*Tejas-Ap-Anna*” (*Chān.*-VI.2.3 ff) to say nothing of specific elements like *Ākāśa* (*Taitt.*-II.1.1) or waters (*Ait. Upa.*-I.1 and elsewhere) or the *Puruṣa* or *Hiraṇyagarbha* or the cosmic egg.
- (3) The *Puruṣa* or the individual soul is very rarely included amongst any of these. The creation of *Puruṣa* mentioned in the *Ait. Upa.*-I.3

¹

² M. Winternitz — History of Indian Literature, page 150.

is clearly the body which the *Ātman* subsequently animates. The 'Puruṣa' of the cosmology in *Muṇḍaka-II.1.1*, is identical with 'Akṣara' with which the creation starts as given in *Atharvaśīras* (6). Similar remark applies to the 'Puruṣa' mentioned in *Praśna-VI.2*; the *Kṣetrajña* described in *Mait.-V.2*.

The "*Bhūtātma*" occurring in the *Mait.III.2* and *Amṛtabindu* (12) and declared to be subject to the influence of the *Guṇas* and the cause of the transmigration is no other than the individual soul, but his creation as such is nowhere unmistakably stated.

- (4) The majority of the texts speak of the Creator's entrance into his creation. Thus, *Ait. Upa.* Speaks of the creator's entrance into the body of the opening in the skull (*Vidṛti*), while *Bṛ. Upa.-I.4.7* tells us that "He entered upto the very tips of the nails." Similar such examples are also seen in *Bṛ.-V.9*; *III.7.3.23*; *I.4.10*; *Tait.-II.6*; *Śvet.-VI.11*; *Mait.-II.6*; *Atharvaśīras-1*.
- (5) Majority of our texts proclaim the reality of the creation. That which is real need not therefore be external, because we are told that prior to creation, the world was absolutely non-existent : *Bṛ.-I.2.1* – नैवेह किञ्चनाऽग्रा आसीत् ।; *Ait. Upa.-I.1* – नान्यत् किञ्चनमिशत् ।; *Taitt. Upa.-II.7* – असद् वा इदम् अग्र आसीत् ।; *Chān. Upa.-III.19.1* – असदेवेकम् अग्र आसीत् ।; *Atharvaśīras-1* – अहमेकः प्रथममासीत् ।

Thus it can be summarised that :

1. The universe is the manifestation of the Supreme and as such is destitute of an independent existence of its own.
2. The Supreme is accorded the status of both the material and efficient cause of the universe.
3. The process of the creation is uniformly infallibly preceded by the performance of penance and spiritual contemplation upon the things intended to be created.
4. The ultimate purpose of the creation of this universe is to make the experience of the fruits of moral and non-moral actions of individual selves possible.
5. The process of creation of the universe and that of its dissolution have been dealt with in one and identical context in order to emphasize the ephemeral character.

According to Dr. S. G. Desai¹ "The later *Upaniṣads* do not treat the topics of the creation of the world with much curiosity. They, however, describe the theories of creation of the world, which are influenced by the various systems of philosophy, such as : (1) Mythical or Ritualistic, (2) Theistic, (3) Naturalistic, (4) Mythics – Philosophical and (5) Purely Philosophical".

In the *Upaniṣadic* cosmogony two theories have been advanced to account for the origin of the universe, viz. (1) Materialistic and (2) Spiritualistic. In accordance with the materialistic standpoint, the seers of the *Upaniṣads* have declared that the genesis of the universe may be sought in the following basic elements : (1) Water (*Br. Upa.*-V.5.1); (2) Air (*Chān. Upa.*-IV.3.1); (3) Fire (*Kaṭha Upa.*-II.5); (4) Space (*Chān. Upa.*-I.9.1); (5) Non-entity (*Tait. Upa.*-II.7); (6) Primeval Egg and (7) Vital-air (*Prāṇa*).

And in conformity with the spiritual point of view it has said that the whole creation has emanated from (1) The Absolute *Brahman* i.e. Soul and (2) Śiva, the Supreme God-Head.

It is clear that "The *Upaniṣadic* seers were not anxious to offer a rational explanation regarding the origin of this *Upaniṣad*. Their sole concern was to reveal the truth that the individual self was one and identical with *Brahman*. The main theme of the *Upaniṣadic* philosophy is to prove the unreality of this phenomenal world", opines S. S. Upadhyaya.² Hence we find divergent views regarding the genesis of creation.

The creator is described by most of the primary sources as, after the first act of creation, himself entering into the object so created. Moreover, the creator does not feel any drag upon his power of creation by reason of the limitation of the material principle, out of which the creation is to be fashioned; as the creator was believed to fashion, like the spider, the fabric of his creation from out of himself. Finally, it is to be noted that the creator who created the creation is capable of re-absorbing it within himself and so remains once again in his original state of *Advaita*, one without a second. This means that the creation does not affect or colour his real nature. The creator is not only immanent in his creation but also transcendent, and therefore its controller or "*Niyamitṛ*".

¹ Desai S. G. — A Critical Study of the Later *Upaniṣads*, page 367.

² Upadhyaya S. S. — The Nārādīya Purāṇa (A Philosophical study), page 58.

ONTOLOGICAL DATA

This topic comprises Ontological data found in the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV taken up for study. The term ontology means philosophy concerned with the nature of being.¹ It includes within its peripherals the topics like Ātman or Jīvātman, Paramātman, Puruṣa, Brahman etc.

Concept of Ātman:

According to Yāska, Ātman is derived from the root √अत् – which means ‘to move constantly’ by adding the suffix मनिन् . It means that element (Tattva) which remains unchanged among the things, which go on changing and perish. Secondly it can also be derived from the root √आप् = To pervade आत्माऽततेर्वाऽप्तेर्वाऽपिदाप्त इव स्याद् यावद्वयाप्तिभूत इति ॥३.१५॥

Accordingly to H. G. Narahari², “The word Ātman is usually derived from the root √अन् to breathe’ and is thus linguistically related to Prāṇa. The Śāṇḍilya *Upaniṣad* gives the etymology of the word Ātman as that which attains, gets and eats everything: यस्मात्सर्वमाप्नोति सर्वमादते सर्वमस्ति च तस्मादुच्यते आत्मेति ॥३.२॥ Moreover Sandilya Upa. (II) states यश्च विश्वं सृजति विश्वं बिभर्ति विश्वं भुङ्क्ते स आत्मा । i.e. He, who creates, sustains and consumes the universe is Ātman, while Ātmopaniṣad defines Ātman as: त्वंपदार्थादौपाधिकात्तत्पदार्थादौपाधिकाद्विलक्षण आकाशवत् सर्वगतः सूक्ष्मः केवलः सत्तामात्रोऽसिपदार्थः स्वयंज्योतिरात्मेत्युच्यते ऽतत्पदार्थस्वाऽऽत्मेत्युच्यते । i.e. Distinguished from the Entity of “Thou” possessed of attributes as well as from the entity of “That” possessed of attributes that which is all - pervading like the sky, subtle, whole by itself, pure existence, the entity of “Art” (*Asi*) Self-luminous, is spoken of as Ātman, the entity of ‘not That’ also is spoken of as Ātman.

The word Ātmā occurs about 30 times in the RV. In RV-I.164.4, the term Ātmā is understood as the thinking or intelligent principle, which though connected with the gross and subtle form, is nowhere perceptible as a separate object; and in RV-I.73.2d, the seer exhorts that Agni is to be Cherished for like Soul (Ātmā), he is the seat of happiness आत्मेन सेवी दिधिषाय्योऽभूत् । etc.

¹ New Compact Oxford Dictionary, Thesaurus and Word Power Guide, Indian Edition-2001, page 619, Oxford University Press Inc., New York

² Narhari H. G. — Ātman in the Pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic Literature, Page 5-6, Adyar Library, Madras, 1944,

AV refers to Ātman as immortal : सूर्या मे चक्षुवतिः प्राणोन्तरिक्षमात्मा पृथिवी शरीरम्। अस्तुतो नामाहमयमस्मि ॥५.९.७॥ It is said that Ātman resides in the lotus like body endowed with nine gates and three Guṇas: पुण्डरीकं नवद्वार त्रिभिर्गुणेभिरावृतम् । तस्मिन् यद् यक्षमात्मन्वत् तद् वै ब्रह्मविदो विदुः ॥१०.८.४३॥ He is the only one in the beginning and He entered the minds of every body: प्रको ह देवो मनसि प्रविष्टः प्रथमो जातः ॥१०.८.२८॥ Ātmā is said to be complete : अयुतोऽहमयुतो म आत्मा ॥अथर्ववेद-१९.५१.१॥

Ātman is glorified in the earlier *Upaniṣads* viz. Bṛhad and Aitareya refer to Ātmā as the only entity in the beginning. आत्मैवेदमग्र आसीदेक एव । बृहद - १.४.१७॥ आत्मा वा इदमेक इवाग्र आसीन्नान्यत्किंचन । ऐतरेय - १.१॥

Chan. *Upaniṣad* (VII 26.1) refers to it as omnipresent and the Supreme Creator etc. : आत्मतो बलामात्मतो विज्ञाने . . . आत्मतः कर्माण्यात्मन एवैदं सर्वमिति ॥७.२६.१॥ Similarly Śvet. (I.9,16) mention Ātmā as All-pervading, BG (X.6) mentions Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Creator. Jābāla *Upaniṣad* (2) mentions Ātmā to be infinite and unmanifest.: य एषोऽनन्तोऽव्यक्त आत्मा । Taitt (I.5.1) identifies between Ātmā and Brahma : तद्ब्रह्म । स आत्मा ॥१.५.१॥

Similarly in BG (I.20), God Kṛṣṇa identifies Himself with Ātman.

Ānnapūrnopaniṣad mentions Ātmā as neither gross nor small, neither sentient nor insentient etc. i.e. it describes Ātmā to possess the qualities of the Supreme :

आत्मा स्थूलो न चैवाणुर्न प्रत्यक्षो न चेतः ।

न चेतनो न च जडो न चैवासन्न सन्मयः ॥अन्नपूर्णा-२.२०॥

Kaṭha (II.3.12) and Muṇḍaka (III - 2.3) state that it is difficult to obtain Ātman.

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।

अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्रः कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥कठ-२.३.१२॥

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।

यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥मुण्डक-३.२.३॥

Similar such feeling is expressed is found in Ānnapurnopaniṣad :

यावत्सर्वं संत्यक्तं तावादात्मा न लभते ।

सर्ववस्तुपरित्यागे शेष आत्मेति कथ्यते ॥१.४५॥

The Brahmasūtras establish Ātman as higher than anything else:

आत्मशब्दाच्च । ३.३.१५ Śaṅkarācārya on the Sūtra आत्म प्रकरणात् । ४.४.३, conveys that the 'Light' attained by the Jīva referred to in Chān.-VIII.3.4 is the Supreme self, free from evil and undecaying : अथ य एष संप्रसादोऽस्माच्छरीरात्समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरूपसंपद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यत एष आत्मा . . . । ८.३.४॥

The Ātmā or Jīvātmā is known by different connotations as Kartā, Kṣetrajña, Sākṣī, Kūṭastha, Antaryāmī, Pratyagātmā, Antarātmā etc.

J'VśTMś

Earlier references to Jīva are found in the major *Upaniṣads* like Ch. (VI.3.2, 3.; VI.11, 1, 2, 3; VIII.3.2; Kāṭha-II.1.6; Praśna-V.5, Śvet.-V.9; Gauḍapāda-kārikā refers to Jīva several times : I.15; II.16; III.3-7, 11, 13, 14, 48; IV.63, 65, 68-70)

Ch. Upa. Identifies Jīva with Ātmā developing names and forms: अनेन जीवेन आत्मना अनुप्रविश्य । ६.३.२,३॥ Further telling the nature of the Self, Ch. Upa. mentions the living self or Jīvātman as immortal: न जीव म्रियतेति । ६.११.३॥ Ch.-VIII.3.2 states that all the desires find their fulfilment in the Self: जीव ये च . . . सर्वं तदत्र गत्वा विन्दते ।

Jīvātmā or the embodied Self is defined in Sarvopaniṣad as: पुण्यपापकर्मानुसारी भूत्वा प्राप्तशरीरसंधियोगमप्राप्तशरीरसंयोगमिव कुर्वाणो यदा दृश्यते तदोपहितत्वाज्जीव इत्युच्यते । i.e. when the soul conforming itself to good and bad action, has made a link of the present body (with its past body), and is seen to be effecting a union, a connection as it were, with the body not yet received, then it is called the Jīva, individual soul, on account of its being limited by Upādhis. Commentator Nārāyaṇa defines 'Sandhi' given in the above definition as : एकशरीर त्यागेन अपरशरीरग्रहणम् । This concept is based on BG :

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२.२२॥

This concept of Jīva or soul having link with it, past, present and future bodies is also portrayed in this verse from Kāṭhopaniṣad when Naciketā is handed over to death by his father :

अनुपश्य यथा पूर्वं प्रतिपश्य तथाऽपरे ।

सस्यमिव मर्त्यः पच्यते सस्यमिवाजायते पुनः ॥१.१.६॥

Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa in the Sūtras III .1.11 and 13 establish that one gets next birth accordingly to the deeds or actions performed : सुकृतदुष्कृते एवेति तु

बादरिः ॥३.१.११॥ Ve-lānta Paribhāṣā defines Jīva as : तत्र जीवो नाम अन्तःकरणावच्छिन्नं चैतन्यत् । i.e. Individual self is consciousness limited (avachinna) by the mind.

Praśna Upa (V - 5) identifies Jīvātmā with Parama-Puruṣa: स एतस्माज्जीवधनात् परात्परं पुरिशयं पुरुषं ईक्षते । Śvet. Upa. defines Jīva as capable of infinity even though extremely subtle :

वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च ।

भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः स चानन्त्याय कल्पते ॥५.९॥

While the Maitrī Upaniṣad identifies Jīva with Prāṇa saying : प्राणसंज्ञको जीवः ॥६.१९॥

Kaṭha Upa. states that He who knows this Self, the experience as the living spirit close at hand as the lord of the past and the future - one does not shrink away from Him.:

य इमं मध्वदं वेद आत्मानं जीवमन्तिकात् ।

ईशानं भूत भव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते ॥एतद्वै तत्॥२.१.५॥

Annapūrnopaniṣad states that characteristics of Jīva:

व्यवहारमिदं सर्वं मा करोतु करोतु वा ।

अकुर्वन्वापि कुर्वन्वा जीवः स्वात्मरतिक्रियः ॥२.१०॥

अधवा नमपि त्यक्त्वा चैत्यांशं शान्तचिद्धनः ।

जीवस्तिष्ठति संशान्तो ज्वलन्मणिरिवात्मनि ॥२.११॥

i.e. whether the Jīva is devoted to worldly transactions or not, even while doing or not doing (his daily duties), he has his devotion turned towards his own Ātman or else. Going up even that element of consciousness, the Jīva stands tranquillized and with his palpable sentence reduced to quiescence, shines like a gem in the Ātman.

Gauḍapāḍakārikā states that just the ether in the earthen jar i.e. Ghaṭākāśa is dissolved in the Ākāśa (Mahākāśa), so are dissolved the individual souls in the Ātman.

घटादिषु प्रलीनेषु घटाकाशादयो यथा ।

आकाशे संप्रलीयन्ते तद्वज्जीवा इहात्मनि ॥३.४॥

Similarly Amṛtabindūpaniṣad states, just as it is the jar which being removed from one place to another changes places and not the Ākāśa enclosed in the jar; so is the Jīva which resembles the Ākāśa :

घटसंवृतमाकाशं नीयमाने घटे यथा ।

घटे नीयते नाऽऽकाशं तथा जीवो नभोपमः ॥१३॥

So also Annapūrṇā Upa. states that as ether is known as the ether of pot or the great expanse of ether. So the Ātman is spoken of as of two kinds : as of the character of the Jīva and of the Īśvara :

यथाकाशो घटाकाशो महाकाश इतीरितः ।

तथा भ्रान्तेर्द्विधा प्रोक्तो ह्यात्मा जीवेश्वरात्मना ॥५.७७॥

Gauḍapāḍakārikā states that as dream made creature is born and also dies, so likewise, all these creature are and also are not. Moreover the individual soul realizes the unborn, sleepless, dreamless, non duality, when awakened from sleep brought about by Māyā.

यथा स्वप्नमयो जीवो जायते म्रियतेऽपि च ।

तथा जीवा अमी सर्वे भवन्ति न भवन्ति च ॥४.६८॥

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।

अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥१.१६॥

Śaṅkarācārya in his Bhāṣya on BS : गुहां प्रविष्टावात्मानौ हि तद्दर्शनात् ॥१.२.११॥ states : यथ जीवपरमात्मानौ ततो जीवाद्विलक्षणः परमात्मा प्रतिपादितो भवति ।

Similarly the Kaivalya Upaniṣad points out that Jīva enjoys pleasure and pain in the dream state : स्वप्ने जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता ॥१३॥ and also स एव जीवः स्वपिति ॥१४॥ Annambhaṭṭa defines *Sukha* and *Duḥkha* in his *Tarkasaṁgraha* as : सर्वेषामनुकूलतया वेदनीयं सुखम् ॥५५॥ and प्रतिकूलतया वेदनीयं दुःखम् ॥५६॥

KARTĀ

Bṛhad. Upaniṣad refers to the self as the Kartā who creates all the animate and non-animate objects from nothing : न तत्र रथा न रथयोगा न पन्थानो भवत्यथरथान्नथयोगान्यथः सृजते . . . सृजते स हि कर्ता ॥४.३.१०॥ Further it is mentioned that the Self in the body is the maker of all : यस्यानुवित्तः प्रतिबुद्ध आत्माऽस्मिन्संदेहो गहने प्रविष्टः । स विश्वकृत्स हि सर्वस्य कर्ता तस्य लोकः स उ लोक एव ॥ ४.४.१३॥

Ch. Upa. mentions one to be the agent who due to his strength rises serves people and approaches the preceptor and becomes a pupil : बलं वाव विज्ञानाद् . . . परिचरन्नुपसत्ता भवत्युपसीदन्द्रष्टा भवति . . . कर्ता भवति . . . ॥७.८.१॥ Further it is

states that he becomes a doer when he gets the food : अन्नं वाच बलाद्भयः . . . कर्ता भवति . . . ॥७.१.१॥ Praśna Upa calls the Supreme Self as the Kartā : एष हि दृष्टा, स्पृष्टा, श्रौता, धाता . . . कर्ता विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः ॥४.१, ५.१॥

Mund. Upa. mentions Brahmā as the creator of the Universe : ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः सम्बभूव विश्वस्य कर्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता ॥१.१.१॥ Further the *Upaniṣad* endows equality with the God to that person who being a seer perceives the creator of golden hue: यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारं ईशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् । तथा विद्वान् पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ॥३.१.३॥ Similar idea is expressed by Maitrī *Upaniṣad*: यदा पश्यन्पश्यति रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारं ईशं पुरुषं . . . ॥६.१८॥ Maitrī Upa. states that Kartā is the elemental self : यः कर्ता सोऽयं वै भूतात्मा . . . ॥३.३॥ Further self is called the doer : खल्वात्मनोऽत्मा . . . चेता . . . कर्ता वक्ता . . . ॥६.७॥

Bādarāyaṇa establishes the individual soul as an agent i.e. Kartā in B. S. : कर्ता शास्त्रार्थवत्त्वात् ॥२.३.३३॥ To prove individual soul as an agent, Śāṅkarācārya quotes Taitt. Upa. (II.5.1), where certain acts are enjoined to be done by the agent and if the soul is not an agent, these injunctions would become meaning-less. Similarly Śāṅkarācārya on BS : संभोगप्राप्तिरिति चेत्, न विशेष्यात् ॥१.२.८॥ Point out the difference between Ātmā and Parmātmā establishing the individual soul as an agent, the doer of good and bad deeds and therefore it experiences pleasure and pain.

Based on this Sarvopaniṣad defines Kartā as : सुखदुःखबुद्ध्याश्रयो वेदान्तः कर्ता । i.e. when it dwells in the body as the seat of the idea of pleasure and pains then it is the Kartā i.e. agent.

KṢETRAJÑA

Ātmā as also known as Kṣetrajña in the earlier *Upaniṣads* like Maitrī and Śvet. and BG. Maitrī Upa. states : चेतामात्रः प्रतिपुरुषः क्षेत्रज्ञ ॥२.५, ५.२॥ while Śvet Upa. mentions Ātmā as: प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिः ॥६.१६॥ BG defines Kṣetrajña as:

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।

एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥१३.१॥

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥१३.३३॥

Based on this concept, Sarvopaniṣad defines Kṣetrajña as the consciousness, which manifests Itself as the Liṅga-Śarīra i.e. Subtle body: आत्मसंनिधौ नित्यत्वेन प्रतीयमान आत्मोपाधिर्यस्तल्लिङ्गं शरीरं हृद्ग्रन्थिरित्युच्यते, तत्र यत्प्रकाशते

चैतन्यं स क्षेत्रज्ञ इत्युच्यते ॥२॥ Here, Liṅga-Śarīra is identified with the Hṛdgranthi or Hṛdayagranthi. While the Hṛdayagranthi or heart's knot is referred to in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad as the knot of ignorance, which when cut asunder or untied leads to the realization of the Supreme Reality :

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्व संशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥२.२.८॥

SĀKṢĪ

Śvet. Upa mentions the God to be Sākṣī: केवलो साक्षी निर्गुणश्च । Ātmā is also known as Sākṣī in the Maitrī Upa: सर्व कश्चित्प्रभुः साक्षी ॥६.१६॥ Even BG refer to God as Sākṣī : गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी ॥९.१८॥ Śaṅkarācārya also portrays Ātmā as Sākṣī in Vivekacūḍāmaṇi (211).

Following early texts Kaivalyopaniṣad identifies God with Sākṣī and Cīṭ:

त्रिषुधामसु यद्भोग्यं भोक्ता भोगश्च यद्भवेत् ।

तेभ्यो विलक्षण साक्षी चिन्मात्रोऽहं सदाशिवः ॥१८॥

Muni Adhvarindra defines Sākṣī in Vedānta-Paribhāṣā as : साक्षी तु अन्तःकरणोपहितं चैतन्यम् । Sarvopaniṣad borrowing this concept from earlier texts adds its own view of manifestation and disappearance to the Sākṣī Ātmā : ज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेयानामाविर्भावतिरोभावज्ञाता स्वयमेवमाविर्भावतिरोभावहीनः स्वयंज्योतिः स साक्षी-त्युच्यते । i. e. He who is the cogniser of the manifestation and disappearance of the knower, knowledge and the knowable, but is himself devoid of such manifestation and disappearance and is Self-luminous is called the Sākṣī - the Witness.

The Āvirbhāva - Tirobhāva concept characterized to Sākṣī is originally found in the Chān. Upaniṣad : आत्मत आविर्भावतिरोभावौ ॥७.२६.१॥ Even Maitrī Upa refer to it as: आविर्भूतेऽन्तराकाशे . . . ॥६.२८॥

Bādarāyaṇa also refers to Āvirbhāva one's own manifestation when the Jīva has attained the highest light: संपद्याविर्भावः स्वेनशब्दात् ॥४.४.१॥ While BS also refer to Tirobhava as: पराभिध्यानात् तिरोहितम् ॥३.२.५॥

Thus the concept discussed in the Sarvopaniṣad is not a novel one. It is borrowed from the earlier text like Chā. Upa. and BS.

KŪṬASTHA

Ātman as Kūṭastha is originally found in BG, where Kūṭastha is known as

immutable, as the characteristic of a Yogī :

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥१५.१६॥

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥१२.३॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥६.८॥

Thus following this earlier concept, Sarvopaniṣad defines Kūṭastha as: ब्रह्मादिपिपीलिकापर्यन्तं सर्वप्राणिबुद्धिष्वविशिष्टतयोपलभ्यमानः सर्वप्राणिबुद्धिस्थो यदा तदा कूटस्थ इत्युच्यते । i.e. when being perceived in an undifferentiated manner in the intelligence of all beings from Brahmā to an ant, that which resides by the intelligence of all beings is called the Kūṭastha.

Kūṭastha is also defined in Annapūrṇopaniṣad as:

समाधिः संविदुत्पत्तिः परजीवैकतां प्रति ।

नित्यः सर्वगतो ह्यात्मा कूटस्थो दोषवर्जितः ॥५.७५॥

The Paramātmā that is eternal, that embraces all, that is the Ātman, the Kūṭastha (i.e. immovable, unchangeable and perpetually the same), that is devoid of defects and is one only i.e. is split (into parts) out of the delusion caused by Māyā and not out of his real form.

Vidyāraṇya Muni (c. 1247 AD) defines Kūṭastha in Pañcadaśī (VIII - 21) as that consciousness which witnesses the interval between the disappearance and the rise of successive vṛttis and the period when they do not exist and which is Itself unmodifiable and immutable:

संध्योऽखिलवृत्तिनामभावाश्चाभासिताः ।

निर्विकारेण येनासौ कूटस्थ इति चोच्यते ॥८.२१॥

Vidyāraṇya Swamī in his Pañcadaśī states that just as there is no difference between Ghaṭākāśa and Mahākāśa, so also Kūṭastha and Brahman are one:

कूटस्थब्रह्मणोर्भेदो नाममात्राद्वे न हि ।

घटाकाशमहाकाशौ वियुज्येते न हि क्वचित् ॥६.२३७॥

ANTARYĀMĪ

Ātmā is known as Antaryāmī which is immortal and source of all beings

in the Bṛhad Upa.: अन्तर्यामिणिं ब्रूहीति ।३.७.२॥ and एष ता आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृत ।३.७.३, ४.२.३॥ Māṇḍ. Upa also mentions: एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य ।६॥

Brahmasūtra (I .2.18-20) in the Antaryāmyādhikaraṇa states the meaning of Antaryāmin as the inner controller or ruler i.e. God.

Sarvopaniṣad, following the earlier texts defines Antaryāmī as : कूटस्थाद्युपहितभेदानां स्वरूपलाभहेतुर्भूत्वा मणिगणसूत्रमिव सर्वक्षेत्रेष्वनुस्यूतत्वेन यदा प्रकाशत आत्मा तदाऽन्तर्यामीत्युच्यते । i.e. when standing as the means of realising the real nature of the Kūṭastha and other, which are differentiations by virtue of possessing limiting adjuncts, the Ātman manifests itself as interwoven in all bodies, like the thread through the strength of jewels, then it is called the Antaryāmī, Internal Ruler.

This concept seems to be borrowed from BG :

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोक्तं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥७.७॥

Here “*Sūtre maṇigaṇā iva*” speaks of God as present in each and every pearl of the necklace.

PRATYAGĀTMĀ

Discussing on the topic, how the inner self-Pratyagātmā be achieved, Kaṭhapaniṣad provides as with the following thought.

पराञ्चिखानि व्यतृगत् स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात्पराङ्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।

कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्त्वमिच्छन् ॥२.१.१॥

Following the earlier text, Pratyagātmā is defined in Sarvopaniṣad as : सर्वोपाधिर्विनिर्मुक्तः सुवर्णवद्विज्ञानधनश्चिन्मात्रस्वरूप आत्मा स्वतन्त्रो यदाऽवभासते तदा त्वं पदार्थः प्रत्यगात्मेत्युच्यते । When the Ātman shines forth absolutely free from all limiting adjuncts brilliant as a homogenous mass of consciousness in its nature of pure intelligence, independent, then, it is spoken of as the Entity of ‘Thou’ (Tvam), and as the Pratyagātman, Inner Self.

The commentator Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin explains the term ‘Pratyagātman’ as : पुराक्प्रपञ्चप्रातिलोम्येन अञ्चतीति प्रत्यक् स चासावात्मा चेति प्रत्यगात्मोच्यो । i.e. that self is known as Inner Self which is befitting (Śobhate = Aścati) setting aside the Prapañca or mundane existence. The commentator Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin further defines it as : विज्ञानचिन्मात्रस्वभावात्मा तद्रूपेण यदा भासते तदा त्वं पदार्थः प्रत्यगात्मा भवति । When the

Ātmā is seen like the intelligent (Vijñāna) consciousness then Tvam i.e. 'thou' becomes Pratyagātmā i.e. the Inner Individual Self.

ANTARĀTMĀ

Antarātmā is referred to in several major and minor *Upaniṣads*. Kaṭhōpaniṣad (6.17) and Śvetāśvatara *Upaniṣad* (3.13) describes Antarātmā as that Puruṣa who is of the size of the thumb and one who always resides in the hearts of people : अङ्गुष्ठमात्रं पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा । Muṇḍakōpaniṣad (II.1.9) explains that Antarātmā is that subtle body or Ātman which is encircled by the five Mahābhūtas i.e. the body. We can say that here Antarātmā refers to the Jīvātman. BG identifies Antarātmā with God Kṛṣṇa :

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥६.४७॥

The author of Ātmā *Upaniṣad* has modified and elaborated this concept. He has given it a new dimension showing its particularities. In short, this minor Upa. Has made the concept of Antarātmā more clear and precise.

Ātmōpaniṣad defines Antarātmā as: अथान्तरात्मा नाम पृथिव्यमेजोवाख्याकाशेच्छाद्वेष-सुखदुःख काममोहविकल्पनादिभिः स्मृतिलिङ्गउदात्तानुदात्तह्रस्वदीर्घप्लुस्वलितगर्जितस्फुटितमुदित-नृत्यगीतवादत्रप्रलयविजृम्भितादिभिः श्रोता ध्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धाकर्ता विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः पुराणं न्यायो मीमांसा धर्मशास्त्राणीति श्रवणघ्राणाकर्षणकर्मविशेषणं करोत्येषोऽन्तरात्मा नाम ॥२॥

The Inner Ātman is the Puruṣa, who by his perceiving the earth, water, fire, air and other, desire and aversion, pleasure and pain, lust, delusion, doubt etc., who by his perceiving acute and grave (accents), short, long, and protracted (vowels) and faltered, shouted, abruptly broken, and mixed (syllables), and who by his sensibility to dancing, music, vocal and instrumental, loss of consciousness, yawning etc. is the bearer, smeller, taster, thinker, comprehender, doer and discriminating self, whose sign is memory, (who studies) the Purāṇas, the Nyāya, the Mīmāṃsā, and the Dharmaśāstras, and who particularizes hearing, smelling, and attracting from generosity of actions.

Thus, we see that Inner-Ātman comprises of the whole range of material phenomena, gross and subtle (i.e. mental), which the individual soul concerns himself. Thus this concept also goes back to the Hindu Philosophy, as the mind is nothing but subtle matter.

Śāṇḍilyōpaniṣad describes Antarātmā as the inner potent omni-present

deity, the resource of all : यः एको देव आत्मशक्तिप्रधानः सर्वज्ञः सर्वेश्वरः सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा सर्वभूताधिवासः सर्वभूतनिगूढो भूतयोनिर्योगैकगम्यः ॥२॥

Antarātman as stated in Ātmopaniṣad is the Śrotā (hearer), Ghrātā (smeller), Rasayitā (taster), Mantā (thinker), Boddhā (comprehender), Kartā (doer), and Vijñānātmā Puruṣa (the discriminating self). He also particularizes hearing (Śravaṇa), smelling (Ghrāṇa) and attracting from generality of actions (i.e. Ākarṣaṇa-Karma-Viśeṣaṇam) etc. This is based on the earlier *Upaniṣads* for e. g. Chāndogya Upaniṣad VII.8.1 refers to a person who serially becomes the self, hearer, thinker, comprehender, doer and then the discriminating self who enjoy the fruit of his acts if he has strength (Bala) : बलं वाव विज्ञानाद्भूयोऽपि ह शतं विज्ञानवतामेको बलवानाकम्पयते स यदा बली भवत्यथोत्थाता भवत्युत्तिष्ठन्परिचरिता भति परिचरन्नुपसत्ता भवत्युपसीदन्द्रष्टा भवति श्रोता भवति मन्ता भवति बोद्धा भवति कर्ता भवति विज्ञाता भवति . . . ।छा.उप.-७.८.१॥

Further, in the same *Upaniṣad* (VII.9.1) highlighting the importance of Anna, it is said having taken food he becomes the Dṛṣṭā, Śrotā, Mantā, Kartā and Vijñātā : . . . अथान्नस्यायै दृष्टा भवति श्रोता भवति मन्ता भवति कर्ता भवति विज्ञाता भवत्यन्नमुपास्वेति ॥७.९.१॥

In Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upa. III 7.23, Ātmā is said to be the possessor of all contradictory attributes, like, even though not seeing, He is the seer, though not hearing, He is the hearer, though not thinking, He is the thinker and so : . . . आत्माऽन्तर्याम्यमृतोऽदृष्टो द्रष्टाऽश्रुतः श्रोताऽमतो मन्ताऽविज्ञातो विज्ञाता नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टा नान्योऽतोऽस्ति श्रोता नान्योऽतोऽस्ति मन्ता नान्योऽतोऽस्ति विज्ञातैष त आत्माऽन्तर्याम्यमृतोऽतोऽन्यदार्त ततो होद्दालक आरुणिरुपरराम ॥३.७.२३॥

Similarly in Praśnopaniṣad, it is said : एष हि द्रष्टा स्प्रष्टा श्रोता धाता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः स परेऽक्षर आत्मनि सम्प्रतिष्ठते ॥४.९॥ This same concept is seen to be taken by the Ātmopaniṣatkāra, as attributes of the Antarātmā. Likewise Vijñānātmā is said to be comprising of gods – Agni etc. Prāṇa, Eyes etc. And the gross elements i.e. Pṛthvī etc. - as the Praśnopaniṣad-IV.11 : विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वैः प्राणा भूतानि सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ति यत्र । तदक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविवेशेति ॥४.११॥

Antarātman is said to have his characteristic sign as memory - Smṛtiliṅga, which is the chief characteristic of the individual self, without which reproduction of past experiences cannot be possible. If without it a person forgets, what he experienced in boyhood, after his entering youth stage, as the body having undergone a thorough change. Here Citta or the mind stuff comes into play, storing up all the past impressions in subtle form

and bringing them to the surface when stimulated.

The Antarātman also perceives the Udātta, Anudātta, Hrasva, Dīrgha, Pluta, Skhalita, Garjita, Sphuṭita and Mudita. The terms Hrasva, Dīrgha, and Pluta are the three kind of vowel sounds used in Vedic prosody. Skhalita or faltered sound shows the defect in the pronunciation of syllable or in speech. Antarātman is also sensible to Nṛtya (dancing), Gīta (Music - Vocal), Vāditra (instrumental music), Pralaya i.e. loss of consciousness and Vijrumbhaṇa i.e. Yawning. Here Pralaya does not mean final dissolution but as loss of consciousness.

Antarāman in Ātmopaniṣad is stated as one who studies the Purāṇas, Nyāya, the Mīmāṃsā and the Dharmaśāstra.

All this discussion on Ātman being the Śrotā, Ghrātā, Mantā etc. show a proper charm of development of thought from the older i.e. ancient major *Upaniṣads* to the minor ones. These concepts are also found in the older *Upaniṣads* like Bṛhadāraṇyaka (Ś.YV) and Chāndogya (SV), more specific and clarity of thought about the same is perceived in Praśnopaniṣad of the AV. The same chain is elaborated with precise and clear thoughts of these being the characteristics of the Antar-Ātman.

Thus, this shows that minor *Upaniṣads* though following the same trend of the major *Upaniṣads* have contributed in their own way to bring up a thought of their own more specifically and more clearly categorizing it. Moreover the proximity of thought perceived between Praśnopaniṣad and Ātmopaniṣad, here, also leads as to think of them as being of the same Veda i.e. AV.

BHŪTĀTMĀ

The Supreme Being is also known as Bhūtātman in the Amṛtabindūpaniṣad:

एक एव हि भूतात्मा भूते भूते व्यवस्थितः ।

एकधा बहुधा चैव दृश्यते जलचन्द्रवत् ॥१९॥

Being one (without any differentiation), the universal soul is present in all beings (Human or divine, animate or inanimate). Though one, it is seen as many like the reflection of moon in the water. Similar verbatim is found in Maitrī Upa. II.2, 3, 5: IV.1-3; V.2; Vi.10, Sarvopaniṣad-2.

Bādarāyaṇa in Br. Sūtra II.3.50 आभास एव explains the same concept that the Individual soul is only a reflection or image of the Supreme Lord, just

as the reflections of sun in different sheets of water are different, so does the soul appear as different when in different bodies opines Śaṅkarācārya in his Bhāṣya on this Sūtra : आभास एव चैष जीवः परस्यात्मनो जलसूर्यकादिवत् प्रतिपत्तव्यः । Further he says just as the trembling of a particular reflection of the sun does not cause the other reflection of the sun does not cause the other reflections to tremble so also the experiencing of happiness and misery by a particular Jīva or individual soul is not shared by other souls. Hence there is no confusion of the results of action. Br. Sūtra . III 2.18 states : अत एव चोपमा सूर्यकादिवत् ।

PARAMĀTMĀ

Praśnopaniṣad refers to Paramātmā as Supreme resort or abode : सर्वं परं आत्मनि सत्प्रतिष्ठन्ते ॥४.७॥ Annapūrṇopaniṣad describes the Paramātmā is the Ātmā that manifests itself without beginning and end and there arise one fullness of convection, that all the phenomenal world is the Ātmā.

अनाद्यन्तावभासात्मा परमात्मैव विद्यते ।

इत्येतन्निश्चयं स्फारं स्मयगज्ञानं विदुर्बुधा ॥२.३४॥

Maitrī Upaniṣad Paramātmā to meditate on the self as a result the Paramātmā enter with the five airs as वै पञ्च वायुः समासृष्टः । प्राणोऽग्निः परमात्मा । ६.९॥ and also अनुद्भू एष परमात्मा ॥६.१७॥ i.e. Paramātmā is incomprehensible.

BG refers to Paramātmā the Highest Puruṣa residing in the bodies and as eternal as quality ness in Exhaustible and as one who is not be and by Action.

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥१३.२२॥

अनादि त्वानिर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।

शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥१३.३१॥

उत्तमपुरुषस्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥१५.१७॥

Kaivalyopaniṣad describes Paramātmā as

अपाणिपादोऽहं मचिन्त्यशक्तिः पश्याम्यक्षुः स शृणोम्यकर्णः ।

अहं विजानामि विविक्तरूपो न चास्ति वेत्ता मम चित्सदाहम् ॥२१॥

वेदैरनेकैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ।
 न पुण्यपापे मम नास्ति नाशो न जन्म देहेन्द्रियबुद्धिरस्ति ॥२२॥
 न भूमिरापो न च वह्निरस्ति न चानिलो मेऽस्ति न चाम्बरं च ।
 एवं विदित्वा परमात्मरूपं गुहारायं विष्क॥मद्वितीयम् ॥२३॥
 समस्त साक्षिं सदसद्विहीनं प्रयाति शुद्धं परमात्मरूपम् . . . ॥२४॥

Following the earlier texts; the author of the Ātmopaniṣad defines Paramātmā as : अथ परमात्मा नाम यथाक्षरमुपासनीयः । स च प्राणायामप्रत्याहार-समाधियोगानुमानाध्यात्मचिन्तकं वटकणिका श्यामाकतण्डुलो वालाग्रशतसहस्र . . . निष्क्रियः संस्कारो नास्त्येष परमात्मा पुरुषो नाम ॥३॥ i. e. Paramātmā is to be worshipped according to the precepts of the Vedas and He reveals Himself to one who through the Yoga of Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra and Samāthi or through reasoning meditates on the Adhyātma. He is like the subtle banyan seed. He cannot be grasped or perceived. Neither is He born nor He dies. He is neither dried up, nor burnt or shaken or pierced or severed. He is beyond all qualities, the witness, and eternal. Pure, component less, taintless, egoless etc. He is devoid of sense origins, doubt and expectation. He is all pervading, unthinkable and indescribable. He purifies the unclean. He is without action and Saṁskāras.

ĪŚVARA

Bṛhad states that one should meditate on the Self alone as dear : ईश्वरो ह तथैव स्यात् ॥१.४.८॥ BG refers to Īśvara as the Lord of all being : भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ॥४.६॥ Realizing that the Īśvara or Paramēśvara equally pervades everywhere, the man by such knowledge escapes Self-destruction : समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थित मीश्वरम् । न हिनस्त्यात्मनाऽऽत्मनं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥१३.२८॥ BG identifies Jīva with Īśvara who takes away the sense organs along with mind when it leaves the body :

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।
 गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धामिवाशयात् ॥१५.८॥

The inexhaustible pervades the three spheres : यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्तव्ययईश्वरः ॥१५.१७॥ BG refers to Īśvara as the alone enjoyer, perfect, powerful and happy : ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी शिद्धोऽहं बलवान् सुखी ॥१६.१४॥

Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad (II) mentions the omnipresent, creator as 'Sarveśvara' i. e. the Lord of all : य एको देव आत्मशक्तिप्रधानः सर्वज्ञः सर्वेश्वरः सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा . . . ।

Annappūṛṇopaniṣad establishes monism by stating that ' it is due to delusion (Bhrānti) that the Supreme Ātman seems to be twofold i. e. as Jīva and Īśvara. He compares it with Ghaṭākāśa (Space in the jar) and Mahākāśa (Space over all) :

यथाकाशो घटाकाशो महाकाश इतीरितः ।

तथा भ्रान्तेर्द्विधा प्रोक्तो ह्यात्मा जीवेश्वरात्मना ॥अन्नपूर्णा-५.७७॥

Śvet. Upaniṣad mentions Maheśvara as the Highest God above Īśvara

तां ईश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतम् ।

पतिं पतीनां परमं परस्तात् विदाम देवं भुवनेशं इड्यम् ॥६.७॥

Similarly Kaivalyopaniṣad also praise God Śiva as the only Highest Entity and Highest God.

तमादिमध्यान्तविहीनमेकं विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमद्भुतम् ।

उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् ॥८॥

Śaṇḍilya Upaniṣad refers to the method of worshipping God Īśvara-pūjana while discussing the topic of ten Niyamas, one of the Aṣṭāṅga-Yogas : ईश्वरपूजनं नाम प्रसन्नस्वभावेन यथाशक्ति विष्णुरुद्रादिपूजनम् ॥१.२॥

Here it is observed that one should worship God with happy mind. The author of this Upaniṣad seems to believe in हरिहरयोरभेदः; as he asks the devotee to worship both the devoties Viz. Viṣṇu and Rudra.

The word "Īśvara" popularly known as 'God' has peculiar meaning in the Advaita philosophy. The Vedāntist does not believe Īśvara to be the absolute existence. Because he is as unreal as the phenomenal universe. Brahman associated with ignorance is known as Īśvara. The difference between Īśvara and the ordinary man is that the former, though associated with Māyā, is not bound, but its fetter, where as the latter is its slave. Īśvara is the highest manifestation of Brahman in the phenomenal universe as pointed out by Sadānanda in his Vedāntasāra¹ : एतदुपहितं चैतन्यं सर्वज्ञत्वसर्वेश्वरत्वसर्वनियन्तृत्वादिगुणकमव्यक्तमन्तर्यामी जगत्कारणमीश्वर इति च व्यपदीश्यते सकलाज्ञानावभासकत्वात् । Īśvara, i.e. Brahman associated with the aggregate of ignorance, has three qualities, viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, whose affects were seen in the acts of creation, preservation and destruction.

¹ Swami Nikhilananda: Vedāntasāra of Sadānanda Pp. 27-29

BHAGAVĀN

The Supreme Being is glorified as Bhagavān in several earlier and later texts. Pointing out the characteristics of Bhagavān, Viṣṇu - Purāṇa states:

ऐश्वर्यस्य सग्नस्य धर्मस्य यशस्त्रियः ।

ज्ञानवैराग्ययोश्चैव षण्णां भगिति ईरणा ॥वि.पु.॥

The major *Upaniṣads* like Bṛhad¹ Chan², Śvet.³, Praśna⁴ and Maitrī⁵ use the term Bhagvān for the 'Lord' or 'God' while Śvet. Upa (V.4) once refers to the term as 'Glorious One' even Gauḍapāḍakārikā (IV.82, 84 and BG X.14, 17) refers to Bhagavān as 'the God'.

Like the major *Upaniṣad*, minor *Upaniṣads* also mention the God as Bhagavān.

Minor *Upaniṣads* like Āruṇeyī, Kaivalya and Atharvaśikhā apply the term Bhagavān to those persons who are asked questions regarding the Supreme Being, like Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin and Atharvan respectively. The Atharvaśira Upa. Uses Bhagavān thirty two times in paying respect and glorifying various deities, natural phenomena etc.

Brahmā is addressed as Bhagavān at the commencement of Mahāvākya Upa.

The Atharvaśira Upa. eulogizes Bhagavān Maheśvara as : अथ कस्मादुच्यते भगवान्महेश्वरः यस्माद्भक्ताज्ज्ञानेन भजत्यनुगृह्णाति च वाचं संसृजति विसृजति च सर्वाभिवान्परित्यज्यात्मज्ञानेन योगैश्वर्येण महति महीयते तस्मादुच्यते भगवान्महेश्वरः॥४॥

Similarly Atharvaśira (6) mentions Bhagavān, Rudra as all pervading : व्यापको हि भगवान्द्रो . . . ॥६॥ Kṛṣṇopaniṣad (2,8) also refer to the term Bhagavān in the sense of 'God'-Jābāla (4) Upa. Glorifies see Yājñavalkya as Bhagavān : अवमेवैतद्भगवन्निति वै याज्ञवल्क्य ॥४॥

PURUṢA

The Supreme Being, also known as Puruṣa is glorified in several major

¹ Bṛhad Up. II.1.3, 13; III.1, 2,; 7.1, 8.1,12; 9.27; IV.2.1, 4, 3.14-16; 4.7, 23,; 5.4, 14; VI.2.4.

² Chan. Upa. - I - 8.7; 11 - 1 - 4; IV - 4.3; 5.1, 2; 6.2, 3,; 7.2, 3,; 8.2, 3; 9.2, 3; 14 - 2, 3; V - 1.7, 12; 3 - 4, 6,; 11.2, 4, 5; VI - 1, 7; 5.4; 6.5; 8.7; 9.4; 10.3; 11.3; 12.3; 13.3; 14.3; 15.3; VII - 1.3; 26.2; VIII - 7.3.

³ Svet Upa - III - 1

⁴ Prasna Upa. - I - 1, 3, ; II - 1; III - 1; IV - I; V - 1; VI - 1.

⁵ Maitrī Upa - I - 2, 3, 4,; II - 1, 2, 3, 4,; III - 1, 2; IV - 1, 5; VI - 13, 30, VII - 10.

Upaniṣads like Bṛhad.¹, Chān.², Taitt.³, Ait.⁴, Kāṭha⁵, Praśna⁶, Muṇḍaka⁷, Śvet.⁸, Kauṣītaki⁹, Maitrī¹⁰ etc. BG¹¹ also eulogizes Puruṣa as the Supreme Being. Kāṭhopaniṣad portrays Him as the Supreme : पुरुषात्र परं किञ्चित्साकाशा सा परा गतिः : १३.११ ॥

Gauḍapāḍakārikā (I.6) mentions Puruṣa as the creator of the rays of the mind : सर्वजनयति प्राणश्चेतश्चून्पुरुषः पृथक् ॥ १.६कड ॥

Following the footsteps of the earlier text Kaivalya Upa. States

अणोरणीयानहमेव तद्वन्महानहं विश्वमहं विचित्रम् ।
पुरातनोऽहं पुरुषोऽहमीषो हिरण्मयोऽहं शिवरूपमस्मि ॥ २० ॥

Kṣurikopaniṣad mentions the abode of Puruṣa as : ततो रक्तोत्पलाभासं पुरुषायतनं महत् ॥ १९अब ॥ Atharvaśiras glorifies Puruṣa as subtle : सूक्ष्मं पुरुषम् ॥ १३ ॥

BRAHMAN

The word Brahman is derived from the root √bṛh or Bṛhma = to extend.

Accordingly, Brahman is the name of that Reality from which has expanded or manifested the whole creation. In Nirukta (1 - 8), the word brahman (Brahman RV X.71.11) is explained as suggesting the of the sense of 'prayer' and lone well versed in Vedic lore respectively has been connected with the parivr̥dha; eminent and high, the former outing to all Surpassing greatness the latter on account of his learning.¹²

The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa (III.379) derives the term from the bhr̥, bhrama to maintain to support and interprets it as that which supports the whole

¹ Bṛhad: I - 4.1, 10, 17.; 5.2, 15; II - 1.2 - 17; 2.3, 5, 6; 5.1, 18; II - 2.11, 13.; 7.2; 9.4, 10 - 17, 26, 28; IV - 3 - 2 to 7 - 21, 66; 4.1, 5; V 6.1; 9.1; 10.1, 15.1; VI - 2.12 - 15; 3.1; 4.1.

² Chān.-I.1.2, 6; 6; 7.5; II.6.1, 9.7; III - 12.3, 4, 6 - 8; 13 - 7; 14.1; 16.1; IV - 10 - 2; 11.1; 12.1; 13.1; 15.1; V 7.1; 11.6; VI 2.3; 4.7; 7.1; 8.1; 14-1, 2; VI 15-1; 16.1; VIII 12, 3, 4.

³ Taitt - I - 6.1; II - 1.1; 3.1

⁴ Ait - I I - 3; II - 2; III - 11; IV - 12; V - 8; VI - 8

⁵ Kāṭha - I - 8; II - 1; III - 11; IV - 12; V - 8; VI - 8

⁶ Prasana - III - 3.8; IV - 1, 2, 9; V - 5; VI - 1, 2, 5, 6

⁷ Muṇḍaka - I - 1.7, 2.11, 13; II - 1.2, 5, 10; III - 1.3, 2.1, 8

⁸ Svet - I - 2; III - 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 19; IV - 7

⁹ Kausi - I - 1; III - 6; III - 3; IV - 3 - 19

¹⁰ Maitrī - II - 6; III - 33; IV - 6; VI - 1, 6., 10, 18, 30, 33, 35; VII - 11.

¹¹ BG - II - 15, 21, 60; III - 4; VIII - 4, 8, 10, 22; IX - 3; X - 12; XI - 18, 38; XIII - 19, 23, XV - 4, 16, 17, XVII - 3; XVIII - 4

¹² Vide Varma Siddheshwar, The Etymologies of Yāska Pg. 49

universe.¹

Madhusudan Oza² derives the term from the two roots viz. $\sqrt{b}rha$ and $\sqrt{b}hrama$ means that which pervades the whole universe and secondly that which supports the whole universe.

The word Bharmā thus develops gradually and step by step from Bharmā > Bharanam > Bharman > Brahman.

According to Macdonell the word Brahman is derived from the $\sqrt{B}arh$ (2nd Conj.) means pious swelling or fullness of soul, devotion, pious utterance, prayer, Vedic spell, Om etc. and the 'brahman' (M) means devote man, priest worshipper, knower of Vedic texts or spells etc.

Śaṅkara explains the term while commenting the aphorism अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा (I.1.1) as, there must exist Brahman, who by nature is eternally pure, conscious and free, omni-scent and omni-potent. He shows the etymology of the word Brahman from the root $\sqrt{b}rhati$ to exceed, atīśayana and points in to that what is eternally, pure and so on in accordance with the meaning of the root $\sqrt{B}r̥mh$: अस्ति तावत् ब्रह्म नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभावं सर्वज्ञं सर्वशक्तिं समन्वितं ब्रह्म स्वस्य हि न्यत्पाद्यमानस्य नित्यशुद्धत्यादयोः अर्थः प्रतीयन्ते बृहतेः धर्तृः अर्थानुगमात् । शाङ्क.भा.-१.१॥

T. M. P. Mahadevan³ also derives the terms from the $bṛh$ 'to burst forth' or 'to grow' probably suggesting the sense of 'prayer' or 'speech'. Eventually it came to signify the ground of the universe or the source of all existence that which has burst forth into the universe or that from which the universe has grown.

S. Radhakrishnan⁴ states that the word Brahman is used in the *Upaniṣads* to indicate the Supreme Reality. It is derived from the root $\sqrt{b}r̥h$ - 'to grow, to burst forth'. The derivation suggests flushing forth, bubbling over, ceaseless growth, $bṛhattvam$.

Śāṇḍilya *Upaniṣad* gives the following etymology of the word Brahman. It is so called because it grows (बृंहति) and causes all things to grow

¹ Jaiminiya Brahmana (3.379) - स एष एव ब्रह्म एष हि इदं सर्वं विभर्ति तस्मात् एष एव भ्रम ह वै नाम् एष तत् ब्रह्म इति परोक्षम् आचक्षत ।

² Oza Madhusudan - Brhama - Siddhanta - I - 9 -11, P -13 ab cf. Ibid, Brahmasamavaya, Atmakanda, Nirvisesa - Nuvak Ka, 29, 29, 30, 31.

³ Mahadevan T. M. P. - Invitation to Indian Philosophy Page 33, Arnold - Hesnemann Publishers, New Delhi, - 1974, First edition.

⁴ Radhakrishnan S. - The Principal *Upaniṣads* Introduction Pg. 52

(बृंहयति) : बृंहति बृंहयति सर्वं तस्मादुच्यते परंब्रह्मेति ।३.२॥

The word Brahman occurs over 200 time¹ in the RV in various case forms and as a part of compound. It occurs in the RV both in masculine and in the neuter gender. In masculine gender denotes the senses such as: Brahmin Singer (Brhamaṇaḥ Stotra) (I.80.1; IV.58.2; V.40.8; VII.42.1 etc.); Create mighty (Parivṛdhaḥ) (I.16 8.6; IV.58.2; V.29.3; V.32.12 etc.); Creator (Prajāpati) (I.164.35; X.125.5; I.141.3); Lord of Prayer i.e. Bṛhaspati (brahmanaspati) (II.1.3); Brahman priest (Brahmā) (II.1.2, IV.94, IX.96.6); Prayer (Brahma) (VIII.31.1); Sacrificial priest (Brahmaṇaḥ) (I.10.1); Aṅgirasas or Marut (Brahmāṇa) (V.31.4); Brahman or Cause of the Universe (Brahmāṇam) (II.37.1; X.107.6).

The word Brahman is more frequently used in neuter gender than in masculine gender in the RV. According to Sāyaṇa in neuter gender it denotes the senses such as : Prayer (Stotra) (1.62.13, 1.20.5; 3.41.3 etc.); Food, Sacrificial or ordinary (Anna or Havis) (1.10.4, 2.41.18, 3.8.2, 4.22.1 etc.); Cause of universe (Jagat Kāraṇam); Great act (Parivṛdham Karma) (1.105.15; 1.129.4; 8.69.9; 9.86.41); Brahmin (8.35.16, 8.37.1); Body (Putrādivardhanakāri) (9.68.23); Great (Bṛhat) (9.71.1); Rudra (10.61.7).

Thus in the RV the Brahman means prayer. In the YV it came to mean the sacrifice and in the AV it stands for the magical potency. "It was easy from this state to mean it as the highest and mystic principle behind the universe" states S. G. Desai.²

In the Sūktas of AV, the first meaning of the word Brahman is "the magical power that arises at the magical acts." States Suryakant Bali³

Accordingly to N. J. Shende⁴: "It has also been maintained on the basis of several references that the Brahman is the miraculous power which brings additional potency to the ears, five different organs, heart, mind and intelligence of the priest or the individual who practices the magical acts." In this context, the Brahman Stands for the magical act or the power arising out of that:

¹ Narhari H. G. - Ataman in the Pre - *Upaniṣadic* Vedic Literature, P - 3, 22 - 25.

² Desai S. G. - A Critical Study of the Later *Upaniṣads* Page 391

³ Bali Suryakant - Historical and Critical Studies of the AV Page 131 (Article on - The Philosophy of AV Vacaspati Upadhyaya) Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1981

⁴ Sende N. J. The Religious and Philosophy of the Atharva Veda, Page 202.

ब्रह्म देवामनु क्षियति ब्रह्मदैवजनीर्विखः ।

ब्रह्मदमन्नक्षत्रं ब्रह्म सत्क्षत्रमुच्यते ॥ अथर्ववेद-१०.२.२३ ॥

Brahman is called the creator of the earth and the atmosphere : ब्राह्मणा भूमिर्विहिता ब्रह्म दोरुत्तर हिता । अथर्ववेद-१०.२.२५ ॥ Brahman is denoted by the term 'Puruṣa' and is mentioned as the material and the efficient cause of the body.

ऊर्ध्वेनु सृष्टातीर्यन्तु सृष्ट सर्वा दिशः पुरुष आ बयूवा ।

पुरं यो ब्रह्मणो वेद यस्याः पुरुष यच्यते ॥ अथर्ववेद-१०.२.२८ ॥

The hymns thus enunciate the principle that the microcosm and macrocosm emerge out of the same Supreme Reality i. e. Brahman (AV X 2.31.32).

The Skambha Sūkta (Av X 7) personifies Skambha i.e. the fulcrum of universe and identifies Him with Brahman as the Puruṣa.

In the Brahman as, Brahman denotes the ritual and so is regarded as omnipotent. He who knows Brahman knows and controls the universe. Brahman becomes the primal principle and guiding spirit of the universe. 'There is nothing more ancient or brighter than this Brahman.' (Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa-X.3.5.11)

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Mentions that the ultimate reality is being : सन्मात्रं हि ब्रह्म । The Kaṭha Upa. (III - 2) Brahman as immutable and Supreme : अक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्परम् । The Chāndogya Upaniṣad (VI.8.4), however, makes out that five in the first to evolve from the Primeval Being and from fire came water and from water the earth. At the time of dissolution, the earth is dissolved in water and water in fire, and fire in the Primeval Being.

The two terms 'Brahman' and 'Ātman' are used as synonyms in the *Upaniṣads*. The Ch. Upa. Inquire about the Ātman and Brahman which appear as interchangeable terms : को नु आत्मा किं ब्रह्मेति ॥५.११.१॥ In some contexts where the inquiry is into the source of the universe, the expression 'Ātman' is employed and in some other contexts. There the topic discussed is the true self of Ātman, the term 'Brahman' is used. For eg. In the Chān. Upa. a king, while describing the Reality which is the source of the universe, refers to it as the cosmic Ātman, while in the Taitt Upa. Bhṛgu makes an analysis of the Sheaths that cover the self, while the term of reference is Brahman.

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (III.1)¹ the pupil approaches the father and asks him to explain to him the nature of Brahman. He is given the formal definition and is asked to supply the content by his own reflection. 'That from which these beings are born, that is which when born they live, and that into which they enter at their death is Brahman.' The son is impressed by the material phenomena and fixes on matter (Anna) as the basic principle, when not satisfied, he looks upon life (Prāṇa), then consciousness (manas), then intellectual consciousness (Vijñāna) and he finally arrives at the truth that spiritual freedom or delight (Ānanda), is the ultimate principle. It concludes with the affirmation that absolute Reality is Satyam – truth, Jñānam – Consciousness and Anantam – infinite.

Similar concept of the Supreme Reality being called as Satyam (Truth), Jñānam (Knowledge), Anantam (infinite) and Ānandam (Bliss) is found in Sarvopaniṣad. The *Upaniṣad* defines each of this trait of Brahman.

Sarvopaniṣad defines Satya as : सत्यमविनाशिनामदेशकालवस्तुनिमित्तेषु विनश्यत्सु यन्न विनश्यत्यविनाशि तत्सत्यमित्युच्यते । i.e. The reality is indestructible, that which, when name, space, time, substance and causation are destroyed, dies not, is the indestructible. This concept of 'Satya' as Brahman is borrowed from Vedic literature, H. G. Narahari² state: " The word Satya occurs in RV for almost fifty six times and it is understood by Sāyaṇa to mean 'Brahman – The True'

सत्येनोत्तभूमिः सूर्येणोत्तभिता द्यौः ।

ऋतेनादित्यास्तिष्ठति दिवि सोमो अधि श्रितः ॥१०.८५.१॥

Sāyaṇācārya interpret, the word 'Satyena' as : सत्येन ब्रह्मणा अनन्तामना ब्रह्मा खलु देवानां मध्ये सत्यभूतः । This view is also accepted by the *Upaniṣadic* seers. For e.g. Brhad. Upa. (II.3.1) : द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्तं चैवामूर्तं च मर्त्यं चामूर्तं च स्थितं च यच्च सच्च त्वं च । Cha. Upa.³ Also states : तत्सत्यं स आत्मा । Similar view is found in Maitrī Upa. (VI. 8; VII .7) : एष हि खल्वात्मा . . . सत्यम् । Kauṣ. Upa. (IV.5,18) also state : सत्यस्यात्मेति वा or सत्यस्वात्मा भवति । Ch. Upa. also states : ब्रह्मणो नाम सत्यम् । ८.३.४॥ Taitt. Upa. (II.1.1) assigns all these three truths viz. Satya, Jñāna, and Ananta to Brahman : सत्यंज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ।

¹ यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद्ब्रह्मेति ।

² Narhari H. G. - Ātman in pre - *Upaniṣadic* Vedic literature Pgs. 4.

³ Ch. Upa. VI - 8.7, 9.4, 10.3, 11.3, 12.3, 13.3, 14.3, 15.3 16.2.3

Bṛhad Upa. V 4.1 and V 5.1 refer to Satya as Brahman : सत्यं ह्येव ब्रह्म सत्यं ब्रह्मेति । Śaṅkarācārya quotes Bṛhad V 4.1 and V 5.2 while discussing the Satya-vidyā in BS III 3.38 : सैव हि सत्यादयः । In the Satyādhikaraṇam.

Jñāna means knowledge. It is defined by Sarvopaniṣad as: ज्ञानमित्युत्पत्ति-विनाशरहितं चैतन्यं ज्ञानमित्यभिधीयते । Knowledge is that consciousness which is void of origin and destruction.

Apart from the reference to Jñāna in the Taitt. Upa. (II 1.1) as characteristic Brahman, nowhere in the earlier Vedantic literature¹ do we find the concept of Jñāna as defined above. Moreover Śrī Kṛṣṇa in BG (I.1) identifies himself with knowledge BG defines Jñāna as:

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तं अज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥१३.११॥

BG XIII 7 -11, states the characteristics of Jñāna and BG XIV 17 states that Jñāna has spring from Sattva : सत्त्वात्सञ्जायते ज्ञानम् ।

Ananta is defined in the Sarvopaniṣad as : अनन्तं नाम मृद्विकारेषु मृदेव सुवर्णविकारेषु सुवर्णमिव तन्तुकार्येषु तन्तुरिवाव्यक्तादिसृष्टिप्रपञ्चेषु पूर्वं व्यापकं चैतन्यमनन्त-मित्युच्यते । And Ananta, the infinite, remaining in the same manner as does the clay in modification of clay, as gold in the modifications of gold, as thread in the fabric of threads, the antecedent, all pervading consciousness, that is in all phenomena of creation beginning with the unmanifested, is called the infinite.

Ananta is identified with the Supreme in many earlier *Upaniṣad* like Chan (I.9.2)², Kāṭha (III.15)³, Taitt (II.1.1)⁴, Śvet. (I.9)⁵, Maitrī (II.4; VI.28; VI.24)⁶.

Moreover other minor *Upaniṣad* like Atharvaśīras (3), Amṛtabindu, Jābāla etc. also refer to Ananta as the Supreme Bang : यः सर्वव्यापि सोऽनन्तो योऽनन्तस्तत्तारम् । अथर्वशिरस्-३ ॥ Similarly निर्विकल्पमनन्तं च । अमृतबिन्दु-९ ॥ and also य एषोऽनन्तोऽव्यक्त आत्मा । जाबाल-२ ॥

¹ Maitrī Upa. - VI 3.4 - II 33, 38, 99; Amṛtabindu - 19, Skanda - 11.

² स एषोऽनन्तः ॥१९.२॥ ; Chān.-III.2.9,12; IV.15 also refer to Ananta.

³ अनाधनन्तं महतः परम् ॥३.१५॥

⁴ सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ॥२.१.१॥

⁵ अनन्थात्मा विश्वरूपः ॥१.९॥

⁶ अनन्तोऽक्षय्यः ॥२.४, ६.२८॥

BG also refers to Ananta as the Supreme : तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥११.४७॥

The Jīvātmā attains identity with the Brahman on the dawning of knowledge and when ignorance with all its limiting adjustments disappear in the sense conveyed by the Brahmasūtra : अतो अनन्तेन, तथा हि लिङ्गम् ॥३.२.२६॥

Therefore the individual soul becomes one with the infinite, as the scripture says – as at as said in Muṇḍaka III.2.9 : ‘He who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman Himself.’ : ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति ।

Further, here in the definition of Ananta, we find the philosophy of Vallabhācārya who prepared *Avikṛtapariṇāmavāda*. As it is seen in the definition : मृद्धिकारेषु मृदिव, सुवर्णविकारेषु सुवर्णमिव, तन्तुकार्येषु तन्तुरिव । Such as Ananta i. e. unmodified. It means that why any part of it is known, the whole of it is known. i.e. everything that exists is Ananta i.e. Brahman.

Avikṛtapariṇāma means a kind of change which does not leave any trace of its effect on the substance of the thing i.e. It is no change but simply one kind of phase of a thing when turned into another, so Vallabhācārya establishes that Brahman is Avikṛtapariṇāma. It exhibits various places in it during the course of etc. expansion or manifestation into various forms of matter and souls. But these phases, do not affect the real form of Brahman.

“The Brahmasūtra I 4.26 : आत्महतेः परिणामात् convey this sense what seems to be creation is the work of Ātman (Brahma). Creation as nothing but the expansion of Brahman. Not only Brahman does create cosmos out of itself but It is fashioner of it. Like a potter that makes a pot out of clay, at does not remain aloof after creating the universe. So it is both material cause as well as efficient cause of the world. Cosmos is the effect of which Brahman is a cause. Here cause and effect relationship is not the ordinary one, which is found in this world. But here they are non different. As a spider evolves a cob - web out of its belly, so does Brahman brings out the universe, which is latent in it. When it will to spent.”¹

And so Vallabhācārya says explaining the BS-I.4.2 : सूक्ष्मं तु तदहत्त्वात् that ‘Avyakta is Brahman and here it is designated as Sūkṣma.

¹ Pgs. 121-122 - Primer of anu Dharya by Jethalal G. Shah - 2nd edition 1960.

The same concept of Avikṛtapariṇāma is explained in detail in the Chandogya Upa. VI - 1.4 : यथा सोम्य एकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृन्मये विज्ञातं स्यात् वाचारंभणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिका इत्येव सत्यम् ।

Āruṇi, the father of Śvetaketu tells explain his son the knowledge of the Supreme Reality by knowing which everything becomes known,. He says, “just as by the knowledge of lump of earth, everything that is made of earth comes to be known, all this being merely a word, a modification, and a name, the ultimate substratum of et all being the earth, similarly when any part of Brahman is known, the whole of it is known, the whole of it is know, the ultimate subtratum of at all being Brahman itself, which is self - identical, self-subsistent, and self - known. It means that everything that exists is Brahman. This same philosophy is explained by the author in Sarvopaniṣad. The term तन्तुकायेषु तन्तुरिव, also can be explained by the असमवायि कारव as given in the Tarkasaṃgraha by Annambhaṭṭa. It is said: कार्येण कारणेन वा सहैकस्मिन्नर्थे समवेतत्वे सति कारणमसमवायिकारणम् । यथा तन्तुसंयोगः परस्य । तन्तुरूपं परगतरूपस्य । तर्कसङ्ग्रह-३७ ॥ i.e. where the cause and effect are associated in one and the same object, that cause is called non - intimate: such as the conjunction of the threads is the non-intimate cause of cloth, and the colour of the threads is that of the cloth itself. Such or this is the relation of the Ananta with the world.

Ānanda is defined in Sarvopaniṣad as : आनन्दो नाम सुखचैतन्यस्वरूपोऽपरिमिता-नन्दसमुद्रोऽविशिष्टसुखरूपश्चाऽऽनन्द इत्युच्यते । Ānanda, Bliss - the essence of the consciousness of happiness, the ocean of measureless bliss, and the state of undifferentiated happiness (the happiness which is not dependent on the senses such as sight, hearing, touch etc.) is called Bliss.

Ānanda as the subtles of all treats, attributed only to the Supreme Reality is also formed in the earlier texts like Brhad¹ and Taitt² details.

Tejabindūpaniṣad refers to Ānanda as Brahman who is beyond the causality of happiness, difficult to be seen, birth less, immutable, free from all functions of the mind - stuff, eternal constant and imperishable.’

आनन्दं नन्दनातीतं दुष्प्रेक्ष्यमजमव्ययम् ।

चित्तवृत्तिविनिर्मुक्ते शाश्वतं ध्रुवमच्युतम् ॥८॥

¹ Brhad - विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म ।३.९.२२,२८॥ एषोऽस्य परम आनन्दएतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि नात्रामुपजीवन्ति ।४.३.३२॥

² Taitti - आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विज्ञान् ।२.४.१, २.९.१॥ आनन्द आत्मा ।२.५.१॥ आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानादानन्दाद्धि . . . भूतानि जायन्त आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्त्यानन्दं प्रयन्ति ।३.६.१॥

Ānanda is referred in the Brahmasūtras by Bādarāyaṇa. He says :
आनन्दादयः प्रधानस्य ॥३.३.११॥ इतरे एवर्थसामान्यात् ॥३.३.१३॥

It means that the attributes like Ānanda i.e. Bliss, Knowledge, all pervading etc. show or described the nature of the Brahman and are given here for the knowledge of Brahman. Similarly the sūtra : आनन्दमयोऽभ्यासात् ॥१.१.१२॥ establish the fact that 'self is consisting of Bliss because of the repetition seen or found in the Taittirīya Upa. Thus, the above sūtra consider Ānanda as a trait of the Supreme Reality.

Śaṅkarācārya in his Vivekacūḍāmaṇi (124-195), portrays all the tracts of the Supreme Being as omni scent, with of three states, distinct from five sheaths etc. :

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म विशुद्धं परं स्वतः सिद्धम् ।

नित्यानन्दैकरसं प्रत्यगभिन्नं निरन्तरं जयति ॥२२५॥

अतः परं ब्रह्म सद्वितीयं विशुद्धविज्ञानघनं निरञ्जनम् ।

प्रशान्तमाद्यन्तविहीनमक्रियं निरन्तरानन्दरसस्वरूपम् ॥२३७॥

निरस्तमायाकृतसर्वभेदं नित्यं सुखं निष्कलमप्रमेयम् ।

अरूपमव्यक्तमनाख्यमव्ययं ज्योतिः स्वयं किञ्चिदिदं च कास्ति ॥२३८॥

ज्ञातृज्ञेयज्ञानशून्यमनन्तं निर्विकल्पकम् ।

केवलाखण्डचिन्मात्रं परं तत्त्वं विदुर्बुधाः ॥२३९॥

So, Brahma means that *Ajaḍa* (non-gross i.e. subtle) entity wheel in by the power of the knowledge of one's own form, there is cessation of *Janma*, *Sthiti* and *Bhaṅga* i.e. production, sustenance and destruction. Sarvopaniṣad states : एतद्वस्तु चतुष्टयं यस्य लक्षणं वस्तु निमित्तेष्व व्यभिचारि स तत्पदार्थः परमात्मा परं ब्रह्मेत्युच्यते । Commentator *Upaniṣad* Brahma Yogin goes in detail to describe each important term given in the text Ātmopaniṣad.

Ananta : Means that entity with the Kāraṇātmā, infinite consciousness which is pervaded in his own work and is void of three types of *Paricchedas* i. e. that Brahma which is devoid of Deśa, Kāla and Vastu : कारणात्मना स्वकार्यव्यापकचैतन्यमनन्तं त्रिविधपरिच्छेदशून्यं देशतः कालतः वस्तुतः परिच्छेदरहितं ब्रह्म इति श्रुतेः ।

Ānanda : A Brāhmaṇa verse in Vedas (छान्दसः) passes over (व्यत्ययः), the characteristic sign (लिङ्ग) : लिङ्गव्यत्ययः छान्दसः ।

Paramātmā : That he, in the Deśa, Kāla, Vastu and Nimitta, which is

following the improper course (व्यभिचारी), becomes अव्यभिचारी following proper course i. e. the तत् पदार्थ from the त्व पदार्थ in तत्त्वमसि i.e. becomes Paramātmā : सोऽयं व्यभिवारिदेशकालवस्तुनिमित्तेषु अव्यभिचारी तत्पदार्थः परमात्मा भवतीत्यर्थः ।

Parabrahma : त्वंपदार्थोपाधिभेदः जीवत्वं तस्मात् तत्पदार्थोपाधिकभेदस्त्वीश्वरत्वं तस्मादपि विलक्षणं अत एव आकाशवत् सूक्ष्मं आकाशव्यापकत्वात् यत् केवलं प्रत्यक्षपरविभागैक्यकलनाऽसम्भवप्रबोधसिद्धं सत्तामात्रस्वभावं ब्रह्मात्रमसन्नहि इति निष्पतियोगिकब्रह्मात्रावशेषश्रुते तदेव हि परं ब्रह्मेत्यर्थः ।

Parabrahma is that entity which is different from the limitations of of the Jīvātmā and also from the limitations of Upādhi of Īśvara, and so it is subtle like the sky due to its all - pervasiveness. One who is absolute / only inner individual self, under Īstood as non - dual of any other divisions, difficult to be proved by intellect, of the nature of a ruler, “that Brahman is not non - existent” such statements which are not contradictory are found in Śruti for Brahman. He is the Supreme Brahman

Earlier *Upaniṣads* like Bṛhad¹, Taitt², Muṇḍaka³ etc. also refer to Ānanda as Brahman.

Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa in Br. Sūtra : द्युम्वाद्यायतनं स्व-शब्दात् ॥३.१.१॥ Establishes Brahman as the resting place of heaven, earth etc., which means that Brahman is the highest being the substratum of all.

Amṛtabindūpaniṣad (22) glorify the Supreme Reality as the abode of all :

सर्वभूतादिवासं यद्भूतेषु च वसत्यपि ।
सर्वानुग्राहकत्वेन तदस्म्यहं वासुदेवः ॥२२॥

Tejabindūpaniṣad eulogize the Supreme abode as:

परं गुह्यमिदं स्थानमव्यक्तं ब्रह्म निराश्रयम् ।
व्योमरूपं कलासूक्ष्मं विष्णोस्तत्परमं पदम् ॥५॥
त्र्यम्बकं त्रिगुणं स्थानं त्रिधातु रूपवर्जितम् ।
निश्चलं निर्विकल्पं च निराधारं निराश्रयम् ॥६॥

¹ विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म ॥३.९.२८॥ एषोऽस्य परम आनन्दएतस्यैवानन्दस्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति ॥४.३.३२॥

² आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् । न बिभेति कदाचनेति ॥२.४.१॥

³ तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति ॥२.२.७॥

उपाधिरहितं स्यानं वाङ्मनोऽतीतगोचरम् ।

स्वभावभावनाग्राह्यं संघातैकपदोज्झितम् ॥७॥

तद्ब्राह्मणं तदध्यात्मं तन्निष्ठा तत्परायणम् ।

अचित्तचित्तमात्मानं तद्वयोम परमं स्थितम् ॥९॥

Thus this Supreme of abode of Viṣṇu Brahman in general, is hidden in mystery, the sustain place of all imperceptible without support, derived of from, unchangeable, unconditioned, uncontainable etc.

Brahman is eulogized in several major and minor *Upaniṣads* like Bṛhad¹ Chan.² Taittirīya³, Kāṭha⁴, Kena⁵, Aitareya⁶, Muṇḍaka⁷, Praśna⁸, Māṇḍūkya⁹, Śvetāśvatara¹⁰, Maitrī¹¹, Kauṣītaki¹², Gauḍapāḍakārikā¹³, Mahānārāyaṇa¹⁴, Kaivalya¹⁵, Atharvaśīras¹⁶, Atharvāīkhā¹⁷, Tejabindu¹⁸, Amṛtabindu¹⁹ etc. BG²⁰ glorifies the Supreme Being as Brahman in several ways.

Brahmasūtras III.2.11, Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa also establishes Brahman as without qualities while discussing on the nature of Supreme Reality : न स्थानतोऽपि परस्योभयलिङ्गं सर्वत्र हि ॥३.२.११॥

¹ Brha - I - 3.21, I - 4.6, 10, 11, 15; II 1.4, 15; II - 4.6; II - 5.1, 19; II 6.3; III - 1.6, 9; III - 4.1; III - 9.28; IV 1.2, 3; IV 4.5, 7, 25; V 1.1; V - 3.1; V - 5.1; V -12.1; VI 5.4.

² Chān. : I -7/5; III 5.1, 11.4; 14.1, 4: 18. - 6; III - 19.1, 4.; IV 5.2., 3.; IV - 10.5, 15.1, 6, 16.2; IV - 17.8, 10; V - 11, 1; vII - 1.5, 2.2; VII - 3 -1; VIII 3.4

³ Taitt. I.1.1, 6.2, 8.1; II - 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 8.1; III 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 10.4.

⁴ Kāṭha II .16; III - 2; V .6

⁵ Kena 4, 27

⁶ Ait - III - 13; V - 3

⁷ Muṇḍaka - I 1.1., 2; 8, 9, 10; II 2.2., 4, 9, 11; III 2.9

⁸ Praśna - II - 6; IV 4; VI - 7

⁹ Māṇḍ. - 2

¹⁰ Svet - I - 9, 12, 7, 16; II - 7, IV - 2; V - 6; VI - 21

¹¹ Maitrī - IV . IV 4, 6; VI 3, 4, 5, 14, a6, 20, 22, 24, 35 VII -11

¹² Kaus - I - 4, 7; II -1, 12.; IV .1.

¹³ Gaud - I -25, 26; III 12, 33, 35, 46

¹⁴ Mahanar - I - 6, 7; V -10; XI 13; XII .1; XIII -1; XV .1, 4, 10

¹⁵ Kaivalya - 10, 16, 17, 19

¹⁶ Atharvaśīras 1, 3, 5, 6

¹⁷ Atharvasika - 1,2

¹⁸ Tejabindu - 5, 9, 14

¹⁹ Amṛtabindu - 8, 16, 12

²⁰ BG III - 15; IV 24, 31; V -10, III -3; X - 12; XIII -12; SVII - 23.

Śaṅkarācārya while commenting upon it says that though the *Upaniṣadic* texts describe Brahman as both i. e. Qualified (Saguṇa) (ch. III 14.2) and also as unqualified (Nirguṇa) Br. II 8.8), the true nature of the Brahman is devoid of the qualified aspects as given in Kaṭhopaniṣad.

अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तत्राऽऽसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् ।

अनाद्यनन्तं महतः परं ध्रुवं निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते ॥१.३.१५॥

In this Aṇubhāṣya on Brahmsūtra III 2.27, Vallabhācārya point out that Its is one and the same Brahman that appears in diverse forms: अतः सर्वविरुद्धधर्माणामाश्रयो भगवान्, न हि प्रमाणश्रुतदृष्टेनुपपत्तिरस्ति यदर्थं युक्त्यपेक्षा । ३.२.२७ ॥

Not only this but even the attribute of Brahman are also Brahman i. e. Brahman is both Nirākāra and Sākāra and yet we cannot say that there are tow Brahman.

The same concept of Brahman beign formless is also discussed by Bādarāyaṇa in his BS III 2.14 : अरूपवदेव हि तत्प्रधानत्वात् । i.e. Brahman is formless as He is the Main purport of all the texts about Brahman as it is also stated in Brhad III 8.8; Kaṭha - I 3.15; etc. On one side Brahman is said to be with the three Guṇas i.e. attributes while on the other side He is said to be formless. The Brahmsūtra : न भेदादिति चेत्, न प्रत्येकमतद्वचनात् ॥२.२.१२॥ ascertains that every such form is due to Upādhi and it is derived of Brahman in texts like Brhad II.5.1 : यश्चायमस्यां पृथिव्यां तेजोमयोऽमृतमयः पुरुषो यश्चायमध्यात्मं शरीरस्तेजो-मयोऽमृतमयः पुरुषोऽयमेव स योऽयमात्मा । or Chān.: आकाशो वै नाम नामरूपयोर्निर्विहिता । यदनन्तरा तद्ब्रह्म ॥८.१४.१॥ and also in Muṇḍaka Upa : दिव्योह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः ॥२.१.२॥ Similar thought is expressed in Muṇḍaka I 1.6.

Śaṅkarācārya in Vivekacūḍāmaṇi also refers to Brahman as Upādhirahita :

उपाधिसम्बन्धवशात्परात्मा ह्युपाधिधर्माननुभाति तद्गुणः ।

अयोविकारानविकारिवह्निवैष्णवैकरोऽपि परः स्वभावात् ॥१११॥

Similar expression is found in Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 357 and 501.

The Supreme Reality is possessed of several contradictory attribute as stated in the Amṛtabindupanisad :

नैव चिन्त्यं न चाचिन्त्यं न चिन्त्यं चिन्त्यमेव तत् ।

पक्षपातविनिर्मुक्तं ब्रह्मसंपद्यते तद् ॥६॥

तदेव निष्कलं ब्रह्म निर्विकल्पं निरञ्जनम् ।
 तद्ब्रह्माहमिति ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्म संपद्यते ध्रुवम् ॥८॥
 निर्विकल्पमनन्तं च हेतुदृष्टान्तं वर्जितम् ।
 अप्रमेयमानादिं च यज्ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते बुधः ॥९॥

ŚABDA BRAHMA

Amṛtabindu *Upaniṣad* mentions two types of Brahman: शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परब्रह्मादिगच्छति । अमृतबिन्दु-१७ ॥ i.e. Śabda Brahma (Word Brahman) and Param-Brahma (Supreme Brahman)

शब्दाक्षरं परं ब्रह्म तस्मिन्क्षीणे यदक्षरम् ।
 तद्विद्वानक्षरं ध्यायेद्यदीच्छेच्छान्तिमात्मनः ॥१६॥

The idea is that 'word' is the Supreme Brahman. But when the idea of 'word' vanishes, that which remains is the 'imperishable Brahman' Further it is said : .

द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये तु शब्दब्रह्म परं च यत् ।
 शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥१७॥

Here it is pointed out that of the two Vidyās when the Śabda-Brahman is mastered then only he is eligible to attain the Highest Brahman.

According to Swami Mādhavānanda¹ Here the term Śabda-Brahma refers to the Vedas with the Upan. Veda, etc, which also include the sciences of medicine, warfare, music and mechanics.

This concept can be related to the following verse of Bhartṛhari:

इदं अन्धतमं सर्वं जायेत भुवनत्रयम् ।
 यदि शब्दः वयं ज्योतिः आसं सारात् न दीप्यते ॥

Maitrāyaṇi *Upaniṣad* (VI -22) also refers to Śabda Brahman. Here two types of Brahman are enumerated : द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणी अभिध्येये शब्दश्चाब्धौ । अथ शब्देनैवाशब्दमाविष्क्रियते अथ तत्रोमिति शब्दः । अनेनोर्ध्वमुत्क्रान्तोऽशब्दे निधनमेति । अथ हैषा गतिः । एतदमृतम् । एतत् सायुज्यत्वं निर्वृतत्वं तथा चेति । (1) Śabda Brahma and (2) Param-Brahma.

द्वे ब्रह्मणि वेदितव्ये शब्दब्रह्म परं च यत् ।
 शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥१७॥

¹ Swami Madhavananda : Minor Upaniṣads

It is pointed out that both these Brahman should be realized and a person who is skilled in Śabda-Brahman is able to obtain Param-Brahma. This the same concept as referred in Amṛtabindupanisad.

Bhartrhari, in Vākyapādiya starts his philosophical exploration with the concept of Śabda - Brahman. This according to him, is the unique and ultimate Reality. The concepts of existence, consciousness and language - in - use, which are associated with our understanding of the empirical world exhibit the elements of plurality. Yet all these concepts are word - generated so they are bound by a common essence. And this essence is called by Bhartrhari Śabda tattva, the language - principle. It is the ultimate principle of unity, hence the ultimate reality the Brahman.

Therefore, Śabda Brahman signifies Supreme unity rather than Supreme existence. The opening verse of his treatise Vākyapādiya¹ epitomizes his metaphysical approach. It says:

अनादिनिधनं ब्रह्मशब्दतत्त्वं यदक्षरम् ।
विवर्तते अर्थभावेन प्रक्रिया जगतो यतः ॥१.१॥

Bhartrhari further equals Śabda to - great bull (Mahāntam Rṣabha), who is described by the Mumukṣus.

अपि प्रयोक्तुरत्मानं शब्दमन्तरवस्थितम् ।
प्राहुर्महान्तमृषभं येन सायुज्यमिष्यते ॥१.१४३॥

Therefore, the Śabda - Saṁskāra is the means to attain Supreme Reality. Those who know the essence of it, attain the word - Brahman.

तस्माद्यः शब्दसंस्कारः सा सिद्धिः परमात्मनः ।
तस्य प्रवृत्तितत्त्वज्ञस्तद्ब्रह्मामृतमश्नुते ॥१.१४४॥

Finally It is stated that how a person merges in Śabda - Brahman.

प्राणवृत्तिमतिक्रान्ते वचस्तत्त्वे व्यवस्थितः ।
क्रमसंहारयोगेन संहत्यात्मानमात्मनि ॥१.१४५॥
चाचः संस्कारमाधाय वाचं ज्ञाने निवेश्य च ।
विभज्य बन्धनान्यस्याः कृत्वा तां छिन्नबन्धनाम् ॥१.१४६॥
ज्योतिरान्तरमासाद्य च्छिन्नग्रन्थिपरिग्रहः ।
कारणज्योतिषैकत्वं छित्त्वा ग्रन्थीन्प्रवर्तते ॥१.१४७॥

For Bhartrhari Śabda means something more than a 'language'. It is the

¹ Shukla Jaydeva M — Vākyapādiya

name of a complex phenomenon implying an activity as well as a principle. As a type of activity it is something in which all human beings, in fact, all sentient beings are engaged. The Sanskrit term for it is 'Śabda - Vyāpāra'.¹

B. K. Mitalal² translates it as 'languageing'. Again as principle it stands for the very potency for communicating thoughts through language. It is the linguistic potency, the very power of conceptualisation, which is the basis of our consciousness as well as the awareness of the external world. This potency itself is Śabda - Tattva, the word principle, the Śabda - tattva, being the Central concept of all forms of phenomenal activity is identified with the Brahman. The term Brahman in Advaitan and *Upaniṣadic* context means the 'Reality' in metaphysical sense.

This concept is based on the Bhagavadgītā (VI 44), which also refers to Śabda - Brahman:

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव हियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥६.४४॥

This verse points out the impact of previous birth on the behavior of a person in the present birth. A person desirous of performing Yoga goes beyond the word - Brahman i. e. attains Mokṣa.

Here the concept of 'Yoga' is different from the concept of Yoga found in Yogasūtras (i.e. Aṣṭāṅga Yoga).

Here, Yoga means perfection in one's work: योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ।भ.गी.-२.५०॥
Similarly when a person becomes indifferent of all duals it is also known as Yoga states Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa : समत्वं योग उच्यते ।भ.गी.-२.४८॥

This shows that doctrine of Yoga taught in Bhagavadgītā is different from the concept of Yoga found in the Yogasūtras of Patañjali.

Yoga has been variously explained in BG as Samatva (II 48), Kauśala (II - 50), Karmayoga (V -2), as something to be attained as a goal and means (V - 16, 17), as the divine power (VII - 35) etc.

Nowhere in the *Upaniṣad*, Yoga has been described in such diverse and mutually contradictory ways, opines Dr. Uma Deshpande³

Śaṅkarācārya in his Bhāṣya on BG VI - 44 opines that Śabda Brahman

¹ Patnaik Tandra - Śabda-Brahman - Pages 21,22

² Matilal B. K. - The word and the Word Pp 85

³ Deshpande Uma - Glimpses of Indian Logic aHeritage Page - 26

means the fruit declared by the Vedas for performing the act or rituals i. e. Yajña - Yāgas : शब्दब्रह्म वेदोक्तकर्मानुष्ठानफलमतिवर्ततेऽतिक्रामति अपांकरिष्यति ।

Lokmanya Tilak¹ in his text Gita Rahasya opines regarding Śabda - Brahman: "The word 'Śabda - Brahman' used in the 44th stanza means desire - prompted ritual such as Yajñas and Yāgas, prescribed by the Vedas: and it is performed, keeping faith in the Vedas; and the 'Veda' is the faith in the Vedas; and the 'Veda' is the 'Śabda' (word), that is, the 'Śabda - Brahman' which was in existence before the entire creation came into existence. Any person whosoever performs all Actions with some desire in the first instance; but, as the Mind is gradually purified by the performance of such Action, he gradually acquires the inspiration of performing Action desirelessly. That is why it is stated in the *Upaniṣads*, as also in the *Mahābhārata* that:

द्वे ब्रह्मणी वेदितव्ये शब्दब्रह्म परं च यत् ।
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥

That is, it must be understood that the Brahman is of two kinds, namely, the Śabda - Brahman, and the other (that is, Nirguṇa - Brahman) beyond it; when a person has become well - versed in the Śabda - Brahman, he reaches the nirguṇa - Brahman, which is beyond (*Maitrī Upa.* - 6.22; *amṛtabidnu* - 17; *MBh. Śānti Parva* - 231, 63, 269)

In *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Sri Śaṅkarācārya gives no. of verses showing i.e. Brahman and Ātman are one: for e.g.

विनिवृत्तिर्भवेत्तस्य सम्यग्ज्ञानेन नान्यथा ।
ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वविज्ञानं सम्यग्ज्ञानं श्रुतेर्मतम् ॥२०२॥

It means ignorance can be destroyed by the real knowledge that Brahman and atman are one and the same. It is said when ignorance ends our misery also ends :

आवरणस्य निवृत्तिर्भवति हि सम्यक्पदार्थदर्शनतः ।
मिथ्याज्ञानविनाशस्तद्विक्षेपजनितदुःखनिवृत्तिः ॥३४७॥

So this knowledge of the eternal as pure Supreme etc. as given below shines

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म विशुद्धं परं स्वतः सिद्धम् ।
नित्यानन्दैकरसं प्रत्यगभिन्नं निरन्तरं जयति ॥२२५॥

¹ Tilak Balganagadhar : Gita Rahasya or Karm - Yoga Page - 1005, seventh edition, 1933
pub: Lokmanya Tilak Madal, Narayan Peth, Poona

Hence it is said that 'Everything is Brahman.'

सदिदं परमाद्वैतं स्वस्मादन्यस्य वस्तुनोऽभावात् ।

न ह्यन्यदस्ति किञ्चित् सम्यक् परमार्थतत्त्वबोधदशायाम् ॥२२६॥

यदिदं सकलं विश्वं नानारूपं प्रतीतमज्ञानात् ।

तत्सर्वं ब्रह्मैव प्रत्यस्ताशेषभावनादोषम् ॥२२७॥

The units between Jīvātmān and Paramātmān is very nicely portrayed in the Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad. This quote is originally taken from Chandogya Upaniṣad - VI 8.7; VI 9.4; VI 10.3; VI - 11.3; VI - 12.3; VI 13.3; VI 14.3; VI - 15.3; VI - 16.3.

There is an elaborate discussing on this topic between Uddālaka Āruṇi and svetaketu in the Chhandogya Upani where it is repeated nine times.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan¹ opines that: ' This famous text (tattvam asi) emphasizes the divine nature of the human should, the need to discriminate between the essential self and the accidents with which it is confused and the fetters by which it is bound. He who knows only what is of the body or mind knows the things that may be his but not himself. The text 'That art thou' applies to the inward person, Antaḥ-puruṣa, and not to the empirical soul with its name and family descent.

Śaṅkarācārya while commenting on Tattvamasi (VI.8.7) Sates : . . . अतः स एवात्मा जगतः प्रत्यक्स्वरूपं सतत्त्वं यायात्म्यम् । आत्मशब्दस्य निरुपपदस्य प्रत्यगात्मनि गवादिशब्दवन्निरुद्धत्वात् ।

. . . Further he comments on VI 16.3 : कार्यकरणसंघातव्यतिरिक्तोऽहं जीवः कर्ता भोक्तेत्यपि स्वभावतः प्राणिनां विज्ञानादर्शनात् । . . कथमेवं व्यतिरिक्तविज्ञानेऽसति तेषां कर्तृत्वादि विज्ञातं सम्भवति दृश्यते च । तद्वत्तस्यापि देहादिष्वात्मबुद्धित्वान्न स्यात्सदात्मविज्ञानम् । तस्मात् विकारानृताधिकृतजीवात्मविज्ञानविवर्तकमेवेदं वाक्यं तत्त्वमसीति सिद्धमिति ॥

Madhvācārya makes the text 'tat ivam asi' read as 'atat tvam asi' - then arte not that and argues that these passages at establishing the difference between the individual and the Universal Self².

We find the discussion on 'Tat Tvam Asi' - in Vadatasara³ of Sadānanda (apara 153). Here the real meaning of the text is seen to be derived from *Jahadajahallaksana*. When one part of the direct meaning of a sentence is

¹ S. Radhakrishnan - The Principal Upaniṣads , Page 458

² Swami Nikhilananda - Vedantasara of Sadananda Pp 88- 89, Ninth impression

³ quoted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan - The Principal Upaniṣads Page 467

given up and another part is retained, it is a case of Jadayahal - Laksana -. In the example "this is that Devadatta", the accepted. Similarly in the Mahāvākya 'Tat Tvam Asi;', the contradictory furors of remoteness and immediately, omni science and partial knowledge, etc. associated with "That" and "thou" respectively are given up and pure consciousness, which is common to both, is accepted. Thus, the real meaning of the great Vedic dictum is derived by applying this *Jahadajahallaksana* which is also called as *Bhagalakasana*.

Thus, these minor Upanisads of AV deal with various aspects of the Supreme Reality, as found in the earlier texts.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL DATA

This topic deals with epistemological data or *Pramāṇa-śāstra* depicted in some minor *Upaniṣads* of *Atharvaveda*.

Epistemology means - theory of the method or grounds of knowledge¹. Epistemology is one of the main branches of philosophy; its subject matter concerns the nature, origin, scope and limits of human knowledge. The name is derived from the Greek terms 'episteme' (knowledge) and logos (theory), and accordingly this branch of Philosophy is also referred to as the theory of knowledge.² It includes validity of the *Vedic* scriptures in obtaining the knowledge of the *Brahman*, import of the *Upaniṣadic* statements (*Vidyā*) and the problem of *Avidyā*, nature of *Avidyā* etc.

Technically the term *Vidyā* means knowledge (from the root \sqrt{vid} = to know), and *Avidyā* means Ignorance, folly or want of learning, Spiritual ignorance, Illusion or illusion personified or *Māyā*.

According to Dr. Jwalaprasad, "Man finds himself in the possession of certain convictions which, roughly speaking, he calls knowledge, further he finds that all his convictions are not of the same value, and that he has to distinguish them as true and false. The awareness of this distinction naturally leads him to enquire into the origin and validity of all knowledge itself as the object of science; is epistemology."³

Epistemology undertakes or provides a method of metaphysical enquiry and criticism, and we find that, in the history of philosophy, whether consciously or unconsciously, it has been used as such. This is most true

¹ Oxford dictionary — Oxford Press, 3rd edition, 1949.

² Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.18, founded-1768, 15th edition, page 466.

³ Dr. Jwālāprasāda History of Indian Epistemology, page-1, Introduction, second edition, 1958.

in today's times, when all metaphysical problems are attacked through an analysis of knowledge, and again, all philosophical criticism is usually based upon epistemological ground.

In Indian philosophy, epistemology was always treated as a part of Logic and the first systematic treatment of the means of knowledge (the *pramāṇas*) is found in Gautama's *Nyāya-sūtras*¹, which also deal with the objects of knowledge (the *prameyas*).

I discuss firstly the validity of the *Vedic* scriptures in obtaining the knowledge of *Brahman*. In Sanskrit literature, the term technically used is *Pramāṇa*.

The Sanskrit word *Pramāṇa* literally means the instrument of *Pramā* or knowledge, as it is stated in *Tarkasaṃgrahadīpikā* by Annambhaṭṭa.²

प्रमाकरणं प्रमाणमिति प्रमाणसामान्यलक्षणम् ॥३५॥

A *pramāṇa* is again defined as that by which an object is proved to exist opines Dr. Jwālāprasāda³ while discussing the epistemology in *Sāṃkhya*.

According to Ganganath Jha,⁴ "In philosophical literature, the term *Pramāṇa* has been used sometimes in the sense of the means of cognition—प्रमीयते ज्ञायते अनेन; while sometimes it is used in the sense of valid cognition itself – प्रमीयते यत् ।"

To come to the details of the analysis of knowledge in Indian philosophy, it may be said that the means of knowledge (the *pramāṇas*) which have been considered possible and have been discussed are : Direct knowledge (*pratyakṣa*), including sense-cognition and other direct means of knowledge; Inference (*anumāna*); Knowledge by similarity (*Upamāna*); Verbal testimony (*śabda*), including scriptural testimony (*śāstra* or *āgama*); Presumption (*Arthāpatti*); Implication (*sambhava*); Non-existence (*Abhāva*) and Tradition (*aitihya*)

According to the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*⁵ (I.2), there are four means of knowledge, viz., Codes of law (*smṛti*); Direct knowledge (*pratyakṣa*), meaning by this sense cognition; Tradition (*aitihya*), and Inference

¹ *Nyāya-sūtras* of Gautama — I-1.3, Pg. 4

² Parab K. P. — *Tarkasaṃgraha-Dīpikā* on 35th Kārikā — Bhāratīya *Vidyā* Prakāśan

³ Dr. Jwālāprasāda — *History of Indian Epistemology*, Pg. 184

⁴ Jha Ganganath — *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā in its sources*, page 77-78, Pub.-Banaras Hindu University, 1942.

⁵ A Mahadeva Shastri and K. Rangacarya- *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, page 10,

(*anumāna*) — “स्मृतिः प्रत्यक्षमैतिह्यम् । अनुमानश्चतुष्टयम् । तै.आ.-१.२॥”

Sāyaṇācārya comments on this : “स्मृतिरनुमेयश्रुतिमूलं मन्वादिशास्त्रम् । प्रत्यक्षं सर्वं पुरुषाणां श्रोत्रेण ग्राह्यं वेदवाक्यं च । ऐतिह्यमितिहासपुराणमहाभारतब्राह्मणादिकम् । अनुमानः शिष्टाचारः । तेन हि मूलभूतं श्रुतिस्मृतिलक्षणं प्रमाणमनुमीयते । तदेतत्स्मृत्यादिचतुष्टयमवगति-कारणभूतं प्रमाणम् ।”¹

According to *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, a *pramāṇa* is defined as that by which an object is proved to exist. *Sāṃkhya* approves three *pramāṇas* viz., *Drṣṭa* (sense-cognition); *Anumāna* (inference) and *Āptavacana* (reliable-testimony).

दृष्टमनुमानमाप्तवचनं च सर्वप्रमाणसिद्धत्वात् ।

त्रिविधं प्रमाणमिष्टं प्रमेयसिद्धिः प्रमाणाद्धि ॥सांख्यकारिका-४॥²

The *pramāṇas* according to the *Yogasūtras*³ are simply mentioned and not defined : प्रत्यक्षानुमानागमाः प्रमाणानि ॥१.७॥ : Direct knowledge (*pratyakṣa*); Inference (*anumāna*) and Scriptural testimony (*āgama*).

According to the *Nyāya-sūtras* (I.1.3), there are four means of knowledge. They are: Direct knowledge (*pratyakṣa* – in the sense of sense-cognition); Inference (*Anumāna*); Knowledge by similarity (*Upamāna*) and Verbal testimony (*śabda*).

Tradition (*Aitihiya*) is regarded as included in verbal testimony; and presumption (*Arthāpatti*), implication (*saṃbhava*) and non-existence (*Abhāva*) are treated as cases of inference by Gautama in his *Nyāyasūtras* (II.2.1-12).

According to the *Vaiśeṣika sūtras*⁴, there are strictly speaking only two means of knowledge : तयोर्निष्पत्तिः प्रत्यक्षलैङ्गिकाभ्यां ज्ञानाभ्यां व्याख्याता ॥१०.४॥ Direct knowledge (*pratyakṣa*), and Inference (*anumāna*).

Knowledge by similarity (*Upamāna*), verbal-testimony (*śabda*), presumption (*Arthāpatti*), implication (*saṃbhava*) and non-existence (*Abhāva*) are regarded as only modes of inference.

Knowledge is ultimately a quality of the soul as stated in the *Tarkasaṃgraha* : ज्ञानाधिकरणमात्मा ॥१७॥ It is also stated in the

¹ Apate Vinayak Ganesh — Taittirīyāranyakam with the Bhāṣya of Sāyaṇācārya, page 6

² Mainkar T. G. — Sāṃkhyakārikā of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa, page 45

³ Taimni I. K. — The Science of *Yoga*, page 16;

⁴ Muni Śrī Jambuvijayaji — *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* of Kaṇāda, page 72,

Tarkasaṃgraha-dīpikā – आत्मा मनसा संयुज्यते

According to Śābarasvāmin and Kumārila, six means of knowledge are recognised by the *Mīmāṃsā sūtra*¹ viz., Direct knowledge (*Pratyakṣa*); Inference (*Anumāna*); Knowledge by similarity (*Upamāna*); Verbal testimony (*Śabda*); Presumption (*Arthāpatti*) and Non-existence (*Abhāva*).

प्रमाणषट्कविज्ञातो यत्रार्थो नान्यथा भवेत् ।

अदृष्टं कल्पयेदन्यं सार्थापत्तिरुदाहृता ॥श्लोकवार्तिक – अर्थापत्ति परिच्छेद-1st verse ॥²

The *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*³ of Adhvarendra muni and *Vedāntasāra* of Sadānanda enumerate six *Pramāṇas* :

तानि च प्रमाणानि-षट् प्रत्यक्षानुमानोपमानागमार्थापत्त्यनुपलब्धिभेदात् । वेदान्त परिभाषा ॥

Taking into consideration the different *Pramāṇas* recognised by different systems, we can arrange them progressively.⁴

Cārvāka	Pratyakṣa
Vaiśeṣika	Pratyakṣa and Anumāna
Sāṅkhya	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna and Śabda
Yoga	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna and Āgama (Śabda)
Nyāya	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, Śabda and Upamāna
Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, Śabda, Upamāna and Arthāpatti
Kumārila Mīmāṃsakas	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, Śabda, Upamāna, Arthāpatti and Anupalabdhi
Vedānta	Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, Śabda, Upamāna, Arthāpatti and Anupalabdhi

Thus, among the various systems of Indian philosophy, the Cārvāka, Bauddha and Vaiśeṣika do not recognise Śabda or testimony as a distinct *Pramāṇa* or source of Knowledge. The *Vaiśeṣika sūtras* (1.1.3; 2.3.32; 9.2.3 and 10.2.9, declares that verbal cognition is nothing apart from inferential cognition.

There is some difference between the *Nyāya* and *Vedāntic* description of

¹ Ganganath Jha — *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and its Sources*, page 90

² Pt. Durgadhar Jha — *Ślokavārtika of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa with Hindi commentary*;

³ Swāmī Mādhavānanda — *Vedānta-paribhāṣā of Dharmarāja Adhvarindra*, page 8

⁴ Ranade R. D. — *Vedānta, The Culmination of Indian Thought*, Page 36.

the nature of *Vaidika* or scriptural testimony.

According to *Nyāya*, scriptural testimony is personal since the *Vedas* have been created by the Supreme Reality or God. For *Naiyāyikas*, the *Vedas* as a system of truths, emphasises the will of God. Thus, “*Nyāya* offers higher status to the instructions and assertions of *Veda* as they are unquestionably and unconditionally true.” opines J. V. Bhaṭṭācārya.¹ For *Vedānta*, it is impersonal in as much as the God does not create but only reveals the contents of the *Vedas*, which are eternal truths, independent of God. The *Mīmāṃsakas* look upon the *Vedas* as the system of necessary truths or eternal verities, which are independent of all persons and therefore purely impersonal in character. They accord the status of *Śabda Pramāṇa* only to *Vedic* instructions. Śābarasvāmin while commenting on the Jaimini *Sūtra* III.2.35 states : “शब्दप्रमाणका वयं यच्छब्द आह तदस्माकं प्रमाणम् ।” For *Śābara* verbal testimony is the knowledge of an object which is not perceived by a sense organ, but is the result of knowledge of words. Dr. R. D. Ranade² opines : “For the *Mīmāṃsaka* word is greater than God and hence their vaunted doctrine of *Apauruṣeyavāda* and in *Nyāya* God is greater than the word, in *Vedānta* word is made co-equal with God.” There is a reference to the word ‘*Tarka*’ and ‘*Pramāṇa*’ in *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* (IV.34).

तर्कतश्च प्रमाणाच्च चिदेकत्वण्यवस्थितेः ।

चिदेकत्वपरिज्ञाने न शोचति न मुह्यति ॥४.३४॥

The word *Pramāṇa* also occurs in *Ātmopaniṣad* (6) :

विना प्रमाणसुष्ठुत्वं यस्मिन्सति पदार्थधीः ।

अयमात्मा नित्यसिद्धः प्रमाणे सति भासते ॥६॥

Even in *Maitrī Upaniṣad*, we find the use of terms like *Anumiti* (अन्तरात्मक्या गत्या बहिरात्मनोऽनुमीयते गतिः ॥६-१॥) and the terms *Pramāṇa* and *Prameya* (VI.14) – तत्रैकैकमात्मनो नवांशकं सचारकविधं सौक्ष्म्यत्वादेतत्प्रमाणमनेनैव प्रमीयते हि कालः । न विना प्रमाणेन प्रमेयस्योपलब्धिः । प्रमेयोऽपि प्रमाणतां पृथक्त्वादुपैत्यात्म-संबोधनार्थमित्येव प्याह ॥६-१४॥

Since in the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV, *Śabda Pramāṇa* or validity of scriptures is more frequently found than any other *Pramāṇas*. I, therefore, discuss this *Pramāṇa* as elaborately as possible.

¹ Bhaṭṭācārya J. V. — *Nyāya-mañjarī* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, page 316,

² Ranade R. D. — *Vedānta – The Culmination of Indian Thought*, page 27

Etymologically 'Śabda' (शब्दयति) signifies sound (ध्वनि), literally it stands for 'word' (पद) and epistemologically it refers to a source of knowledge, viz., 'Verbal testimony', states C. D. Bijalwan.¹

Śabda Pramāṇa means verbal testimony or verbal authority. Scriptural statements are also known as *Āgama* as stated in *Vedāntasāra* by Sadānanda. This *Pramāṇa* is accepted by almost all the schools of philosophy viz. *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta*, except *Vaiśeṣika* School.

It consists of the statements, which are proof themselves and do not need any external statement for support. As it is stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*:

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥ भ.गी. १६.२३ ॥
तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥ भ.गी. १६.२४ ॥

According to *Sāṃkhya* philosophers *Vedic* statements are the only statements, which are free from all sorts of doubt, hence self-valid.

सामान्यतस्तु दृष्टादतीन्द्रियाणां प्रतीतिरनुमानात् ।
तस्मादपि चासिद्धं परोक्षमाप्तगमात्सिद्धम् ॥ सांख्यकारिका-६ ॥

But their self-validity is due to the non-personal authorship of *Vedas*. The *Vedic* words have a natural power to denote worldly objects and that power is communicated by *āptas*, "Hence the self-validity of *Vedas* are tested and lived by the *āptas*" states Dr. Radhakrishnan.²

According to *Nyāya* philosophy, *Śabda* literally means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of the objects derived from words or sentences. All verbal knowledge however is not valid. Hence, *Śabda* as a *Pramāṇa*, is defined in the *Nyāya* as Valid verbal testimony. It consists in the assertion or instruction of a trustworthy person – आप्तोपदेशः शब्दः । न्यायसूत्र-१.७.१ ॥

As it is also stated by Annambhaṭṭa in *Tarkasaṃgraha*³ : "आप्तवाक्यं शब्दः । आप्तस्तु यथार्थवक्ता ॥ ४८ ॥"

¹ Bijalwan C. D. – Indian Theory of Knowledge based upon Jayanta's Nyāyamañjarī, page 214

² S. Rādhākṛṣṇan — Indian Philosophy, vol.-1, Pg. 301

³ Mehendale K. C. — *Tarka Saṃgraha* of Annambhaṭṭa, page 24, Bhartiya Book Corporation, Delhi, 1991

It is only when one perceives the word and understands its meaning, that he acquires knowledge from a verbal statement.

Tarkasamgraha states : वाक्यं द्विविधम् । वैदिकं लौकिकं च । वैदिकमीश्वरोक्तत्वात्सर्वमेव प्रमाणम् ॥५१॥ i.e. *Śabda* or Verbal testimony is classified in two kinds : *Vaidika* (scriptural) and *Laukika* (secular). *Āpta-vākyam* falls under the category of *Laukika* — लौकिकं त्वाप्तोक्तं प्रमाणम् ॥५१॥

Such scriptural statements or *Śabda Pramāṇa* are also found in the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV undertaken for study. The list is as follows :

**LIST OF QUOTATIONS FOUND IN THE MINOR UPANISADS OF AV
UNDERTAKEN FOR STUDY**

Sr. No.	Quote	Original Source
१	तं जानन्नग्र आरोहाथा नो वर्धय रयिम् । जाबालोपनिषद्	वाजसनेयी संहिता-३.१४ अथर्ववेद-३.२०.१
२	कूर्मोङ्गानीव संहृत्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ॥२॥ क्षुरिकोपनिषद्	भगवद्गीता-२.५८
३	शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परब्रह्माधि-गच्छति ॥१७॥ अमृतबिन्दु-उपनिषद्	मैत्री-उपनिषद्-६.२२
४	मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः । अमृतबिन्दु- उपनिषद्	मैत्री-उपनिषद्-६.३४
५	सखा मा गोपायौजः सखायोऽसीन्द्रस्य वज्रोऽसि वार्त्रघ्नः शर्म मे भव यत्पापं तन्निवारयेति । आरुणेयी उपनिषद्	बौधायन धर्मसूत्र-२.१०.१७-३२, ३.२.७
६	ॐ तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् । सूर्योपनिषद्	ऋग्वेद-३.६२.१०
७	सूर्य आत्मा जगतः तस्थुषश्च । सूर्योपनिषद्	ऋग्वेद-१.११५.१
८	ॐ इति एकाक्षरं ब्रह्म । सूर्योपनिषद्	भगवद्गीता-८.१३
९	ॐ घृणि सूर्य आदित्य । सूर्योपनिषद्	त्रिपादमहानारायणोपनिषद्-७.११
१०	तद् विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः । शाण्डिल्योपनिषद्	ऋग्वेद-१.२३.२० वाजसनेयी संहिता-६.६ तेजबिन्दु उपनिषद्- आरुणेयी उपनिषद्-
११	तत्त्वमसि-२ । शाण्डिल्योपनिषद्	छान्दोग्य उपनिषद्-६.८.७, ६.९.४, ६.१४.३ शुक्ररहस्य उपनिषद्-२.३, ३.५

		पैङ्गल-३.१-२, २.६ निरालम्बा-३.१ बहुवृचा-४ रामरहस्य-५.१५
१२	यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।-२.३। शाण्डिल्योपनिषद्	तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद्-२.४.५ शरभ उपनिषद्-१८ ब्रह्मोपनिषद्-२२
१३	यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवाः साध्याः सन्ति देवाः । महावाक्योपनिषद्	ऋग्वेद-१.१६४.५०, ८.४.१९, १०.९०.१६ अथर्ववेद-७.५.७ वाजसनेयि संहिता-३१.१६ तैत्तिरीय संहिता-३.५.११.५ मेत्रायणी संहिता-४.१०३, १४८.६, ४.१४.२, २१८.२ काठक संहिता-१५.१२ एतरेय ब्राह्मण-१.१६.३५ कौषीतकि ब्राह्मण-८.२ शतपथ ब्राह्मण-१०.२.२.२ तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक-३.१२.७ आश्वलायन श्रौतसूत्र-२.१६.७
१४	नान्यः पन्था अयनाय विद्यते । महावाक्योपनिषद्	वाजसनेयी संहिता-३१.१८ तैत्तिरीय संहिता-३.१२.७ तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक-३.१२.७ श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद्-३.८, ६.१५ त्रिपादमहानारायण उपनिषद्-४.३ नारायण परिव्राजकोपनिषद्-९.१ चित्ति-१२.७, १३.११ लक्ष्मी-७
१५	आदित्यवर्णं तमसस्तु पारे । महावाक्योपनिषद्	पारमात्मिकोपनिषद्-७.५ चित्ति-१२.७
१६	द्वा सुपर्णा शरीरेऽस्मिन् जीवेशाख्यौ सह स्थितौ । तयोर्जीवः फलं भुङ्क्ते कर्मणो न महेश्वरः ॥४.३२॥ अन्नपूर्णोपनिषद्	ऋग्वेद-१.१६४.२० अथर्ववेद-९.९.२०
१७	भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थि शिञ्चन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥४.३१॥ अन्नपूर्णोपनिषद्	मुण्डकोपनिषद्-२.२.८ योगशिखा उपनिषद्-५.४५ सरस्वती-५६

		महोपनिषद्-४.८२
१८	वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यं पुराकल्प प्रचोदितुम् । नाप्रशान्ताय दातव्यं न चाशिष्याय वै पुनः ॥४.१९॥ अन्नपूर्णोपनिषद्	श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद्-७.२२
१९	एक एव हि भूतात्मा भूते भूते व्यवस्थितः । एकधा बहुधा चैव दृश्यते जलचन्द्रवत् ॥अमृतबिन्दु उपनिषद्	पञ्चदशी (विद्यारण्यमुनि)-१५.७
२०	न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिः न बद्धो न च साधकः । न मुमुक्षुर्न वै मुक्त इत्येषा परमार्थता ॥ आत्मोपनिषद्-३१, अमृतबिन्दूपनिषद्-१०	गौडपादकारिका-३.३२
२१	मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं . . . ।अमृतबिन्दु उपनिषद्	मैत्री उप.
२२	मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं . . . । अमृतबिन्दूपनिषद्	मैत्री उप.

VIDYĀ AND AVIDYĀ

Among the minor *Upaniṣads* undertaken for study, *Sarvopaniṣad* defines *Vidyā* as : सोऽभिमानो ययाऽभिनिवर्तते सा विद्या ॥१॥ — that by which self-conceit is completely dispelled is *Vidyā* or knowledge i.e. spiritual illumination. Commentator Nārāyaṇa simply defines it as that knowledge which destroys ignorance. But commentator *Upaniṣad* Brahma Yogin defines *Vidyā* as : स्वाविद्यातत्कार्याभिमाननिवर्तिका । i.e. one that removes one's own neiscience as well as one's own pride.

In the *Chāndogya*, there is an illustration of Śvetaketu who was puffed up with *Abhimāna*.

स ह द्वादशवर्ष उपेत्य चतुर्विंशतिवर्षः सर्वान् वेदानधीत्य महामना अनूचानमानी स्तब्ध
एयाय तं ह पितोवाच ॥६.१.२॥

Śaṅkarācārya comments thus on the above line of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* :

“स पित्रोक्तः श्वेतकेतुर्ह द्वादशवर्षः सन्नुपेत्याचार्यं यावच्चतुर्विंशतिवर्षो बभूव तावत्सर्वान्वेदांश्चतुरोऽप्यधीत्य तदर्थं च बुद्ध्वा, महामना महद्गम्भीरं मनो यस्यासममात्मानमन्यैर्मन्यमानं मनो यस्य सोऽयं महामना, अनू (अनुवचनसमर्थः) चानमान्यनूचानमात्मानं मन्यत इत्येवंशीलो यः सोऽनूचानमानी स्तब्धोऽप्रणतस्वभाव एयाय गृहम् । तमेवम्भूतं हात्मनोऽननुरूपशीलं स्तब्धं मानिनं पुत्रं दृष्ट्वा पितोवाच सद्धर्मावतारचिकीर्षया ॥२॥”

It points out to an important aspect of *Abhimāna* or pride in an individual, which according to this *Upaniṣad* is the biggest hindrance for obtaining

Vidyā and it is through *Vidyā* that self-conceit is destroyed.

The term '*Abhimāna*' is also referred in other major *Upaniṣads*. For e.g.

We find this concept of *Abhimāna* illustrated in *Kenopaniṣad* (third and fourth *khaṇḍa*), where once in a fight between Gods and demons, the Gods were successful and they became proud thinking that it was due to their power. Having known this, Brahman suddenly appeared before them and threw a blade of grass to burn. The Fire (*Jātavedas*), Wind-God (*Mātariśvā*) were unsuccessful in burning that small blade of grass. Then Gods sent Indra. He was a modest God. He ran to Brahman to know its nature and Brahman disappeared from his sight. A beautiful goddess appeared there and explained to him that it was due to the powers of Brahman. Indra knew that this power of God was the power of Absolute.

“ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा देवतं अमहीयन्त । त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥२.१॥-----”

Dr. S. K. Belvalkar and R. D. Ranade¹ opines : “It was on account of his humility, which made it possible for him to go to Brahman and touch him nearest, that he became the foremost of the Gods.”

तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्सह्येन त्रेदिष्टं पस्पर्श स ह्येतत्प्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥
केनोपनिषद्-४.२॥

Praśna Upaniṣad (2.4) refers to '*Abhimāna*' as :

सोऽभिमानादूर्ध्वमुत्क्रामत इव तस्मिन्नुत्क्रामत्यथेतरे सर्व एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्व एव प्रातिष्ठन्ते ।

This is an answer to the question of Bhārgava of *Vidarbha* country to Pippalāda as to how many powers support the created world? Pippalāda states that I, alone, dividing myself fivefold, sustain and support this body. They did not believe him. Through pride, he seemed to go upward (from the body), when he went up, all others also went up. When he settled down, all others also settled down.

Maitrī Upaniṣad (6.10) states – अध्यवसायं संकल्पाभिमानाः । Here in this *Upaniṣad*, the *Ātman* is stated as an *Aṁśa* of the Absolute, very small like the thousandth part of the hair, and attached to a functioning organism later designated as the '*Sūkṣma*' or the '*Liṅgaśarīra*' (the subtle and transmigratory body), the soul when conditioned by this attachment being

¹ Belvalkar S. K. & Ranade R. D. — History of Indian Philosophy vol. II - The Creative Period, Page 180.

designated as the “*Bhūtātma*” in *Maitrāyaṇi Upa.* (III.2).¹ ‘एतस्य सोऽम्शो यं यश्चेतामात्रः प्रतिपुरुषः क्षेत्रज्ञः संकल्पाध्यवसायाभिमानलिङ्गः . . . ।’

The concept of *Abhimāna* as one of the traits of *Āsurī-saṃpat* is found only in *Bhagavadgītā*.

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥भ.गी.-१६.४॥

We find the word *Abhimāna* in the edition of Tilak B. G. – *Gītā-Rahasya*² A. Mahadev Shastri³ and in the edition of Swami Chidbhavānanda⁴.

While the term ‘*Atimāna*’ is found in the place of ‘*Abhimāna*’, in the critical edition of Dr. S. K. Belvalkar⁵, in vol. II *Śaṅkaragranthāvalī*⁶ and in the edition of *Bhagavadgītā* with the *Bhāṣya* of Rāmānujācārya published by Ānandāśrama, and also in the edition of *Bhagavadgītā* by R. D. Ranade⁷.

These demoniac endowments bring bondage and hence they should be shunned.

दैवी संपद्धिमोक्षाय निबन्धायाऽऽसुरी मता ।

मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥भ.गी.-१६.५॥

Śaṅkarācārya in his *Bhāṣya* on *Bhagavadgītā* 16.3, defines *Atimāna* as : ‘मानोऽतिमानः स यस्य विद्यते सोऽतिमानी ।’. It means that a person possessing of excessive pride is called *Atimānī*, while Rāmānujācārya defines it as : “अतिमानश्च स्वविद्याभिजनाननुगुणोऽभिमानः ।” He states *Atimāna* is pride generated due to learning.

Further it is stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa :

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।

¹ Belvalkar S. K. — *Vedānta Philosophy*, Part-1 : Lecture 1-6.

² Pub. — by Lokamanya Tilak Mandir, Poona, Fifth edition, 1919; *Gītā press*, Gorakhpur, 1943;

³ Translation into English, The Sanskrit Commentary of Śaṅkarācārya, Pub. by V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, Madras, 1961.

⁴ Swami Chidbhavānanda — *Bhagavadgītā*, Pub. by Ramkrishna Tapovanam, Tirupparaitturai, 5th edition, 1992.

⁵ Belvalkar S. K. —

⁶ Śaṅkaragranthāvalī — vil. II, Pub. by Motilal Banarasidas, page 239.

⁷ Ranade R. D. — *Bhagavadgītā – The Philosophy of God Realization*, page 116, Nagpur University, 1959.

विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥१६.१८, १८.५३॥

i.e. a person who free from *Ahaṁkāra* or the notion of 'mine' is fit for becoming *Brahman*.

Moreover such a person who is not bound and does not have ego, is liberated from the cycle of birth and death :

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

हत्वामि स इमाँल्लोकात्र हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥१८.१७॥

In BG *Ahaṁkāra* and *Abhimāna* are separately stated.

Ahaṁkāra i.e. *Abhimāna* deludes the person due to which he believes himself to be the doer :

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।

अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥३.२७॥¹

According to Rāmānujācārya (11th century A.D.)², *Ahaṁkāra* exists with the soul even in the state of salvation as he points out that if a person would know that he doesn't exist in the state of Mukti, then why will he strive for it? So the entire salvation - Śāstra would be un-authoritative owing to the absence itself of qualified persons.

अहमर्थविनाशश्चेन्मोक्ष इत्यध्यवस्यति ।

अपसर्पेदसौ मोक्षकथाप्रस्तावगन्धतः ॥३॥ para 7

स साधनानुष्ठानेन यदि अहमेव न भविष्यामि इत्यवगच्छेत्, अपसर्पेदेवासौ मोक्षकथा-प्रस्तावात् । ततश्चाधिकारिविरहादेव सर्वं मोक्षशास्त्रमप्रमाणं स्यात् । अहमुपलक्षितं प्रकाशमात्रमपवर्गे अवतिष्ठते । मयि विनष्टेऽपि किमपि प्रकाशमात्रमवतिष्ठते, इति मत्वा न हि कश्चिद्बुद्धिपूर्वमधिकारी प्रयतते । अतोऽहमर्थस्यैव ज्ञातृतया सिद्ध्यतः प्रत्यगात्मत्वम् । स च प्रत्यगात्मा मुक्तावपि 'अहम्' इत्येव प्रकाशते, स्वस्मै प्रकाशमानत्वात् ।

Thus, the nature of the inmost *Ātman* belongs to the I-entity itself being established as being the knower and that inmost *Ātman* shines forth as 'I' himself even in salvation, on account of his illumining in respect of himself.

Abhimāna or *Ahaṁkāra* is said to have evolved from *Mahat* i.e. the great

¹ We also find the references to the term 'Aham or Ahaṁkāra' in BG 18.17 and 18.59 respectively.

² Karmarkar R. D. — Śrībhāṣya of Rāmānuja, Part-I, Catuṣṣūtri, Page-78, para-44,

Pub. — Uni. Of Poona Sanskrit & Prakrit Series, vol.-1, Poona - 1959

principle according to the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy :

प्रकृतेर्महांस्ततोऽहङ्कारस्तस्माद्वाणश्च षोडशकः ।

तस्मादपि षोडशकात्पञ्चभ्यः पञ्च भूतानि ॥सां. का.-२२॥

Īśvarakṛṣṇa in *Sāṅkhyakārikā* defines *Ahaṁkāra* as :

अभिमानोऽहंकारः तस्माद् द्विविधः प्रवर्तते सर्गः ।

एकादशकश्च गणः तन्मात्रपञ्चकश्चैव ॥२४॥

i.e. *Ahaṁkāra* is self-assertion; from that proceeds a two-fold evolution only viz. the set of eleven and the five fold primary or rudimentary elements.

Here Īśvarakṛṣṇa¹ identifies *Abhimāna* with *Ahaṁkāra* while discussing on the process of origination or evolution.

In the seventh *prapāṭhaka* of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, we find the reference to different *Vidyās*, as Nārada is introduced to us as one who is conversant with the intellectual learning of those days. He has studied all the Vedas, the History and Mythology, all the different sciences of Archery, Astronomy and the science by which ghosts can be exorcised.

“नाम वा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदः आथर्वणश्चतुर्थ इतिहासपुराणः पञ्चमो वेदानां वेदः पितृयो राशिर्देवो निधिर्वाकोवाक्यमेकायनं देवविद्या, ब्रह्मविद्या, भूतविद्या, क्षत्रविद्या, नक्षत्रविद्या, सर्पदेवजनविद्या नामैवैतन्नामोपास्वेति ॥छा.उप. ७.४॥”

No one who is not conversant with the science of Ātman can hope to get across the ocean of sorrowful existence. Sanatkumāra begins by telling Nārada that whatever he has ‘learnt’ is but a ‘name’ (*nāmaivaitat*). The knowledge of various subjects is not called false, but is regarded as valueless without the knowledge of Ātman, which alone deserves the name ‘*Vidyā*’.

So here the distinction between *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* is not that of truth & falsehood, but that of the knowledge which leads to emancipation and the knowledge which leads nowhere. Thus *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* refer, in these passages, to the knowledge of two different spheres of life. They are looked upon as distinct and *Avidyā* is subordinated at places to *Vidyā* or regarded as valueless, but is never regarded as false in the logical sense of the term.

¹ Mankar T. G. — *Sāṅkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Pg. 110-111

In the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* (I.1.4, 5) two *Vidyās* are distinguished. *Brahmavidṣ*, the *Brahma* - knowers call them '*parā*' (higher) and '*aparā*' (lower). The four *Vedas* and the six *Āṅgas* constitute the lower *Vidyā* while that by which the immutable is known is the higher *Vidyā*. We might relatively call the former '*Avidyā*' :

द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद्ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति, परा चैवापरा च ॥१.१.४॥

Kenopaniṣad (12) states that a man attains energy and vigour through *Ātman* and immortality is obtained by *Vidyā* i.e. knowledge :

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।

आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥१२॥

Maitrī Upaniṣad expressing a different view states that *Vidyā* not only provides immortality but it in a way helps to realise the Supreme Reality.

विद्यया तपसा चिन्तया चोपलभ्यते ब्रह्म ॥ IV.4 ॥

Thus the concept of *Vidyā* as discussed in major *Upaniṣads* is in the sense of knowledge or spiritual illumination.

In the *Brahmasūtras*, a section of the third Adhyāya i.e. Sādhanaādhyāya, discusses various *Vidyās* by means of which the individual soul attains *Brahman*. The *Sūtra* : सर्ववेदान्तप्रत्ययं, चोदनाद्यविशेषात् ॥३.३.१॥ propounds that the *Vidyās* with identical or similar form met with in the scriptures or in different recensions of the scriptures form one *Vidyā*. Similarly *Brahmasūtra* (III.1.17) : विद्याकर्मणोरिति तु प्रकृतत्वात् । declare that *Vidyā* or knowledge is the means to go along the Devayāna, the route leading to the Gods. Similar concept is also found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* — I.5.16 — विद्यया देवलोकः, where *Vidyā* leads a person towards *Devaloka*.

Swāmī Raṅganāthānanda¹ opines : "Education may start with the *aparā* aspect of *Vidyā* or knowledge; knowledge relating to the non-self, to the changing and perishable world of experience, but it should not stop there, but lead the student on the *parā* aspect of *Vidyā*, which is *Adhyātmavidyā* — the knowledge of the self, the changeless and immortal reality in man and the universe."

Hence *Adhyātmavidyā* is enumerated as one of the divine *Vibhūti*s in *Śrī madbhagavadgītā* (X.32) by Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa :

¹ Swāmī Raṅganāthānanda : The Message of the *Upaniṣads*, Page 300

सर्गणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥१०.३२॥

Several *Upaniṣads* refer to the term '*Avidyā*'. The word *Avidyā* literally means 'ignorance'. Among the minor *Upaniṣads*, taken up for study, *Sarvopaniṣad* defines *Avidyā* as : 'तदभिमानं कारयति या सा अविद्या ।'

Here the commentator *Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin* is indebted to Śaṅkara for this concept of 'अनात्मनि आत्माभिमानप्रयोजिका' i.e. which uses the self conceit in the object which is non self. The commentator, at the end of his commentary on the *Upaniṣad*, quotes about *Avidyā* as :

अविद्यमानैवाविद्या वस्तुतत्त्वविचारिणाम् । इतरेषां तु मूढानां वज्रादपि दृढायते ॥

Truly speaking *Avidyā* is non-existent for those who contemplate, think on it, but for others and for fools it is complete truth as a thunder-bolt, because for the *Alaukika* or divine people, the *Avidyā* is *Anirvacanīya* and so its existence cannot be talked about. Here the commentator further states : 'ब्रह्मातिरिक्तं सामान्यापह्नवतावादिश्रुतिस्त्रिमानम् सिद्धान्तोऽध्यात्मशास्त्राणां सर्वापह्नव एव हि । नाविधाऽस्तीह नो माया शान्तं ब्रह्मोदमकलमम् ॥'

There is a reference to *Avidyā* in the *Śāṇḍilya Upa.* (III.1)

अथास्य या सहजास्त्यविद्या मूलप्रकृतिर्माया लोहितशुक्लकृष्णा ।

A person should abandon *Avidyā*. In that context, it is further said, in the *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* (IV.3, 4)

नात्मज्ञस्यैष विषय आत्मज्ञो ह्यात्ममात्रहृक् ।

आत्मनाऽऽत्मनि संतृप्तो नाविद्यामनुधावति ॥४.३॥

ये ये भावाः स्थिता लोके तानविद्यामयान्विदुः ।

त्यक्ताविद्यो महायोगी कथं तेषु निमज्जति ॥४.४॥

Ātmopaniṣad states that the nature or form of this world or jagat is just like *Brahman*, because of the difference of *Vidyā* & *Avidyā* and *bhāva* (existence) and *Abhāva* (non-existence).

जगद्रूपतथाप्येतद्ब्रह्मैव प्रतिभासते ।

विद्याऽविद्यादिभेदेन भावाऽभावादिभेदतः ॥२॥

न च विद्या न चाविद्या न जगच्च न चापरम् ।

सत्यत्वेन जगद्भानं संसारस्य प्रवर्तकम् ॥४॥

The word '*Avidyā*' has different connotations in the *Vedic* texts (1500-

1200 B.C.), in the forms of 'avidvān', 'avidvāmsaḥ' etc. in the sense of not knowing the greatness of god' and the like, for e.g. (*Rgveda*-VI.15.10; I.120.2; X.128.7). In all these cases, the word '*Avidyāḥ*', '*avidvāmsaḥ*' or '*avidvān*' conveys the idea of the people having lack of knowledge i.e. ignorant people.

In AV. XI 8.23, which is a mystic hymn on the constitution of man, *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* are described as entering the body of man —

विद्याश्च वा अविद्याश्च यत्त्वान्यदुपदेश्यम् ।

शरीरं ब्रह्म प्राविशद्वचः सामाथो यजुः ॥ अथर्ववेद-११.८.२३ ॥

We may say that '*Avidyā*', in whatever form the word may be used, its synonyms are used in the *Vedas* to convey the idea of lack of knowledge or, at a later stage, something among in the way of right knowledge & acting as a positive hindrance for spiritual progress.

Among the major *Upaniṣads*, we find the terms *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* discussed in *Upaniṣads* like *Chāndogya*, *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Kātha*, *Maitrī* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads*.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* distinguishes between *Vidyā* or knowledge which is power and *Avidyā* or ignorance which is impotence (I.1.10). यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपनिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवतीति खल्वेतस्यैवाक्षरस्योपव्याख्यानं भवति ॥१.१.१०॥

This passage glorifies the tri-monosyllable '*Aum*', It tells us that all sorts of persons perform (religious) acts, those who know the secret of '*Aum*' and those who do not, *Vidyā* & *Avidyā* are distinct. In fact, what is performed with *Vidyā* (knowledge) & faith becomes more effective.

Īśopaniṣad (2-14) states that *Avidyā*, the not-self as well as *asambhūti* are one and the same. *Avidyā* affirms the world as a self-sufficient reality. *Sambhūti* means the fact of being born, an effect, too, that has this (quality of being born) is *Sambhūti*, what is other than that is *Asambhūti*, *Prakṛti*, (the primal material cause), *Avidyā* (ignorance), called *Avyākṛta* (the Unmanifested).

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।

ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ सम्भूत्यां रताः ॥१२॥

Those who worship *asambhūti*, known as the unmanifest *Prakṛti*, is cause and *Avidyā*, which is the seed of desire and work, and is blinding by nature. *Īśopaniṣad* (9) says that they enter blinding darkness those who

worship *Avidyā*.

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति ये अविद्यामुपासते ।

ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायां रताः ॥ ईश-९ ॥

Śaṅkarācārya¹ while commenting on Īśa (9) identifies *Avidyā* with *Karma*. He states that *Avidyā* should be taken in the sense of '*Karma*' as *Karma* is contradictory to *Vidyā* :

भाष्य — 'अन्धं तमोऽदर्शनात्मकं तमः प्रविशन्ति । के ये अविद्यां विद्याया अन्या अविद्या तां कर्मैत्यर्थः कर्मणो विद्याविरोधित्वात् । ईश-९ ॥'

Further it is observed that one who knows *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* both, overcomes death through *Avidyā* and experiences immortality by means of *Vidyā*.

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।

अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ ईश-११, मैत्री-७.९ ॥

Īśa (10) points out that there are different results obtained from *Vidyā* as well as *Avidyā* and Īśa (11) quotes that a person overcomes death through *Avidyā*. It means that in Īśa Upa. (9-11), we have an intriguing use of the words '*Vidyā*' and '*Avidyā*'. They who worship *Avidyā* enter dense darkness, & into denser darkness, they who worship *Vidyā*. The fruits of *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* are different. However, one who knows both, crosses death by means of *Avidyā* and attains immortality by *Vidyā*. It puzzles us by saying that both *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* lead to darkness. This is explained in the next stanza, which says they are to be valued differently. The way in which the words '*Vidyā*' and '*Avidyā*' are to be interpreted is indicated in st. 11 which says that by *Avidyā* one crosses or conquers death & by *Vidyā* one attains immortality. According to Solomon E. A.², "This passage can be interpreted to mean that the knowledge which leads to worldly activity and welfare, that is to say, to *preyas* and which is usually called *Avidyā*, is necessary for a man in order that he might reach the last but one stage on the path to the enjoyment of eternal beatitude when alone *Vidyā* reveals itself. In this passage, the words denote two different kinds of knowledge, both are necessary; neither is rejected or even subordinated. This is the *Upaniṣadic* tendency, it may be noted in passing, from which the later doctrine of *Karmayoga* (path of action)

¹ Works of Śaṅkarācārya in Original Sanskrit : vol. 1 — Ten Principal *Upaniṣads* with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, Page 9, Pub. — Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi, Reprint, 1992.

² Solomon E. A. — A problem of Truth and Reality, page 22

originated; *Avidyā* may here be rendered as *Karmajñāna* (knowledge of acts, action) or even knowledge of empirical sciences, which exist alongside with *brahma-jñāna* (supreme knowledge of Brahman, the ultimate reality)."

Īsopaniṣad puts before us the idea that truth is veiled in this universe by a vessel of gold, and it invokes the grace of God to lift up the golden vessel and allow the truth to be seen :

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।

तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥

Thus, here the conception of veil prevents truth from being seen at first glance.

Here *Vidyā* is said to lead towards immortality (*Amṛtatva*). Similarly *Kena*-12, *Śvetāśvatara*-V.1 and *Maitri*-VII.9, also refer to *Vidyā* as *Amṛta* i.e. nectar.

The thought is carried ahead in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* II.4-5 where *Vidyā* is considered as more elevating of the two - *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*. Naciketas is in search of *Vidyā*, as he is not carried away by worldly temptations. But there are self-conceited persons who are confident of themselves and regard themselves as full of wisdom though they are plunged in *Avidyā*. These fools grope here and there like blind men led by the blind. *Kaṭha Upa.* II.-1-2 compares *śreyas* and *preyas*, the spiritual good and the worldly pleasant and the choice of *śreyas* is recommended. It is well with him who goes in for *śreyas*. He misses his aim that selects *preyas*. Here the knowledge leading to spiritual bliss is termed '*Vidyā*', while '*Avidyā*' is the knowledge conducive for worldly pleasure.

Here *Avidyā* is mentioned in the *Upaniṣads* as the source of delusion.

This *Upaniṣad* speaks of people living in ignorance and thinking themselves wise, who move about wandering in search of reality. If they had lodged themselves in *Vidyā*-wisdom, instead of *Avidyā*-ignorance, they would easily have seen the truth. (*Kaṭha* I.2.4.5).

Śaṅkarācārya¹ in his *Bhāṣya* on *Kaṭha* (I.2.5) compares *Avidyā* with extreme darkness :

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितम्मन्यमानाः ।

¹ Works of Śaṅkarācārya in Original Sanskrit : vol. 1 — Ten Principal *Upaniṣads* with Śaṅkarabhāṣya, Page 9, Pub. — Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi, Reprint, 1992.

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धा ॥कठ. १.२.५, मैत्री-७.९॥

भाष्य — ‘ये तु समारभाजो जना अविद्यामन्तरे मध्ये घनीभूते इव तमसि वर्तमाना वेष्टयमाना ।’

Here the concept of blindfoldness is discussed and we are informed that we deliberately shut our eyes to the truth before us.

Kāthopaniṣad (III) discusses ‘*Ātmavidyā*’, where there is a dialogue between Yama (Mṛtyu) and Naciketā. Yama describes the *Śreyas* (the good) and the *Preyas* (the pleasant). He says that in the *Preya*-path, the self of a man is submerged in the darkness of *Avidyā* or ignorance and this darkness will begin to lift as he enters the *Śreya*-path which will be designated as path of *Vidyā*, knowledge or spiritual awareness. Yama, here, identifies *Śreyas* with *Vidyā* i.e. knowledge and *preyas* with *Avidyā* i.e. ignorance.

The seventh stanza in *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* condemns sacrificial rites as unreliable boats (*adr̥ḍhaḥ plavaḥ*) and lower type of action (*avara-karma*). ‘*Avidyā*’ in this passage, therefore, means lower knowledge, which regards sacrifices as the sole aim.

It is pointed out in *Muṇḍaka* (II.1.10) that *Avidyā* breeds selfishness and becomes a knot in the heart, which we should untie before we can get possession of the self in the recesses of our heart.

पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम् ।

एतद्यो वेद निहितं गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य ॥२.१.१०॥

And all the doubts are cleared as soon as this knot of ignorance is untied :

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टेपरावरे ॥२.२.८॥

We find the concept of *Avidyā* taking a different turn in the *Praśna Upaniṣad*. Firstly it is stated that we cannot reach the world of *Brahman* unless we have shaken off the crookedness in us the falsehood (*Anṛtam*) in us, the illusion (*Māyā*) in us.

तेषामसौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्मनृतं न माया चेति ।प्रश्न-१.१६॥

Later on as the sages received satisfactory solutions to their queries from Pippalāda, they addressed him, “you are our father who help us over to the other shore (of the ocean) of *Avidyā* ‘ते तमर्चयन्तस्त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्माकमविद्यायाः परं पारं तारयसीति ।’ (प्रश्न-६.८). The sages were wise but they

had no definite knowledge about the objects of their inquiry, or were utterly ignorant about them. '*Avidyā*' here means 'lack of knowledge' or 'inadequate knowledge'. However, it is to be noted that the thought here is mono-centric. *Avidyā* does not here refer to any entity distinct from the object of *Vidyā*. They have a common object and '*Avidyā*' in this passage means lack of knowledge or 'inadequate knowledge' of that object of inquiry, the knowledge of which would be *Vidyā*.

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* gives the idea clearly that *Avidyā* is mutable while *Vidyā* is immutable i.e. immortal.

द्वे अक्षरे ब्रह्मपरे त्वनन्ते विद्याविद्ये निहिते यत्र गूढे ।

क्षरं त्वविद्या ह्यमृतं तु विद्या विद्याविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सोऽन्यः ॥५.१॥

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (V.1) distinguishes between *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*. *Avidyā* is knowledge of the mutable and *Vidyā* that of the immutable. The Supreme Being rules over both *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*.

This is a striking use of the word '*Avidyā*', The mutable world is identified, at least in linguistic usage, with the knowledge of the mutable world, and thus '*Avidyā*' is used in connection with the Supreme Being, as the ephemeral world emanating from *Brahman*, or the potentiality of *Brahman* to manifest itself in the form of the momentary universe.

In the *Maitri Upa.* (VII.9) in the seventh *prapāṭhaka*, there is a polemic against false teachers who propound the doctrine that there is no soul. They are the followers of Bṛhaspati, they slander the *Veda* and wallow in ignorance. It is related that Bṛhaspati in the guise of Śukra taught the demons this *Avidyā* for the safety of Indra.

बृहस्पतिर्वै शुक्रो भूत्वा इन्द्रस्य अभयाय असुरेभ्यः क्षयाय इमाम् अविद्याम् असृजत्; तया शिवम् अशिवमिति उद्विशन्ति अशिवं शिवमिति ।मैत्री उपनिषद्-७.९॥

This passage is a late one and the definition of *Avidyā* given here smacks of later influence, i.e. especially 'of *Yogasūtras* definition of *Avidyā* :

अनित्याशुचिदुःखानात्मसु नित्यशुचिसुखात्मख्यातिर्अविद्या ।योगसूत्र-२.५॥

An inquiry into a comparatively late stage of *Upaniṣadic* thought reveals a different and interesting turn in the meaning of the word '*Avidyā*'.

In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV.3, Janaka inquires as to what is the light of man and Yājñavalkya gradually comes to the *Ātman*. The impressions of the waking state are present in the dream-state, wherein he sees things similar to those he has seen in the waking state. But the dream is illusory

and the *Ātman* is, in fact, absolutely unaffected by it. Yājñavalkya proceeds to explain the effects and signs of *Avidyā*.

‘अथ यत्र एनं घ्नन्ति इव जिनन्ति इव हस्ति इव विच्छाययति गर्तम् इव पतति यदेव जाग्रद् भयं पश्यति तदत्र अविद्यया मन्यते । अथ यत्र देव इव राजा इव अहम् इव इदं सर्वोऽस्मीति मन्यते सोऽस्य परमो लोकः ।’ Br.Up.IV.3.20.

Yājñavalkya is trying to convince Janaka that the *Ātman* is as unaffected by the worldly experiences as it is by the dream-experiences.

According to E. A. Solomon¹, “This passage is an important landmark in the history of the word, and the concept of ‘*Avidyā*’, as here *Avidyā* is looked upon as being responsible for the creation of imaginary conditions, which make us miserable. Here *Avidyā* signifies a tendency of the mind by which one imagines thing which do not exist when and where they are being imagined, but are derivatives of something experienced as reality in a different context.”² *Avidyā* thus is here that principle, which compels the *Ātman* to identify itself with that particular body.”

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (V.11) gives the characteristics of *Avidyā* as : ‘क्षरं त्वविद्या ।’ — *Avidyā* is mutable.

Thus, Dr. E. A. Solomon³ states: “*Avidyā* conveys the following shades of meaning in the *Upaniṣads* :

- ❖ Knowledge of something other than *Ātman* or *Brahman* – and hence the distinction between *Avidyā* and *Vidyā*.
- ❖ In the *Praśna Upaniṣad* *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* have a common object and *Avidyā* means lack of knowledge or inadequate knowledge of the objects of metaphysical inquiry.
- ❖ ‘*Avidyā*’ in the *Maitri Upa.* indicates false knowledge, of course, according to dogmatic valuation. Nevertheless, the word has acquired a logical sense here.
- ❖ In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upa.* IV.3, it signifies a mental tendency to imagine things where they do not really exist. In *Bṛhad. Upa.* IV.4.3. It can be interpreted to mean that principle which leads one

¹ Solomon E. A. — *Avidyā, A Problem of Truth & Reality*, page 28

² Compare *Brahmasūtra* Śāṅkarabhāṣya’s discussion on *Adhyāsa* : स्मृतिरूपं परत्र पूर्वदृष्टावभासः ।

³ Solomon E. A. — *Avidyā – The Problem of Truth & Reality*

to identify the *Ātman* with the body.

- ❖ The *Śvetā. Upa.* uses the word to mean the mutable world as governed by the Supreme Being. '*Avidyā*', is used as a synonym of '*Prakṛti*' or '*Māyā*'. The *Maitri Upa.* IV.2 uses the word 'moha' in equivalent of '*Avidyā*' in the sense of a congenital principle, which does not allow the soul to cognise rightly.

Śaṅkarācārya in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* depicts *Avidyā* in different ways: In *Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya* or in the *Upodghāta* he defines *Adhyāsa* as : 'अध्यासो नाम अतस्मिंस्तद्वृद्धिरित्यवोचम् ।' superimposition, says Śaṅkara, is the apparent presentation to consciousness, by way of remembrance, of something previously observed in some other thing. It is an apparent presentation, that is knowledge, which is subsequently falsified, in other words, it is illusory knowledge. Further, he says: "एवमविरुद्धः प्रत्यगात्मन्यप्यनात्मध्यासः । तं एतमेवं लक्षणम् अध्यासं पण्डिता अविद्येति मन्यन्ते तद्विवेकेन च वस्तुस्वरूपावधारणं विद्यामाहुः ।". Śaṅkarācārya proves identity between *Adhyāsa* and *Avidyā* and defines *Vidyā* as the right comprehension of the Supreme Entity.

This superimposition is called ignorance (*Avidyā*) metaphorically, the effect being put for the cause. Ignorance here does not mean want of knowledge, but that kind of knowledge, which is stultified later by the knowledge of things as they are. Its counterpart is called knowledge (*Vidyā*).

Śaṅkarācārya citing the example for *Adhyāsa* says that when we superimpose the characteristics or qualities of the body and the sense organs on our self; it is *Adhyāsa*. तथा देहधर्मान् - स्थूलोऽहं, कृशोऽहं, गौरोऽहं, तिष्ठामि, गच्छामि, लङ्घयामि चेति । तथेन्द्रियधर्मान् - मूकः, काणः, क्लीबः, बधिरः, अन्धोऽहमिति ।

In his *Bhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra* I.4.3 - तदधिगतत्वं तदर्थवत् - Śaṅkara states that the subtle causal condition is dependent on the Supreme Being for without Him, it cannot create this empirical world. It is the potential power, the causal potentiality inherent in *Brahman*. It is Nescience that explains why, when one's ignorance is destroyed by knowledge, there is no possibility of that liberated soul getting into bondage again. About this ignorance you can neither say that it is, nor that it is not; it is an illusion and so it is reasonably called unmanifest (*Avyakta*).

Śaṅkarācārya states in his *Bhāṣya* on II.1.9 : "तत्र यः परिहारः कार्यस्य तद्वर्माणं चाविद्याधारोपित्वात्र तैः कारणं संसृज्यत इति, अपीतावपि स समानः । अस्ति चायमपरो दृष्टान्तः -

यथा स्वयं प्रसारितया मायया मायावी त्रिष्वपि कालेषु न संस्पृश्यते, अवस्तुत्वान्, एव परमात्मापि संसारमायया, न संस्पृश्यत इति । मायामात्रं ह्येतत् यत्परमात्मनोऽवस्थात्रयात्मनावभासनं रज्ज्वा इव सर्पादिभावेनेति ।” As it is stated in Gaudapāḍakārikā (I.16) :

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।

अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा इति ॥

The above paragraph means that it is the existence of ignorance (*Avidyā*) which is not destroyed, that is responsible for the reappearance of the world. (This is said while discussion on three states – *jāgrata*, *svapna* and *susupti*) so also at dissolution the power of distinction remains in a potential state as *Avidyā* or ignorance. But in the case of the liberated, no ignorance being left, there is no chance of their being brought back into bondage from their state of oneness with *Brahman*.

Thus, as discussed earlier, the *Brahmasūtras* according to Śaṅkarācārya convey that the wrong-perception of duality is brought about by ignorance (*Avidyā*), which is beginningless — तथा च लोकेऽनुभवः - शुक्तिका हि रजतवदवभासते एकश्चन्द्रः सद्द्वितीयवदिति ।’ Śaṅkarācārya states that due to this ignorance, *Brahman* is mistaken for the world the individual soul identifies itself with its adjuncts (*upādhis*), viz. the body, senses, etc. which are only superimposed on it. This identification makes a person think that it is the doer, enjoyer etc., though the truth is that soul is none of these thereby, individual soul comes under the sway of birth, death, happiness, misery etc., in short, becomes bound down to this world (*Samsāra*). Hence, *Avidyā* is known as *Anirvacanīya* i.e. indescribable. *Anirvacanīya* is defined as : “*Sat Asat Vilakṣaṇa Anirvacanīya* – that which is neither real (existent) nor non-existent (unreal) is *Avidyā*.”

Śaṅkara’s explanation of the world as an illusion has given his philosophy the name of *Māyāvāda* or *Anirvacanīya-Khyātivāda*. It is also known as *vivartavāda*, the doctrine of apparent modification of *Brahman* into this phenomenal world.

In the *Adhyāsabhāṣya* of *Brahmasūtra-śāṅkarabhāṣya*, Śaṅkarācārya refutes all these theories pointing out duly the logical fallacies and finally establishes the validity of the *Advaita* theory called *anirvacanīyakhyāti*. Though the literal meaning of the word *khyāti* is knowledge, it is applied to error and technically the theories of *khyāti* mean the theories of error. There are five prominent theories of *Bhrama* (error) propounded by the schools of the Indian philosophy viz., the theory of self-apprehension (*ātmakhyāti*), the theory of non-being’s apprehension (*asatkhyāti*), the

theory of non-apprehension (*akhyāti*), the theory of misapprehension (*anyathākhyāti*) and the theory of indefinable apprehension (*anirvacanīyakhyāti*). All these theories of error have been classified into two groups viz. *Satkhyāti* and *asatkhyāti*. According to the former, an error is the cognition of the existent (*sat*). There are three theories under *Satkhyāti*, viz. *Anyathākhyāti*, *Ātmakhyāti* and *Akhyāti*. According to the theory of *Asatkhyāti*, an error is non-existent being.

आत्मख्यातिरसत्ख्यातिरख्यातिः ख्यातिरन्यथा ।

यथानिर्वचनख्यातिरित्येतत् ख्यातिपञ्चकम् ॥ ¹

Valid knowledge (*Pramā*) is the apprehension of an object as it is, while error is the cognition of an object as it is not. The Sanskrit term for error is '*khyāti*' (cognition) derived from the root (*khyā*) meaning, 'to perceive' or to manifest.

"The *Anirvacanīya khyāti* is connected with *Adhyāsa* or superimposition of bodily characteristics on self or of the world on God. Secondly, it is connected with *vivarta* or mal-transformation as opposed to *pariṇāma*, which is transformation only. Whether we speak of super-imposition or mal transformation these cannot take place without a substratum. There may be different substances underlying different appearances, but ultimately there is one substance that lies at the back of them all", opines Dr. R. D. Ranade.²

Annappūrṇopaniṣad (I.13-16) discusses about the five *bhramas* (delusion):

भ्रमः पञ्चविधो भाति तदेवेह समुच्यते ।
जीवेश्वरौ भिन्नरूपाविति प्राथमिको भ्रमः ॥१.१३॥
आत्मनिष्ठं कर्तृगुणं वास्तवं वा द्वितीयकः ।
शरीरत्रयसंयुक्तजीवः सङ्गी तृतीयकः ॥१.१४॥
जगत्कारणरूपस्य विकारित्वं चतुर्थकः ।
कारणाद्भिन्नजगतः सत्यत्वं पञ्चमो भ्रमः ।
पञ्चभ्रमनिवृत्तिश्च तदा स्फुरति चेतसि ॥१.१५॥

The delusions are : (1) Is *Jīvātmā* different from *Paramātmā*? (2) Is there any truth in the agentship (कर्तृत्व) of *Ātman*? (3) Is *Jīvātman* attached (सङ्गी

¹ Quoted from *Brahmasūtracatuṣṣūtrī* by Vidyāsudhākara Paṇḍita and Haradatta Śarmā, Pub. – Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 1940

² Ranade R. D. — *Vedānta* – The Culmination of Indian Thoughts : Page 61, Pub. – BVB, Mumbai, first edition, 1970.

) with three bodies – कारण, कार्य, & लिङ्ग ? (4) Is there any modification in *Brahman* who is in the form of the root cause of this world? (5) Is reality of the world different from the root cause/material cause/ source (*Brahman*)?

How the cessation of these bhramas or delusion is possible is also stated :

1. बिम्बप्रतिबिम्बदर्शनेन भेदभ्रमो निवृत्तः ।
2. तदा प्रभृति मच्चितं ब्रह्माकारममभूत्स्वयम् । निदाघ त्वमपीत्थं हि तत्त्वज्ञानमवाप्नुहि ॥१६॥
3. घटमठाकाशदर्शनेन सङ्गीतिभ्रमो निवृत्तः ।
4. कनकरुचकदर्शनेन विकारित्वभ्रमो निवृत्तः ।
5. रज्जुसर्पदर्शनेन कारणाद्भिन्नजगतः सत्यत्वभ्रमो निवृत्तः ।

For the first time in this minor *Upaniṣad*, we find such an analytical study. Here the five delusions (*Bhramas*) are dealt with and how the cessation of these *Bhramas* is possible is also suggested later on.

In the same *Upaniṣad*, Annapūrṇā V.77, Bhrānti is also discussed as :

यथाकाशो घटकाशो महाकाश इतीरितः ।
तथा भ्रान्तेर्द्विधा प्रोक्तो ह्यात्मा जीवेश्वरात्मना ॥५.७७॥

As there is Bhrānti or delusion between Ghaṭākāśa & Mahākāśa as they are different (but in reality, they are one) similarly there is also delusion regarding *Jīvātmā* and *Īśvara*.

In Maitri (VI.2) the soul is referred as infatuated with Moha (ignorance), moha is an equivalent of *Avidyā* in the sense of a congenital oblique psychical affliction which does not allow the soul to cognise rightly - a concept which is explicitly formulated in the BG and in the Buddhist concept of *Avidyā*.

Rāmānujācārya also describes *Avidyā* as neither existing nor non-existing.

दोषश्च स्वरूपतिरोधानविविधविचित्र विक्षेपकारी सदसदनिर्वचनीया अनाद्यविद्या ।

and the defect is that the beginningless '*Avidyā*' causing concealment of the nature of *Brahman* and causing variegated projections, cannot be described either as existing or as non-existing.

In the commentary '*Śrī-bhāṣya*' on *Brahmasūtra* I.1.1, Rāmānujācārya refers to the word '*Avidyā*' in the sense of '*Karman*'. After stating the verse :

विद्या चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।

अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥ ईशोपनिषद्-११ ॥

Rāmānujācārya states that *Avidyā* is the *Karman* enjoined for the particular castes and stages of life. *Avidyā* means 'by *karman*'. It means *Avidyā* apprehended as being the means of crossing over death is the prescribed '*karman*' itself other than *Vidyā*. For this, Rāmānuja quotes from *Viṣṇupurāṇa* :

इयाज सोऽपि सुबहून् यज्ञान् ज्ञानव्यपाश्रयः ।

ब्रह्मविद्यामधिष्ठाय तर्तुं मृत्युमविद्यया ॥ वि. पु. ६.६.१२ ॥

i.e. he also performed many sacrifices, with knowledge as his resort, having taken to the knowledge of *Brahman* in order to cross over death by *Avidyā*.

Avidyā In Different Schools Of Philosophy :

In the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa *Avidyā* or ignorance is known as *viparyaya*. He states :

एष प्रत्ययसर्गो विपर्ययाशक्तितुष्टिसिद्ध्याख्यः ।

गुणवैषम्यविमर्हेन तस्य भेदास्तु पञ्चाशत् ॥ ४६ ॥

पञ्च विपर्ययभेदा भवन्त्यशक्तिश्च करणवैकल्यात् ।

अष्टाविंशतिभेदा तुष्टिर्नवधाऽष्टधा सिद्धिः ॥ ४७ ॥

The *Yogasūtras* of Patañjali calls these as the *Pañca-kleśas* (*Yogasūtra* II.3). i.e. Afflictions viz. *Avidyā* (ignorance), *Asmitā* (Egotism), *Rāga* (Desire), *Dveṣa* (Aversion) and *Abhiniveśa* (Tenacity of mundane existence) : अविद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः क्लेशाः ॥ २.३ ॥

Avidyā is characterized as : अविद्या क्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्ततनुविच्छिन्नोदारणाम् ॥ २.४ ॥

Ignorance is the field of the others, like whether they are Dormant, Extenuated, Intercepted or simple. Here ignorance means delusion, the notion, in short, is that what is *Anātman* (not soul) is soul.

Avidyā is defined as follows : अनित्याशुचिदुःखानात्मसु नित्यशुचिसुखात्मख्यातिरविद्या ॥ २.५ ॥ Ignorance (*Avidyā*) is the notion that the un-eternal, the impure, evil and what is not soul, are (severally) eternal, pure, joy and soul.

In the *Yogasūtras*, the term *Avidyā* is used in its *Upaniṣadic* sense of ignorance with regard to the true nature of reality and not in the sense of error, which meaning also it acquires in the *Vaiśeṣika* and the *Nyāya sūtras*. The *Vaiśeṣika sūtras* of Kaṇāda also establish the nature of *Vidyā*

and *Avidyā* as proper knowledge and false knowledge respectively in the *sūtra* : विद्याविद्यातश्च संशयः ॥२.२.२३॥ It is to be noted that in the *Vaiśeṣika sūtras*, the terms '*Vidyā*' and '*Avidyā*' are used in the sense of knowledge and error also respectively with regard to the ordinary object of perception. '*Vidyā*' is defined as 'knowledge' free from defect or error 'अदुष्टं विद्या' (IX.2.12); and '*Avidyā*' as 'defective knowledge' - 'तद् दुष्टज्ञानम्' (IX.2.11). This defective knowledge is attributed to the defect of the sense organs, or that of the past-impressions. इन्द्रियदोषात् संस्कारदोषाच्चाविद्या ॥१.२.१०॥

CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ :

Māyā is defined in *Sarvopaniṣad* as beginningless, neither real nor unreal, nor real unreal, that which is un-definable etc. :

“अनादिर्न्तर्वली प्रमाणाप्रमाणसाधारणा न सती नासती न सदसती स्वयमविकाराविकारहेतौ निरूप्यमाणेऽसती । अनिरूप्यमणे सती लक्षणशून्या सा मायेत्युच्यते ॥४॥”

Hence a very novel concept of *Māyā* is found elaborated in the *Sarvopaniṣad* where *Māyā* is endowed with the attributes like Anādi (beginningless), Antaratni (productive), Pramaṇāpramāṇa-sādhāraṇa (general by proof or non-proof), Na-Sati (not existing), Na-Sadasati (neither existing nor non-existing), Svayamavikārāvikārahetau (cause of modifications but *Māyā* itself is Avikāra i.e. free from modifications), Nirupyamāṇe-asati (existing even though manifested), and Lakṣaṇa-Śūnya (devoid of characteristics).

The concept of *Māyā* in such an elaborate manner is not found in any other *Upaniṣad*.

That which is beginningless, fertile (it containing within herself the seeds of action, capable of producing the phenomenal universe) open to both proof and disproof, neither real (it has no reality considered apart from *Brahman*) nor unreal (because it is perceived by all), nor real-unreal (it is not both real and unreal at the same time, but it is something different from Sat (existence) and Asat (non-existence), or in other words, it is inexpressible (लक्षणशून्या). — non-existent, when, because of the immutability of its own substratum, the cause of change (*Avidyā* or Nescience) is ascertained (when *Māyā* is perceived to have the changeless *Brahman* as its substratum, and consequently when the cause of all modification or change in the phenomenal universe is ascertained in its true aspect, in the state of highest realisation, then *Māyā* becomes non-existent, as then whatever is, is perceived as one existence — *Brahman* only) — existent when it is not so ascertained (when such is not the case

it exert its own powers of illusion and bondage on the unenlightened souls) — (thus that) which is undefinable, is called *Māyā*.

Commentator Nārāyaṇa defines *Māyā* beautifully as : “लक्षणशून्येदृशी तादृशीति निर्वर्तुमशक्या । सा माया । सा शब्दो निषेधे या शब्दः प्राप्तौ । प्राप्ताऽपि या सती नास्ति सा माया ।” Commentator Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin states : “यावत् ब्रह्मज्ञानं नोदेति तावदियं माया अनादिः शास्त्रजन्यज्ञानिदृष्ट्या अन्तर्वर्ती स्वसत्त्वे स्वासत्त्वे नाविद्याऽस्तीह नो माया । इति”

Till the Brahmajñāna is not obtained, this *Māyā*, which is beginningless, born from the Śāstras, which has end according to the scholars, which is in existence (स्वसत्त्वे) and also in non-existence (स्वासत्त्वे) and one whose knowledge and ignorance (स्वाज्ञस्वज्ञदृष्टि) becomes the proof that ‘This is neither Nescience (अविद्या) nor *Māyā*, which is the inner self and then becomes concealed or covered (तिरस्कृत) at the end, that is *Māyā*..

Thus from this point of view *Māyā* is non-existent (अवस्तुभूत) just like the horn of a rabbit (शशशृङ्गः). On account of the lack of proof of existence of its work which is general, without proof, from the empirical (व्यावहारिकदृष्टि) or causal (कारणदृष्टि) point of view; which is non-existent due to bondage or due to not having insight, even though active (कार्यात्मना) and which is not non-existent (नासती) due to its obtaining or performing of actions performed by it. *Māyā* is neither existent nor non-existent due to one lustre and darkness (तेजस्तिमिरवत् एकस्याः), due to the impossibility of existence and non-existence, from the point of view of one’s ignorance, which is existent from the पृथिवी to the अव्यक्त which is transformation less (विकाररहित), of the all seeds of transformation due to the truth of her (*Māyā*’s) own being false like the horns of the rabbit, and so that which is void of characteristics other than Brahma is known as *Māyā*, “. . . अत एव या ब्रह्मादिरिक्तलक्षणशून्या सा मायेत्युच्यते ।”

It has no reality considered apart from *Brahman*. It is unreal because it is perceived by all and it is neither real Nor unreal but it is something different from Sat (existence) and Asat (non-existence), or in other words, it is inexpressible (लक्षणशून्या). Gauḍapāda-kārikā (IV.58) establishes the non-existence of *Māyā*: सा च माया न विद्यते । In Śvetāśvatara Upa. (IV.10), *Māyā* is referred to as *Prakṛti* or the creative power. “मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान् मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ।” i.e. this primordial nature is *Māyā* and The Great Lord is

the owner of the *Māyā*.

According to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*¹, the *Māyā* is impregnated by God :

कपिलस्तत्त्वसंख्याता भगवानात्ममायया ।

जातः स्वयमजः सातादात्मप्रज्ञस्ये नृणाम् ॥३.२५.१॥

In the *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad*, *Māyā* is defined with *Avidyā* and is said to be the basic nature or *Prakṛti* of *Brahman* and He plays with *Māyā* : “अथास्य या सहजास्त्यविद्या मूलप्रकृतिर्मायालोहितशुक्लकृष्णा ।” “योऽसौ देवो भगवान्सर्वेश्वर्यसम्पन्न सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतानां हृदये संनिविष्टो मायावी मायया क्रीडति ।” Here *Māyā* is referred as the *Mūla-Prakṛti*. The term is relative of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, where we know that the *Pradhāna* or *Prakṛti* is *Avikṛta* and it is referred in the similar verbatim in *Sāṃkhyakārikā* (3) :

मूलप्रकृतिरविकृतिर्महदाद्याः प्रकृतिविकृतयः सप्त ।

षोडसकस्तु विकारो न प्रकृतिर्न विकृतिः पुरुषः ॥ सां.का.३ ॥

त्रिगुणमविवेकि विषयः सामान्यमचेतनं प्रसवधर्मि ।

व्यक्तं तथा प्रधानं तद्विवरीतस्तथा च पुमान् ॥सां.का.११॥

प्रीत्यप्रीतिविषादात्मकाः प्रकाशप्रवृत्तिनियमार्थाः ।

अन्योन्यभिभवाश्रयजननमिथुनवृत्तयश्च गुणाः ॥ सां.का.१२ ॥

In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, we find metaphorical description of the similar idea :

अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः ।

अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते जहात्येनां भुङ्क्ते भोगामजोऽन्यः ॥४.५॥

Here the creation of this world or cosmology is discussed giving the example of a she-goat.

In *Bhagavadgītā* this creation is said to be possible due to the three *Guṇas* which are possessed by *Prakṛti* :

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥भ.गी. १४.५॥

In the seventh chapter of BG, Lord Śrīkrṣṇa states that it is due to these three *Guṇas* that the world is deluded (*mohitam*), and thus divine *Māyā* possessing of these three qualities is difficult to overcome. Only those

¹ Pansikar V. L. S. — *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, rev. by N. R. Acharya, Bombay, 1950, Nirṇayasāgara Press.

who seek refuge in Him can cross the *Māyā* those who do not seek their shelter into Him are taken away by *Māyā* and they cling to the demoniac traits :

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैभावैरिभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥७.१३॥

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥७.१४॥

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरे भावमाश्रिताः ॥७.१५॥

Here, *Māyā* occurs as a deceptive power by which the Supreme Reality subdues those who do not resort to Him or worship Him as their God. Those who possess this insight realise that this *Māyā* is nothing but formulated of the three guṇas causing the cosmic process. But the evil people are caught by these three and are deluded.

Śaṅkarācārya on BG VII.14 considers *Māyā* as the force which deludes the beings : ‘सर्वभूतमोहिनीम्’.

Rāmānujācārya, in the *Bhāṣya* on BG-VII.14, mentions as the specific function of the *Māyā* that it causes the real nature of the Lord to disappear — ‘अस्याः कार्यं भगवत्स्वरूपतिरोधानम् ।’

In Mahābhārata (XII.323.42) those present declare that they are unable to behold Hari “being deluded by this *Māyā*”.

In *Kṛṣṇopaniṣad* stanza 12 it is stated : “दुर्बोधं कुहकं तस्य मायया मोहितम् जगत् ।” “difficult to realise are his tricky ways by *Māyā* is the world deluded”. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa states in Bhagavadgītā :

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥७.२५॥

Matsya Purāṇa states :

सोऽवतीर्णो महीं देवः प्रविष्टो मानुषीं तनुम् ।
मोहयन् सर्वभूतानि योगात्मा योगमायया ॥४७.११॥

Here we observe close relation between the word ‘*Yoga*’ and ‘*Māyā*’.

As ‘power’ *Māyā* can be compared to ‘Śakti’; and as a maternal form’, it can be identified with *Prakṛti*. In *Sāṃkhya* Philosophy, *Prakṛti* or *Māyā* remains in a primordial state by means of an equilibrium of the three

Guṇas : Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

“When the Supreme God, who is unique, seems to appear in multiple forms this can be speculatively expressed in this way that the Niṣkala becomes Sakala (the invisible aspect of the god head becomes divisible) and creates the phenomena of nature. The mythological counterpart of this is that God is able to appear in many different or identical forms.” opines Teun Goudriaan.¹

Here it is evinced that there is a difference between the concept of *Prakṛti* as referred in *Sāṃkhya* and *Māyā* as *Prakṛti* in *Vedānta*.

In *Sāṃkhya* philosophy *Prakṛti* is the primal nature, which is constituted of three Guṇas and distinct from Puruṣa. Creation is possible due to the combined effect of Puruṣa and *Prakṛti*. No single entity is capable of doing it. Here duality persists. *Prakṛti*, *Avyakta* or *Pradhāna* is distinct from Puruṣa and one of the 25 constituents of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy.

Amarakośa (II.10.11) defines *Māyā* as that magical power which projects the whole world directly like the magic power of the magician — “मीयते अपरोक्षवत् प्रदर्श्यतेऽनया इति । इन्द्रजालादि !”

While in *Vedānta*, *Māyā* is identified with *Prakṛti* which is the innate nature of Supreme Reality. It is the divine power by which the Supreme Being regulates and rules over this universe. So the Supreme Reality is known as *Māyin* i.e. one who is endowed with *Māyā*. We cannot separate the two. For e.g. — “मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् । श्वेताश्वतर उप.” and “मायां एतां शक्तिं विद्यात् । नृसिंहपूर्वतापिनी उप.-३.१”

Similarly it is stated in BG :

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।

हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ भ.गी.-९.१० ॥

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन्नार्थं दधाम्यहम् ।

संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ भ.गी. १४.३ ॥

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः भवन्ति याः ।

तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ भ.गी. १४.४ ॥

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ भ.गी. १४.५ ॥

¹ Teun Goudriaan — *Māyā Divine & Human* page 4, Motilal Banarasidas, first edition, Delhi - 1978

Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa is acting as a father and *Prakṛti* as mother of creation.

In the Śvetāśvatara Upa. we are told that it is only by meditation upon God, by union with Him, and by entering into His Being, that at the end, there is the cessation of the great world-illusion :

क्षरं प्रधानममृताक्षरं हरः क्षरात्मानावीशते देव एकः ।

तस्याभिध्यानाद्योजनात्तत्त्वभावाद्भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः ॥१.१०॥

The word *Māyā* meaning “power” instead of “illusion” is used in the Śvetāśvatara Upa. later on, when it describes God as a Mayin — a Powerful Being who creates this world by His powers while the other viz., the individual soul is bound down by ‘*Māyā*’ :

छन्दांसि यज्ञाः क्रतवो व्रतानि भूतं भव्यं यच्च वेदा वदन्ति ।

अस्मान्मायी सृजते विश्वमेतत्तस्मिंश्चान्यो मायया संनिरुद्धः ॥४.१॥

Even God is described as spreading His meshes and making them so manifold that he catches all the beings of the universe in them and rules over them :

य एको जालवानीशत ईशनीभिः सर्वलोकानीशत ईशनीभिः ।

य एवैक उद्भवे संभवे च य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥३.१॥

Here we have the conception of a snare or meshes inside which all beings are entangled.

Śaṅkara states : “The snare is *Māyā* because of its being impossible to overcome” (जालं माया दुरत्ययत्वत् १). His conclusion is that the wader of the “net” is the same as the possessor of the *Māyā* (जालवान् मायावीत्यर्थः १); who by His *Māyā* keeps all others in check (Śvet. Upa. IV.9).

So the “net” is an image well fitted to illustrate the action of the divine *Māyā*. “Indeed the terms *Indrajāla* and *Māyā* are sometimes used as synonyms” opines Teun Goudriaan¹.

In R̥gvidhāna² (IV.23.1) it is stated : “शाम्बरीम् ईन्द्रजालं वा मायाम् एतेन वारयेत् ।” one will restrain by this (stanza) the *Māyā* called Śāmbarīm and the *Māyā* called *Indrajāla*. *Indrajāla* here appears as a subdivision of the general term *Māyā*.

The identity of the *Māyā* with a net spread over mankind can also be

¹ Teun Goudriaan — *Māyā* Divine and Human, page 216.

² R. Mryer — R̥gvidhāna — trans. J Gonda, Urechit-1951, Berlin, 1978.

expressed by means of a compound *Māyājāla* – “the net which is *Māyā*”. *Māyā* is a mere metamorphosis of the *Sāṃkhya Prakṛti*.

The commentary of *Upaniṣad Brahma Yogin* on *Śvetāśvatara Upa.* explains *jāla* as “the Energy called *Māyā*, the characteristic activity of which is that it catches the fishes which are human souls”. That the Lord wields this net denotes that he presides over and enlivens this cosmical energy of *Māyā*: “तदधिष्ठातृत्वेन तद्वान् ईश्वरः ।” In this way He rules over all by His ruling powers. The word ‘ईशनीभिः’ is explained by the commentator as “माया शक्तिभिः”.

Even *Purāṇas* quote for *Māyā*. It is stated in *Brahmapurāṇa* by *Parāśara* :

“दृश्यते ह्यर्थरूपेण पुरुषैर्भ्रान्तदृष्टिभिः यदा पश्यन्ति चात्मानं केवलं परमार्थतः ।
मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतं तदा भवति निर्वृतः तस्माद्विज्ञानमेवास्ति न प्रपञ्चो न संसृतिः ॥”

Vedāntaparibhāṣā states :

“ईश्वरसाक्षी तु मायोपहितं चैतन्यम् । तच्चैकम् तदुपाधिभूतमायाया एकत्वात् ।”

The witness in God is that consciousness of which the cosmic illusion (*Māyā*) is the limiting adjunct.

R. D. Ranade¹ states “*Śvetāśvatara Upa.* was written at the time when the *Vedānta*, the *Sāṃkhya* and the *Yoga* were yet fused together. There was yet no definite line of cleavage between the *Māyā* of the *Vedānta* and the *Prakṛti* of the *Sāṃkhya*.”

With further reference to this, *Kṛṣṇopaniṣad* enumerates *Māyā* to be three-fold : (1) *Sāttvikī*, (2) *Rājasī* and (3) *Tāmasī*.

Sāttvikī among the *Rūdras*, *Rājasī* in devotees and *Brahman*, and *Tāmasī* in the demons. Moreover it is qualified by the attributes “*Ajeyī* and *Vaiṣṇavī*” i.e. one which cannot be won over and that which is possessed by Lord *Viṣṇu* (i.e. *Kṛṣṇa*) respectively :

माया सा त्रिविधां प्रोक्ता सत्त्वरजसतामसी ।
प्रोक्ता च सात्त्विकी रुद्रे भक्ते ब्रह्मणि राजसी ॥४॥
तामसी दैत्यपक्षेषु माया त्रेधा ह्युदाहता ।
अजेया वैष्णवी माया जप्येन च सुता पुरा ॥५॥

An interesting description of the three *guṇas* occurs in the *Mahābhārata*

¹ Ranade R. D. — A Constructive Survey of Upaniṣadic Philosophy, Page 136, BVB, Bombay, 1986.

(XII.326.26). The three guṇas viz., Sattva (Lucidity), Rajas (Passion) and Tamas (Inertia, darkness) are present in a quite or moving state in all bodies. The soul is devoid of these guṇas, but it experiences them; it creates them, being itself superior to them.

The Kṛṣṇopaniṣad (5) directly continues the argument when it is said that God is endowed with three-fold *Māyā* consisting of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; the element of Sattva is declared to be present in Rudra, that of Rajas in a devoted *Brahman* and that of Tamas in the party of the demons; thus *Māyā* is explained to be threefold.

“Here the three basic strands with their three colours are interpreted as characteristics of the divine *Māyā* which deludes mankind, while the tripartite mystical nature of Reality is connected with the gods, the religious performers (and monopolists of religious literature), and the antagonists of both”,¹ states Teun Goudriaan.

In the *Devi Bhāgavata Purāṇa*² (VI.37.48-50) : the power of *Māyā* manifests itself in this way that the three guṇas are the cause of the embodiment of souls (देहसम्भव). Further (VI.26.2) it states that without delusion (Moha) no soul would be embodied. It is also said (VI.31-32) that the guṇas are basic to the three cosmical energies — Jñānaśakti (those of wisdom), Kriyāśakti (action) and Dravyaśakti (matter).

In *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (VIII.5.44), Viṣṇu is addressed with the words — “गुणेषु मायारचितेषु वृत्तिभिर्न सज्जमानाय” — to those whose are unattached to the activities in the scope of the guṇas which are the product of *Māyā*.

Viṣṇu's *Māyā* or Vaiṣṇavī *Māyā* is often said to manifest itself by the delusion with which it envelops the world of creatures, and Viṣṇu himself is often called the God who deludes (Mohayati) that world;³ as it is referred in Kṛṣṇopaniṣad (5).

Viṣṇu's *Māyā* is alluded to on several places in MBh. For e.g. in XII.325.4, Viṣṇu is called among others by the name Mahāmāyādhara ‘bearer of supra-normal *Māyā*’. In MBh. XII.290-57 it is stated by Bhīṣma that the world is to be compared to foam of the waters, enveloped as it is by Viṣṇu's hundreds of *Māyās*.

Viṣṇu's ability to assume different colours is an important aspect of his

¹ Teun Goudriaan — *Māyā Divine and Human*, page 167.

² T. Pandey — *Devi Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Banaras, 1963.

³ Teun Goudriaan — *Māyā Divine and Human*, page 129; Motilal Banarasidas, first ed., 1978

incomprehensible, fallacious *Māyā* (drone nature). Viṣṇu's *Māyā* appears in manifold forms. (page 179).

इन्द्रादिसर्वदेवानां सूर्यादिज्योतिषम् अपि ।

या शक्तिर्दृश्यते चित्रा विष्णुमाया नमामि तम् ॥¹

According to Teun Goudriaan : "This powerful delusive manifestation of Viṣṇu is called the *Māyā*, but the *Māyā* is not a female entity. It is the God Viṣṇu who disguises Himself, who assumes another appearance for the delusion of the world of creatures. The *Māyā* is constituted by Viṣṇu's multi-coloured manifestations."²

The *Māyā* i.e. *Tāmasī* referred here is possessed by the *Daityas* i.e. the demons.

While discussing the different views in *Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* and their relation, *Annapūrṇopniṣad* (IV.33) depicts *Paramātmā* to be self illuminating and endowed with *Māyā*.

“प्रकाशते स्वयं भेदः कल्पितो मायया तयोः ।”

And a person who is faultless and free from *Māyā*, he only perceives that self illuminating *Brahman* and not others (*Annapūrṇā* – IV.36).

“क्षीणदोषाः प्रपश्यन्ति नेतरे माययावृताः ।”

M. Hiriyanna³ states while discussing on the topic of *Jñāna*, *Ajñāna* and *Māyā* that : “According to Advaita, *Jñāna* is an *Antaḥkaraṇavṛtti* state of the internal organ. In *Suṣupti* the *Antaḥkaraṇa* like everything else is merged in *Ajñāna*. Hence the joy that is experienced then should be through an *Ajñānavṛtti*. This is in the case of *Jīva*. In respect of *Īśvara*, no *Antaḥkaraṇa* is recognised and all His *Jñāna* is of the form of *Māyāvṛtti*”.

In *Sītopaniṣad*, *Sītā* is described as — *त्रिवर्णात्मा साक्षान्मायामयी* and also as — *महामाया अव्यक्तरूपिणी* ।

In *Sāṃkhya*, *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* brings about this creation, so *Māyā* i.e. *Sītā* is referred alone as the mother gave birth to this whole creation. Here *Sītā* can be identified with *Prakṛti* which is *Triguṇātmikā* and *Sītā* is *Trivarnātmā*. Moreover, she is endowed with *Māyā*, she is *Mahāmāyā* and

¹ K. P. Aithal — *Ambikāstuti* by Hanuman — st. 6, page 62, in *Stotrasamuccaya*, vol. I, Madras, 1969, as no. 10.

² Teun Goudriaan — *Māyā* Divine and Human, page 140,

³ M. Hiriyanna — *Vedāntasāra* of Sadānanda Notes, page 27

unmanifest (*Avyakta*) in nature just like Pradhāna or *Prakṛti* —

In *Sītopaniṣad*, *Māyā* is identified with *Sītā*, the wife of Rāma. But there is no reference to Rāma endowed with *Māyā*.

In *Agni Purāṇa* (308) and *Kūrma Purāṇa* (II.20), *Māyā* is considered to be Viṣṇu's spouse, Śrī or Lakṣmī, especially in Pāñcarātra system, where the *Māyāśakti* is said to issue from Lakṣmī.¹

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (II.3.3), Goddess Durgā is repeatedly called by the name *Māyā*: देवीं मायां तु श्रीकामो (यजेत) — “A person who desires welfare should worship the Goddess *Māyā*”, and the commentator states that here *Māyā* is equal to Durgā.

Minor *Upaniṣads* like *Kṛṣṇopaniṣad* and *Gopī Upaniṣad* state that Supreme Reality is the possessor of power – *Māyā* —

गोप रूपो हरिः साक्षान्मायाविग्रहधारणः ।

दुर्बोधं कुहकं तस्य मायया मोहितं जगत् ॥१०॥

माया शबलितं ब्रह्मासीत् । गोपी. उप. ४॥

With *Māyā* the lord rules over the world as is evinced from the following verse :

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥भ.गी. १८.६१॥

And this divine power (*Māyā*) of the God is difficult to cross over. It is only possible through unflinching devotion —

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥भ.गी. ७.१४॥

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan² opines : “The power of creation is called *Māyā*. The delusive character of the world is also designated *Māyā* in the sense of *Avidyā*. When we are asked to overcome *Māyā*, it is an injunction to avoid worldliness. *Māyā* is concerned not with the existence of the world but with its meaning, not with the factuality of the world but with the way in which we look upon it.”

In *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, *Māyā* is known as *Īśvara Śakti* i.e. power of God. *Māyā* is also known by different names : *Prakṛti*, *Avidyā*, *Ajñāna*,

¹ According to Kosambi, the present legend occurs in several Purāṇas.

² S. Radhakrishnan — *The Principal Upaniṣads* pg. 89-90.

Pradhāna, Śakti, Ajā.

In the beginning of the creation, He brought forth *Māyā*. It is of the form of cause and effect endowed with three guṇas. It possesses two powers : *Āvaraṇa Śakti* (Concealing Power) and *Vikṣepa Śakti* (Power of Projection). Thus *Māyā* can be viewed from two points of view : Creative Power – Śakti and Its Creation – An Effect.

While discussing on the extensions of Ignorance (*Ajñāna*), *Sadānanda*¹ in his *Vedāntasāra* states that this ignorance has two powers : (1) The Power of Concealment (*Āvaraṇa Śakti*) and (2) The Power of Projection (*Vikṣepa Śakti*). Here we can state that *Ajñāna* is nothing but *Māyā* and these are the two functions of *Māyā* : “अस्याज्ञानस्यावरणविक्षेपनामकमस्ति शक्तिद्वयम् ॥५१॥”

(1) It is called the power of concealment as it conceals the real nature of *Brahman* which is Sat, Cit and Ānanda i.e. Existence – consciousness and Bliss – Absolute.

(2) It is called power of projection because it gives rise to the illusion of name and form.

(1) *Āvaraṇa Śakti* is described as² :

“आवरणशक्तिस्तावदल्पोऽपि मेघोऽनेकयोजनायतमादित्यमण्डलमवलोकयितुं नयनपथ-
पिधायकतया यथाच्छादयतीव तथाज्ञानं परिच्छिन्नमप्यात्मानमपरिच्छिन्नमसंसारिणमव-
लोकयितुं बुद्धिपिधायकतयाच्छादयतीव तादृशं सामर्थ्यम् ।”

i.e. Just as a small patch of a cloud, by obstructing the vision of the observer, conceals, the solar disc extending over many miles, similarly Ignorance (here the sense is of *Māyā*) though limited by nature, obstructing the intellect of the observer, conceals, the self which is unlimited and not subject to transmigration. Such a power is the power of concealment. Here *Māyā* which is neither gross nor subtle on account of its being indescribable, is said to be limited. This comparison is made only in relation to the *Ātman*, which it seems to envelop for the time being.

Even when a man thinks himself bound, he is in reality the blissful *Ātman*. He has forgotten his real nature and this is due to *Māyā*. The aim of all spiritual practice (*Sādhana*) is to realise the identity of *Paramātmā*

¹ Swāmī Nikhilānanda — *Vedāntasāra*, Page 37-40, Advait Aśrama, Calcutta-14.

² *ibid*

and *Jīvātman*. The concealing power of *Māyā* makes a man forget his real nature like the small patch of cloud which obscures the Mighty Sun from the vision of the observer, for e.g. *Māyā* is referred as Śakti of the God which is concealed due to its own qualities – देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् । – I.3.

(2) Vikṣepa Śakti is stated as :

“विक्षेपशक्तिस्तु यथा रज्ज्वज्ञान स्वावृतरज्जौ स्वशक्त्या सर्पादिकमुद्भावयत्येवमज्ञानमपि स्वावृतात्मनि स्वशक्त्याकाशादिप्रपञ्चमुद्भावयति तादृशं सामर्थ्यम् ।”

Just as Ignorance regarding a rope, by its inherent power, gives rise to the illusion of a snake etc. in the rope covered by it, so also ignorance (the original and primordial *Māyā*), by its own power creates in the self covered by it, such phenomena as Ākāśa etc. such a power (i.e. the creative power of ignorance) is called the power of projection.

The word ‘*Māyā*’ is used as a synonym of ‘*Avidyā*’ in later philosophical texts. For e.g. *Nṛsiṃhottaratāpinī Upaniṣad* refers to *Avidyā* as arising on its own like *Māyā* : माया चाविद्या च स्वयमेव भवति ॥९॥

Similarly in *Bhagavadgītā* (VII.15)

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥७.१५॥

Here it must be remembered that there is no distinction drawn, between *Māyā* that envelops *Īśvara* and the *Avidyā* that envelops *Jīva* as it is found in the later *Vedāntic* philosophy because for both the generic word *Māyā* is used. It is stated in *Gauḍapāḍakārikā* that duality persists due to the delusive nature of *Māyā* : ‘मायामात्रं इदं द्वैतम् ।’ गौडपादकारिका-१.१७ ॥ Due to the delusion it is stated : ‘यथा मायामयो जीवः ।’ गौडपादकारिका-४.६९ ॥ and ‘चित्तं चलति मायया ।’ ४.६१

In *Nṛsiṃhottaratāpinī Upaniṣad* it is stated : ‘इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा मायामात्रम् ।५।’

Therefore all the three states, i.e. *Jāgrat*, *Svapna* and *Suṣupti* are said to be enveloped by *Māyā* ‘त्रयमप्येत् सुषुप्तं स्वप्नं मायामात्रम् । नृसिंहोत्तरतापिनी उप. ३.१ ॥’

Then also finally it is said that : ‘नात्मानं माया स्पृशति । नृसिंहपूर्वतापिनी उप. ५.१ ॥’

i.e. though it is delusive but *Ātman* remains untouched by *Māyā* and hence it is said in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (I-10) that due to the grace of God, there is cessation of *Māyā* at the end : भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः । श्वेताश्वतर उप. १.१० ॥

Śaṅkarācārya uses the two words – *Māyā* and *Avidyā* – almost synonymously. Broadly speaking, we can imagine the difference between

the two by calling them as objective and subjective principles of illusion. Śaṅkara is already committed to the view that the world is an appearance and *Māyā* and *Avidyā* are causes of illusion.

As observed by V. S. Ghate¹ – “Though the expression ‘*Māyā*’, in the strict sense of ignorance, or *Avidyā* or illusion, may be of a later date, still the doctrine that the universe is illusory was taught by the *Upaniṣads*, and the older the texts of the *Upaniṣads* are the more uncompromisingly and expressly do they maintain this illusory character of the world of experience.”

According to Dr. E. Solomon², “*Avidyā* is the adjunct of *Jīva*. It is perceived in the forms, ‘I am ignorant’, and ‘I do not know’. The *jīva* is reflection of *Brahman* in *Avidyā*. *Avidyā* is translated as nescience. The later Advaitins tried to distinguish between *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. Ajñāna is of two kinds — *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. *Māyā* is made of pure sattva, *Avidyā* is made of impure sattva. *Māyā* is the adjunct of *Īśvara*, *Avidyā* is an adjunct of *Jīva*. *Māyā* has a power of projection. It projects the world appearance in place of *Brahman*. *Avidyā* on the other hand has a power of concealing the true nature of *Brahman*. *Avidyā* can be regarded as a subjective principle of illusion; while *Māyā* is a objective principle of illusion. The nescience in *Māyā* is of cosmic nature while in *Avidyā* it is of individual nature. The *Jīva* bound by *Avidyā* can not know its true nature, which is *Brahman* itself, and the bound *jīvas* are reborn at the time of recreation to exhaust what is in store for them”.

The *Brahmasūtras* also say that the duality or plurality is an illusion i.e. *Māyā*. *Māyā* or ignorance is not a real entity, but it has been identified with ignorance, we can neither say that it exists nor that it does not exist. It is a mystery, which is beyond our understanding; it is unspeakable (*Anirvacanīya*). As *Māyā* is not real, it cannot be related to *Brahman*, the reality. “The relation is only apparent and therefore *Brahman* is in no way affected by this illusion which is Supreme Soul upon it, even as the rope is not affected by the snake that is assumed to exist in it.”, states Swāmī Vīreśvarānanda.³

Śaṅkara describes *Māyā* as indescribable (*Anirvacanīya*). It is neither different nor non-different, hence indescribable. God himself is enveloped

¹ Ghate V. S. — The *Vedānta*, Page-8, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1926.

² E. Solomon — *Avidyā*

³ Swami Vireshwaranand — *Brahmasūtras* according to Śaṅkara, Page 2, Advaita. Pub. — 1996, 7th impression.

by *Māyā*, for it is because of *Māyā* that *Brahman* appears as *Īśvara*. In the last analysis even God is reduced to a level of mere appearance. *Īśvara* himself imagines different forms in himself in and through *Māyā*. Like *Brahman*, *Māyā* is beginningless and does not exist apart from *Brahman*. It is something indescribable which is responsible in making souls perceive a world-appearance in place of *Brahman*.

Śaṅkarācārya in his *Bhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra* 2.1.30 — सर्वोपेता च तद्दर्शनात् । establishes *Māyā* or Nescience to be the power of *Brahman*. The *sūtra* means “And *Brahman* is endowed with all powers, because it is seen (from the scriptures)” — सर्वशक्तियुक्ता च परा देवतेत्यभ्युपगन्तव्यम् । As also it is observed from the *Upaniṣadic* text — सर्वकर्मा सर्वकामः सर्वगन्धः सर्वरसः सर्वमिदमभ्यातोऽवाक्यनादरः । छा.उप.-३.१४.४ ॥ and सत्यकामः सत्यसंकल्पः । छा.उप.-८.७.१ ॥ यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित् । मुण्डक उप.-१.१.९ ॥ एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः । बृहद्.उप.-३.८.९ ॥

The *Brahmasūtra* — आत्मनी चैवं विचित्राश्च हि -२.१.२८ ॥ also establishes the view that though this diverse creation springs from *Brahman* through its inscrutable power of *Māyā*, the *Brahman* Himself remains unchanged.

The *sūtra* — सर्वोपेता च तद्दर्शनात् । २.१.३० ॥ gives proof of *Brahman*'s being endowed with *Māyā-Śakti*, the power of Nescience. As said in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (IV.10) and also Chh. III.14.4 and VIII.7.1.

Śaṅ. in his *Bhāṣya* on *Brahmasūtra* 2.1.37 — सर्वधर्मोपपत्तेश्च ॥ establishes that *Brahman* is the cause of the world due to its power *Māyā*. He says that though in the attributeless *Brahman* an actual change is impossible, yet an apparent modification is possible owing to its power of *Māyā*. Because of this power all the attributes required the cause for such a creation are possible only in *Brahman*. Therefore *Brahman* is the material cause of this world, not through actual modification, but through apparent modification, and it is also the efficient cause of the world.

“यस्यादस्मिन्ब्रह्मणी कारणे परिगृह्यमाणे प्रदर्शितेन प्रकारेण सर्वे कारणधर्मा उपपद्यन्ते ‘सर्वज्ञं सर्वशक्तिं महामायं च ब्रह्म’ इति, तस्मादनतिशङ्क्येयमिदमौपनिषदं दर्शनमिति ॥”

Śaṅkarācārya while commenting on *Brahmasūtras* III.2.3 — “मायामात्रं तु कात्स्न्यानिभक्तियुक्तस्वरूपत्वात् ॥” states that the dream state or dream creation is mere *Māyā* because of its nature of not being a complete manifestation of the totality of attributes as found in the waking state.

Māyā is characterised by Śaṅ. in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (108, 109) as the

power of the lord who is mad up of three Guṇas and is beginningless.

अव्यक्तनाम्री परमेशशक्तिरनाधविद्या त्रिगुणात्मिका परा ।

कार्यानुमेया सुधियैव माया यया जगत्सर्वमिदं प्रसूयते ॥१०८॥

सन्नाप्यसन्नाप्यभयात्मिका नो भिन्नाप्यभिन्नाप्यभयात्मिका नो ।

साङ्गाप्यनङ्गा ह्यभयात्मिका नो महाद्भुताऽनिर्वचनीयरूपा ॥१०९॥

One is also known here as *Avidyā* or Nescience which is a different concept itself as seen in *Sarvopaniṣad*. She is neither existent nor non-existent nor partaking of both characters, neither same nor different nor both, neither composed of parts nor an indivisible whole nor both. She is most wonderful (अद्भुता) and cannot be described in words (अनिर्वचनीयरूपा). And she can be destroyed only by the realisation of non-dual pure *Brahman*. (वि. चू. 110).

Māyā which is a frequently used word in the *Vedic* literature is often conceived as power or energy of God – a device by which he creates the world. To Śaṅkara, it is a source of the phenomenal world of names and forms opine N. D. Rajadhyaksha¹.

Rāmānujācārya, the propounder of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Philosophy, differs from Śaṅkara in his conception of *Māyā*, the self and liberation. To Rāmānuja creation is real, and the created world is as real as *Brahman*. But he adds that the world cannot be conceived apart from *Brahman*, hence its reality can be conceived in and through *Brahman*. For him, *Māyā* is not a principle of objective illusion. But it is the God's power of creating multifasion world. He helds and in this he differs from Śaṅkara that there is no illusory object. *Brahman* pervades the entire world.

Vidyāraṇya Muni (1169 A.D.) states three forms of *Māyā* in Pañcadaśī :

असत्ता जाड्यदुःखे द्वे मायारूपत्रयं त्विदम् ।

असत्ता नरशृंगादौ जाड्यं काष्ठशिलादिषु ॥१५.२३॥

Asattā (non-existence), Jaḍatā (non-sentience) and Duḥkha (sorrow, misery) are the three forms of *Māyā*.

Kaivalyopaniṣad describes *Ātman*, to be deluded by *Māyā* as a delusive power due to which one identifies himself with the body :

स एव मायापरिमोहितात्मा शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वम् ।

स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति ॥१२॥

¹ Rajadhyaksha N. D. — The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, page 138-139,

स्वप्ने स जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता स्वमायया कल्पितजीवलोके ।
सुषुप्तिकाले सकले विलीने तमोऽभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति ॥१३॥

Here the *Jīva* or human soul being completely deluded by the *Māyā* descends to the body and performs all acts, by means of various enjoyments such as woman, eating and drinking. He attains satisfaction in the waking state.

Praśnopaniṣad tells us that we cannot reach the world of *Brahman* unless we have shaken off the crookedness in us, the falsehood in us, the illusion (*Māyā*) in us : तेषामासौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति ॥१.१६॥ Here the word *Māyā* is directly used in the sense of illusion.

Māyā is used in the Vedas to denote both mental power & the concrete form in which it is realized. The use of *Māyā* concerning the skill of an artisan or craftsmanship is thought provoking in RV.(III.60.1; I.60.4, RV.X.177.1). It is said that through *Māyā* the sun-bird is adorned. Thus, *Māyā* is used in these passages in connection with the art of brilliant decoration. Through *Māyā*, *Mitra* and *Varuṇa* guard their law and send rain (RV.63.3, 7,); *Māyā* is a characteristic of *Varuṇa* (VI.48.14 etc.) it was employed by *Agni* (III.27.7) and soma IX.83.3) and in the former deity the *Māyās* of the *māyin* are united (III.20.3).

अग्ने भुरीणि तव जातवेदो देव स्वधावोऽमृतस्य नाम ।

याश्च माया माथिनां विश्वमिन्व त्वै पूर्वीः संदधुः पृष्ठबन्धो ॥ऋग्वेद-३.२०.३॥

It was marks of the *Aśvins* (V.78.6) and even earthly sacrificers are *māyins* (IX.73.6). Through *Māyā*, *Indra* triumphs over the *māyin* demons (I.11.7; V.30.6.etc.) and he has much *Māyā* (*purumāya*, VI.18.12). The sun and the moon succeed each other by virtue of *Māyā* (X.85.18) and *Māyā* explains the double forms of *Puṣan* and *Agni* (VI.58.1, X.88.6).¹ It is evinced that wherever '*Māyā*' is used in the RV, the idea of something extraordinary or unusual is invariably interwoven. In RV VI.47.18 and III.53.8, *Indra* is said to assume many forms by his *Māyā* or to wear different forms, effecting *Māyā* in his body (VI.47.18). Here *Māyā* is used in plural form :

रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।

इन्द्रो मायाभिः पररूप ईयते युक्त ह्यस्य हरयः शता दश ॥ऋग्वेद-६.४७.१८॥

The Supreme Lord is perceived as having manifold form through His powers of cosmic illusion, can be explained by a reference to the diversity

¹ See *Māyā* – Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (ERE)

of powers that are in the cosmic illusion, as is pointed out by Sāyaṇācārya in his Bhāṣya : . . . स चेन्द्रः परमेश्वरो मायाभिर्मयाशक्तिभिः पुरुरूपो वियदादिभिर्बहुविधरूपैरुपेतः सन् ईयते चेष्टते । . . .

M. Hiriyanna states : “This apparently was a description of Indra who was, at one stage in the development of *Vedic* thought, regarded as the Supreme God and *Māyā*, his magic power. The Advaitins understand from ‘Indra’ here *Īśvara* and from *Māyā*, his adjunct by means of which he manifests himself in diverse manner – as countless, *jīvas* i.e. *Brahman* though not many, is seen as many *jīvas* by reason of the multiplicity of *Ajñāna*. Indra wills that he may assume a particular form and it is realized. Hence is the appropriateness of *māyin* as an epithet of Indra.”

Similar concept is found in the Śvetāśvatara Upa.- IV.10 where *Māyā* is said to be *Prakṛti* and Maheśvara as the *Māyin* i.e. the ruler or controller of *Māyā*.

In Nirukta, the etymology given is “मीयन्ते पदार्थाः परिच्छिद्यन्ते अनया इति माया बुद्धिः ।” We find *Māyā* in the sense of ‘Intellect’ in RV :

मायाभिरिन्द्र मायिनं त्वं शुष्णमवातिरः ।

विदुष्टे तस्य मेधिरास्तेषां श्रवांस्युत्तिरः ॥ ऋग्वेद-१.१.२७.७ ॥

Commenting on the RV. IV.31.21 and V.30.6, Sāyaṇa emphatically explains the word as ‘Śakti’, power. ‘मायया स्वकीयया शक्त्या’

P. D. Śāstri¹ circumscribed the term *Māyā* for *Rgveda* as : “a wondrous, supernatural power, mysterious will-power”. He² points out that “the word *Māyā* has occurred twenty times, in sixteen hymns, in ten books only.”

‘*Māyā*’ is found in the Vājasaneyī Samhitā (see Śukla Yajurveda XI.69, XIII.44; XXIII-52; XXX.7 etc.) where again the sense is the usual one of wonderful intelligence, mysterious power with its particular applications, craftsmanship etc.

Māyā was born from *Māyā* :

बृहती परि मात्राया मातुर्मात्राधि निर्मिता ।

माया ह जज्ञे मायाया मायाया मातली परि ॥ अथर्ववेद-८.९.५ ॥

It was milked from Viraj, and on it the Asuras subsist (VIII.10.22). Luck

¹ Śāstri Prabhu Dutt — The Doctrine of *Māyā* in the Philosophy of the *Vedānta*, London, 1911, Page 14.

² Śāstri Prabhudatta — Doctrine of *Māyā*, Page 13,

in gambling is invoked by the aid of the *Māyā* of an Apsaras (IV-38.3), the black snake assumes wondrous forms by the Asuras *Māyā* (VI.72.1), the sun and moon follow one another by *Māyā* (VII.81-1), the sorceress prevails by its means (VII.4.24); by *Māyā* the sun makes 'the two days' (i.e. day and night) of diverse forms (XIII.2.3), through Agni the *Māyās* of the Asuras are repelled (IV.23.5), yet the gods go about with asura-maya (III.9.4).

The mysterious magic element in the meaning of the word is particularly stressed in the A.V., & the word can generally be rendered as 'magic, sorcery, witch-craft'. The underlying idea is that of mysterious, incomprehensible power or intelligence. In AV X.8.34, '*Māyā*' stands for the power of God, which is yet represented as concealing even him.

यत्र देवाश्च मनुष्याऽश्चारा नाभाविव श्रिताः ।

अपां त्वा पुष्पं पृच्छामि यत्र तन्मागया हितम् ॥ अथर्ववेद-१०.८.३४ ॥

Similarly the word *Māyā* is used in the sense of extraordinary mysterious power, whether godly or not.¹

According to E. A. Solomon, "*Māyā* thus means in the *Vedas* 'extraordinary power of intelligence and action inspired by it, mysterious will and its concrete realization'. The idea of mystery being more emphasized in the AV, it came to mean 'sorcery' magic; but even here, the basic idea is that of mysterious power of intelligence. The word does not yield the meaning 'illusion' in the *Vedas* and the *Brāhmaṇas* though the idea of illusion is unconsciously associated at times with our outlook on things super-normal."²

Thus, in some Vedic texts, *Māyā* stands for various aspects : the power creating a new appearance, the creation of that appearance as an abstract performance and the result of the process i.e. the created form itself.

Śrī Kṛṣṇajanma-khaṇḍa of *Brahma-Vaivarta-Purāṇa* (27th adhyāya) defines *Māyā* as :

राजन् ! श्रीवचनो माश्च याश्च प्रापणवाचकः ।

तां प्रापयति या सद्यः सा माया परिकीर्तिताः ॥

¹ See Ait. Br. — VI.36; Taitt. Br. — III.10.8; Śat. Br. — II.4.25, III.4.2.1 etc; Tāndya Br. — XIX.19.1

² Solomon E. A. — *Avidyā* — A problem of truth and reality, page 18

माश्च मोहार्थवचनो याश्च प्रापणवाचकः ।

तां प्रापयति या सद्यः सा माया परिकीर्तिता ॥

The word *Indrajāla* seems to trace its origin from the AV (VIII.8.5-8) where it is used in a magical context :

अयं लोको जालम् आसीच्चक्रस्य महतो महान् ।

तेनाहम् इन्द्रजालेन अमून् तमसाभी दधामि सर्वान् ॥ अथर्ववेद-८.८.८ ॥

[i.e. it is rightly said by some unknown author – ‘अघटनघटनपटीयसि माया ।’]

J. Gonda¹ states that “the central meaning of *Māyā* is “an incomprehensible wisdom and power enabling its possessor, or being able itself, to create, devise, contrive, effect or do something.”

Thus it is clear that these minor Upaniṣads follow the major Upaniṣads pertaining to the topics like *Vidyā*, *Avidyā* and *Māyā*. They follow Śaṅkarācārya in the belief of *Māyā*. as well as the Kṛṣṇopaniṣad following BG, mentions *Māyā* to be three fold.

CONCEPT OF MOKSA

The present topic is a brief study of the nature of Mokṣa (Final Beatitude) and its means expounded in some minor Upaniṣads of AV. The term *Bandha* or *Bandhana* is referred to by major Upaniṣads like *Bṛhad* (IV.3.36); *Chān.* (VI.8.2); *Śvetāśvatara* (VI.6,14) and *Maitri* (IV.2; VI.30,34). As for e.g. in the *Bṛhad. Upa.*², the term *Bandhana* is used while discussing the topic of the self at the time of death.

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*³ VI.16 refers to the Supreme Reality as the cause of worldly existence, liberation, of continuance and of bondage. The *Maitri Upaniṣad*⁴ IV-2 refers to the example of a lame man being bound by the fetters made of the fruits of good and evil, while discussing the topic of the elemental self, which does not remember the highest state due to the attachment to the objects of sound, touch etc. Further, *Maitri*⁵ VI.30

¹ J. Gonda — *Māyā* – 1965, page 166

² स यत्रायमणिमानं न्येति जरया वीपतपता वाणिमानं निगच्छति तद्यथाग्रं वौदुम्बरं वा पिप्पलं वा बन्धनात्प्रमुच्यत एवमेवायं पुरुष एभ्योऽङ्गेभ्यः संप्रमुच्य पुनः प्रतिन्यायं प्रतियोन्याद्रवति प्राणायैव । बृहद्. उप.-४.३.३६ ॥

³ स विश्वकृविश्वदितात्मयोनिर्ः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद् यः । प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिर्गुणेशः संसारमोक्षस्थितिबन्धहेतुः ॥ श्वेताश्वतर उप.-६.१६ ॥

⁴ . . . सदसद् फलमयैः पाशैः पङ्कुरिव बद्धं . . . शब्दस्पर्शादयो ह्यर्था मर्त्येनार्था इवास्थिताः । येषां सक्तस्तु भूतात्मा न स्मरेत परं पदम् ॥ मैत्री उप.-४.२ ॥

⁵ अतः सद्ब्रह्मणि सत्यभिलाषिणि वृत्त्योऽन्यः तत्फलछिन्नपाशो निराशः . . . स हि सर्वकाममयः पुरुषोऽध्यवसाय संकल्पाभिमानलिङ्गो बद्धः अतः तत्त्विपरितो मुक्तः ।

refers to the term *Pāśa* and *Baddha* for one who yearns for the real Brahman. He who is opposite of that is liberated. The *Maitri Upaniṣad*¹ VI.34 shows the path for relieving oneself from bondage if the thought of man is fixed on Brahman as it is on worldly objects. Similarly it points out that the mind is in reality the cause of bondage and liberation for mankind, for bondage if it is bound to objects and freedom from objects is called liberation.

Thus, *Bandha* means that which is hindrance for obtaining Final Beatitude i.e. *Mokṣa*. It is a knot in the heart which should be untied, as it is stated in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* :

भिद्यन्ते हृदयग्रन्थिच्छिद्यन्ते सर्व संशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥२.२.८॥

Similar view is expressed by *Chān. Upa.*-VII.26.2 and *Kātha Upa.*-VI.15. This bondage does not allow a person to achieve significant spiritual progress. Hence the seekers for liberation try to get rid of it and obtain *Mokṣa*, the final aim or goal of life.

BG refers to the term *Bandha* or *Bandhana* several times viz. IV.14; V.3; XIV.5-8; XVI.12; XVIII.17,26,30 etc. In BG² IV.14 the Lord states that He is not affected by action which He performs as He does not entertain the hope of fruit. One who understands this principle and acts accordingly cannot be affected by action. BG V.3³ points out that one who is free from the pairs of opposites is liberated from all the bonds of *Karma*. All the three *Gunas* viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* bind by attachment for happiness and knowledge, by attachment for performing actions and by ignorance of duty, idleness and sleep respectively, as stated in BG-XIV.5-8.⁴ BG-XVI.12⁵ points out that the person with demoniac traits is bound by hundreds of bonds of hope; while it is stated in BG-XVIII.30⁶ that a person who understands what leads to bondage as well as release should

¹ समासक्तं यथा चित्तं जन्तोर्विषयगोचरे । यद्येवं ब्रह्मणि स्यात् तत्को न मुच्यते बन्धनात् ॥६.३४.५॥

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः । बन्धाय विषयासङ्गि मोक्षो निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥६.३४.११॥

² न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा । इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बद्धयते ॥४.१४॥

³ ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति । निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥५.३॥

⁴ सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः । निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥१४.५॥

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् । सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥१४.६॥

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् । तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥१४.७॥

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् । प्रमादालस्य निद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥१४.८॥

⁵ आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः । ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसंचयान् ॥१६.१२॥

⁶ प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये । बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थसात्त्विकी ॥१८.३०॥

be known as a *Sāttvika* person.

On the basis of the major *Upaniṣads* and BG, Minor *Upaniṣads* of AV undertaken for study refer to the concept of bondage, which can be classified into : (1) Bondage of Birth and Death, (2) Bondage of *Karma* and (3) Bondage of mental weaknesses.

Bondage is found in the *Upaniṣads* like *Sarvopaniṣad* (1) and *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* (I.56; II.1,2,18,24; V.102). *Kaivalyopaniṣad* (4)¹ refers to those ascetics getting rid of the bondage when their mind is purged off all sins due to total renunciation from worldly matters.

Annapūrṇopaniṣad (II.2)² states that attachment brings bondage and (I.5.6)³ states that even though the *Citta* is extremely bound or attached, it can be liberated by long lasting penance (*Dīrgha Tapas*).

Further, the author considers desire or thought i.e. सङ्कल्पत्व as the cause of bondage : सङ्कल्पत्वं हि बन्धस्य कारणं तत्परित्यज ॥५.१०२॥

Following the teachings of the major *Upaniṣads* and BG, the *Atharvaśikhopaniṣad* (2) states that one who studies this *Upaniṣad* becomes free from the cycle of birth and death : एतामधीत्य द्विजो गर्भवासान्मुच्यते । While the *Kṣurikopaniṣad* (22,23) states that a person who is well-versed in *Yoga* and performs *Prāṇāyāma*, and also one who is free from all desires, is liberated i.e. his knot of ignorance is cut asunder and he is liberated from the cycle of birth and death :

प्राणायाम सुतीक्ष्णेन मात्राधारेण योगवित् ।

वैराग्योपलभृष्टेन छित्त्वा तन्तुं न बध्यते ॥२२॥

अमृतत्वं समाप्नोति यदा कामात्प्रमुच्यते ।

सर्वैषणाविनिर्मुक्तश्छित्त्वा तन्तुं न बध्यत इति ॥२३॥

Ātmopaniṣad (16) states that a person, who has realised the Supreme Brahman, is freed from the bondage of body etc.:

ग्रस्त इत्युच्यते भ्रान्त्या ह्यज्ञात्वा वस्तुलक्षणम् ।

तद्वदेहादिबन्धेभ्यो विमुक्तं ब्रह्मवित्तमम् ॥१६॥

Bandha is also referred in minor *Upaniṣads* like *Brahmabindu* ((II.10) and

¹ वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः संन्यासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः । ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥४॥

² सङ्गो बन्धाय कथ्यते ॥२.२॥

³ असक्तं निर्मलं चित्तं युक्तं संसार्यविस्फुटम् । सक्तं तु दीर्घतपसा मुक्तमप्यतिबद्धवत् ॥१.५६॥

Mukti (II.2.68).

Sarvopaniṣad begins with the topic *Bandha*, (bondage of the soul). *Bandha* is defined as : सोऽभिमान आत्मनो बन्धः । i.e. Egoism is the bondage of the soul. Egoism here refers to the misconception one has about oneself as 'I am thin, beautiful' etc.

The *Paingala* and the *Śivopaniṣad* describes the nature of bondage as "Mama" and the nature of *mukti* as "na mama". Thus, here also bondage is associated by *Mamatva* i.e. Iness i.e. egoism.

In *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says one who is free from the notion of egoism and whose understanding is not tainted

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावः बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वाऽपि स इमाँल्लोकान् न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥भ.गी.-१८.१७॥
मुक्तसंगोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्धयसिद्धयोर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥भ.गी.-१८.२६॥
अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तः ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥भ.गी.-१८.५३॥

Abhimāna or *Ahaṅkāra* is considered as a quality of the *Kṣetra* i.e. the body in BG-13.5.

Abhimāna is the vice which binds the people and it is considered to be one of the *Āsurī Sampat* in *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* :

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥भ.गी.-१६.४॥
दैवी संपद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ॥भ.गी.-१६.५अ,ब॥

Abhimāna or *Ahaṅkāra* is said to have evolved from *Mahat* i.e. the great principle in *Sāṅkhya* philosophy :

प्रकृतेर्महांस्ततोऽहङ्कारस्तस्माद्वाणश्च षोडशकः ।
तस्मादपि षोडशकात्पञ्चभ्यः पञ्च भूतानि ॥सांख्यकारिका-२२॥
अभिमानोऽहंकारः तस्माद् द्विविधः प्रवर्तते सर्गः ।
एकादशकश्च गणः तन्मात्रपञ्चकश्चैव ॥२४॥
सात्त्विक एकादशकः प्रवर्तते वेकृतादहङ्कारात् ।
भूतादेस्तन्मात्रः स तामसस्तैजसादुभयम् ॥२५॥

Sāṅkhyakārikā identifies *Abhimāna* with *Ahaṅkāra* while discussing the

process of origin or evolution. Further it is stated that different things spring from the I-principle according to the *Guṇas*. As stated in the *Sāṅkhyakārikā* (33) *Ahaṅkāra* or ego also forms a part of the *Antaḥkaraṇa* (internal organ), which is three fold viz. Intellect (*Buddhi*), I-principle (*Ahaṅkāra*) and mind (*Manas*).

Similarly Patañjali in his *Yogasūtras* include *Asmitā* among the *Pañca Kleśas*. *Asmitā* means Egoism : अविद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः क्लेशाः । यो.सू.-२.३ ॥

Śaṅkarācārya in his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* (137) also refers to the same concept: अज्ञानात्मन्यहमिति मतिर्बन्धः । i.e. bondage is due to ignorance.

Pañcīkaraṇam of Vidyāraṇya Muni refers to *Abhimāna* or ego as of the nature of the sense of ownership (34).

CONCEPT OF MOKṢA :

In classical Sanskrit several words are employed to describe the state of Final Beatitude. The *Amarakośa*¹ (I.4.15,16) regards *Mukti*, *Mokṣa*, *Amṛtatva*, *Niḥśreyasa*, *Kaivalya*, *Nirvāṇa* and *Apavarga* as synonyms.

We find several references² to the term *Mukti* in the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV undertaken for study. These terms are frequently employed in the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā*. *Mukti* and *Mokṣa* are both derived from the root \sqrt{muc} = to be free and the verbal forms of \sqrt{muc} are frequently used along with immortality as in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*-VI.8³ and also *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*-VI.8,14; *Bṛhad*-IV.4.7; *Śvet. Upa*-I.8; IV.16.⁴ The term *Mukti* is also used in *Bṛhad*-III.1.3,4,5,6; BG-III.9; XVIII.26 advising to be free from attachment. It is related to the sacrificial, ritual priest etc. in the *Bṛhad. Upaniṣad* (III.1,3,4,5,6).

The concept of *Mokṣa* is referred to in the major *Upaniṣads* like *Chān. Upa.* (VI.8.7); *Bṛ. Upa.* (I.4.10; IV.3.33; VII.4.21; VII.5.22).

The attainment of Brahman which is bliss, as also the cessation of grief is liberation; as we have *Śruti* texts – तरति शोकमात्मवित् (*Chān.*-VII.1.3)

¹ मुक्तिः कैवल्य निर्वाणं श्रेयोनिः श्रेयसामृतम् । १.४.१५ ॥ मोक्षोऽपवर्गो । १.४.१६ ॥

² Kaivalya-9,17; Jābāla-6; Atharvaśikhā-2; Kṣurikā-12,23; Śāṇḍilya-I.54,61,65,66; III.4; *Annapūrnā*-I.25,30,56,57; II.15,18,44; V.9,45,68,74,85,90,101,105; Sūrya-1; *Ātmā*-16,17,20,31; Parabrahma-5,13; Kṛṣṇa-3,26; Dattātreyā-3; Amṛtabindu-3,6,9,10; Tejabindu-8,12,13.

³ यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते ज्ञातुं अमृतत्वं च गच्छति ।

⁴ ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपापैः ।

Mokṣa is the attainment of this Brahman that is of the nature of bliss. As it is mentioned in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* : स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति ॥३.२.९॥ Br. *Upa.* states : विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म . . . ॥३.९.२८॥ The attainment of *Mokṣa* is not the attainment of a world beyond in the nature of a paradise; nor is Brahman-bliss sense-generated. This bliss release is not something to be attained at all. It is attaining, as it were, what is ever attained. Release, according to *Advaita Vedānta*, is not something that does not exist now and is accomplished, it is the very nature of the individual freedom and bliss are his essence.

Śvet. Upa.-VI.16 and *Maitri Upa.*-VI.20,30,34 also refer to this concept. *Maitri Upaniṣad* defines *Mokṣa* as : अध्यवसायस्य दोषक्षयाद्धि मोक्षः । मैत्री-६.३० ॥

Radhakrishnan¹ states : " *Mokṣa* literally means release, release from the bondage to the sensuous and the individual, the narrow and the finite. It is the result of self enlargement and freedom." Further he states : " *Mokṣa* is release from birth and death."

In *Brahmasūtra Śāṅkarabhāṣya*, liberation is said to have declared to one who is devoted to that Sat (the first cause, i.e. the intelligent principle – Brahman) : तन्निष्ठस्य मोक्षोपदेशात् ॥१.१.७॥ The BS III.4.52 : एवं मुक्तिफलानियमः तदवस्थावधृते । states that Liberation is a matter of contingency. It consists in the superintending of a state (*Tadavsthā*). There is no hard and fast rule as to the origination of knowledge whose fruit is release. On the other hand Śāṅkara refers to release (*Muktiphala*) and says there are no degrees in it, as liberation is qualitatively alike. Though knowledge arises, the fruit of illumination is hold over until one reaches that state, i.e. until obstacles are removed. The main sense of *Mukti* according to Bādarāyaṇa is realisation : संपद्याविभविः स्वेनशब्दात् ॥४.४.१॥ and मुक्तः प्रतिज्ञानात् ॥४.४.२॥ and when this is attained : अनावृत्ति शब्दात् . . . ॥४.४॥ All these show that *Mokṣa* can be identified with Brahman. So *Mokṣa* or Final Beatitude is nothing but attaining Brahman. Śāṅkarācārya has been repeatedly saying that release is a matter of immediate eternal experience and not something to be produced at sometime and place by any activity. Śāṅkara holds that release is eternal unsurpassed bliss attained, as it were, on the cessation of nescience. Hence, P. K. Sundaram² opines : "For all, these reasons the Advaitin thinks that release is of the nature of unsurpassed Bliss and cessation of nescience."

¹ S. Radhakrishnan — Indian Philosophy, page 209, 242

² Sundaram P. K. — Advaita Epistemology, page 389

The term *Mokṣa* is used in number of minor *Upaniṣads* of AV¹ like *Jābāla*, *Atharvaśira*, *Sarva* etc. *Mokṣa* is defined in *Sarvopaniṣad* as : तन्निवृत्तिर्मोक्षः – i.e. the cessation of the bondage is *Mokṣa* or liberation. Commentators Nārāyaṇa as well as Śaṅkarānanda also opine in the same manner as : बन्धात् निवृत्तिः मोक्षः । When *Sarvopaniṣad* defines it as cessation of bondage (*Bandha*). *Mukti Upa.* (II.68)² defines it as cessation of desires.

It can be said that *Mokṣa* referred in the *Sarvopaniṣad* not only means cessation of egoism but in its broad context, also contains the cessation of grief and desires / lust. Rāmānujācārya (1017-1137 AD) in his *Śrībhāṣya*³ differs from this view and states that Ego of a person stays with him even in the state of *Mokṣa* : मोक्षदशायामहमर्थो नानुवर्तते इति तदपेशलम् । तथा सति, आत्मनाश एवापवर्गः प्रकारान्तरेण प्रतिज्ञानः स्यात् । . . . स साधनानुष्ठानेन यदि – अहमेव न भविष्यामि – इत्यवगच्छेत्, अपसर्पेदेवासौ मोक्षकथाप्रस्तावात् ।

Mokṣa is defined in the *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* as :

न मोक्षो नभसः पृष्ठे न पाताले न भूतले ।
सर्वाशासंक्षये चेतः क्षयो मोक्ष इतीष्यते ॥२.२३॥
तदमार्जनमात्रं हि महासंसारतां गतम् ।
तत्प्रमार्जनमात्रं तु मोक्ष इत्यभिधीयते ॥२.२५॥

The dissolution of the mind on the eradication of all desires is known as liberation. Moreover, the complete eradication of the furious thinking of the objects of worldly existence is known as liberation.

Furthermore, *Mokṣa* is defined as :

सङ्गत्यागं विदुर्मोक्षं सङ्गत्यागादजन्मता ।
सङ्गं त्यज त्वं भावानां जीवन्मुक्तो भवानघ ॥५.४॥
भावाभावे पदार्थानां हर्षमिर्षविकारदा ।
मलिना वासना यैषा सा सङ्ग इति कथ्यते ॥५.५॥

i.e. Giving up of attachment is liberation. It brings immunity from rebirth. Hence, a person should give up attachment and become *Jīvanmukta*.

A person filled with the conviction, who has comprehended aright its

¹ Jābāla-1,4; Atharvaśira-5; Sarva-1; Śāṇḍilya-1.54; *Annapūrṇā*-I.3; II.23,24,25,36,37; IV.56; V.4,47,53,103; *Ātmā*-26,27,29; Parabrahma-2,15,16; Mahāvākya-1; Dattātreyā-1; Amṛtabindu-2

² मोक्षः स्याद्वासनाक्षयः । मुक्ति उप.-२.६८॥

³ Karmarkar R. D. — Śrī-bhāṣya of Rāmānuja (Catuṣsūtri) part I, para-44, page 78

correct import through the study of the Veda and the grace of the Guru, that there is really no multiplicity, is said to be liberated :

नानात्वमस्ति कलनासु न वस्तुतोऽन्तर्नानाविधासु सरसीव जलादिवान्यत् ।
इत्येकनिश्चयमयः पुरुषो विमुक्त इत्युच्यते समवलोकितसम्यगर्थः ॥२.४४॥

We find references to *Jīvanmukti* several times in the *Annapūrṇopaniṣad*¹ and once in *Dattātreyopaniṣad*². Similarly *Videhamukta* is also referred in *Annapūrṇa*³ and *Ātmā Upaniṣad*⁴. *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* defines *Jīvanmukta* as :

सर्वाधिष्ठानसन्मात्रे निर्विकल्पे चिदात्मनि ।
यो जीवति गतस्नेहः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥२.२७॥
भृष्टबीजोपमा येषां पुनर्जननवर्जिता ।
वासनारसनाहीना जीवन्मुक्ता हि ते स्मृताः ॥४.५२॥

We find the description and glorification of a *Jīvanmukta* person in the *Annapūrṇopaniṣad*.

अस्यां तुरीयावस्थायां स्थितिं प्राप्याविनाशिनीम् ।
आनन्दैकान्तशीलत्वादनानन्दपदं गतः ॥२.१४॥
सर्वाधिष्ठानसन्मात्रे निर्विकल्पे चिदात्मनि ।
यो जीवति गतस्नेहः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥२.२७॥
सुमेरोर्वसुधापीठे माण्डव्यो नाम वै मुनिः ।
कोण्डिन्यात्तत्त्वमास्थाय जीवन्मुक्तो भवेत्यसौ ॥३.२॥

Two fold dissolution of mind for a *Jīvanmukta* person is stated :

द्विविधश्चित्तनाशोऽस्ति सरूपोऽरूप एव च ।
जीवन्मुक्तौ सरूपः स्यादरूपो देहमुक्तिगः ॥४.१४॥

i.e. with form (seed) and without form (seedless). That with form occurs in *Jīvanmukti* and that without form embraces the state of *Videha-mukti* :

सरूपोऽसौ मनोनाशो जीवन्मुक्तस्य विद्यते ।
निदाधारूपनाशस्तु वर्ततेऽदेहमुक्तिके ॥४.१८॥

The man of fortitude i.e. a *Jīvanmukta* person does not grieve, having

¹ Annapūrṇopaniṣad-I.4; II.27; III.2; IV.1.19,14,17,18,59; V.4,6,68,83,108,120.

² Dattātreyopaniṣad-3

³ Annapūrṇopaniṣad-III.1; IV.19,20,52

⁴ Ātmā Upaniṣad-24

arrived at the conclusion, "I do not die, live, exist etc.; I am devoid of dotage, passion,; I am pure, enlightened, tranquil, equipoise, alone etc.:

न म्रिये न च जीवामि नाहं सन्नाप्यसन्मयः ।

अहं न किञ्चिच्चिदिति मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥५.९१॥

Vidyāranya muni (c. 14th century AD) also states similar characteristics for a *Jīvanmukta* person in details in his work *Jīvanmukti-viveka*. Swami Mokṣadānanda¹ while discussing on the topic, quotes from *Laghu-yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of Gauḍa Abhinanda (c. 9th century AD):

नोदेति नास्तमायाति सुखे दुःखे मुखप्रभा ।

यथाप्राप्ते स्थितिर्यस्य स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥५.९१॥

रागद्वेषभयादीनामनुरूपं चरन्नपि ।

योऽन्तर्व्योमवदत्यच्छः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥५.९३॥

Non-Attachment is considered to be the means of liberation : इत्यसङ्गस्थितिं विद्धि जीवन्मुक्ततनुस्थिताम् ॥२.३क,ड॥ Further the state of non-attachment (*Asaṅga*) is described as one who delights not in the actionlessness, who is equipoise, one who mentally renounces the fruits of his actions etc.

Annapūrṇopaniṣad (II.27-34) states the characteristics of a *Jīvanmukta* as one who is devoted to the Ātman, who has reached the end of his desire, who is full of pure mind, and does not stand in need of anything in this world. He is devoid of all attachments and misconceptions :

सर्वाधिष्ठान सन्मात्रे निर्विकल्पे चिदात्मनि ।

यो जीवति गतस्नेहः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥२.२८॥

नापेक्षते भविष्यच्चवर्तमाने न तिष्ठति ।

न संस्मरत्यतीतं च सर्वमेव करोति च ॥२.२९॥

The *Yogī*, having established himself in the imperishable state of *Turiya*, characterised by the exclusive enjoyment of bliss and experienced *Jīvanmukti*, which may be described as the state, akin of sleep, of the *Turya*, through constant meditation on the Brahman, in the attitude, "I am Brahman" attains the higher state of bliss, unaffected by desires, viz. *Videhamukti*. Commentator Upa. Br. Yogin explains : एवं क्रमेण अनानन्दं तदपेक्षया उत्कृष्ट महानन्दं विष्णुरुद्रसपवितमेत्य कालशब्देन चित्सामान्यं सर्वसाक्षिमिष्टनन्दं तदप्यतीत्य तुर्यातीतपदं गतो योगी विदेहमुक्त इत्युच्येत । With all the bonds resulting from birth and worldly existence, with all the misconceptions due to the

¹ Swami Mokṣadānanda — *Jīvanmukti-viveka* of Swami Vidyāranya

darkness of ignorance completely eradicated, enlightened person attains the state of absolute existence i.e. the Paramātman.

Annapūrṇopaniṣad states the characteristics of a person in the state of *Videhamukti* :

विदेहमुक्त एवासौ विद्यते निष्कलात्मकः ।
समग्राग्र्यगुणाधारमपि सत्तवं प्रलीयते ॥४.१९॥
विदेहमुक्तौ विमले पदे परमपावने ।
विदेहमुक्तिविष्ये तस्मिन् सत्त्वक्षयात्मके ॥४.२०॥

Sage R̥bhu tells sage Nidāgha to be possessed of impression-less mind by becoming a *Jīvanmukta* and then by forcibly absorbing mind, he should be of a functionless mind i.e. leading to *Videhamukti* :

हे निदाघ महाप्राज्ञ निर्वासनमना भव ।
बलाच्चेतः समाधाय निर्विकल्पमना भव ॥४.२५॥

Laghu-yoga-vāsiṣṭha of Gauḍa Abhinanda (c. 9th century AD) states :

जीवन्मुक्तपदं त्यक्त्वा स्वदेहे कालसात्कृते ।
विशत्यदेहमुक्तत्वं पवनोऽस्पन्दतामिव ॥५.९८॥
विदेहमुक्तो नोदेति नास्तमेति न शाम्यति ।
न सत्रासन्न दूरस्थो न चाहं न च नेतरः ॥५.९९॥

Vidyāraṇya muni (c. 14th century AD) in his *Jīvanmukti-viveka* states that as the effacement of the latent impressions and the dissolution of the mind are the principal causes of *Jīvanmukti*, so knowledge, being the direct means of attaining *Videhamukti*, is considered to be the principal cause : जीवन्मुक्तेर्वासनाक्षयमनोनाशविव विदेहमुक्तेः साक्षात्साधनत्वाज्ज्ञानं प्रधानम् ।

When the person takes delight in his own self, with his mind completely purified and cleared, enjoying the best types of rest, not craving for anything, and living without any attachment, one is said to enjoy *Mukti* even when he is alive and is known as *Jīvanmukta* (*Annapūrṇā*). According to S. G. Desai¹ : “The desire of liberation (*Mukti*) is born in the mind due to the ripened fruit of good deeds done in many previous births. Then he approaches a preceptor and gets initiated and follows the path of Salvation.”

According to Rajadhyaksha² : The distinctive feature of the *Vedānta*

¹ Desai S. G. — A Critical Study of Later *Upaniṣads*, page 396,

² Rajadhyaksha N. D. — The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, page 145-146,

concept of liberation is the positive approach it has towards it. Liberation is not the production of anything new. It reorients the older beliefs. It is the realisation of 'I am Brahman.' Then all the illusory distinctions disappear and the self realises its own nature. This state is not a negative one as it is preached in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. It is a state of positive bliss (*Ānanda*) to be enjoyed here and now and not in any hypothetical hereafter. It should not be imagined that to one who is liberated the world ceases to exist. Far from that, it acquires a new meaning for him. It gives him the highest bliss he can experience by being in communion with the Supreme Reality. This state he can enjoy even when he is living (*Jīvanmukti*) and the same state will continue even in a disembodied state (*Videha-mukti*)."

"Various views about the means to attain salvation are stated by the *Muktikopaniṣad*", states S. G. Desai.¹ Thus, some say that one obtains salvation by getting initiated into *Tara* or *Om̐kāra* and by muttering Rāma's name in Kaśī. The others say that it can be achieved by following the *Sāṅkhya Yoga*. Others again advocate the path of devotion. Some declare the meditation (*Yoga*) as the sure means while others talk of *Vedāntavākya-manana* (the pondering over the *Mahāvākyas* in the *Upaniṣads*) as the effective means indeed. According to some the *Mukti* is fourfold (*Bhāgavata purāṇa* as *Salokatā*, *Samīpatā*, *Sarūpatā* and *Sāyujyatā*) while others feel that *Mukti* is of one type only. Some achieve it while living while others after the fall of this earthly body. The *Mahopaniṣad* speaks of the four simple means of getting *Mukti* as the *Śama*, *Vicāra*, *Santoṣa* and *Sādhu-Saṅgama* (self-control, meditation, contentment and the company of the good). The *Paīṅgalopaniṣad* as well as the *Śivopaniṣad* describes the nature of bondage and *Mukti* as "*Mama*" and "*Na Mama*" respectively.

Seven stages in the acquisition of the knowledge and attaining liberation are described in the *Annepūrṇopaniṣad* in following manner :

1. At first, an aspirant keeps the company of saints, hears the *Śāstras*, and practises detachment (*Vairāgya*) from the objects of enjoyment. These acts produce a desire for liberation in him. He should discard enjoyment (*Pravṛtti*) and adopt renunciation (*Nivṛtti*).
2. Then he should cultivate reflection (*Vicāraṇā*) on truth and untruth, the eternal and non-eternal, the real and the unreal, i.e. he enquiry or thought as to how one can obtain release from rebirth.

¹ Desai S. G. — The Critical Study of the Later *Upaniṣads*.

3. Then he should sedulously practise the subsidiary means to the acquisition of true knowledge (Sāṅgabhāvanā), i.e. endowing the God with some limbs, Saguṇakalpanā.
4. Then he should dissolve all the subtle subconscious impressions of emotions, desires, and actions (Vāsanā-vilaya).
5. Then he attains embodied release (Jīvanmukta), experiences pure consciousness and bliss (Suddha-saṁvid-ānanda), and attains a state, which is half-conscious and half-asleep.
6. Then he attains a state of super-consciousness (Asaṁvedana), what is called unconscious trance (Asāṁprajñāta Samādhi) is really super conscious trance. It is a state of condensed bliss only resembling deep sleep. It is the fourth state (Turīya) of perfect statelessness or liberation.
7. Then he attains the last super-ecstatic state (Turīyātīta) called Supreme Nirvāṇa, which is completely devoid of object-consciousness, i.e. liberated from worldly existence.

The first three states are waking states, i.e. Jāgrat state covers the first three Bhūmikās. The fourth state is called dream wherein the world appears to be like a dream. The fifth state is called deep sleep since it is in the nature of condensed bliss. The sixth state is called ecstasy (*Turīya*) or the fourth state in the nature of super-consciousness. The seventh state is called the super-ecstatic (*Turīyātīta*) state. It is ineffable, incomprehensible, self-manifest being (APU-V.81-89).

The fourth state (*Turīya*, *Turya*) is devoid of the sense of 'I' or 'not I', being or non-being, desire and volition, individual nescience (*Avidyā*) and cosmic nescience (*Māyā*), inequality and unrest, egoism (*Ahaṅkāra*) and attachment (*Āsakti*), waking state, dream and deep sleep. It is a state of tranquillity, equanimity, equality, silence, transference, fulfilment, renunciation, and perfect bliss. It is a state of doing all works with complete renunciation of all objects. It is a state of destruction of mind and ego.

The existence of mind is the cause of intense suffering. The extinction of mind or desire and attachment, is the cause of supreme delight. Hence, the mind should be merged and dissolved in the ether of pure consciousness (*Cidākāśa*) with its desire and attachment (APU-V.107-17).

The seven stages referred to here slightly differ from those as stated in *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (III.118.5,6) and *Laghu-yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (XIII.113,114) :

ज्ञानभूमिः शुभेच्छाख्या प्रथमा समुदाहता ।

विचारणा द्वितीयास्यात् तृतीया तनुमानसा ॥यो.वा.-३.११८.५॥

सत्त्वापत्तिश्चतुर्थी स्यात्तत्तऽसंसक्तिनामिका ।

पदार्थमाविनी षष्ठी सप्तमी तुर्यगा स्मृता ॥यो.वा.-३.११८.६॥

The first stage of cognition is called “goodwill”; the second is called “discrimination”; the third is called “attenuate-mindedness”; the fourth is called “enlightenment”; the fifth is called “disconnection”; “objectless” is the sixth and the seventh is known as “transcendence”.

Although the names of these states, except for the second and seventh (*Vicāraṇā* and *Turyagā*) differ in both these texts, the essence is the same.

Different schools of thought in India hold different views with regard to the nature of release.

The *Naiyāyikas* say that final release consists in the individuals acquiring his nature by getting rid of qualities, like cognition, pleasure, pain, effort, merit, demerit, etc.

According to the *Vaiśeṣikas*, when the soul is rid of the qualities produced by contact with names and body. It regains its un-dependence : आत्मविशेषगुणानाम् अत्यन्तोच्छेदः । The *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* of Kaṇāda define *Mokṣa* as : आत्मकर्मसु मोक्षो व्याख्यातः । ६.२.१९॥ तदभावे संयोगाभावेऽप्रादुर्भावः स मोक्षः । ५.२.२०॥ The *Sāṅkhyas* say that release is at hand when the intelligent *Puruṣa* is discriminated from the *Prakṛti* and as devoid of merit, demerit etc.

The *Jainas* say that at release, there is the permanent rising up of the soul divested of all limiting adjuncts like the body. The senses and their activities and all *Karmas* : प्रलीन-निखिलोपाद्ये क्षेत्रज्ञस्य सततोर्ध्वगति लक्षणम् । न्यायमकरन्दः-पृष्ठ २७०॥

We find the references to *Amṛta* or *Amṛtatva* in the major *Upaniṣads* like *Bṛhad*¹, *Chāndogya*², *Īśa*³, *Kena*⁴, *Taittirīya*⁵, *Kaṭha*⁶, *Muṇḍaka*¹, *Praśna*²,

¹ *Bṛhad*-I.3.28; I.4.6; I.5.17; I.6.3; II.3.1,3; II.4.2,3; II.5.1; III.7.3; III.9.10; IV.3.12; IV.4.7,14,16,17,25; IV.5.3,15; V.14.8 and V.15.1

² *Chāndogya*-I.4.4,5; II.22.2; II.23.2; III.1.2; III.5.4; III.6.1,3; III.12.6; VI.15.1; VII.24.1; VIII.3.5; VIII.6.6; VIII.12.1; VIII.14.1

³ *Īśa*-11, 14

⁴ *Kena*-12

⁵ *Taittirīya*-I.4.1; I.6.1,2; I.10.1; III.10.3,6

⁶ *Kaṭha*-I.13; I.28; IV.1,2; V.8; VI.8,11,17

*Śvetāśvatara*³, *Maitri*⁴ and *Kauṣītaki*⁵ (Similarly the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV like *Kaivalya* (3,4,6); *Jābāla* (1,3); *Kṣurikā* (23) and *Parābrahma* (1) also mention *Amṛta* or *Amṛtatva*). BG also refers to this concept several times (II.15; IX.19; X.18,27; XIII.12; XIV.20,27; XVIII.37,38).

Niḥśreyas (*Mokṣa*) occurs in *Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad* (III.4), *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (II.14; III.2), BG (V.2) and *Vaiśeṣika Sūtras* of Kaṇāda (I.1) in the definition of *Dharma*. The word '*Śreyas*' often means 'better' in the *Upaniṣads* like *Śāṇḍilya*-II.1; *Chān. Upa.*-IV.16.5; V.6.1; *Bṛhad-*I.4.6,11,14; *Taitt.*-I.4.3; I.11.3; *Kaṭha*-II.1,2; *Muṇḍaka*-I.2.7,10; *Maitri*-IV.5 and BG-I.31; II.5,7,31; III.2,11,35; IV.33; V.1; XII.12; XVI.22 and XVIII.47. *Śreyas* as opposed to *Preyas* i.e. pleasure really means *Niḥśreyas* i.e. Salvation.

Kaivalya does not occur much in the principal *Upaniṣads* except *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*-IV.18 and VI.11; where it means *Kevalaḥ* (not affected by *Guṇas* or isolated as pure consciousness). *Kaivalya* occurs in the minor *Upaniṣads* of AV like *Kaivalya* (24), *Śāṇḍilya* (I.40), *Annapūrṇā* (V.15) and *Ātmā* (24). In *Sāṅkhya*, the liberation is defined in terms of *Kaivalya* as observed from *Sāṅkhyakārikā* (68) which means when *Prakṛti*, the primal nature, as her object is accomplished, has ceased to be active and when separation from the body has taken place, the spirit attains deliverance that is both absolute and final, i.e. *Kaivalya*.

Nirvāṇa occurs in the minor *Upaniṣads* like *Kṣurikā* (23), *Āruṇeyī* (5) and *Annapūrṇā* (I.19; II.32; V.114).

According to the *Annapūrṇopaniṣad*, the state of *Nirvāṇa* is attained when, by the strength of practice, the throbbing of the vital airs has been attenuated to the point of extinction, and the throbbing of the mind meets with repose wherefrom recede words which are capable of generating misconceptions :

अभ्यासेन परिस्पन्दे प्राणानां क्षयमागते ।

मनः प्रशममायाति निर्वाणमवशिष्यते ॥२.३३॥

i.e. remaining in the state of the Brahman alone without a counterpart, in bodiless aloneness (*Videha-Kaivalya*), as a result of the dissolution of the

¹ *Muṇḍaka*-I.1.8; I.2.11; II.2.2,5,7,11; III.2.9

² *Praśna*-I.10; II.5; III.11,12; V.7; VI.5

³ *Śvetāśvatara*-I.6,10; II.5; III.7,15; V.1,6; VI.6,17,19

⁴ *Maitri*-III.2; IV.6; VI.22,23,24,35,36

⁵ *Kauṣītaki*-II.10; III.2

vital air and the mind and all the misconceptions generated by them. By the dissolution of the misconception of the *Jīva*, that state of *Videha-mukti* alone remains.

Nirvāṇa occurs in BG VI.15 as the *Yogī*, who subdues his mind, always practises *Yoga*, secures peace and is centred on the God. This is the highest *Nirvāṇa*. in BG II.72 and V.24,25, we find *Brahmanirvāṇa* which means 'Bliss in Brahman'.

According to B. G. Tilak¹ : "That wonderful and special happiness which belongs to mankind in addition to its beastly qualities is the happiness of the Ātman (*Ātmānanda*), which is most constant, independent and excellent of all happiness. This peace is called in BG (VI.15) as *Śānti* of Emancipation i.e. *Nirvāṇa*. this state of *Nirvāṇa* (dissolution), which at first sight appears difficult, can ultimately be reached by a man by practice (*Abhyāsa*) and by renunciation (*Vairāgya*)."

Buddha refers to the state of merging the Ātman into the Supreme Reality as *Nirvāṇa*, which means 'obtaining rest', or 'the destruction of desire in the same way as a lamp goes out . . .'. *Nirvāṇa* is the 'death of death', or as is stated in the *Upaniṣads*, it is, 'the path of overcoming death', and not merely 'death' (*Bṛhad-IV.4.7*).

Apavarga occurs in the minor *Upaniṣad* of AV viz. *Parabrahma* (1). *Apavarga* occurs only in the *Maitri Upaniṣad* VI.30 and was the Good laid down by the very first *Sūtra* of the *Nyāyadarśana*.

Conclusion :

Thus it is observed that without the cessation of desires and nescience, freedom from the bondage of *Karma* is not possible. So a *Mumukṣu* i.e. a person desirous of liberation should shun them and perform his duty without expecting the fruits of his actions. It is by following this path a person becomes *Jīvanmukta* and then *Videhamukta*, finally merging into the Supreme Reality i.e. *Mokṣa*. Hence the concept of *Mokṣa* discussed in the minor *Upaniṣads* is on the basis of the concept of *Mokṣa* discussed in the earlier literature viz. the major *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavadgītā* and *Brahmasūtras*.

¹ Tilak B. G. — *Gītā-Rahasya*, page 159, 319, 807