

MADHWA AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

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THOUGH from time to time ,epoch to epoch, in the course of the long, continuous, and progressive, dynamic growth and evolution of Indian philosophy, the Dvaita Vedanta of Madhva. (Anandatirtha or Poorna prajnya) has been shown to be rationally, the most consistant and spiritually the most satisfying. It has been the modern fashion either to belittle its philosophical value and significance, deliberately, or to attempt to make out that the philosophical system of Madhva is Monism, Which description, has been applied to the Doctrine of Sankara from time immemorial. I propose to record briefly the contents of the works of Sri Madhva who has ceaselessly, consistantly, courageously and conscientiously endeavoured to uphold and maintain the philosophical prestige of Dvaita Vedanta and vindicate its value and validity for the benefit and guidance of deserving aspirants.

WORKS OF MADHVA

The Dvaita Vedanta is the Doctrine of the Supreme and Almighty Lord Himself. In the incarnation of Krishna, the Lord expounded the Doctrine of Dvaita through the medium of Gita taught to Arjuna.

In the incarnation of Vyasa, or Badarayana, the selfsame Lord taught Dvaita in the Brahma-Sutras or VedantaSutras.

According to tradition, Twenty-one Acharyas or system-builders has preceded Madhva and had written their own Bhasyas, (commentaries) on the Vedanta Sutras.

There is no need to search for anything

detailed in their works. They reveal the Greatest Common Measure of Agreement, (G.C.M.) in sponsoring or supporting some form or another of AdvaitajMonism)

Madhva maintained his Dualism, pluralism, and Realism, and at a single stroke, as it were overthrown all the 21philosophical opponents. In' philosophy proper, there is no majority-rule. There is nothing strange or untenable in maintaining that a single Bhasya, that of Madhva, may be the only one correct and cogent, as against the numerically strong 21.

The main and the most outstanding contribution made by Madhva is the division or dichotomization of Reality or the Universe into TWO-the Supreme Lord, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer etc. of the Universe and the rest of Creation. The Supreme Lord is the one and only independent entity-SVATANTRA. The rest of the Universe is dependent. (PARA TANTRA). It goes without saying the dependent is throughout controlled by the Independent. Of the many dualisms, one might notice in the world, the most vital and significant is the dualism between Infinite Lord and Finite mankind. Madhvacharya's works have been computed to be 37. Their names are well known and they need not to be repeated here. I shall, however, indicate, in reference to some important works, how Dualism has been maintained.

In his Sutra-Bhashya, Madhva has in all relevant contexts pointed out that the Finite (Jiva) is radically different from the Infinite (Iswara). For purposes of beginners and for engaging the attention of the

average man in the street, who may evince some general interest in philosophy, it would be just sufficient if the TWO opening Sutras are studied. The first Sutra or apothegm, (Atha atah-Brahma-jignyasa) lays down that it is obligatory for aspirants to undertake investigation of the nature of Brahman. Because, it is Brahman, the Lord who has put finite selves into bondage or imprisonment in transmigration. (birth-and-death-series)

His Grace alone would liberate the finite from the said bondage. Divine Grace can be secured by worship, ordinary meditation, special types of yogic meditation, and leading pure lives of selfless service to the Lord and His creatures.

The second Sutra contains a definition of Brahman. For, without a definition, nothing can be known and identified. Brahman is defined as that Supreme Being from which proceed, creation, preservation, destruction etc. of the Universe.

This clinches the matter. Whatever other forms and types, models and patterns of creatorship, finite individuals may possess, (such as creation of this or that social or political order, the Five-Year-Plan, atomic weapons and so forth), it must be obvious that even the world's greatest do not possess the power of creating the Universe of Mountains,

Oceans, etc and of Stars, planets and Milky-Way. Thus, the Dualism between the finite and the Infinite is eternal or timeless. The one can never be one or identical with the other.

This conclusion is argued out in the most remarkable manner in Madhva's supreme fighting, controversial treatise, the **Anu-Vyakhyana**, which undoubtedly forms the magnum opus of Madhva.

Madhva, humorously, observes that Finite. Man. does not. possess the creatorship of the Universe. (**Nahi Janmadihetuttvam-jivasya-jagato-bhavet.....**)

Madhva, has argued most effectively and convincingly the following Bondage is real. Real bondage will never be rent as under, or removed, unless the Grace of the Supreme Lord is secured. As a precondition to this, nature of Brahman should be investigated. (**Atoyathartha, bandhasya-vina-Vishnup rasadatah- Anivritteheta dartham- hi - jignyasa-atra-vidheeyat.....**)

Thus, for Madhva, concrete experience in life is the starting-point of all philosophy. (as in Sankhya.)

Life reveals transmigration, (birth-and death-series) predominantly evil-ridden. Escape from evil-ridden finite life is the goal of philosophy and philosophic effort and endeavour.

The goal can be reached only through. the Grace of the Supreme Lord. He alone has the power to liberate mankind who put it in chains.

In several contexts of **Anuvyakhyana**, this and allied conclusions have been elaborately argued and established.

Madhva has powerfully and passionately appealed to the intelligentia unhesitatingly to reject Monoism. (Advaita Oneness or identity between the Finite and the Infinite.)

In Ten Prakaranas, Madhva has elaborated the thesis of Dualism, with less of controversial paraphernalia. It is interesting to note the ten works of madhva revealing an ascending scale of philosophic development.

In Pramanalakshana, Madhva has described the sources and guarantors of valid knowledge which are three. (Pratyaksha, (sense-perception) Anumana, (Inference) and

Aagama. (Texts) For. without the help of Pramanas, the prameyas, entities or the categories to be known can never be known at all. Truth can be determined only in open debates and discussions. So, Madhva has explained in **Katha-Lakshana**, the three types of discussion, Vada, Jalpa, and Vitanda. Truth-determination is the goal. in Vada. In Jalpa, victory over opponent is the goal. In Vitanda, mere destructive criticism in the goal. The business-like teacher and pupil would be engaged **only** in Vada-type.

After settlement of these preliminaries, Madhva has undertaken destructive work which is indispensable prolegomena to any constructive work.

In Mithyatvanumana-Khandana. Madhva has refuted the inference or syllogism given by Monists in support of illusionistic metaphysics.

In Mayavada-Khandana, the absolute untenability of Maya-doctrine and Oneness, is demonstrated.

In Upadhi-Khandana, Madhva has shown the impossibility of Upadi which is believed by Advaitins to explain how the one Brahman became Many.

Then, the Acharya has constructively built up and argued his own system. He has shown in **Tattvasankhyana** that Reality stands dichotomized into two-Svatantra and Paratantra. (Independent Lord and Dependent Creation.)

In Tuttvaviveka, the same conclusion is presented in a more authoritative manner.

Tattvodyota witnesses a systematic development of Dvaita. The most striking

feature of this work is that it contains the necessary textual proof to demonstrate that **Mayavada** is for all philosophical purposes the same as **Sunyavada**. **Mayavada** is Advaitism, **Sunyavada** is Buddhism.

Of the **Ten Prakaranas** (Minor Treatises) **Vishnutattvavinirnaya** is the most elaborate and most important. Madhva has argued that Vishnu is the Supremest Reality and Lord of the Universe. Difference between the Finite and Infinite is proved. Dualism is established. This work is remarkable in another way. In this, Madhva has advanced an absolutely original suggestion that the celebrated Advaitic text **TATTVAMASI** which is claimed to support Oneness or Monoism, should in fact be ATAT-TWAM-ASI. (Thou art NOTTHAT). Logic, grammar, Rules and Canons of interpretation, harmony with the illustrative instances

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mentioned in the Upanishad, all, point, Madhva argues, in the inevitable direction of ATAT-
TWAMASI. The matter is yet to be investigated.

In Karmanirnaya, Madhva has explained that all our actions, duties, rites, rituals and others in the line should be devotionally dedicated to the supreme Lord Who is the Sole Judge and who is the sole Authority to distribute rewards and punishments.

It will thus be seen that in all his philosophical works, Madhva has argued and established only DUALISM, difference between the Finite and the Infinite and nowhere has he even remotely hinted at Monoism.

Sri Krishnarpanamasthu