

The Concept of Jiva, Brahman and Maya in The View of Vallabhacharya

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Abstract - The philosophy of Sri Vallabhacharya is Suddha Advaita or pure monism, because he does not admit Maya like Sankara, and believes that the whole world of matter and souls is real and is only a subtle form of God. Those who bring Maya for the explanation of the world are not pure Advaitins, because they admit a second to Brahmin. Vallabha holds that Brahman can create the world without any connection with such a principle as Maya, but Sankara traces the universe to Brahmin through the power of Maya. Hence the philosophy of Vallabha is called pure monism or Suddhadvaita. Vallabha says that the entire universe is real and is subtly Brahman. The individual souls and the world are in essence, one with Brahman. Jiva, Kala (time) and Prakriti or Maya are eternal existences, but they have no separate existence apart from Brahman.

Keywords - Vallabhacharya, Suddha Advaita, Brahman, Jiva, Maya.

Introduction

Vallabha has evolved his philosophy solely on the authority of the verbal testimony (apta) and has thereby shown that dry logic has no independent place in the discussion of philosophical problems—an attitude which is responsible for his strong criticism of Sankara. His philosophical views are as it follows. The highest entity is Brahman, which is Sat (existence), Cit (knowledge), Ananda (bliss) and Rasa (sentiment). He is Purna (perfect) Purusottama (the best of beings); and is therefore personal in nature. He possesses many divine qualities, of which jnana (experience) and kriya (activity) are the most prominent. He also possesses contradictory qualities. He is devoid of worldly or material qualities, and the negation of qualities in Brillilman, mentioned in the Upanishads, refers to the absence of material qualities in Him. He possesses sort of body totally made up of ananda. His ananda is infinite. He is omnipresent and eternal. He is both kartr (agent) and bhokt (enjoyer). For lila. (sport) He has created the universe out of Himself, and is thus both the efficient and the material cause of the universe which is naturally sustained by Him and absorbed in Him at the end. Although the world is full of people, both happy and unhappy, and comes to an end at particular periods, Brahman is not open to the charges of practising cruelty and creating inequality, simply because he has created the world out of Himself in lila. Again, He does not undergo any change even when He transforms Himself into this world—a doctrine known as cvikrlaparinama (unchanged transformation). The kriya-sakti (power of action) of Brahman is described in the purva-kanda (first or ritualistic portion) of Vedas, while His jnana-sakti (power of knowledge) is described in the uttara-kanda (latter portion i.e. the Upanishad) . Brahman the Lord, as associated with kriya and jnana saktis is again, described in His grandeur in the Gita and the Bhagavata. Aksara Next to and lower than Parabrahman is Akara (immutable) or Akara Brahman. He possesses .sat, cit , and limited ananda (as against infinite ananda of Parabrahman). He appears in various forms according to the different aspects of the latter. He may appear as Vaikunthaloka when Parabrahman. the Lord, appears as residing in Vaikuntha. He may appear as the charana (foot) of the Lord when the latter appears in the form of antaryami (the inner controller) and also in the form of an avatara (incarnation). He also appears as the foot in the adhidaivika (celestial forms of the Lord. The Akara is further described as the putcha (tail) or the anandamaya (blissful) Lord, and is the adhyatmika (corporeal) form of the latter. When the Lord want, to give moksa (liberation) through jnana, He manifests- four forms, viz. akaara, kala (time), karma (action), and ,svabhava (nature), Akara then appears in the forms of Prakrti (primal matter) and Purusa (soul); and this Prakrti develops through different stages into the universe, and is therefore called the cause of all causes. The negative descriptions of Brahman in the Upanishads refer to this Aksara Brahman which become the subject of meditation of jnanins alone. Kala, karma, and .svabhava are aksara, different forms of the Lord inseparable from Him, and serve "some purpose in the, creation of the world. There are; again, twenty-eight tattvas (principles which appear in the process of creation, viz. sattvas (purity), rajas (activity), lamas (inertia), Purusa, Prakrti, mahat (cosmic intelligence), ahankara (egoism), five tanmatras subtle elements, five mahdbhutas gross elements), five karmlndriyas (organs of action), five jnanendriyas (organs of knowledge), and manas (mind). But though aksara, kala, karma, and svabhava exist even before the creation of the universe, they are not included in this list of the tattvas as they are general causes , inseparable, from the Lord. The twenty-eight categories are called . tattvas as they represent in the world the causal capacity of the Lord. The Lord, as the cause or the whole universe, expresses His causal capacity in the form of these twenty-eight categories which, in spite of the same nomenclature, have to be clearly distinguished from the categories or the Samkhya system. For instance, the three gunas (qualities), which constitute the Prakrti of the Samkhya, are distinct from Prakrti in this system: the indriyas (organs) are developed from the rajasa ahankara, and their devatas (presiding deities) from the sattvika ahankara ; and indriyas and manas are atomic and eternal Soul.

Maya :

The term Maya is one of the most important words in the history of Indian Thought. A critical examination of such terms from the earliest times to the modern period is both interesting and instructive. It is here proposed to examine the

concept of Maya in the Suddhadvaita Vedanta of Vallabhacharya. For the proper appreciation of Vallabhacharya's idea of Maya it is necessary to know the background against which he evolved his own Philosophy. The word Maya is as old as the Rgveda wherein it occurs about ninety times in connection with gods like Varua, Indra, Pusan and Tvastr. It is used in different senses such as (1) the power of working wonders-creative genius. (2) mere Physical power, (3) wiles or tricks, witchcraft or sorcery or magic, and most rarely in the sense of illusion of course, not in the sense in which it was later on understood by Sankaracharya. The derivation of the word from vma "to create" naturally suggests that its primary meaning should have been 'Creative power,' and other senses might have developed from this original idea. The word is also used in Avesta in senses such as (1) wisdom or knowledge, and (2) virtue or excellence. It is used in the Rgvedic sense about five times in the Yajurveda, ten times in Samveda, and twenty-six times in the Atharvaveda. The Nighantu includes the word in the list of words meaning knowledge (prajna). Yaska' accepts that meaning. Sayana interprets the word in various ways, sometimes even according to the system of Sankaracharya. The Brahma literature associates the word Maya with the Asuras in the sense of 'magic power,' while the Upanishad.. and the Gita use the word in the sense of divine power. 'The .Brahmasutras use the word only once in connection with dreams. The Mahabharata , the Ramayana and the Purana, mention the word in the sense of wonder or trick, while Gaudapada uses the word in the sense of power and illusion. The several commentaries on the Brahma sutras give a fair idea of their authors' views on Maya, which may be briefly Very often in the Moksadharma Parvan of the Santi Parvan, in the sense 'or divine power. There is; however. no reference to the theory of illusion which later on appears in the system of Sankaracharya. Vallabhacharya has accepted as his authority the four basic works (Prasthanas), viz. (I) Vedas, (2)Gita, (3) Brahma sutras, and (4)Bhagavata, and shown how in case of doubts the following authority should be utilised. The result of this principle is that the following authority becomes a commentary on the preceding authority, and in his way the Bhagavata comes to enjoy unique position in his system. The highest, Reality is, according to Vallabhacharya, pure Brahman, otherwise known as Krsna, full of Bliss and possessing infinite powers-a Personal God. Maya is one of the twelve powers of the Lord, and is defined as the power residing in the Lord and by which the Lord can become everything. It is by means of this Maya that the Lord creates the world, and in this capacity the Maya is called Yogamaya. The wonderful capacity of this Yogamaya is entirely due only to the attributes of the Lord. This Maya has got three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas from which the world is created. But when these Gunas are produced directly from the Lord, the Maya should be understood as of the from of Cit-Sakti or Ananda Sakti. The world is created for the sake of pleasure, and as pleasure is not possible without diversity, the individual souls in the world are, therefore, put by the Lord, under the influence of Avidya (ignorance) which is also one of his powers Avidya is responsible for the soul's Ahamta and Mamata which constitute the Samsara which being false can be destroyed by right knowledge (Vidya). The Lord can create the world in various ways, But there are two principal ways of the creation of the world(1) Vedic and (2) Pauranic. According to the Vedic authorities the Lord himself becomes the world without any aid, while according to the Puranas the Lord takes the help of His own Maya Sakti. These two types of creation have been favourably compared by Vallabhacharya with golden ornaments which are shaped by hammering and by putting molten gold in blocks. It should be, however, remembered that the world, like the golden ornament, remains in the form of Brahman in both the cases. The principal Maya Sakti or the Lord has again got another variety, Vyamohika maya, by which the mind is deluded It is this Vyamohika Maya that accounts for error in the world. It is like an attendant of the Lord and operates in the case of those who are away from the Lord, but not in the case or the Lord' devotee. As Maya is of the nature of Sri Lakshmi, wealth the form she has assumed is called a woman. It is meant for the pleasure of the Lord and for the delusion of demons. The word Maya is also used in the sense of magic and conception; and sometimes in the sense of the world created by the Lord with the help of Maya. The description of the world as Mayika or unreal in the Puranas is meant only for creating the spirit of detachment and not for showing that the world is really an illusion. It will be clear from this brief exposition that Vallabhacharya's concept of Maya is primarily based on the original sense of -Creative genius-of the word Maya in the Rgveda, and has been influenced by the later' literature up to the Purana.

Jiva And Brahman:

The Jivas are not effects. They are Amsas or parts of God. They issue from Him spontaneously as sparks from fire. Brahman is the whole. The Jiva or the individual soul is part; but, there is no real difference between Brahman and the individual soul, because the individual soul is of identical essence with Brahman.(According to Ramanuja, the parts are really different from the whole.) The soul is one with Brahman. It is as real and eternal as Brahman. The individual soul is not Brahman screened by the veil of Avidya. It is itself Brahman, with the attribute 'bliss' being obscured or suppressed. Ananda or bliss is suppressed or obscured in the individual soul. Ananda and consciousness are suppressed or obscured in matter or the inanimate world. When the soul attains bliss, and the inanimate world attains both consciousness and bliss, the difference between Brahman and these vanishes. The soul is both a doer and an enjoyer. It is atomic in size, but it pervades the whole body by its quality of intelligence, just as sandalwood pervades even the places where it does not exist by its sweet fragrance and just as a lamp, though confined only to a part of a room, illuminates the whole room.

There are three kinds of souls: (i) The pure (Suddha) Jivas. The divine qualities (Aisvarya) are not obscured in these souls by ignorance. (ii) The worldly Jivas (Samsarin). These souls are caught in the net or clutches of Avidya or ignorance. They experience births and deaths on account of their connection with gross and subtle bodies. (iii) Mukta Jivas or liberated souls. These souls are freed from the bonds of Samsara through Vidya or Knowledge. When the soul attains the final emancipation, it recovers its suppressed qualities and becomes one with God or Brahman. The world appears as Brahman to one who has realised the Truth or Brahman. There is another classification of souls, viz., Pushti souls, Maryada souls and Pravahika souls. All these are different from one another in their origin, nature and final end. They all issue from God with their differences. The Pushti souls are the highest, as they issue from the Ananda-Kaya or the bliss-body of God. These souls are the Amsa (parts) of His body. God is the Amsi (the whole). These are the souls of grace. They have the divine seed in them which bears fruit in the end. They ultimately reach the goal through the grace of the Lord. They have communion and fellowship with Lord Krishna. They develop Bhakti through the grace of the Lord. Bhakti is the means and the end in itself.

The Maryada souls are generated from the Vak or the Word of God. They are governed by law, not by grace. They perform their ritualistic duties, at first with selfish interests. Later on, they develop Nishkama-Bhava (unselfish attitude) and do their ritualistic routine without any self-interest. This purifies their mind. They reach the Akshara, which is a kind of vestibule to the abode of God. Afterwards they attain the supreme abode of God. The Pravahika souls issue from the mind of God. They are the Samsaric Jivas. They are souls neither of grace nor of law. They are in continuous motion (Pravaha). These three kinds of souls have further sub-divisions and cross-divisions into Pushti-Pushti, Pushti-Maryada, Pushti-Pravahika, Maryada-Maryada, Maryada-Pushti, Maryada-Pravahika, Pravahika-Pravahika, Pravahika-Pushti and Pravahika-Maryada.

The Lord was alone, without a second, in the beginning of a cycle. He desired to be many for the sake of pleasure: and as He desired, thousands of souls came instantaneously out of Aksara Brahman like sparks from fire. In special cases the souls may emanate from the Lord Himself. The soul is thus an amsa (part) of Brahman and is eternal. With a view to enjoying sport, the Lord suppressed the element of ananda (bliss) in the soul, and the soul consequently became subject to bondage and wrong knowledge. The soul is never created, nor does it ever die. It is only the body which is created and destroyed. As long as the soul is associated with the body, birth and death, which are the attributes of the body, are metaphorically predicated of it. The soul is atomic-it is neither omnipresent, nor does it vary in size according to the body it inhabits. It experiences everything in the body through its quality of caitanya (intelligence) which pervades the whole body. It knows, does, and experiences various things in the world; but these qualities of the soul are, in fact, derived from the Lord. The soul is thus quite real, and not a product of nescience. The Lord, in order to bring about variety, which is essential for the sake of pleasure, makes the souls varied in nature. Consequently, the souls can be grouped into three classes, viz. (1) those that are busy with worldly matters, (2) those that follow the Vedic path according to the letter of the Vedas, and (3) those that worship the Lord out of pure love engendered only through divine grace. These three types are generally described as pravaha, maryada, and pusti respectively. The universe is the effect of Brahman and is real and non-different from Him. The element of sat is manifest in it, while the other elements of cit and ananda are latent. The Lord has created the universe out of His own self for the sake of sport (lila) without suffering (any change whatsoever, and is related to it as the spider is to its web. The origination, existence, and destruction of the world or experience is completely different in nature from the world of dreams and is therefore not unreal like the experiences in a dream. The universe (jagat) is clearly distinguished from the unreal world (samsara) caused by the avidya (nescience) of soul. For the sake of diversity, the Lord makes the souls subject to His power of avidya which is the root cause of the ideas of 'mine' and 'thine'. Samsara which is solely made up of ahanta (I-ness or egoism) and mamta (My-ness or the idea of possession), has to be destroyed by means of knowledge, devotion, etc. Pusti Contrasted With Jnana and Karma Three paths have been generally recognized as leading to moksha, viz. Karmamrga, Jnana-marga, and Bhakti-marga. The several schools of the Vedanta differ from one another in laying differential emphasis on the elements of Karma, jnana, and bhakti. According to the Suddhadvaita system, the Lord manifests Himself in the five forms of Kriya (Vedic sacrifice), viz. agnihotra, darsa-paurnamaso, pasuyoga, catumasya and somayoga, in the purva kanda, and in the form of jnana in the uttara-kanda, He who performs the Vedic rites and obtains the knowledge of Brahman as prescribed in the Upanishads, enjoys moksha in the form of divine joy. To such a man the Lord, described in the Vedic literature as possessing the six forms (the five of sacrifice, and the one of jnana) manifests Himself. He goes by the path of the gods (devayana) and gradually attains moksha; but if he happens to enjoy the special grace of the Lord, he gets moksha immediately after death. He who does not attain the knowledge of Brahman but performs the Vedic rites without any motive, please all the Gods concerned in the sacrifices and enjoys, atmananda, (the bliss of the soul). The term svarqa, used in this connection in the sense of atmananda, etymologically means 'that which is perfectly earned', or the happiness of the soul which is unmixed, eternal, and inferior only to the supreme divine joy which is the privilege of those who enjoy the favour of the Lord. But he who performs different sacrifices, simply with a view to fulfilling different desires, goes to the popular soar goloka (heaven), where he enjoys different kinds or happiness in his merit is exhausted and then returns to the world of mortals to move again in the cycle of birth and death. It should be further noted that he who attains the knowledge of Brahman and realizes that everything in the world is Brahman, is a real knower of Brahman. But he is absorbed in Akara Brahman, and not in Parabrahman or Purna Purusottama, because, as already stated, he meditates upon Akara Brahman and considers it to be the final stage of reality that has no higher. But if this knowledge of Brahman is associated with devotion, the knowing devotee is absorbed in Purna Purusottama. This stage is indeed, higher than the stage of absorption in Akara Brahman. There is, again, another stage which may be described as the highest. When the Lord desires to favour a particular soul and be it remembered that in showing His favour He is not guided by any other consideration than His own will He brings out the soul from Himself, gives him a divine body like His own and plays with him for all time. In this play, which is called nitya-lila, the Lord, remaining subordinate to the devotee, gives him the pleasure of His company." which is generally known as bhajananda (the bliss of devotion) or svarupananda (the bliss of the Lord Himself) which is referred to in the Taittiriya Upanishad, the Bhagavata, and other Puranas. It is most interesting to note that this divine bliss is purely a gift of the Lord and cannot be obtained by any human effort. It is this very idea of the gift of divine grace that is called Pusti in the Suddhadvaita system. The experience of svarupananda which is decidedly superior to that of Brahmananda, is, according to Vallabha, the highest. Conception of moksha, the summum bonum. The Lord is full of rasa (sentiment), and out of the eight rasas (love, heroism, fury, humour, wonder, pathos, and horror), srngara (love) is the most prominent. As srngara has two aspects, viz. samyoga (union) and viprayoga (separation), there are two stages in this rasa which the devotees enjoy. In the company of the Lord the devotees enjoy the happiness of union, while in His absence they suffer the misery of separation and think of Him all the time.

Review of literature :

Review of related literature is an important research effort as it provides comprehensive understanding of what is already known about the topic. Familiarity with research work of others provides up-to-date knowledge of the latest developments, findings, recommendations, tools and loopholes of researches. It helps to avoid duplication of what has already been done, and provides useful directions and helpful suggestions for research work.

Dasguta, Surendranath (1922) Brahman, Siva is qualified, visista by jiva-jagat and together they form an organic whole, advaita, hence the name of the doctrine, visista sivadvaita. Individuals achieve liberation through knowledge, for which one prepares by performing karmas in accordance with dharma. And it is the knowledge of Siva Nature, Sivatyta which is achieved through meditation on the nature of Siva as being non-different from one's own. In fact it is only through Siva's grace that karma has efficacy and can allow for the possibility of liberation.

Tapasynanda, Svami (1990) Jiva-jagat are nothing but manifestations of Brahman, which is Krsna. My is the power of Krsna, which causes the misunderstanding of the jagat. It is only the non-difference, abheda that is real, while the perception of all seeming difference, bheda exists for the sake of Krsna's sport, Lila. While Brahman can be attained via action and knowledge, this is the lower or aksara Brahman with limited bliss. The bhakti marga is superior and easy to follow, resulting in participation in the lila of Krsna. Liberation of the jiva is dependent on Krsna's grace. Vallabha's philosophy may be felt to lack the intellectual arguments and debate that characterizes Sankara's work. Brahman is to be known "not intellectually, but intuitively.

Shah, Jethalal G. (1969) Jivas are to Brahman like sparks to a fire, they are parts of Brahman which lack the divine qualities owing to suppression, tirobhava, of Brahman's bliss. There are a multiplicity of types of jivas, including jivan-muktas, pusti jivas and pravaha jivas among others.

Marfatia, Mrudula I. (1967) Pusti marga or the path of grace is the path of complete self-surrender and innate faith in Krsna, that his grace will certainly save the follower on this path. This has implications of predestination and denial of free will, total dependence on Krsna's grace. But for a pusti jiva, devotion is the means and the end, service of Krsna leads to the highest bliss. Bhakti results in a three-fold fruit: Krsna subordinates himself to the devotee, the devotee attains association with the divine and ultimately a supernatural body is attained whereby the devotee can participate in the divine sports of Krsna.

Objectives of the Paper :

- To examine the Philosophy Vallabhacharya in the light of Jiva, Brahman and Maya.
- To evaluate the critical analysis of Vallabhacharya Philosophy and others.

Methodology:

The method used in this paper is descriptive-evaluative method. The study is mainly review based. It is purely supported by secondary and tertiary source of data, i.e. books, translation of old scriptures, journals, papers and articles and internet.

Conclusion :

According to Vallabha, God is the Absolute or the Purushottama. He is perfect. He is Sat-Chit-Ananda. He is infinite, eternal, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He has all the auspicious qualities also. The Sruti texts which say that He has no attributes, mean only that He has not the ordinary qualities. God is *real*. There is no other reality besides Him. He is the *only* Being. He is the source for this universe and all souls. He is the first cause and the only cause. God is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. He creates the world by the mere force of His Will. Brahman manifests Himself, of His own Will, as the universe and the individual souls, but He does not undergo any change in His essential nature. Things come out of the Akshara (Sat-Chit-Ananda), like sparks from fire. Brahman is the Creator of the world. He is also the world itself. God is personified as Krishna, when He possesses the qualities of wisdom and action. He appears in various forms to please His devotees.

Creation is manifestation of Brahman. The universe is the effect of Brahman. The universe is as eternal and real as Brahman Himself. The inanimate universe is filled with Brahman. The world is not an illusory appearance. It is not different from Brahman in essence. Jagat is the world of Nature. It is not illusory. It is real. It is God Himself in one form. But, the Samsara or temporal involvement is illusory. This is created by the soul around its 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'. The separation from God on account of egoism makes the soul forget its original, true, divine nature. Samsara is a product of the soul's imagination and action which play round its 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'. On account of its selfishness, it puts itself in wrong relations with other souls and with the objective universe. It creates a web of its own and gets itself entangled in it. This is an illusion, because the web has no reality. This Samsara, the world of false relations created by the soul, is alone Maya. Samsara or Maya rises because the soul, which is not apart from God, tries to set itself up as an independent reality or entity in its own right. The self which is something apart from God is illusory. Its body is illusory and its world also is illusory. All this is Samsara. It is very different from the world of Nature.

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