

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION  
AND PRONUNCIATION

CHAPTER I  
SAMANYAYA—RECONCILIATION THROUGH  
PROPER INTERPRETATION

SECTION I

अ	a	o in son	इ	ḍ	d	
आ	ā	a in <i>master</i>	ढ	ḍh	dh in <i>godhood</i>	
इ	i	i in <i>if</i>	ण	ṇ	n in <i>under</i>	
ई	ī	ee in <i>feel</i>	त	t	French t	
उ	u	u in <i>full</i>	थ	th	th in <i>thumb</i>	
ऊ	ū	oo in <i>boot</i>	द	d	th in <i>then</i>	
ऋ	r	somewhat between r and ri	ध	dh	theh in <i>breathe here</i>	
ए	e	a in <i>evade</i>	न	n	n	
ऐ	ai	y in <i>my</i>	प	p	p	
औ	o	o in <i>oh</i>	फ	ph	ph in <i>loop-hole</i>	
अौ	au	ow in <i>nore</i>	ब	b	b	
क	k	k	भ	bh	bh in <i>abhor</i>	
ख	kh	ckh in <i>blockhead</i>	म	m	m	
ग	g	g (hard)	य	y	y	
घ	gh	gh in <i>log-hut</i>	र	r	r	
ङ	ṅ	ng	ल	l	l	
च	c	ch (not k)	व	v	v in <i>avert</i>	
छ	ch	chh in <i>catch him</i>	श	ś	sh	
ज	j	j	ष	ṣ	sh in <i>show</i>	
झ	jh	dgech in <i>hedgehog</i>	स	s	s	
ञ	ñ	n (somewhat)	ह	h	h	
ट	ṭ	ṭ	ः	ḥ	ng	
ठ	ṭh	th in <i>ant-hill</i>	:	h	half h	

*Preamble*: It being an established fact that the object and the subject,<sup>1</sup> that are fit to be the contents of the concepts "you" and "we" (respectively), and are by nature as contradictory as light and darkness, cannot logically have any identity, it follows that their attributes can have it still less.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the superimposition of the object, referable through the concept "you", and its attributes on the subject that is conscious by nature<sup>3</sup> and is referable through the concept "we" (should be impossible), and contrariwise the superimposition of the subject and its attributes on the object should be impossible. Nevertheless, owing to an absence of discrimination between these attributes, as also between substances, which are absolutely disparate, there continues a natural human behaviour based on self-identification in the form of "I am this"<sup>4</sup> or "This is mine."<sup>5</sup> This behaviour has for its material cause an unreal nescience and man resorts to it by mixing up reality with unreality as a result of superimposing<sup>6</sup> the things themselves or their attributes on each other.

<sup>1</sup> Non-Self or matter, and Self or Consciousness, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The attribute of matter is insentience, and of the Self, Consciousness. These attributes cannot have any relation of identity or non-difference.

<sup>3</sup> Which witnesses the intellect etc.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, "I am this body", where the body as such is superimposed on the Self, conceived of as "I". Or "This body is I", where a relationship with the Self is superimposed on the body.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, "This is my body", where the attributes of the body are superimposed on the Self. In the first case (previous f. n.) the separateness of the body and Self is forgotten; in the latter they are kept apart, but the attributes get mixed up.

<sup>6</sup> The phrases "by mixing up" and "as a result of superimposing" mean

If it be asked, "What is it that is called superimposition?"—the answer is: It is an awareness, similar in nature to memory, that arises on a different (foreign) basis as a result of some past experience.<sup>7</sup> With regard to this, some say that it consists in the superimposition of the attributes of one thing on another.<sup>8</sup> But others assert that wherever a superimposition on anything occurs, there is in evidence only a confusion arising from the absence of discrimination between them.<sup>9</sup> Others say that the superimposition is the same thing. The implied sequence points out the chain constituted by superimposition, its impression on the mind, and subsequent superimposition, which succeed one another eternally like the seed and its sprout.

<sup>7</sup> Or the interpretation is: "It is somewhat like a recollected thing emerging from the impression of some past experience." The two interpretations are from the points of view of subjective and objective awareness.

<sup>8</sup> Four alternative theories follow successively. Of these the first two—*Anyatābhākyātī* and *Āmakhyātī*—are comprised within the present view. According to *Anyatābhākyātī*, subscribed to by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools, we have at first a vague awareness of "this" with regard to the rope in front. As the mind is not satisfied with this alone, it craves for a distinct perception. But some defect in the cognizer, his instruments of perception, or environment debars this, at the same time that the similarity of the rope and the snake calls up the memory of the latter. This memory conjures up the visual perception of the snake, and so the "this" is apprehended as "This is a snake". According to some Buddhists who hold the *Anyatābhākyātī* theory of error, the "this" of the externally perceivable rope is superimposed on the mentally present snake to form the erroneous judgment, "This is a snake". Their psychological explanation is this: It may so happen that owing to the past impression inhering in consciousness, there may be a simultaneous flow of the consciousness of the external "this" and the internal snake, in which case the two get mixed up. The Buddhists call this *Āmakhyātī*.

<sup>9</sup> This view of *Ākhyātī* is held by the followers of Prabhākara, who assert that there is no such thing as erroneous knowledge, for a contrary supposition will paralyse human action by raising doubt at every turn as to whether a particular cognition is valid or not. In a case of so-called error, we do not really have a single cognition, but two, though we err by failing to recognize the difference between the two. On the one side we have the knowledge of the "this" in its absoluteness, occurring in the judgment "This is nacre". The nacre fails to come within the range of cognition owing to some defect in the factors concerned and some similarity between nacre and silver, because of which latter fact, the

tion of anything on any other substratum consists in fancying some opposite attributes on that very basis.<sup>10</sup> From every point of view, however, there is no difference as regards the appearance of one thing as something else. And in accord with this, we find in common experience that the nacre appears as silver, and a single moon appears as two.

*Opponent*: How, again, can there be any superimposition of any object or its attributes on the (inmost) Self that is opposed to the non-Self<sup>11</sup> and is never an object (of the senses and mind)? For everybody superimposes something else on what is perceived by him in front,<sup>12</sup> and you assert that the Self is opposed to the non-Self and is not referable (objectively) by the concept "you".

The answer (of the *Vedāntin*) is: The Self is not absolutely beyond apprehension, because It is apprehended as the content of the concept "I"; and because the Self, opposed to the non-Self, is well known in the world<sup>13</sup> as an immediately perceived (i.e. self-revealing) entity. Nor is there any rule that something has to be superimposed on something else that is directly perceived through the senses; for boys superimpose the ideas of surface (i.e. concavity) and dirt on space (i.e. sky) that is not an object of sense-perception. Hence there is nothing impossible in superimposing the non-Self on the Self that is opposed to it.

This superimposition, that is of this nature, is considered by the learned to be *avidyā*, nescience.<sup>14</sup> And the ascertainment of contact between the eyes and the nacre calls up to memory the silver seen in a shop. But the silver is remembered not in association with its time and locality, but simply as silver. So the two cognitions of "this" and silver synchronize, at the same time that their difference is not apprehended. This non-perception of difference prompts certain reactions in the perceiver.

<sup>10</sup> This view of *Asatkhyātī* is held by the Buddhist Nihilist, according to whom, the non-existing silver appears on the non-existing nacre.

<sup>11</sup> *Pratyak-ātmā* is interpreted by *Ramanabrah̄mā* as that (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Brahman) which stands opposed to non-existence, insentience, and sorrow (i.e. sorrowful ego etc.).

<sup>12</sup> As an object, directly perceived through the senses.

<sup>13</sup> The Self is known as "I" to all people, learned or ignorant, and nobody has any doubt as to this.

<sup>14</sup> Since it is a product of nescience and is sublated by *vidyā* (illumina-

the nature of the real entity by separating the superimposed thing from it is called *vidyā* (illumination). This being so,<sup>15</sup> whenever there is a superimposition of one thing on another, the locus is not affected in any way either by the merits or demerits of the thing superimposed. All forms of worldly and Vedic behaviour that are connected with valid means of knowledge and objects of knowledge start by taking for granted this mutual superimposition of the Self and non-Self, known as nescience; and so do all the scriptures dealing with injunction, prohibition, or emancipation.

*Opponent*: How, again, can the means of valid knowledge, such as direct perception as well as the scriptures, have as their locus a cognizer who is subject to nescience?<sup>16</sup>

The (*Vedāntin's*) answer is: Since a man without self-identification with the body, mind, senses, etc., cannot become a cognizer, and as such, the means of knowledge cannot function for him; since perception and other activities (of a man) are not possible without accepting the senses etc. (as his own); since the senses cannot function without (the body as) a basis, since nobody engages in any activity with a body that has not the idea of the Self superimposed on it; since the unrelated Self cannot become a cognizer unless there are all these (mutual superimposition of the Self and the body and their attributes on each other); and since the means of knowledge cannot function unless there is a cognizership; therefore it follows that the means of knowledge, such as direct perception as well as the scriptures, must have a man as their locus who is subject to nescience.

Moreover, there is no difference (of the learned) from the animals (in regard to empirical behaviour). Just as animals and tion). The commentary refers to superimposition, which is a product of *Māyā*, rather than to *Māyā* itself, because the latter is a source of evil in its derived forms and not in its unevolved states, e.g. sleep, whereas superimposition is directly so.

<sup>15</sup> Since superimposition is a product of nescience.

<sup>16</sup> If the Self, with the superimposition of "I" on It, be subject to ignorance, then the instruments of knowledge and scriptures, depending on It, become vitiated and lose their validity.

others turn away from sound etc. when these appear to be unfavourable after their ears etc. come in contact with them, and they move towards these when they are favourable; and just as by noticing a man approaching them with a raised stick, they begin to run away thinking, "This one wants to hurt me", and they approach another carrying green grass in his hands, similarly even the wise are repelled by the presence of strong, uproarious people with evil looks and upraised swords, and are attracted by men of opposite nature. Therefore the behaviour of men with regard to the means and objects of knowledge is similar to that of animals. And it is a familiar fact that the animals use their means of perception etc. without discrimination (between the body and the Self). From this fact of similarity, the conclusion can be drawn that so far as empirical behaviour is concerned, the use of the means of perception by the wise is similar to that of lower animals, (it being a result of superimposition). Of course, it is a fact that a man acting intelligently does not acquire the competence for scriptural duties unless he has a knowledge of the relationship of his soul with the next world. Still (a knowledge of) the absolute Reality, that is the Self, is not a prerequisite for such a competence; for It (i.e. Reality) has no relevance here, and It is opposed to such competence,<sup>17</sup> inasmuch as It is beyond hunger and thirst, free from such differentiation as *Brāhmana*, *Kṣatriya*, etc., and is not subject to birth and death. And the scriptures, which are operative before the dawn of the real knowledge of the Self, cannot transgress the limits of their dependence on people groping in ignorance. To illustrate the point: Such scriptural injunction as "A *Brāhmana* shall perform a sacrifice" can become effective only by taking for granted various kinds of superimposition of caste, stage of life, age, condition, etc. And we said that superimposition means the cognition of something as some other thing. Thus in accordance as one's wife, children, or other relatives are hale and hearty with all their limbs intact,

<sup>17</sup> For empirical activities, a vague idea about one's soul is quite enough, and no knowledge of the absolute Self is needed. On the contrary, when one knows the absolute Self, one loses all kinds of self-identification, and therefore actions become impossible.

that can be commenced.<sup>18</sup> And the meaning "auspiciousness" cannot enter syntactically into the purport of a sentence. Besides, the word *atba*, even when used in some other sense, serves the purpose of auspiciousness from the very fact of its being heard.<sup>19</sup> If it implies the anticipation of something coming later by something broached earlier, then this does not differ in effect from causality<sup>20</sup> (i.e. sequence).

The meaning of "sequence" being taken for granted, one has to mention that earlier thing which is a prerequisite for a deliberation on Brahman, just as much as a deliberation on religious rites (or deeds) depends invariably on an earlier study of the Vedas. The mere fact of the study of the Vedas cannot be the prerequisite sought for here, since this is a common factor (in both the cases of deliberation on Brahman and religious rites).

*Opponent*: A previous understanding of the religious rites can be accepted here as the special factor (leading to the deliberation on Brahman).

*Vedāntin*: Not so, since it is logically possible for a man who has studied the Upaniṣads to undertake a deliberation on Brahman even without deliberation on the religious rites. And no sequence is meant here between these two like the procedural arrangement in the matter of taking up the heart etc., where an order is sought to be enjoined;<sup>21</sup> for there is no proof either

<sup>18</sup> *Brahma-jijñāsā* literally means a wish to know Brahman. A wish follows spontaneously from the knowledge that something is achievable by effort, and that when achieved, it will lead to desirable results. Thus a wish cannot be begun like a pot, for instance. So by implication the phrase means "a deliberation on (the nature of) Brahman"; and to complete the sentence, we have to supply "is to be undertaken". According to this interpretation also, *atba* cannot mean commencement, that idea being implied in the verb itself that has to be supplied (f. n. 26).

<sup>19</sup> Like the auspicious sound of a conch.

<sup>20</sup> *Pūrva-prākṛia-apekṣā* may mean the broaching of a later topic by presupposing something broached earlier, as for instance in enumeration. But this meaning is inadmissible, since nothing is broached before this aphorism. Or it may mean the anticipation of a later factor by the former. But in that case we come to causality.

<sup>21</sup> The word *avadāna* means the cutting off of a limb of the sacrificial

or as they suffer from the loss of those limbs, one thinks, "I myself am hale and hearty" or "I myself am injured"; thus one superimposes external characteristics on the Self. Similarly one superimposes the characteristics of the body when one has such ideas as "I am fat", "I am thin", "I am fair", "I stay", "I go", or "I scale". So also one superimposes the attributes of the senses and organs when one thinks, "I am dumb", "I have lost one eye", "I am a eunuch", "I am deaf", or "I am blind". Similarly one superimposes the attributes of the internal organ, such as desire, will, doubt, perseverance, etc. In the same way, one first superimposes the internal organ, possessed of the idea of ego, on the Self, the witness of all the manifestations of that organ; then by an opposite process, one superimposes on the internal organ etc. that Self which is opposed to the non-Self and which is the witness of everything. Thus occurs this superimposition that has neither beginning nor end but flows on eternally, that appears as the manifested universe and its apprehension, that conjures up agentship and enjoyership, and that is perceived by all persons. In order to eradicate this source of evil and in order to acquire the knowledge of the unity of the Self, is begun a discussion (after the study) of all the Upaniṣads. We shall show in this discussion about the nature of the embodied soul, that this is the purport of all the Upaniṣads.

#### TOPIC 1 : DELIBERATION ON BRAHMAN

This is the first aphorism in the scripture which deals with the ascertainment of the meaning of the Upaniṣads and which is sought to be explained by us.

अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ॥ १ ॥

अथ Thereafter अतः hence ब्रह्म-जिज्ञासा a deliberation on Brahman.

1. Hence (*is to be undertaken*) thereafter a deliberation on Brahman.

The word *atba* (thereafter) is used in the sense of "sequence", and not "commencement"; for *brahma-jijñāsā* is not a thing