

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

SUPERVISED BY

**Dr. V. C. NARAYANADAS,
PROFESSOR AND HEAD,
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CERTIFICATE

*This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled
ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
- A CRITICAL STUDY being submitted by K.S. Radhakrishnan is
the result of a bonafide research work carried out by him in
this Department under my supervision and that no part of the
thesis has been submitted for a degree in any other
University.*

Venkataramanadas
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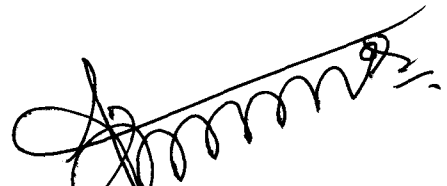
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DECLARATION

I, K.S. Radhakrishnan, hereby declare that this thesis has not been previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title or recognition.



K.S. RADHAKRISHNAN

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PREFACE

The Ramayana of Valmiki needs no introduction to the Indian reader and it is famous for its wealth of poetic imagery, loftiness of thought and purity of poetic diction. Though Ramakatha (the story of Rama) had been the part of the tradition of Indian antiquity before the creation of Ramayana by Valmiki, it is the Ramayana of Valmiki that makes Ramakatha the part and parcel of Indian Culture. The story of Rama has been sung by different poets of diverse tunes in diverse ways in all the important vernacular tongues of India. Surdas, Tulsi Das, Tukaram and Kampan are a few of the famous poets who have made the vast illiterate masses of India familiar with the immortal teachings of Ramayana. Kannasa Panikkar, Kerala Varma Raja and many others apart from Ezhuttacchan tried their level best to narrate the Ramakatha in Malayalam. But the widely accepted versions of Ramakatha in Kerala is the Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilippattu of Thunchath Ramanujan Ezhuttacchan.

Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilippattu, the most celebrated work of the legendary poet, is a parayana grandha (scripture meant for daily reading) for the average Hindu Malayalee. It occupies a unique place in the horizon of Malayalam language and literature for its literary merit. Apart from its literary excellence, it has got its own unique social, religious and philosophical reasons for its wide acceptance.

The present thesis - THE ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADYATMA RAMAYANAM - A CRITICAL STUDY is intended to explore the philosophical infrastructure of this aesthetic

creation. Since Adhyatma Ramayana is rooted and grounded in Indian aesthetic tradition, and since the aesthetically oriented works of Indian tradition cannot be understood properly without a proper understanding of the philosophical implications of Indian aesthetic tradition, the first chapter of the work is devoted to explore the aesthetic background of Adhyatma Ramayana

Accordingly, the first chapter is an exposition of the philosophy of Natya Sastra in order to establish the relation between Natya (work of art), Loka (World) and Maya and to show that the aesthetic basis of Adhyatma Ramayana is to be found in the philosophy of Natya Sastra. Natya is the fifth Veda for Bharatha the author of the work, and Ezhuttacchan finds a definite means for self realisation (Moksha) in that "Veda".

The second chapter of the thesis makes an enquiry into the epistemological background of Adhyatma Ramayana. The enquiry reveals that the epistemological infrastructure of Adhyatma Ramayana is more or less identical with the Epistemology of Advaita Vedanta.

Since there is identity between the epistemology of Adhyatma Ramayana and the Advaita Vedanta, the metaphysics revealed by such an epistemology cannot be entirely different from that of Advaita Vedanta. The third chapter is the exposition of the metaphysics of Advaita Vedanta as found in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

The fourth chapter is devoted to explore the cosmology of Adhyatma Ramayana. The cosmology as it is found in Adhyatma Ramayana is ultimately identical with the cosmology of Advaita Vedanta which is based upon a monistic interpretation of the contents of the Upanisads. It can also be seen that the Cosmological position of Adhyatma Ramayana has astounding consistency with its aesthetics, epistemology and metaphysics.

The ethical position is the subject matter of the fifth chapter. The ethical position of Adhyatma Ramayana is essentially the same as the ethics of the Advaita Vedanta. It will be seen that though it maintains identity in the usage of technical terms and in the interpretation of such terms, the clarity and the unique brevity in the exposition of Advaita ethics by Ezhuttacchan is truly remarkable. No doubt, it is one of the reasons for the popularity of the Adhyatma Ramayana as one of the outstanding work in Advaita Vedanta. The conclusion, the sixth chapter of the thesis, evaluates in brief the general significance and total consistency of the Advaita Philosophy as found in Adhyatma Ramayana.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Dr.V.C. Narayanadas, Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Calicut for the sincere and valuable help and guidance extended to me to undertake the research work.

K.S. RADHAKRISHNAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AR - Adhyatma Ramayanam, Tunchath Ezhuthacchan,
Ed: Harisarma, A.D. SPCS, Kottayam, 1980.
- Ark - Aranyakanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam
- Ayk - Ayodhyakanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam
- BK - Balakanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam
- E Up. - Eight Upanisad with the commentary of Sankaracarya,
Tran: Swami Gambhirananda, Calcutta, 1986.
- E Up.2 - Eight Upanisads with the commentary of Sankaracarya,
Tran: Swami Gambhirananda by KM, Calcutta, 1981.
- Gita - Srimad Bhagwad Gita Translation and Commentary by
KM, SPCS, Kottayam, 1982.
- Is Up. - Isa Upanisad, Commentary by Swami Mridananda Sri
Ramakrishna Asram, Trissur, 1982.
- Ka Up - Katha Upanisad Commentary by Swamy Mridananda,
Trissur, 1984.
- KIK - Kiskindakanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam
- L - Line
- Ls - Lines

- Ma Up - Mandukya karika of Gandapada and the commentary of Sankaracarya, Tran: Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Asram, Calcutta, 1989.
- Mu.Up. - Mundaka Upanisad, Commentary, Swami Mridananda, Trissur, 1979.
- N.S. - Natya sastra, Barata Muni, Tran: Narayana Pisharoti, K.P., Trissur, 1987.
- Pr.Up. - Prasna Upanisad, Commentary by Swami Mridananda, Trissur, 1981.
- Tai.Up. - Taittiriya Upanisad, Commentary by Swami Mridananda, Trissur, 1984.
- Sk. - Sunderakanda of Adhyatma Ramayana
- Sv.Up. - Svetaasvatara Upanisad Commentary by Swamy Mridananda, Trissur, 1984.
- YK - Yuddhakanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam

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Chapter I

THE AESTHETIC BACKGROUND OF ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

1.1.1 Prelude

Tunchathu Ramanujan Ezhuttacchan, generally known as Ezhuttacchan, is the legendary poet of Kerala who tried to express the Advaita Philosophy through his aesthetic utterances. Since, his works are the lingual expressions of an unconditional devotion to God tinged with the essence of Advaita Philosophy, they are read regularly at dawn and dusk in the average Hindu Malayalee families.

He has been enthroned on the saddle of Malayalam language and literature. He is admired and studied by the academics for his poetic excellence and is regarded by the laymen as their friend, guide, teacher, preacher and philosopher. It may be unbelievable but it is a usual practice that this aesthetic utterances of Ezhuttacchan is read with reverence and devotion when death robus of the pleasurable moments of human existence. The poetry of Ezhuttacchan is not a peace-time luxury or a wartime necessity but

an essential requirement for the day to day life of a religious minded average Hindu Keralite.

1.1.2 Biographical Data

Despite the monumental place he occupies in Kerala's life, very few facts are known about his life. It is generally agreed that he lived sometime between 1425 and 1625 AD.¹ But some of the historians and critics of Malayalam language and literature have differences on this general acceptance.² Like his period of existence, the name of the poet also is a matter of dispute. The generally accepted name is Ramanujan.³ Ramanujan was born in a non-Brahmin family and had his education in the traditional Gurukula style of learning. He was well versed in Vedas, Upanisads, Puranas, Sastras and Itihasas.⁴ Whatever may be the disputes prevailed about his biographical data a memorial named Thunchanparambu is preserved by the Kerala state and it is considered as his birth place.⁵

1.1.3 Works

Ezhuttacchan has introduced a new style of writing poetry into Malayalam and that is known as Kilippattu.⁶ He is primarily respected for his works like Adhyatma Ramayanam, Sri Mahabharatam and Sri Mahabhagavatam. Hari Nama Kirtanam, Uttara Ramayanam,

Irupathinalu Vrittam, Brahmapuranam, Devi Mahatmyam, Satamukha Ramayanam, Chintaratnam, Kaivalya Navaneetam are also credited to his fame.⁷ Among them Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilippattu is unanimously attributed to Ezhuttacchan by all critics and historians of Malayalam Language and literature.⁸

1.1.4 Adhyatma Ramayana

Adhyatma Ramayana is the transcreation of the work of that name in Sanskrit. Critics and historians do admit that this work is more than the translation of the Sanskrit version.⁹ It is divided into six Kandas or sections. These are the Balakanda, the Ayodhyakanda, the Aranyakanda, the Kiskinda Kanda, the Sundarakanda and the Yuddhakanda. The six Kandas in toto are again divided into 128 sub sections. The Balakanda contains 16 sub-sections, the Ayodhyakanda 21, the Aranyakanda 22, the Kiskindakanda 18, the Sundarakanda 13 and the Yuddhakanda 38 sub-sections.

These 128 sub sections expose the spatio-temporal physical structure and the supra-spatial and the supra-temporal spiritual structure of the story of Rama, the embodiment of dharma.¹⁰ Among them eight sub-sections are exclusively meant for the stutis¹¹ (praises) and four are devoted to upadesas (instructions). Sub-sections 9 and 14 in Balakanda are the stutis of Kausalya and

Ahalya respectively. Agastya, Jatayu, Kadamba adore Sri Rama in sub-sections 7, 19 and 20 of Aranyakanda respectively. Kiskindakanda contains Swayamprabhastuti in sub-section 15. Naradastuti appears in sub-section 7 and Aditya Stuti is seen in sub-section 8 of Yuddhakanda.

1.1.5 Stuti and Upadesa

Four sub-sections which contain upadesa state the philosophical problem of advaita philosophy in a technical manner. The first such upadesa is given by Sita to Hanuman in the fourth sub-section of Balakanda. Lakshmana undergoes two such courses of advices in the sub-section 5 of Ayodhyakanda and the sub-section 10 of Aranyakanda. The fourth one is given to Thara in the sub-section six of Kiskindakanda and it is given by Rama himself.

These upadesas contain the specific answers to the questions relating to the metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, cosmological and aesthetic aspects of Advaita philosophy. The Stutis use the technical terms of advaita philosophy in the adoration of the feet of Rama. In a sense the advaita philosophy is found in all the expressions of the poet in the Adhyatma Ramayana. So, any part of the work is enough to explain the philosophical aspect. But the system of Advaita philosophy as such is more explicitly expressed in the upadesas and stutis in a systematic manner. So the present

study concentrates more on the upadesas and stutis in order to explain the Advaita system as found in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

1.2.1 Bharata and Natyasastra

Aesthetically oriented works of Indian tradition cannot be understood properly without understanding the philosophical infrastructure of the Indian aesthetic tradition. The vast tradition of Indian aesthetics has been systematised by Bharata Muni in his Natyasastra.¹² Bharata Muni identifies the world which the Advaita Philosophy calls as Maya with Natya.

As in the case of Maya, the Natya also performs the dual function of concealment and projection. Maya is to be transcended to attain moksa (liberation) in Advaita Philosophy and Natya is to be transcended to appreciate Rasa (essence) in Natya Sastra. Ezhuttacchan's Adhyatma Ramayana is deeply rooted in and grounded on the aesthetic tradition of Natya Sastra. Bharata declares that the Natya is the fifth veda which is meant for the ignorant people who are not competent to learn the vedas in order to attain moksa.¹³ Ezhuttacchan also devotes his own expressions of Natya (Adhyatma Ramayanam) to the ignorant in order to enable them to cross over the ocean of sansara to attain moksa.¹⁴

So, the analysis of the aesthetic back-ground of Adhyatma Ramayana which is essential to expose its philosophical position

cannot be done properly without rendering a proper analysis of Natya sastra. Moreover such an analysis can provide tools for the analysis of the text. The tools of analysis are necessary to expose the epistemology, metaphysics, cosmology, ethics and finally the total system of philosophy itself. So, the present study has to start with the analysis of Natya Sastra.

Since the poetic utterance of Ezhuttacchan is based on the essence of Indian aesthetic tradition, it is highly relevant to expose the philosophic background of Natya Sastra as a prelude to the present study. Moreover such an exposition will provide the tools to analyse the text Adhyatma Ramayanam.¹⁵

1.2.2 Definition of Natya

Bharata defines Natya precisely as Loka Vrithyanukaranam.¹⁵ (The work of art is the expression of the order of spatio-temporal manifestations). The definition contains four terms. They are: (a) Loka (b) Vrithy (c) Anukarana and (d) Natyam. Since these terms are used in technical sense, our first attempt is to bring out the specific contextual meaning of them.

1.2.3 Loka

The literal sense of the word is world. Here, it means spatio-temporal manifestations. It is not confined to human beings

alone, but includes all living and non-living entities. Since it includes every spatio-temporal manifestation, it denotes the present, past and future. So, Loka signifies both actuality and potentiality. It foresees innumerable possibilities of spatio-temporal manifestations.

1.2.4 Vrithy

The Vrithy is related to Loka. In ordinary language Vrithy means function. So, here it means the functions of Loka. It cannot be an externally imposed function. Since we are not aware of anything other than the Loka, the functions also must be those which are inherent in Loka. The spatio-temporal manifestation is not a static entity because, if it is stationary, the time factor cannot be explained. So the Loka which is ever active in its functions is the concern here.

It is a fact that vrithy is related to the activity of a particular unit of spatio-temporal manifestation. But the activity itself is not vrithy. Activity found in the various units of spatio-temporal manifestation may be different. But the principle which governs all the activities must be identical. The principle which governs the activity means the principle which governs the structural and functional order of spatio-temporal manifestations, and it is this principle which is referred to in Bharata's definition.

1.2.5 Anukarana

The term is coined by adding the prefix anu with karana. The prefix anu means to follow and karana means function. So, literally anukarana means to follow function. Here it denotes to follow the function of not the loka but the lokavrithy. As we have already seen, the lokavrity is different from loka, anukarana should not be understood as imitation. A unit of loka may be imitated, but, the principle which is present in such a unit cannot be imitated.

Since lokavrithy is the principle of structural and functional order of loka. Imitation of lokavrithy is an impossible task. Since both the subject and object of aesthetic experience are the different manifestations of loka, the Vrithies which are present in the subject and object are identical. So, the subject of experience need not imitate the vrithy because the vrithy that is present in the object is identical with the vrithy that is present in the subject. This can be illustrated with an example of the law of gravitation and an apple. Since the law of gravitation is present in every unit of spatio-temporal manifestation, the scientist who observes an apple and all the apples to be observed have the identical law in them. The scientist never imitates the law of gravitation but, he realises the identical nature of the natural law.

Anukarana, therefore means the experience of the principle of the structural and functional order of spatio-temporal manifestation. It is a process of realisation of the non-dual principle that is present in both the subject and the object of aesthetic experience. The term aesthetic experience stands for the three phases of the aesthetic phenomenon, viz., the Aesthetic experience, aesthetic expression and aesthetic appreciation. They cannot be kept in water-tight compartments. They are the integrated and interdependent part of the one and the same experience.

1.2.6 Natya

Literally Natya is the expression of the existence of something that is not actually existing at a particular space and time. It has to serve two functions: (i) To conceal what is present at a particular space time limitation; (ii) To project something that is not there at that time. It indicates both the presence and absence of something. It is both positive and negative. It embraces both reality and unreality. It is real at one level of experience and unreal at another level. This can be illustrated with an example of an actor who acts on the stage. An actor, X, acts the role of Macbeth. The actor X is prior to the beginning and remains even after the completion of the play. At the time of acting it is X who conceals his personal characteristics and projects the characteristics of Macbeth.

Here the actor X never becomes Macbeth on the stage. There is no transformation of his personality. Instead, the actor conceals his own reality and projects the unreality. This dual functioning is the essential aspect of Natya. Since Natya is the anukarana of lokavrithy, its very essence is to be found in the structural and functional order of the spatio-temporal manifestations through its dual function of concealment and projection.

1.3.1 Natya and the Universe

If Natya is lokavrithyanukarana, what is its relation to the loka? In other words what is the relation between the actual world and Natya? Bharata himself gives the answer. He says" "Lokasya Caritam Natyam."¹⁶ (Work of art is the recorded expression of the order of the momentum of the universe). Natyam is the Carita of loka. The literal meaning of caritam is history. Here it means the order of the functioning of loka. The order of functioning of loka itself is Natya that is, there is identity between Natya and Loka.

Since Natya has got dual functions to be served and since the universe itself is a Natya, the universe also has the dual functions of projecting the unreal and concealing the real. The projection of the unreal and the concealment of the real are considered as the functions of Maya by Advaidins. The well known

rope-snake experience is the best example. What is real at one level of experience need not be real at another level of experience.

If Natya is the caritam of Loka the universe itself is a work of art. There cannot be any difference between the universe and the work of art because the principle of the structural and functional order of spatio-temporal manifestation must be identical both in the universe and in a work of art. In this sense, there is identity between Natya and Loka.

1.3.2 The aim of Natya

In the first chapter of his work, Bharata declares the aim of the creation of Natya and Natya Veda. There was no need of Natya in Kritayuga because that age was morally perfect. But, with the beginning of Tretayuga the moral equilibrium was disturbed due to the selfishness of man. Man was totally under the control of kama and dharma was not observed. The social justice also was not preserved because, the members of the society refused to observe Svadharmā.¹⁷ At this stage the Brahma, the Supreme creator, created the Natya Veda on request of the Devas. He said that Natya is the fifth Veda and it is meant to teach the truth to all, irrespective of Varnas.¹⁸

1.3.3 The Vedas

The Vedas are pramanas for the orthodox systems of Indian thought. Pramana means the instrument of knowledge, that is, the instrument by which we may be able to measure out something accurately. The Nyaya system of thought, which devotes its total attention to explore the scope and limit of study of pramanas admits four pramanas. They are the Pratyaksha, Anumana, Upamana and Sabda.¹⁹ There are other two pramanas - Arthapathy and Anupalabdhy - but they have little importance.

The Nyaya, which is also known as Pramana Sastra considers sabda or Veda as an important pramana. All the orthodox systems including Vedanta give very much importance to Sabda to attain the knowledge of the ultimate reality.

The pramanas are used to measure out our experience. The experience may be subtle at the micro and macro levels. When it becomes more subtle the instrument of measurement also must be more delicate. Sabda is never meant for the ordinary experience where Pratyaksa, Anumana etc. are enough. Sabda is meant for the measurement of the most subtle forms of experiences.

The vedas are the compendium of aphorisms uttered by aptas.²⁰ Aptas are reliable persons and they are free from likes and

dislikes of human mind. While discussing the characteristic features of Sthita pranja, Gita portrays him as a fellow who is not affected by painful and pleasurable experiences and who is not inflicted by any of the modes of selfishness of human mind.²¹ The utterances of such a man will be reliable. These compendium of aphorisms are meant for the attainment of moksha. Vedanta recognises the prime importance of Veda as a pramana. The aim of Veda is the attainment of moksha through the practice of dharma.

1.3.4 Adhikari

A competent fellow to learn the Vedas is known as Adhikari. All are not competent to learn the Vedas and without learning the Vedas, moksha is not possible. But, all must get a chance to attain moksha so that they may be able to overcome the sorrow, suffering and miseries of human existence. It is for this purpose that the fifth Veda which never insists on any type of discrimination is created.

Bharata describes: It is for the attainment of Purusarthas (the ultimate aims of existence). It is sweet and desirable; it is simple and perceivable; it has the ability to show the future world all the possible functions of the universe and it is created by taking the essence of all the four Vedas.²²

There is no obscurity in the manifesto. It is meant for all including the Sudras and others who are not competent to attain moksha through the proper study of the Vedas. The definite purpose of the creation of Natya is clearly reminded again in the concluding portions of the first chapter of Natya sastra. It is for the ignorant to enable him to attain wisdom.²³

1.4.1 Natya, the Aesthetic Unit

The term Natya represents the three stages of aesthetics, namely the aesthetic experience, expression and appreciation. The three faculties cannot be separated and kept in water tight compartments. Every faculty of aesthetics is meant to serve as a means for the attainment of moksha. Since Natya is the fifth veda, like jnana (wisdom), karma (action) and Bhakti (devotion). Lokavrithyanukaranam' also is a medium to attain moksha.

1.4.2 Aesthetic Experience

The loka is not the subject matter of aesthetic experience because the unit of aesthetic experience is the Vrithi of loka. The loka or the spatio-temporal manifestation is only a sign which signifies the vrithi or the principle of the structural and functional order of the spatio-temporal manifestations. The sign should not be misperceived or misconceived for the signified. But since the sign has a definite purpose, we cannot ignore it.

Then, what is the signified? The technical term to the signified is rasa (aesthetic essence). Rasa is something which cannot be either explained by words or approached by mind. It can only be suggested by words and mind. Such suggestions can be used as ladders to reach the experience of rasa, and the rasa is the essence of lokavrithy.

Taitheriyopanisad terms the Brahman experience as Rasa and it says that Brahman is Rasa itself.²⁴ Since Natya Veda is created for the attainment of moksha and since the Natya is the anukarana of lokavrithy, rasa must be Brahman himself. So, the aim of aesthetic experience is the realisation of Brahman.

The experience of rasa is not a direct one. There may be extra-ordinary experts who may be able to experience rasa without the upadhi (condition) of loka. Since Natya is never meant for such exceptionals we cannot take them into consideration. Our experience begins with loka and not with lokavrithy. It begins with perception and the subject matter of the perception is loka. The sure and certain knowlede acquired through the contact of sense organs with external objects is called perception.²⁵ This belief is common to all systems and it is technically called loukika pratyaksha (worldly perception). What is perceived here is only the loka.

1.4.3 Rasa, the Aim:

Since Natya is not the anukarana of loka as such, we cannot satisfy with the perception of loka. What is to be perceived is not the loka but the lokavrithy. Since lokavrithy is not loukika (empirical), we have to transcend the boundaries of loukika pratyaksa. It is only in aloukika pratyaksa (trans-empirical perception) the vrithy is perceived because vrithy is aloukika.

So, the subject matter of aesthetic experience is not the spatio-temporal manifestations but the principle of the order of the spatio-temporal manifestations. The spatio-temporal manifestation is a sign and the signified is the principle of the structural and functional order of the spatio-temporal manifestation. So every unit of spatio-temporal manifestation can be instrumental for the experience of rasa. The spatio-temporal manifestation is only a means to experience vrithy and vrithy is only a means to experience Rasa.

1.4.4 Aesthetic Expression

The next stage of Natya is aesthetic expression. What is to be expressed is a vital question and the answer is that the essence of experience is to be expressed. The aim of aesthetic expression, as in the case of aesthetic experience, is the expression of

lokavrithy. Here again, the loka can be a medium of expression. But the aim of aesthetic expression is not the loka but the vrithy.

1.4.5 Medium of Expression

The medium of expression also is the loka. As we have used the loka to experience the essence of loka, here also, we have to adopt the same method. Thus, the loukika (empirical) medium of expression has to be used to express the essence of experience and the expressed form of experience is called language.

Then the problem of aesthetic expression leads us to the problem of language. The medium is common to all. The layman and a genius have to use the same medium. The medium, in its ordinary level is able to express only an ordinary range of experience. When the experience becomes more subtle the medium also has to be sharpened. The media of expression may be changing from person to person. They may be changing in accordance with the change of space-time limitations. Different media may be used to express the same experience. But whatever may be the changes of media the problem of media never changes.

1.4.6 Language and its aim

The aim of expression of experience is communication. In a sense it is the intrinsic aim of expression. At this stage language

becomes an activity. Activity involves change and language then becomes a tool. It is a tool for the expression of experience. So language becomes a product and a process that is, a tool and the method of operation of the tool.

The language which is limited by space and time, is useful only to express the spatio-temporal manifestations. The problem of expression becomes more complicated when experience becomes more subtle and when it transcends the limitations of space and time. At this stage language becomes inefficient to express the experience. This has to be overcome by every one who explores the depths of experience. The man of aesthetic experience also has to face the same problem since his mission is the expression of the principle of the structural and functional order of the spatio-temporal manifestations in order to suggest the essence of such an order.

1.4.7 Orders of Language

He has overcome this limitation by creating a new order of language. There can be at least three orders of language. They are the grammatical order, the logical order and the aesthetic order. The grammatical order is the primary one and it is universal. This order of language is directly related to the primary laws of space and time. The violation of this order causes obscurity.

The logical order is an internal order. It is this order which gives consistency to the ideas compiled by the grammatical order. But all the rules of the grammatical order need not be preserved in the second order. The grammatical order of language is related to the external structure of the percepts while the logical order is related to the internal structure of the concepts. If the rules related to the logical order is violated, the language system will become absurd even if the grammatical order is preserved. These two orders of language can express the experience limited by time and space.²⁶

1.4.8 Language as a Ladder

The different orders of language are used to attain clarity of expression. As Wittgenstein says: "From the outward form of clothing it is impossible to infer the form of thought beneath it, because the outward form of clothing is not designed to reveal the form of the body, but for an entirely different purpose."²⁷ Though language mirrors the world, it mirrors not the whole world. This may be the reason to say that "Language is so subtle and complicated an instrument that we often lose sight of the multiplicity of its uses."²⁸ The two orders of language are able to mirror only the outward aspects of the world. This outward form of clothing has to be removed off. The creation of a new order of language is

essential to overcome the difficulty, and aesthetic order of language serves this purpose. I.M. Gopi also recognises different orders of use of language, when he discusses the problem of language and he admits that the expressive aspect of aesthetic use as a method to overcome the limitation of the other orders of language.²⁹

But, even in the expressive and informative functions, the language may not be clear and certain because of the inherent ambiguity. This may be the reason why Wittgenstein defined philosophy as a "battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language,"³⁰ and advised that in the use of language one might distinguish between surface grammar from depth grammar.³¹ At the same time he declares that "the limit of my language means the limit of my world."³²

These comments have been mentioned here to show that the first two orders of language prove themselves to be incapable of showing the exact nature of the world about which we talk. Wittgenstein himself recognises two types of language systems. They are the ordinary language and formal language. He also recognised the insufficiency and inefficiency of these language systems. By declaring the limitations of language he says:

"My proposition serves as elucidation in the following way. Any one who understands me eventually recognises them as nonsensical, when he

has used them as steps to climb up beyond them (He must so to speak throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it) He must transcend them and then he will see the world aright".³³

1.5.1 Aesthetic Order

Yes, language can be used as a ladder to overcome its own limitations. But, the question is how it can be used as an effective ladder? Natya Sastra answers the question by showing it is possible by creating an aesthetic order of language. The aesthetic order of language is created by using symbols, images and myths. The images and myths are created by using ordinary words. Such words in turn represent experience of ordinary kind.

The aesthetic order of language serves as a bridge between two levels of experience. One, the empirical ordinary level of experience which can be expressed by either of the first two orders of language or by both. The transcendental level of experience cannot be touched by these orders of language but it can be suggested by the third order of language.

The aesthetic order of language embraces the other two orders of language because it is formed with the help of signs and symbols used in the other two orders of language. But such orders

need not be explicitly exhibited. They are inherent in the aesthetic order, hence, it cannot be non-grammatical and illogical. But it is a-grammatical and a-logical because it deals with the area of experience where grammar and logic cannot act.

1.5.2 Vakroky

The aesthetic order of language is technically termed as Vakroky by an Indian aesthetician, Kuntaka.³⁴ He argued that the soul or the essence of every creative expression is vakroky. Wherever experience crosses over the limitation of time and space or wherever experience becomes more subtle and unique, the expression of such experience will be vakroky. The problem of inefficiency and insufficiency of language is an all-time problem of every genius irrespective of his field of study.

1.5.3 Experience as a Unit

But we cannot give up the use of language because, it is the only means of aesthetic expression and communication and it cannot be free from emperical references. Such emperical references can be seen in Vakrokti also. But vakrokti, which is formed by using symbols, images, and myths has got a lower level of reference at one hand and has the power to suggest a higher level of experience on the other hand.

Anything and everything can be used as an image or a symbol. Single letters, single words or a group of words can function as images and symbols. But all such images and symbols must have specific functions to be served in vakrokty. As we have already mentioned, the symbols and images have to connect different orders of experiences. They connect macro and micro, spatio-temporal, supra-spatial and supra-temporal experiences together. All such experiences function as a unit when they are expressed by symbols, images and myths. In a sense symbols and images represent a universe of experience.

1.5.4 Myth and Aesthetic Order

Myths are the hereditary property of a society. Like the physical continuity of a land, its myths also continue. Every society has its own myths. Every member of such a society shares the heredity of every myth which is inherited by his society. The tradition of both the individual and the society has got connections with the inherited myths. Myths always have a spatio-temporal reference related to certain individuals or incidents of the past. But myth appears not as a dead experience but as a living one. When it becomes a living experience, it becomes the part of the present and it becomes the part of individual life. Since it is a present experience, paradoxically, as Eliot said, "it cannot be inherited and if you want you must obtain it by great labour."³⁵

A genius in any field uses myth as a medium to express his ineffable experience. Sophocles, the Greek dramatist, has used a myth of Oedipus to express his experience of the tension created by the clash between order and chaos.³⁶ Certain experiences cannot be expressed in ordinary language and in such contexts myth itself functions as another order of language. When we use a myth, the first requirement is that it must be known to all concerned in a society. At least one level of its meaning must be known to all. The historical facticity is not something of serious concern to a genius who uses the myth. The historical position of a Rama or an Oedipus is quite unimportant for the one who uses the myth to express his unique experience. For him, the myth is only a tool to express his own inexplicable experiences.

1.5.5 Meaning of Vakrokty is Contextual

Let us sum up the arguments for further discussion:

- (1) Vakrokty is an order of language created by a genius by using images, myths and symbols.
- (2) Images, myths and symbols have many realms of meanings.
- (3) This is the method by which a genius is able to cross over the limitation of ordinary language. Then the question which arises is how is it possible to fix the level of meaning of images, myths and symbols? In other words what is the

methodology by which we may be able to know in what sense they have been used?

A number of answers are possible to this question. There are many theories of meanings and such theories can be grouped into three³⁷ and they are called referential, ideational and behavioural theories of meaning. The referential theory stresses that a meaningful expression should refer to something and the meaning is different from the reference. The same referent may be having different meanings, hence, the meaning is contextual.

1.5.6 Fixation of the Context

The question, then is how can we know the context. If we know the context we can fix the meaning of symbols, images and myths. In the ordinary experience, context can be perceived and there is no need of special references. But, in extraordinary experiences the context has to be expressed unambiguously. Otherwise it won't be possible to know in what sense a word or symbol has been used. It is for this purpose that Sciences use well defined terms. Thus the term 'motion' has been used in physics in a special sense. The same term may be used in other sciences in a different sense and the sense in which a term is used would be defined properly prior to its use in a particular context.

In the West, science alone unambiguously follows this method. In literature and philosophy, it is left to the readers to fix the context. Hence both may become a type of bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language. But, in India, every system of study has to proclaim its purpose first. All disciplines such as science, philosophy and literature, follow this method. The tatparya or laksya (purpose) of study should be explained prior to the beginning of the study. Bharata also follows the traditional Indian methodology in the first chapter of his Natya Sastra and that has already been referred to.

In Kavya (Poetry) the purpose and context are encased on the fore-front of the kavya itself. The explicit statement of the implicit purpose for which and the context in which a kavya is written is technically known as kavyalakshya (the aim of aesthetic expression). Every major and serious poet of Indian tradition declares the Kavyalakshya. The kavyalakshya is the end towards which the whole kavya is directed. The symbols, images and myths used in a particular kavya should be understood within the context of that end itself. A reader has no right to interpret a particular image outside the declared context.

1.5.7 Context determines perception

Since language mirrors reality, a word, an image or a symbol cannot be understood in isolation. It will always be

associated with a state of affairs and in a states of affair objects fit into one another.³⁸ We cannot take into consideration all states of affairs and every aspect of a single state of affair. Only the essential aspect of a state of affair or the part of a state of affair in relation to a context in which it is used is considered.

Since we have to take the essential aspect of a given state of affair, we have to exercise our power of discrimination (Vivekajnana). That is, we have to take up something and give up something of a given states of affair. It is the kavyalakshya which governs the process of taking up and giving up. Here, it is clear that, it is the lakshya which governs the vivekajnana. It needs no further explanation because it is a proven psychological fact that it is the intention of a perceiver which determines what is to be seen and what is not to be seen. Specifically this is the difference between observation and perception. Perception becomes observation when it is determined by a definite purpose.

1.6.1 The process of Analysis

The process of taking up and giving up has got three stages, according to the Indian system of analysis. The first stage is called Jahallakshana (the process of giving up). Jahad means to give up, that is, to give up the non-essentials of a given context in accordance with the lakshya. It is the negative aspect which gives

a command that everything which can be given up should be given up. But this command has got a positive side which says that what is to be taken up should be the minimum.

The second stage clarifies and stresses that the essentials should not be given up. That is why it is the Ajahallakshana (the process of taking up). This term is coined by pre-fixing a negative sign to jahad which means not to give up. This negative pre-fix gives a positive warning that in the process of giving up, we should not abandon the whole in toto. Because the aim is not a total negation. Then, the aim is not a total negation or the total non-negation but to find what is the essential which should be taken up.

The Jahallajahallakshana (the process of comparison between what is to be take up and is to be given up) is the third stage and it is not the repetition of the first two stages. It is a process of comparison between the given up and the taken up. It is a process of evaluation of the accepted and the rejected. The positive and negative aspects are compared and evaluated to negate the non-essentials in order to affirm the essential. What is affirmed gets more certainty and clarity at the end of this process.

1.6.2 Kavyalakshya

Since language is the expressed form of experience, the three stages must be observed at the level of experience also. So

kavyalakshya is really the declaration of the governing rules of the observation of the author himself. The rules which governed him at the time of experience is expressed as Kavyalakshya. What is to be observed is as important as what is to be expressed.

If observation should be governed and directed by the aim of observation, what is to be observed is the question. This has been clearly illustrated by Vyasa in his Sri Mahabharata.³⁹ Dhrona, the celebrated teacher of Pandavas and kauravas, decided to conduct an examination to test the receptive capacity of his students, after the completion of their training in art, science and philosophy of warfare (The Dhanurveda). The test was very simple. A small artificial bird in a cage was kept at the topmost branch of a big tree. The candidates were to cut the throat of the bird with an arrow from a specific distance. Prior to the practical test there was a viva-voce. In the oral test he asked his students what they had seen. Naturally students answered differently.

Arjuna alone answered that he had seen only the throat of the bird. The aim of observation was not the enjoyment of natural beauty but to observe the aim of his arrow. Here the object is presented in a background. The student is not expected to look at the background, not because they are unimportant or useless but because they are not relevant to the context. So what is to be seen should be determined by the aim of perception. It is this aim of

perception that is to be encarved as kavyalakshya. It is this kavyalakshya which determines what is to be taken and what is to be given up in interpretation.

1.6.3 The three stages of interpretation

The expressed form of experience has to be interpreted in order to see, to know and to go beyond seeing and knowing. Each word, symbol, image and myth should be interpreted at three levels of experience; at the level of perception, inference and at the level where perception and inference do not reach. These three levels are technically called as abhidha (empirical), lakshana (inferred), vyanjana (suggested).

Abhidha is the first level of experience. So, our search to find out meaning also should begin with abhidha. At this level, components of language denotes something which can be experienced with the help of sense organs. Abhidha stresses the empirical context of language and warns that the empirical context should not be neglected. Since the levels of experience start with empirical objects, the interpretation of meaning also must find its starting point in the empirical context. The point we have to note here is that what is to be seen and not to be seen is determined by Kavyalakshya and this should be the guiding principle at the other two levels also.

The second level of interpretation is Lakshana Vyapara. It is the inferred sense of what is perceived. At the abhidha level only the external perceptual order is observed. The internal logical order based on the abhidha is inferred at the Lakshana level. The systematisation of the spatio-temporal experience is completed only at this level. But the spatio-temporal order is not complete and which transcends that level. Hence it has to be overcome.

The Vyanjana level of interpretation is meant for that purpose. At this level language becomes a ladder. It is the level of experience which cannot be either approached by the sense organs or interpreted by the mind. Hence, it cannot be expressed through words. It has to be enjoyed and Vyanjana suggests level of enjoyment.

Vyanjana suggests a higher level of experience and Abhidha and lakshana are only instrumental to reach that level. The empirical experience and the intellectual contemplation are only the stepping stones to the higher level. Then, the question is whether we are in a position to experience the higher level without the stepping stones. The answer needs a little explanation. Since both the subject and object of experience are within the span of space and time, it is not possible to ignore the space-time limitations. No

experience is possible without the medium of spatio-temporal manifestations. But the medium should not be misperceived or misconceived as the end towards which the medium is directed.

1.6.4 Aesthetic Appreciation

If the spatio-temporal manifestation is a medium to experience the essence, and if the language is a medium to express the essence of our experience, there cannot be any doubt about what is to be appreciated. It is the essence which has to be appreciated. The aim of aesthetic experience, expression and appreciation is one and the same. The aim is resanubhuti, the enjoyment of Rasa. How rasa can be identified? Bharata gives the answer: Tatra vibhavanubhavasancari samyogadrasa nispathy.⁴⁰

Rasa emerges from the proper combination of Vibhava (the beginning of a process), Anubhava (the end of a process) and Sancaribhava (the continuity of a process). This is the verbatim translation of the sutra. But the meaning of nispathy should not be understood as emergency because the communion of Vibhava anubhava and sancaribhava is not the cause of Rasa. Instead, Rasa itself is the essence of vibhava, anubhava and sancaribhava. The essence cannot be effect alone but it is seen in the cause also, and it is more than the cause and effect.

Vibhava, anubhava and sancaribhava are related to loka since Natya is loka vrithyanukarana. Vrithy means the principle of structural and functional order. Vibhava, anubhava and sancari samyoga is the modus operandi of the Vrithy. The method of operation of loka vrithy is not caused by rasa. But it can suggest the presence of rasa.

1.6.5 Rasa: not within space-time limitation

The loka as we have seen is a spatio-temporal manifestation. Rasa is not a spatio-temporal manifestation and as Abhinavagupta says it cannot be limited by space and time.⁴¹ The spatio-temporal method of operation cannot be applied on something which is not limited by space and time. Anything that observes the vibhava, anubhava and sancaribhava is only a ladder which can be used to reach rasa and after that the ladder has to be left away. But prior to that we have to know how the ladder functions. At the stage of aesthetic experience, the loka becomes the ladder to experience the vrithy and vrithy becomes the ladder to experience the Rasa. At the stage of aesthetic expression language becomes a ladder and we have to know the modus operandi of the ladder. At the stage of aesthetic appreciation the work of art or Natya becomes a ladder to reach Rasa. So the Rasa that is enjoyed at the three levels is identical.

1.6.6 Method of operation of lokavritthy

We have to know the modus operandi of a tool before using it. Vibhava is the beginning and anubhava is the end and the sancaribhava is the middle. Bharata says that vibhava is the cause, anubhava the effect and sancaribhava the process. Since vibhava, anubhava etc. are derived from nature, they are the parts of day to day life. So they need not be explained or elaborated.⁴²

Vibhava is not a beginning from void and thinking of anything out of void is a logical contradiction. So the world is, that is the case.⁴³ Then, what happens is only a form of change, a type of association and dissociation. So vibhava includes both the presence of one bhava on the one hand and the absence of another bhava on the other hand. A new bhava occurs in the absence of a previous one. When something becomes a cause for some other thing it is dissociated from a previous state of affair and gets associated with a new one. In every association there is dissociation, and in every dissociation there is association.

In this sense vibhava is the beginning of a process. The process has to meet its own end. The end of the process is anubhava. Literally anubhava means the bhava which follows vibhava. Since vibhava is the cause, anubhava is the effect and the

effect is inherent in the cause. In terms of temporal sequence vibhava is prior to anubhava. The past and future need not be perceived at a glance.

The knowledge of the beginning and the end emerges with the middle. Since vibhava, anubhava and sancari function as a unit, our experience of vibhava and anubhava begins with sancaribhava. That which leads to something is the literal meaning of sancari. Here it leads to Rasa. Something which is capable to lead us to Rasa is Sancaribhava.⁴⁴ Sancari represents the real process of vibhava and anubhava. It is the present which connects the past and the future.

1.7.1 The sankhya doctrine of evolution: An Illustration

The process is same in every spatio-temporal manifestation. The vibhava-anubhava sancarisamyoga has been clearly illustrated in a wide canvas by the Sankhya system of Indian thought. According to the doctrine of evolution of Sankhya, Prakrti is the harmony of Satva, Rajas and Tamas. From prakrti there emerges Mahat and from Mahat, Ahankara emerges. Five subtle elements emerges from ahankara and from ahankara emerges both sensory and motor organs. The five gross elements also emerge from the five subtle elements.⁴⁵ This is the first stage of vibhava because prior to this it was the moola- prakriti (Prakrti in its unevolved form). The so called

objects of our experience represent the secondary stage of evolution. What actually presented is the secondary stage and the primary stage is inferred from the secondary stage.⁴⁶ The world as it is presented before us is the sancari bhava and the beginning and the end are inferred from them on the basis of the doctrine that something never emerges from nothing.⁴⁷

The moola prakrti (prime matter) passes through the different stages of evolution and reaches again to the moola prakrti. Here the vibhava which is the beginning of the process and it passes through the sancaribhava and reaches to anubhava. Vibhava and anubhava are inferred from the sancari. But in both cases the process as a unit is the subject of concern. That is why it is the communion of vibhava, anubhava and sancari that leads us to Rasa.

1.7.2 The view of Advaita Vedanta

The aim of Advaita Vedanta is the attainment of moksha. Since the subject who is expected to attain moksha is the part of loka or the spatio-temporal manifestation, the loka has to be pragmatically utilised by the subject for the attainment of moksha. Loka is only an upadhi for the attainment of moksha. According to Advaita Vedanta the loka can be experienced at three levels, the Prathibhasika or the phenomenal level, Vyavaharika or the empirical level, paramarthika or the transcendental level. This shows the fact

that experience at every level is admitted by the Advaita Philosophy and it insists that every level of experience can be utilised to attain the highest end of life, the moksha.

Moksha is not an alienated position of a mumuksu (the person who urges 'moksha'). But it is a more authentic and meaningful experience of the loka. This experience of loka begins with the phenomenal level and reaches the paramarthika level. This is not the process of the negation of the loka, but, it is the process of an enquiry to find out the essence of loka. The 'neti', 'neti' is of course applicable to the first two levels of loka, but these two levels are relatively negated in the light of the absolute reality of the third level.

The Gita compares the loka with a tree, having its roots above. It is an artificial image.⁴⁸ This image is used to express the ontological status of loka. Like this, the everchanging loka is baseless. The tree has got basis only when it is rooted in the earth. When it is uprooted it loses the ground upon which it can stand on. Like this the loka which can be experienced with the sense organs and mind has no basis. Anything which is not having basis cannot be depended on. The baseless and non-dependable loka is only an upadhi to experience the Rasa, the ultimate reality.

1.7.3 Comparison

Since there is inner identity between the basic concepts of Natya Sastra and Advaita Philosophy, we may enumerate some of the significant resemblances between them.

1. At the level of the world:

The world which can be experienced by the sense organs and mind is technically termed as Natya in Natya Sastra while that is termed as Maya in Advaita vedanta. The method of operation of both the maya and natya are identical. Both the Natya and the Maya function in a dual way, of concealing the real and projecting the unreal.

2. At the level of reality:

The reality to be experienced is Rasa in Natya Sastra and Brahman in Advaita philosophy. The positive and negative characteristics of both of them are identical.

3. The Mode of operation:

The method of operation is also identical. The Natya Sastra uses the Natya to cross over the limitations of Natya while the Advaita uses Maya to reach a similar destination.

4. Identity in aim:

The aim of both the experience of Natya and Maya is moksha and moksha is nothing but the realisation of truth itself. That truth is Brahman in Advaita Philosophy and Rasa in Natya Sastra.

This chapter is intended to show that Ezhuttacchan has used the aesthetics of Natya Sastra in his exposition of Advaita Philosophy in the Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilippattu. It is for this purpose that an exposition of the inner relation between the Natya Sastra of Bharata Muni and the philosophy of Ezhuttacchan has been undertaken.

Since there is identity between Natya and Loka (world) and since both Natya and Loka operate on the basis of a dual functioning of concealment and projection, then both the Natya and the Loka can be utilised to cross over their inherent limitations with an aim to attain moksha. The Natya Sastra says that the aesthetic utterances must be used to attain moksha and it considers Natya as the fifth Veda. Ezhuttacchan, intends his fifth Veda to be used to attain moksha. The attainment of moksha is identical with the experience of Rasa because Rasa is identical with Brahman.

Since the Kavyalaksya of Ezhuttacchan's Adhyatma Ramayana is the attainment of moksha, he explains his methodology of

aesthetic expression in the beginning of the Balakanda itself.⁴⁹ He says that his aim is not the exposition of the story of Rama but to explain the principle of Rama. So it is reminded that every syllable of this text should be interpreted only on the basis of this Kavyalaksya. This being the aesthetic infrastructure of Ramayana, we may now enter into a discussion about its epistemology in the next chapter.

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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Chapter - II

EPISTEMOLOGY

2.1.1 Experience is the Unit

The epistemology of Advaita Vedanta begins with experience and ends in experience. What is primary for the system is not the concept of the nature and criterion of truth or error or the use of truth, but the experience itself. The instruments to operate to accumulate knowledge become important only in the context of experience. All the instruments of knowledge are used only to analyse experience, and Advaita Vedanta never admits an instrument that is capable to give knowledge apart from experience.

The present chapter is designed to illustrate and establish how the epistemological position of Advaita Philosophy has been explained in Ezhuttacchan's Adhyatma Ramayana. To the question, why the work is titled as Adhyatma Ramayana, Ezhuttacchan gives the answer that "it is named as Adhyatma Ramayana because those who read it must be able to attain atmajnana".¹ This answer reveals

the aim of Adhyatma Ramayana. Then the question as to how atmajnana can be attained, the answer is given through the 15,767 lines of this work. These lines define, explain and illustrate the answer in an elaborate manner.

2.1.2 Bhakty

Since the aim of Ezhuttacchan is to give atmajnana, his intention is not to describe the story of Rama. The legendary story of Rama is only a tool for him to expose the nature, and the methods of attainment of atmajnana. He declares that his intention is specifically to explain the principle of Rama.² Immediately he clarifies that in order to know the principle of Rama one has to know the essence of all systems of thought and one has to practise varna and asramadharmas.³ He again makes it clear that it can be advised only to a person who is competent to know Rama.⁴ The lone criterion to know whether one is competent or not is to know whether one is having Bhakti in Rama, and an irresistible urge to know Rama itself is the evidence for the presence of Bhakti.⁵

The nature and functioning of Bhakti is elaborately discussed and he enumerates the following characteristics of a true Bhakta.⁶

- (1) He should be totally detached from kama (worldly experience),
- (2) He should be equally away from likes and dislikes

- (3) He should not be having any relation with anything of the world
- (4) He should perform karma (action) like a Sanyasin
- (5) He should be interested only in Erahman
- (6) He should be working for the benefit of the mankind by way of protecting dharma (righteousness) to prevent adhama (Non-righteousness)
- (7) He should practise yama and niyama (self-control and self-discipline)⁷
- (8) He should practice Samadamadisadhana (the process of conquering and controlling the sense organs and mind).

When such a Ehakti is developed in a person, his ignorance vanishes away giving place to the emergence of Vidya (true knowledge).⁸

Vidya is not something that is to be externally imposed on. But it is to be attained from the experience itself. Ezhuttacchan explains that the one who thinks the changing world to be real is not able to attain Vidya.⁹ Because the changing world involves differences and hence it is with relations.¹⁰ The every nature of relation reveals something that is alien to the thing related. This position is known as bhedavicara¹¹ (the experience of differentiation). The bhedavicara is avidya (apparent knowledge) and avidya is the cause of sansara (empirical world).¹²

2.1.3 Sansara

Since Advaita epistemology begins and ends with experience and since sansara is the part of that experience then how the epistemology functions is a question to be answered. In every experience there is the subject who experiences and the object that is experienced in sansara. Since there is difference between the subject and the object, how they are related has to be explained. This is the real problem in epistemology and basically there can be three positions on the nature of this relation.

- (1) The subject and the object are different
- (2) The subject and object are different but they are also identical at the sametime.
- (3) The subject and object are identical

Generally speaking, the first and second positions are the chief concerns of the Western logical systems.¹³ Aristotle is the chief master of the logic of identity in difference and symbolic logicians stands with the logic of differences. The logic of identity is never the concern of Western logicians, but this aspect is the subject matter of religion and literature in the West.¹⁴

2.2.1 The Logic of Identity

The Advaita Philosophy has developed the logic of identity in a systematic and consistent manner. The logic of identity never discriminates between the subject and object of experience. Since identity negates differences then it is not possible to conceive of subject, object and experience as different entities. This is explained with a mathematical precision in the Maha Vakya "Ayam atman Brahma"¹⁵. Ayam (a unit of experience) is Brahman and Atman.¹⁶ Since Ayam is a changing unit, every experience begins with change. Where ever there is change there must be duality. This changing duality may be philosophically classified as 'I' and 'you'. 'I' the subject of experience and 'you' the object of experience. The classic representation of this subject and object in Advaita philosophy is done by the terms Atman and Brahman.

2.2.2 Ayam

Here, what is to be experienced as Atman and Brahman is Ayam itself. It is not possible to have any idea of Atman and Brahman apart from Ayam. Because, our experience is only of Ayam and not of anything else. So any attempt to explain the Atman and Brahman apart from the experience of Ayam will be pure abstraction. Abstract concepts are devoid of experiences and are useful only for

speculations. Since Advaita Philosophy never entertains speculation, it is not possible to have any idea about the Atman and Brahman apart from the experience of Ayam.

2.2.3 Analysis of Ayam

Ayam is the unit of changing experience. In a changing unit of experience the sensory organs, motor organs and mind are the operating instruments. Along with the instruments by which we are operating, the object of experience also is changing. Even Ayam within the limit of sensory organs, motor organs and mind, never says of any unchanging entity. Since it is not possible to experience an object or a subject apart from Ayam then it is not possible either for a subject or for an object to have reality apart from experience. So what is possible is the analysis of Ayam and such an analysis can be done from the stand-point of the identity of Atman and Brahman.¹⁷

2.2.4 Jagrat (waking State)

The analysis begins with the Jagrat state when the sensory and motor organs along with mind are engaged in experience. Such a state of experience from the point of view of Atman is known as Viswanara (the individual).¹⁸ If the same Viswanara is experienced and expressed from the stand-point of Brahman then it is termed as

Virat (Universe). Actually Viswanara and Virat are the sensory experience expressed from two different stand points. The difference is only due to the different standpoints and the experience is identical.

2.2.5 Svapna (Dreaming State)

The Ayam can be analysed in a dreamy state of experience. In a dream, it is the mind that plays the leading role. In Advaita Philosophy mind is nothing but the subtle form of sensory and motor organs. So, in a dreamy state, the sensory and motor organs in their subtlety are functioning and the externalisation of such a function is unnecessary. This state is known as Tajasa (subtle form of individual)¹⁹ in terms of Atman and Hiranyagarbha (subtle form of the universe) from the point of view of Brahman. But the experience in Svapna is identical with that of Jagrat state.

2.2.6 Susupti (Deep sleep State)

It goes to more subtle levels and the highest subtle level is Susupti. Susupti is the causal form of the jagrat and swapna. What is manifested at these two states converges into latency at susupti state. This state is technically called as pranjan (causal form of individual)²⁰ from the point of view of Atman and Iswara (causal form of the universe) from the point of view of Brahman.

Experiences upto this level are not essentially different. They are only the different states and stages of the same but changing units of experience.

2.2.7 Ayam - Both the changing and Non-changing

The entire process of the manifestation of the world can be explained by these different states and stages of Ayam. The process of Ayam itself is a cyclic one, which starts from the Suksma (subtle) susupti to the stula (concrete) Virat and again converges into causal form in susupti. The changing world in its macro and micro forms can be explained by these states and stages of Ayam.²¹

2.2.8 Description of Ayam by Ezhuttacchan

This process of Ayam is repeatedly described by Ezhuttacchan in Adhyatma Ramayana. He specifically describes how stula and suksma forms of Ayam occurs from two stand-points with all details, in Aranyakanda.²² After explaining the cosmic developments and functionings, he says that the everchanging experience is due to the habit of man to go after the changing multifarious phenomenal world.²³ But Rama goes beyond the grip of this changing experience.

2.2.9 Ekatma Pratyasara (the essence of the absolute reality)

These changing multitudes of experience has to be analysed in order to experience what really Ayam is. In such a process all the micro and macro levels of experiences have to be sublated to realise that it is ekatmapratyayasaram and Advaita.²⁴ Ezhuttacchan elaborately describes how this changing experience can be overcome to attain the principle of Rama. He categorically describes that the principle of Rama is unaffected by any change and it cannot be subjected to the language systems for, he is the asraya (permanent substratum) of everything that is changing.²⁵

2.2.10 'OM'

Such an Ayam can be represented by the syllable 'OM'.²⁶ This syllable is constituted by the letters a, u, m. 'a' the beginning, 'u' the substance and 'm' the convergence. It again moves to the 'a', 'u' and 'm'. These letters represent the aspects of the changing experience of the Ayam and it is known as Agama (everchanging). But 'om' is the changing experience and also the basis for that changing experience. This aspect of 'om' is the Nigama (neverchanging). Since the Ayam is Agama, the Ayam always suggests the Nigama because Agama always suggests the Nigama. Ezhuttacchan qualifies his Rama as the omkaranatha (the master of 'om') which means the basis of 'om'.²⁷

2.3.1 Instruments of Analysis

So far, the different states and stages of the analysis of Ayam have been discussed. Now the instruments to be used for the analysis are to be discussed. The instrument by which the analysis can be started is Pratyaksa. Pratyaksa is often translated as perception. But the concept of Pratyaksa and the Western concept of perception are not exactly the same. Pratyaksa is defined as the knowledge which emerges due to the friction of the sensory and motor organs with the object concerned.²⁸

2.3.2 Pratyaksa

Since pratyaksa is caused due to friction, it suggests that both the subject and object are in motion. Since both the subject and object of experience are moving, they are active. So, pratyaksa occurs as a result of the interaction between the subject and object. But perception is defined as an active mental process by the Western logicians. What is active is the subject and the object in question is passive. Such a view is quite consistent with the logic of identity in difference and the logic of difference.

2.3.3 Difference between Pratyaksa and Perception

But this definition of perception does not agree with experience. Since the subject and object are changing, a unit of

experience can not be the result of mental action alone. It must be the result of the interaction between the subject and the object. If the unit of experience is the result of interaction then perception cannot be defined as an exclusive mental process.²⁹

2.3.4 Stula Vyapara

Since pratyaksa is due to the Indriya Sannikarsa (friction of sense organs) the operation of Pratyaksa is within the limit of stula Vyapara (macro operation). In Stula Vyapara, the Viswan and Virat are functioning. Both the Viswan and Virat are the evolutes of the five basic elements. Ezhuttacchan illustrates that the body is the proper combination of various organs and the organs are the product of the pancabhuta (five basic elements).³⁰ Such a body is everchanging and uncertain, hence cannot be depended on.³¹ Since pratyaksa is the result stula vyapara then the defects of stula vyapara can also be seen in pratyaksa.

2.3.5 Pratyaksa and Ayam

Since the body is changing, the sensory and motor organs are also changing. Since the organs are changing then the operation of organs also must be changing. The operation is changing because the Virat is changing along with the Viswanara. So Pratyaksa is the result of the interaction of the changing sensory organs with a

changing object. Naturally the result also must be changing and that changing result is Ayam. The Pratyaksa is defective mainly because of this changing nature. Since it is everchanging, it cannot be depended upon. Ezhuttacchan therefore, categorically declares that an experience derived from Pratyaksa is not Jnana (real wisdom).³²

2.3.6 Other Pramanas

Apart from Pratyaksa Advaita philosophy admits five more pramanas. They are: Anumana (inference), upamana (Assimilative Reasoning), Arthapathy (presumption), Anupalabdhi (non-apprehension) and shruti or sabda (Verbal Testimony). Among them only three, Pratyaksa, Anumana and Sabda are important.³³ The first five of these six pramanas and the last one are of the two different types of experience - the experience of change and the experience of non-change. The first five measure out the experience of change at different levels and the last one suggests the experience of non-change.

2.3.7 Anumana

The stula level of Ayam can be measured out by Pratyaksa. But the suksma level can be measured out by a different Pramana. It is the Anumana that explores the possibilities of Ayam at the suksma level. Since the operation at the suksma level is done by

the mind, Anumana is basically a mental activity. Since mind is the subtle form of all sensory and motor organs, the mental functions also is not basically different from the functions of the sensory and motor organs.

Anumana is the instrument of anumiti (the process of making inference). Anumiti is the Vyaptinjana (the law which governs the inference) that is qualified by the Paksadharmada jnana (the knowledge of concrete example).³⁴ The very essence of Anumana is the Vyaptinjana. Vyapti is Sahacaryaniyama. Sahacaryaniyama means the law which governs two or more sets of conditions. This law is the direct outcome of suksma pratyaksa (subtle perception) and suksma Pratyaksa is a mental operation. In this sense Anumana is a unique pramana and it is different from inference as conceived in the Western thought.

2.3.8 Difference between inference and Anumana

Inference is a process by which it is possible to go from the given to the non-given.³⁵ The deductive and inductive modes of reasonings are the process of knowing something that is not given from the given. In the logic of identity in difference the whole process of inference depends on the fundamental assumptions of logic. The law of causation the law of uniformity of nature and the law of unity of nature are the fundamental assumptions and they jointly

justify the inductive leap in classical logic. But these fundamental assumptions are never justified by the experience.³⁶ This is the major defect of inductive reasoning.

The symbolic logic which tries to keep up the warning of the last proposition of TLP (Tractatus Logico Philosophicus)³⁶ tries to solve it by Material Implications. But the Paradox of material implication is a problem to be solved. Whether it is in the classical logic or in the symbolic logic, there are serious problems in the process of going from the given to the not-given. Whenever one wants to transcend this level, then the problem of speculation also arises. Since speculation is untouched by experience, it is not a matter to be discussed in Advaita Philosophy.

Anumana depends on Vyapti and Vyapti is the direct outcome of experience. So, Anumana is different from inference. But Anumana is not free from defects. Since Anumana is the suksma (subtle) form of Pratyaksa, every defect of Pratyaksa can be seen in a suksma form in Anumana. Pratyaksa and Anumana are useful for all practical purposes of day to day life. But they cannot be taken for granted because both of them are operating on the changing aspects alone.

2.3.9 Sabda

Every experience that is changing, Ezhuttacchan says, is not Jnana.³⁷ So Pratyaksa and Anumana cannot be utilised for the

attainment of Jnana. Since Jnana is the experience of non-change, a pramana that also is not changing must be instrumental to obtain it. It is here that shruti or Sabda or Veda is used as a pramana. So the aim of such a pramana is not to experience something that is changing but to experience something that never changes. Since language is the expressed form of experience, Sabda or Veda is the expressed form of the experience of the non changing basis of the Ayam. It is in this sense that Veda can be treated as Apouruseya.³⁸

2.4.1 Tatparya

The attainment of the knowledge of the unchanging should, therefore, be the tatparya or the aim of interpretation of the Vedas. The persons who expressed the Vedavakyas are known as RISIS (Seers). So, the definition of sabda as aptaupadesa (Advice by a reliable fellow) by the Nyaya system is the most suitable definition.³⁹ 'Apta' literally means a reliable person and a reliable person is one who is free from the likes and dislikes. Gita calls such an aptan as stitapranja.⁴⁰ Stita means something that never changes. So, the person who is having the pranja (State of mind) at a stita state must be experiencing the stita - the non changing. The expression of such experiences in a language form is Veda.

2.4.2 Agama and Nigama of Ayam

It is at this stage that the Agama suggests the Nigama. Since agama suggests Nigama and since Nigama is the basis of agama

then Ayam is both agama and nigama. Since sabda is the expression of Ayam in a language system and since ayam is the process in which the changing experience leads to the non-changing, then the sabda is to be used to experience the Nigama. The first set of Pramanas is capable to deal with the Agama alone and it cannot touch the Nigama. Since Nigama is the basis of Agama, Sabda becomes the basis of all pramanas. It is in this sense that sabda is considered as the prime pramana by the Advaita philosophy.

2.4.3 Adhyatma Ramayana and Veda

Ezhuttacchan also says that the most important Pramana is the Veda. He explains that his Ramayana has the approval of the Vedas.⁴¹ He admits that he himself is not the competent to learn Vedas and sastras.⁴² So he creates the Adhyatma Ramayana for the ignorant who are also not competent to learn the Vedas but are desirous of moksa.⁴³ That is why Ezhuttacchan praises his Rama as the Vedanta vakyartha Vedi⁴⁴ which means that Rama can be known only through the essence of the utterances of Vedantic experiences.

2.4.4 Experience of Nigama

Since Nigama is the basis of Agama and since Agama suggests the Nigama then the question arises as to how is it possible to experience the Nigama. In order to answer this question the

process of experiencing the Nigama has to be explained. It is here that the method of interpretation of sabda becomes relevant. Sabda says that the nature and criterion of truth is Nitya (eternal). Nitya means that which is free from change, hence it is eternal. The Ayam at the level of Viswan, Taijasa, and Pranja from the stand point of Atman and Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Iswara from the stand point of Brahman are not considered as true because they are changing. Ezhuttacchan also admits this aspect when he describes Iswara as Kalasvarupa⁴⁵ (God is in the form of time). It means that the very essence of Iswara is time and the essence of time is change. So the experience upto the level of Iswara is not capable to reveal the real nature of truth.

2.4.5 Agama the ladder

The truth can be experienced only when one is able to cross over the boundary of changing experience and that is possible only to a Stitapranja. Such an experience can not be either expressed by words or approached by mind. If it can not be expressed by words then what is the real role of a language system. The answer is that a language system is a ladder, which leads to experience. So, the sabda, the expressed form of Agama leads to the suggested Nigama, that is, the experience of change is based on the experience of non-change.

2.4.6 Stages of experience

The analysis of the experience of Ayam should be done with the maximum care at every stage of analysis. Because relative stability can be experienced at every stage and state of experience. So, there is every chance to misconceive the different states of Agama as the nature of truth. If change is perpetual and total then it is not possible to take any unit of such a change as reality. Even a dream becomes meaningful because it sustains atleast for a short span of time. The waking experience can sublimate a dreamy one as in the case of the well known rope-snake experience. This example suggests that rope has got only a relative permanence and in essence there is no difference between the experience of the rope and snake. Ezhuttacchan often compares the entire experience of the world with a dream.⁴⁶

2.4.7 Maya

When snake is sublated by a rope then nobody will ask the question were the snake has gone. Because a lower level of experience can not stand with a higher level of experience. In Upanisads this is often compared with darkness and light, and darkness cannot exist in the presence of light. This aspect of experience is technically called as Maya (appearance) by Advaita philosophy. Maya is generally referred to as a metaphysical term

but it has got an epistemological reference also. Epistemologically Maya functions in a double way of concealment and projection. It projects a snake by concealing the rope for a time being. Maya in this sense cannot be compared with an illusion or it cannot be called as a negation of experience. It says that a higher level of experience can sublimate a lower level and in the presence of the higher level the lower level automatically vanishes away. Like this, the Agama vanishes away when the Nigama is experienced.

2.4.8 Avidya and Sansara

The entire Agama of Ayam is a continuous, never-ending process of sublation of one level of experience by another. This process is known as Sansara (the world of empirical experience). So he, who depends on sansara will naturally be perished because the very nature of sansara is perishability. The dependence on the perishable sansara is Avidya (absence of wisdom). Ezhuttacchan describes that Avidya is the cause of sansara and vidya (the presence of wisdom) is the cause of cessation of sansara.⁴⁷

2.5.1 Sadhana catustaya

Advaita epistemology is neither abstract nor impractical but it is concrete and pragmatic. When epistemology becomes pragmatic then it is necessary to spell out the practical steps to be used in the epistemological process. As a corollary the prescription of the

personal qualifications to be attained by the practitioner of that epistemology also should be mentioned. Advaita philosophy clearly prescribes the qualification and training to be possessed by the practitioner and that is called sadhanacatustaya (the four fold steps of practise).

All are eligible to undergo the training to possess the qualification. But all need not be able to attain the competency to handle the epistemological tools to realise the truth. The competency can be attained only after the practice of sadhana catustaya. Sadhana means the concentration and submission of something to the end towards which that thing is directed and catustaya means the four fold aspects. So sadhanacatustaya means the four fold aspects of the concentration and submission of the whole epistemological activity to the end towards which it is directed.

2.5.2 Siddhi and Sadhana

Sadhana (practise) is related to Siddhi (the given) what is given or what remains is Siddhi and for which nobody is personally responsible. The Ayam itself is the Siddhi. There is no author or there is no giver for Ayam. Since the Ayam is an unending process, the very end of Ayam towards which it is directed to be found out in the essence of Ayam itself. The role of Sadhana arises at this stage because the Ayam shows the tendencies to scatter away

externally. It is not possible to know the essence if the experience scatters away. So, it has to be concentrated on the Ayam. In such an effort something has to be given up to Sustain something else.

2.5.3 Vivekajnana

The end towards which the whole process is directed is the criterion to determine what is to be given up and what is to be taken up. Since the Ayam that is revealed by Pratyaksa and Anumana which are the units of changing experiences, they cannot be relied upon. Something which cannot be relied upon has to be given up to take up something that can be relied upon. So, it is essential to rely upon something that never changes. The first Sadhana, the Nityanitya Vastu Viveka (the power to discriminate what is eternal and non eternal) says about the application of the power to discriminate between the change and non-change. Such a power is inherent in the Ayam because if it is not inherent then it has to be imposed upon it from some outside sources. Such an idea is an abstract one, devoid of experience. Hence it cannot be entertained in Advaita philosophy.

2.5.4 Ihamuttratha Bhogavairagya

Since the end towards which the Ayam is directed is the Nigama, the experience of change is only a ladder to the non-changing experience. The second sadhana, Ihamuttratha

Bhogavairagya (to renounce the pleasure of this world and the world elsewhere) gives the methodology to use the world as a ladder to experience its essence. It says about the Viraga (renounce) bhoga (Pleasure). Raga means the unity of diversity. Viraga means the absence of the unity of diversity. Bhoga⁴⁸ means the experience derives from the operation of sensory and motor organs and mind. So, bhogavairagya means to be devoid of the unity of diversified experiences derived from sensory and motor organs and mind. Because such an experience has a changing nature and the changing nature can not reveal the real nature of Ayam, it says that, in order to experience Natya Bhoga has to be avoided.

2.5.5 Samadamadi Sadhana

The method of getting oneself free from the desire for bhoga is founded in the third Sadhana - Samadamadi Sadhana Sampathu. It literally means the conquest and control of the mind and the sensory and motor organs. Sama is conquering the mind, and controlling the sensory and motor organs is dama. In order to overcome the changing experience, it is essential to stop the operation of the tool which operates on that kind of experience. The operation or the functioning of the tools is to be ceased to experience the basis of the experience of change. This epistemological aspect is clearly explained in Isavasya upanisad, when it makes a request to the sun to withhold its rays in order to experience its real nature.⁴⁹

2.5.6 Mumuksutva

The fourth sadhana is Mumuksutva⁵⁰ (the state of being a mumuksu) which says that the practice of the three Sadhana should be continued constantly. Mumuksutva literally means the state of being in which one is not satisfied with anything other than moksa. 'Neti, Neti' (not like this) is the attitude of mumuksu to the Agama. 'Neti, Neti' is not a negation of the experience of Agama but it says that truth is not found in the changing experience and the changing state of experience has to be sublated. So the entire Agama will be sublated to the experience of Nigama by saying 'neti', 'neti' to the mundane experience.

2.6.1 Panca Maha Vrita

How such a Nigama stage of experience can be distinguished from the Agama is a vital question to be answered. The answer is that the activities of a Mumuksu will be always guided by the Panca Maha Vrita (Five great vows). The practice of Ahimsa (Non-violence), Satyam (truth), Asteya (Non-stealing), Aparigraha (renunciation) and Brahma carya (celibacy) are the five Maha Vritas. Generally these virtues are treated as the part of ethics and are kept out of a discussion on epistemological problems. But, in Advaita epistemology, it is not possible to keep out anything as external to the epistemological analysis. So the epistemological significance of the ethical terms should also be taken into account.

The prefix Maha (great) with Vrita (vows) refers to the all inclusiveness of vritas (vows). So they are the vritas to be practised by all persons within and outside of the Varna and Asrama dharma. Why they should be practiced by all in a specific question and an ethical answer is very much ready for it. But an epistemological enquiry shows that these virtues are really the Ayam itself.

2.6.2 Ahimsa

A brief description of these virtues is essential to establish this point. The term Ahimsa is coined prefixing 'A' with himsa. In ordinary language Himsa means violence. But here Himsa means change. Since change involves destruction, everything that is changing undergoes destruction. Since destruction is imminent in violence then the term himsa stands for change, destruction and violence. Ezhuttacchan describes it in a brilliant manner and he says that himsa is true if and only if the changing experience is true.⁵¹ Epistemologically speaking Ahimsa is nothing but the neti neti of the agama which enables the Ayam to experience the Nigama.

2.6.3 Satyam (Truth)

Such a non-changing aspect of Ayam is Satyam. It describes the nature of the non-changing experience. To be non-changing is to

be consistent with itself. Everything that is changing is inconsistent with itself. Anything that is inconsistent with itself is non-dependable. The consistency of experience has to be found out in the Ayam. Anything that remains as permanent with experience is the basis or the ultimate foundation of experience. So, the basis of Ayam is satya towards which it is always oriented. Since the veda is the expressed version of Ayam, the non changing basis of the veda is the end of the veda. It is in this sense that Vedanta is called as the end of the veda.

2.6.4 Rama and Satya

Ezhuttacchan is well aware of these facts. That is why he categorically states that Rama is really known only when he is known as the end of the Vedas.⁵² He elaborately describes Rama in many places identifying him with Satya.⁵³ If Rama alone is the ultimate foundation of experience and if he alone is truth then how he can be known is the question and Ezhuttacchan says that it is possible if and only if one is ready to submit to the Satyam (ultimate truth).⁵⁴

2.6.5 Asteya

The epistemological reaction of the mumuksu to the inconsistent agama is Asteya. Steya literally means to steal. Stealing is due to the attraction of the objects concerned. This attraction is

a joint venture of mind and sensory organs.⁵⁵ So Steya means the experience arises due to the interaction between sensory and motor organs and mind. Then, asteya means the absence of the experience due to indriya Sannikarsa (frictions of the sense organs and objects) that is, epistemologically asteya means the absence of the experience of Pratyaksa and Anumana. The absence of such an experience occurs only when the Vedantic experience (the experience of the ultimate truth) arises.

2.6.6 Aparigraha

The state of experience as described above has to be maintained constantly. But there is every chance to get it occasionally disturbed by the Indriya Sannikarsa. The absence of even such an occasional disturbance is aparigraha. Parigraha means to receive something as essential for empirical existence. This happens due to the presence of a body. The body is the compendium of sensory and motor organs in their macro and micro forms. So there is every chance to follow the directions of body. Whenever one submits oneself to the directions of bodily inclination, one should be sure that the experience of satya is ceased off. So aparigraha should be practised in order to avoid everything that hinders the experience of Satya. So, epistemologically Asteya means that the devotion of oneself to the constant experience of the ultimate foundation of every experience, that is, the experience of the Nigama of Ayam.

2.6.7 Rama and Aparigraha

Since this is the epistemological aspect which asteya stresses, the practises of asteya is essential to experience satya. Ezhuttacchan therefore, warns that "he who is devoted to Rama should not be diverted in attention."⁵⁶ The diversion of the attention from Rama is the cessation of the experience of Satya and such an experience is within the purview of Agama and which is not the experience of Nigama.

2.6.8 Brahmacharya

Since the unit of experience is the Ayam and since the basis of Ayam is Nigama, then what one should do to experience the nigama for ever is the question and the answer is Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya means to experience Brahma. Here it means the constant experience of the ultimate truth. There should not be any holiday for such an experience. Ezhuttacchan constantly reminds the Ramabhaktas (the devotees of Rama) that they must contemplate constantly on Rama in words, deeds and mind.⁵⁷ It is this epistemological necessity of the constant experience of Satya which is explained in the fifth vow.

2.6.9 Existence and experience

Since what remains is the Ayam alone, then one is what one's experience is. He who experiences the Agama identifies

himself with Agama and who experiences Nigama identifies himself with the nigama. So, if one experiences satya then naturally he will be satya. By contemplating on this logical aspect Ezhuttacchan proclaims that Rama is satyam (ultimate truth) and the jnana (ultimate wisdom). Rama can be attained through Rama⁵⁸ alone and he further clarifies that the devotees of Rama also attains the truth of Rama.

2.7.1 Neti Neti

The experience of Satya can be described in two ways by the negative and by the positive ways. The negative way of expression of truth is 'neti, neti'. The negative way of expression explains away all the units of agama by saying neti neti (not like this). The negative signs are used in a language system to denote the negation of Agama experience. Here all the qualities, quantities, relations and modalities are negated. Ezhuttacchan repeatedly uses words with negative signs to explain the Agama or Ayam. He describes Rama with all such terms whenever he gets a chance to describe him.⁵⁹ But all such negative ways of describing Rama are to stress the positive characteristics. Satya (truth), Jnana (wisdom), ananda (bliss) are the positive characteristics and Ezhuttacchan always ends his stutis (praises) with such positive utterances.⁶⁰

2.7.2 The method to Experience Svarupalakshana

Then how can the positive characteristics of Rama be experienced? To answer the question the method of interpretation of a text is to be explained. This is meant to use the language of a text as a ladder to experience the truth of the text. Every syllable of the text has to be interpreted at three levels. The Indian aesthetic terms these levels as Abhita (denotative sense), Laksana (connotative sense) and Vynjana (suggestive sense). The three levels are corresponding to the sravana (sense experience), manana (mental experience) and Nididhyasa (final experience) of the vedas. Sravana and manana are the corresponding part of the pratyaksa and anumana.

2.7.3 Rama and Ananda

Since Rama is Ananda and since Ananda is rasa then, only the third level of interpretation can suggest the rasa. This Vyanjana level of interpretation corresponds to nididhyasa and it is the state of experience which cannot be sublated. The experience without sublation is known as abadhidha (Non-sublatable). So the Abhidha and laksana levels of interpretations are to be sublated by saying 'neti neti' (not like this) to suggest the Vyanjana level. The competency to do such an interpretation can be attained only by the practise of sadhana catustaya and the pancamahavritas. Ramabhakta

(a devotee of Rama) alone is the competent to interpret the Adhyatma Ramayana and one of the characteristics of Ramabhakta is the practice of Sadhana catustaya.⁶¹

2.7.4 Bhakti and Ananda

Since ananda cannot be explained by words or approached by mind, vijnana cannot explain it. It can only suggest it. All the verbal descriptions are to be sublated by saying neti neti to affirm the unsublatable experience of Ananda. In such a process of interpretation of Adhyatma Ramayana, Ezhuttacchan warns that each syllable of the text should be interpreted with bhakti (devotion). The bhakti will be increased along with the increase of inner urge to experience Rama and that causes enlightenment.⁶¹ The Rama bhakty (devotion to Rama) in Adhyatma Ramayana is identified with advaita Vedantatic mumukshutva, which is a stage of experience where one is not satisfied with anything other than the experience of Ananda (the ultimate bliss).

2.7.5 All inclusiveness of Advaita Epistemology

The epistemology of advaita philosophy cannot exclude anything from ayam. Any spatio-temporal manifestation is capable to lead one to become a Ramabhakta because every manifestation is the Agama and the basis of Agama is Nigama. So Ezhuttacchan earnestly believes and advocates that every sinner has a future. This is

described in details while he explains the nature of persons who are eligible to become a Ramabhakta. The out cast and the untouchable, women folk and the thief, sinner who commits patricide, and matricide, the murderer or who kills his guru and sanyasi, the economic offender and the depressed all are eligible to become a Ramabhakta.⁶² While elaborately describing this aspect, Ezhuttacchan emphasises the all - inclusive nature of Advaita epistemology.

2.7.6 Rama Bhakti to attain Jnana

Ezhuttacchan warns that error can arise at any stage and at any level of ones experience. Error arises due to the misconception of sublatale experiences as unsublatale one. One order of reality may be misconceived as another order. Rama is an experience of paramarthika (ultimate) level but often it can be misconceived as vysvaharika (empirical) satta. This is what happens in the well known rope-snake experience. Rope is an empirical reality but it is misconceived as a phenomenal reality. Ezhuttacchan says that this is the ajnsnalaksana or the mark of ignorance.⁶⁴ The only remedy to correct this error is the Ramabhakti itself. To this end, like the rsi of Isa Vasya upanishad.⁶⁵ Ezhuttacchan also prays to Ram to bestow upon him more and more Bhakti.⁶⁶

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

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Chapter - III

METAPHYSICS

3.1.1 Metaphysics an Abstract Concept

The term metaphysics is used by Aristotle for knowledge which comes after physics or science of nature. After Aristotle, the term has come to be used to refer to the knowledge that goes beyond the boundaries of scientific enquiry. Usually the term is associated with speculative wisdom where the experience becomes insignificant and irrelevant. So Kant declared that, since the knowledge through experience never certifies metaphysics, then metaphysics is not possible as a descriptive science. The impossibility of metaphysics is admitted by the positivist philosophers because according to them, metaphysical statements cannot be empirically verified. So, metaphysics for the Western philosophy has gradually turned out to be a term to refer to speculative knowledge which claims to deal with the nature of the ultimate reality.

3.1.2 Metaphysics as a Concrete Experience

Since Advaita Epistemology never entertains speculation, it is not in favour of a speculative and abstract metaphysics. Hence, for the Advaitin, metaphysics consists of an explanation of the nature and function of the ultimate reality that can be experienced. Since the Advaita Epistemology begins and ends in experience, it does not admit anything unrelated to experience. So, it is the experience that has to be relied up on for the attainment of the knowledge of the nature of reality. In order to get the knowledge of the ultimate reality all the levels of experience have to be analysed. It is only at the final stage of analysis that it is possible to find out the nature of ultimate reality.

3.1.3 Brahman, the ultimate reality

The ultimate reality in Advaita philosophy is termed as Brahman. The Mundakopanisad explains that "anyone who knows that supreme Brahman becomes Brahman indeed."¹ Then the question is what is the nature of such a supreme reality? The Taitteriya upanisad declares that to be "Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam."² This Mahavakya explains the positive characteristics of Brahman. In order to know these positive characteristics it is essential to analyse experience at all levels.

3.1.4 Sattatraya (Levels of reality)

Advaita philosophy admits three levels of reality - the sattatraya. They are the pratibhasika (phenomenal), Vyavaharika (empirical) and Paramarthika (Transcendental). The ultimate nature of reality is revealed only at the Paramarthika level. Along with the sattatraya the different stages of experience are also admitted by Advaita philosophy. They are the avastatraya - Swapna (dream), jagrat (waking) and susupti (deep sleep). The Pratibhasika level of reality is a phenomenal one and it is momentary. Even though it is momentary it is experience and as an experience it has got its own reality. The Vyavaharika, is the empirical level and the lone difference between the empirical and the phenomenal is that the duration of empirical level is much more than the phenomenal level. Ezhuttacchan explains this fact when he declares that the world is Swapna Sannibha (like a dream).³ Here, he compares the entire world with a dream to express the momentary nature of the empirical existence.

3.1.5 Turiya (the final state)

It is only at the Paramarthika level that the positive characteristics of Brahman are experienced. At that level the avastatraya will be ceased and it is known as the turiya state. Jagrat, Swapna and Susupti are the stages which explains only the

Prathibhasika and Vyavaharika Satta. Since the beginning of experience commences with the prathibhasika satta and develops through the Vyavaharika satta then how Brahman at these stages can be experienced is a point which deserves due consideration.

3.2.1 The Annam Brahma

The Taittiriya answers it elaborately and it begins with analysis of the aphorism that: "Purusa annarasamayah."⁴ The same mantra clarifies that the annarasamaya (the essence of matter) is Ayamatma. So from the point of view of the Atman the experience begins with annam. Annam means the matter, the hard external substances of every experience. He who experiences Brahma as Annam becomes Annam.⁵ This position is logically consistent, because one is what one actually is, that is, one is identical with one's experience. It is termed as Annam because Annam (nutrition) is the cause for the growth of everything that exists and everything that exists is the cause for Annam. It is a dialectical relation and the dialectical relation involves the relation of opposites. Wherever there is a relation of opposites there is change also. So the experience of Annam is associated with the experience at the level of pratyakṣa. Eventhough this is the beginning of experience it cannot be treated as the end of the experience. Experience has to go into its own depths.

3.2.2 Prana (Life)

Below that bare material level there are the levels of Prana (life), Mana (mind), Vijnana (self-consciousness) and finally Ananda (bliss). Prana is the phenomenon of life. Life is higher than the matter. Eventhough there are material aspects in life, life is not the bare matter because it is more refined than the bare matter. Eventhough life is more refined than the matter, life is not essentially different from matter. He who experiences life alone can naturally be the life because one is identified with one's experience. But the experience at the level of Prana (life) involves change and hence it is contradictory. Since it is contradictory it has to be sublated.

3.2.3 Mana (Mind)

If the Prana represents the world of living organisms the Mana signifies the psychic operations of such an organic universe. The psychic operation is a more refined and higher stage of experiences when compared to the level of mere living. But the psychic operation is not essentially different from the forms of life because the psychic operation is only the suksma (subtle) level of the operation of the stula (gross) level of Prana. The difference of stula and suksma are only in appearance. So the merits and demerits of the stula will be present at the suksma level too.

3.2.4 Vijnana (Self consciousness)

The Vijnana level denotes self-consciousness and it is higher and more subtle than the mere consciousness, but it also is not essentially different from the prana and Mana. So whatever is seen in annam is seen also in the Prana, Mana and Vijnana. These levels are to be sublated to experience the real nature of Brahman. In order to transcend to such a level, the Ayam is to be experienced as a non-dual unit. Only in the experience of Ayam as a non dual and absolute the nature of ultimate reality can be revealed. One who has the experience of non-dual and absolute reality alone is able to experience. All these different levels of Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana and finally reaches the state of ananda⁶ (final bliss). The process has been clearly explained and illustrated through the dialogue between the Seer Bhrugu and his son Varuna through the Bhrugu Valli of Taittiriya upanisad. Bhrugu, the son of Varuna approached his father with a request to teach him Brahman. After giving the initial introduction Varuna advised that "Crave to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge. That is Brahman."⁷

Bhrugu made an earnest effort to experience in accordance with the lessons taught by his father and he sublated many levels to experience Brahman, the ultimate reality through tapas. Tapas is

a technical term which means to involve totally in the process of knowing Brahman. It indicates that the process of knowing Brahman is not essentially different from the experience of Brahman. Since the process of knowing is not different from the experience of Brahman then there cannot be anything other than the experience. So when Varuna says that tapas is Brahman he suggests, Brahman can be experienced only when it is possible to realise the essence of non dual identity.

3.3.1 Atman and Kosas (bodies)

From the point of view of atman it has got the Annamayakosa (material body), Pranamayakosa (body of life), Manomayakosa (psychic body), Vijnanamayakosa (body of self consciousness) and finally, the Anandamayakosa (body of bliss). From the point of view of Brahman, there are the states of Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana and finally the Ananda. The identity that is to be seen in all levels of experience is to be seen in all states of experience also. Because, the avastatraya of experience is closely related to the Sattatraya. The avastatraya - the jagrat, swapna and susupti correspond to the pratibhasika and vyavaharika levels of sattatraya. the turiya, that is to be achieved after the first three stages is attained only in the paramarthika level.

3.3.2 Ayam the Metaphysical Unit

The experience of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana are only the stepping stones to Ananda. The Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana are levels to be experienced as stula, Suksma and Karana, in Viswan and Virat at the stula state, in taijasan and Hiranyagarbha at the suksma state and Pranjan and Iswara at the karana state. The experience at these states can be measured out by the Pramanas like Pratyaksa and Anurana. It is the veda which suggests the experience of Ananda. The whole experience as a non-dual unit is Ayam. It is in this sense that Ayam is considered as a metaphysical unit.

3.3.3 Illustration of Ayam by Ezhuttacchan

Ezhuttacchan with precision and brilliance explains this process and functioning of Ayam as a metaphysical entity in the Agastya stuti or Aranya kanda.⁸ He uses the same terminology, like, Jagrat, Swapna, Susupti, Viswan, Virat, Taijasan, Hiranyagarbha, Pranjan, Iswara, Stula, Suksma, Karana, Prathibhasika, Vyavaharika and paramarthika, Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana, Ananda etc. in various parts of Adhyatma Ramayana⁹ in the upanishadic sense. These technical terms of advaita Philosophy are used in the same sense throughout the work and so he rightly claims that his Ramayana is the essence of Vedanta.¹⁰

3.3.4 The indefinable nature of Ananda

The Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana have to be transcended in order to realise Ananda. Each level of experience has to be sublated by saying 'neti neti'. Bhrgu in Taittiriya upanisad sublates the experience of Anna because that is not enough to explain the whole unit of Ayam. In other words the experience of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana never satisfies the mumuksu. So a mumuksu declares 'neti, neti' to all experiences until he experiences the essence of reality. So the tapas or the unending devotion to find out the experience which gives complete satisfaction leads him to Ananda.

3.3.5 Ananda and Language

Upanisad says that Ananda can not be expressed by words nor can it be approached by mind.¹¹ It cannot be expressed by words because words are inefficient to express it. Since language mirrors the world every syllable in a language system has a reference to something in the spatio-temporal system. Form is a spatio-temporal order and anything that is having a spatio-temporal order must be a unit of changing experience. Any unit of changing experience has relations and relations involve contradictions. Then, every language system is a system of contradictions, and a system of contradiction is not competent to express an experience that is free from all contradictions.

Language system is an expressed form of experience. An expressed form of experience is the externalised form. The externalised form is the stula level of experience. If something is possible in the stula level then that must be possible in the suksma level also. The possibility of an expression may be limited by certain factors at the stula level than at the suksma level. But if an expression is possible at suksma, then, that must be possible at stula. So, if the language system is not able to express the experience, the manas, the suksma rupa of such a system must not be able to approach it. Since essentially there is no difference between the stula and suksma then Ananda is the experience that belongs to a higher level.

3.3.6 Language and Pramanas

The experience that can be measured out by the Pratyaksa and Anumana can be expressed by a language system and it is within the reach of mind. This experience is derived by the operations of sensory and motor organs and the mind. Such an experience can be interpreted in terms of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana. So if the experience of Ananda cannot be expressed by words and approached by mind then it must be different from Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana. So it is at this part it says 'neti, neti' to the experience. What is sublated here by saying 'neti neti' is the Agama and Agama naturally leads to Nigama.

If this is the case then how is it possible to say that there is the Nigama? The Taittiriya mantra explains that he who experiences Ananda will not be afraid of anything. This answer suggests the nature of such an experience. One is afraid of something because the thing that produces fear must be external to him. Anything that is external to him is alien to him and anything that is alien to him is not known to him. The unknown entity tells about the duality and if duality is possible then plurality also is possible. It is possible because duality admits divisibility and divisibility causes plurality. So, the cause of fear is due to the existence of something external to oneself.

3.3.7 Ananda and Plurality

If one is not afraid of anything then it is clear that the experience of plurality must cease. In such a state one would be free from all conflicts arising from the dichotomy of right and wrong, truth and falsity, one and many etc. He is free from such experience because every experience is part of his own existence. This is due to the experience of Ayam as a non dual entity. So, the world of experience of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana has to be sublated to experience the never changing aspect of Ayam.

He who experiences this never changing aspect, the nigama of Ayam by transcending the experiences of its ever changing

aspects, is technically called as Vidwan. Such a person is able to experience the epistemological, Metaphysical, cosmological, aesthetic and ethical binaries as the Ayam itself at the level of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana. The non-duality of reality should be experienced at all levels and in order to have such an experience the experience of Nigama should be experienced at every aspect of Agama.

3.4.1 Rama and Ananda

Ezhuttacchan describes his Rama as Suddhan (free from impurities), Advayan (free from change) and Paramananda murthy (the idol of supreme bliss).¹² He then identifies Rama as Vedanta vedyan¹³ (he who is known as the end of the Veda) and Satyajana Ananda (Truth, wisdom and bliss) and Amirtatmaka (the essence of immortality).¹⁴ The term suddha means that which is free from guna (qualities). Guna is the subject matter of sensory and motor organs and mind. So something that is free from guna is something that is not the subject matter of the experience derived from sensory and motor organs and mind. Every experience at the levels of Anna, prana, Mana and Vijnana are the experiences of gunas. Such experiences are to be sublated in to experience Rama.

3.4.2 Rama the Advaya (non-dual)

Such a process of sublation is possible only when Rama is known as advayan. Dvayam means two, so, advayam means the

absences of binaries. Such a state can be attained only if one is able to realise that the Viswan and Virat, Taijasan and Hiranyagarbha, Prajan and Iswara are identical at the stula, suksma and karana levels because there is no real difference between the stula, suksma and karana. The whole unit of experience in all these levels are to be sublated by saying 'neti neti' to realise that Rama is Advayan.¹⁵

3.4.3 Rama the Paramanandamurthy (Idol of supreme bliss)

Such a realisation is possible only if one is able to know that Rama is paramanandamurthy (Idol of supreme bliss). Murthy is a technical term which denotes anything that is having a concrete spatio-temporal reference and which must be able to function as a ladder to a unit of experience that transcends the spatio-temporal existence. Since Rama is paramanandamurthy, he is only a ladder to experience paramananda which cannot be expressed by any other means. So, Rama is the right means to experience the Ananda which cannot be expressed by any spatio-temporal categories. The spatio-temporal means refer to both the language system and mind. Since Rama is not known through the language system and the mind. Ezuttacchan calls him as Avedyan (cannot be known).

3.4.4 Rama the Vedanta Vedyan

Vedyan in Malayalam means one who is to be known by sensory and motor organs and mind. The prefix 'a' in Malayalam

denotes negation. So, avedyan means one who is not known by sensory and motor organs and mind. He cannot be known because he belongs to a realm which is unapproachable by means of sensory and motor organs and mind. So Rama is an experience where the sensory and motor organs along with mind becomes ineffective. That is why he calls him as Vedanta Vedyan - ~~he who is known through the~~ Vedanta the end of the Vedas.

3.4.5 Rama the Nigamagamasara (the essence of both change and non change)

The Veda is a pramana to be used to experience the essence of Ayam. Since the Veda is the compendium of aphorisms uttered by aptas it never deals with the experiences which can be measured out by Pratyaksa and Anumana. Naturally it deals with the experience that is unapproachable by the sensory and motor organs and mind. The experience that transcends the sensory and motor organs and mind is the experience of Nigama. So, the Nigama is the essence of Ayam. And to know the essence means to know the whole process of Ayam. That is why he calls Rama as the Nigamagama sara (the essence of both change and non change).

Then the question is what is the characteristic feature of such an experience. Ezhuttacchan enlists both the Tatastalakshana and the svarupalaksana of such an experience. Rama is Nirgunan,

Nirupaman, Niscalan, Niradharan, Niskriyan, Niskaranan, Nityan. He is satya, jnana, ananda and amrta.¹⁶ He says that Rama is free from qualities, beyond comparisons, unchanging, unsupported, free from all types of actions, and uncaused.

3.5.1 Nirguna devoid of Qualities

Since all qualities are the subject matter of spatio-temporal experiences and since the essence of Rama transcends all such experiences, he cannot be the possessor of qualities. The essence of experience of Rama is advaidic. The comparison is possible only in a dualistic or pluralistic state of experience. Because in order to make a comparison there must be more than one reality. In a state of experience of more than one, there is the problems of binaries and pluralism. Such a level of experience is the subject matter of sense organs and mind. Since the experience of Rama goes beyond the limit of space and time, it is not subjected to the sensory and motor organs and mind. In such a state of experience there cannot be anything other than the experience itself. Since there is nothing more than the experience, comparison becomes impossible. So the adjective Nirupama (free from comparison) suggests that the essence of Rama is advaidic.

3.5.2 Niscalan (Unchanging)

Rama is Niscalan, that is, Rama is free from any kind of movement. Movement takes place in space and time. Anything that

moves within the limits of space and time is the object of sense experience. Anything that is within the limit of sense experience is the subject matter of Pratyaksa and Anumana. The operative field of Pratyaksa and Anumana is the Agama aspect of the Ayam and Niscalan sublates such an experience. In the absence of momentum activities are also not possible. To be active means to be within the space-time limitation. So anything that is free from change is also free from activities.

Anything that is free from activities is free from the law of causation. Because cause and effect involves change and change occurs only in a spatio-temporal realm. The experience of a space-time realm has contradictory aspects in it and the cause and effect which are within the space-time results in a contradiction between the cause and effect. Cause and effect cannot be explained properly without having the concept of identity in difference. Effect is both different and identical with the cause. The cause is in the effect and the effect is in the cause in a different form. Contradictions are possible in the Prathibhasika and Vyavaharika levels. Such levels of experience are the Agama of Ayam and they are to be sublated to experience Rama.

3.5.3 The Basis of Change

The changing entities are dependent entities. Change necessarily implies plurality in which different entities are inter-

dependent. If they are not interdependent they will be scattered away and the scattered collections of independent entities cannot explain their own existence. The existence of anything in a pluralistic set up is always justified by relations of space, time, quality and quantity. Without these relations it is not possible to describe them at all. Further, logical explanation is always based on Adhara (ultimate foundation). Such a level of experience is there in the field of changing experience and that is again within the limit of Agama. If any experience is not within the limit of Agama then that must be free from Adhara also.

3.5.4 Satya jnana Ananta (Truth, wisdom, infinite)

The tatastalaksana (qualities to be denied) such as mentioned above are often referred to as the acosmic view because it negates all qualities of the universe by saying 'neti, neti'. But this negation leads to the affirmation of the positive qualities, or the svarupalaksanas (qualities to be affirmed). Immediately after mentioning the Tatastalaksana, Ezhuttacchan declares the Svarupa laksanas. The first one, the nitya is enough to indicate the character of Nigama. Rama is Nitya. Nitya is the experience that is free from change. So, the essence of Rama is the experience of the nonchanging aspect of the Ayam. Such a nonchanging aspect of Ayam is Satya. That is why satya is often identified with nitya. The experience of Satya is Jnana and that Jnana itself is Ananda.

3.5.5 Ananda the source of everything

The nature of the experience of Ananda is stated in the Taittiriya upanishad thus: "He who knows Brahman and ananda knows that all these beings originate; having been born, they are sustained by ananda; they move towards and merge in ananda. This knowledge, realised by Brugu and imparted by Varuna terminated in the supreme ananda established in the cavity of heart."¹⁷ This mantra establishes that the basis of agama is nigma and it also says about where it has to be sought. The experience of Ananda sublates all the other experiences of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana. When Ananda is experienced the other experiences becomes irrelevant. They are irrelevant because they cannot act in the presence of Ananda. Since they cannot act and since they cannot dominate, then it must be understood that every experience other than Ananda really depends on it. Since every experience depends on it, it can be called as the sources of all other experiences. The experiences other than the Ananda are the various forms of bhutas (Gross elements). These bhutas are operating on the basis of Ananda.

But the bhutas are entering into the process of beginning, sustenance and end. Anything that is having the process of beginning and end can not be different from the process itself. So, the bhutas are really the process itself. Such a process is known through the Anna, prana, mana and Vijnana. He who knows the process alone as

real becomes the process itself. Since the process involves change the knowledge of that process also is changing. The different steps of experiences through Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana are only the different steps of the experiences of change. Since one is not different from one's experience, these different steps are the different layers of one's own existence. Ananda is the natural culmination of all the experiences. Since it is the experience of the existence then it cannot be different from the existence. That is why it is possible to have the experience of Ananda in one's own inner space.

Since Ananda is the basis of all experiences, the Annamayakosa, Pransmayakosa, Manomayakosa and Vijnanamayakosa are operating on the basis of Ananda. So, Ananda is the ultimate reality that exists in every unit of experience. Then, it is not something to be sought and found out beyond experience. But it is within the experience itself. Since experience of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana are the different layers of change they can not be the basis of the experience. Because the changing experience itself cannot be the basis of change. The basis of change is something that should not be changed. Since Ananda is the basis of experience then it cannot be changing. So the never changing aspect of the ever changing experience is Ananda and that Ananda is Nigama.

3.6.1 Rama the Jagat and the Asraya of Jagat (the world and the basis of the world)

This aspect has been explained by Ezhuttacchan thus, "Rama is the Asraya of Jagat (the basis of the world). He is the jagat itself (He is the world). He is the adibhuta of jagat (the prime element of the world), but he is not attached by jagat. He is the atman and the sakshin that never changes. He is 'aja, ajita (never born and never to be overcome) and he is the Ananda which is not the subject matter of language system."¹⁸ Since Rama is jagat and the Asraya of Jagat there cannot be anything other than Rama. So, the basic non-duality is stressed here by Ezhuthacchan to give emphasis on the nature of Ananda. Since Jagat is an everchanging unit of experience, then it needs an Asraya to depend on. Such an Asraya can be something external to it. If something that is external to the world is the Asraya of the world then the external world would not be known by jagat. Because something that is external to Jagat cannot be known by Jagat. In order to avoid this contradiction, Ezhuttacchan says that Rama is both the Jagat and the Asraya of Jagat. Since Jagat itself is Rama then it is clear that Rama himself is the asraya of jagat.

3.6.2 Jagat and Bhutas

The Jagat is made out of bhutas (basic elements). Being the adibhuta (the primary element) Rama is the cause and effect of the

bhutas. Since Rama is both the cause and effect of bhutas there is every chance to doubt that Rama is a changing unit of experience. Ezhuttacchan rules out this possibility by saying that Rama is not effected by the infliction of bhutas because he is not attached to any process of the bhutas.

Then, what is he? The answer is that Rama is the Atman that never changes and remains as a sakshi (witness) to all experiences of change. Because he is the Ajan and Ajitan. Ajan means either he is not born out of something external to him or he is not the result of his own process. So here Ajan means something that is not the result of the process or the process itself. Since it is not the result of the process or the process itself, it cannot be won over by anything. Something which cannot be won over by anything is ajitan.

3.6.3 Rama and the Language System

Such an experience is Ananda and that Ananda is the Asraya of the Jagat. This is the level of experience that is attained only after the sublation of all experiences of jagat in the forms of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana by saying 'neti, neti'. Since such an experience is the Asraya of Jagat, it must be the Nigama. Since it is the Nigama it can not be the subject matter of a language system. The language systems are meant to express only the Agama. Since

Ananda is the Nigama and since that is the Assraya of Jagat then it cannot be the subject matter of a language system.

Since Rama is both the Jagat and the Assraya of Jagat then the Jagat and its Assraya cannot be different. Since both the Jagat and its Assraya cannot be different then the Assraya of Jagat must be the essence of Jagat. So, Jagat and the essence of Jagat are non-dual. Then the Ananda, the Assraya of Jagat is in the Jagat itself. Since Ananda is in the jagat itself then it is absolutely right to call Rama as Paramanandamurthy.¹⁹

3.6.4 Rama the completion of Experience

The experience of Rama as paramanandamurthy takes place when the process of experience is completed. It begins from the stula level of experience and then it reaches to suksma and finally to the basis of suksma and stula levels of experience. The Katha Upanisad brilliantly explains the process. It says that: "The sense objects are higher than the senses and the mind is higher than the sense objects; but the intellect is higher than the mind and the great soul is higher than the intellect."²⁰

3.6.5 Rama the Atman itself

Sankara interprets the first part of the mantra like this: "Now, then, the senses are gross. The arthah, sense objects by

which those senses were created for their (ie. of the sense objects) own revelation are certainly parah, higher subtler, more pervasive and are their inner selves; indriyebhyah than, those senses - which are their own effects."²¹ Since Manas is more subtle than the sense organ and the objects then it must be superior to them. Since Buddhi is more refined than the Manas then naturally it must be superior to manas. Since Atman is the most refined then it must be the most superior form of experience.

3.7.1 Maya

Then, the question is what the relation between the experience of Atman the highest reality and the rests. It is here that the term Maya is used to explain the relation is. Ezhuttacchan says that it is due to the Maya that the multitudes occur. The multi forms of relations including the cause and effect are also due to Maya. But the absolute is never the subject of such multitudes and relations.²² Again he explains that it is the Maya which causes for the existence of authorship apart from the words.²³ The functioning of Maya begins with the awareness of body as a separate entity.²⁴ It is the Maya which causes for the discrimination and when Maya ceases the discrimination also vanishes away.²⁵ The knowledge of the Anatma (unreal) as Atma (real) is the direct effect of Maya and from this the sansara (world) effects.²⁶ The Maya functions in a dual way of concealing the real and projecting the unreal. It is due

to the projection of Maya that the sansara is taken for granted as a reality. The Maya is the cause of the whole process of stula (gross) sukṣma (subtle) differences.²⁷ It is the Maya that causes the experience of the existence of the world as in the case of rope-snake experience.²⁸ Finally he declares that the svarupa of Rama is covered by Maya and it is revealed only after the vanishing of Maya.

3.7.2 Maya and Sansara

Maya for Ezhuttacchan is the sansara (world) itself and the sansara is not unreal. But it is not real also. It is not unreal because anything that can be experienced cannot be called as unreal. Every sort of experience is real at least for the time being. But every experience cannot be taken for granted because the experience of sansara is ever changing. The ever changing process possesses the dual qualities of sad (existence) and asad (non-existence). Every experience is sad because it exists for at least that moment. At the time of experience it never changes. If it changes at the time of experience also then it is not possible to experience it. It is experienced because it exists at the time of experience. The snake is experienced in the place of a rope at the time of experience and the snake never changes at that time. It changes only at a secondary stage. Then the rope is experienced and the snake is not

experienced. So, even to experience change, it is essential to have the existence. It is the nonchanging unit at the time of experience which is the cause for the experience of change.

3.7.3 The Nature and function of Maya

Maya possesses both the qualities of change and non-change. It is sad non changing - at one unit and asad - changing at another unit. Such an experience creates epistemological inconsistency and metaphysical chaos. An experience which creates metaphysical chaos cannot be depended on. Such a non-dependable experience of Maya is brilliantly compared with a tree that is having its roots above and branches down.²⁹ This artificial image is used to express a unique experience that the sansara or the Maya does not have any basis. Anything that basis cannot be depended on. More over he who depends on the baseless Maya also will perish as in the case of the snake which vanishes away when rope is experienced.

Since Maya is sansara the whole experience of multitudes is due to sansara. In every experience of multitudes there must be relations. Every relation is basically the relation of cause and effect. In every relation of cause and effect there must be the spatio-temporal sequence of prior and posterior forms. Cause, the prior form of effect is absent in the posterior form. The effect is latent in the cause. What is latent in the effect will be manifested

again. This process of the manifestation and latency will be continued. That is why the sansara is often compared with a wheel. Like a wheel the sansara rotates constantly.

Since the Maya causes the cause effect form of events in the spatio-temporal sequence then there must be the agent and action. The concept of the agent and action creates duality and the duality causes for the existence of body as a separate entity. Whenever body is experienced as a separate entity then there will be discrimination. The discriminatory process will be continued until Maya vanishes away.

The functioning of Maya is consistent with its nature. The nature of Maya is sad and asad with its dual function of avarana and Viksepa. Avarana means to conceal and Viksepa means to project. It conceals the snake and projects the rope. At the time of projection what is experienced is the snake and not the rope. But what remains is the rope. The experience of snake is momentary and it vanishes away along with the experience of rope. This process of concealment and projection is the cause for the differences that is manifested at the stula level of experience. What is latent at the stula level becomes manifested at the suksma level also.

3.7.4. Vivartha and Parinama

It is in this sense, Ezhuttacchan says, that Maya is the cause of the world. Whenever there is change there is Maya. Maya

is manifested along with the manifestation of change and it is latent when the change remains as latency. Then, the question is what the metaphysical nature of change is. This aspect is explained by the doctrine of Vivarta. In vivarta change is not real. What is real is unchanging. But the unchanging that is seen as change is the sansara and the sansara is vivarta (apparent).

This is clearly illustrated by the rope-snake experience. The rope never becomes the snake. The rope happens to be experienced as snake. If the rope becomes the snake then it is known as parinama (evolution). In parinama the change is real and it can be explained only by the identity in difference. In parinama what was latent and what is manifested are connected through the cause and effect relationship. Since the cause is hidden in the effect then what is latent is manifested in the form of effect. This is not what happens in the case of rope and snake. Here the rope appears as the snake and the snake cannot exist in any form in the rope. But in parinama the cause is transformed into the effect, that is, the snake must exist in the rope. But when the rope is experienced the snake vanishes just as darkness disappears in the presence of light.

3.7.5 Maya and Ayam

But the Ayam is the basic unit of analysis. The Ayam at the stula and sukma levels are functioning as the Anna, Prana, Mana and

Vijnana states of experience. Such states of experience have to be sublated to experience Ananda and when Ananda is experienced the other levels will be vanished away. So, the levels of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana can be called as Maya. Then the question is whether the Maya should be there always along with Ananda?

3.7.6 Parinaminitya (changing existence) and Kutastanitya (unchanging existence)

In order to answer the question it is essential to explain the concept of parinaminitya and Kutastanitya. Parinaminitya refers to the enduring feature of the ever changing experience where all the binaries are functioning. Because wherever there is experience that experience begins with Pratyaksa and Anumana. This aspects is stated in Katha Upanisad when it qualifies. Aswatha (momentary) as Sanatana (eternal).³⁰ Eventhough it is Aswatha which means momentary, the ever changing Aswatha continues to exist. It means that the ever changing aspects exist as long as the pratyaksa and anumana operate. So whenever and wherever the pratyaksa and anumana are in operation, the changing experiences shall be there. This aspect of every experience is stressed by the term parinaminitya.

Kutastanitya signifies the nature of unchanging experience. One of the meanings Kuta is centre. Aste means that which exists.

So kutasta means that which exists in the centre. Here it means that which exists in the centre of every experience that is changing. That which exists in the centre of every experience is the unchanging and eternal. So, the parinaminitya and the kutastanitya point towards the never changing and the ever changing characteristics of the experience. The kutasta is experienced not with the help of pratyaksa or Anumana but with sruti where the entire language ceases to function. So the parinaminitya and kutastanitya are referring only the experience of Ayam. That experience begins with stula level of Anna, goes through the various states at the suksma level and ends in the Ananda. That experience of Ananda in Ayam is the ultimate reality of Advaita Philosophy.

In many places Ezhuttacchan describes Rama as the Kutasta.³¹ In Ayodhya Kanda, he mentions the process of the Maya as parinaminitya.³² After mentioning the process he explains that: It is Kutasta (eternal) that is the basis of parinami (non-eternal) and every parinami signifies the kutasta and kutasta is the centre of every parinami. So, Ezhuttacchan says that the parinaminitya suggests the kutastanitya as the Agama of Ayam which in turn suggests the Nigama and Rama is both the kutasta and parinami.

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
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Chapter - IV

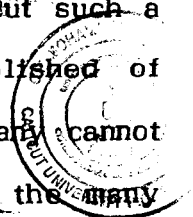
COSMOLOGY OF ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

4.1.1 The Problem of one and many

The term Cosmology refers to the theory of the Universe. The theory must be able to explain the origin, development sustenance and destruction of the universe. Since universe is the totality of multitudes, the problem of one and many is a basic problem of cosmology. Every system of thought tries to give an answer to the question of one and many. Pluralism, dualism, monism and non-dualism are the possible solutions to the problem. In Indian systems Vaisesika advocates pluralism, Sankhya stands for dualism and Advaita Vedanta resolves it to non-dualism.

4.1.2 Pluralism

It is easy to explain multitudes with pluralism. But such a common sense view of reality cannot be logically established of pluralism is admitted then the relation between one and many cannot be explained properly. If one is basically different from the many



then they cannot be related together. This is the main criticism against Vaisesika system. The Vaisesika system fails to explain the samavaya (inseparable relation) because of the same reason, if basically the atoms are different, it is not possible to have Samavaya (inseparable) relation between the atoms. If two atoms are inseparably related, then it is not logically possible to divide them. If Samavaya is not possible then what is possible is the Samyoga (separable) and in samyoga there is nothing to be called as intrinsic relations. Because samyoga speaks only of the proximity of atoms in a given context. If the relation between one and many is not logically explained, then the cosmology cannot be described.

4.1.3 Dualism

To rule out the difficulties of pluralism the Sankhya system reduces the multitudes of the universe to one. According to Sankhya, the cause of the universe is Prakrti or Pradhana. The Prakrti is the cause of everything and that itself is uncaused. It is also known as Avyakta on account of its being extremely subtle and imperceptible. Since it is imperceptible by ordinary experience it can be inferred from its effects. Since the universe is the effect and since the effect must have cause then there must be something to be called as the cause of the effect. Since the cause cannot be different from the effect, what is to be seen in the effect in the manifested form must be seen in the cause in the latent form.

The two forms, the latent and the manifested forms, are always possible in every unit of the evolute of Prakrti. The process of evolution of the cause into effect is explained by the Parinama Vada. The entire plurality of psycho-physical beings in the universe is explained by Prakrti. This monistic reductionism of the plurality of universe to the material prakrti is not logically sound. Since the active Prakrti is not capable by itself to cause evolution, the presence of an inactive, purusa as an abstract logical entity is to be admitted. This dualistic position is not logically sound because if one abstract logical entity like purusa is possible then on the basis of the same logic more than one entity can be admitted. Moreover if some sort of division, either empirical or to abstract, is admitted, the logical culmination of such a division will be pluralism and pluralism is not logically sound. More over the process of logical abstraction and reductionism can be entertained only in a speculative field of enquiry which is devoid of experience.

4.1.4 Non-dualistic Ayam

The Advaita Philosophy never entertains speculation hence it cannot admit anything that is devoid of experience. Since the subject matter of our analysis is Ayam, we now need to consider the question as to how the Ayam is experienced as the universe?

According to the Taittiriya Upanisad "He (the self) wished let me be many, let me be born. He undertook a liberation. Having liberated, he created all this that exists. That (Erahman) having created that, entered into that very thing. And having entered there it became the formed and the formless, the defined and the undefined, the sustained and the non-sustained of the sentient and the insentient, the true and the untrue. Truth became all this that there is. They call that Brahman Truth."¹

4.2.1 Ayam alone Exists

Since our experience reveals the Ayam alone then everything in the experience also must be the Ayam. Since everything is Ayam then the world of multiplicity also must be Ayam. Since the world owes, itself to the Ayam, the essence of Ayam must be the essence of the world. Since there is only Ayam and its essence, then, the multitudes are also caused by the essence of Ayam itself. So, there can not be any cause other than the essence of Ayam. That is why the Taittiriya says "Sah, akamyata."²

Akamyata means it is desired and that decision is taken by the "Sah A", the Atman. Since there is nothing other than the Atman to take a decision, the decision to become multitude is taken by the atman himself. This statement should not be taken in the literal

sense of decision making as done by human beings, but it means that it is the Atman itself that is manifested in the world of multiplicity.

4.2.2 Atman and multitudes

The multiplicity (prapanca) is possible because the atman is ekam. Ekam means one which is the absolute. Since Atman is absolute, it can be viewed as many within the space-time limitation. Hence it is stated that the absolute desired to become (prajayeya) many. The literal meaning of prajayeya is to be born. To be born means to have a beginning is spatio-temporal existence. Every beginning is the beginning of a process which continues to its end. Every process involves multiple elements. Hence the Atman's desire to be many should be taken to mean that the absolute manifests itself in the prapanca.

4.2.3 Multitudes and Maya

Since the reality is ultimately one without a second, the multiplicity belongs to the realm of Maya.³ It is the multiplicity which leads to diversification which results in the experience of permanence amidst the experience of change. Ezhuttacchan illustrates the fact by saying that the Lord Rama desired to create the universe and for which he assumed Maya.⁴ In an earlier part of the

same section he reminds us that Rama is the avyaya (immutable) and hence he cannot undergo change. Thus, the author intends to establish that the essence of the whole cosmic process is to be found in the one immutable reality. Hence the "desire" as stated by the seer can be seen as coeval with the changing experience. Ezhuttacchan, thus, clarifies that the Maya itself is the desire for creation.

4.2.4 Identity of one and Many

Again Taittiriya upanishad explains that it is the process which creates whatever is seen in the universe and whatever is created has its essence within the thing created. This aspect is explained when Taittiriya points out that "tat eva anupra visat."⁴ Tat here means that which is desired to be created. That tat enters into what is created. The essence which causes for the creation of the universe is within the created universe itself. Everything that is the essence of the creation is Ayam. Because Ayam is Agama which is having the Nigama as its basis.

Since the essence is in the created being, it is characterised by both the 'Sat ca' and 'Tyat ca'. both the form and formlessness.⁵ Anything that has got a form must be within the limit of the spatio-temporal order. Change is the order of space and time. So, anything that has the form be the unit of changing

experience. Since this experience contains, the essence of creation and since the essence is beyond the reach of form then it must also be formless at the same time.

4.2.5 Agama, the form and Nigama the formlessness

As far as Agama of Ayam is having a form it can be defined. Definition is a linguistic process within the range of space and time. So, naturally form can be defined. But everything that is defined also crosses the boundaries of space and time. Since everything that has got a form can be defined and since everything, that is not having the form can not be defined then the created is both definable and indefinable.⁶

4.2.6 Changing and Non-changing

The defined form is limited by space and time. So, anything that can be defined depends on something for its existence. Something that is subject to constant change cannot be its own sources. Since form is a spatio temporal order, it is subjected to change. So form cannot be its own source. The changing form is in need of something as its source to depend and that should not be changing. That which is never changing is never in need of anything for its existence. Since the created is both ever changing and never

changing then it can be termed as 'nilaya namca' and 'anilaya namca'.⁷

4.2.7 Brahman is the Cosmos

Something that is changing is technically termed as asatya and never changing is termed as satya. Since the created world is characterised by both change and immutability, it is the ayam, that has the agama and nigama and that Ayam is Brahman. That is why the Taittiriya Upanishad states that it is the Brahman that creates the cosmos and that everything in the cosmos is from Brahman.⁸ Since everything is Brahman then everything is truth.

4.3.1 Rama the Creature and the Creator

Ezhuttacchan says that, on the basis of the upanisdic doctrines it can be undoubtedly said that Rama is the creator of the universe.⁹ Moreover he created the universe from himself. He clarified that only the Vedantins are capable to tell that the never changing truth is the basis of the everchanging experience.¹⁰ Since Rama is truth, anything that is created from the Rama cannot be untrue. So every aspect of this universe must be true. Nothing can be regarded as non-existent. This position of cosmology is consistent with the Advaita epistemology and metaphysics. The Advaita epistemology never denies any experience. Since every experience is

real at least for the moment in which it is experienced, no experience can be false. This affirmation of all experience can be seen in the metaphysics also. In its metaphysics it aims at the experience of the non-changing amidst the changes.

4.3.2 Existence and experience are identical

If no experience is negated, then, how the experience as a whole can be explained? The beginning of the Taittiriya mantra elaborates the answer.¹¹ It says that he who knows it as asat, then, Brahman also is known, to him as asat and he who knows it is sat, it is known to him as sat. The second part of Taittiriya Upanisad explains the different layers of asat as Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana and sat as Ananda.¹² It can be known as Anna by means of bare Pratyaksa. If one's experience freezes to that level then truth for him is the bare matter itself. That bare material level can be experienced as prana mana and vijnana at different subtle levels of experience. The total experience that starts from Anna and ends in Vijnana is asat. The mantra warns that he who experiences asat as Brahman becomes asat. Since what remains is the Ayam alone, then, it is not possible to have anything other than the experience. Since there is nothing apart from the experience, it is not logically possible to think of anything other than the experience. So, one is equated with ones experience.

4.3.3 Asat (non-existing)

Since one is equated with ones own experience and since one experiences only the asat (non-existing) then one becomes the asat (non-existing). This arguments is logically sound. But there is a very serious question that is to be answered in this context. Why asat is treated as non existing? It needs a little explanation Gita says that non existing does not have the form of existence and existing does not have form of non existence.¹³ The aim of experience is to know the sat alone. Since the characteristic feature of sat is existence and existence means permanence then anything that is changing does not have the feature of existence. So everything that is changing is impermanent and anybody who depends on impermanence also would vanish.

4.3.4 Nitya Sansarin (one who vanishes in change)

Ezhuttacchan calls the one who experiences the asat alone as Nitya-sansarin (He who vanishes in change).¹⁴ Sansara is the experience of change and he who is immersed in change is in the grip of sansara. Such a man will be undergoing the process of beginning, sustenance and destruction endlessly. The life of such a man will not have any basis, because his life is the sum total of the changing experiences only. A baseless life nullifies its own truth.

4.3.5 Nitya Mukta (eternally liberated)

Naturally he who experiences the sat will become sat. One who enjoys the Ananda never again experiences change because Ananda is a state of experience that transcends all changes. Such an experience can neither be realized by the mind nor be expressed by words. Ezhuttacchan calls persons who attains to experience as nitya mukta (eternally liberated).¹⁵ Here mukta means he who experiences the Nitya. The Nitya means the never changing aspect amidst the change.¹⁶

4.4.1 Origin of the Universe

So far only the sources of the origin of the universe is explained. The process of the development of the universe has been brilliantly elaborated in Prasna Upanisad.

"Earth and the rudiment of earth, water and the rudiment of water, fire and the rudiment of fire, space and the rudiment of space, the organ and the object of vision, the organ and the object of hearing, the organ and the object of smell, the organ and the object of taste, the

organ and the object of touch, the organ and the content of speech, the hands and the object grasped, sex and enjoyment, the organ of excretion and excreta, the feet and the space trodden, the mind and the content of thought, understanding and the content of understanding, egoism and the content of egoism, awareness and the content of awareness, the shining skin and the object revealed by that, prana and all that has to be held by prana."¹⁷

4.4.2 The Five Basic Elements

The first part of the mantra describes the origin and development of the five basic elements in their macro and micro forms. The earth, water, air, fire and akasa (space) with the specific sukṣma forms are evolved. Along with the evolution of these forms the evolution of the five sensory organs also occurs. These five sensory organs are the functional units of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. These sense organs and these functional micro forms are only the individual counter parts of the five basic elements.

After the sensory organs the structure and functions of the motor organs are explained. These motor organs along with the

contents of orientation and the area of functions can also be seen there. Then the internal structure of the individual is explained. The manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Ahankara (ego sense), and Citta (psychic apparatus) together forms the Antahkarana. Every thing of these internal structure has been connected by prana (life force).

4.4.3 The Three Gunas

The entire universe is the evolution of these basic elements. The structure and functions of the universe can again be reduced to three basic principles. They are the Satva, Rajas and Tamas.¹⁸ These three gunas are the product of Maya and Maya covers the Purusa.¹⁹ The Maya is constituted with the satva, Rajas and Tamas and it is known as prakrti.²⁰ The process of the prakrti is the cause of the basic elements and their functions. It is from the basic elements the other objects are derived. In this respect the process of evolution of Sankhya system is not different from Advaita. But in Sankhya, though the prakrti is ever active the evolution starts due to the presence of purusa. Hence it is essential to have the existence of something that is different from the prakrti. The logical inconsistency of the position has already been discussed.

4.4.4 Identity of Cause and Effect

But the position of advaita Vedanta is entirely different from the Sankhya. The Advaita position is brilliantly explained by the

Prasna upanishad.²¹ Eventhough it is seen with sensory and motor organs and mind and with the contents of orientation of operations, it is never touched by any of the organs or of the various contents of operations. Because it is the basis of every process. The basis of the evolution is in the evolute itself. It is not possible to have anything other than the evolute because such a concept leads to abstraction and speculation.

4.4.5 All Pervading Cause

This aspect also is explained by the upanisad.²² The mantra says that "It is that absolute shining Atman which is hidden in all beings. It is all pervading and it is within the centre of all creatures. It presides over all the functions and it is the dweller in all beings, the impartial spectator, the absolute who is free from all qualities."²³ The Atman is qualified as eka deva which means that the atman is the absolute. Since it is eka (absolute) it cannot be related to any particular object, because anything that is related to a particular objects cannot be the absolute. Since it is the absolute then, it is hidden in all objects irrespective of their spatio-temporal limitations.

That is why the mantra says that it is the Sarva Bhutesu gutah (hidden in all bhutas). Here, a doubt is possible. Since it is

hidden in all the micro and macro manifestations of the bhutas, then, it may not be seen in every part of such micro and macro manifestations. This doubt is cleared by saying that it is sarva vyapi (all pervading). Since it is all pervading, every part of the object must be its own manifestation. If every part of the object is Atman then the ever changing and deteriorating aspects also must be atman. Such a concept may defeat the very purpose of upanisads. But the doubt is ruled out by saying as sarvabhutantratam (the centre of every element). It means that it is in the centre of every part of the objects and it is in the centre of the object made out of the parts. So every unit of changing experience is changing on the basis of the centre of it.

Since it is in the centre of every unit of experience and since every unit of experience is changing then, the centre cannot be changing. Such a non changing centre of everything amidst the change is expressed as Karmadhyaksa (presiding force of actions). Karma means the action of any kind. It is the physical kind and the moral action. Adhyaksa means the presiding force. So, it is the presiding force of every kind of actions. It is the centre which holds everything in motion.

But the centre cannot be separated from the objects because it is dwelling in all beings. So, the centre is within it. Even though the centre is within it, it never moves. Since it never

moves, then it is called Saksi (witness). Saksi is never the part of the process. So it remains as the centre of everything and being the centre it is all pervading and it never moves because the centre cannot move. Hence such a centre is the absolute spirit. Since it is the absolute, then, it is devoid of all qualities. Hence it means it is free from the limitations of spatio-temporal manifestations.

4.5.1 Brahman is both the cause and effect of the Universe

This process of cosmic evolution is expressed through a brilliant simile by the Mundaka upanisad.²⁴ As a spider spreads out and withdraws its thread, so out of the immutable does the universe emerge. The simile is so familiar to the students of Vedanta. The spider by itself and independently of any auxiliary causes spreads out the thread that are non-different from its own body. Again it withdraws those very threads. Here the process and the product of the creation are identical. It shows that nothing other than the absolute is involved here in the process of creation.

4.5.2 The Order of Cosmic Evolution

The next mantra of the same upanisad explains the order of the creation.²⁵ Brahman, the immutable sources of creation when desirous of creating this world increased in size. From that Brahman, through its omniscience of the power and knowledge of

creation, preservation and dissolution originates Annam. The term annam represents the entire material world in its subtle and gross forms of manifestation. From the Annam originates prana and from prana the manas and then emerge the five elements and the other aspects of the world. From manas originates the various functions of manas. The functions of manas is called Kama. Along with the nature and function of various Karmas the various stages of life originate. Along with the performance of the various karmas at various stages the different stations of life also are originated. So, the entire universe with all its diversities is possible.

4.5.3 Karma and the Universe

The universe in motion exists through the karma. Karma here means the order of the functioning of the bhutas. This is known as natural laws when they appear with in the limit of space and time. Every spatio-temporal manifestation has to obey the natural law and everything with in the space and time can be explained by means of the spatio-temporal order. In space and time it is the proximity of the previous and the present which explains each other. So every object in space and time is essential to explain the other.

This order of space and time is applicable to Manas because Manas is derived from Annam. Since Manas is derived from Annam,

the moral action of manas also can be interpreted by the rules of Annam.

4.5.4 Karma is the moral Order

The morality, then, is not the concern of the human beings alone. It is the concern of every spatio-temporal manifestation. Because every spatio-temporal manifestation has an internal structure and that is more refined than the external structure. The animal kingdom and the plant kingdom are to take part in the moral life along with mountains and Oceans in accordance with this theory. This is the logical basis of the aphorism- Lokah, Samastah, Sukhino Bhavantu (Let the universe be enjoyed happiness). Loka means the spatio temporal manifestation. Samasta means each and every object along with the perfection of each and every part of the object. Sukha, the state of happiness is possible only if each and every forms of the spatio temporal manifestation along with the perfection of each and every part is involved as a single unit of experience.

Ezhuttacchan explains this aspect by saying that "Loka Karma Sutra Eaddham (universe is bound by karma).²⁶ So, what he says is that the entire Loka is connected by the thread of Karma. The spatio-temporal manifestation is governed by the doctrine of Karma. That karma appears as universal order and moral order. It

is due to the karmic orders the bhoga is possible.²⁷ Bhoga generally means pleasure. But in Advaita Philosophy, it means the experience of sensory and motor organs and manas. It is in this sense that the entire world is the result of karma. Since the experience begins with Bhoga and since Bhoga is the karma itself then, there is a chance to think that karma alone is the reality. One of the mantra of the Mundaka Upanisad rules out such a possibility of doubt by mentioning that the loka karma (the action of the world) leads to amirtam (immortality).²⁸

4.5.5 Karma is the Agama based on the Nigama

Since the aim towards which the whole Karma is directed is Amritam, then, it explains that the basis of the change as something that which never changes. Since mritam is change, then, amritam is the absence of change. Since Karma is change and the order of change and since that order of change is the absence of change, then, it is clear that even the basis of the order of change itself is the absence of change. The changing unit is the Sansara and sansara is the Agama part of Ayam and the Agama leads to the Nigama.

4.5.6 Karma is Maya

Since Amirta is the basis of the cosmic evolution, then, the question is what is the nature of the state Amirta. The Sveta

asevata upanisad describes it like this.²⁹ It is the experience of the absolute which creates the entire universe from itself due to the force of its own Maya. Since the absolute is the basis of Maya and the creations Maya, then, it is called as the Maya mayan (master of Maya). The master of Maya absolutely depends on itself for the creation, preservation and destruction. The experience of the master of Maya as the basis of everything that is created, preserved and destroyed in the universe is the experience of Amirta.

4.6.1 The Concept of Mayamayan

Ezhuttacchan gives the analysis of the cosmology in the form of Agastya Stuti. It explains and illustrates the Upanisadic cosmology. He calls his Rama as the Mayamayan³⁰ and describes the very nature of Maya as parinama.³¹ He points out that the Upanisads call it as the Avyakrta (the prime substance) or Prakrti.³² The manifold objects of the cosmos are due to the parinama (evolution) of the Avyakrta.³³ The basic elements of the cosmic existence are the three principles satva, Rajas and Tamas.³⁴ These three principles through their stula, suksma and karana (concrete, subtle and causal forms) operate as the universe.

4.6.2 The functioning of Maya and Karma

It is from the tamas that the subtle forms of the Panca-bhutas (five fold elements) emerged. The sensory and motor organs

emerged from the Rajas and Manas emerges from satva.³⁵ The all pervading stula of the cosmic existence is the Virat and the Virat itself is the totality of all the organic and inorganic forms which constitute the universe.³⁶ It is through the gunatraya (three fold constituents of prakrti) that the maya is functioning. It manifests itself both in the spatio-temporal existence and in the moral world. Nothing within the spatio-temporal realm can be free from it. In human beings it reveals in all the Jagrat, Swapna and Susupti³⁷ (Waking, dreaming and deep-sleep) states.

4.6.3 Karma is Avidya

The spatio-temporal existence is the manifestation of avidya (ignorance) and those who are immersed in avidya are incapable of being liberated. The ocean of avidya has to be crossed over by vidya. It is through the vidya that the avyaya (immortal) is known and the one who knows avyaya is called Nitya Mukta (eternally liberated). Nitya Mukta is the state of Amrita.³⁸ In a state of Amrita the vidya and avidya are known distinctively as they are. Hence even the avidya is known as avidya on the basis of Vidya.

4.7.1 All Inclusiveness

The cosmology of advaita philosophy is an all inclusive one. It does not accord any special status to some particular creation.

Everything that exists has the one and the same source. Consequently, every creation has an end towards which it is directed. Moreover there is no difference between the creature and process of creation. The creature and the process of creation are identical. This identity rules out the role of any external agency in relation to the creation. There is no place for a God over and above the creation. In pluralism and in dualism an external agency is essential either as an efficient cause or as an inactive agent for creation. However the Advaita cosmology has no need of a deus ex machine.

4.7.2 Individual and the Cosmos

The dualistic and pluralistic cosmologies find difficulty also in explaining the individual human beings. In pluralism and in dualism individual enjoys a special status, in spite of the fact that he is just a part of the cosmic existence. But the advaita cosmology does not find any need to accord a privileged status to the individual. Being the part of Ayam the individual and the universe are only the different modes of the same reality. Both the universe and the individuals are the evolutes of the same prakrti with its qualities of Satva, Rajas and Tamas. Both in their concrete existence are the products of the five basic elements, so that both of them can be analysed into the Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana levels. This

identity of man with the rest of the universe is consistent with the Advaita epistemology and metaphysics.

The analysis of Pratyaksa and Anumana reveals the units of experience as the non dual Ayam. Since pratyaksa arises due to the friction of Indriya with Indriyatha, then, what remains in pratyaksa is the experience itself. It cannot be further analysed into the subject of experience and the object of experience. Since such discrimination is not possible then it is not possible to know the individual and the universe as separate and distinct entities. Since anumana depends on pratyaksa, the experience at the level of Anumana also cannot be essentially different from the pratyaksa.

4.7.3 Ananda is the basis

The object of our analysis is experience and we have seen that the experience never reveals anything other than the Ayam. It can be known at the various levels like Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana and Ananda. Eventhough experience progresses from the level of Anna, to Prana, Mana and Vijnana, they are to be sublated to experience Ananda which is the highest reality. When Ananda is experienced the other experiences will vanish away like darkness in the presence of light. It is the same Ayam that is experienced as the Anna, Prana, Mana, Vijnana and finally realised as the Ananda.

4.7.4 Identity of Jivatma and Paramatma

The non dual nature of the Advaita system is kept intact in its cosmology also. Ezhuttacchan explains it like this: Jivatma (individual) and Paramatma (universal) are only the Synonymous terms to refer to the same experience.³⁹ There is no difference between them. He states that the motto of advaita cosmology is the experience of the non-dual identity of the Jivatma (individual) and paramatma (universal) at all levels of manifestations of the universe. The whole process of universe is Maya and the basis of Maya is non-dualistic. The whole process of universe is non-dualistic. The process of Maya as well as the end towards which Maya is directed also are non-dualistic. This non-dualistic character of the advaita cosmology is kept intact in Adhyatma Ramayana.

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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Chapter - V

ETHICS OF ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

5.1.1 Ananda is the Aim

The suggested sense of the mahavakya, ayamatmabrahma indicates the aim of the process of Ayam is to experience Ananda. The Agama of the Ayam suggests the Nigama. The very end towards which the whole process moves is the Nigama and the Nigama is Ananda. The experience of Ananda is the ultimate aim of every existence. The triple texts of Advaita Vedanta specifically explains the episteme and the techne of the attainment of this aim. So, the basic orientation of the Advaita Philosophy is in ethics.

The aim of Advaita ethics is the cultivation of a life that transcends both good and evil. The problems of good and evil arises out of the world that is directed by the binaries of spatio-temporal existence. The Advaita, aesthetics, epistemology, metaphysics and cosmology aim at a level of experience that is free from such

conflicts. The aesthetics is directed to Rasa and the experience of Rasa is untouched by the limitations of the media. Taittiriya upanishad defines Rasa as the Brahman itself. The methodology to experience such a Rasa is given by its epistemology and that epistemology reveals that there is only the Ayam to be analysed and that Ayam is essentially Ananda. Its metaphysics undoubtedly proclaims that the only reality in its true sense is the Brahman itself. It is the cosmic manifestation of Brahman that is explained by its cosmology.

5.1.2 Ayam is the subject matter of Ethics

The highest goal of Advaita Ethics is to experience Brahman in the day to day experience. As the aesthetics, epistemology, metaphysics and cosmology of Advaita system is oriented in the experiences of day to day existence, the ethics also is deeply rooted in the daily experience. Such an experience is technically called as Ayam and Ayam is the subject matter of Advaita Ethics. The Ayam is the loka in aesthetic, it is pramana in epistemology, it is sattatraya in metaphysics, it is also the five sheaths of experience which appear in subtle and gross forms in cosmology. The same Ayam is called karma in ethics. The differences are only in the terminologies.

Since karma is the ethical term for Ayam then the nature of Karma cannot be different from the nature of Ayam. Since Ayam is ever active, karma also must be ever active. Anything that is moving and active must have past and future along with the present. The present is the stula (concrete) form while the past and future are suksma (subtle). What is present is the subject of pratyaksa. It is the pratyaksa which justifies Anumana and the Anumana is the pramana by which past and future are known.

5.1.3 The Operation of Karma

The karma which is in operation at present is termed as the Prarabdha. The term literally means that which has already started functioning. Technically speaking, everything that is manifested in space and time is prarabdha. The every day experience is prarabdha. It is Ayam as revealed through pratyaksa. Since pratyaksa is in space and time, there is the duality in Pratyaksa. So naturally in prarabdha also there is duality. The duality and the multiplicity are due to Maya. That is why Ezhuttacchan calls the body as prarabdha¹ and he says that the existence of body in this form is due to Maya.²

5.1.4 The body is due to Karma

He elaborates this point by saying that the very nature of Kaya (the body) is vikari. Vikari means that which is always

changing. Since it is always changing Ezhuttacchan calls it as parinami which means that which is changing in accordance with certain order.³ This order is to be found in Karma. There are two specific forms of the prarabdha karma and they are the sancchita and the agami. Sancchita means that which is collected or accumulated. It is from the Sancchita that the prarabdha starts functioning and the continuation of prarabdha in future is Agami. It establishes the causal nexus between the present life with the previous ones.

5.1.5 Karma and Causation

The present birth cannot be considered as an isolated occurrence. It is not an accidental occurrence which is not connected with anything. An unconnected occurrence is unpredictable and an unpredictable occurrence creates only chaos and mystery. It creates chaos because there is nothing to determine it and there is mystery because the cause of birth remains unknown. If chaos and uncertainty characterise life, the very existence itself would be miserable. An amount of certainty is essential even to drink a cup of water to quench the thirst. Since there is a certain order in relation to life, it can be assumed that there exists some amount of certainty. Advaita says that this is not due to some habitual certainty, but it is due to the unavoidable causal nexus through the operation of karma. The cause cannot be an external agent. The concept of an

external agent as a cause for anything is devoid of experience and hence it is abstraction and it cannot be admitted in Advaita Philosophy.

Since, Advaita epistemology never accepts anything other than the experience and since the experience reveals only the Ayam, then, the cause of the prarabdha should be traced to the Ayam itself. Ayam is a process and as in the case of every process it has a beginning, subsistence and an end. In this sense an end is the cause of the beginning and a beginning is the cause of an end.

5.1.6 The Cyclic Process of Karma

This structure of the process shows that cause exists in effect and effect in cause. There is a continuity between the past and the present. So, the sanccita is potentially the prarabdha and prarabdha is only the actualisation of sanccita. This shows that the cause of the body is to be found within itself. The present body is only the result of the continuation of the process of Ayam. So the Ayam itself is both the cause and effect. Ayam which appears as a body in a previous existence is the sanccita and when it appears in the present one, it is prarabdha. The continuation of the sanccita through prarabdha into the future existence is termed as the Agami.

5.2.1 Karma operates at various Levels

The past creates the present and the present creates the future is the order of the operation of karma. Every unit of this process can be expressed in three states. They are the stula (gross), suksma (subtle), and Karana (causal). The culmination is turiya and it remains beyond the process. So the result of every unit of karma also must be having the three states. The stula phala (concrete effect) of a Karma is explicitly expressed in suksma (subtle) and karana (causal) phalas. But in the process of manifestation of the karma, the suksma will be expressed as stula and vice-versa. That is why the stula, suksma and karana are treated as identical by the Mandukya Upanisad.⁴

5.2.2 Karma and Panca Mahayajna

Every unit of prarabdha has to obey a five fold obligation. They are called the pancamahayajna. This is stated clearly in Brahaderanyaka Upanisad.⁵ It is a set of Karma to be performed to maintain properly the spatio-temporal existence of all living beings. The existence of the body in a specific spatio-temporal order becomes difficult in the absence of the performance of such karmas. This set of karma is termed as nitya karma. Nobody can be exempted from the performance of such karmas. Since they are to be practised constantly they are called the nitya (regular).

5.2.3 The classification of Karma

There is another set of karma which are to be performed occasionally. They are known as naimithika karma. Even though it is required only on certain occasions, the performances of these karmas are essential to those occasions. In other words such a set of karma are the necessities of such occasions. There is a third set of karma, the kamya karma, which are to be performed for the attainment of certain special ends. But Kamya karma are not obligatory for all. If one does not seek special ends the question of kamya karma does not arise. Pratisiddha karma (prohibited actions) is the fourth set and which should be avoided for the preservation of normal order. It should be avoided because it can give only the opposite of the intended results. Pratisiddha karma only says of the possibility of performance of such karma. At the same time it warns that the performance of pratisiddha karma would cause hindrance to the existence because pratisiddha karma moves against the order of the process.

5.2.4 Varnadharma

Apart from these four sets of Karma one has to observe the varnadharma and asramadharma. In the beginning of the Adhyatma Ramayana, Ezhuttacchan describes that the Varnadharma and

asramadharmā are to be explained to know the principle of Rama.⁶
This is intended to know the cause of bandha and moksa.⁷

In Gita, Krishna says that: "I have created the four fold varnas in accordance with the guna and karma."⁸ He clarifies that though he has created varnas he is not the author of it. Since Krishna is represented as the ultimate reality in Gita, the meaning is that the ultimate reality is the cause for the creation of varnas. But, since ultimate reality is unchanging it cannot be considered as the changing cause. The varnas thus created have the basis in the ultimate reality and the functions performed by each individual is determined by the Varna. Here it means that the Ayam functions on the basis of the merits and the nature of one's profession. In this context it should be taken to mean the Ayam because there cannot be anything other than the Ayam. So, mayasrestam means the Ayam itself has created the four fold classification on the basis of guna (merit) and karma (service). Here guna means the qualities of a particular Ayam and karma means the functions performed by such an Ayam. So, the spatio-temporal manifestations of the Ayam are classified in accordance with their constituent structure and the functions duly discharged by such structures.

The second part of the sloka in Gita explains the epistemological structure of the creation. It says, "tasya kartharam apiram viddhi akartharam avyayam." Though, the Ayam classifies

the whole process into the four fold classes, it is to be known that the essence of the process is akarharam and avyayam. Karharam means something that is being done. The process that is being done is the process of change the changing process of the Agama of the Ayam. It is again pointed out that the changing process is really due to the akarharam and avyayam. The akarharam signifies the absence of change and avyayam points out the inexhaustability of such a state. This suggests the Nigama of Ayam. It is the Agama of the Ayam which classifies the process into four on the basis of the constituting structure and the functions duly discharged by the structure. But the classification is made to know the basis of the process and the basis of the process is the never changing basis of the ever changing experience.

5.2.5 The Four fold Classes

The four fold classes are, Brahmana, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The Indian philosophy is often criticised for this classification. It is criticised mainly because the four fold classification has paved the way for the caste segmentations of Indian Society. The caste segmentation is looked upon as unnatural and it led to the decay of Indian society. The caste segmentation is of course one of the reasons for the decay of Indian Society. But it has nothing to do with the Varahadharma as such.

Since the varna dharma is determined on the basis of the guna and karma of the Ayam then it can not be called as unnatural or antinatural. The plurality in spatio-temporal order can be explained only in terms of differences. The differences of the manifestations of Ayam must be due to the proportionate basic elements out of which they are constituted. These basic elements are Satva, Rajas and Tamas. The classification of ayam is based on the presence of these three gunas. But the fact that is to be noted here is that the ultimate basis of the Ayam is not the three gunas but the never changing Ananda. The differences disappears when the Ananda is experienced and the aim of Advaita philosophy is the experience of Ananda itself.

5.2.6 Varna and Ananda

So, the advaidin who experiences the non dual Ananda will not be affected by the differences. He who has not enjoyed this state of experience alone will be subjected to the differences. The whole ethical part of Advaita philosophy aims at the experience of the non dual reality. However in the world of change there will be differences and the differences are due to the presence of the three gunas in varying proportions.

The more subtle functions are entrusted with the more refined classes who are dominated by Satva Guna. That is why the

teaching and religious performances are entrusted with the Brahmin class. Since Rajas is ever active, the maintenance of the social and political stability is entrusted with ksatriya in whom the Rajo guna is dominant. The trade and agriculture are with the vaisyas while sudras are the helpers to all the other classes. The point to be noted here is that this classification is not the ultimate one. It is applicable only to the level of changing experience alone. Their validity is limited to the empirical existence. There is nothing in the class-distinction to prevent anyone from the attainment of moksa. That is why Ezhuttacchan specially declares that all including the out-cast, untouchable, sinner and thief, he who commits matricide and patricide the depressed and even he who kills sanyasin are eligible for moksa.⁹ So, the Varnadharna is a classification meant only for the spatio-temporal existence and it never affects the ultimate end of the Advaita philosophy.

5.2.7 Asraradharna

Every varna has to observe the Asramas. Asramadharna is related to the different stages of life. Brahamcarya, Garhastya, Vanaprasta and Sanyasa are the four Asramas to be observed. The social significance of these Asramas is very important. The Brahamcarya is a period that is exclusively meant for learning. The experience of Bhrugu in Taittiriya Upanisad clearly indicates that by learning what is meant is a disciplined life of study in everything

including the vedic texts. So that one may fully prepare himself for his future life. Thus, Brahmacarya is the period of the learning and the ultimate aim of this process is to recognize the basis of all experiences.

If the nature of the reality which is the summum Bonum of human existence is made known even at the very beginning of the life, then the rest of the life could be led in accordance with it. Thus Garhastya, the house hold life, may be led with a conscious awareness of one's ultimate end. During the period of Vanaprasta one should begin his attempts to detach himself from the worldly life and this process should be completed in the fourth asrama. Sanyasa is a way of life, the sole aim of which is to realize the truth, that it is the way of life that is meant for the realisation of the basis of Ayam. The point to be noted here is that the end of life of both the varna and asrama is the experience of Ananda.

5.3.1 Panca Maha Vrata

The proper performances of these duties lead to the cultivation of certain virtues known as panca mahavratas. Ahimsa, satya, asteya, aparigraha and Brahmacarya are the five cardinal virtues to be practised. They termed as cardinal virtues because the observance of these virtues are essential for the realization of its ultimate end of the Ayam. The epistemological implication of these

virtues have already been explained (2.6.1 to 2.6.8 pp). The ethical importance of these virtues is our present concern.

5.3.2 Ahimsa

Himsa means violence. Ahimsa then is the absence of violence. In the ordinary sense violence means to kill. Ahimsa is an important virtue to be practised by all. On the other hand if violence (himsa) is permitted and if it is practised universally the existence of living beings itself would become impossible.

Ahimsa therefore, is the law of the universe. Hence the practise of violence is an activity that goes against the nature. Anything that is antinatural is pratisiddha karma. The performance of pratisiddha karma will produce only the opposite of the intended aims. So, practise of violence for the sake of anything will not be able to achieve the end towards which the activity is directed. So the killing of any type is a pratisiddha karma and that should be avoided.

5.3.3 Ahimsa means Tyektenabhunjeetha (take the minimum)

But no spatio-temporal manifestation is able to survive without appropriating something other than itself. The existence of an organism is maintained by consuming the other organisms. But this

does not mean that non-violence is the law of the nature. The Isavasya Upanisad shows that right way to lead a life based upon Ahimsa by saying tyektenabhunjeetha.¹⁰ This is the essence of the advise given by upanisads. But, it is the Isa which specifically mentions it. The mantra says "what so ever changing there so the changing world; through renunciation of that (world) mayest thou enjoy; covet not anyones riches." Since the world does not have the creator, it is self operative. This self operative aspect of the ayam is expressed by Isavasyam Idam sarvam. Isa is the immanent principle of the Ayam. So, nobody has the right to accumulate anything other than the minimum that is essential to sustain in the universe. One is expected to take only the minimum because the Ayam is not the creation of anybody. This is the meaning of Tyektenabhunjeetha.

The minimum for one's own existence has to be fixed by each one. In such a process of fixation of the minimum one should not be guided by the likes and dislikes. If one is guided by likes and dislikes then one should grab more and that is prohibited by the mantras by saying: "magraadha kasyasvidnam" should not steal the property of others. The possession of any thing by grabbing breaks the limit of minimum. The possession of something by breaking the limit of the minimum is stealing. Here the minimum means what is essential for ones existence. Such a minimum can be fixed by oneself only if one is free from Asakti. Asakti literally

means attachment. But here it means the enjoyment of pleasure and pain born from sense experience. Then, any karma that is performed with asakty is himsa and the karma that is performed by anasakty is Ahimsa.

5.3.4 Himsa and Bhoga

Ezhuttacchan also says that Ahimsa has to be practised. He makes it clear that himsa is possible if and only if the experience that can be attained by sensory and motor organs and manas is true.¹¹ If the change is the nature of truth then what is possible is violence. Because violence operates only on the area of change.¹² He elaborates this point that all bhogas are momentary and it will vanish like a drop of water that falls on hot iron bar.¹³ He classifies that the sansara (world) that is the result of raga (attachment) is just like a dream.¹⁴ The raga operates due to the cittavritty (psychic operation).¹⁵

The cittavritty of raga is clearly explained in the Bhagavad gita.¹⁶ It is due to the intense inner urge of the mind that the sense organs are getting attached to the object. When they get attached, there will be a tendency to enjoy pleasure. But the object in question is ever changing. So the ever changing object in question may not be able to give either pleasure or pain constantly. When it

fails to give the desired amount of pleasure then it causes one to be angry over it. This anger may lead one to forget about himself causing his own destruction.

5.3.5 Satya

Ezhuttacchan says that anger, destroys the dharma. The one who seeks satya (truth) should therefore be free from anger.¹⁷ Satya is treated not only as an epistemological and metaphysical category, but also as the ethical category by Advaita philosophy. As an ethical category satya means to experience the constancy in ethical life. If satya is not to be observed then what is possible to be observed is the Asatya. Since asatya means change, it cannot be depended on. Since it cannot be depended on, then, it is not possible to live in accordance with Asatya. If asatya is practised then that will only create chaos and disorder. So, the very existence of the order itself is the evidence for satya.

The term satya has got an empirical meaning in advaita system. The simple meaning of the term is to tell the truth. If an individual never tells the truth and if that is revealed, then, that individual will not be trusted by anybody. If all individuals of a society are like him then the life itself will not be possible in such a society. At the paramarthika level satya means the experience of the Ananda. Since Ahimsa is the anasakta karma then

Ahimsa is only a means for the experience of satya. Thus, in essence satya and Ahimsa are identical. Since there is only the Ayam then it is not possible to make a distinction between the ends and means. Since the ends and means are identical then Ahimsa and satya are also identical.

5.3.6 Asatya (Abstain from stealing)

One who practises Ahimsa to realise satya will not steal anything. This is the logical relevance of Asatya and the term has got an empirical reference also. Empirically the term signifies the impossibility of normal life in a society of thieves. At the higher level it signifies a vital aspect of Ayam. The stealing takes place only when there are properties other than one's own and when one thinks that such properties can give him pleasure. But, if Ayam alone is there, the very thought of the existence of anything other than Ayam is logically inconsistent with it. When one realises this logical inconsistency then one will not be able to possess anything. This realisation is a double edged one. On the one hand it is the realisation that anything other than Ananda is not capable to give happiness. Such a realisation causes the renunciation of anything other than Ananda by saying 'neti neti'. On the other hand it positively focusses on Ananda and it renounces everything else for the sake of experiencing Ananda.

5.3.7 Aparigraha (renunciation)

If asteeya is the possession of something by assuming that there is something to be possessed to get happiness. Aparigraha says about the renunciation of everything that is unrelated to the experience of Ananda. Since Ananda is devoid of all types of qualities, quantities, relations and moralities then Aparigraha says that all the sheaths of experiences other than Ananda are to be transcended in order to experience the Ananda. This aspect of aparigraha is stated in the Adhyatma Ramayana in the following words. "This ananda is self illuminating, it is the meaning of tatva (reality), it is devoid of form and it is eternal."¹⁸

5.3.8 Brahmacharya (Celibacy)

The fifth virtue is Brahmacharya. This virtue signifies the aim of the process of Ayam. The Ayam is aimed at the experience of brahman. Since the aim is the experience of the ultimate reality and since the sources of experience is the Ayam alone, then, every unit of Ayam should be devoted to know the truth. In such a journey to the truth the Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana levels have to be sublated by saying 'neti neti'. So, such experiences will not be taken for granted by a Brahmacari.

Since the Brahmacari is interested to experience only the Ananda, then he will assume only the minimum necessities of the

empirical life. To satisfy with the minimum in all Asramas is the empirical level ethical significance of the term and at the paramarthika level it means the experience of Ananda itself.

5.3.9 Shreyas and Preyas

The life that is directed to experience Ananda is technically called as Shreyas and the life that is directed to anything other than Ananda is Preyas.¹⁹ Preyas leads to the world of pleasure and pain and finally to the uncertainty of the sansara. The life that leads to uncertainty of the samsara will perish. The virtue which the Brahmacarya advocates is the pursuit of shreyas. Ezhuttacchan says that the samsara never gives shreyas. The experience of Rama is "Nirmalam Dharmakarmadharam, api anadharam."²⁰ It is free from qualities, quantities, relations and modalities. The experience of Rama as Ananda is the basis of all karma and dharma. At the same time Rama does not depend on anything other than himself and so the experience of Rama is the adhara (basis) of everything else, it is in itself anadharam (free from any other basis).

5.4.1 Sadhana Catustaya

This experience of Rama is possible through the practise of sadhana catustaya (four fold discipline). The first sadhana, the Nityanitya vastuviveka, demands a clear distinction between the

changing and the non changing. The changing experience is bhoga²¹ and bhoga leads to preyas. The experience of the never changing Ananda is shreyas. So, ethically, nitya, anitya vastu viveka means to make a discrimination between preyas and shreyas in order to renounce the preyas to experience shreyas. "Iham utharartha bhoga vairagya" (renunciation of pleasure) specifically emphasises that in order to attain shreyas, bhoga should be renounced. The renunciation of bhoga can be attained by the practice of sama, damadi sadhana. Sama means to conquer the mind and dama means to control the sense organs. Here the process to conquer and control the mind and sense organ is to overcome the everchanging experience in order to enjoy the eternal bliss.

The conquering and control of sense organs are not an easy task. The indriyas are often compared with horses. kathopanisad specifically says that the indriyas are the horses which ride over sphere of sensory objects.²² It is the nature of the sense organs to ride over the sphere of sensory objects. The relation of indriyas with object is the cause for the belief of oneself as a bhokta (enjoyer) and kartha (doer). The samadamadi sadhana is mainly intended to get over the obstacles arising from the notions of kartha and bhokta. The practise of samadamadi sadhana becomes a tough task. It contains a package programme for physical and mental training to attain control over the senses. In the absence of such control, the whole effort to experience Ananda will be a failure.

5.4.2 A walk on the razor's edge

Even if one is ready to take up practical steps for the realization of the final experience it demands his full attention to achieve the aim. The Isa upanisad summarises the difficulties in the following aphorism. "The face of the truth is covered by a golden disc."²³ The golden disc that covers the truth is the senses and the objects of the senses. They are ever active and colourful to hinder the efforts to know the truth. Ezhuttacchan describes such experiences as "ksnaprabha cancelam"²⁴ - that is the momentary experiences which shine and change constantly. Since the truth is covered by a golden disc only earnest and conscious efforts can lead to a success. Such an earnest and conscious effort is compared with a walk on razor's edge.²⁵

5.4.3 The experience of Mumuksu

The earnest and conscious effort becomes possible only when one is not satisfied with anything other than the experience of Ananda. Such an attitude is known as mumuksutvam. Only a mumuksu has the power to ask to remove the disc that covers the face of the truth.²⁶ He who practises dharma to experience truth alone is called a mumuksu. The mumuksu naturally becomes "self controlled, calm, withdrawn into himself enduring and concentrated and he experiences the atma in him and everything in atman."²⁷

5.4.4 Mumuksu and learning of the Vedantic text

Only a mumuksu is eligible to learn the texts on vedanta in order to attain moksa. The first stage of learning the text is sravana. It literally means to hear the texts. Since hearing is sensory experience then sravana signifies the whole units of sensory and motor experience that can be derived from pratyaksa. Since the aim of sravana is not to enjoy the sensory experience, the Abhidha (empirical) of the experience has to be given up. Since the Abhida of sravana (to hear) is only an externalised operation that the sravana itself has to be given up in order to go into the inner essence of experience.

5.4.5 Sravana

As far as the traditional learning of text is concerned the sravana is the learning of a text from a competent teacher. The competent teacher means the teacher who has already realised the truth. The subject matter to be taught to the Mumuksu by the teacher is none other than the inner depth of the Maha vakyas such as Tat tvam Asi." The guru cannot make him learn the inner essence. The guru can only express the inner essence. The experience of the inner essence has to be taken place in the inner cavity of the taught itself.

5.4.6 Manana

It is here that the manana the reflection of what is taught by the guru takes place. Since the basis of Advaita epistemology is experience, what is taught by the guru is to be experienced in the life of the student. So the entire abhidha (empirical experience) of the universe has to be given up for laksana (process of inference) vayapara. It is at this stage that the intellectual contemplation of what is heard from the guru is taken place. Here the Anumana is the pramana and anumana is only the suksma vyapara (subtle form) of pratyaksa. Since it is the suksma vyapara it takes place in the manas (mind) because manas (mind) is the suksma (subtle) rupa (form) of the indriyas (senses).

5.4.7 Nididhyasana (contemplation)

The abhidha and laksana along with sravana and manana are to be sublated to experience the Vyanjana (suggested sense). It is at this stage that Nididhyasana (contemplation) occurs. What is heard in sravana and what is logically contemplated in manana are used as ladder to the nididhyasana. The nididhyasana becomes a constant and uninterrupted meditation with a view to transform the mediate and indirect experience into an immediate and direct one. Such immediate and direct experience is at the vyanjana level where

the words and mind cannot act. That is why Brhadaranyaka Upanisad says that in nididhyasana it is the atman that is experienced.²⁸

5.5.1 Nididhyasana and Bhakti

As far as Ezhuttacchan is concerned Nididhyasana is the Bhakti (devotion) itself because a Bhakta (devotee) has to practise Sadhana catustaya and he should be "sanyasin" whose only aim is to attain the experience of Erahman.²⁹ So a devotee of Rama according to Adhyatma Ramayana is one who practices the nididhyasana. From the point of view Ezhuttacchan Bhakti alone is enough to attain moksa.³⁰ He clarifies this point by saying that Bhakti leads to knowledge (Jnana) and knowledge enables one to perform karma (action) and the karma guided by jnana leads to moksa.³¹

5.5.2 Stita Prajna and Bhakty

Gita calls the one who experiences the truth in nididhyasana as the stita prajna and states that the Stitaprajna has the following characteristics: (1) he has to overcome all kamas (sensual pleasure) due to mental operations, (2) He is not influenced by the pain and pleasure of life (3) He is free from kama (passion) and krodha (anger), (4) He is a sanyasin, (5) He is totally immersed in his quest for the experience of Atman.³² In a similar manner, Ezhuttacchan describes the characteristics of a Bhakta. (1) He has

completely withdrawn from the kama (Passion), (2) He is completely free from the influence of likes and dislikes, pain and pleasure or life, (3) he performs karma like a Sanyasin, (4) He is immersed in his quest for the experience of Brahman.³³ Thus it may be seen that the Stitaprajnan of Gita is identical with the bhakta of Adhyatma Ramayana.

5.5.3 Performance of Karma is essential

Since karma is the ethical term for ayam, it is not possible to be free from karma. To be free from karma means to be away from Ayam and that is impossible. Every spatio-temporal entity is in karma because every spatio-temporal entity is Ayam. Every spatio-temporal entity has to perform karma always, because karma is the order of the spatio-temporal manifestation. That is the reason why the Gita criticises Arjuna's tendency towards inactivity. If ayam is moving and if Ayam is karma then the order of Ayam itself is the performance of karma. So non-performance of karma is not possible because non-performance of karma is against the order of Ayam. Even if the physical performance of karma is absent, the inner performance of karma will be taking place in the form of cittavritty (psychic operation). Cittavritty is only the subtle form of the physical performance of karma. Since there is no essential difference between the subtle and the gross, the non performance of karma in stula, suksma and karana levels is impossible.

5.5.4 The dynamics of Karma and Phala

The performance of karma is the way of life and every karma has its fruits. No karma can be free from phala (fruits) because it is the part of karma. Karma and phala are closely related. The causation in karma shows the continuity of the karma in to phala and again the phala causing further karma. This is the dynamism of sancita, prarabdha and Agami forms of karma. The prarabdha is due to sancita again the prarabdha accumulates the fruits in the form of sancita leading to Agami karma. This never ending process of the repetition of the karma into Phala and again phala into karma is known as sansarachakra (wheel of sansara).

5.5.5 Karma and Loka

Ezhuttacchan describes this when he explains that "Loka, karma sutra baddham."³⁴ The entire spatio-temporal manifestation of Loka. That Loka is bound by the thread of Karma (Karma sutra baddham). The karma in a dynamic way produces effect on one hand, and on the other hand the effect again turns out into cause. The dynamic way of producing cause and effect in the world is bhoga (enjoyment of pleasure and pain). That is the reason why Ezhuttacchan describes bhoga as the result of karma.³⁵

Thus, Ezhuttacchan concludes that the human body itself is created by the merits and demerits of Karma.³⁶ So the present

human existence can be explained by the previous one. The repetition of this experience is sansara and the sansara is identified with a dream in order to show its transcendent nature.³⁷

5.6.1 Nishkama karma

Since the sansara is like a dream and since it is ever changing, it can create only uncertainty. The uncertainty causes pain and it makes the existence miserable. If karma is the way of existence then nobody can be free from karma. He who performs karma is the sansara, and sansara is only another name for sorrow, suffering and misery. So he who performs the karma is in sorrow suffering and misery. A final release from this state of existence is to be found in the path of Niskama karma.

5.6.2 Characteristics of Niskama Karma

According to Gita the characteristics of a Niskama karma yogi are as follows: (1) He is entitled only to perform karma (2) He should not have the desire for the fruit of Karma, (3) He should never perform karma to reap the fruit thereof (4) He should never abstain from karma.³⁸

The first premiss says about the necessity of performance of karma. Since he is the adhikari (eligible and competent) of karma

he has to perform karma. He has become the adhikari because he is a spatio-temporal manifestation. Anything that is manifested in space and time is in the Ayam. Since Ayam and Karma are identical and since the Ayam is ever active, then, the performance of karma is the way of every spatio-temporal manifestation.

5.6.3 Kama and Karma

The second premiss warns that one should not have the kama (desire) in the phala (results) of Karma. This does not mean that the karma is free from phala. Since there is dynamism between karma and phala, no karma can be free from phala. The phala of the karma never depends on the desire of the persons concerned. Then, the meaning of the warning is that the phala will be looked upon just as result of a natural process. Since the dynamism of karma and phala causes change then it is not possible to stick on to the results. Any effort to stick on to the phala of karma will be futile. It will create only frustration.

The third premiss tells the causal dynamism of karma. The phala of the karma will be occurred even if one does not desire it. Since both the karma and phala are changing then even if one tries to stick on to the results for ever, it will be in vein. But the, fourth premiss gives a warning that in spite of the fact that one should not desire the phala of karma, one should never abstain from

karma. These premises demonstrate that one has to perform karma always. Hence Ezhuttacchan recommends the performance of Niskama karma till the end of prarabdha.³⁹

5.6.4. The Meaning of Niskama karma

Nishkamakarma is not an aimless performance of karma for nothing. It has got a definite aim. Ezhuttacchan says that Nishkamakarma is the performance of karma devoting whole of its fruits to nitya Brahman.⁴⁰ So the aim of Niskama karma is Brahma realisation. The various forms of karma which appears in the stages of Stula, Suksma and Karana in the levels of Anna, Prana, Mana and Vijnana and at the states of Jagrat, Swapna and Susupty have to be sublated by saying 'neti neti' to experience the Ananda. The karma that is exclusively devoted for the realization of Ananda is Niskama karma.

5.6.5 The aim is Moksa

The state of experience of Ananda is moksa. The performance of karma that leads to moksa is Niskama karma. When Niskama karma is performed, karma will not be an obstacle in the way of one's realization Ananda.⁴¹ Since the experience of Ananda is unaffected by any upadhi, it cannot be affected by karma. Since Ananda is the experience which cannot be approached by mind or described by

words then the performance of karma by experiencing Ananda will not affect it. Such a performance of karma cannot affect the agent who performs the Karma.

Gita states that one who performs Niskamakarma is stita prajna⁴² and the stita prajnan will not experience the Ayam at the lower levels. Sensory experience has no role to play in that experience. Even the most subtle forms of the experiences of sensory and motor organs and manas will be transcended at the level of stita prajnan. Such Niskamakarma can be performed through Bhakti (devotion). Ezhuttacchan describes that the experience of Ananda itself is Jnana and jnana is moksa. So Ezhuttacchan concludes that Bhakti is the way to experience Ananda and Ananda leads to jnana. So Bhakti leads to jnana and jnana itself is moksa. That is why he proclaims that a Rama Bhakta assumes the Bava of Rama.⁴³

The performance of Niskama karma for the realization of Ananda is Dharma which means dharma is the path to moksha. Since there is identity between the ends and means then the dharma itself is moksa. This is the way of shreyas. On the contrary in the pursuit of preyas the end is kama (fulfilment of worldly desires) and artha (wealth) is the means. Since the unchanging eternal experience of Ananda is a Moksa is considered as the parama purusartha (supreme end of human existence).

Moksa as the experience of Ananda is the basis of Ayam. Since moksa is the basis of Ayam then Moksa is the basis of every karma. Since dharma and moksa are identical in the sense they are means and the ends. Niskama Karma becomes the basis of every karma leading to the supreme goal. Hence the highest ethical principle of Advaita philosophy is the demand for the performance of Niskamakarma to attain moksha.

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

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Chapter - VI

CONCLUSION

The concluding part of Adhyatma Ramayana states that the study and recitation of it can lead every one to the attainment of moksha irrespective of Caste, creed and community.¹ According to Ezhuttacchan, it is only a medium to be used to cross over the ocean of sansara. This is possible because he has used every syllable of the text to express the essence of Advaita Vedanta. He has expressed his kavya laksya (the aim of aesthetic expression) unambiguously at the beginning of the Kavya (Poetry). He declares that his aim is to expound the essence of the Vedas, the Vedanga and the Vedanta in order to enable one to attain vidya (true knowledge).²

Ezhuttacchan claims that the regular reading of Adhyatma Ramayana facilitates the general welfare of the society and the individual. It would enable one to attain economic stability along with other benefits.³ He claims that the regular reading of Adhyatma Ramayana with faith and devotion can serve as a remedy to ills affecting the universal order by giving fertility to the impotent,

relief to the sick and financial stability to have-nots and solace to the sufferer.⁴ Because it is a treatise on dharma and the Adhyatma Ramayana is written by the person who has attained immortality.⁵

The person who has attained immortality is the person who has crossed over the ocean of sansara. The sansara is the cycle of birth, life and death. The Sansara (empirical world) is caused by Avidya (ignorance)⁶ and Avidya is the result of Maya. Vidya (true wisdom) arises when sansara disappears as darkness in the presence of light.⁷ In order to get rid of the grip of sansara one has to become a Mumukshu⁸. The Mumukshu has to perform Niskama karma (detached action) and the Niskama karma performed to attain Brahma realisation.⁹ Brahma realisation can be attained only when one is capable to experience the Svarupa of brahman (true nature of ultimate reality).¹⁰ The Svarupa of Brahman is Satya (truth), Jnana (wisdom) and Ananta (infinite).¹¹ The experience of Satya, Jnana and Ananta is the experience of Ananda (bliss) and Ananda transcends all experiences that can be expressed in language system.¹²

However, language may be used to suggest the ineffable experience of Ananda. Ezhuttacchan therefore uses the language system to suggest the experience of Ananda. This is made possible on the basis of the Philosophy of natya. Natya is the imitation of the carita (function) of Loka (world).¹³ In order to express the essence of the carita of loka, the whole Loka has to be sublated.

That is why Bharata says Natya express all Bhavas (Modes of expression) of the whole world.¹⁴ The Natya of Ezhuttacchan, the Adhyatma Ramayana expresses the whole Bhavas of the world through a language system in order to suggest the experience of Rasa. The experience of Rasa is the aesthetic intention or the Kavya laksya of Ezhuttacchan.

The Rasa can be experienced only if the svarupa (true nature) of experience is revealed. In order to reveal the svarupa the tatasta laksana (apparent nature) has to be sublated. The entire Loka is the tatasta laksana. Since there is identity between the Loka and the Natya, the entire language system in which the Natya is expressed has to be sublated to experience the Rasa. The practise of the process of sublation is possible only if one is able to know the methodology of sublation. The methodology of the process of sublation is given by the Advaita Vedanta. The Adhyatma Ramayana of Ezhuttacchan elaborately discusses the tools of sublation, the process of sublation and the effects of sublation. The author claims that his work has been named as Adhyatma Ramayana because it is capable to give Atma jnana (ultimate wisdom) to the readers.

The kavyalaksya of Adhyatma Ramayana of Ezhuttacchan is to give education in Advaita Vedanta to the large ignorant mass who are not competent to learn the vedas to cross over the ocean of

sansara. Since this is the aesthetic intention of Adhyatma Ramayana, the present study, has undertaken an exposition of the aesthetic, epistemological, metaphysical, cosmological and ethical structure of the work in order to demonstrate that the system of Advaita Vedanta as it is envisaged in Adhyatma Ramayana of Ezhuttacchan is identical with the classical Advaita philosophy based upon the Upanisads.

Since this is the premiss of the thesis and since the Adhyatma Ramayana is an aesthetic utterance, the study has to begin with the aesthetic analysis and then it proceeds to the epistemology, metaphysics, cosmology and ethics. In order to substantiate the premiss the following arguments have been presented in the first five chapters of the thesis.

The first chapter, the aesthetic background of Adhyatma Ramayana presents the following arguments. Since Natya (aesthetic expression) and Loka (the world of experience) are identical the order of the operation of Natya and Loka are also identical. As the rsi (seer) utilises the Loka (the world) to overcome the limitation of the Loka the reader has to utilise the Natya to cross over the limitations of Natya (the work of art). The Natya sastra of Bharata qualifies the Natya (the aesthetic utterances) which can help the reader to attain Moksha as the fifth veda to be useful to all irrespective of caste, creed and community differences. Thunchath Ramanujan Ezhuttacchan moulded his Adhyatma Ramayana as the fifth

Veda to educate the ignorant mass in Advaita philosophy in order to enable them to attain Moksha.

The epistemology of Adhyatma Ramayana, the second chapter of the thesis expresses the epistemological consistency of the Adhyatma Ramayana with the Advaita epistemology of the Upanishads. Ayam (a unit of experience) is the basis of Advaita epistemology and Ayam suggests the nigama (the never changing essence of experience) through the Agama (the everchanging modes of experience).

Since Ayam is the unit of experience and since the unit of experience alone is the basis of the Advaita epistemology the most important characteristic feature of Advaita epistemology is its all-inclusiveness. Ezhuttacchan elucidates the all-inclusiveness of Advaita epistemology in Adhyatma Ramayana. He explains that all including the criminals, untouchables and out castes are eligible to become the devotee of Rama and all devotees of Rama are eligible to read his Ramayana for the attainment of Moksha.

The next chapter explains the metaphysics of Adhyatma Ramayana to point out the below given statements. The aim of Advaita metaphysics is the realisation of Brahman through the Ayam. The Agama (everchanging) aspect of Ayam is metaphysically termed as Maya and Maya functions is a dual way of Avarana (concealment) and viksepana (projection). This dual functioning of Maya is the

tatata Laksana (appearance) to be sublated to experience the svarupa laksana (the ultimate reality). The Nigama (the neverchanging experience) of Ayam is the Svarupa laksana (the ultimate reality) and the ultimate reality is the Ananda (bliss) itself.

Ezhuttacchan qualifies his Rama as the paramanandamurthy (the concrete form of the ultimate bliss). The aim of the parayana (reading with devotion) of Adhyatma Ramayana is the experience of Rama as the concrete form of the ultimate bliss. He explains that Maya will be vanished away when the experience of Rama as the ultimate bliss occurs. Ezhuttacchan further establishes that the experience of Rama as the ultimate bliss is the basis of every other experience.

The fourth chapter is devoted to discuss the cosmology of Adhyatma Ramayana and forward the following arguments. The basic problem in cosmology is the problem of one and many. The problem can be solved by means of dualism, pluralism, monism and non-dualism. Advaita philosophy rejects dualism, pluralism and monism because the dualism, pluralism and monism are logically inconsistent.

According to Advaita Philosophy the cosmos, which appears as many, is the manifestation of non dual reality. The cosmos when it appears as many is technically termed as sansara. But the sansara

(the world as it appears) is a changing unit of experience and it is only a projection of the Brahman (the basis of every appearance) which itself is not changing. In this sense Brahman is both the creature and creator.

Ezhuttacchan identifies Rama with the sansara (cosmos) and the Brahman (the basis of cosmos). So, His Rama is both the creature and creator of the cosmos. Since there is identity between experience and existence, then he who experiences the Asat (unreal appearance) becomes the Asat and he who experiences the sat or the Brahman (the basis of appearance) becomes the sat. Ezhuttacchan argues that the sansara or the asat (unreal appearance) is mrutam (mortality) and the basis of the sansara is Amrtam (immortality). He qualifies his Rama as both the Mayamayan (appears as the everchanging world) and Amrtam (the never changing and immortal basis) of the cosmos and he establishes the identity between jivatma (the individual soul) and the paramatma (the cosmic soul).

The fifth chapter Ethics of the Adhyatma Ramayana presents the following points. The Advaita ethical term for the world of action is karma. The Term karma denotes the order of the manifested world and connotes the moral order of the manifested world. Since there is non-dual identity in every field, the cause and effect also cannot be an exception to it. Karma denotes the relation of identity between cause and effect in spatio-temporal manifestation at the

external and internal levels of its operations. Such operations are controlled and directed by the basis of Karma - Ananda (eternal bliss).

Ezhuttacchan identifies his Rama with karma and Ananda. He elaborates that the Karma when it is directed to enjoy, Ananda then it leads one to sreyas (liberation) and when it is directed to enjoy the worldly pleasure then it leads one to Preyas (bondage). The performance of karma to enjoy sreyas is Niskamakarma (detached action) and Ezhuttacchan identifies niskama (detachment) with Bhakti (devotion).

On the the basis of the arguments mentioned above, we are lead to the following deductions. Firstly he says that every experience is the experience of Rama. Aesthetically Rama is the Natya (work of art) which manifests as diversified Bhavas (modes of presentation) with Rasa (essence) being the basis of such Bhavas. Epistemologically Rama is the Ayam (unit of experience) which operates as Agama (everchanging experiences) on the basis of Nigama (neverchanging experience). Metaphysically he is the Brahman (ultimate reality) which appears as Maya (appearance) on the basis of Ananda (ultimate bliss). Cosmologically Rama is the Prapanca (universe) manifests as sansara (changing many) being Amrtam (the immortal non-dual) the basis. And ethically he is the karma which

operates preyas on the basis of shreyas to attain moksha (liberation).

The second deduction is that the non dual identity is the basis of the experiences of Rama. This is possible because aesthetically Bhava (modes of presentation) suggests the Rasa and the Rasa is Ananda (ultimate bliss) itself. The Bhavas are only upadhis (media) to experience the Ananda. Epistemologically the essence of Ayam (unit of experience) is nigama (never changing) and Agama (ever changing) is the upadhi (medium) to experience the Nigama and nigama is identical with ananda. Metaphysically Maya (appearance) projects the tatasta laksana (negative aspects) to conceal the svarupalaksana (positive aspects) of Brahman. Brahman is Ananda itself and Maya is only an upadhi to experience Ananda. Cosmologically prapanca is the sansara having the basis of Amrtam. The sansara is only an upadhi to experience Amrtam (immortality) and there is no difference between Amrtam and Ananda. In ethics karma appears as preyas (bondage) to experiences. Shreyas (liberation) and shreyas is nothing but the performance of karma with an aim to attain moksha and moksha is the Ananda itself. Since there is identity between bhava (modes of presentation), agama (unit of experience), Maya (appearance), Sansara (changing world) and preyas (bondage) and since there is identity between Rasa (essence), Nigama (never changing) Brahman (ultimate reality), Amritam (immortality) and Sreyas (liberation) then there is identity between

Natya (work of art), Ayam (unit of experience), brahman (Reality), prapanca (universe) and karma (action). The essence of such an identity is ananda (Ultimate bliss) and Ananda is Rama himself.

Thirdly, Ezhuttacchan deduces that the experience of Rama is all inclusive. It is possible because aesthetically the Natya includes all Bhavas. That is every spatio-temporal manifestation is included in the manifestation of the different bhavas having Rasa as their essence. Epistemologically Ayam embraces everything including both the agama and nigama. Metaphysically nothing exists apart from Brahman and it manifests as the Maya in the tatasta lakshana at the same time it remains as the basis of Maya in Svarupalaksana. Cosmologically prapanca is the unit of experience and it appears as sansara as Amrtam has its basis. Karma is the ethical unit and it includes both preyas and shreyas. Hence it is not logically or empirically possible to have anything other than the above mentioned categories. Ezhuttacchan refers to the aesthetic, epistemological, metaphysical, cosmological and ethical categories of the Advaita philosophy to a single Term-Rama.

Since every experience is Rama and since the experience of Rama is non-dualistic and all-inclusive, then, the following conclusion is possible. The philosophy as it is revealed by Adhyatma Ramayana of Thunchath Ramenujan Ezhuttacchan is the Advaita Vedanta of the classical type revealed by the upanisads.

Just as the Advaita Vedanta cannot logically exclude anything or anybody from the sphere of experience then, the Adhyatma Ramayana of Ezhuttacchan never excludes anybody from the attainment of moksa.

This philosophical position of Adhyatma Ramayana enables it to advocate a peaceful co-existence in social life. It admits peaceful co-existence because of its all inclusive nature. Since non-duality is the essence of experience, then, it is not possible to exclude anything. Since it is not possible to exclude anything, then, there is no scope for alienation of any type because each and every is seen in all and all is seen in each and every. Since everything is in all and all is in everything, then, every existence is the manifestation of the one and the same reality. In such a circumstance the practice of violence amounts to self contradiction.

Since peaceful co-existence is admitted, as a natural corollary mutual respect also has to be admitted. If nothing is alien to one's own existence, then, the disrespect against something is the disrespect against one ownself. It is not possible to lead a life, with disrespect either to one self or to others without disturbing the total equilibrium of existence. So, the very existence of the life itself is an evidence for mutual respect and Adhyatma Ramayana advocates the mutual respect.

3. The direct outcome of the peaceful co-existence and mutual respect is the universal brotherhood. Since all inclusiveness is the nature of the experience, then, the experience never gives the idea of anything as alien to the individual. So every being shares the common sources of origin.

These implication of Adhyatma Ramayana furnishes the basis for the social harmony of our social life on the basis of the very fact that Adhyatma Ramayana has become the parayana grantha (sacred book for daily reading) of the average Hindu Malayalee. Perhaps more than anything else Adhyatma Ramayana and its philosophy may be the source of tolerance of Malayalee towards the other religion.

**ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY IN
EZHUTTACCHAN'S ADHYATMA RAMAYANAM
– A CRITICAL STUDY**

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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CHAPTER - I

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Raghavan Pillai Dr. K., Ezhuttacchan, p.10.
2. Narayana Pillai P.K., Sahitya Panchananan, Panchananante vimarasanatrya pp.15-20.

He has the opinion that the period is between 1425 and 1525. But Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer in Kerala Sahitya Charitam, Part II argues that the period is between 1495 AD and 1575 AD.

3. 'Anujan' in Malayalam means younger brother. So Ramanujan means younger brother of Rama.

This is the generally accepted name of the poet. Dr.P.K. Raghava Pillai also accepts the version. Some other names which scholars have surnamed as Ezhuttacchan are Sankaran, Ramanandan, Raman, Suryanarayanan etc.

4. This can be inferred from his works. Actually no proof other than his works is available to testify the statement. Scholars and critics unanimously admits that he was well versed with the orthodox and heterodox systems of Indian thought. His indisputable wisdom of Advaita system is praised by all. Dr. Raghavan Pillai observes that the poets knowledge of Vedanta and other system of philosophy is remarkable.

5. 'Thunchan parambu' is near Tirur Railway Station in Malappuram District of Kerala State. It is believed that Ezhuttacchan had run a school there initiating the education of younger generation. Even now thousands of children are ritually initiated into reading and writing there in vijayadasami festival. He is admired as a sanyasin and is worshipped as an acharya by Keralites. Several fanciful stories are circulating among public and some festivals are also named after him. Thunchan Vilakku (Thuncchan illumination) is celebrated in Ramananda Asramam.
6. In Malayalam kili means bird and pattu means song. So kilipattu means song of a bird. Here it means a method of writing poetry in particular Dravidan metres like, keka, kakali, kalakanchi, annanada etc. There is no unanimous opinion about the paternity of this method of writing poetry. Kannassa Ramayanam of Kannassa Rama Panicker is written in the same style prior to Ezhuttacchan. There are many theories related to the origin of kilippattu. But they are all just stories.
7. Scholars differ on the question of number of works to be attributed to the credit of Ezhuttacchan. By analysing the historical and linguistical peculiarities critics have raised serious objections against inclusion of works except Adhyatma Ramayana to his fame.
8. Raghavan Pillai Dr.K., Ezhuttacchan, after assessing the various arguments he concludes that "there is no controversy on Ezhuttacchans authorship of Adhyatma Ramayanam", p.20.

9. Thunchath Ezhuttacchan, Adhyatma Ramayanam Ed: AD Harisama. SPCS KTM, 1980.
Critics argues that it is not a verbatim translation of the Sanskrit work. Ezhuttacchan changes the spatio-temporal order of the original plot.
10. Rama is defined as an idol of Dharma in Valmiki Ramayana.
11. Stuti means submissive and devotional adoration of words of flowes on the feet of Rama. While upadesas are the philosophical discourses devised to use as tool to remove the philosophical doubts of the reader. It is the technical terms of Advaita Philosophy which are used in Stuti as words. Eg. Please see, the lines 620-630 of Balakanda. Kausalya stuti is narrated there eand he uses the words like "NIRMALAN, NIRAMAYAN, NIRGUNAN, NIRAHANKARAN, NIGAMANDYAVAKYARTHAVEDYAN". These are the technical terms of Advaita philosophy used with the Malayalam suffix 'AN' in order to personify them. This is a poetic device used by Ezhuttacchan to popularise the technical terms of Advaita Philosophy.
12. De, Sushil Kumar, History of Sanskrit poetic, pp.1-18. The legandary story about the beginning of kavya says that the spirit of poetry is born of the goddess of learning. But it assumed the states of a systematic discipline only with Barata Muni and his Natya Sastra. The period of Bharata Muni is ranging from the second century BC to the second century AD. A galaxy of aestheticians has commented the

Sutras of Natya sastra in many ways and we have got a number of aesthetic systems.

13. This aspect will be illustrated in the preceding chapters.
14. Bharata Muni, Natya Sastra tran: Narayana Pisharati, K.P., TCR, 1987, Chapter 1, Sutra-7.
Who are not competent to learn veda to attain moksha. Lines 80-90, unambiguously say that those who render Ramayana with devotion must be able to attain moksha. Again the lines 50-60 claims that the Ramayana contain the essence of the four vedas and sastras.
15. N.S. Chapter I, Sutra 85.
16. Ibid, Chapter 36, Sutra 6.
17. Ibid, Chapter 36, Sutra 6.
18. Ibid, Chapter 1, Sutra 7.
19. Maharsi, Gautama, Nyaya Darsanam, Chapter 1, Sutra 3.
20. Ibid, Chapter 1, Sutra 7.
21. K.M. Sreemad Bhagavad Gita, SPCSKTM 1982, Chapter II Sloka 56.
22. N.S. Chapter I, Sutra 9.
23. Ibid., Chapter 1, Sutra 85.
24. Mridananda Swami, Taithirivopanishad, TCR, 1984.
25. Gautama, Nyayasutra, Chapter I, Sutra 4.
26. Caus Peter, Philosophy of Science a systematic Account, pp.18-36.
27. Wittgenstein Ludwig, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus 4.002(4)
28. Copi I.M. Introduction to Logic, p.69.

29. Ibid, pp.20-71.
30. Wittgenstein Ludwig, Philosophical Investigations, p.1-109.
31. Ibid. 1-133.
32. Ibid, 664.
33. Wittgenstein, TRactatus LOGico Philosohicus, 6.54.
34. History of Sanskrit Poetics, vol.1, pp.127-129.
35. Eliot T.S., Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot, p.22.
36. Sophocles, The complete Greek tragedies, Vol.III.
37. Alston, William P., Philosophy of Language, pp.10-31.
38. TRactatus Logico Philosophicus, 2.07 & 2.03.
39. Vyasa, Maharsi, Sree Mahabharata, Vol.1, pp.462-472.
40. Natyasastra, Chapter 6, Sutra 31.
41. Bandhu Veda, Bharateeya Kavya Sastra Saram, p.141.
42. N.S. Chapter 7, Sutras 4-9.
43. TRactatus-Logica -- Philosophicus - 1.
44. N.S. Chapte 7, Sutra 34.
45. Kapila Maharsi Samkhya Darsanam Chapter 1, Sutra 61.
46. Ibid., Chapter 1, Sutra 62.
47. Ibid, Chapter 1, Sutra 78.
48. Gita, Chapter 15, Sloka 1.
49. AR, BK, LS 1220-130.

CHAPTER - II

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. AR BK Ls 372-73
2. AR BK Ls 120
Here the request is made not to tell the story but to explain the principle of Rama.
3. AR BK Ls 124-28
4. AR BK Ls 134
5. AR Ark Ls 147-148
6. AR Ark Ls 510-523
7. Yama means the practise of Pancamahavratas. Niyama means the physical training to be practiced to control the sensory organs.
8. AR Ark Ls 494-95
9. AR BK Ls 356-57
10. Ar KIK Ls 757-59
11. AR KIK Ls 62-65
12. AR AYK Ls 1143-1144
13. Any text book on classical logic elaborates these facts. The classical logicians are concerned only with the identity indifference. The structural and functional orders of the logic of identity in difference were the concern of science.

But now it has changed and the twentieth century has developed a logic of difference. The Wittgensteinian dictum "where of one cannot speak there of one must be silent" is the basic principle of this logic and the speakability never says of identity.

14. The experience of identity is the subject matter of the new testament. Matthew, 10-20, 28 and 30, Matthew 11, 19 and 27, Matthew 16 - 16 and 17, are the examples. In literature the major writers like Tolstoy, Doestoyky, T.S. Eliot are the examples.
15. Mandukya upanisad (with Karika of Goudapada and the commentary of Sankaracarya) Trans. Swamy Gambhirananda, Calcutta, 1979, Mantra-2.
16. Ayam literally means to move. Here it means change, something that is changing is called agama.
17. Ma. Up., Mantra 2
The last part of the mantra says about the four padas of ayam.
18. Ma, Up, Mantra 3
19. Ibid " 4
20. Ibid " 5
21. Ibid " 6
22. AR, ArK, Ls 1027-28.

The terms as such are used in this part. But they are repeated in a more poetic way in three other places also.

- a) AR AYK Ls 1112-1113
 b) Ibid Ls 1168-72
 c) Ar.K Ls 450-60
23. AR KIK Ls 764-65
24. Ma. UP. Mantra - 7
 Ekam literally means the absolute so the mantra means that, it is the ekatma Pratyasara - the absolute itself is remained. Then, there is no possibility for duality.
25. AR BK Lines 1160-1170.
26. Ma UP, Mantra - 8
 The figure given below can express the whole process of Ayam.
 a ---- Viswan ---- Jagrat ---- Stula --- Virat
 u ---- Taijasa --- Svapna --- Sukshma --- Hiranyagarbha
 om --- Prana --- Susupti --- Karana --- Isvara
27. AR, BK, Ls, 620-640.
28. Nyaya sutra, Sutra -4, It is due to the Sannikarsa that the knowledge arises. Sannikarsa happens due to the friction of Indriya and Indriyarthas.
29. The participant theory in Science admits that the perception due to the interaction between the subject and object.
30. AR Ak Ls 1129-30
31. Ibid Ls 1133-1135
32. Ibid Ls 1137-1138
33. Iyer, Venkita Rama, Advaita Vedanta, Asia Publishing House, New York, 1962, page. 139.

34. Nyaya sutra, Sutra 5.
35. Humen attack on causation is based on the defect of induction.
36. TLP - 7.
37. AR, AYK Ls 1135-37.
38. Iyer, Venkita Rama, Advaita Vedanta, page 152.
Explains Apauruseya as non authorship of human beings. The experiences of principles cannot be attributed to personal authors. That is why Newton is not considered as the author of law of gravitation. Vedas are apauruseya becuse it is the expressed form of he principle of Ayam.
39. Nyaya sutra - 7.
40. Gita, Slokas, 54-58
41. AR, BK, Ls 57
42. Ibid Ls 85-86.
43. Ibid Ls 89-91
44. Ibid Ark Ls 487-88
45. Ibid AYK 1112-13
46. In all stutis he repeatedly uses this image.
47. AR, AYK, Ls - 1143-44.
48. Ibid, Ls 1075-80.
Explains that bhoga is everchanging and momentary unit of experience.
49. Isavasya upanisad, Swami Mridananda, Sri Ramakrishna Asrama, TCR, 1982, Mantra, 15.

50. AR, AVK Ls 668-672.
51. AR AYK Ls 1069-73
52. AR BK Ls 136-37
53. Ibid. Ls 803-804
54. AR Ark Ls 690-691
55. Gita, Chapter II Slokas 62-64
56. AR SK Ls 119-20
57. Ibid AYK Ls 430-40
58. Ibid YK Ls 2318-19
59. He uses the terms like NIRGUNA
NIRAKARA, NIRAHANKARA, NIRAMAYA NIRMALA etc. in all
stutis of Rama. He uses more than thousand lines to expose
Rams as agama
60. AR BK Ls 415-16
61. AR Ark Ls 510-23
62. Ibid. Ls 520-530
63. Ibid. Ls 304-310
64. AR BK Ls 1173-74
65. Isa UP Mantra 15s the last two lines
66. AR, BK, Ls 1160-63

CHAPTER - III

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Eight Upanisads with commentary of Sankaracharya, Tran: Gambhirananda Swamy, Advaita Asrm, Calcutta, 1989. Mun.up. 111, ii, 9.
2. Tai. up.11, i, 1.
3. AR, AYK. Ls 629-632.
4. Tait up 11,2
5. Ibid 11,ii,1.
6. Ibid 11, viii, 5.
7. Ibid. 111, i, 1.
8. AR, AYK. Ls 470-485.
9. He uses the term in a number of occasions. But the specific use of the term in the specific vedantic form is seen in the following places.
 - a) AR BK Ls 1104-1200
 - b) AR AYK Ls 1070-1180
 - c) Ibid Ls 1780-1770
 - d) Ibid Ls 1826-1870
10. AR, AYK Ls 134-35

He defines Rams as he essence of the Vedas and qualifies him as Vedanta Vidya (to be known by Vedantas).

11. Tait up 11, ix
12. AR, BK Ls 1135-40
13. Ibid Ls 1136 and 1150
14. Ibid L 1187
15. Ibid Ls 1135
16. Ibid 1184-87
17. Taitt, up 111, vi
18. AR, BK Ls 1159-64
19. Ibid L 1139
20. Ka up L 1, iii, 10
21. Eight upanisads pp 159-60
22. AR, BK Ls 1167-69
23. Ibid Ls 296-97
24. Ibid AYK Ls 1129
25. Ibid. Ark. Ls 483-84
26. Ibid Ls 613-15
27. Ibid Ls 617-622
28. Ibid Ls 626-629
29. Ka up 11, v, 1
30. Ka up. 11, vi, 1
31. In all stutis and upadesas the term kutasta is used. In many other occasional references also the other characters qualifies Rams as the Kutasta.
32. AR, AYK, Ls 1131-32.

CHAPTER - IV

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Tait. up 11, 6
2. Ibid., The first pada of the mantra.
3. AR, Ark, Ls 479-80
4. Taitt, 11, 6
5. Ibid, The mantra continues the explanation of the nature of creation. It has got both form and form lessness.
6. Ibid., The mantra uses the term Nirukta and Anirukta.
7. Ibid.
8. Nilaynamca - having dependence.
Anilayanamca - absence of having any dependence because it is not essential.
8. Ibid.
The last pada of the mantra.
9. AR, Ark, Ls 444-45.
10. Ibid, Ark, Ls 447-48.
11. Tait up II.6.
At the beginning the mantra explains what happens to the different levels of experience.
12. Tait up 11, 1-6.
13. Gita, 2-16.

14. AR, Ark, Ls 489.
In Malayalam, he calls them as Nitya Samsarikal. The 'Kal' is used at the end of a noun in Malayalam to denote plural noun.
15. AR, Ark, Ls 492.
16. Tait up II, 7.
17. Eight upanisads, pp. 463-64.
18. Sveta Aveta upanisad, commentary by swamy Mridananda, Trissur, 1984.
19. Ibid, v.7.
20. Ibid. IV, 10.
21. Ibid., III, 17.
22. Ibid VI, 11.
23. It is the para phrasing of the VI, 11 mantra of Prasna Upanisad
24. Mu. up. 1, 1, 7.
25. Ibid. 1.1.8.
26. AR, Ark, L 1762
27. Ibid, L 1762.
28. Mu. up. 1,1,8
The last pada of the mantra.
29. Sv. up 111, 1
30. AR.Ark, L 1131
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid L 444

33. Ibid Art L 1168
34. Ibid Ayk Ls 184-85.
35. Ibid Ark Ls 456-60.
36. Ibid " Ls 463-65.
37. Ibid " Ls 470-77
38. Ibid " Ls 480-93, cf. Isa Up. 11.
39. AR, Ark, Ls 645-48.

CHAPTER - V

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1. AR AYK Ls 1173
2. Ibid Ls 1131-32
3. Ibid Ls 1131-32
4. Ma Up Mantra, 1, Swami, Mridanda.
5. Br Up, 1 iv, 6, Bruhadaranyaka upanisad, TCR, 1982.
6. AR BK Ls 126-27.
7. Ibid L 131.
8. Gita - 4, 13.
9. AR BK Ls 334-340.
10. Isa Up. Mantra-1
11. AR Ark Ls 1071-71
The advise to Laksmana begins with this statement.
12. AR Ark Ls 1073.
13. Ibid, Ls 1075-76
14. Ibid, Ls 1090-91.
15. Ibid, Ls 1099-100.
16. Gita chapter II 64, 65.
17. AR, Ark Ls 1149-50.
18. Ibid, 1165-68

19. Kat. Up., 1.ii, 2
20. AR Ark L 1710
21. Ibid Ls 1073-74
He defines bhoga as the everchanging experience.
22. Kat. Up. 1, iii, 423. Isa up. Mantra, 15
23. Isa up. mantra 15
24. AR, Ark Ls 1073.
25. Kat. up. 1, iii, 14.
26. Isa up. 15.
The last pada of the Mantra.
27. Br. up. IV iv, 23.
28. Br. up. II, iv, 5.
29. AR BK Ls 510-523
Elaborately discusses the nature of Bhakty. This point has already been discussed in details in chapter - II.
30. AR, Ark Ls 710-720.
31. Ibid., Ls 655-56.
32. Gita II, 55, 56
33. Ar, Ark Ls 709-714
34. Ibid Ls 1761
35. Ibid L 1762
36. Ibid Ls 1977-78
37. Ibid L 1121
38. Gita chapte 11, 47

39. AK AyK Ls 1173-74
40. Ibid Ls 1177-79
41. Ibid L 1180
42. Gita chapter 11, 59
43. AR Ayk Ls 1816-17

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-19-31-19

CHAPTER - VI

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1.	AR	YJ	L	38
2.	Ibid	BK	L	59
3.	Ibid	BK	L	5127
4.	Ibid		Ls	5126-5140
5.	Ibid		L	5121
6.	Ibid	AK	L	1143
7.	Ibid		L	1144
8.	Ibid		L	1145
9.	Ibid		Ls	1178-79
10.	Ibid	Bk	L	1186
11.	Ibid	Bk	L	1186
12.	Ibid	BK	L	1164
13.	NS	Sutra		1.85
14.	Ibid			1.84

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