On Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in Advaitavedānta

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I. Introduction

Just 50 years ago, P. Hacker described the situation of Post-Śaṅkara Advaitavedānta studies in his introduction to the Untersuchungen über Texte des frühen Advaitavāda 1. Die Schüler Śaṅkaras as follows:

Eingehendere Untersuchungen über die Lehren der Jünger Śaṅkaras gibt es meines Wissens noch nicht. Toṭaka ist, soweit ich sehe, bisher überhaupt nicht beachtet worden, und über Sureśvaras und Padmapādas Lehrmeinungen macht nur DASGUPTA einige Mitteilungen im II. Bande seiner History of Indian Philosophy. Angesichts der großen Bedeutung der direkten Schüler Śaṅkaras wäre es indessen wohl wünschenswert, das ihre Gedanken ausführlicher dargestellt würden. Denn von ihnen gehen mehrere Richtungen der Advaitaschule aus, die in manchen Punkten voneinander abweichen. Was wir aber bis jetzt über diese Richtungen wissen, ist nicht viel mehr als das, was in Zusammenfassungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts darüber
Thanks to Hacker’s work, the thoughts of Śaṅkara’s direct disciples (Sureśvara, Padmapāda, Toṭaka and Hastamalaka) have been made sufficiently clear from a historical point of view, but when it comes to the development of Advaitavedānta thought after Śaṅkara’s direct disciples, the situation mentioned above by P. Hacker has not much improved.¹) The present paper is intended as a small contribution to fill up this lacuna. I will discuss the thoughts of the Vivaraṇa of Prakāśātman and the Bhāmatī of Vācaspatimiśra, both of whom were situated a little later than Śaṅkara’s four direct disciples.²) The discussion will focus on the significance of pratibimba ṣaṇḍha (reflection theory) and avacchēde ṣaṇḍha (limitation theory), which have generally been regarded as one of the most basic differences between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school in late Advaitavedānta.

II. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntalesaṇḍha

It is not clear exactly when the distinction between pratibimba ṣaṇḍha and avacchēde ṣaṇḍha was established in Advaitavedānta. These two theories have usually been explained as they are described in the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntalesaṇḍha. I shall therefore first sketch the essentials of pratibimba ṣaṇḍha and avacchēde ṣaṇḍha as found in the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntalesaṇḍha.

1. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntabindu

According to the Siddhāntabindu of Madhusūdhana Sarasvatī (about AD 1500), there are three major theories in Advaitavedānta, namely,
abhāsavāda, pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda, and each theory has an ontological aspect as well as an epistemological aspect.

1.1 Ontological Aspect of the Three Theories

In their ontological aspect, these three theories are regarded as three different explanations of the relationship among Pure Consciousness (caitanya = ātman = Brahman), Īśvara (the Lord) and jīvas (individual souls).

According to the ābhāsavāda attributed to Sureśvara, Īśvara is a semblance (ābhāsa) of Pure Consciousness conditioned by One Ignorance (ajñāna), whereas jīvas are semblances of Pure Consciousness conditioned by many intellects (buddhis) which are themselves products of Ignorance; and since a semblance is unreal, both Īśvara and jīvas are unreal [Siddhāntabindu: 26–28]. (Īśvara and jīvas are unreal.)

Two types of pratibimbavāda are mentioned in the Siddhāntabindu. According to the pratibimbavāda attributed to Prakāśatman, Īśvara is the prototype of Pure Consciousness (bimba-caitanya) conditioned by One Ignorance whereas jīvas are reflections (pratibimbas) of Pure Consciousness in One Ignorance as limited by many inner organs and impressions thereon. (Īśvara is the prototype and jīvas are reflections.)

According to the pratibimbavāda attributed to Sarvajñatman, Īśvara is the reflection of Pure Consciousness in One Ignorance and jīvas are the reflections of Pure Consciousness in many intellects, but the prototype of Pure Consciousness conditioned by One Ignorance is pure. (Both Īśvara and jīvas are reflections and Pure Consciousness alone is the prototype.)

Although these two pratibimbavādas differ as to what are the prototype and the reflections, they both state that Ignorance is one (therefore Īśvara is also one) and that jīvas are many in accordance with the difference of their intellects. Both also agree that not only the prototype but also its reflections (Īśvara and jīvas) are real. (Īśvara and jīvas are real. Ignorance is one, but jīvas are many in accordance with the difference of their intellects.)

According to the avacchedavāda of Vācaspatimiśra, Īśvara is Pure Consciousness which has become the object of ignorance, and jīvas are Pure Consciousness which has become the support of ignorance. This means that ignorances limit Pure Consciousness, that Pure Conscious-
ness as limited by ignorances is Īśvara, and that the subject of ignorance is jīva. According to this theory there are as many ignorances as there are jīvas. The phenomenal world is different for each jīva, because each jīva is the material cause of its own phenomenal world by virtue of being conditioned by its own ignorance. (Each jīva has its own ignorance which acts as the material cause of its own phenomenal world.) It is noteworthy that the Siddhāntabindu does not mention the avaccheda-relationship between Pure Consciousness and intellects in describing avacchedavāda.

After having described avacchedavāda the Siddhāntabindu proceeds to a discussion of eka-jīvavāda (the theory of one jīva), drṣṭisrṣṭivāda (the theory of world-creation by perception) and anekājīvavāda (the theory of many jīvas). This order of description, beginning with ābhasavāda and ending in drṣṭisrṣṭivāda or anekājīvavāda, is exactly the same as that followed by J. Simha [1971: 221ff], which shows that Simha mostly follows the description of the Siddhāntabindu in his discussion of ābhasavāda, pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda, and so forth.

1.2 Epistemological Aspect of the Three Theories

In their epistemological aspect these three theories are three ways of explaining how Īśvara’s knowledge differs from that of jīvas, and what the function is of the transformation (vrtti) of the intellects of jīvas. Because ignorance has acquired an identity with Pure Consciousness through semblance with it, all its products become necessarily permeated by Pure Consciousness through semblance with it. Accordingly, Pure Consciousness as the cause of the universe (Īśvara) makes everything manifest at all times without the need of any means of knowledge, because Pure Consciousness possesses the quality of making manifest everything connected with it. Thus Īśvara is omniscient.

Jīvas, on the other hand, are limited by their intellects and can therefore know only the objects that are connected with their intellects. Their intellect consists of three parts: the part within the body, the part which permeates the object and the part between the body and the object. In each of three parts Pure Consciousness manifests itself. Pure Consciousness as manifested in the part of the intellect within the body is called the knower. As manifested in the part of the intellect between the body and the object, it is called the means of knowledge. And as manifested in the
part of the intellect which permeates the object, it is called the object of knowledge. This object of knowledge is Pure Consciousness as not yet known. When it is known, it is called the result of knowledge. [Siddhāntabindu: 31–33]

According to both the ābhāsavāda and the pratibimbavāda, the purpose of the transformation of the intellect is to forge a connection of Pure Consciousness in the object with Pure Consciousness in the knower, and to remove the veil over Pure Consciousness inside the object. This view differs from that of the avacchedavāda according to which the purpose of the transformation of the intellect is only to remove the veil, because the jīva, being the material cause of the universe, is connected with everything. This is the distinction. [Siddhāntabindu: 34]

1.3 Attitude of the Siddhāntabindu — Reconciliatory

The description in the Siddhāntabindu clarifies the difference among ābhāsavāda, pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda, but gives us no clue as to why these different theories came to be established. In fact, the Siddhāntabindu does not mention any point of mutual criticism among those three theories, which would be useful for us to understand the historical development of those theories. The reason for this non-critical approach is to be sought in the fundamental attitude of this work to those three theories.

In that respect, an opponent raises the following question:

Since divergent views with respect to the real are impossible, how can [all] these mutually inconsistent views be authoritative? Therefore, [it should be determined] which [of these three views] is to be discarded and which is to be accepted.\textsuperscript{9)

The author replies:

The distinction between jīva and the Lord [of the Universe] and so forth, though it is mere product of the human intellect, is nevertheless alluded to in the Scriptures, because ideas like that are a helpful means to lead us to the knowledge of the truth.\textsuperscript{10)

Thus, according to the Siddhāntabindu, the three theories are equally helpful in imparting a knowledge of the truth. Considering this reconcil-
iatory attitude of the Siddhāntabindu, it is quite natural that no treatment of these mutual criticisms among the three theories is found in it. Let us now proceed to the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha.

2. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha

According to the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha of Appaya Dīkṣita (about AD 1550), there are two major theories, namely, pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda, and each theory has only an ontological aspect.

2.1 Description of Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda

In the Siddhāntabindu only two types of pratibimbavādas were described, but from the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha we learn that there existed various types of pratibimbavāda. The works which hold pratibimbavāda are: Prakātharthavivarana, Tattvaviveka, Saṃkṣepaśārīraka of Sarvajñātman, Citradīpa, Brahmānanda, Dr̥gdrśyaviveka and Vivaraṇa of Prakāśātman. Although the pratibimbavāda set forth in these works are mutually different, the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha classifies them into three types. The first is the pratibimbavāda of the Prakātharthavivarana, Tattvaviveka, Saṃkṣepaśārīraka, which holds that Pure Consciousness is the prototype and both Īśvara and jīvas are reflections of it. The second is the pratibimbavāda of the Citradīpa, Brahmānanda, Dr̥gdrśyaviveka, which also holds that Īśvara is the reflection of Pure Consciousness. The third is the pratibimbavāda of the Vivaraṇa of Prakāśātman, which is described as follows:

The followers of the Vivaraṇa, however, say thus: . . . Since it is taught that only a single Ignorance is the adjuncts [which causes] the difference between the jīva and the Lord, the difference between the jīva and the Lord is through their being reflection and prototype, not through both of them being reflections, because it is impossible for both to be reflections, in the absence of two [different] adjuncts. . . . Of the jīva that is a reflection of Ignorance, the particular transformation of Ignorance, which is of the form of the internal organ, is the place of distinctive manifestation, as the mirror is for all-pervasive light of the sun.
Hence too is the empirical usage of that (jīva) as having that (internal organ) for adjunct.\(^{13}\)

The above description of the pratibimbaṁbāḍa of the Vīvarāṇa has the following two points in common with the corresponding description in the Siddhāntabindu: (1) Ṣivaṁra is the prototype and jīvas are reflections, (2) Ignorance is one, but jīvas are many in accordance with the difference of their internal organs. Thus, both texts have an identical understanding of the pratibimbaṁbāḍa of the Vīvarāṇa.

The description of avacchedavāḍa in the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha, on the other hand, is quite different from that in the Siddhāntabindu. The avacchedavāḍa attributed to some (anye) is there described as follows:

Therefore, Pure Consciousness, which is limited (avacchīna) by the internal organ like the ether, is the jīva; what is not so limited is the Lord.\(^{14}\)

The avacchedavāḍa is here described in terms of the avaccheda-relationship between Pure Consciousness and the internal organ. No mention is made of the object and the support of ignorance, which were essential points in the description of avacchedavāḍa in the Siddhāntabindu. Such a difference in the ways of description of avacchedavāḍa between the two texts looks a bit puzzling to me.\(^{15}\)

2.2 Mutual Criticism between Pratibimbaṁbāḍa and Avacchedavāḍa

In the description in the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha we find many points of mutual criticism which are not found at all in the Siddhāntabindu. In this mutual criticism we find many points of criticism of avacchedavāḍa by pratibimbaṁbāḍa, but criticism of the latter by the former is very rare. The main point of criticism of pratibimbaṁbāḍa by avacchedavāḍa is as follows:

The reflection of what is not conditioned by colour-form does not stand to reason; much more is this so in the case of what is color-formless (i. e., Pure Consciousness).\(^{16}\)

Among the many points of criticism of avacchedavāḍa by pratibimbaṁbāḍa I cite only one example which contains the same points of criticism found in the Vīvarāṇa itself.
Since thus Pure Consciousness as within the world is defined in its entirety in the form of jīvas, by the respective internal organs as adjuncts, for the Lord, who is of the nature of Pure Consciousness devoid of that definition, there would be existence outside the world alone. In that case, the declaration of existence in the midst of modifications as the Inner Controller, such as in “He who stands in cognition (i.e., the jīva)” will be contradicted. On the reflection-theory, however, since the reflected ether is seen even while there does exist the natural ether present in the water, the existence in two forms in one place is intelligible.  

Here the point of criticism is that Īśvara who is not limited by the internal organ cannot be the Inner Controller within the jīva who is limited by the internal organ. However, the Siddhāntalesāsasamgraha later concludes this topic by pointing out that pratibimbavāda has also the same defect, because the prototype (Īśvara) which is not within the adjunct (upādhi) cannot exist within the modifications (e.g., internal organ) of the adjunct. In this way this text is also as reconciliatory in its nature as the Siddhāntabindu.

After having described pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda, the Siddhāntalesāsasamgraha proceeds to describe ekajīvavāda, anekajīvavāda, dṛṣṭisṛṣṭivāda. This way of description is just the same as that of S. Dasgupta [1932: 474ff] which does not contain the explanation of ābhāsavāda. This shows that S. Dasgupta mostly follows the description of the Siddhāntalesāsasamgraha in explaining pratibimbavāda, avacchedavāda, etc.

2.3 Some Noteworthy Points

While comparing the descriptions of pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntalesāsasamgraha, we found some noteworthy points. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Ābhāsavāda is described in the Siddhāntabindu but is not mentioned in the Siddhāntalesāsasamgraha which contains much more extensive descriptions than the Siddhāntabindu.

2. An epistemological aspect is described in the Siddhāntabindu but is not mentioned under the topic of pratibimbavāda and avacche-
The way of description of *avacchedavāda* differs in both texts.

4. There existed various *pratibimbavādas* but only one type of *avacchedavāda*, namely, that of Vācaspatimīśra.

5. As far as the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Vivaraṇa* is concerned, both texts understand it in the same way.

In the light of the above findings, the following assumptions can be made:

1. It seems that there was no common understanding of *ābhāsavāda* in late Advaitavedānta.

2. There seems to have been a common understanding of *pratibimbavāda* in late Advaitavedānta.

3. Whether there was a common understanding of *avacchedavāda* or not is not sure.

These assumptions lead me to the following doubts:

1. Is the difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* really one of the most basic differences between the *Vivaraṇa* school and the Bhāmatī school in late Advaitavedānta, as has generally been thought?

2. Is this view a mere reproduction of the views of the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntalesasamgraha* through the views of famous Indian scholars like S. Dasgupta, J. Simha and so on?

These doubts will be reconsidered in the next part of this paper.

**III. Establishment of Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in Advaitavedānta**

As mentioned above, we do not yet know when the distinction between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* was established in Advaitavedānta. In the present section I want to discuss the establishment of *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* in Advaitavedānta.

In order to determine the date of the establishment of these two theories, I will use the following two criteria:

1. Whether these two theories were regarded as conflicting views or not?

2. Whether technical terms like *pratibimbavāda* or *pratibimbapakṣa* and *avacchedavāda* or *avacchedapakṣa* were used or not?
Let us begin with the view of Śaṅkara (about AD 700–750).

1. **Brahmasūtrabhāṣya of Śaṅkara**

Śaṅkara says the following about the relationship between Īśvara and jīvas:

> Just as the light of the sun or the moon which pervades the entire space apparently becomes straight or bent when the limiting adjuncts with which it is in contact, such as a finger, for instance, are straight or bent, but does not really become so; and just as the ether, although it apparently moves when jars are being moved, does not really move; and just as the sun does not tremble, although its image trembles when you shake a cup filled with water in which the sun’s light is reflected; just so the Lord is not affected by pain, although pain be felt by that part of him which is conjured up by ignorance, and limited by the intellect and other adjuncts, and called the individual soul.\(^{18}\)

Here Śaṅkara uses two examples (the ether limited in jars and the reflection of the sun in water which are applicable to avacchedavāda and pratibimbavāda respectively) in exactly the same way in order to explain the difference between Īśvara and jīvas. This shows that Śaṅkara does not regard avaccheda and pratibimba as two conflicting views.

2. **Pañcapādikā of Padmapāda**

While discussing the establishment of ‘I’-consciousness (ahaṁkāra) or jīva in the Pañcapādikā, a commentary on the Brahmasūtrabhāṣya, Padmapāda (about AD 720–770) uses the following examples in the same context [Pañcapādikā: 112ff.]:

1. The redness (= ahamkārtṛtya) of a red flower (= upādhi = ahamkāra) reflected in a crystal (= Pure Consciousness = ātman).
2. An image (= a non-objective aspect of ahamkāra) of a face (= Pure Consciousness = ātman) reflected in a mirror (= ahamkāra). This example is applicable to pratibimbavāda.
3. The big ether (= Pure Consciousness = ātman) and a small amount
of ether (= jīva) limited in a jar (= upādhi). This example is applicable to avacchedavāda.

4. A rope mistaken for a serpent, etc.

Padmapāda concludes as follows:

And all these examples are for the purpose of removing the doubt that may arise regarding what has been established by the Scriptures, conformatory logic and experience, and also for mental comfort; it is not for the sake of directly establishing the thing itself (i.e., ātman).¹⁹)

This shows that Padmapāda also regards these examples just as mere examples and does not see any conflict between pratibimba and avaccheda.

3. Pañcapādikāvivarana of Prakāśātman

So far we could not find an example suitable for the two criteria mentioned above, but in the Pañcapādikāvivarana, a commentary on the Pañcapādikā, we can find such examples.

Prakāśātman refutes a criticism of pratibimba as follows:

Since even the reflection of color-formless Brahman is possible like the reflection of the color-formless ether in water with clouds and stars [in it] and the far and wide ether is seen even in water as high as one’s knees, it is impossible to say that the reflection of clouds and the like is connected only with the ether in water.²⁰)

The point of criticism refuted here, namely, the impossibility of the reflection of color-formless Brahman (= Pure Consciousness), is almost the same as that described above in the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha.

Prakāśātman further criticizes an idea of avaccheda as follows:

If Brahman-Egg, limited by adjuncts in the Egg [of the world], were limited entirely in the state of jīva, unlimited Brahman would exist outside the Egg [of the world]. Therefore, in that case, Brahman would not be omnipresent and would no be the Inner Controller etc., because an unlimited existence confined to limited places, and thus having divided into two parts does not stand to reason.²¹)

Here the point of criticism is that Īśvara who is not limited by the
internal organ cannot be the Inner Controller within the jīva who is limited by the internal organ. This point also is the same as that described above in the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha.

Prakāśātman further insists on the superiority of the idea of pratibimba over that of avaccheda using the term pratibimbapakṣa as follows:

In the case of pratibimbapakṣa, on the other hand, the existence [of the ether] being divided into two parts in the same place is possible, because the reflection of the ether is seen only when the natural ether is in water. Therefore [in the same way] it is possible for Brahman-Egg to exist in the form of Inner Controller etc. in the limitations of jīvas. Thus pratibimbapakṣa is superior [to avacchedapakṣa].\(^{22}\)

Thus it seems clear to me that the difference between pratibimba and avaccheda was already established at the time of Prakāśātman. What then about the Bhāmatī of Vācaspatimiśra, a commentary on the Brahmasūtrabhāṣya of Śaṅkara?

4. Bhāmatī of Vācaspatimiśra

As mentioned above, the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntalesaśasamgraha describe avacchedavāda in a different way. The former defines it from the point of view of the object and the support of ignorance, whereas the latter defines it from the point of view of the avaccheda-relationship between Pure Consciousness and the internal organ. Keeping this in mind, let us examine the texts in the Bhāmatī.

Vācaspatimiśra discusses an avaccheda-relationship between the Highest Ātman (= Pure Consciousness = Brahman) and the jīva as follows:

The Highest Ātman as limited by the adjuncts is the jīva.\(^{23}\)

Here the adjuncts mean the body, the internal organs and so forth. If we follow the definition of avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntalesaśasamgraha, we may conclude from this description that the Bhāmatī holds an avacchedavāda.

As for the support of ignorance, Vācaspatimiśra says the following:

The inner self limited by the internal organs etc., the intelligent being compounded of the “this” and the “not-
this” [elements], is the jīva, the agent, the enjoyer, the **support of the two kinds of ignorance** — the result and the cause, — the substrate of “I-ness”, the transmigrator, the vessel of the entire host of woes, the material cause of the superimposition; . . .

And with regard to the object of ignorance, Vācaspatimiśra says the following:

This is what is said: it is established that just as the stream [of the existence of the serpent], which has for its material cause the rope in conjunction with the ignorance of the rope, exists if the rope exists, and is absorbed in the rope itself, just so the universe, which has for its material cause Brahman in conjunction with ignorance, exists in Brahma alone and is absorbed in that.

If we understand the word avidyā-sahitya-brahma in the sense that Brahman is affected by ignorance (although this interpretation is not evident), we could conclude that the Bhāmatī regards Brahman as the object of ignorance. The description of avacchedavāda in the Bhāmatī differs, however, in one important respect from that in the Siddhāntabindu. The Bhāmatī in fact clearly says that Brahman in conjunction with ignorance is the material cause of the universe, and this view is quite different from that in the Siddhāntabindu where jīva is said to be the material cause of the universe. This misunderstanding of the view of the Bhāmatī by the Siddhāntabindu and the different descriptions of avacchedavāda in the Siddhāntabindu and the Siddhāntaleśasamgraha sharply contrast with the complete agreement in the understanding of pratibimbavāda in both texts. This leaves the impression that avacchedavāda is attributed as a view of the Bhāmatī from the side of pratibimbavāda.

Vācaspatimiśra sometimes further explains the relationship between the Highest Ātman and jīva also in terms of pratibimba-relationship, as follows:

Thus the jīva, as limited by the material cause, namely avidyā, is regarded as the reflection of the Highest Ātman.

Accordingly, for the Bhāmatī, avaccheda and pratibimba do not seem to be two conflicting views.

As a tentative conclusion, we can say only this much: the difference
between \textit{pratibimbavāda} and \textit{avacchedavāda} was already established at the time of Prakāśātman. But it is not certain when exactly this difference was first established, because the date of Prakāśātman itself is not fixed yet. However, we can at least reply to the following statement by P. Hacker.

Vācaspati lebte gegen Ende des 10. Jahrhunderts. Leider läßt sich einstweilen nicht bestimmen, ob Prakāśātman älter oder jünger is als er. [Hacker 1953: 44]

Vācaspatimiśra is older than Prakāśātman.

\textbf{IV. Appendix: Significance of Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda and Substantialization of Ignorance in the \textit{Bhāmatī}}

As mentioned above, after having described ābhāsavāda, \textit{pratibimbavāda} and \textit{avacchedavāda}, the \textit{Siddhāntabindu} finally comments on these three theories as follows:

The distinction between \textit{jīva} and the Lord [of the Universe] and so forth, though it is mere product of the human intellect, is nevertheless alluded to in the Scriptures, because ideas like that are a helpful means to lead us to the knowledge of the truth [Siddhāntabindu: 30].

Here the \textit{Siddhāntabindu} says that the assumptions of the division into the \textit{jīva} and the Lord of the Universe etc., which ābhāsavāda, \textit{pratibimbavāda} and \textit{avacchedavāda} teach in different ways, are mere products of the human intellect. This means that the division into the \textit{jīva} and the Lord of the Universe etc., as taught by the ābhāsavāda, \textit{pratibimbavāda} and \textit{avacchedavāda}, are considered to be mere products of ignorance by the \textit{Siddhāntabindu}. This raises serious doubts about the generally held view that the difference between \textit{pratibimbavāda} and \textit{avacchedavāda} constitutes one of the most basic difference between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school. That general views is based on the interpretations of famous Indian scholars such as S. Dasgupta, J. Simha and so on, which are themselves based upon the descriptions in the \textit{Siddhāntalesāsamgraha} and the \textit{Siddhāntabindu} respectively. Now if this view of the \textit{Siddhāntabindu}, which was a standard summary book of the doctrines of
Advaitavedānta, reflects the general understanding among late Advaitins, how can the difference between pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda be a significant basic difference either theologically or philosophically between the Vivarāṇa school and the Bhāmatī school? Although it is difficult to answer this question, we can at least find a clue in the substantialization of ignorance after the Bhāmatī.

As is well-known, according to Śaṅkara, ignorance is a wrong or mistaken cognition as when we mistake a rope for a serpent, and the fundamental ignorance (avidyā) is the mistaking of non-ātman for ātman as well as of ātman for non-ātman, on which our ‘I’-consciousness depends. Thus avidyā, according to Śaṅkara, is basically an epistemological problem, although ontological problems, such as the levels of reality, are also discussed by him in terms of the concept of avidyā. This means the following:

Suppose there is a cup here and I perceive it. The fact that I perceive this cup is certain for me, but it is not so certain whether the form and color of this cup as perceived by me are the same as those perceived by my cat. Further, whether this cup perceived by me really exists or not is also not so sure. With regard to this problem, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika hold that whatever is expressible (abhidheya) and cognizable (prameya) really exists as it is, but Śaṅkara holds just the opposite view. According to Śaṅkara, for any cognition including perception to be possible, we first need the framework of subject and object and also the articulation of the object (the perceived world) by concepts and language, both of which are mere products of ignorance. That is to say, not only the cup perceived by me, but also I who perceive the cup, are established only through avidyā, because the framework of subject and object itself is the product of ignorance which mistakes non-ātman for ātman, as well as ātman for non-ātman. Therefore, when this avidyā disappears, concepts, language and the framework of subject and object also disappear. And when I (cognizer) and the world (object of cognition) disappear, ātman = Brahman which is their base appears. And in this process, of course, meditation is indispensable.

But even though the cup as well as ‘I’ are mere products of ignorance and therefore not real, still the fact that I now perceive the cup remains. What is the mechanism at work here? How can both be mere products of ignorance? Śaṅkara did not discuss this in detail. It was Padmapāda who
discussed this problem in detail by explaining the establishment of ‘I’-consciousness and its mechanism. A later development of his discussion is reflected in the epistemological aspect of the ābhāsavāda, pratibimbavāda and avacchedavāda as described in the Siddhāntabindu.

Another problem concerns the reality of the world (the object of perception) and ‘I’, especially the reality of ‘I’. We can somehow understand that the world (the object of perception) disappears in the process of meditation, but it is difficult for us to understand that ‘I’ including body, intellect and ‘I’-consciousness etc. also disappears in this process, unless we have really had an experience of the disappearance of ‘I’ in meditation. Śaṅkara’s and Vācaspatimiśra’s views of the bodiless-state (aśārīratvā) indicates that both did not agree on the nature of meditative experience.

Śaṅkara says following about the bodiless-state:

Therefore it is established that so-called liberation differs from all the fruits of action to be performed, and is an eternally and essentially disembodied state. . . . But this (mokṣa) is the Highest Reality, eternal without undergoing any changes, omnipresent as ether, free from all modifications, absolutely self-sufficient, not composed of parts, of self-luminous nature. That bodiless entity in fact, to which merit and demerit with their consequences and threefold time do not apply, is called liberation; . . . It (i.e. mokṣa) is, therefore, the same as Brahman in the inquiry into which we are at present engaged. If Brahman were represented as supplementary to certain actions to be performed, and liberation were assumed to be the effect of those actions, it would be non-eternal, . . . 27)

Śaṅkara here says that the bodiless-state is the state of liberation (mokṣa) as well as Brahman itself. But how does our body disappear, when ignorance (avidyā) is sublated?

The Bhāmati, on the other hand, explains about the relationship between the body and avidyā as follows:

Surely, through frequently repeated texts beginning with “Existence alone, this was in the beginning, dear one” and ending in “That thou art”, which are helpful for Brah-
man-inquiry, there arises the true indubitable knowledge of the inner self as different from the body etc., the material cause (upādāna) of which is beginningless ignorance (avidyā); in spite of this, there is the continuance of notions of transmigrations and consequent empirical usage, because of the continuance of the impressions of ignorance; . . .

The Bhāmatī says here that avidyā is the material cause (upādāna) of our body etc., and naturally the inner organ might be included in “etc.”. According to the Bhāmatī, avidyā is not mistaken knowledge as in Śaṅkara’s case, but is the material cause of our body and inner organ, etc. This means that when our avidyā disappears, our body etc. also disappear; just as a pot disappears when clay which is its material cause disappears. This substantialization of avidyā might be one of the means to make us understand rationally or logically how our body etc. disappear, when avidyā disappears. Padmapāda also substantializes avidyā in a different context. Such substantializations of avidyā by Padmapāda and the Bhāmatī naturally resulted in the substantialization of the world in Advaitavedānta. Consequently, it also led to the development of a dualistic tendency indicating the duality (dvaita) of Brahman = ātman and avidyā, especially if only One Ignorance (avidyā) is taught, as was done by Prakāśātmāna. Thus it seems to me that the substantialization of avidyā beginning with Padmapāda and the Bhāmatī is closely connected with problems such as one ignorance or many ignorances, the object and the support of ignorance, and pratībimbavāda or avacchedavāda etc. as their background. In this sense the following words of P. Hacker seem to be still very suggestive.

References

[Texts]


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Notes
1) Of course, excellent studies on each of the texts have been made (for example, [Camman 1965] etc. . . .).
2) The dates of both are not yet fixed. With regard to the date of Vācaspatimisra we can find three views: (1) around AD 841 according to G. Oberhammer, (2) around AD 890–984 according to S. A. Srinivasan and (3) around AD 976 according to P. Hacker [Kanazawa 1987: 6]. With regard to the date of Prakāśātman, we can find two views: (1) AD 10th century according to K. Camman [1965: 4–8] and (2) around AD 1200 according to S. Dasgupta [1932: 30].
3) ajñānopahitam bimbacaitanyam īśvaraḥ, antahkaranatatsmāskārāvacchinnanājanapatrībitam caitanyam jīvaḥ, iti vivarāṇakārāḥ/[Siddhāntabindu: 28].
4) ajñānopratībitam caitanyam īśvaraḥ, buddhīpratībitam caitanayam jīvaḥ, ajñānopahitam tu bimbacaitanyam suddham iti sāṅkṣepāsārāvākārāḥ/[Siddhāntabindu: 28]. ajñānopahitam tu bimbacaitanyam suddham does not fit for the corresponding portion of the Sāṅkṣepāsārāvāka (III. 277–278), where it is stated that bimba (prototype) is not associated with Ignorance and intellects. Therefore, there is a possibility that ajñānopahitam is a misreading of ajñānānopahitam by the editor of the Siddhāntabindu.
5) anayoś ca pakṣayoh buddhibhedāḥ jīvaṇānātivam/pratībibasya ca pāramārthikatvāḥ jahallakṣaṇaiva tattvāmādipādeṣu/[Siddhāntabindu: 28].
6) ajñānaviṣayibhūtām caitanyam īśvaraḥ, ajñānāsrayabhūtām ca jīva iti vācaspatimisrāḥ/[Siddhāntabindu: 29].
7) asmimś ca pakṣe ajñānānanātivāj jīvaṇānāteṣvam/[Siddhāntabindu: 29].
8) pratijīvaṃ ca prapatīcābeḍāḥ, jīvasyaiva svājñānopahitatayā jagadupādānatyatvāt/[Siddhāntabindu: 29].
9) nanu, vastunī vikalpāsamḥabbhāt kathāṃ parasperaviruddhamataprāmāṇyam, tasmāt kiraṃ kiraṃ kiraṃ upādēyaṃ iti cē/[Siddhāntabindu: 30].
10) jīveṣvaraśvābhāvādikāpanās tu puruṣabuddhimātrapravabhā api śāstreṇānūdayante, tattvaajñānopayogītavāt/[Siddhāntabindu: 30].
11) Tattvaviveka, Citradīpa and Brahmananda are Pañcadasī Chap. 1, 6 and 11–15 respectively.
12) The difference between the first and the second is not so clear as far as the prototype and the reflection are concerned.
13) vivarāṇaṁśarīnas te ēhuḥ . . . ekasyaivaajñānasya jīveṣvaraśvābhāvopādhitvapratīpādanād bimbaprāprībitambhāvena jīveṣvarayor vībhāgah nobhayor api pratībibhāvenopādhitvāyaṃ antareṇoḥbhayaḥ pratībibhātayogat/. . . ajñānapratībitasya jīvasyāntah-karāṇaṁ uḥ api ajñānaparīnuṁmahedo viśeṣābhīhayaktisthitām sarvataḥ prastāsaḥ svarītraprākāśasya darpana iva atas tasya taduḍhindhitavāyavahāro pi/[Siddhāntalesāsāṅgraha: 17].
14) tasmād ghaṭākāśavat antahkaranāvacchinnam ca itanyam jīvaḥ tadanavacchinnam īśvaraḥ/[Siddhāntalesāsāṅgraha: 18].
15) Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that both ways of description were so
well-known that either way of description was sufficient for each text.

16) rūpānapahitapratibimba na yuktah sutarām nīrūpe ... [Siddhāntaśāsanaṭaragṛha: 18].

17) ... andāntavartināś caitanyasya tattadantaḥkaraṇopādhibhīḥ sarvātmanā jīvabhāvenāvacchedāt taddacchedaraḥita caitanyārūpasyaśvarasyāṅgad bahir eva sattvam syāt iti yo viṣṇuṇe tiṣṭham ityādār antaryāmībhaṇeva vikārāntaravasthānas-ravānaṁ virudhyate/pratibimapaṅke te jalagatasvabhāvikākāse satya eva pratibimbābākāśādārānād ekatra devigniṣṭhṛtya vṛttir upapadyate ... /[Siddhāntaśāsanaṭaragṛha: 18]. Cf. [Vivarana: 290].

18) prakāśāḥ sārasa candramāso vā vyādvyāpyāvatiṣṭhāmāne'ṅgulyādyupādhisambandhāt tasya jīvākrādībhaṇeva pratipadyamāneṣu tattadbhāve vca pratipadyamāno'pi na paramārthatas tadbhāvam pratipadyate/yathā cākāśo ghatādūsā gacchatsu gacchan iva vibhāvanāno'pi na-paramārtha gacchati, yathā codaśāravādikampanānāt tattagā sūryapatribimbe kāmāme'pi na tadvan sūryaṁ kampate, evam avidyāpratyupasthāpīte buddhyādyupāhite jīvākhye'mie duḥkhāyamānāne'pi na tadad vṛcāro duḥkhāyate/ [Brahmasūtraśābhaṣya II. 3: 46: 624].

19) etac ca sarvam udāharanañjātām śrutītamyāyānubhavāsiddhāsaṣ tatasambhāvanā-parīhāraya buddhismyārtham ca, na vastuna eva sākṣat siddhayay [Paścāpatīka: 113].

20) amūrtyasa cākāśāya sābhānañkṣetrasyayajal pratibimbaśadvad avend prātibimbaśadvad eva jāti vāraṁyata [Vivarana: 289].

21) upādhibhīr andāntavartibrahmanah sarvātmanā jīvabhāvenāvacchedāt anavacchinnasya brahmaṇo'ṅgad bahir eva sādabhāvaśprasangat tatra sarvagatasaarvaniyantraśādhi brahmaṇo na yātāancācchinnapadesu anavacchinnasya devigniṣṭhṛtya vṛttyayogayāt [Vivarana: 290].

22) pratibimapaṅke te jalagatasvabhāvikākāse satya eva pratibimbābākāśādārānād ekatra eva devigniṣṭhṛtya vṛttyupapatte h jīvāvacchādeṣu brahmaṇo'pi niyantavyeśeśiṣyaavasthānam upapadyate iti pratibimapaṅke eva śreyāṇ itī [Vivarana: 290-291].

23) paramātmaiva copādhičālitaśvācchintō jīva itī [Bhāmatī III. 1. 1: 658].

24) tad anantaḥkaraṇāvacchinnah pratyagātma īdāmanāṁdruṅaś cetanaṁ kartā bhoktā kāryakaroṇādiśyāvadyāvādhāro haṃkārāśpadam saṃsārī sarvārthasambhārabhājanam jīvātman itaretārādhyāśopadānāyah [Bhāmatī, Upodghāta: 45].

25) etad uktān bhavati — yathā rajajīvānāṇasaḥitarairajjupādānā hārā rajjvāṁ satyāṁ asti, rajjvāṁ eva ca liyate, evam avidyāsaḥitabrahmopadānam jagat brahmaṇe eva asti, tatrātvasāyata iti śrīdm [Bhāmatī I. 1. 2: 95].

26) evam avidyopādhičālitaśvācchintō jīvā paramātmapratibimbaśadvad ... /[Bhāmatī II. 2: 10: 502].

27) ata evānusthaye karmaphalavālkāsanaṁ mokṣākhyam asārārtvamniyam iti Siddhām/ ... idam tu pāramārthikam, kūṭaṭhanityam, vyomavr sarvāyāḥ yātra dharmākṛtam evam avidyāśaḥitabrahmopadānam jagat brahmaṇa eva asti, tatrātvasāyata iti śrīdm [Bhāmatī I. 1. 4: 116-121].

28) satyaṁ, 'sād eva somyedam' ity upakramāt, 'tath tvaṁ ati' ity antāc chadbād brahmatīmāṁṣopakaraṇād asākṛdabhyastāt, nirṛcikītse'nādyavidyopādānarahādyāṭrīktaṃ-
ratya-gatmatattva-vabodhe ja-te’pi avidya-sam-skara-nuvrta-v anuvartante sam-sarika-h pratyay-as tad-va-vahara-s ca; [Bhāmatī I. 1. 1: 58].

29) He interprets the word mithyā-ajñāna in the Brahmasūtrabhāṣya of Śaṅkara as mithyā-ajñāna and as its result he interprets mithyā-ajñāna-nimittah vyavahāraḥ as avidyā-upadānah lokavyavahāraḥ [Pañcapāḍikā: 26].