THE PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLICATIONS OF 'SRI CHATTAMPI SWĀMI' IN 'ADVAITACINTĀPADDHATI'

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The aim of this paper is to identify one of the eminent personalities in the history of Kerala who had with the explanatory laws of society fashioned the society working on the hardcore Advaita philosophy. Based on the necessities and requirements of the social conditions of the modern society, the great social reformer called 'Sri Chattampi Swāmi' had been able to reconcile the advaitic thinkings with the social change. He had profoundly influenced the masses and brought forth radical changes in the prevailing social customs and practices. His multifaceted activities on social reformations played a pivotal role in the moulding of the coeval society in Kerala. Being a contemporary of Sri Nārāyaṇa Guru, the agility expressed by 'Sri Chattampi Swāmi' needs special mention.

Sri Chattampi Swāmi (1853-1924) is one of the premiers among the celebrated personalities who served as a catalyst in the socio-cultural renaissance of 19th century Kerala. During his life time the society in Kerala was so caste - ridden that the social life was expressed in the form of utter chaotic state. Although Sri Swāmi was pacific in nature his deeds were triumphant enough to conciliate the turbulent Kerala society. Chattampi Swāmi (hereafter referred to as S.C.S.) adopted Advaita Philosophy as a tool to unite humanity.

S.C.S. was a prolific writer and a proficient teacher, who is well versed in Advaita. The multifarious personality of Swāmikal was rightly reflected through his works like Christumatanirūpaṇam, Sarvamata Sāmarasyam etc. We could not be able to trace out all of his works.

The available books come to thirty in number. Among these works Advaitacintāpaddhati, Vedādhikāranirūpaṇam Jīvakāruṇyanirūpaṇam etc are the most celebrated.

Advaita Cintāpadhati of 'Sri Chattampi Swāmi' is an Original Vedānta text written in Malayalam. Swāmi wrote this work in his own special style which truly whets the appetite of everyone who is interested in Advaita Vedānta. It can be enumerated as one among the Prakaraṇa granthas of Advaita Vedā nta. This book is simple and instructive like Vedāntasāra of Sadānanda. The text is divided into six Prakaraṇas. They are:

1. अध्यारोपापवादौ	२. शरीरतत्वसंग्रहः
३. जगन्मिथ्यात्वम् ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारः	४. तत्वमसि महावाक्योपदेशः
५. चतुर्वेदमहावाक्यानि	६ श्रुतिसारमहावाक्यप्रकरणम्।

Almost all the major tenets of Advaita Philosophy, like the supremacy of Brahman knowledge, the illusive nature of the world appearance, the method of adhyāropa and apavāda, the interpretation of the Vedānta dictums like Tattvamasi etc.are dealt within this work in an unequivocal style.

Brahman –The Ultimate Reality.

The central teaching of Advaita philosophy is that Brahman alone is Real whereas the world is illusory and the Jīva is non different from Brahman - the Absolute. In the A.C.P., S.C.S. defines Brahman as one, which is changeless in the states of awakening dream and deep sleep. It is the one, which exists through all the three phases of time without any change.[1] This Brahman is self-luminous and illumines all objects. It is in the form of self which is Turīya.[2] This Turīya according to S.C.S. is not Vaiśvānara, which is conscious of external objects; it is not Taijasā which is inwardly conscious. It is not a form of self, which is aware of a state between waking and dream. It is not like the aggregated consciousness of the state of deep sleep. It is unseen and not impressible to empirical discussions. It is non-distinctive; it is beyond the reach of thoughts and words. It is the unchanging essence of all knowledge. It is

the cessation of the pluralistic world, it is peaceful, auspicious, non-dual and it is the Turīya.[3] This is only because of our ignorance we are insensitive from the Absolute existential nature of Brahman. When this nescience is demolished by the power of true knowledge the universe of names and forms get totally obliterated and pure Brahman shines forth as the Absolute-Truth- Consciousness.[4] S.C.S. allocates Pāramārthika Sattā, the pure transcendental Independent and non-dual existence to the Supreme Brahman.[5]

The Universe

According to Advaita the whole universe is Brahman itself. S.C.S. accepts that Brahman is the cause of the universe and it is the doctrine to which all texts subscribe. Further S.C.S. holds that creation is dealt within the Upaniṣads assuming Brahman in conjunction with avidyā as the material (Upādāna) cause of the universe. This Universe is considered as the transformation of Brahman and the evolution of Māyā. In order to explicate the nature of empirical world S.C.S. proposes the Sattātrayavāda, the three kinds of existence viz. ultimate Reality (पारमार्थिकसत्ता) empirical existence (व्यावहारिकसत्ता) and illusory existence (प्रातिभासिकसत्ता). The Advaitins assert Brahman only as the ultimate Reality. They set apart practical existence or Vyāvahārika Sattā to the souls, world and Iśvara. S.C.S. made a clear depiction of this fact by giving the following definition as - one which experiences and does not change in the pragmatic level is termed Vyāvahārika for example pot, cloth etc.[6]

Adhyāropa and Apavāda

In the delineation of the sublime topic of Brahman knowledge and the illusive nature of the empirical world, almost all Vedānta texts follow the method of Adhyāropa and Apavāda. The first chapter of A.C.P. explains the method of superimposition (Adhyāropa) and the method of negation (Apavāda) in detail.

Adhyāropa is the erroneous indication of the properties of one thing to another like rope snake. It is the superimposition of the unreal on

real due to ignorance. According to S.C.S., adhyāropa is the attribution of properties to things which are not their genuine ones. Ignorance is the root cause of the superimposition. Just as the Superimposition of snake on the rope, man in the pillar, water in the desert or like silver-in conch shell the primary energy also designated as मूल प्रकृति transforms itself into the material world.[7] मूलप्रकृति is an equilibrium state of the three guṇas –sattva, rajas and tamas. Swāmi assigns three different colours to these three guṇas. S.C.S. ascribes the names Māyā, avidyā and tamas in tune with the predominance of these three guṇas. According to him the dominance of Sattva guṇa and māyā as the conditioning factor represents Īśvara, where avidyā is the conditioning factor and rajoguṇa is the preponderant denotes ji va and where the tamoguṇa is prominent and tamas is the conditioning factor is marked as the accessories of the five elements. This chapter also explains the topics of the emergence of three deities, the different classes of jīvas, the production of gross elements along with the sense organs etc.

Apavāda - the method of negation - is the usual method employed for executing Brahman knowledge. The ignorant notion of the universe of names and forms is negated and there by enacts the existence of the Supreme Reality. While describing the nature of universe S.C.S. has disapproved the theories of Pariṇāmavāda, Satkāryavāda etc by appropriate arguments because they are not consistent with reasoning.

Interpretation of the Vedāntic dictums Tat Tvam Asi, Aham Brahmāsmi...etc.

The core of Advaita Vedānta can be summed up in four maxims called Vedānta Mahāvākyas. The identity of the jīva and Brahman can be successfully informed to the competent aspirant through the apex Śruti passages 'Aham Brahmāsmi', 'Prajñānam Brahma', 'Tattvamasi' and 'Ayamātma Brahma'. S.C. S. allots three lengthy chapters in his Advaita Cintāpaddhati for unfolding the ideas represented through the various Vedānta Mahāvākyas. While describing the meaning of Śruti passages advaitins are concerned with the problems of sentence meaning.

Dharmarājadhvarīndra in his Vedānta Paribhāṣa describes thus- the unitary meaning of the sentence is conveyed by the denotative power of the constituent words in that sentence. It is of two types –'Śakti and Lakṣaṇa- primary and secondary denotative powers of words respectively.

S.C.S. describes these as follows - when one hears a word, it arouses in the mind of the hearer an idea of the thing signified by the word. S.C.S treats this as Śakti vṛtti. He provides an example of pot that according to him when one hears the word 'pot' one concerns its form, utility etc. he then proceeds to explain that the term 'tvam' possessing the primary meaning of jīva and 'that' possesses a primary meaning of the qualified Brahman.[8]

S.C.S. classifies lakṣaṇa, the secondary denotative power into Jahadlakṣaṇa, Ajahatlakṣaṇa and Jahadajahadlakṣaṇa. Then he provides a lively discussion of the Śravaṇa, manana and nididhyāsana of the words Tat, Tvam and asi in Tattvamasi Mahāvākya. Following this a delineation of other major Vedānta dictums like Prajñānam Brahma, Aham Brahmāsmi and Ayamātma Brahma are furnished in the 5th chapter. In the concluding chapter of A.C.P., Swāmi entertains प्रपञ्चस्वरूपं ब्रह्म एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म भावातीतं ब्रह्म स्वानुभवातीतं ब्रह्म as the 'Śrutisāramahā vākyas and offers a detailed description of these passages also.

Liberation

According to Advaita Vedānta the supreme ideas of human birth is the very realization of Brahman. Our ignorance and the activities of mind blocked us from attaining this Brahman knowledge. S.C.S. in a clear and narrative way expounds the methods of attaining this paramount human ideal of Brahman - realization. According to him what follows the intellectual recognition of the Ātman which had been lost sight of will after the rejection of enjoyment of the sense be the bliss of the Ātman. S.C.S. emphasizes that after achieving Sādhanācatuṣtaya one should attain the realization of Brahman through self surrender in front of an eminent Guru with the object of clearing his doubts regarding the ultimate Being and by acquiring the highest good as human experience.[9]

The impact of Śaiva Sidhānta on Chattampi Swāmi along with Advaita had their reflections as is expressed in the concept of liberation. In A.C.P. he uses the word Samādhi to denote the state of Mokṣa.

Samādhi

The state of Samādhi according to S.C.S. is that where there is no apprehension of the gross, subtle or causal world. It is the state where there is the ever-shining Brahman alone.[10]

Savikalpa Samādhi

S.C.S. holds that, the state in which a mental activity encompasses the form of Brahman appears to an aspirant who always meditates on 'Aham Brahmāsmi' after having heard from the preceptor the formulation 'Tat tvamasi' is Savikalpa Samādhi. In Savikalpa Samādhi there is the distinction of 'I the knower and Brahman the known'.[11] S.C.S. further classifies Savikalpa Samādhi into Śabdānuviddha Savikalpa Samādhi and Śabdānanuviddha Savikalpa Samādhi. Samādhi, which is dependent on the verbal formulation Aham Brahmāsmi, is termed as Śabdānuviddha Savikalpa Samādhi. At the culmination of this type of Samādhi the cittavṛtti transforms in to the form of Brahman. The state of Samādhi in which the activity of citta becomes permeated in Brahman is called Śabdānanuviddha Savikalpa Samādhi.

By the repeated exercise of Savikalpa Samādhi the distinction of the knowledge, the knower and the object of knowledge vanishes and the aspirant then enters into the state of Nirvikalpasamādhi, where total merging in Brahman occurs. This is the state in which there will be the absolute absence of the world and where the Brahman alone shines forth.[12] A twofold classification of Nirvikalpa Samādhi is also provided in A.C.P. as Advaita bhāvānurūpa nirvikalpa Samādhi and Advaita brahmāvasthānurūpa nirvikalpa samādhi. Among these two classes the Advaita brahmāvasthānurūpa nirvikalpa samādhi is the prominent one. Just as the water sprinkled on the red-hot iron disappears by absorbing it into the metal, in the long lasting practice of the non-dual perceptional form of Samādhi the functions of Antaḥkaraṇa which creates the diverse worldly objects merges into the extremely manifested Brahman. Here S.C.S. considers Advaita bhāvānurūpa nirvikalpa

Samādhi as the means (साधन) and Advaita Brahmāvasthānurūpa nirvikalpa Samādhi as the end result (फल).

Advaitacintāpaddhati of S.C.S. gives access to the seamless flow of Brahman knowledge. In this work he stresses the need for Brahman knowledge in achieving liberation; Advaitic knowledge is proved as a vigorous instrument to unite society as the potential of Advaita philosophy was powerful enough to provide enrichment to different categories of humanity. The thoughts and ideas rendered by S.C.S. through his Advaitacintāpaddhati helped to a greater extent in bringing a revolution in societal transformation. This work furnishes a glance of his metaphysical absolutism.

सन्दर्भाः

१. अनुभवरूपः तुरीयः त्रिष्वपि कोष्वास्ति। ऋक.६. ब्र. ६५.

२. सर्वप्रकाशः स्वप्रकाश । तुरीयरूपः आत्मा। ऋक.६ ब्र.६६.

३. अयं तुरीयः जाग्रद्रुपं स्थूल शरीरं अहमित्यभिमन्यमानः बहिष्प्रज्ञो विश्वः सूक्ष्मरूपं सूक्ष्मशरीरं अहमित्यभिमन्यमानः अन्तःप्रज्ञः तैजसा वा सुषुप्तिरूपं कारणशरीरं अहमित्यभिमन्यमानः प्रज्ञानघनः प्राज्ञः वा न किन्तु अदृश्यम् अव्यवहार्यम् अग्राह्यम क्षणं अचिन्त्यवायपदेश्यमकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्त शिवमद्वैतम् च तत् तुरीयम् ऋक.६ ब्र. ६७.

४. अज्ञाननाशे तत्कार्यनामरूपाणामपि बाधे सच्चित्सुखं ब्रह्म प्रकाशेत ऋक.६ ब्र.६८.

५. स्वतन्त्रं अपरिणामि सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपं ब्रह्मैव पारमार्थिकसत्ता। ऋक.६ ब्र.५३.

६. व्यवहारदशायां अपरिणामित्वेन स्थितानां पदार्थानां सत्ता व्यावहारिकीसत्ता तस्योदाहरणनि घट-प - मादीनि ऋक.६ ब्र.५३.

७. अखण्डसच्चिदानन्दे ब्रह्मवस्तुनि रज्ज्वां सर्प इव स्थाणौ पुरुष इव मरुमरीचिकाया जलमिव शुक्तौ रजतमिव आकाशे कृष्णवर्ण इव मूल प्रकृतिः नाम शक्तिः विवर्तरूपेण चेल्लोः (ऋक.६. ब्र.२५)

८. यथा घट इति शब्दश्रवणेन कम्बुग्रीवपृथुबुधोदराद्याकृति विशिष्टस्य ज नयनार्थं उपयुज्यमानस्य पात्राविशेषस्य प्रतीतिर्जायते। यथा घट इति शब्दस्य शक्यार्था भवति। अस्य वाच्यार्थ इत्यपि नाम। तथा त्वं पदस्य वाच्यार्थः देहाभिमानी जीवः इति तत् पदस्य वाच्यार्थो प्रपञ्चकारणभूतः ईश्वरः च ऋक.६ ब्र.९०

९. तस्मात् सर्वसन्देहनिवृत्यर्थं परमपुरुषार्थ ाभाय च सद्गुरुशुश्रूषा कार्या। ततः ब्रह्म साक्षात्कर्तुं याः कर्तव्यः। ऋक.६ ब्र.८७.

१०. समाधौ स्थूल प्रपञ्चस्य सूक्ष्मप्रपञ्चस्य कारणप्रपञ्चस्य वा अनुभवो न। तत्र केवल ब्रह्मस्वरूपमेव प्रकाशेत। ऋक.६, ब्र.६९

११. गुरुमुखात् तत्वमसि महावाक्यं श्रुत्वा अहं ब्रह्मास्मि इति निरन्तर ध्यानेन ब्रह्माकारमनोवृत्यवस्थैव सविकल्पसमाधिः। अस्मिन् समाधौ अहं ध्याता ब्रह्म ध्येयं च इति भावना अस्ति। ऋक.६. ब्र.७१.

१२. सविकल्पसमाधेः अभ्यास बलात् ध्यानकर्त। ध्यानकर्म इत्यवस्थाद्वयमुपेक्ष्य चित्तं ध्येयस्य सच्चित्सुखब्रह्मणः मार्गे प्रविशति। ऋक.६. ब्र.७१.