UNIT-9 ŚAṄKARA: BRAHMAN AND MĀYĀ

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9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to -

- describe the meaning of Vedānta
- explain the Avdvaita Vedānta of Sankara
- describe the concept of Brahman
- explain svarupalakṣana or Nirguna Brahman
- explain tatasthalakṣana or Saguna Brahaman
- explain the negative description of Brahman
- describe the importance of Māyā in Advaita Vedānta
- describe the meaning of Māyā
- explain the two functions of Māyā
- describe the nature of Māyā

9.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to the concepts of Brahman and māyā in Advaita Vedānta of Sankarāchārya. But before knowing the concepts of Brahman and maya, you must know about Vedānta Philosophy and also about Advaita philoshophy of Sankara. So let us know about the Vedānta philosophy first.

Vedānta Philosophy is a very important philosophy in India. It is the foundation of the spiritual culture of India. The term 'Vedānta' literally means 'the end of the Vedas'. In this sense it stands primarily for the Upanisads. Because Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas, both chronologically and also philosophically. Chronologically the Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas, because each of the four Vedas comprises three types of literature _____ the Samhitā, the Brahmans and the Upanisads coming successively. Philosophically also the Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas, as they mark the culmination of the Vedic speculation and contain the essence of the Vedic teaching.

Thus we may mention the following points for which the Upanisads are regarded as Vedānta.

a) The Upanisads are literally the last product of the Vedic literature. There are three types of literature in the Vedas- the Samhitā, the Brahmans, and the Upanisads and the Upanisads comes last where all the philosophical problems are discussed.

b) In respect of study also, the Upanisads come last. As a rule, a man studies the Samhitas first, next the Brahmans for guiding him for his house hold life, and last of all the Upanisads when he retires from the family life and engages to understand the meaning of life and also the mystery of the Universe.

c) Lastly, the Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas in the sense that a man's education is not complete till he receives instructions in the Upanisads.

It is to be noted that Vedānta represents not only the Upanisads, but also the scriptures that are related with the knowledge of Brahman. In this

sense Vedānta includes not only the Upanisads, but also the Bhāgavad-Gitā, the Brahmasuṭra and also all the commentators that are related to the knowledge of Brahman. It is for this reason that the

Upanisads, the Brahma sutra, and the Bhāgavad-Gitā are called as the 'Prasthānatraya' i.e. the three foundation stone of Vedānta philosophy.

While, the concept of Māyā occupies a very important place in the Advaita philosophy of Sankara. Śaṅkara introduced the concept of Māyā as a philosophical explanation of the physical universe.

You are to know that though the doctrine of Māyā is known after the name of Sankara, yet Śaṅkara is not the originator of the concept of Māyā. Actually he developed the concept of Māyā, after a thorough and careful study of the ancient Indian literature like the Vedas, the Upanisads, the Bhāgavad-Gitā, the Brahmasuṭra, and the Sāṅkhya- kārikā of Gaudapāda. The concept of Māyā is thus a systematic, elaborate and methodical presentation of Śaṅkara, by retaining all the characteristics of the Upanisadic thought.

In our previous discussion, you have learned that according to Śaṅkara, Brahman is the only reality and the world is an appearance of Brahman. Now one of the main problems is about the relation between Brahman and the world. What is the relation between Brahman and the world? How is the world of appearance connected with Brahman? For the Advaita Vedānta, the question is an illegitimate one. For a relation presupposes two distinct things. If Brahman and the world are to be related, they must be distinct from each other, which is not applicable in case of Advaita philosophy. So, to explain the relation between Brahman and the world is a fact capable of no further explanation.

It is Śaṅkara, who boldly and logically announced the doctrine of Māyā as an explanation of the relation between the world of appearance and Brahman. Through the theory of Māyā, Śaṅkara proved that Brahman is the only absolute reality and the world is an appearance. The magician can create hundred coins out of one single coin. We cannot explain it and we call it 'Māyā' In the traditional example 'rope - snake' illusion, the rope appears

as a snake, due to darkness. Similarly, Brahman appears as the world due to Māyā. Had there been no rope, there would be no 'snake'. Similarly had there been no Brahman, there would be no world appearance. Thus, the concept of Māyā is introduced by Sankara for the explanation of Brahman and the world appearance. Now let us discuss the concepts of Brahman and Māyā in this unit.

9.3 ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

There are various schools of Vedānta philosophy, like Advaita Vedānta of Sankara, Visistvadvaita Vedānta of Rāmānuja etc. Among all the schools, the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara culminates in its highest spiritual achievements.

Advaitavāda popularly means that belief which considers that the ultimate reality is only one. It means that Brahman is the only reality. Like any other doctrine of Indian philosophy, the Advaita thought also did not originate at one time. It was a result of a gradual philosophic thinking. It started from the period of Rg̣veda, the oldest text of Hinduism. The famous statement of the Rig-Veda 'Akam Sad Viprā Bahudhā Vadanti" indicates that the reality is one and it is expressed in many ways.

So, it would be a mistake to suppose that Śaṅkara was the first to propound the view of Advaita Vedānta. Even Śaṅkara himself never claimed the glory to be the founder of the system. You are to know that there is another Acharya, Gaudapāda, who was the great grand teacher of Śaṅkara. He had introduced the Advaitic concept in his philosophy. Yet the credit of Sankara lies in the fact that he had developed the Advaita Vedānta along with all the authentic human experiences, such as critical, moral and the religious etc. that were current for a very long time. Śaṅkara is therefore regarded as the propounder of Advaita Vedānta. He had established the Advaita Vedānta in a systematic and scientific method. Now let us disuses the concept of Brahman.

9.4 THE CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN

The entire philosophy of Sankara is expressed in a beautiful half verse which runs as follows - "Brahma Satya Jagat Mithyā Jivo Brahmaiva Na Parah" "Brahman is the only reality, the world is false, the individual soul is non different from Brahman. Thus the fundamental point to Sankara Vedānta is that Brahman is the absolute reality; the world is nothing but the appearance of Brahman due to māyā. This philosophy is also called Brahmavidyā as its main subject is about the knowledge of Brahman. The meaning of Brahman has already been fixed by the Upanishads, and the Sāstras and Śaṅkara followed the same ancient tradition in his philosophy.

9.5 NATURE OF BRAHMAN

In the Upanisads, Brahman has been characterized from two points of view. These are essential and secondary, indeterminate and determinate or Svarupalaksana and Tatasthalaksana. And in Sankar Vedānta also we find that Brahman has been explained in the same sense as it is stated in the Upanisads.

Now let us discuss Brahman from these two points of view -

(a) Svarupalakṣana of Brahman : The Svarupa or the essential definition of a thing consists of the essential nature of that thing. The Sruti describes Brahman as "Satyam Jnanam Anantam". i.e. Brahman is Existence, Consciousness and Infinite."

Brahman is Satyam : Brahman is not contradicted by any time. It is always the same and does not undergo any change. It is truth, uncontradicted. It is Sat or Satya.

Brahman is Jñānam : Jnāna here does not mean ordinary knowledge, which involves the relation of the knower and known. It is that knowledge which is beyond the duality of subject and object, knower and known. Knowledge is, thus, not the attribute of Brahman. Brahman is knowledge itself.

Brahman is Anantam : Brahman is infinite, eternal and unlimited. It is devoid of all consideration of time, space and causation.

Another definition of Brahman is Sat Cit and ānanda. These three terms Sat Cit and ānanda are not the attributes of Brahman. These are the very characteristics of Brahman.

Brahman is Sat: Brahman is Sat. It means that Brahman is truth and that Brahman is never false.

Brahman is Cit: Brahman is Cit or consciousness itself. It is self-luminous and shines by itself and in itself.

Brahman is Ananda: Again, Brahman is ānanda or Bliss itself. Bliss is not a predicate to Brahman like pleasure, happiness etc.

Thus, Braman is Sat-Cit-ānanda or Being, Consciousness, Bliss. Brahman is, thus, the pure subject without any object or any predicate. It is thus the Nirguna Brahman.

Another definition of Brahman: Again, another definition of Brahman is that Brahman is free from all differences i.e. Bhedarahitam. Bheda or difference is of three types - (i) Sajātiya i.e. difference between the objects of the same class. It is the difference e.g. between one mango tree and another mango tree. (ii) Vijātiya i.e. difference between an object of one class and another class. It is difference between a mango tree and a neem tree. (iii) Sagatah i.e. internal difference. Sagatah bheda refers to different parts of the same tree like the roots, trunks, branches, leaves, fruits, etc. of the same mango tree.

Brahman is free from all these differences.

Brahman has no Sajātiya bheda as there is not another Brahman from which it is to be distinguished.

There is nothing else other than Brahman or other side Brahman making for Vijātiya bheda. Therefore, it is said in the scriptures "Sarvam khalu idam Brahman". i.e. Brahman is all these.

Brahman is one and there is no multiplicity in it. Brahman is, therefore, free from sagatah bheda.

(b) Tatastha laksana of Brahman:

The Tatastha laksana or secondary characteristics is that

which is not originally possessed by Brahman but attributed to him by human beings. Thus, Brahman is regarded as the cause of the origin, maintenance and dissolution of the world. The Tatastha laksana of Brahman explains Brahman with atributes. It is Saguna Brahman.

Thus, we have seen that in the Advaita Vedānta, Brahman manifests itself in two forms. In itself it is unqualifid (nirvishesa), indeterminate (nirguna) indefinable (anirvacaniya). But associated with its own power Maya, it appears as qualified (savishesa), determinate (saguna). He is the Lord (Isvara) of the universe. He is the creator, preserver and destroyer and its inner controller.

Brahman manifests itself in two forms which in fact are its two poises. In itself it is unqualified (Nirguna) but associated with Maya it is qualified (saguna). So in Advaita Vedānta, there are two views regarding the ultimate reality - higher and lower, parā and aparā, Nirguna and Saguna

Now, the question is what is the real nature of Brahman : Is Brahman nirguna or qualitiless, actionless and differenceless? Or is it endowed with quality, action and difference?

The Visistadvaita vedāntins like Rāmānuja and others, who are the believer of a personal God, are of the opinion that Brhaman is necessarily endowed with quality like omnipotence, omniscience, all powerful, all pervading etc. For them, the Upanisadic Brahman implies only the Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman simply speaks of the essence of Brahman.

On the other hand, the Advaita vedāntins, are of the opinion that Brahman is essentially nirguna and niskriya i.e. devoid of any quality and action. According to Śaṅkara, Nirguna Brahman is the metaphysical principle and can be realised only when man attains the ultimate knowledge of Brahman, i.e. the Brahmajnāna. Brahman appears to be saguna and sakriya only when assosiated with Māyā.

Brahman is thus viewed from two points of view. From the transcendental (paramarthika) point of view, Brahman is Nirguna. And from the phenomenal (vyavaharika) point of view, Brahman associated with Māyā is spoken of as Saguna Brahman. It is conceived of as having a form, a

name, having all the superior qualities like omniscience, omnipotence, all powerfulness, Goodness, grace, beauty etc. It is called God.

Thus, Nirguna and Saguna Brahman are not two different realities. The same Brahman is Nirguna and Saguna from two different view point. From the transcendental (pāramārthika) view point, Brahman is Nirguna and from the (vyavahārika) empirical view point, Brahman is Saguna or God. In this manner, Sankara brings out a consistency among the two sets of Upanisadic Brahman as Saguna and Nirguna.

9.6 NETI NETII CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN

In the Upanisads, the best way of knowing Brahman is described in the negative ways. We are not able to know Brahman by our ordinary empirical knowledge. So the best way of knowing Brahman is as 'Not-this', 'Not-this' (Neti, Neti). The significance of the term 'Neti', 'Neti' is in the fact that it is impossible for the human being to know Brahman through ordinary concept or ordinary mode of expression. Brahman, the pure being can not be grasped by the empirical knowledge. So, we may have a glimpse of the Absolute Reality, through the negative description as 'Neti Neti', like 'Brahman is not this', 'Brahman is not that' etc.

Thus, from the above discussion we come to know that Brahman is the ultimate reality, according to Sankara. And Brahman can be viewed from two points of view- Nirguna and Saguna. From the transcendental point of view, Brahman is Nirguna. Brahman can be realised only by those rare few, who have attained Brahmajnāna. Saguna Brahman, on the other hand, can be, known from the phenomenal point of view. Saguna Brahman is the theistic God who satisfied the religious attitude of man.

You have gone through the concepts of Brahman, which have been discussed in the preceding sections in this unit. Now, you will study the concepts of māya in the coming sections of this unit.

9.7 MEANING OF MĀYĀ

The word 'Māyā' does not have any fixed and unalterable meaning in the history of Indian thought. Owing to this the doctrine of Māyā has been greatly misunderstood and wrongly interpreted by the critics both in India and abroad.

The term Māyā is often translated into English as 'illusion' or 'false' by the philosophers both in India and also the West. It is for this reason when we say that 'the world is Māyā' we normally understand that 'the world is an illusion' or 'the world is false' according to Sankara's philosophy. Such misunderstanding is responsible for our attempt to translate the Sanskrit word Māyā into English meaning as 'illusion' which does not reflect the appropriate meaning of Māyā. So, it is better to use the term Māyā in its original Sanskrit language and not to view it from English translation.

In the Rg Veda, the term Māyā means the power to transform into strange forms. Among the principal Upanisads in the Bṛhādaranyaka, the term Māyā means the magical power. In the svetatasvatara Upanisads, the word Māyā implies the power of Mahesvara. In the Bhāgavad-Gitā, Māyā means the sakti of Isvara.

The literal meaning of the word Māyā is highly significant. The word Māyā is a combination of two words, "Mā" and "yā" which implies 'not' and 'what' respectively and, taken together, it means 'that' which is 'not'. Thus the statement that "the world is Māyā" means that it is an appearance of reality in a form which is not its essential and ultimate nature and has no being after the dawn of right knowledge.

Śaṅkara describes Māyā as the root cause of the world appearance. In most cases, Śaṅkara has used the term ajnana, avidyā, māyā, prakriti, avyakta etc as synomyous. Thus, Māyā occupies a very important position in Advaita Vedānta as it is regarded as the cause of all multiplicity and empirical activity.

9.8 MĀYĀ IS A FACT OF EXPERIENCE

The concept of Māyā is based on the fact of experience. We find in our experience that the reality of a thing is different from its appearnce. Let us take an example. To a passanger in a fast moving train, the trees, houses etc, appear to be running backwords. You may also notice that when the clouds move in the sky, it looks as if the moon is moving. A stick which is burning at one end, when revolved rapidly, produces the impression of a circle of fire. These experiences happen in our everyday life, which are natural to us. According to Śaṅkar, these are the cases of Māyā which breaks up the original picture of reality and gives a distorted picture of it and this fact is experienced by us in every field of activity.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) The concept of Māyā holds that the world is an appearance of Absolute Reality (True/False)

b) The world Māyā means 'that' which is 'not' (True/False)

c) Śaṅkara is the propounder of the concept of Māyā (True/False)

Q 10: What is the meaning of the term 'Māyā' according to Bṛhadāranyaka Upanishad? (Answer in about words)

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Q 11: Write the Śaṅkara's interpretation of the concept of Māyā.(Answer in about 60 words)

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Q 12: The term māyā means the magical power. Name the Upanisad where it stated

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9.9 THE TWO FUNCTIONS OF EXPERIENCE

According to Śaṅkara, Māyā is the principle which breaks up the original Picture of reality and gives a distorted picture of it as subject and object. Māyā works as a power of Brahman, since it is the power of creating the world of appearance. This power functions in two ways - one is called āvarana Sakti or the power of obscuring or veiling or concealing. The other is called Viksepa Sakti or the projecting or distorting power. The power of concealment is just like the real nature of the rope covered by darkness. The power of projection is just like the illusory snake as projected in place of the rope. Māyā obscures the self or Brahman and projects the world in its place. The real nature of Brahman or the soul is obscured by Māyā by its enveloping power and appears to be the knower, doer and experiencer of the worldly objects. The case is again that of like the rope and the snake. When the rope looks like a snake it creates the feelings of fear on the onlooker. Thus, Brahman associated with the Māyā appears to be the material cause and also the creator of the world. It is Just like the spider appearing as the material cause as well as the efficient cause of the web from itself. Here the question may arise, as to how the limited, non-eternal and inert ajnana can obscure the Brahman which is unlimited, eternal and of the nature of consciousness. To this, Śaṅkara replies that just as a small patch of cloud covers the sun for a limited time, similarly "aj̃nana" or Māyā covers the self for a limited period till the right knowledge dawns. Just as the sun reveals the entire world by overcoming the veil of clouds, man overcome the veil of aj̃nana when right knowledge dawns.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 13: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Śaṅkara introduced the concept of Māyā as an explanation of the relation between Brahman and the world of appearance. (True/False)

b) The term māyā is used for illusion in the philosophy of S/amkara. (True / False)

c) The term māyā is synonomous with the term aj̃nana, avidyā, prakṛti, avyakta etc. (True /False)



ACTIVITY: 9.1

- What do you mean by Māyā in Śaṅkara's philosophy? Discuss

Ans: ……

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9.10 NATURE OF MĀYĀ

Māyā has a very important role to play in Advaita vedānta, as it is the cause of all multiplicity and empirical activity. Regarding the essential nature of Māyā, the Advaita Vedanta has pointed out some important features which are as follows -

(i) Māyā as the energy of God:

According to Sankara, Brahman is regarded as God, as

conditioned by Māyā, so Māyā is His energy, the inherent force, by which God creates this multiple universe.

ii) Māyā as the finitising principle:

Māyā is the finitising principle, for which one Brahman appears as the many. Māyā makes the one Brahman appear as the world process. In the rope-snake illusion, the man's ignorance in conjunction with the insufficient light plays a role on the rope and makes it appear to him as a snake. Here ajnana or ignorance conceals the rope and makes it appear as a snake. Similarly, the two powers of Māyā i.e. the concealment (āvarana) and projection (viksepa), conceal the Brahman and project the world in its place. Thus Māyā functions as a finitising agency in the Advaita vedānta.

(iii) Māyā - anādi:

Māyā is anadi i.e. beginningless. It is not possible to say when the association of Māyā with Brahman started. It is as old as the history of the world and no one can say when the world of appearnce began. Its origin is beyound our comprehension. For, we are subject to this Māyā. But though Māyā is anādi or beginningless, it is not "ananta", without an end. After the realisation of Brahmajnana, one can overcome the Māyā or ajnana or ignorance, so Māyā though anādi, has an end (antah).

(iv) A Positive entity - Bhāva-rupa:

According to Advaita vedanta, Māyā is a positive entity (Bhava-rupa) and not a negative one (jnana viruddha). It cannot be regarded as a negative entity, since it is the material cause of the world. Māyā not only conceals the reality of Brahman but also misrepresents the reality into various forms of appearance. So it is something positive. According to Śaṅkara Māyā is antagonistic (hostile) to knowledge (Jnana virodhi). This means that Māyā or ajnana is dispelled by right knowledge. Māyā vanishes at the dawn of knowledge of

Brahman just like the darkness vanishes before the light. So Māyā is not only absence of apprehension but misapprehension as well.

(v) Māyā is indescribable (Anirvacaniya):

Māyā is indescribable i.e. devoid of any well defined nature. For, it is neither existent nor non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent. It is neither similar with Brahman, nor different from Brahman nor non-different from both. It is neither composed of parts nor is partless nor both. Hence, it is indescribable.

Māyā cannot be regarded as existent or real like Brahman since it is contradicted by right knowledge. Nor is it absolutely non existent like a sky-flower since it is a fact of experience. Again, it can not be both existent and non existent which is self-contradictory. Again, Māyā can not be equal with Brahman nor different from Brahman which will involve dualism. Since difference and non-difference are mutually contradictory both of them can not be associated with Māyā. Even Māyā can not be regarded as composed of parts or partless or both parts and partlesss which is impossible. Thus, it is not possible to determine the exact nature of Māyā. Hence it is called indeterminable (anirvacaniaya).

(vi) Māyā is Trigunatmaka :

Māyā is composed of three gunas (Trigunatmaka). Māyā is like the Prakrti of Samkhya composed of three gunas as - Sattva, Raja and Tama.

But it must be remembered that Māyā cannot be equated with Prakrti of Śaṁkhya. There are some fundamental differences between the two. The Prakṛti of Samkhya is an ultimate reality which is independent of Purusha . But in Advaita, Māyā is considered as the primordial cause of the universe which is dependent on Brahamn. Māyā helps, as it were, to Isvara in his creation and hence dependent on the Lord.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 14: What are the two functions of māyā?

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Q 15: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Brahman appears as the world due to ma-ya. (True / False)

b) Māyā is indescribable. (True/False)

c) Māyā is a positive entity. (True/ False)

d) Māyā is beginningless. (True/False)

e) Brahman is associated with ma-ya, is regarded as God. (True/ False)

Q 16: Māyā is composed of three gunas. What are they?



9.11 LET US SUM UP

- Vedānta philosophy represents primarily for the knowledge of Brahman
- Vedānta philosophy is based on the Parsthānatraya i.e. the Upanishads, the Bhāgavadgit? and the Brahmasutra.
- Advaita vedānta of Śaṅkara is one of the main schools of vedānta philosophy.
- Śaṅkara is not the originator of the system
- Advaita vedānta is a development of the ancient Indian literature.
- Śaṅkara explained the concept of Brahman in consistent with the Upanisads.
- Brahman is explained from two points of view - (i) Nirguna and (ii) Saguna Brahman.
- Both Nirgun.a and Saguna are not two entites of Brahman.

- From the transcendental point of view Brahman is Nirgun.a and from the empirical point of view the same Brahman is Saguna.
  It is impossible for the human being to know Brahman through ordinary mode of expression.
- According to the Upanisads, Brahman can be known in a negative way. Neti, Neti.
- Brahman can be realized by those rare few who have attained the Brahma aj̃nana or who realise Brahman in himself.
- Śaṅkara introduced the doctrine of māyā to explain the world of appearance.
- Māyā has no fixed meaning in Indian philosophy, for which there arises so much misinterprelatation.
- Māyā does not mean illusion.
- Māyā means 'that' what 'it is not'.
- The concept of māyā is a fact of experience.
- Māyā works in two ways - (i) Āvarana Sakti and (ii) Viksepa Sakti
- Māyā has many imsportant features.



9.12 FURTHER READINGS

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9.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Vedānta Philosophy is a very important philosophy in India. It is the foundation of the spiritual culture of India. The term 'Vedānta' literally means 'the end of the Vedas'.

Ans to Q No 2: Chronologically the Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas, because each of the four Vedas comprises three types of literature _____ the Samhita-, the Brahmans and the Upanisads coming successively. Philosophically also the Upanisads are regarded as the end of the Vedas, as they mark the culmination of the Vedic speculation and contain the essence of the Vedic teaching.

Ans to Q No 3: The Upanisads, the Brahma su-tra, and the Bhāgavad-Gitā are called as the 'Prasthānatraya'

Ans to Q No 4: a) True b) True c) True

Ans to Q No 5: Indeterminate (Nirgun.a) and determinate (Saguna) or Svarupalaksana and Tatasthalaksana

Ans to Q No 6: From the transcendental point of view Brahman is Nirgun.a.

Ans to Q No 7: from the empirical point of view the same Brahman is Saguna.

Ans to Q No 8: a) False b) False c) False
d) True

Ans to Q No 9: a) True b) True c) True

Ans to Q No 10: According to Br.hada-ranyaka Upanisad, the term māyā Brhadaranyaks, means the magical power.

Ans to Q No 11: Samkara holds that māyā is considered as the root cause of the world appearance. He has used the term aj̃nana, avidyā-, māyā, prakr.ti, avyakta etc. as synomyous to Māyā. Śaṅkara uses it as the cause of all multiplicity and empirical activity.

Ans to Q No 12: Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad

Ans to Q No 13: a) True b) False c) True

Ans to Q No 14: Āvarana Sakti and Viksepa Sakti

Ans to Q No 15: a) True b) True c) True d) True e) True

Ans to Q No 16: Sattva, Raja and Tama



9.14 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: What is the literal meaning of the term 'Vedānta"?

Q 2: What do you mean by "Brahma Satya Jagat Mithyā"?

Q 3: What is Saguna Brahman, according to Samkara?

Q 4: What are the two viewpoints regarding the concept of Brahman?

Q 5: Give an example of the concept of māyā.

Q 6: What are the two words consists of māyā?

Q 7: How does Bṛ.hada-ryanka Upanisad define the concept of māyā?

Q 8: Māyā as a work force functions in the two ways. What are the two ways?

Q 9: What are the two important features of māyā?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Explain briefly the concept of Brahman.

Q 2: Briefly comment on the nature of Brahman.

Q 3: What is Tatastha laks.an.a Brahman? Discuss briefly.

Q 4: Discuss briefly the Neti Neti Concept of Brahman.

Q 5: Māyā is indescribable. Briefly explain this feature of māyā.

Q 6: What is the importance of māyā- in Advaita Vedanta? Discuss briefly.

C) Short Notes on (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Advaita Vedānta

Q 2: Svarupalakṡana of Brahman

D) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Why are the Upanisads are regarded as Vedānta?

Q 2: Explain the concept of Brahman?

Q 3: Explain the Prasthanatraya of Vedānta philosophy.

Q 4: Is Brahman Nirguna? Explain.

Q 5: How Brahman can be explained as Saguna or endowed with quality? Discuss

Q 6: What is the Neti Neti concept of Brahman? Explain

Q 7: Discuss the concept of māyā according to Samkara.

Q 8: Explain the meaning of māyā.

Q 9: Explain the two functions of māyā.

Q 10: Describe the nature of māyā.

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