

**THE SYNOPSIS ON THE SUMMARY OF THE  
THESIS ENTITLED “NATURE *OF BRAHMAN IN  
ADVAITA VEDĀNTA : A CRITICAL STUDY*”**

**THE SYNOPSIS OF THE THESIS SUBMITTED FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (ARTS)  
OF THE VIDYASAGAR UNIVERSITY**

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VIDYASAGAR UNIVERSITY  
2013**

## **THE SYNOPSIS ON THE SUMMARY OF THE THESIS ENTITLED “*NATURE OF BRAHMAN IN ADVAITA VEDĀNTA : A CRITICAL STUDY*”**

Brahman is the main concern of Advaita Vedānta. In this research work an attempt has been made to explicate the nature of Brahman in the light of Upaniṣads (Second chapter), Advaita Vedānta (Third chapter) and other Vedānta systems, such as, Rāmānuja’s *Viśistādvaitavāda*, Nimbārka’s *Dvaitādvaitavāda*, Madhva’s *Dvaitavāda*, Vallabha’s *Viśuddhādvaitavāda* and Śrī Caitanya’s *Acintyabhedābheda* (Fourth chapter). The distinction between *Svarūpa Lakṣaṇa* (essential characteristic) and *taṭastha lakṣaṇa* (secondary characteristic) has been dealt with in the fifth chapter. The nature of Brahman, according to three main contemporary Indian thinkers like Śrī Aurobindo, Swāmī Vivekānanda and Rabindranāth Tagore has been discussed in the sixth chapter. This work has been completed with a critical estimate in the seventh chapter.

Normally the principal teachings of Śankara’s Advaita are expressed as (a) Brahman is ultimately real, (b) the world is a false appearance on Brahman and (c) the *jīva* is essentially identical with Brahman. Śankara’s Absolutism is known as *Kevalādvaitavāda* on its positive side and as *Māyāvāda* on its negative side.

The fourth chapter explicates the ontological status of Brahman in different Vedānta systems mentioned earlier. These are *Vaiṣṇava* philosophies which are called the ‘*Bhakti* School of Vedānta’. These are based on the

commentaries of *Brahmasūtra*. Their commentaries are different due to their different attitudes of ultimate reality. The characteristic feature of Brahman is of two kinds- essential characteristic (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa*) and secondary characteristic (*taṭastha lakṣaṇa*). The essential characteristic feature remains in the very nature of an object. The truth, knowledge and infinitude are the essential characteristic of Brahman. The accidental characteristic feature of Brahman exists in its being the cause of the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the universe.

According to Swāmī Vivekānanda, the Absolute or Brahman is Impersonal and the real Infinite. It comprehends all and the essence of all. It is *Sat- cit- ānanda*. Śrī Aurobindo conceives consciousness as the ultimate reality or Brahman, the Divine. It is eternal, absolute and infinite. Tagore's Absolute has been conceived almost in Śankara's manner. To him, everything is a manifestation of the Absolute. Tagore's writings indicate that his position is fundamentally different from that of Śankara also. In fact, in his lecture on 'Universal Man' Tagore examines Śankara's standpoint and distinguishes it from that of his own.

The dissertation presents various explications concerning the nature of ultimate reality, i.e., Brahman, according to the different Vedānta systems, such as, Advaita, Viśistādvaita, Dvaita and Dvaitādvaita. There are differences and contradictions regarding the nature of ultimate reality among them because of their variety of interpretations of *Brahmasūtra*. All of them attempt to develop Vedānta philosophy, so all the systems are important and valuable in the broad

perspective of man's spiritual life. From the discussion and examination of the different Vedānta systems in the foregoing chapters we can conclude that the Advaita Vedānta view concerning the nature of the ultimate reality (i.e., Brahman) is most satisfactory. Swāmī Vivekānanda, a new Vedāntin, points out in this respect that *Advaitavāda* is the highest attitude of spiritual life and *Viśistādvaitavāda*, *Dvaitavāda* and *Dvaitādvaitavāda* are only steps towards it. However he asserts that each step is a Vedāntic step. According to him, there are different interpretations in favour of different views of various Vedānta systems and to his mind they have been progressive, beginning with the dualistic or *Dvaita* and ending with the non-dualistic or *Advaita*. According to him, Śankarācārya was the best teacher of Vedānta philosophy. This holistic view of Vedānta ultimately points to the greatness of the Advaita Vedānta of Śankara. So in our finding the nature of Brahman exposed in the *Advaita* Vedānta is the guide in the Vedāntic ways of thought.

(SibsankarTunga)