MADHVA'S CONCEPTION OF SVATANTRA

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MADHVA lived in the thirteenth century A.D. He is the last of the originators of Vedanta systems. Coming last he has a definite advantage over his predecessors. Having studied both their merits and defects he has propounded a system of Vedanta which has so far proved the last word in Vedanta.

1. Svatantra, the One Principle of All

Madhva teaches that the Cause, Source, Ground, Principle, Substance, Basis, Truth or Reality of all that is the world is essentially one. Following the Vedas, he names this Cause Svatantra, Brahman, Parabrahman, Ātman, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Iśvara, Paramēśvara, Vāsudeva and so on. In the course of his thought Madhva constantly makes use of the conception of Svatantra, explains its significance, and, on its basis, justifies the various aspects of the ultimate Reality that underlies all. The term svatantra is a compound of sva and tantra and it means svādhīna, the Independent. This implies that the source of all is self-established, self-evident, unbound and all-complete. These are the various aspects signified by the various other Vedic names, Brahman and so on. Svatantra as the source of all reality is the giver of the reality of all. This means that all else is paratantra, or parādhīna.

Madhva's teaching is purely a philosophical justification of Svatantra with all its implications. He shows also that Śruti and Smṛti reveal the truth of Svatantra only and that their teaching expresses the conclusion of the philosophy he expounds. This is the reason why he constantly makes a reference to the texts of Śruti and Smṛti in his works. We must not infer from this that he reads his own ideas into Śruti and Smṛti. Whenever he defines an idea presented by a Śruti, he gives not only the philosophical justification of the idea, but the support of other passages of Śruti which state the same idea more clearly. This is why he quotes profusely from Śruti and Smṛti. Thus his teaching by way of giving a self-complete system of philosophy makes the several texts of Śruti a consistent whole. This is an attempt at presenting a philosophy which holds true at all times and in all circumstances.

As regards the history of philosophy that preceded him, he notes the following: The Vedas started the real philosophical enquiry as expressed
in such passages as “From which all these creatures come into being, by which they are living and into which they enter and disappear, reflect on That. That is Brahman” (Tait.)¹ The sole purpose of the whole Veda is to study the various aspects of Brahman, the Ground of all. This is the teaching of the passage “All the Vedas reveal the truth of Brahman.”² The Smritis illustrate the truth taught by the Veda. Bhāgavata says “Dravya, Karma, Kāla, Svabhāva, Jīva and Prakṛti (all the items of the world) exist because of the desire of Brahman. And if Brahman is indifferent to them they do not exist.”³ The Gītā says “I am the creator of all.”⁴ The teaching of Śrutī and Smṛti is confirmed by the Brahmaśūtra: “That from which this world has production and so on is Brahman.”⁵ The manner in which the Truth is taught in these works is highly significant. They hold that the cause of all is Brahman but not that Brahman is the cause of all. This circumstance indicates better the spirit of the teaching which is that the whole universe is an expression, work or a product of a single principle and this is named Brahman.

Next followed the Darśanas including the schools of Vedānta. Their originators failed to see fully the significance of the lead given by the Vedic tradition. Each in the course of his thought somehow developed an undue interest in some aspect of the world or other and made much of it. Cārvāka denied cetana and made svabhāva, an aspect of matter, the principle of all. Baudhaṇḍa denied the world of actual experience and made sūnya the ultimate. Jainī began to explain everything with his syādvāda and ended by saying that nothing can be really explained. Nyāya-vaiśeṣika and Pūrva-mīmāṃsa assumed several self-established realities together with Īśvara or Karma as a connecting link. Though Sāṅkhya spoke of two principles, prakṛti and puruṣa, it attributed all creative activity to prakṛti and made puruṣa practically a non-entity. None of these schools respected the spirit of Brahmavāda started by the Vedas. This circumstance gave rise to the idea of re-establishing the old Brahmavāda. There appeared several schools of Vedānta. But they formed only the basis for the greater systematisation of Vedic thought at the hands of Śankara and Rāmānuja. But even they did not do proper justice to the Vedic spirit of finding out the single principle of all. Śankara found it impossible to justify Brahmavāda without mixing it with Māyāvāda. Just as it is with Sāṅkhya, Śankara attributed all creative activity to māyā or avidyā and reduced Brahman practically to the position of Sāṅkhya puruṣa. Similarly Rāmānuja found it impossible to explain the origin of the world without giving Brahman the assistance of sūkṣma cidacit. Whatever be the importance given to the name Brahman in these systems, they have posited something other than Brahman as the origin of the world and have thus abandoned the pure Brahmavāda taught by the Vedas.
Madhva’s Conception of Svetantra

By way of illustrating this point, T. C. 770 says (Śankara) denies that pradhāna is the cause of the world; but holds that the cause of the world is avidyā. This does not help Brahmanvāda, i.e., it does not help the conception of Brahman as the only origin of all. The attempt found in avidyāvāda (māyāvāda) is like giving the sheep to a tiger after snatching it by force from a wolf. This passage compares creatorship to a sheep, pradhāna to a wolf, and māyā to a tiger. The idea is this: whether a wolf eats the sheep or a tiger eats it, it is not saved. Similarly, whether the creatorship goes to pradhāna or to māyā, the result is the same, and Brahman as the creator of all is not maintained. With this observation the passage of T. C. reveals the vigour or spirit of Madhva’s teaching.

Madhva makes nothing other than Brahman the source of the world. According to him, Brahman, and Brahman only, is the source of all and as such, It is Svetantra and It is therefore all that explains the world with all its aspects. For this reason Madhva calls It Guṇapūrṇa (all-complete).

Because Madhva speaks of Brahman as Guṇapūrṇa, his conception of Brahman must not be taken to be the same as saguna of Śankara. Saguna of Śankara is a product of Brahman and māyā. But Guṇapūrṇa of Madhva is the uncaused Cause of all. It is essentially One. It is an expression of complete identity. Madhva calls this identity savīṣeṣābheda. He means that though this identity is essentially one, it admits of different expressions—the substantive and the attributive. He points out that this is the nature of every identical thing. Further, the higher conception of Brahman according to Śankara is nirguna. Madhva points out that the conception of nirguna involves self-contradiction, because to call something nirguna is to attribute nirgunatva to it.

He shows how Brahman is Svetantra and Guṇapūrṇa by explaining how It is the cause of all. He distinguishes the two aspects of the world cetana and acetana, spirit and non-spirit. Acetana stands for Prakṛti, Kāla, Deśa, Veda, the products of Prakṛti and abhāva, absence of different kinds. Cetana stands for all jīvas including the abhimānis, the presiding deities of the various aspects of the world. He explains in every work of his, how Brahman is the sole creator of all this. His position as explained in M. Bh. with S. may be quoted: “Hari is the creator of all, cetana and acetana. This conviction occurs only to the good (satām) and it never occurs to the evil-minded (asatām). Hari creates acetana as acetana, i.e., without mixing it with cetana. But He creates cetana along with acetana, i.e., body. He is thus the cause of all. None else can be the cause of the world. Some think that prakṛti, etc., cause the world. They are wrong. Prakṛti, Kāla
etc., are products. They are created by Hari. Some say that Hari Himself changes into the world. Others believe that the creation is something like a dream or illusion. Both are wrong. Hari is changeless and He transcends illusion. The mere desire of Hari gives rise to the world. He is free from all defects. How then can He have change? Hari, the Changeless, desires. The world is really created. This is the teaching of the Veda. This is the conviction of Caturmukha, etc., who know the truth. It is illusion to think that something else is the cause of the world. Illusion is dvaita. It is created by Hari. It must therefore be destroyed by Himself. He destroys dvaita. He is therefore Advaita. If He has no desire to release jīva He creates dva. If He desires the release of jīva He destroys dvaita. Good jīvas never favor dvaita. They know that Hari destroys dvaita. Hari, Parabrahma is therefore Advaita.”

This is the essence of Madhva’s Brahmavāda. It traces everything of the world to the wish or desire (icchā) of Brahman. Brahman’s wish is the sole cause of all. Brahman is therefore Svatantra. “To be svatantra is indeed to follow one’s own desire.”

2. Svatantra, the All that Explains All

The cause of all must be Svatantra. This may be illustrated in the following manner: Cause in the ultimate sense is necessarily one. Two ultimate causes limit each other and each ceases to be ultimate. Further, the two causes must be brought together if they were to give rise to the world. The principle that brings them together becomes the ultimate cause of all and it is necessarily one.

The conception of one cause needs an explanation. We all commonly speak of upādāna and nimitta causes. Taking the production of a jar for example, we call the clay from which the jar comes upādāna and the jar-maker and so on that help the production of the jar nimitta. But the cause of all neither upādāna nor nimitta. The cause of all is necessarily changeless. If it has change, then the change must be caused by something else. It is therefore no longer the cause of all. So the cause of all is not upādāna. Nor is it nimitta. For a nimitta cause cannot do anything without the help of upādāna. It cannot therefore be the one cause of all.

The cause of all does not depend on anything else. It is independent. It is called Svatantra Kāraṇa. In the same sense it is often called simply cause—kāraṇa, nimitta and so on.

Svatantra Kāraṇa or in short, Svatantra cannot be acetana, because acetana cannot cause anything. When acetana appears to do anything, what actually
takes place is that a cetana works through it. Svatantra is therefore cetana. This means that It has knowledge, desire and will, the several aspects of cetana. Further, Svatantra is the cause of the cetana aspect of the world. This also proves that It is cetana.

Thus the very conception of Svatantra implies that Brahman, the cause, is uncaused, unconditioned, unlimited and unaided by anything else. Brahman is thus absolutely changeless. Even the fact that It causes all must not be taken to mean change in It, because with change It cannot be Svatantra as change implies a cause of change. Brahman as Svatantra is thus self-established. If It were not self-established It cannot be Svatantra. N. S. says conclusion of this discussion: “Therefore the cause of all must be taken be Svatantra. That alone is indeed Īśvara”.9

The truth that Brahman is Svatantra implies that the world is caused, conditioned, limited and aided. It is nothing but change. Its reality is therefore derived from Brahman. For this reason the world is called paratantra. Thus according to Madhva, Svatantra is cause and paratantra product and Svatantra is the cause of all that occurs to paratantra.

Madhva distinguishes eight aspects that occur to paratantra, viz., production, living, destruction, direction, knowledge, non-knowledge, bondage and release (sṛṣṭi, sthiti, samhāra, niyamana, jñāna, ajñāna, bandha and moksha). The first four and non-knowledge in the sense of the absence of knowledge occur to acetana and all the eight aspects occur to cetana. Of them, production (sṛṣṭi) consists in the reception of sattā (being or reality) from Svatantra. T. S. T. says that sṛṣṭi is sattālābha, reception of sattā.10 Svatantra as the giver of sattā is the creator of all. The same idea may be extended to the other seven aspects. To give them to the world is to give them sattā. This is how Svatantra is characterised as the creator of the eightfold aspect of the world. For this reason Svatantra is called Īśvara.

The term sattā in this connection means svarūpa (essence), pramiti or prameyatva (the state of being known), pravṛtti (function) and existence in space and time. Only from Īśvara does everything in the world receive sattā in all these four senses and with reference to every aspect that occurs to it. For this reason everything is called adhiśina (dependent). Īśvara as the giver of sattā in these various senses is called Niyāmaka. Madhva says in Ai. Bh. 37, “By explaining creation, etc., as occurring to the world, the text proves adhiśinatva (the dependent nature) of the world”.11

To hold that the Kāraṇa of all is Svatantra and that Svatantra is Brahman implies that it is the very nature of Brahman to create. Brahman as Svatantra is unconditioned. Space, time, etc., never condition Svatantra, Svatantra
is thus self-established always and everywhere as the cause of all time and all space. *Br. Bh.* 9-15 says, "Because It is eternally existent It is called Ātman . . . . Hari is Ātman because He is All-pervading, All-infinite and All-knowing." These are the expressions of the infinite nature of His creatorship. This implies that the process of the world-creation is beginningless and endless—*anādi* and *nītya*. For this reason the Veda speaks of the *nītya* character of *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kāla* and so on; but at the same time it distinguishes *Svatantra* as the *Nītya* of the *nītya* things (*Nītyonītyānām*). This means that It is the giver of *nītyatva* to the *nītya* things of the world.

*Svatantra* is thus the source of all that the world has. This implies that it is all-complete in every sense of the term. This aspect of *Svatantra* is called *Guṇapūrṇa*. This is the significance of Brahman as conceived by the Veda. The idea that Brahman is *Guṇapūrṇa* is justified by the idea that It is *Svatantra*. *Svatantra* signifies all-creatorship. The knowledge of Brahman as *Svatantra* and *Guṇapūrṇa* therefore presupposes a correct understanding of the creatorship of Brahman.

How the knowledge of creatorship leads to the knowledge of *Svatantra* and *Guṇapūrṇa* is explained by T. C. 332, "Īśvara creates not only the properties of *cetana* but also those of *acetana*. When it is understood that *cetana* itself is dependent on Him, *i.e.*, created by Him, there is no difficulty in holding that He is the creator of *acetana*. The fact that Īśvara creates both *cetana* and *acetana* points to His *Guṇapūrṇatva*. This may be illustrated by taking for example an *acetana*, say space (*ākāśa*). In understanding the fact that Īśvara's creation of *ākāśa* points to His *Guṇapūrṇatva*, the following difficulty may be felt:—*Ākāśa* is *acetana*. Its property, say, room-making, is therefore *acetana*. To create this property which is *acetana* does not mean the completeness (*pūrṇatva*) of this property in Īśvara (because Īśvara is *cetana*). Further, room-making is the very essence (*svabhāva*) of *ākāśa*. An essence must not be conditioned by anything. To hold therefore that Īśvara creates it cannot be justified. This difficulty is met as follows:—Īśvara wishes that *ākāśa* must have room-making. *Ākāśa* has this property. If Īśvara had a different desire *ākāśa* would have been solid (*nibīda*). Further, even after creating *ākāśa*, Īśvara has the power completely to destroy the room-making of *ākāśa* and make it solid. He has not done it, because He has not wished it. If even men can with the help of some chemical make copper non-copper, cannot Īśvara do room-making non-room making? Though Īśvara has not destroyed *ākāśa* He has the power to do it. He has indeed the power to do anything He pleases. *Śruti* and *Smṛti* also teach that the essence of everything is created by Him. 'The rivers flow because of His command; the wind blows because of His fear. And *ākāśa* gives room for
creatures because it is His will." Therefore Īśvara's creation of room-making in ākāśa points to the completeness of room-making in Him. So the term ākāśa with the completeness of its meaning applies to Īśvara. It is applied to ākāśa only in a very limited sense. It is therefore said that Īśvara has the guṇas of all creatures. N.S. says 'Room-making in ākāśa is limited by space and time. Ākāśa with its room-making is therefore the creation of Īśvara. It is an expression of Īśvara who is immanent in it. This immanence is itself a form of His.' So to establish that room-making which forms an essence of an acetana has in view the determination of the divine properties, both room-making and the power of creating the very essence of things. The same way of thinking must be extended to all items of creation. Therefore the term ākāśa means primarily Brahman.13

Īśvara is the creator not only of positive entities, but also of the negative ones. T. C. 835 says, "The horn of a hare is eternally absent. Its absence is the creation of Īśvara. If Īśvara had desired its existence it would have been there. Īśvara did not desire it and it is eternally absent."14 So nothing in the world is uncreated. "Īśvara as the creator of all is Svetantra and Guṇapūrṇa. For this reason Śruti calls the Creator Brahman.

3. Svetantra, the Cause of Causes

We have noted that Īśvara's creative activity is at work through the whole course of eternity. This implies that particular aspects of the world are made to continue from the beginningless to the endless time. This is also proved by our experience. Every product we observe has a previous and a later state. Before a jar is produced, there is in its place clay and clay is the later state of the jar when destroyed. So N. S. 422 says, "Everything is nitya in substance and anitya with regard to its change."15 This idea holds true with regard to the whole of creation. Creation of the world presupposes the existence of the substantive aspect of things and the destruction of the world is followed by the same aspect. Even to maintain the existence of these aspects is the work of Īśvara. It is therefore held that Īśvara creates the world by making use of the elements that are already existent, i.e., the elements to which Īśvara has already given existence. These elements are prakṛti (the root matter), deśa (space), kāla (time), and cetana (spirit).

The fact that Īśvara creates things making use of the things that are already existent does not in any manner modify the creatorship of Īśvara. N. S. 293 says, "Though Hari is able to create things without making use of anything, He always creates this world from the things that are already existent. Even this rule is His desire."16 And in fact "To make use of prakṛti, etc., in producing the world illustrates really His unlimited creatorship. (Prakṛti,
etc., are therefore said to be the causes of the world.) But these causes are after all His creation.” This indeed points to the richness of His omnipotence (aśīvanya).” N. S. 299 says, “(Actually the order of creation is this—From Prakṛti comes mahat, from mahat ahankāra and so on. Prakṛti is upādāna, and kāla, etc., are nimitta.) But Hari is quite able to create ahankāra from prakṛti and mahat from ahankāra, and to make prakṛti nimitta and kāla, etc., upādāna. Yet Hari always creates the world following the order he pleases.” “This is the conclusion. If it is asked whether Hari makes use of upādāna and nimitta—the answer is, yes. He makes use of them. So in this limited sense, prakṛti, etc., may be said to be the causes of the world. But it must not be supposed that Ṣvārāra is not able to create the world either without making use of them or making use of them in a different manner. Therefore Ṣvārāra the creator must not be compared to a pot-maker. It does not therefore follow that He is not Svatantra and Prakṛti, etc., are not paratantra. What then is the origin of creation? The origin is His desire. This proves that He is Svatantra. Even though He makes use of prakṛti, etc., they are not uncreated by Him. How is then His overflow of omnipotence or creatorship modified? Prakṛti, etc., are indeed produced by Him. Therefore to make use of them points to the richness of His creatorship. Madhva proves it thus: “Because the very causeness of causes is given by Him, His making use of causes proves the richness of His creatorship.”

In this connection we have to note the following: From the point of view of Brahman’s creatorship, the so-called causes of the world are only products. To make use of them in the creation of fresh things is only to make use of products in producing fresh products from them. But the real cause of even these fresh products is Ṣvārāra Himself, because the creation of these products is after all the result of His wish. So, just as Ṣvārāra is the giver of reality to prakṛti, etc., He is the Giver of reality to Mahat also. And just as Mahat, etc., are products, prakṛti, etc., also are products. What is meant in these passages is that there is nothing in this world that is self-established, or that has reality independent of Brahman or that does not receive reality from Brahman. For this reason, the whole world is called paratantra. Paratantra means product (kārya). It receives reality from Ṣvārāra. This means that Ṣvārāra who gives reality to the world, and who is uncaused and therefore has self-established Reality, is Svatantra. Only Brahman is Svatantra and all else is paratantra.

In T. S., Madhva speaks of two tattvas, Svatantra and paratantra. Svatantra is that the Reality of which is self-established and paratantra is that the reality of which is derived from Svatantra. Svatantra is Kāraṇa and paratantra is kārya. Tattva in this connection means Prameya. Prameya
is the object of correct knowledge. Though both Sva\-tantra and paratantra are called prame\-ya, it must not be forgotten that Sva\-tantra is the object in the highest sense. The Šruti says, “Nārāyaṇa is Mahājneya” (the object of objects). This means that Nārāyaṇa is the Giver of objectivity to objects and He is therefore the Ground of objects. His objectivity is self-established. He is Sva\-tantra. So, the mention of two tattvas, Sva\-tantra and paratantra, has in view the establishment of Sva\-tantra as the Ground of all and this is done by showing that all else is paratantra.

4. Sva\-tantra, the Eternal of the Eternals

Madhva’s position that all that is other than Brahman is paratantra means that all without any exception is actually created by Brahman. In opposition to this truth Nyāya-vai\-śe\-sika, Sāńkhya, etc., hold that there are items of the world that are beginningless (anādi) and therefore not produced; Nyāya-vai\-śe\-sika speaks of paramānus, the indivisible and indestructible units of matter, space, time and so on, which are in themselves anādi and therefore uncreated. Sāńkhya calls the root-matter prakṛti in the sense that it is uncaused (anādi) but is the cause of all that is produced (vikṛti or sādi). Madhva holds that even the so-called anādi things are essentially the creation of Iśvara. In explaining this position T. C. 379 notes—“Iśvara has the power to do, undo and do in any manner He pleases. Even the so-called anādi things are therefore His creation, just in the same way as the sādi things are. The power of Iśvara is unmodified and unopposed in every sense. This truth may be illustrated in the following manner. We believe that the past existed in space. But Iśvara has the power to make the past without space. He has not done so because it is not His desire. This is proved by the experience that the past was in space. We must not imagine that He cannot meddle with the past. This imagination is opposed to His creatorship (aiśvarya) and it is sublated by the Šruti which says that svabhāva, jīva, karma and so on, exist because of His desire. The supposition that the anādi things must have their own anādi essence (svabhāva) does not in any way modify the creatorship of Iśvara, because His desire which produces anādi essence of anādi things is also anādi. In a previous section called Ākāśādhikarana, the truth that the essence of all things is the work of Iśvara is proved. In the present passage the fact that anādi essence is the work of Iśvara is established. So this passage supplements the previous one. In a later division called vīvatpāda, it is established that the production of everything in the world consists in its receiving a change which is the work of Iśvara. Production in this sense is called parādhīna viśeṣāvāpti. But the special teaching of the present passage is this—Some items of the world may not admit of creation in the sense of coming into existence only at a point
of time and for this reason they may be taken to be anādi. But their very essence, i.e., their reality, is created by Īśvara. The fact that Īśvara is the creator of anādi essence of anādi things proves the transcendence (māhātmāya) of Īśvara and it is the same as anādi svabhāva niyāmaka śaktī, the power of creating anādisvabhāva. This means that the term anādi applies in the primary sense only to Īśvara.\(^{20}\)

The statement that Īśvara has the power to make the past spaceless is really very significant. On the basis of actual experience even though we believe that the past existed in space, Īśvara has the power of making this belief or experience wrong or even impossible. This means that the correctness of correct knowledge also is dependent on Him, i.e., made by Him. Further, this passage interprets production as parādhīna višeṣāvāpti. The significance of this interpretation will be explained shortly.

So far, it has been shown that the creative power of Īśvara is absolute and unconditioned in every sense. This must not be taken to mean that chaos prevails in the world. Madhva assures us that Īśvara’s desire is satya. The word satya in this connection means consistent. Consistency is an item of all-completeness (guṇapūrṇatva) of Īśvara. This enables us to take it for granted that Īśvara gives no room for any kind of disorder or confusion in the world. Bh. Bh. 21. 18 says, “The process of this world is anādi and nitya. It is never destroyed and never confused. Like the flow of a river it is always in order. Nobody, whatever his power be, can interfere with the order of the world, because Viśnu is Satya, Śrī is satya and jīva and jaḍa are satya, that which is known is satya and there is nothing asiṣya. One who knows Viṣṇu consistently with these ideas attains mukti and goes to Purusottama.”\(^{21}\) One must not forget that in this passage the word Viṣṇu means Guṇapūrṇa and the word Purusottama means the highest principle of all. The statement that Viṣṇu is satya therefore means that He is the giver of satyatva to other things. The other entities are helplessly satya because Viṣṇu is Satya. Ai. Bh. 30 says, “Hari is Nirdoṣa and Guṇapūrna, because He is the Giver of satyatva to all (that is given as satya).”\(^{22}\)

Because Madhva holds that the process of the world is anādi and anameta and that Īśvara creates it by making use of certain elements such as prakṛti which are taken to be anādi and nitya, it is often found necessary to explain repeatedly how the anādi things are produced. Some important ideas in this connection may be mentioned. In the first place, the idea that Īśvara creates anādi things is not new to the Darśanas. In the Vedānta of Śankara the distinction between jīva and Brahman is taken to be anādi; yet it is considered to be the creation of avidyā. According to Nyāya-vaśīṣṭka德拉vya is anādi; but it is conditioned by guṇa-vatva (the state of having guṇa.)\(^{23}\)
And in the second place, from the standpoint of Brahmanāda the anādi items of the world are never considered to be anādi in the sense that they oppose or modify the creatorship kartṛtva of Brahman. The Brahma Sūtra teaches that prakṛti, etc., are anādi only in a secondary (gauṇī) sense. Brahman alone is anādi in the primary sense. The so-called anādi things of the world undergo constant change. They are vikāri. It is evident that they are interdependent and therefore limited (vibhakta). These facts prove that they are products. This means that their cause is necessarily changeless (nirvikāra) and unlimited (pūrṇa). Therefore that which is nirvikāra and pūrṇa is Brahman. So Brahman is not a product and It is only cause.\textsuperscript{24}

Further, the term anādi as applied both to Brahman and the world has different implications. The world as anādi means that it exists from the beginningless time. This means that it is in time. But Brahman is the creator of time itself. There is no sense in holding that It exists in time. The fact that the world exists in time means that time is the support (ādhatra) of the world. But Brahman is the support of all. This is an implication of the truth that It creates all. Further to hold that Brahman exists in time is to make time the support of Brahman. This is to deny Brahman and make time Brahman. The Śruti says: “Sadeva Somypedamagra āśī,” and so on. The apparent meaning of this is that Brahman (Sat) was prior to this world. But, because time is one of the items of the world, the real meaning of the Śruti must be that Brahman transcends time, because It is the creator of time. So, the term agra in the Śruti does not mean priority in time; it means guṇapūrṇa. The whole passage means that guṇapūrṇa is the presupposition of the world (Aī. Bh.).\textsuperscript{25} So, the statement that Brahman is anādi must be finally taken to mean that It is the giver of anāditva to anādi. This is an implication of the fact that It is the creator of anādi. Anu. V. i. i. ii says, “such is the creatorship of Brahman.” N. S. interprets this passage as “the creative power of Īśvara has in view everything, the eternal, the non-eternal, the essence, the non-essence, etc. If anything is excepted, His creatorship becomes modified. What then does this power do? It is the Giver of the very reality of these things. Is not the reality of these things anādi? Yes, it is. But it is so because of the anādi creatorship of Īśvara.”\textsuperscript{26}

All these ideas clearly show that Brahman, and Brahman alone, is the cause of the world and that there is nothing in the world that is not uncreated. The objects of the world seem to be produced by means of other objects of the world. But we have seen how even this is the desire of Īśvara. The various entities that help the production of an object may seem to bind it. But even this binding is His creation. This implies how He binds everything but He is never bound by anything. Br. Bh. says, “He gives causeness to causes.
How then can the causes help Him? N. S. 19 says, "All causes have their existence, function, etc., from Him. Therefore no effect is produced without His desire." He is therefore the only cause of all. As the only cause, He is completely unbound. For this reason, He is called Svatantra. This term implies two ideas: (1) He is uncaused, *i.e.*, self-established. (2) He acts purely according to His desire, *i.e.*, His desire is the source of all. Both these ideas are, as a rule, involved in defining Brahman as Svatantra.

Brahman’s creation has a much wider scope than has appeared so far. Creation is defined as giving of *sattā*, etc. (*sattādīdāna*). *Sattā*, etc., stand for *satta*, *pramittī*, and *pravṛtti*. In some passages, *svārūpa* is mentioned in place of *sattā*. N. S. 330 says, "Some thinkers hold that *svārūpa* is *sattā*, others *pramāṇavoyogya* (the state of being revealed by *pramāṇa*) and some others *arthakriyākāritva* (the state of producing something). All these are found in the objects and they are created by Him." N. S. 513 says, "the property that is special or peculiar to a thing is called *svārūpa* or *svabhāva*. Everything possesses it. It is created by Īśa. If it were not created by Him, it would be svatantra and this affects the Īśatva of Īśa. To have an affected Īśatva is sublated by the Śruti, ‘All this is Brahman indeed’ (*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*). N. S. 166 says, “(To limit the creatorship of Īśvara is not justified). Take the case of a person, Devadatta. Only that thing the existence, knowledge and function of which Devadatta does not create, control and direct, stands in opposition to him. But the case of the world is different. The existence, etc., of the world are dependent upon Īśvara (because He gives them to the world, maintains them and destroys them as He wills). How can then the world be opposed to Him? Further, if the existence, etc., of the world were not dependent on Him, the world would be a rival to Him. It is not so. (Existence, etc., are certainly dependent upon Him and therefore the world is not a rival to Him.) These ideas clearly show that Īśvara is not merely a controller or director of the world, just as a king controls or directs his kingdom, but He is the giver of the very *sattā*, etc., to the world. This is the significance of His immanence (*antaryāmitva*) in the world."

N. S. 330, after stating an objection, applies the same idea both to the things that are said to be *nitya* and to the things that are said to be *anītya*: “An objection may be raised. The existence, etc., of the *nitya* things are *nitya*. That which is *nitya* cannot therefore be *paratantra*. This objection is met as follows: Just as Īśvara controls and directs *anītya* things by giving them existence, etc., being Himself *nitya*, He controls and directs the *nitya* entities continuously and incessantly by giving them existence, etc. Objects like a jar, for example, are of *anītya* nature. That they are *anītya* is not an accident. If they were an accident, they would have been destroyed
immediately after their production. (But they are not destroyed. After production they are maintained for some time and only afterwards, they are destroyed. At the time when they are maintained, they are as good as nitya things. That they are produced does not affect this aspect, viz., the aspect of their existence during the period when they are maintained. And to hold that they are dependent, paratantra, at the time when they are maintained, does not create any difficulty.) Similarly, there is no difficulty in holding that the nityatvā of nitya things is paratantra. Further, because the anityatvā of anītya things is paratantra, it does not follow that objects like a jar are nitya. Similarly, to hold that nitya things are paratantra does not make them anītya. (They may be nitya; but as nitya, they are paratantra in the sense that their reality is derived from Īśvara.) This simply means that it is His desire to maintain nitya things as nitya and anītya things as anītya. (Therefore that the world is paratantra, i.e., that it has derived reality, does not confuse nitya and anītya things.)"\textsuperscript{52}

The ideas that Brahman is the cause of the world and that the world is a product must not be understood from the commonsense point of view that a product has necessarily a beginning in time. The point of view of Brahmavāda is entirely different. It holds, as already noted, that a product may be anādi or sādi, nitya or anītya but it is more concerned with the finding out of the Ground or Basis of the whole world, recognizing the world as it is given, i.e., as consisting of enduring and non-enduring elements. This is what is meant by offering an explanation of nitya as nitya and anītya as anītya. That which explains them is their cause, Ground or Basis, i.e., Brahman. The nitya and anītya things are not self-explanatory because they are changing and limited (vikāri and vibhakta).

5. Svetatnta, the Only Aim of Sound Thinking

To ignore this truth and to hold that something of the world is the cause of all or one of the causes of all is to overlook the changing and limited character of all that is the world. This error presupposes an undue interest in something that is of the world and a natural dislike for the ultimate source of all. Madhva calls this undue interest durāγraha and the dislike paratattva vidveṣa. In the presence of these defects, thinkers ignore the Svetatnta character of the Creator and deny or modify His creative power. For example, Nyāyavaiśeṣika holds that the so-called Īśvara is only one among the many causes of the world and that he himself, i.e., without the help of other things, cannot create the svarūpa or svabhāva of anything. Thus durāγraha and paratattvavidveṣa, and not impartial enquiry, are the causes for the appearance of systems other than Brahmavāda. In addition to this
circumstance as Madhva notes, there are people who know only that much on the basis of which they entertain wrong ideas of Brahman. He calls them alpavedins. Further, people are influenced by those whom he calls kupanditas (sophisticated people). Making use of time-honoured terms in their own interest, such persons popularize their own ignorance about truth. This circumstance he calls mithyājnānaprasakti (spreading of wrong knowledge). Further, people are in general interested in things that are tāmasa (evil) in nature. All these circumstances are also the creation of Īśvara and they have also a purpose to serve. If a person were to transcend these evil influences, he must be naturally endowed with pure intellect (suddha buddhi). Even this is a creation of Īśvara’s wish and Madhva calls it Īśvaraprasāda.\textsuperscript{33}

In stating these ideas Madhva does not condemn the world as evil because his is the spirit of seeing Brahman even is the so-called evil things. He only indicates the abilities required really to appreciate the truth that Brahman is the Ground of all. Even though we seem to be quite free from these defects and are deeply interested in understanding what really Madhva has taught, we may not in reality be free from the defects and may not be following his actual teaching. Sometimes, we may read carelessly some passages of Madhva such as:—the world is satya, nitya, etc., it is different from Brahman, Brahman creates the world making use of prakṛti, etc.; Brahman is tattva; the world is rattva, etc., etc. And after such a careless reading, we may wrongly think that Madhva teaches as follows:—World is as real as Brahman. Brahman is one of the causes of the world; Brahman has therefore a second or many seconds to it, etc., etc. We may even think that we can support these ideas by means of Śruti, Smṛti and the arguments used by the other Darśanas, Nyāya, and so on. But all these are only notions that are fundamentally opposed to Madhva’s Brahmanavāda, the sole aim of which is to establish Svaṭatantra as the only ground of the world. The passages cited above which seem to mislead us have a deeper significance if we take them in their context. So in describing the general circumstance of the world Madhva gives us a caution so that we may be better able to maintain suddha buddhi transcending at the same time the evil influence of lower passions, durāgra ha, etc.

In reflecting on prakṛtivāda of Sāṅkhya, i.e., the theory that prakṛti is the origin of all, Madhva notes that it is undue interest in prakṛti that is the source of this theory. This interest is called pradhānadurdikṣa. He does not make any difference in substance between pradhānavāda and māyāvāda because both imply the denial of Brahman, the only source of all.\textsuperscript{34} Nor can pradhāna or māyā by itself be the cause of the world. The pradhāna of Sāṅkhya is limited by puruṣa and māyā of Śankara is limited by Nirguṇa Brahman.
Madhva’s Conception of Svatantra

All these considerations show with what care and accuracy Madhva is establishing his Brahmavāda. He demands the same care and accuracy from his readers also. To emphasise this aspect is, after all, not out of place. Being misled by the term dvaita that is applied to Madhva’s thought even an ardent follower of Madhva may try to find out dualism or pluralism in his thought. Whatever be the name given to his thought, in fairness to him, one ought to start from his actual teaching, but never from the popular and sometimes misleading name given to it. In every work of his, in the beginning, middle and in the end, Madhva asserts at the cost of much repetition that the sole aim of his philosophy is to establish that Brahma is the Svatantra cause of all. At every stage of his thought he amplifies in unambiguous language the teaching of Śruti—“Ekam evadvitiyam Brahma”—(Brahman is one only and It is second-less) by his favourite expression that Hari is Sarvottama—the highest Principle of all. To make use of English terms, his system is unmodified monism in the sense that it traces everything absolutely to one principle, i.e., Brahman. It is thus far from dualism or pluralism. Further, to call his thought monotheism is not to do justice to him. Monotheism implies something of religious faith. But mere faith as opposed to reason has no place in his philosophy. He accepts only that as real which is in every sense revealed by pramāṇa the truth of which is well established. His conceptions are without exception rationalistic. When he quotes Śruti or Smruti his aim is not to gain strength from it, but to indicate the philosophy underlying the text. With him the items of the world may be many. They may be real or actual in so far as they go. But they are all without exception the work, expression or creation of one single Principle, i.e., Svatantra, Brahman. Madhva says that this is the real teaching of Śruti, “Sa idam sarvanam asprjata”. (He created all this.) The same truth is further amplified in the following pages.

A superficial reading of Purāṇas often makes us familiar with the creation of the world in cycles (kalpa). We are told that Īśvara gives rise to the things of the world, mahat, ahankāra, etc., making use of prakṛti as upādāna and kāla, etc., as nimitta, in accordance with the karma of the jīvas that have to play their parts in the created world. This is the popular idea of creation among the Hindus in general and the mādhvas is particular. It is popularly believed that the upādāna and nimitta causes of the world and the jīvas are anādi and therefore uncreated. It is also believed that God is the creator in the sense that he connects and directs the several self-existent anādi things and with their help creates the objects of the world, even as a pot-maker connects water, clay, etc., and makes a pot. The idea that the upādāna and nimitta causes of the world exist irrespective of God, the creator, is the substance of this belief. In spite of the Vedic teaching and Brahmavāda founded on it,
this belief has somehow become a tradition. This tradition seems to be
the result of an undigested mixture of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sānkhya and Pūrva-
mīmāṃsā. Most often, it seems to appeal to common sense because people
at large are generally unable to comprehend how anādi things can be created
even by Īśvara. This circumstance is given a colour by the term dvaita
which is commonly taken to mean that there is a second to Brahman, namely anādi. This anādi thing may even be dependent on Brahman
just in the sense that a servant is dependent on his master, but it is self-
existent even as Brahman is. Whatever be the value of this belief, Madhva’s
Brahmavāda gives absolutely no support for this belief. The author of T. C.
seems to laugh at this belief when he says on p. 389, “If the teaching of Śruti
‘He created all this’ is taken to mean that He created only the products
that have a beginning in time, i.e., the products that are sādī; then consistently
with this idea another Śruti passage ‘He transcends all this, etc.’ also ought
to be taken to mean that He transcends only the world of products (sādī),
but not the things of the world that are said to be anādi and nitya.” The
idea is that to limit the meaning of the term all (sarva or viśva) in these
passages can never be justified. The teaching of these passages is that
Īśvara is the creator of all—both sādī and anādi, He therefore transcends all
and for this reason He is Svatantra.

6. Svatantra, the Sole Creator of All, Always, Everywhere

The truth that Brahman is the cause of all does not imply that the
objects It creates continue to exist and operate independent of It. Brahman
is also the cause of the maintenance of existence and operation. Objects
of the world operate in different manners under a given circumstance.
Certain things act as causes. Certain other things appear as products and
the remaining things seem to be indifferent. Causeness, productness and
indifference are different operations of the objects. They are equally the
creation of Brahman and they are therefore products. We have seen how
the rich creatorship of Īśvara can make, unmake and differently make things.
Applying this thought to the case of these three entities, cause, product and
indifferent entities, it is easy to see how Īśvara can cancel all or make each
the other. He might have cancelled a different product and produced the
product in question. Or, He could have made the present product its cause
or an indifferent entity and made the cause or indifferent entity the present
product. Further even with regard to time in which a product is supposed
to appear, He could have made the present past or future and the past or
future the present. He could have even made the present pastless or future-
less and the product causeless or effectless. We are thus required to see
His kāraṇa, akāraṇa and anyathākāraṇa—doing, undoing and doing differently
with reference to every item of the world. So the fact that He has created a product is purely an expression of His independent will and it only illustrates the final truth taught by the Upaniṣad, ‘Icchāmātram prabhokṣaḥ srṣṭiḥ’. The circumstance under which alone a thing seems to be produced does not therefore offer any serious difficulty with reference to Brahmavāda. And in fact, it amplifies the Svaṭantra character of Brahman. Further, if the purāṇas mean that Īśvara really needed the assistance of prakṛti, etc., they are wrong, because they are sublated by Brahmavāda. If they can be interpreted so as to amplify the richness of Īśvara’s creatorship, then only they are respected. One who is engaged in Brahmajijnāsā can never dispense with these truths.

The inevitable conclusion from the previous considerations is that the creation of the world or the creative activity of Īśvara cannot be confined to any one period or periods. Īśvara’s creation is going on incessantly and unceasingly everywhere without exception and with reference to everything in the world including even the things that may be looked upon as being already created. There is nothing in the world that does not undergo change. Everything however stable it may seem to be, is really undergoing deep changes incessantly. Take the case of a cetana; change in the body or in mind and change even in the duration of its existence speak of the incessant change that occurs to cetana. Similar is the consideration with regard to acetana. Change is the very essence of the reality of the world. Nothing is thus self-same as it is ordinarily taken to be. The authorship of this universal change speaks for the incessant creative activity of Īśvara. So the Gītā says, “I am the giver of all bhāvas to the creatures”.

In following this discussion, we must bear in mind that according to Madhva the so-called substance and its property are not different from each other. So, to speak of a change as occurring to something is to represent the real or actual essence (svarūpa) of the thing itself. This position enables him to explain how even the so-called nitya things, prakṛti and so on, are incessantly created in having incessant changes. This explains how from the standpoint of Īśvara’s creatorship, there is no significant distinction between nitya and anitya things.

Change comes from Īśvara. It is therefore parādhīna. The state of a thing obtaining parādhīna is called parādhīna-viśeṣāväpti. Parādhīna-viśeṣa means a variety of parādhīna. Avāpti means obtaignment. This is the meaning of srṣti (creation). It applies to all that is other than Brahman. It is called by Madhva parādhīnatava or tadvaśata. It is not a mere occurrence to an enduring entity, but it is the mark of the creation of the entity
itself. Change and changing entity are thus one and the same thing. This means that both form a single entity which is called viśiṣṭa. With reference to a viśiṣṭa two aspects may be distinguished—attributive (dharma or viśeṣanā) and substantive (dharma or viśeṣya). This distinction is made on the basis of viśeṣa (peculiarity or uniqueness) which is found in everything we think of. Without it nothing can be thought of. For the reason that everything conceived has its own viśeṣa, a single entity, i.e., viśiṣṭa is treated as though it consists of two aspects, dharma and dharma. This explains how nothing in the world can be nirviśeṣa and nothing is really different from its property.

N. S. 431 says, “The production of a property of a thing means the production of the viśiṣṭa. Viśiṣṭa is identical with svarūpa of the thing. The production of a viśiṣṭa means the production of svarūpa of the thing.”

To illustrate this point the production of a jīva may be taken for example. Whenever a jīva has a relation to something external such as body or has even an idea in its mind, it has the production of its svarūpa itself. An idea in the mind or relation to a body is a case of change that occurs to jīva. With this change jīva becomes a viśiṣṭa. This viśiṣṭa is not different from the essence or svarūpa of jīva. So the production of change means the production of svarūpa (svarūpa srṣṭi) of jīva. Change is parādhīnaviśeṣa and its occurrence to jīva is parādhīna-viśeṣāvāpti. T. Pr. 2, 3, 18 says, “jīva’s production in this sense is not metaphorical, but it is a real case of production.”

This is the implication of the Sadasaṭkāryavāda of Madhva according to which nothing is permanent and nothing is devoid of pūrṇa-vasthā and uttarā-vasthā, i.e., nothing has a first beginning in time. It is true that we are not commonly familiar with this meaning of production. We commonly believe that production of a thing is a fresh beginning of a product in time. This belief is perhaps the influence of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika’s Asaṭkāryavāda, non-existent-product-theory. This theory is not true to experience, because it does not explain how something comes only from a particular thing. We have seen that oil comes only from the oil-seeds, but not from sand. By way of appreciating the significance of this experience Sāṃkhya holds Saṭkāryavāda, existent-product-theory. According to this theory a product is existent even before the so-called production of it, just as oil exists in oil-seed before it is produced. So Sāṃkhya concludes that the so-called production consists in making patent (vyakta) what is latent (avyakta). But he does not somehow see that this making patent is itself a fresh change brought upon the thing. So Madhva favours sada- satkāryavāda. This is the theory that holds that a product is existent only as a pūrṇa-vasthā and non-existent as product, i.e., as an expression of a
fresh change. This is what Madhva means by parādhīnaviśeṣāvyāpti and it is in this very sense that he holds that Īśvara creates the world incessantly. N. S. 327 says, "Therefore the doership in the real sense belongs only to Him." This implies that nothing in the world can be said to do anything in the real sense of the term. Acetana does not do anything. The case of cetana also is in reality the same. Taking for example a case where a jīva seems to do something, N. S. 327 says, "Both jīva and Īśvara are in the body—(jīva as abhimānin and Īśvara as antaryāmin). He (Īśvara) produces knowledge, desire and will of the jīva by means of His knowledge, desire and will. He also gives the power of causeness to the other causes which are external to jīva. Thus He produces jar, etc. The so-called doership of jīva is thus given by Him. The same is the implication of the teaching of the Gītā—'knowledge, discrimination, etc., come from me'.

This illustration explains how rich Īśvara's creatorship is. In creating even an ordinary thing like a jar, one can note the real extent of His rich creatorship. His knowing the abilities of antaḥkaraṇa is to give those abilities to antaḥkaraṇa. This is to create both the abilities and the antaḥkaraṇa as having them. Antaḥkaraṇa is thus a viśīṣṭa. To give this viśīṣṭa to jīva is to create jīva as a viśīṣṭa. Under the same circumstance the knowledge, desire and will of the jīva are created. With them the jīva becomes a more complex viśīṣṭa. Some external entities such as implements, etc., as having causeness are also created. As a result of all these productions, the production of a jar takes place. Further, the production of the jar in this manner directly or indirectly moulds the circumstances of the whole world. This implies that the whole world is created with this special circumstance. (Similar ideas are not new to modern scientific thinking.) Further according to the Vedic tradition every aspect of the world is presided by a controlling principle or agent (abhimānin). There are good and bad elements in the world. And there are corresponding good and bad principles—Devas and Daityas. The latter are finally brought down by the former. The former are therefore good and superior. Vāyu is the highest of them. He controls knowledge, life and strength. He is therefore called jīvottama. Śrī or Laksmini is still higher. She is the controller of all cetana and acetana. The production of the things of the world is an expression of the operation of these agents. This means that when a thing is produced all the agents with their special operation are created. N. S. 280 says, "Abhimāni is that which is the condition (prayojaka) of the reality of the thing in question." The abhimānis are thus the lower principles of the world. Īśvara is the highest of all. He is the principle of principles. He creates things with all the principles. This
is the richness of His creatorship. This does not mean that He creates things through the agency of the other principles. It only means that their agency also is created. This implies that they are themselves created as Viśiṣṭa with their special agency. For this reason they are called only nimita or dvārā in the creation of things. This explains how Īśvara is the direct or immediate cause (sākṣaṭkāraṇa) of all that exists. Madhva says in Anu. Vy. 1.1.6, “The direct and immediate cause of all is Nārāyaṇa (guṇapūrṇa and nirdoṣa). He is Brahma. This is the teaching of the whole Šruti. The aim of this Šāstra is to establish this Truth.” In the light of these ideas, it is easy to see how the production of a change means the production of the whole world, i.e., Brahmāṇḍa. From Śrī downwards everything is affected in some way or other whenever and wherever a change takes place in the world. Thus the creation of a change means the creation of all. These ideas illustrate well how the whole world being nothing but change and limitation is paratantra and how Brahman, the Ground of all, is Svatantra and Guṇapūrṇa.

In the foregoing discussions some sort of doership is attributed to jīva. This does not in any sense modify the doership of Īśvara and in fact it amplifies Īśvara’s doership. N. S. 305 says, “[In giving doership (kārīṇa) to a cetana, this is what Īśvara does.] Having been the author (Niyāmakā) of the particular svarūpa and svabhāva, of the cetana, having made caitanya the basis, having made viśesa the means, having introduced many items of identity (abheda) though they are opposed to one another and having given power to cetana that is consistent with the production of the thing in question, Īśvara makes the things produced by the jīva... Such is the power of Īśvara which is nowhere else observed. He is Omnipotence itself (Aṣeṣaṣaṅkṣī) and His doership knows nothing impossible.” This illustrates how the so-called doership of jīva can in no sense be compared to the doership of Īśvara. Both are called doership because of the poverty of language. This circumstance is to make use of Śamākarṣanyāya. This nyāya means actual borrowing of words that are primarily applied to Īśvara and then applying them to the things of the world in a much inferior secondary sense. In fact, the doership of jīva illustrates its changing character and thereby proves how its svarūpa is constantly created. But the doership of Īśvara illustrates His aṣeṣaṣaṅkṣī and amplifies His Svātantrya and Guṇapūrṇatva.

A question may be asked, If Īśvara has aṣeṣaṣaṅkṣī, why has He created this imperfect world? This question does not arise, because the philosophical enquiry concerns itself with the world that is given and not with what ought to be given. Even assuming that the question does arise, this question implies that what is created must be as perfect as the Creator. In that case,
the created is either different from Īśvara or not different from Īśvara. If it is different, it cannot be perfect, because perfection implies absence of limit and thus there cannot be two perfect entities. If it is not different, it is identical with Īśvara and then the distinction between the created and the Creator is not justified. Either way, the question is not justified. But it does not follow that the creative power of Brahman is in any sense modified. Madhva holds, however, that in creating a thing, Īśvara takes a form that is immanent in that thing. Īśvara has thus Anantarūpa. Each form is Īśvara Himself, in the sense that each is the self-identical expression of Īśvara. Because He is Svatantra, the difference between the created and the creator does not apply to this form of creation. Śruti says, “In Brahman there is no difference of any sort.” (Neha nānāsti kincana.) Thus Īśvara creating Himself along with the creation of the world is an aspect of His creation and this is an expression of His paramaśvārya. Madhva says, Tai. Bh. 5, “Thus willed Īśvara: let me take many forms.” (Bahūrūpo bhavanītīacintayāt.)

Thus the fact that the world is limited implies the all-completeness of its Ground, i.e., Brahman. This conception would be impossible if the several items of the world could be confused and could not be arranged in a definite order. Confusion and disorder mean that nothing can be fixed. The fact of this very statement and the conception behind it imply order and law in the world. Consistently with this truth and with a view to amplify it, Madhva speaks of tāratamya, gradation of higher and lower realities according to the nature of existence, knowledge and function of the things. After fixing them in the scale of gradation, he shows that they can never be confused. He amplifies this idea by his conception of pancabheda—fivefold difference, namely the everlasting difference between one cetana and another cetana, one acetana and another acetana, cetana and acetana, cetana and Īśvara and acetana and Īśvara. The one aim of Madhva in studying all this is the establishment of Svatantra so as to prove the further richness of Its creative power and all-completeness.

Madhva explains in this connection how the world has a definite programme, a definite purpose and a definite order. Nothing is confused in the world. Even the so-called confusion of things from the standpoint of ordinary beings has to help a definite order of the universe. Even the imperfection or dark side of the world helps the expression of the bright side of the same. This shows how the things are created on a principle. Imperfection leads to perfection. Errors lead to correction and bondage leads to release. The previous stages of things help the expression of the later developments of the same.
Madhva brings in this connection the conception of *karma*. *Karma* is an expression of the disposition of the individuals based on their own doings. This means that *Iśvara* brings out fresh changes in the world consistently with the *karma* of the individuals that are to enjoy the creation of the fresh changes. He does not give individuals what is not due to them. And he never fails to give them what is really due to them in accordance with their own *Karma*. For this reason He is called *Sama*, equal to all. This means that He has no partiality (*vaisamya*) and unkindness (*nairghṛṇya*). He does not do things indiscriminately. But this does not mean that He is bound by certain principles. The so-called principles of the world are only the expressions of His perfection and they do not therefore bind Him. That He fashions things according to the *karma* of the individuals does not mean that He is bound by *karma*, because *karma* is after all His creation. He desired law and order in the world. *Karma* appeared. So the world with all its order is the creation of His free desire.

The fact that He wished higher and lower beings does not mean that He is affected by the defects—*vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya*. *N. S.* 311 says, “With a view to free *Iśvara* from *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya*, it is so far said that *Iśvara* creates things according to the *karma* of the *jīvas*. But this means that His creation is not the result of His free desire as he wants the help of *karma*. (How then can He be *Śvatantra*? This is the answer.) Though He creates things of course according to *karma*, still His *Śvatantra* is justified. It is already established that He gives *sattā*, etc., to *karma* and so on. To make use of something to which He Himself has given *sattā*, etc., does not affect His *Śvatantra*. An objection may be raised:—So in His case to make use of *Karma* is as good as not making use of it and this means that He can never be free from *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya*. This is the answer: *Pramāṇas* establish that *Iśvara* has *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya*. To attribute them to Him is not therefore wrong. Further *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya* are not by themselves defects. They are defects only when they originate from defects and lead to defects. They cause evil in *jīva*. But they do not cause evil in *Iśvara*. *Iśvara* is free from evil. For this reason the author of the *Sūtra* attributes them to *Iśvara* and the author of the *Bhāṣya* supports it.”

The idea is that *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya* are some of the essential aspects of *Śvatantra*. Even in the world one cannot be said to be *svatantra* without having *vaisamya* and *nairghṛṇya* in some sense or the other.

7. *Śvatantra*, the Transcendent

So far, the conception that *Iśvara* is the sole Creator of all is explained. In this connection the richness of His creatorship is indicated. How the
richness of His creatorship leads to the conception of His Guṇapūrṇatva is also noted. In recognition of all these truths Madhva calls Īśvara acintya (inconceivable) and adbhuta (wonderful). These are the expressions of His transcendent (alaukkika) nature. Śruti illustrates His transcendence in such passages as “He is smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest.” Human reason does not of course comprehend this truth. But this does not mean that this truth is meaningless. It is consistent with the Svatattra nature of Brahman. It is therefore an expression of Svatattra and it is self-established.

The fact that Svatattra is the source of the very reality of paratantra implies that It is immanent in the latter. Whatever is paratantra is a production of Svatattra. In order to signify this idea Śruti makes use of various terms such as pratibimba (reflection), ābhāsa (appearance), chāyā (image), etc. Corresponding to these terms Svatattra is called Bimba (the source of reflection). Because the terms reflection, etc., are sometimes applied to unreal or illusory things by people, it must not be supposed that what is created is unreal or illusory. Much energy may be wasted to prove the correctness of this supposition but the supposition leads nowhere. It neither justifies life in the world, nor philosophy nor Brahman as the ground of all. If everything is denied, the fact of denial at least is asserted and this fact at least needs an explanation. And Svatattra alone can be this explanation. This is how Svatattra is ever self-established. To hold that the denial of all implies the denial of even the fact of denial is only a clever way of explaining away the point at issue and it cannot be respected in a sound philosophy. So, on no basis can the actuality or the reality of paratantra be considered to be unreal or illusory and the self-established nature of Svatattra be denied.

Sometimes in place of pratibimba the terms like sadṛśa, sarūpa and amśa are used. These terms are commonly taken to mean similarity or part. On the basis of this commonsense meaning, it must not be supposed that Svatattra is similar to paratantra or paratantra is a part of Svatattra. For Svatattra is transcendent and it cannot be similar to paratantra. Further, Svatattra is devoid of difference within Itself and It has no parts. So the terms sadṛśa, etc., as applied to paratantra or pratibimba, mean that its reality is derived from Svatattra.

Of the two entities acetana and cetana that constitute the world, acetana has mere sattā and it is a pratibimba of the sattā aspect of Svatattra. Cetana has in addition jnāna and ānanda. It is therefore a pratibimba of sattā, jnāna and ānanda of Svatattra. Jīva in this sense is called ābhāsa of Īśvara.
Anu. V. 3. 2. 42 says, "Jīva is called ābhāsa because its knowledge and existence are always produced by Īśvara. Just as a man’s shadow is a reflection and a creation of the man all the jīvas, caturmukha, etc., are pratibimbas of paramātman. They are incomplete and Hari alone is all-complete." Anu. V. 4. 1. 65, says, "The entity denoted by the term Ātman is therefore only Viṣṇu and none else. Because the other entities are not Guṇapūrṇa, the terms Ātmā, Brahma, etc., do not mean anything other than Viṣṇu." So a jīva’s reality is only derived. Jīva is therefore ātmābhāsa but not Ātman. Ātman is only Viṣṇu. Therefore the belief that Madhva holds Ātmanānātavāda, namely, the doctrine that there are many ātmanas, does not represent the spirit of his teaching. His position alone brings out the real significance of the doctrine of One Ātman (Aākāśīmya Vāda) taught by the Upaniṣads, because it accounts for the actual existence of jīvas.

By holding that Svatantra alone is Ātman, Madhva brings out the complete identical character of Svatantra. To note this point is essential, because the truth that Svatantra is Guṇapūrṇa may be carelessly taken to mean that each of the guṇas that constitute Svatantra represents only a part of Svatantra. It may be further concluded, in spite of Madhva’s teaching that Svatantra is completely devoid of distinction within Itself, that each guṇa is essentially different from the others. In explaining the complete oneness of Svatantra Madhva says in Anu. V. 3. 2. 16, “The guṇas of Īśvara transcend all. All His guṇas are all His other guṇas. All are the creators of all. All are all-complete. . . . The identity of them is Vāsudeva. He is completely defectless.” This is the conception of Guṇapūrṇa.

Having established that Īśvara as guṇapūrṇa is all transcendent, Madhva speaks of His bheda (distinction) from the world. The word bheda in this connection signifies the highly distinguished nature of Īśvara, namely His complete transcendence. To modify bheda in any manner is to lower down Īśvara and to deny His Svātantrya, for asvatantra is defective and svatantra is defectless and the two can never be identical. Anu. V. 3. 2. 42 says, “As implied by Śruti, Svatantra is so far well conceived. It is not confused with asvatantra. All the attributes given to Svatantra are justified, because they are implied in the conception of Svatantra. These attributes cannot be justified, if they are applied to asvatantra. Any attribute that is inconsistent with Svatantra must not be applied to It, for that which is opposed to Svatantra is itself wrong. All aspects of our experience must be interpreted consistently with Svatantra.” Svatantra is thus ever distinct from asvatantra. Anu. V. 3. 3. 39 says, “Svatantra is distinguished from asvatantra in order to prove Its defectlessness (nīrdoṣatva).” Thus Madhva speaks of bheda just to define Svatantra clearly.
8. Sva\text{t}antra, the Real of the Reals

Just as Madhva employs the conception of bheda to prove the nir\text{d}o\text{s}at\text{v}a of Ī\text{s}vara, he employs the conception of the reality (satya\text{t}a) of the world to justify the creatorship of Ī\text{s}vara. If the world is not real, the creatorship of Ī\text{s}vara cannot be justified. The conception of a creator of nothing involves self-contradiction and the denial of the reality of the world ends in the denial of its cause, \textit{i.e.}, Brahman. \textit{N. S.} 210 says, "It is wrong to think that to hold the world is real does not lead to any good (puruṣ\text{s}ā\text{r}tha), for the reality of the world justifies the creatorship of Ī\text{s}vara. Through this, His guṇa\text{p}ū\r{n}\text{a}t\text{v}a or māhā\text{m}ya is conceived and this leads to puruṣ\text{s}ā\text{r}tha".\textsuperscript{49}

The reality of the world can be justified from the standpoint of Brahman also. Because Brahman is Guṇa\text{p}ū\r{n\text{a}n}a and nir\text{d}o\text{s}a, His creation must be necessarily real. But the satya\text{t}a of the world is never confused with the satya\text{t}a of Brahman. Because the world is satya, it is never taken to be a second to Brahman. It is never equal to Brahman in any sense of the term. Brahman is Paramā\text{r}tha in the sense that It gives reality to all. For this reason, Brahman is Advaita or Adviti\text{y}a, secondless and superiorless. This is the teaching of Śrut\text{i}: Advaitam paramā\text{r}thataḥ, Advaitaḥ sarva bhāvānām, etc.

Further, to call the world satya proves the paratāntra character of the world. The world is satya because it has satva from Brahman. As the giver of satva to the world, Brahman is satya. \textit{Anu. V.} 1. 1. 6 says, "Brahman is satya because It gives satva to the world. This is the meaning of srṣṭi (creation)."\textsuperscript{50} In interpreting this passage, \textit{N. S.} 134, says, "Sat means saddhāva. This means birth. Because Brahman gives this to everything other than Itself. It is called Satya....Living or existing is also a meaning of satva....Destruction is also a meaning of the same. .... Because Brahman gives living and destruction also to the world, It is called Satya."\textsuperscript{51} The world, having satva in these senses, is necessarily a changing entity (vikā\r{r}i) and is therefore a product (kārya). This means that it has a cause. That cause must be changeless (Nirvikā\r{r}a) and is therefore Sva\text{t}antra. This is how the conception of satya\text{t}a of the world helps the conception of Sva\text{t}antra as its Ground.

Such a conception of satya\text{t}a of the world also leads to various other conceptions of the world that establish the truth of Svātantrya. \textit{Bhg. T.} 139 says, "The world does not continue to be the same. It changes. For this reason, it is said to be amrta, though it is real. Because Brahman is always changeless, It is always Satya."\textsuperscript{52} \textit{N. Mr.} 289 says, "In some passages of the scriptures, the world is said to be asat, because it is asādhu
and *avatāra;* apāramārthika, because it changes and is destroyed; mithyā, because it is useless (vṛthā); avidyāmāna, because it does not continue to be in relation to jīva; and māyāmaya, because it is an expression of prakṛti. The world is compared to a dream, etc., because it is anitiya, vikāri and paratantra, and never because it is sublated by the knowledge of Brahman.”\(^{53}\) So, according to Madhva, the world as satya is paratantra. This speaks for the transcendence or Svātantrya of Brahman.

9. Svatantra, the Only Reality

Anu. V. 3. 8. 39 says, “The guṇas, satya, etc., form the very essence of this highest Īśvara”\(^{54}\) Consistently with this idea, Bhg. T. 138 says, “He alone is Satya. Satyatva means Svātantra. That is Viṣṇu. The satyatva of other things is their being always in changing process. Such is always the being of puruṣa (jīva) and prakṛti.”\(^{55}\) The being of Puruṣa and prakṛti in this connection is their being in space and time. Viṣṇu is Satya in the sense that He is the very Ground of all this—space, time, puruṣa and prakṛti. This means that He alone is nītya. Satya and Nītya connote the same idea. N. S. 225 says, “Satya is interpreted as sadātana (existing always). Satya and nītya therefore mean the same thing.”\(^{56}\) This passage implies that nothing else can be satya or nītya in the primary sense of these terms. N. S. 200 says, “To say that prāṇa, etc. (world) are satya implies that they are adhīna.”\(^{57}\) In this sense, Śruti says, Brahman is satya of satya (satyasasyasatyam). In this expression, the second satya means adhīna. N. Mr. 292 says, “The satyatva of the world, i.e., prāṇa, etc., is inferior (apakṛṣṭa).”\(^{58}\) The Sūtra calls the world avara (inferior). It is inferior because it is adhīna and adhīna means derived. So the satyatva or nītyatva of the world is only derived. It is avara, apakṛṣṭa or adhīna. But the satyatva or nītyatva of Brahman is Svatantra. So the difference between the two cases of satyatva or nītyatva is one of kind and not of degree. One can never be compared with the other. In fact, the satyatva of the world can never be expressed along with the Satyatva of Brahman. N. S. 188 says, “Therefore it is established that to mention anything along with Īśvara (as similar to Īśvara) is prohibited.”\(^{59}\)

If the statements “Brahman is satya” and “world is satya” occur anywhere in Madhva’s works, his intention is to prove or illustrate one by the other as follows:—The world is satya, because Brahman is Satya, i.e., Brahman gives satyatva to the world. Brahman is Satya, because the world is satya, i.e., satyatva of the world points to Brahman as its Ground. It is evident that to take the satyatva of both as similar is sublated by the very foundations of this system, viz., Brahmagāda. If Śankara says that the
world is *mithyā* because it is *bādhya* (sublated), Madhva points out that the world is not *bādhya* because it is given by *pramāṇa*, even as Śankara’s Brahman (*Nirguṇa*) is not *bādhya*. Madhva holds that the world is *satya* in the sense of *abādhya*, even as Śankara’s Brahman is *satya* in the sense of *abādhya*. Thus he brings Śankara’s highest Brahman, i.e., *Nirguṇa* down to the level of the world as he conceives. *N. Mr.* 95, makes use of this idea and says, “Let the world have *satva* (*sātva* or *sātyatva*) that is similar to the *satva* (*sātva*) of your (Śankara’s) Brahman, i.e., *Nirguṇa* (supposing it to be real for the sake of argument)”.60

Madhva justifies the conception of *Svatantra* as the Highest Reality on the basis of a well-conceived scheme of degrees of reality of the world. He says in *Br. Bh.* 31, “That which has evil is *mūrtā*. (That is the word below *Vāyu*.) *Virinca* (*Vāyu*) is the *rasa* (principle) of *mūrtā*. He is free from evil (*Śrī* is the *rasa* of *Vāyu*). She is free from evil because *Śrī* and *Vāyu* are free from evil, they are *amūrtā*. *Viṣṇu* is not like *mūrtā*, not like the *rasa* of *mūrtā* and not like *amūrtā*. He is therefore always under all circumstances the Highest. All else is inferior. He is therefore *Satya* of *satya*. He alone is the principle of *mūrtā* and *amūrtā*. Therefore He alone is *Satya*."61

According to this passage, the order of gradation of Reality is this—*mūrtā*, *mūrtarasa* or *amūrtā* and *Viṣṇu*. The latter ones are the principles of the former ones. *Viṣṇu* is the Highest of all. In holding that *Viṣṇu* alone is *Satya*, Madhva’s idea is explained in *Bhg. T.* 138: “If He wills, then all this exists; otherwise, it does not exist. Therefore, under every circumstance and in every connection, the truth that He alone is real must be fully recognised.”62

From the standpoint that Brahman alone is real, Madhva says in *Bhg. T.* 125, “*Svātantrya* is *sātva*. *Viṣṇu* alone has it and none else. *Bhg. T.* 135... *Svatantra* is *vastu*; *paratantra* is *avastu*, i.e., not *vastu*. *Bh. T.* 125. *Svatantra* is *cetana*, *Viṣṇu* alone is *cetana*.”63 These expressions mean that from the standpoint of Brahman, the world is neither *sāt* nor *vastu* and the so-called *cetana* is not *cetana*. Madhva says further, *Bhg. T.* 106, “*Svatantra* is *Paramārtha* (Absolute). Hari’s desire is *svatantra*. Anything else is *paratantra*. It does not at all exist as *paramārtha*.... The real (sāt) is the Independent (*Śvādhīna*). The dependent is unreal. Therefore, the wise say that it does not exist... Though the world exists from the beginningless to the endless time, because it is *asvatantra*, it must be said to be non-existent. The changeless *Viṣṇu* alone is *Paramārtha*, because He is *svatantra*... If there is *dvaita* (illusion) about Him, it is His creation. He Himself removes it, if the conviction that *dvaita* is *adhīna* and He is *Svatantra* (occurs to *jīva*). Because *dvaita* is *adhīna*, it is said to be *nāsti*
This is how Madhva justifies the teaching of Śruti, "Brahman is one only and it is secondless" (Ekameva dvitiyam-Brahma). He brings out the significance of this Śruti, by means of another Śruti, "All these different aspects of the world, svabhāva, jīva, karma, dravya, kāla, Śruti and kriyā, exist because of His will. And if He is indifferent, they do not exist." It may be noted that all these entities also represent the world-principles according to other systems of thought like Cārvaka, etc. Madhva brings them all under the category of the world and makes them the creation of Brahman. Thus the only aim of his teaching is to establish the truth of Brahman, i.e., Svaṭṭātra. As he says in Bhg. T. 3, "Paramātman alone is Tattva. Therefore the wise see Him only."  

10. Svaṭṭātra, the All

We have seen how creation means giving sattā, etc., to the created. This meaning of creation enables Madhva to explain the passages of Śruti which apparently teach the identity of Brahman and the world. He says, Bhg. T. 17, "All this, viz., the world consisting of bheda is said to be puruṣa Himself, because the sattā, etc., of the world are adhīna." Bhg. T. 53, "Because Hari gives sattā to all, He is called Sarvatattva." Bhg. T. 55, "Because Keśava gives sattā to jīva, He is said to be identical with it." Tai. Bh. 9, "All this is He, because He is the Giver of all this." V.T.V., "All this is called Brahman, because sattā, etc., of this are Brahmadhīna". The following is what Madhva means by these passages:—On the strength of the apparent meaning of certain Vedic passages, to hold that there is complete identity between the world and Brahman is to confuse one with the other. This results in the denial of both. Paratantra as being identified with Svaṭṭātra is unreal, because it ceases to be paratantra. Similarly, Svaṭṭātra as being identified with paratantra is unreal, because it ceases to be Svaṭṭātra. Therefore, we must abandon the apparent meaning of Śruti, and study the implication of the abheda or identity taught by it. This implication consists only in recognizing the fact that Brahman is the Giver of reality to the world. Thus Madhva explains abheda by employing the same conceptions, Svaṭṭātra and paratantra, that point out bheda between the two. Bheda according to him is thus an expression of abheda as taught by the Śruti. Abheda implies that paratantra can never be separated from svaṭṭātra, i.e., it can never exist independent of Svaṭṭātra. Paratantra therefore is ananya but Brahman is transcendent. It transcends all that is the world. Bhg. T. 21 says, "Because Sattā, etc., of Viṣṇu are Svaṭṭātra,
He is different (Anyā) from the world. And because all else derives sattā, etc., from Brahman, though it is by nature different from Brahman, it is identical (ananyā) (with Brahman).”

So, Madhva concludes Anu. V. 3. 2. 46, “Bhagavān, and Bhagavān only, is taught by all the Vedas.” Bhg. T. 59, “Those that have little or no knowledge do not see Brahman as the only meaning of the Vedas, but he alone who has pure knowledge sees only Brahman as taught by them.” Anu. V.—“Therefore the object of enquiry is the Dearest, the All-complete Vāsudeva, the Secondless Parabrahman The Highest.”

Thus the Brahmanāda of Madhva establishes how Brahman, the Ground of all, is Svatantra and Guṇapūrṇa. Madhva says: the contemplation of this Truth is an immediate joy and a joy for ever. This is Madhva’s philosophy of Ānanda (Brahman) and for this reason he is rightly called Ānanda Tīrtha.

ABBREVIATIONS

M.Bh. .. Māndūkya Bhāṣya, by Madhva.  N.S. .. Nyāya Sudhā, by Jayatīrtha.