

Siddhanta-lesa-sangraha

Topic 4. Discussion of the causality of Maya.

On the basis of the sruti, "Know Maya to be Prakriti" (Svetasvatara up), since the insentience of Maya is found in pot, etc, Maya is the material cause. Brahman which is Consciousness cannot be the material cause.

1. Brahman is the material cause by vivarta and Maya by parinama. Material causality means 'being the cause of producing the effect in itself'. This is applicable to both vivarta and parinama. Thus the above objection is answered by padaarthavanirNayakara.

2. Others say: Causality is the production of an effect which is non-different from the cause. The universe is non-different from Brahman of the nature of existence which is its cause by vivarta. The universe is also non-different from the insentient Nescience which is its cause by parinama. This is seen from the experience, "The pot has existence", and "the pot is insentient". The non-difference between Brahman and the universe which belong to two different levels of reality is similar to the apparent non-difference between nacre and illusory silver which also belong to two different levels of reality.

3. Since the immutable Brahman cannot by itself be a cause, the causality is through the medium of maya. Thus, maya which is superimposed on Brahman which is immutable pure consciousness, makes Brahman the cause of the universe and itself becomes the supporting cause, just as the smoothness of clay is the cause of the smoothness in the pot also. This is the view of SamkshepasarIraKa. In the commentary the meaning of sruti "Know maya to be prakriti' is explained.

4. Brahman which is the object (content) of maya which has its locus in the jiva itself and which becomes apparently modified or transfigured (vivarta) in the form of the insentient universe is the material cause of the universe. Though maya is a supporting cause, it does not enter into the effect and so it is not a dvaara kaaraNam. This is the view of Vachaspati Misra.

In the commentary it is explained that it is maya of the nature of avidya that is located in the jiva.

5. Maya which is of the nature of a power is the main material cause and not Brahman. Since Brahman is the substratum of maya, causality is attributed to Brahman only metaphorically, says Vedaantasiddhaantamuktaavali. .