

cannot coexist, so too, ‘ignorance’ and ‘knowledge’ can never co-exist. They are at opposite poles, each the antithesis of the other.

Perception of plurality (bhedaprasakti) is ‘constant contemplation, of the world of objects (arthasandhānaparvatvam). This is the cause for bondage, the reason for all conflicts in life, the source of all struggles in existence.

If this be so, then, how can ego sense once annihilated, ever arise?

Śaṅkara explains in the following verse the secret logic of the ego’s return –



कार्यप्रवर्धनाद्वीजप्रवृद्धिः परिदृश्यते ।  
कार्यनाशाद्वीजनाशस्तस्मात्कार्यं निरोधयेत् ॥ ३१२ ॥

*kāryapravardhanādbijapravṛddhiḥ paridṛśyate,  
kāryanāśadbījanāśastasmāt kāryam nirodhayet. (312)*

312. When the ‘effects’ are flourishing, the ‘seeds’ also are observed to increase. When the ‘effects’ are destroyed, the ‘seeds’ also are destroyed. Therefore, the ‘effect’ must be subdued.

When a seed is allowed to grow into a tree, the tree will produce millions of seeds. A thriving tree will bring forth, yearly, a huge crop of seeds. If the tree is destroyed, there will be no crop of seeds emerging from it. Stop the ‘effect’, and the ‘cause’ also ends.

We all have sense vāsanās in us. If these are given a favourable chance, watered by our egocentric thoughts, the seeds, the urges for sense gratifications, the vāsanās,<sup>1</sup> increase, grow, flourish and multiply. Then the individual helplessly confesses, ‘I cannot get out of it’. Therefore, when the low, base, extrovert vāsanās spring forth to expression, curb them – crush them – do not allow them to stem forth and yield more of such poisonous vāsanās.

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<sup>1</sup> The sub-level urges, that determine the emotional profile of an individual, are called vāsanās, the channels of thought.

Even though the ego has been apparently annihilated, the vāsanās which are the cause for the ego lie dormant and so, if we allow the sense thoughts (viśayānucintanam) a free play in the mind, those vāsanās will revive and then the ego will necessarily manifest. Therefore, by constant meditation upon the ‘Self in all’, turn the mind away from sense thoughts, and allow no chance for the return of the ego sense.<sup>1</sup>



वासनावृद्धितः कार्यं कार्यवृद्ध्या च वासना ।  
वर्धते सर्वथा पुंसः संसारो न निवर्तते ॥ ३१३ ॥

*vāsanāvṛddhitah kāryam kāryavṛddhyā ca vāsanā,  
vardhate sarvathā pūṁsaḥ saṁsāro na nivartate. (313)*

313. Through the increase of vāsanās, egocentric ‘work’ increases and when there is an increase of egocentric ‘work’, there is an increase of vāsanās also. Thus, man’s transmigration never comes to an end.

In the previous verse, the cause and effect have been discussed. If the ‘effect’ increases, the ‘cause’ also increases. There, the example of a tree was given to demonstrate the truth of the cause-effect phenomenon.

The ‘results’ come to manifest because of vāsanās. The ‘results’ are egocentric ‘thoughts’, and sensuous ‘actions’. When the actions have manifested, they in their turn, create more and more vāsanās. From vāsanās spring forth more actions again and again, this endless chain of sorrows continues. Thus, ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ are interchangeable. The ‘cause’ can become an ‘effect’ and this ‘effect’ becomes the next ‘cause’.

This cause-effect chain is never ending. When this body becomes incapable of expressing the vāsanās, another body has to be taken up and there too, man indiscriminately accumulates fresh vāsanās and moves on to yet another body. This is called

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<sup>1</sup> *tasmātkāryam nirodhayet - viśayānucintanam na kuryāt.*