

In using analogies, nobody has yet come to the field of philosophy who can rival Śaṅkara's efficiency and perfection. According to him, the schools of philosophy which argue emphatically, describe beautifully and enunciate exhaustively, discussions that give clear intellectual pictures of the why and wherefore of this universe, are all nothing but the beauty of the words or the eloquence of the speaker. The player of an instrument with his proficiency may entertain the largest conceivable audience and for the time being, the listeners may even consider him the king of artistes. Yet, in effect, he can never gain sovereignty, permanent and complete, over the audience through the instrument.

Similarly, the various schools of philosophy are intellectual entertainments no doubt, yet the seeker cannot gain the status of godhood by merely dabbling in philosophy. A king might entertain himself and his friends by playing the *vīṇā*. But his empire is not consolidated, nor is order maintained among the people nor is royal dignity nourished through his proficiency in the instrument.

Ācārya Śaṅkara wants to emphasise that any amount of philosophical studies, even a mastery over all the six schools of philosophy, cannot bring about a complete evolutionary fulfilment.

The term 'sāmrājya' has a reminiscent flavour of Upaniṣad in ancient literature. This term is used for the kingdom of God within, in the heart of every individual.



वाग्वैकरी शब्दज्ञरी शास्त्रव्याख्यानकौशलम् ।
वैदुष्यं विदुषां तद्वद्भुक्तये न तु मुक्तये ॥ ५८ ॥

*vāgvaikharī śabdajharī śāstravyākhyānakauśalam,
vaiduṣyam viduṣām tadvadbhuktaye na tu muktaye. (58)*

58. *Loud speech in a stream of words, the efficiency in expounding or commenting upon the sāstras, erudition gained, these bring only a little*

joyous, material satisfaction to the scholar but they are insufficient to liberate him completely.

The *Yogaśāstra* gives us the various subtle stages of metamorphosis of a thought or a desire before it is expressed in the form of sounds and words. Altogether it describes four distinct stages in the manifestation of a thought as an expression in words. First of all, the thought arises from or has contact with the reality of life in us and at this stage, it is called ‘*parā*’. When it manifests sufficiently for the ego in us to be conscious of it, it is in a state grosser than the previous one and at this stage of its perceptible existence it is called ‘*paśyantī*’. A thought of which we have become conscious passes through a state of inner moulding in the crucible of language and this state of transcribing thought into a series of symbolical sounds for the purpose of conveying it to another is called ‘*madhyamā*’. And when actually the symbols indicated by the mind are relayed through expressed audible sounds, the thought in its grossest manifestation is called ‘*vaikhari*’.

By the term ‘*vaikhari*’, Śaṅkara means the unproductive and noisy discussions on philosophy which some students of Vedānta engage in. These gabblers are laughed at, condemned, and quite ignored by all the great Ācāryas like Śaṅkara. To the ṛṣis, an ounce of practice is more sacred than tons of discussion around a table.

According to Śaṅkara, mere knowledge of philosophical thoughts can be used only for purposes of eking out a profit for one’s own livelihood, or for gaining some insignificant popularity or short-lived glory.



अविज्ञाते परे तत्त्वे शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला ।
विज्ञातेऽपि परे तत्त्वे शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला ॥ ५९ ॥

*avijñātē pare tattve sāstrādhītistu niṣphalā,
vijñātē'pi pare tattve sāstrādhītistu niṣphalā. (59)*