

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA EDUCATIONAL AND
RESEARCH INSTITUTE (RKMVERI)

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P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah, West Bengal

COMPLETE LIST OF M.Phil. and Ph.D. THESES ON VEDANTA AND
RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANADA PHILOSOPHY BY THE RESEARCH
SCHOLARS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SANSKRIT AND PHILOSOPHY
(COMPLETED / IN PROGRESS) SINCE INCEPTION

(AS ON 15 JULY 2022)

SECTION 1: M.Phil. THESES (14)

(1) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: अद्वैतवेदान्तदृष्ट्या अष्टावक्रगीतायाः समीक्षणात्मकमध्ययनम्।

Research Scholar: Amit Kumar Dey

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

Aṣṭāvakra Gītā is a dialogue between *Janaka* and *Aṣṭāvakra*. Notably there was a copy of *Aṣṭāvakra Gītā* in the rack of Sri Ramakrishna's room in Dakshineshwara. He did not allow everybody to read this book. Only Naren (later Swami Vivekananda) was allowed to study this scriptural treatise as he was treated to be an *Uttama Adhikārī*. The scholar tries to examine *Aṣṭāvakra Gītā* from the viewpoint of *Advaita*. He also tries to explain the similarities and dissimilarities between *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* on their style and theories. He also throws a light on while the *Aṣṭāvakra Gītā* can be treated as a *prakaraṇa grantha* or not. He also tries to explain why this book is only for the *Uttama Adhikārī*.

(2) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: षट्त्रिंशत्तत्त्वसंदोहग्रन्थस्य विशिष्टमध्ययनम्

Research Scholar: Arupam Sanyal

Research Supervisor: Dr. Neeraj Kumar Bhargave

The thesis is based on a Tantric treatise called *Ṣaṭṭrimśattattvasandoha*. In Śaiva philosophy, 36 tattvas or substances are discussed. In this book the attributes of all 36 tattvas are discussed. In this dissertation, the scholar critically analysed the attributes of these tattvas. He has also discussed the evolution of the tattvas in the Śaiva philosophical literature and the historical background of the Śaiva thought. In the Śaiva literature different kinds of attributes are ascribed to these tattvas. The scholar has compared all these attributes and prepared standardised the attributes. The Dissertation is divided into four chapters. First chapter is an Introduction. While the Second chapter discusses Śuddha tattva, the third and fourth chapters discuss Śuddhāśuddha and Aśuddha tattva respectively.

(3) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: ईशोपनिषदः शङ्कराचार्य-वेदान्तदेशिक-भाष्ययोः समीक्षात्मकमध्ययनम्

Research Scholar: Chandan Mukherjee

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

The researcher selected two different commentaries on *Īśāvāsyopaniṣat*– one by *Śaṅkarācārya*, another by *Vedāntadeśika*– for this research.

The *Īśāvāsyopaniṣat* (or simply *Īsopaniṣat*) is one of the shortest of its kind. It's basically a brief philosophical poem discussing the soul/self (Atman). This edition that belongs to the *Kāṇva* recension, consists of 18 verses.

The phrase “*Īśā vāsyam*” literally translates to “enveloped by the Lord” and refers to the theory of soul (Atman); a concept used in both dualism and non-dualism. This book however, including the commentary of *Śaṅkara*, focuses on non-dualism (advaita). The different theories between two classical philosophies are discussed here.

(4) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: छान्दोग्योपनिषदः शाङ्करभाष्यदिशा क्रममुक्तिस्वरूपविमर्शः

Research Scholar: Kartik Mete

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

Mukti of salvation is the supreme *puruṣārtha* of all the beings. According to Advaita, there are three types of *Mukti* viz. *Videhamukti*, *Jīvanmukti* and *Kramamukti*. In this research, *Kramamukti* has been discussed. Eventually, a detailed depiction on the concept of *mukti* has been described. In the second chapter, *kramamukti* has been discussed. *Devayānagati* has been elaborated with special reference to *śaṅkarabhāṣya*.

In the third chapter, *kramamuktyupāsanā* has been described. In this chapter many kinds of *Upasanās* are discussed. In the fourth chapter, *āvṛtti* and *anāvṛtti* of a *Kramamukta*, has been depicted with critical analysis of *śāṅkarabhāṣya* of various Upanishads and *Brahmsūtras*. In the end, a conclusion is given containing a brief description about the thesis.

(5) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: श्रीरामकृष्णविवेकानन्दसम्मतो वेदान्तः

Research Scholar: Palash Ghorai

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

The researcher claims that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have proposed a new school of Vedanta. The scholar names this Vedanta as *vijñāna vedānta*. The thesis aims at proving that *vijñāna vedānta* is different from any other school of Vedanta.

(6) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: अद्वैतवेदान्तदिशा वृत्तिप्रयोजनमीमांसा

Research Scholar: Rajesh Adhikari

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

There are many definitions for the term *vṛtti*, i.e. *Abhidhā*, *lakṣaṇā*, *vyañjanā*, *tātparyā*, *pramāṇa*, *vikalpa* and so on. But in this thesis, the scholar examines need of the *vṛtti* of *antaḥkaraṇa*. The *antaḥkaraṇa* was created from the combined Sattvic Part of the five elements– Soil, Water, Fire, Air and Space. For an ocular cognition, there is something which connects the sense of sight with the perceptible matter. This ‘something’ is acknowledged as *vṛtti* of *antaḥkaraṇa*. Thus, we can say that *jīvacaitanya* and matters get connected through the *vṛtti*.

There might be three fundamental needs of *antaḥkaraṇavṛtti*– *ciduparāga*, *abhedābhivyakti* and *āvaraṇābhībhavārtha*. The thesis has Four Chapters with a brief preface. *Ciduparāga* is the relation between *jīvacaitanya* and matters, that is created by *vṛtti*.

This Relation can be divided into four categories–

viṣaya-viṣayi-bhāva sambandha

paramparā sambandha

saṃyogaja-saṃyoga sambandha

Tādātmya sambandha

Abhedābhivyakti is the unification of vṛtti, brahmacaitanya and jīvacaitanya.

This can be divided into three categories–

unification of jīva caitanya and viṣaya caitanya

unification of brahma caitanya and jīva caitanya

unification of śuddha caitanya that appear as jīva and viṣaya

In āvaraṇābhāvavārtha āvaraṇa or cover indicates Avidyā or ignorance. Jñana or Brahman is covered with this ignorance, and this vṛtti unveils this cover. The thesis aims at describing the process of this unveiling and the result. The thesis tries to exhibit the need of vṛttis of antaḥkaraṇa.

(7) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: शङ्करानन्दकृत-कैवल्योपनिषद्दीपिकायाः समीक्षात्मकं संपादनम्

Research Scholar: Saibal Acharya

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

Short notes on *Upaniṣad* at critical places are known as *Dīpikā*. Śaṅkarānanda, a follower of the *Advaita* school has prepared such *Dīpikās* on many *Upaniṣads*. *Kaivalyopaniṣad* is one of the important *Upaniṣads* that speaks on *mokṣa*, oneness of *ātman* and *parabrahman* etc. Hitherto, the need for a critical edition of the *Dīpikā* on *Kaivalyopaniṣad* was not addressed. Long ago, a single manuscript of *Dīpikā* on *Kaivalyopaniṣad* was edited by one scholar. In this dissertation, the present scholar has collected seven different manuscripts belonging to different genealogies from the entire country and prepared a critical edition. He has also presented an extensive study on *Dīpikā*.

(8) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: शङ्कराचार्यविरचिते साधनपञ्चके अद्वैतवेदान्तशास्त्रार्थपरामर्शः

Research Scholar: Shanti Ghosh

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

Śaṅkarācārya well known as Jagadguru is famous for his *prasthānatrayabhāṣya*. Apart from *bhāṣyas*, he has also written many *prakaraṇagranthas*. *Sādhanapañcakam* is one of

them. *Sādhanapañcakam* is a collection of five verses that preach forty gospels. This thesis intends to examine *Sādhanapañcakam* and its relation to *prasthantrayabhāṣya*.

The Veda preaches twofold paths– *Karmamārga* and *Jñānamārga*. But chanting of the holy Vedas is prescribed for both. *Sādhanapañcaka* speaks on the importance of *Guru* and *satkarma*. It discusses about *mokṣa* and how *Guru* helps the *sādhaka* in his path. It also describes about *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. These result in *sarvātmarśana*.

This thesis critically examines this treatise named *Sādhanapañcaka*.

(9) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: अद्वैतशास्त्रदिशा अर्थापत्तिविवेकः

Research Scholar: Subhadeep Das

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

The *mīmāṃsakas* accept six means of knowledge. *Arthāpatti* is one among them. Some of the philosophical schools argue that *Arthāpatti* is appurtenant to *anumāna*. This thesis will explain how various *ācāryas* from *pūrova mīmāṃsā* and *uttara mīmāṃsā* schools. The scholar will also discuss why *arthāpatti* is a separate means. The scholar will also collect the instances of *arthāpatti* from the *bhāṣya* of *Ācārya Śaṅkara*.

(10) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: सोपाधिकभङ्गान्ताद्वैतसिद्धौ नव्यन्यायप्रभावाः।

Research Scholar: Subhankar Das

Research Supervisor: Dr. Shantanu Ayachit

Advaitasiddhi is a predominant contribution of the great saint *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī*. Apart from its Vedantic contribution, the creation of this book is self-satisfactory in nature. This book is written in well-known Nyaya-technique, which is popularly known as *Navyanyāyaśailī*. For instance, in *maṅgala śloka* of the book, there is the line– “मोक्षं प्राप्त इव स्वयं विजयते विष्णुर्विकल्पोज्झितः” (*mokṣam prāpta iva svayam vijayate viṣṇurvikalpojhitah*), which means that after avoidance of all materialistic dualism, one can enjoy the eternal happiness.

Here, a doubt comes that *Mokṣa* is not subject to creation and not mere worldly pleasure, which is constant for some specific period only. Thus, “*Mokṣam prāpta iva*” is not consistent with the Advaitic philosophy. To resolve such dispute, a famous way of Navya Nyaya is followed here, which is-- उद्देश्यविधेयस्थले

उद्देश्यतावच्छेदककालावच्छिन्नत्वं विधेयांशे भासते॥ (Uddeśyavidheyasthale uddeśyatāvachchedakakālāvachchinnatvaṃ vidheyāṃśe bhāstate). Here, *Paramātmabhāva* is the *Avacchedakadharmā*, by which such disputes can be resolved. Apart from that, there will also be *Hetoābhāsa*, by accepting such disputes. Thus, here by pronouncing the *Navya nyaya* process, several disputes can be resolved.

The dissertation is mainly to simplify the traditional wordings of the book and its hidden theories. My main objective is to decode the book and its theories in the light of concepts written in ordinary Nyaya books including- *Tarkasaṅgraha*, *Muktāvalī* etc. The thesis aims at making a treatise to make the book more approachable to the students who have not gone through the advanced texts of Nyāya. This will also promote people to know the true Sanskrit verses of the rare books, rather than relying merely on any commentaries.

(11) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: उद्धवगीतायां मुमुक्षोरधिकारगुणानां विमर्शः

Research Scholar: Sujit Paramanik

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

Uddhavagītā is a part of Śrīmadbhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa. Here Śrīkṛṣṇa preaches mokṣadharmā to his favourite disciple Uddhava. The upadeśa to Uddhava by Kṛṣṇa is known as Uddhavagītā. There Kṛṣṇa points some special qualities of a mumukṣu. The scholar examines these qualities and tries to find its relevance and reference in light of other well-known Vedānta scriptures like Upaniṣad, Gītā etc.

(12) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: शुद्धशाङ्करवादस्य मुख्यसिद्धान्तयोर्विश्लेषणम्।

Research Scholar: Swami Vedarthananda

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraj Bhat

Saccidanandendra Saraswati (1880-1975) is a contemporary scholar in Advaita Vedānta. He claimed that the process of sṛṣṭi discussed by Shankaracharya was later diluted by other scholars like Vācaspati Mīśra etc. He has proposed some new concepts on adhyāsa and apavāda. This thesis is a treatise on the concepts proposed by Saccidanandendra Saraswati.

(13) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः सांख्ययोगाध्यायस्य भारतभावदीपव्याख्यानदिशा विमर्शः

Research Scholar: Tirthankar Dey

Research Supervisor: Dr. Shantanu Ayachit

Bhāratabhāvadīpa is the famous commentary on *Mahābhārata*. The commentary is also known as *Nilakaṇṭhī* on the name of the commentator *Nilakaṇṭhadikṣita*. This commentary follows the Advaita school of thought. But it has some unique way of interpretation. The scholar will critically analyse the commentary with reference to other Advaitic commentaries.

(14) M.Phil. thesis (pre-Ph.D.)

Topic: श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतोक्त-सांख्ययोगाध्यायस्य शङ्कर-रामानुज-बलदेव-रीत्या विशिष्टमध्ययनम्

Research Scholar: Tridib Roy Mandal

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

The scholar prepares a comparative and critical analysis of the Advaita, Viśiṣṭadvaita and Acintyabhedābheda explanation of the Gītā with special reference to the second chapter of the Gītā. He has compared the commentaries of the Gītā written by Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya and Baladeva Vidyabhūṣaṇa in this regard. In the first chapter he has thrown enough light on the theory of Acintyabhedābheda as it is less known among the Vedānta schools. In the second chapter of the thesis the places of dissimilarities among the commentaries are discussed. The third chapter deals with the similarities among the commentaries. The last chapter is a conclusive study.

SECTION 2: Ph.D. THESES (11)

(1) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: शङ्कर-रामानुज-बलदेवरीत्या भगवत्गीतायाः प्रथमषट्कस्य विशिष्टमध्ययनम्।

Research Scholar: Tridib Roy Mandal

Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

This thesis can be treated as an extension of the earlier thesis done by the same scholar. Here the scholar examines Śaṅkarācārya's, Ramānujācārya's and Baladeva's commentaries of the Gītā with special reference to the first six chapters.

(2) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: रवीन्द्रसङ्गीते अद्वैतभावना

Research Scholar: Amit Kumar Dey

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

Literature expounds philosophical thoughts in a lucid and attractive style. Even great poets like *Kālidāsa*, *Śrīharṣa* etc. also have referred to many philosophical thoughts in their epic poems.

It is said that Nobel-laureate Rabindranath Thakur was deeply influenced by the *Upaniṣads*. Being an ardent *Brāhma*, Rabindranath was of the opinion that *Brahma* is *nirguṇa* and *nirākāra*.

This research intends to find out the influence of *Upaniṣad* on the songs of Rabindranath. The scholar finds similarities and influences of *Upaniṣad* on Rabindranath's songs.

(3) Ph.D. thesis

Topic:

A Bengali Translation and Critical Analysis of Amṛtaraṅginī Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā by Puruṣottamācārya

Research Scholar: Arpan Bhattacharya

Research Supervisor: Dr. Rakesh Das

Amṛtaraṅginī, a commentary on the *Gītā* from *Vallabhācārya's Śuddhādvaita* viewpoint, was written by *Puruṣottamācārya* (1668-1781 A.D.). So far, *Amṛtaraṅginī*

has not been translated into any language but Hindi. This thesis intends to provide a complete Bengali translation of the *Amṛtatarāṅginī* along with a comprehensive introduction to the philosophical aspects of *Śuddhādvaita*. The first part of the thesis figures out the principal doctrines and substances espoused in *Śuddhādvaita*.

Unlike other Vedāntic schools, Vallabhācārya accepts the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as a *Prasthāna* other than the three universally accepted *Prasthānas*. *Śuddhādvaita* sculpts *Kṛṣṇa* as the Supreme Reality. *Kṛṣṇa* is both *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa*. *Parabrahma Kṛṣṇa*, who is the substratum of opposite qualities, assumes different forms. *Akṣara* is the altar or foot of *Puruṣottama*. While *Akṣara* is the 'non-manifest' form of brahman, *jagat* is His 'manifest' form. He is immanent in all living beings and non-living things and at the same time transcendental. *Vallabha* claims that the *jagat* is real. There is a fundamental difference between the *jagat* and *samsāra*. The *jagat* is God's play (*līlā*) whereas *samsāra* is the subjective projection of the ignorant soul. Hence, *samsāra* is unreal, but the *jagat* is real. *Samsāra* ends when the soul attains supreme knowledge, but the *jagat* does not end until *Kṛṣṇa* wants to do so. *Avikṛta-pariṇāmavāda*, according to which the essence of brahman remains unchanged even while manifesting the world (*jagat*) is accepted in the philosophical school. All individual souls are parts of *Kṛṣṇa*. There are three kinds of souls: the *puṣṭi* souls who only seek God's love and grace and nothing else; *maryādā* souls who follow scriptural injunctions with the aim of attaining *mokṣa*; and *pravāhī* souls who are attached to worldly pleasures and, hence, never attain *mokṣa*. *Vallabha's Bhakti Mārga* is known as *puṣṭi mārga* as distinguished from *maryādā mārga*. The goal of *Puṣṭi Bhakti* is the Supreme God, who is Bliss and Love, while the goal of *Maryādā Bhakti* is liberation from the cycle of birth and death. *Puṣṭi Bhakti* depends upon God alone. *Maryādā Bhakti* depends upon one's own efforts. When a *maryādā* soul attains liberation, it merges into *akṣarabrahma*. But the *puṣṭi* soul, in the transcendental *Vaikuṅṭha Loka*, participates in the bliss of God in different ways. Firstly, rendering service (*sevā*) to God, thereby coming to possess supernatural strength (*alaukika sāmāthyā*). Secondly, attaining *sāyujya*, a state of complete union with God. In this state, the devotee has no other thought except *Kṛṣṇa*. All these theories will be elaborated in the first part followed by the translation of the *Amṛtatarāṅginī*.

(4) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः प्रथमषट्कस्य सर्वतोभद्रटीकायाः विमर्शः

Research Scholar: Arupam Sanyal

Research Supervisor: Dr. Shantanu Ayachit

The thesis is based on a commentary on the *Gītā* called *Sarvatobhadra-vivaraṇa* by Śaiva philosopher *Rāmakaṅṭha*. The thesis aims at analysing the commentary critically from the viewpoint of Śaiva philosophy as depicted in its original sources. The work intends to compare this commentary with other Śaiva commentaries on *Gītā* like *Gītārthasaṅgraha*, *Tattovapra-kāśa* etc. and non-Śaiva commentaries like *Nīlakaṅṭhi* etc.

(5) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: श्रीसायणाचार्यकृतवेदभाष्यव्याप्तिसमीक्षा

Research Scholar: Brahmachari Shubhadip

Research Supervisor: Swami Vedarthananda

Ācārya Sāyaṇa (14th Century) was a distinguished Vedic scholar, a Socio-religious reformer, a minister, a politician, a versatile writer and also a great warrior. No serious research to define the extent, availability and authenticity of the Vedic Commentaries that are ascribed to Sāyaṇa has been made so far. Even though some attempts have been made by some scholars, the proposals were vague. So, this is an honest endeavor to determine the authenticity of the commentaries of Sāyaṇa both published or unpublished as known to us so far. It's quite natural to ascribe a work to a popular name so that readers are attracted by the name and feel an interest to go through that work.

It's said and believed that Sāyaṇa has written the commentary to the entire Vedas. But, some scholars opine that Sāyaṇa didn't persuade any commentary to Upanishads. Some inscriptions suggests that the entire commentary (available so far) was not written by Sāyaṇa alone. Probably, Sāyaṇa was the editor-in-chief of a project for preparing commentaries that was initiated by the kings of the Vijayanagar Empire. The language of the commentaries and diversity of expounds of various mantras corroborate this theory.

In this doctoral thesis, the scholar makes a keen study to determine the extent and authenticity of the commentaries from the available published and unpublished (available in the form of manuscript) works ascribed to Sāyaṇa.

The divisions of the proposed chapters -

Introduction : Introduction of Vedārthaprakaśa.

First Chapter : Study of Vedārthaprakaśa on Ṛgveda

Second Chapter : Study of Vedārthaprakaśa on Sāmaveda

Third Chapter : Study of Vedārthaprakaśa on Yajurveda

Fourth Chapter : Study of Vedārthaprakaśa on Atharvaveda

Fifth Chapter : Authenticity of Vedārthaprakaśa

Conclusion

(6) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्ये समन्वयाध्याये प्रयुक्तदृष्टान्तानां प्रयोगस्वारस्यम्

Research Scholar: Buddhadev Das

Research Supervisor: Swami Vedarthananda

Use of similes to propound one's views, is quite common practice in the realm of philosophy. Śaṅkarācārya has also used many similes in the commentary of the Brahmasūtras. A critical analysis of these similes will definitely throw some deep insight on the Advaita thoughts. Since, these similes are all very much earthly, there is an obvious vacillation whether these can aptly propound the unearthly brahman. For an example, while refuting the point that genesis of the inanimate world cannot happen from the conscious brahman, Śaṅkara argues that conscious beings like scorpions develop in inanimate dung. The thesis aims to study such similes with a critical view.

(7) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: शङ्कर-रामानुज-बलदेव-गीताभाष्यदिशा श्रीरामकृष्णकथामृतस्य तदुद्धृतभगवद्गीतासाहाय्येन समीक्षणम्

Research Scholar: Kartik Mete

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

In this research, the verses of the Gita that are quoted in the *Kathāmṛta*. The principal source for Ramakrishna's teaching is Mahendranath Gupta's Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathāmṛta. The dissertation is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the teachings and various *sādhana*s of Sri Ramakrishna are discussed. In the second chapter, vedāntaprimeyas like *Brahman*, *Prakṛti* and the relation of *Jīva* and brahman have been described with special reference to the teachings of Ramakrishna. In the third chapter, *mokṣasādhana*s have been described. In the fourth chapter *karmayoga*, *bhaktiyoga*, *jñānayoga* have been discussed. In the fourth chapter bondage and liberation of a *Jīva*, has been depicted with critical analysis. At the end, a conclusion is given containing a brief description about the thesis.

(8) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: श्रीरामकृष्णस्य समन्वयिदर्शनदृष्ट्या उपनिषदाम् अध्ययनम्

Research Scholar: Palash Ghorai

Research Supervisor: Swami Medhananda

Swami Vivekananda suggested a new way of interpreting the Vedāntic scriptures: “[L]iving with this man [Sri Ramakrishna] first put it into my head to understand the Upanishads and the texts of the scriptures from an independent and better basis than by blindly following the commentators; and in my opinion and in my researches, I came to the conclusion that these texts are not at all contradictory” (CW3: 233). According to Swami Vivekananda, instead of relying on traditional commentaries, we should reinterpret the Vedantic scriptures from the harmonising standpoint of Sri Ramakrishna, who was “as ardent a dualist, as ardent an Advaitist, as ardent a Bhakta, as a *Jñānī*” (CW3: 233).

Although Sri Ramakrishna did not provide his own interpretation of the Upaniṣads or other scriptures, some scholars—including Swami Tapasyananda (1990), Swami Bhajanananda (2010), S. C. Chatterjee (1985), etc. have followed Swami Vivekananda in trying to show how Sri Ramakrishna’s philosophical views can provide a better, non-sectarian way of interpreting the *Upaniṣads*. According to these scholars, Sri Ramakrishna’s non-sectarian philosophy holds that the Supreme Reality is both impersonal (*nirguṇa*) and personal (*saguṇa*), both with form (*sākāra*) and without form (*nirākāra*), and much more besides. They claim that Sri Ramakrishna gets this idea from a special spiritual experience which he calls “*vijñāna*.” In the *Kathāmṛta*, he repeatedly contrasts “*jñāna*,” the Advaitic realization of the impersonal Ātman, with “*vijñāna*,” a vaster, richer, and more intimate realization of God as at once personal and impersonal, at once with and without form, at once immanent in the universe and beyond it. The *vijñānī* sees the world as a real manifestation of *Śakti*, an inseparable power of Brahman. From the standpoint of *vijñāna*, Sri Ramakrishna harmonizes various apparently conflicting religious faiths, sectarian philosophies, and spiritual disciplines and declares that all spiritual paths lead to the same Impersonal-Personal Infinite Absolute.

On the basis of Sri Ramakrishna's non-sectarian teachings, the scholars mentioned above have developed a methodological framework for reinterpreting the Upaniṣadic teachings. However, these scholars have only discussed the *Upaniṣads* themselves in a piecemeal manner. None of them have systematically and comprehensively examined the Upaniṣads. These scholars are followed in arguing that Sri Ramakrishna’s views provide a non-sectarian way of interpreting the *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Kaṭha*, *Muṇḍaka* and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads*. In this dissertation, the scholar examines these five *Upaniṣads* and critically discusses the various interpretations of traditional commentators and modern scholars. Finally, an attempt is made to determine the original meaning of scriptural verses by adopting a non-sectarian interpretive framework inspired by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

(9) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: ब्रह्मसूत्रप्रथमाध्याय-प्रथमपादस्य शारीरकमीमांसा-गोविन्दभाष्ययोः विमर्शः

Research Scholar: Saibal Acharya

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraja Bhat

The first four aphorisms also known as *Catussūtrī* are an important part of the *Brahmasūtra*. It is described to be the summary of the entire *Brahmasūtra*. The latter

aphorisms are like explanations to these four *sūtras*. The scholar here does a comparative study between the commentaries of *Śaṅkarācārya* and *Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa*. Thus, he prepares an extensive treatise comparing the two schools of *Vedānta- Advaita* and *Acintyabhedābheda*.

(10) Ph.D. thesis

Topic: ईशतैत्तिरीयोपनिषदोः शङ्करसायणभाष्ययोः समीक्षात्मकमध्ययनम्।

Research Scholar: Swami Vedarthananda

Research Supervisor: Dr. Nagaraj Bhat

Though Shankara Bhagavatpada (788–820 CE) is the one well known as the Commentator (Bhashyakara) of the Advaita school of Vedanta, there are at least two other teachers known as the commentators in the same tradition. First is Dravidacharya who precedes Shankara Bhagavatpada at least by two centuries.ⁱ The other is Sayanacharya (14th Century CE) of Hampi. A quick comparison of the philosophical ideas of Shankara Bhagavatpada and Sayanacharya reveals that they were both Advaitins and had much in common. At the same time, we can't negate the fact that their works and method of teaching emanated from different philosophical, religious, and political scenarios. It is also conspicuous that Sayanacharya is a product of the post-Shankara scholasticism among the Advaitins.

In his commentary to the Taittiriyaopanishad, Sayanacharya clearly refers to his own position regarding the Vedantic philosophy as Mayavada. He says: "gautamādirmaḥarṣiḥ paramāṇubhyaḥ pṛthivyādyutpattimuvāca. mūlakāraṇāt parabrahmaṇa utpannā ākāśakāladiśaḥ paramāṇavaśca yadā vyavasthitāstadā tata ārabhya uttarakālīnā sṛṣṭiḥ gautamādyuktaprakāreṇa vyavatiṣṭhatām. kiṃ naśchinnaṃ vedāntinām. na caitāvātā māyāvādasya hāniḥ śaṅkanīyā. brahmādistambāntānām sarveṣām prāṇinām vicitrasaṃsārabhramamutpādayantyā māyayaiva dṛśyasya gautamādimatabhramasya utpāditatvāt"ⁱ He accepts Mulajnanam too in his commentary to the Ishavasyopanishad. Sayanacharya says there: "ekatvaṃ nāma paramātmanā sahaikyam. yadvā sarvaṃ vikārajātam mūlājñānanirāseṇa vilāpya viśuddhe sātmaikyam anupaśyataḥ sākṣātkurvataḥ tasmin paramātmani śokamohayorasambhavaḥ" . The direct contention that we can make by reading these statements is that Sayanacharya was a Mulavidyavadi, otherwise called a Mayavadi, like the followers of the Vivarana school of Shankarites. Can this hypothesis be sustained?

Therefore, a question arises regarding whether or not Sayanacharya adopts a Vedantic methodology different from the one adopted by Shankara Bhagavatpada in interpreting Upanishadic Advaita. This is the core research question of this thesis. If he deviated, to what extent? And if not, how can such a claim be substantiated in front of the statements referred to above?

Topic: श्रीमद्भागवतपुराणगतगीतासु महावाक्यार्थविमर्शः।

Research Scholar: Sujit Paramanik

Research Supervisor: Dr. Venkataramana Bhat

There are a number of *Gītās* in *Śrīmadbhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The scholar makes an exclusive study to find out how the theories propounded in the four *Mahāvākyas* are reflected in these *Gītās*.

List of dissertations on Vedanta and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda philosophy by M.A. students (29):

Sl. No.	Topic	Student's name
1	प्रश्नोत्तररत्नमालिकायाः चित्तलोकानां तात्पर्यार्थविमर्शः	Animesh Roy
2	आत्मबोधावबोधः	Apurba Das
3	वेदान्ते विधिविचारः	Biplab Biswas
4	श्रीश्रीरामकृष्णमतानुसारेण नित्यलीलाविमर्शः	Bishwarup Bej
5	अद्वैतशास्त्रे प्रस्थानत्रयम्	Buddhadev Das
6	सौन्दर्यलहर्या सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपविमर्शः	Budhadev Ghosh
7	श्रीश्रीरामकृष्णमतेन अद्वैतशास्त्रानुसारं साकारनिराकारविचारः	Byasdeb Maji
8	श्रीसम्प्रदायगतभक्तिचिन्तनम्	Chandan Mukherjee
9	अद्वैतवेदान्तदिशा अर्थापत्तिप्रमाणविचारः	Debjyoti Kundu
10	रामरायकवेः भाष्यार्कप्रकाशदिशा भक्तियोगः	Debkumar Pujari
11	षड्विधतात्पर्यनिर्णायकश्रुतिसङ्ग्रहः	Gopal Mondal
12	तैत्तिरीयोपनिषदि ब्रह्मानन्दवल्ली	Himadri Sekhar Roy
13	उपदेशसाहस्र्याः पार्थिवप्रकरणम् - एकमध्ययनम्	Kartick Ruidas

14	न्यायप्रस्थानभाष्ये भगवत्पादप्रयुक्तप्रसिद्धलौकिकन्यायानां विमर्शः	Koushik Giri
15	श्रीरामकृष्णमतानुसारेण जीवभेदाः	Monomay Manna
16	अद्वैतसिद्धौ प्रत्यक्षस्य प्राबल्यविचारः	Provat Kumar Mondal
17	वेदानामपौरुषेयत्वविमर्शः	Rajesh Adhikari
18	क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविवेकः	Rajib Dandapat
19	श्रीरामकृष्णमतानुसारेण ब्रह्म सत्यं जगत् मिथ्या	Sadananda Das
20	अपरोक्षानुभूतेः विमर्शात्मकम् अध्ययनम्	Sauvik Patra
21	श्रीमच्छङ्कररामानुजाचार्यमतयोः मोक्षस्वरूपं मोक्षोपायनिरूपणञ्च	Shanti Ghosh
22	श्रीरामकृष्णमतानुसारेण ज्ञान-विज्ञान-भावमुखञ्च	Shubhadip Pal
23	जन्मादिसूत्रे ब्रह्मकर्तृत्वविमर्शं पूर्णप्रज्ञशांकराद्वैतसिद्धान्तयोः तुलनात्मकमध्ययनम्	Shubhankar Das
24	उपदेशसाहस्र्यां तत्त्वमसीति महावाक्यविचारः	Somnath Barman
25	विद्यारण्यमुनिविरचितायाः पञ्चदश्याः आत्मानन्दप्रकरणविमर्शः	Somnath Singha
26	अद्वैतसिद्धिदिशा मिथ्यात्वलक्षणविचारणा	Subhadeep Das
27	अद्वैतवेदान्तदिशा प्रत्यक्षप्रमाणविचारः	Subhajit Das
28	विद्यारण्यमुनिविरचितायाः पञ्चदश्याः योगानन्दप्रकरणविमर्शः	Sujoy Barman
29	श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां तृतीयाध्याये विशिष्टाध्ययनम्	Tanmay Porel

Seminars, Workshops etc., on Vedanta, Sankhya, Mimamsa, etc.

- (1) International Workshop on "Advaitasiddhiḥ of Madhusūdana-sarasvatī" in July-Aug 2022: Resource person: Dr. K.S.Maheswaran, Principal, Madras Sanskrit College, Chennai, 5 July 2022 to Saturday, 13 August 2022.
- (2) International Workshop on Sāṅkhyakārikā in Jan-Feb 2022: Resource Person: Dr. Rakesh Das, Asst. Prof. in Sanskrit, RKMVERI, 3 January to 3 February 2022.

- (3) International Workshop on Mīmāṃsā text Arthasaṅgrahaḥ of Laugākṣi-Bhāskara; Resource Person: Dr. K.S.Maheswaran, Principal, Madras Sanskrit College, Chennai: 2 – 28 August 2021.
- (4) Veda-Vedanta Saptaha (Weeklong celebration of Veda-Vedanta) from 29 February to 5 March, 2016, comprising a 3-day National Seminar on the Three Major Schools of Vedanta (Advaita, Vishistadvaita, Dvaita), Special Lectures on Chaturveda Bhasya by Maha Mahopadhyaya Dr Krishnamurthy Shastri, former Principal of Madras Sankrit College, Chennai; Prof. Samiran Chandra Chakraborty, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Golpark, Kolkata were arranged as a part of Veda Vedanta Saptaha. Maha Mahopadhyaya Dr Krishnmurthy Shastri, Maha Mahopadhyaya Mani Dravida Shastri, Madras Sanskrit College, Professor AV Nagasampige, Director, Purnaprajna Sodha Sansthan and Dr.Umesh Nepal, Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Rajasthan Sanskrit University delivered excellent speeches on Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita & Dvaita respectively. The entire deliberations were in Sanskrit and Dr.Rakesh Das, Asst. Prof. in Sanskrit, RKMVERI, efficiently summarized the lectures in Bengali for the benefit of the audience who, although understanding the Sanskrit lectures for the most part, appreciated the Bengali summary so lucidly done by Dr Rakesh Das.
- (5) Lectures delivered on various abstruse topics of Advaita Vedanta by Prof. H V Nagaraja Rao (Pancadaśī), Brahmachari Divyachaitanya (Mahāvākye saṃsargaviśiṣṭavākyaṛthaḥ katham na), Dr. Venkataramana Bhat (Adhyāropāpavādaḥ), Nagaraja Bhat (Śāṅkaravedānte Yogasātrasyopayagaḥ), Sri Palash Ghorai (Susuptau Avidya), Swami Vedarthananda (tattvamasivākyaṛthavicāre pūrvacāryasaraṇiṃ prati kāścitpūrvapakṣaḥ). Prof. K E Devanathan, the then Vice Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara Vedic University, Tirupati inaugurated the Seminar with a keynote lecture on (Śāṅkara-rāmaṇuja-bhāṣya-svārasyaṃ).
- (6) Besides seminars and symposia conducted at periodic internals, the Department of Sanskrit has a **Weekly Colloquium called *manasollasah* wherein the Sanskrit Department students of all the five years of Integrated M.A. and also Ph.D. scholars participate** to get trained in extempore speech in Sanskrit, composition of poetry on the spur of the moment on various themes given to them, reciting their self-composed poems and presenting their research papers, etc.

Given below is a consolidated list of Workshops conducted from 2015 to 2022:

Sl. No.	Workshop	Duration	Resource Person
1	International Workshop Series 6, 'Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana)' in <i>Advaita-siddhiḥ of Madhusūdana-sarasvatī</i> of 16th century CE	5 July to 13 August 2022	Dr. K.S.Maheswaran, Assistant Professor, The Madras Sanskrit College, Chennai

2	International Workshop Series 5, 'Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana)' in <i>Dhātvartha-nirṇayaḥ in Vaiyākaraṇa-Bhūṣaṇasāra of Kaunḍa-Bhaṭṭa</i>	15 February to 15 March 2022	Dr. Neeraj Kumar Bhargave, Assistant Professor, Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy, RKMVERI
3	International Workshop Series 4, 'Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana)' in <i>Kriyā-svarūpa in Pāṇinīya-Vyākaraṇa</i>	17 January to 5 February 2022	Dr. Ch.K.Padmanabham, Assistant Professor, Vyakarana Department, Central Sanskrit University, Sringeri
4	International Workshop Series 3, 'Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana)' in <i>Sāṃkhya-kārikā of Iśvarakṛṣṇa</i>	3 January to 3 February 2022	Dr.Rakesh Das, Assistant Professor, Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy, RKMVERI
5	International Workshop Series 2, 'Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana)' in <i>Vyākaraṇa-śatakoṭiḥ in the aphorism Arthavada-dhāturapratyayaḥ Prātipradīkam</i>	30 Dec 2021 to 13 Jan 2022	Dr.Ganeshwar Nath Jha, Head of the Department of Vyakarana, Central Sanskrit University, Ekalavya Campus, Agartala, Tripura
6	International Workshop Series 1, <i>Close Reading of the śāstras (śravaṇa-manana) in the Mīmāṃsā text Arthasaṅgrahaḥ of Laugākṣi-Bhāskara</i>	2 to 28 August 2021	Dr.K.S.Maheswaran, Assistant Professor, The Madras Sanskrit College, Chennai
7	National Workshop in <i>Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali (Ekaśeṣāhnikam)</i>	23 to 29 Feb 2020	Dr.Ch.K.Padmanabham, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Sringeri Campus
8	National Workshop in <i>Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali (Samarthā-hnikam)</i>	5 to 12 Jan 2019	Dr.Ch.K.Padmanabham Assistant Professor, Vyakarana Vibhaga, Rajiv Gandhi Campus, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Sringeri

9	National Workshop in <i>Navya-Nyaya</i>	16 to 19 Aug 2017	Dr. Vishwanath Dhital Navya-nyāya scholar from Kashi Sri J.Suryanarayana Navya-nyāya scholar from Chennai Sri Shantanu Ayachit Advaita-vedānta scholar from Tirupati
10	<i>Motivational Workshop for Sanskrit Teachers</i> in collaboration with Samskrita Bharati	02 April 2017	Dr. Nandankumar Akhil Bharatiya Samparkapramukh, Samskrita Bharati
11	National Workshop in <i>Manuscriptology</i>	21 Nov to 6 Dec 2016	Profs. Ratna Basu Samiran Chandra Chakrabarty Nabanarayan Bandyopadhyay Debarchana Sarkar Soma Basu Kakali Ghosh Somnath Sarkar
12	Workshop in <i>Manuscriptology</i> in collaboration with Sri Venkateswara Vedic University, Tirupati	29 Mar to 13 April 2016	Profs. Ratna Basu Samiran Chandra Chakrabarty Nabanarayan Bandyopadhyay Debarchana Sarkar Soma Basu Kakali Ghosh Somnath Sarkar
13	National Workshop in <i>Translation into Sanskrit</i>	2 Nov to 6 Nov 2015	Dr. Rakesh Das Dr. Venkataramana Bhat Dr. Gopikrishnan Reghu Dr. Nagaraja Bhat Dr. Neeraj Kumar Bhargave

Publications by the Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy:

The Publication Division of the Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy publishes books and booklets, original and translations, on various themes in Indian Spiritual Heritage, Sanskrit, Philosophy, etc., including the following three journals:

- (1) *Prajnalokah* (the light of Prajna) – research journal that invites research papers from various Ph.D. scholars, research faculty, etc., from India and abroad; the contributions to this journals should be fully in Sanskrit.
- (2) *Pratibhalokah* (the light of talent) – journal meant for students of Sanskrit, philosophy or related disciplines at the graduate and postgraduate levels; this journal is also fully in Sanskrit. It is meant to encourage students from various colleges and Universities to write papers.
- (3) *Prajnanam* (Awareness) – journal meant for students of Sanskrit, philosophy or related disciplines at the graduate and postgraduate levels; this is a bi-lingual journal (English and Bengali).

The School of Indian Heritage under which the Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy is placed, also runs two Centres called VIVEKA-VYASA and VIVEKA-CHATAK which are described below:

VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA-YOGA-ADHYAYANA-SAMSHODHANA- ALAYAM (VIVEKA-VYASA)

**(Devoted to intense study and research in Vedanta and Yoga in the light of
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda teachings)
Under 'School of Indian Heritage'**

CONCEPT NOTE

The *raison d'etre*:

Swami Vivekananda wanted an intense study of and research into the ancient spiritual and philosophical literature in the light of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings. He also wanted that these highest truths should be made practical and the wisdom enshrined in these immortal texts should be applied in daily life so that they become a living force in society in the modern times. In his short span of life, his endeavour was to initiate such a movement that he strongly believed would transform individual lives and the society as a whole and establish what he called 'Vedantic civilization'. In answer to a question "What is Vedantic idea of civilization?" Swami Vivekananda replied: "True civilization is the manifestation of the divinity in man. That land is the most civilized wherein the highest ideas are made practical." [Ref. *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples, publ. Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas (6th edn, Jan 1989, Vol.II, p.77)]. Further, in a rare mood of self-revelation this modern Rishi summed up his mission in life in the following remarkable words:

“To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate mythology and queer startling psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time meet the requirement of the highest minds – is a task only those can understand who have attempted it. The dry, abstract Advaita must become living – poetic – in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical psychology – and all this must be put in a form so that a child may grasp it. That is my life’s work.” (Ref. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, Vol. 5, p. 104).

Swamiji commanded his disciples and followers to write a new commentary on Vedanta based on the *prasthanas-traya* after having thoroughly studied and researched into the various Schools of Vedanta in depth – Ramanuja, Madhva and Chaitanya to start with, vis-à-vis Shankara’s tradition that is much more widely studied than the others – and discovering their synthesis in the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna. He felt that this would pave the way for the *samanvaya Vedanta* (harmonizing Vedantic doctrine) emerging from Sri Ramakrishna’s life and teachings to be firmly grounded in and established as: one, a culminating synthesis of the ancient Vedantic tradition of the great Acharyas being combining both extensity and intensity, “broad as the skies and deep as the ocean”, and two, practically applicable to the modern society at large for the spiritual and intellectual awakening of humankind. Sister Nivedita’s masterly introduction to the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* puts this idea in perspective in such a lucid and powerful manner:

“It is this which adds its crowning significance to our Master's life, for here be becomes the meeting-point, not only of East and West, but also of past and future. If the many and the One be indeed the same Reality, then it is not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realization. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life itself is religion. To have and to hold is as firm a trust as to quit and to avoid.

“This is the realization which makes Vivekananda the great preacher of Karma, not as divorced from, but as expressing Jnana and Bhakti. To him, the workshop, the study, the farmyard, and the field are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple. To him, there is no difference between service of man and worship of God, between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality. All his words, from one point of view, read as a commentary upon this central conviction. ‘Art, science, and religion,’ he said once, ‘are but three different ways of expressing a single truth.’ “

The urgent need therefore is to create a band of scholars – monastic and lay – who would devote themselves to such an intense study and research as elaborated above

for which a modest beginning has been made by starting the Research Centre called 'Vivekananda Vedanta-Yoga Adhyayana Samshodhana Alayam' (acronym: VIVEKA-VYASA), in English it will be called 'Vivekananda Centre for Vedanta-Yoga Study and Research' under the University's 'School of Indian Heritage' at the Belur main campus of the University.

**VIVEKANANDA CHAITANYA-TATTWA-ANUSANDHANA-KENDRA
(VIVEKA-CHATAK)**

Vivekananda Centre for Consciousness Research

**(Devoted to research in Consciousness in the light of Vedanta and Yoga and
Ramakrishna-Vivekananda teachings)
Under the 'School of Indian Heritage'**

VIVEKA-CHATAK, Vivekananda Centre for Consciousness Research, is a new initiative of RKMVERI started under its 'School of Indian Heritage' which has already entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre for Consciousness Studies under the famous National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) at Bengaluru, with the main objective of engaging in interdisciplinary study and research in neurosciences integrating and interfacing it with ancient Indian philosophical wisdom, contemplative traditions, wherein there is a rich mine of knowledge on Mind, Life and Consciousness and other streams of knowledge like mathematics, physics, computer science, artificial intelligence, cognitive science, psychology etc.

The formation of VIVEKA-CHATAK by RKMVERI under its 'School of Indian Heritage' has its origin in the perception of the well-known and well-recognized fact that it was Swami Vivekananda who, for the first time, carried the ancient Indian wisdom of Yoga-Vedanta to the Western world and interpreted it in the light of modern scientific knowledge that was available at that time, which created great sensation in the intellectual circles in the West, and that this work initiated by him and received by us as a great legacy needs to be taken forward by us in a big way as science and technology have made gigantic strides over the last hundred years and more since then and the revolutionary discoveries in physics, mathematics, biological and neurosciences have come up with astounding truths calling for deeper exploration into mind and consciousness in the light of, and integrating them with, these scientific truths.
