



Two-day Seminar on Bhakti Schools of Vedānta

(Philosophies of Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka, Vallabha, Caitanya with special reference to Brahmasūtras and Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā)



Dates: 18 and 19 April 2025 (Friday and Saturday)

Organised by Department of Sanskrit and Philosophy



Thematic areas of the seminar

The nature of Brahman and its relation to the individual soul (*jīva*) and the material world (*jagat*).

The path to liberation (*mokṣa*) through devotion (*bhakti*) and its compatibility with knowledge (*jñāna*) and action (*karma*).

The specific interpretations of the Brahmasūtra and Gītā that underpin their respective theological and soteriological frameworks.

The role of grace (*prasāda/krpā*) and the personal God (*Sākāra, Saḡuṇa Īśvara*) in the Bhakti path.

Parama Pūjya Swami Bhajanananda Ji Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, will deliver the keynote address in the seminar.

Special attraction: Gītāvdhānam
(a special Avadhāna presentation of the Bhāgvadgītā where the presenter will exhibit unique and surprising expertise on the Gita)
Avadhāni Prof. A Sachidanandamurthy

- **Date** - 18 and 19 April, 2025 (Friday and Saturday)
- **Time** - 10 am to 5.30 pm (both the days)
- **Place** - Abhedananda Convention Centre, Belur Math, West Bengal
- **Registration Fees** - (i) Free for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students, (ii) Rs.250/- for the entire two-day seminar for others (faculty, scholars and anyone else interested)
- **Registration link** - (i) for UG/PG students - <https://zfrmz.in/QIOjexwMeQyJR0aYcD48>
(ii) for others - <https://zfrmz.in/6Bk0NkrifPNYufjbUlu4>
- **Contact:** 8230864238, **Email:** sanskrit@gm.rkmvu.ac.in

QR code for UG/PG students

QR code for others



Swami Atmapriyananda
Pro-Chancellor & Secretary
13 March 2025

Sri Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta has dominated the Vedanta tradition for centuries, so much so, the word Vedanta has come to be used and understood as Advaita Vedanta only. Few are aware, including perhaps scholars of Vedanta, leave alone others, that there are, *inter alia*, at least the following eleven schools of Vedanta, namely,

1. Advaita (Śrī Śaṅkarācārya)
2. Viśiṣṭādvaita (Śrī Rāmānujācārya)
3. Dvaita (Ānandatīrtha or Madhvācārya)
4. Bhedābheda (Bhāskarācārya)
5. Acintyabhedābheda (Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa)
6. Dvaitādvaita (Nimbārkācārya)
7. Śuddhādvaita (Vallabhācārya)
8. Śiva-viśiṣṭādvaita (Śrīkaṅṭhācārya)
9. Viśeṣādvaita (Vīraśaiva) (Acārya Śrīpati)
10. Sāmañjasya or Vijñānāmṛta (Ācārya Vijñānabhikṣu)
11. Śākta-viśiṣṭādvaita (Pañcānana Tarkaratna Bhaṭṭācārya)
12. Śāktādvaita (Maharṣi Hārītāyana)



To the above list may be added the liberal doctrine of 'As many faiths, so many paths' (*jato mat, tato path*) by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna (may be called Samanvaya Vedānta)

The Bhakti Schools of Vedānta have profoundly shaped the religious and philosophical landscape of India over the millennia and are living traditions even now impacting the life and thought of countless devotees, philosophers and thinkers alike in India and abroad. The profound insights offered by these systems deserve intense study and contemplation. The newer *Weltanschauung* (worldview) that these system open up on the concepts of the individual soul (*jīva*), the material world (*jagat*) and God (Ishwara), as well as other philosophical concepts relevant for peaceful and joyful living needs to be highlighted and integrated with our lives.

Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute (RKMVERI) established by Ramakrishna Mission at the holy precincts of Belur Math stands as a unique symbol of harmony and synthesis (*samanvaya*) of all the philosophical and religions thought having roots in the sacred soil of our country, Bharata, developed and practised over the millennia by countless followers of these varied systems of thought, and above all, authenticated and proven to be true by the direct realization of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Vivekananda, his worthy disciple who preached this great gospel of harmony and synthesis to the whole world has been described by the Nobel Laureate French savant, Romain Rolland, as follows: "In the two words equilibrium and synthesis Vivekananda's constructive genius may be summed up. ... He was the personification of the harmony of all human energy".

In the present seminar whose central theme is 'The Bhakti Schools of Vedānta', we seek to explore the profound philosophical and religious insights offered by five of these major traditions, namely, *Nimbārka's Dvaitādvaita*, *Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita*, *Madhva's Dvaita*, *Vallabha's Śuddhādvaita*, and *Caitanya's Acintyabhedābheda*.

The discussions of the above Schools of *Vedānta* will be based essentially on the Prasthāna-traya (Upaniṣads, Bhagavad-Gītā and Brahma Sūtras) with main focus on the last two.

By bringing together scholars and practitioners, this seminar will provide a platform for comparative reflections on how these Bhakti traditions interact with the Vedāntic corpus, address metaphysical concerns, and shape the spiritual aspirations of their followers. It aspires to foster a deeper understanding of the rich tapestry of Bhakti Vedānta discourse and its continuing relevance in contemporary spiritual thought.

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