

There has been talk of surrender lately. One element of surrender in Vedanta or any other study is surrender to the text that is our focus. With primary texts that are encrusted with commentaries I think it is vital to read the text first before our minds are clouded by a view which gets between us and the initial experience. It thus can speak directly to us. That may in fact be difficult when the matter is very abstruse but thereby lies the skill of the reader. I'm biased but it is my opinion that a basic introduction to philosophy can be of great assistance. Certain errors which one is liable to fall into can be avoided by a general grasp of the problem fields and the characteristic approaches. The Sage of Kanchi was not I think being polite when he told me to 'please continue' when I asked him whether I should continue my study of philosophy.

It was heartening to have some of my ideas on curious interpretations of the adhyasa bhasya (preamble to B.S.B.) confirmed by Sri SSS. People are not reading what is on the page because of the interference of received views. How does one get over that? By the opposite of speed reading which is slow reading. You need to get the sense of strangeness of the text to have it grow into you unimpeded by a veil. It may help to reveal only those words you are reading, masking the rest with a post card.

So one reads: **“It being an established fact”**.

Now that's interesting; Shankara believes that there are established facts. He is at least not a sceptic because he accepts that there are some things we just know or that are given. I may even take it that when a fact is established the implication is that there is general agreement. It is not dependent on my personal validation.

**“that the object and the subject”**.

This seems to come under the notion of what is given as an established fact, stuff that we don't have to think about, that is just there. Take it or leave it, you can't deny it. This is important. Objects exist, subjects exist. Odd though it may seem there are some philosophies that hold that only the existence of a subject is immediately given and that the object is the result of an inference that 'explains' sense-data.

**“that are fit to be the contents of the concepts “you” and “we“ (respectively)”**

This again marks the direct intuition. I mean intuition in the sense of the sort of things we know about without having to think about them i.e. the world has stuff that is not us. The pencil on the desk is not an event in my brain.

**“and that are by nature as contradictory as light and darkness”**

One seems to cancel the other out as the light does the dark. The consciousness of the subject is being compared to the inertness of the object as object.

**“cannot logically have any identity”**

They are utterly different from each other. I am here and the object is out there.

**“it follows that their attributes can have it still less”**.

The attributes of the subject and those of the object.

In this first sentence Shankara has set out the field so that we are clear about the basics which are the stuff of everyday intuition. Having done that he now springs the paradox that lies at the heart of perception on us.

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