

Mandukya Upanishd, Class 60

Suppose I want to become chess champion in the world, I only have to defeat the number one person.

Similarly, among various ashtika dharsahanams, which accept creation, the most prominent one is the Sankya philosophy and by refuting Sankya philosophy, then we would have refuted all asthika philosophers.

From verse 24 to 28, Gowdapadha refutes all nasthiaka dharshanam, mainly bowdha madham or Buddhism.

1. Buddhism has four branches. Sowthranthika madham:
This philosopher says that there is an external world different from the observer, the subject. The external world is different from the observer and is real; this real distinct external world is proved by prathyaksha pramanam; therefore, this philosophy presented in a nutshell presented as bahya prathyaksha vadhinaha.
2. Vaibashika madham: Close to first one and they also say there is an external world; it exists separate from the observer; the external world is real; This distinct real external world is proved by inference or reasoning. This philosophy presented in a nutshell presented as bahyana anumana vadhinaha
3. Yogachara madham: There is no independent real external world at all separate from the subject. Just there is no real dream world, separate from the observer,

individual. This philosopher can be defined as Bahyartha abava vadhinaha. External is only an appearance

4. Madhyamika madham: This is similar to the third one; they also so there is no external at all; There is no subject observer also. Sarvartha abava vadhinaha. Soonya vadhinaha.

Of these four, the first two are refuted by the third one. The first two accept that there is a real creation separate from the observer. Third, yogachara, refutes both of them and establishes that there is no observed world separate from the observer. Since he negates the matter, the external world, and establishes that the observer consciousness alone is real, yogachara is very close to advaidham. With regard to negation of the world, advaidam and yogachara are same and call the world as mithya. Both also say consciousness alone is Sathyam and agree on refuting external world.

Refuting yogachara comes in verse 28.

24th verse presents the first two branches of Buddhism and assert that there is an external world.

First argument is if there is a variety of experiences, then there must be variety of objects outside.

Internal variety proves external plurality. If external plurality is

dismissed, you will not be able to explain the plurality of experiences.

To explain internal plurality, you must accept external world. Every experience must have a corresponding external object.

The second argument is that if there is a pain feeling there must be an external object which causes the pain; same thing is true for pleasure also. This also proves an external world. So, one has to accept the existence of an external world accepted by heenayana madham and all other systems of dwaida philosophies – philosophies accepting real world.

In the next three verses heenayana is refuted by yogachara; it should be taken as refutation by Gowdapadha.

Verse 25

Superficially looking, what heenyana is saying is correct. Because every cognition, every experience and every knowledge must have a corresponding object. But when I look into the detail, I find the external object disappears. For example, bangle, chain and ring. We have three different words, corresponding to that plurality of thoughts. With each word, the understanding of object is different. There is plurality of words, cognition and there must be plurality of object. There is a bangle, there is a chain and there is a ring. There are three different words; three different knowledge and

three different objects. But those three objects, really speaking, are non-existent. There is no substance called bangle or chain or ring.

There is only one substance called gold. There are no three substances. Bangle, chain and ring are three words for which there are no corresponding substances at all. There is only one word with a corresponding substance: gold. What is the meaning of using different words when there is no substance? When you negate substance, bangle, chain and ring and then you negate the corresponding words. Padhams and padhartham are both mithya. As you keep probing deeper and deeper, all the padhams and all the padharthas will go away; only adhistanam will remain – the observer, the consciousness.

If you inquire into reality, is there a thing called bangle? The so-called external substance will become non-substantial. Bangle does not have any weight. The weight belongs only to gold. Bangle is only a word. Similarly, world is only a word. There is no such thing called world other than the observer.

Another example is dream experience. For every dream experience, the dreamer sees a corresponding external object. After waking up, we find that there is no external object. Experience disappears, experienced objects disappear when you wake up. Similarly, the corresponding worldly objects

also disappear.

Verse 26

There is no external matter at all. There is only consciousness which does not experience any external objects at all. Because there is no object for the consciousness to contact. The consciousness does not contact any real object because there are no real objects. Similar to not contacting an elephant in dream because there is no elephant. Can we say that consciousness contacts an unreal object? Consciousness does not contact with an unreal object also because an unreal object does not exist separate from consciousness. If there is no unreal object separately, how can it contact? Contact requires a separate object. For example, gold does not contact unreal bangle because there is no unreal bangle separate from gold. If gold has to touch the bangle, there must be two things – gold and bangle. Gold and bangle are only two names for only one substance. Then where is the question of contacting each other. Matter is not a substance; it is a name given to consciousness. Matter and consciousness are only two names for one and the same absolute reality. One who understood gold, calls it gold; one who misses the gold, calls it bangle. Two different people call

it by two different names; but the substance is only one.
From wise
person's angle chaithanyam is called the truth; from an
ignorant person it is called
world. There is no object separate from consciousness; a real
object is nonexistent;
an apparent object does not exist separate from
consciousness. There is
no mithya padharthaha separate from sathyam. Only when there
are two independent
things contact is possible.

Verse 27

Consciousness does not come in
contact with any object at all in all the three periods of
time – in the past,
present or future. You do not come in contact with the dream
elephant
before dream, after dream or even during dream. Because there
is no
elephant even during dream because the elephant is only in
your mind and it is
only a feeling and feelings are not facts. The question is
(this question
is not in the sloka, but the answer is in the sloka) if you
don't accept an
external world, how do you differentiate right knowledge and
wrong
knowledge/error. Normally, we do use the expression right
knowledge or
wrong knowledge or error. Rope knowledge is right knowledge;
snake
knowledge is error. How do you say which is right knowledge
and which is
wrong knowledge? You differentiate what is right and what is
wrong based on

outside object. When the object and knowledge is in concurrence, then it is right knowledge. When the knowledge I have and the object do not concur, then it is wrong knowledge or error. When the perception and object tally, it is right knowledge. When they do not, it is wrong knowledge. That means you need an external object to tally. But if you don't accept an external object at all, then you can't explain an error. The question is how do you explain an error? The yogachara says I do not accept right knowledge or wrong knowledge; there is no right/wrong division at all. In dream rope perception or snake perception is correct? There is no question of rope perception being correct or snake perception being correct because they both are projection; there is no snake outside. How can you talk about error when there is no object at all outside? There is no question of explaining the error. Since there is no external object and there is no question of explaining an error.