

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 61

In the five verses 24 to 28,
Gowdapadha Chariya is refuting Buddhist system of philosophy.
The four
systems are:

1. 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 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. 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.

The first two systems are refuted by the third system. The first two systems claim there is a real external world whereas the third system says there is no external world separate from consciousness. This is close to advaidam, in establishing mithyatvam of the world, and therefore Gowdapadha chariya joined this system to refute the first two system. The first two systems quote the experiences as proof for the existence of an external world. This was refuted in verses 26 to 29 by saying that experience does not prove reality. The best example being the dream. In dream we have clear experiences with corresponding external objects. During the dream we are very sure of experiences and corresponding objects, but when we wake up, we find out there is no external objects at all separate from the dreamer. Similarly, there is no external world separate from the observer. When we look at the pot, we see a pot with weight etc. But up on inquiry you find out there is no substance called pot, the weight, attributes etc. belong to clay. When you are touching a pot, you really are touching clay. Because of lack of inquiry it appears as a substance. Similarly, the whole world looks real. In the first stage, we dismiss the object and retain the word. Once you dismiss the object, the word should also be dismissed. Because without an object there is no validity for the word. All the padham and

padhartham

are resolved into the the ahdishtanam, the chaithanyam.
Similar to
akaram, ukaram, and makaram getting resolved in silence.

Then how will you explain the
erroneous perception. If you are talking about error, there
should be a
right perception. If you want to talk about wrong perception,
there
should be a correct perception. If there is a correct
perception, then
there must be an external object. Without an external object,
the concept
of error can't be there at all. There is no right perception
at all
because there is no world for perception at all.

Verse 28

First, we will take the second
part. Because of the reasons given in the previous three
verses, the
external world is not at all born and therefore there is no
such thing called
external world or an object of an external experience. If it
is unreal
world, why does it feel real? Feeling is not a valid
knowledge – you may
feel like a prime minister, but you are not. In dream, you
feel the dream
world is real, but it is not.

The first part of the sentence is
addressing yogachara. Common features for both are that there
is no
object separate from consciousness. The difference is in
arriving at the

nature of consciousness. The yogachara philosopher says consciousness is a fleeting, flickering, temporary, momentary entity. Therefore, the meaning of the word I, the subject is this temporary consciousness. How am I momentary entity? I have been continually existing for my life. Yogachara will say that you are not one momentary consciousness but many momentary consciousness. Momentary consciousness are constantly replaced by another momentary consciousness. Because of the continuous flow, it looks as though there is a permanent atma. There is no permanent atma, but only a flow of temporary series of atma. He gives two examples:

1. Perennial river: If you look at Ganges, there is no permanent Ganges because the river is in constant flow. You feel that the Ganges you saw last year is same the Ganges this year. The water of Ganges you touch this moment is not the same water for the next moment. Ganges is only a flow of temporary flow of water. Similarly, atma. There is no permanent consciousness at all.
2. Flame: You feel that there is a permanent flame, but on inquiry you will find that the same flame does not continually exists. If the flame exists permanently, the oil will be there permanent, but oil is getting depleted. The flame is constantly getting renewed by oil. The flame of first moment and flame of the

second moment are
not the same; they are only similar.

Permanent river and flame are brama;
Yogachara bowdha says the permanent consciousness and
chaithanyam are
brama. Chaithanyam is born, gone, born, gone; there is a
constant flow of
chaithanyam. Gowdapadha refutes this philosophy in three
words.

Consciousness is not born at all, it is eternal; you can't
talk about temporary
consciousness. Sankarachariya elaborately argues for this
concept:

Sankarachariya asks the question, if
you are talking about the flow of fleeting consciousness and
according to you
this is atma. Consciousness number 1 appears and disappears;
then
Consciousness 2 comes and disappears; then 3 comes and
disappears and so
on. Who is talking about this arrival and departure? Is it
the
first one or second one or third one? Number 1 can never talk
about the
arrival of number 2. Because when number 1 is there number 2
is not
there. Similarly, number 2 cannot talk about number 1 or
number 3. Therefore,
no single member can talk about the flow of chanika
vigyanam, If somebody
has to talk about arrival and departure, there must be
somebody other than the
flow who is there permanently. So, the one who talks about,
who is the
witness of, who is aware of arrival and departure must not

arrive and
depart. Yogchara committed the mistake of taking
consciousness as the
thoughts of mind. These arriving and departing thoughts are
witnessed by
this nithya chaithanyam and this nithya chaithanyam does not
come and go.
Anithya vigyanam is the reality for yogachara. Nithhya
vigyanam is the
reality for us. Thoughts arrive and depart, what is permanent
is I the
witness principle. They are seeing the footprints of flying
birds in the
sky; they are seeing something that is not there; they are
seeing the
origination of consciousness; this is a wrong perception.

The fourth madhyamika says that
there is nothing in creation (soonyavadha); this means you are
not there which
means your philosophy is not there also.

Verse 29

For the sake of refutation, we
discussed all other systems. From verse 29 to 46, Gowdapadha
summarizes
the vedanta chidhantha; Consciousness alone is real and
eternal; the world
obtained in jagradha avastha and swapna avastha are both
mithya; I am not
matter but that eternal consciousness in which the mithya
matter appears and
disappears. Mithya includes body matter, mind matter and
world
matter. Consciousness does not produce a real world. Other
system
claim that eternal Brahman produce the external world. that

assume the

Brahman is subject to change. To be a karanam or a cause it should be

subject to change – savikaram. The truth is Brahman is changeless; therefore,

it is not a karanam at all and can't produce any real creation. that is

the very nature of Brahman. Changelessness is the very nature of

Brahman. This changeless nature of Brahman will ever be the same. World was not born; world is not born; world will not be born; What

was, what is and will be is all Brahman. This nature of Brahman will

never change. If you accept that a world is born out of Brahman, you will

never get out of samsara. Acceptance of real world is invitation for

permanent bondage; therefore, you should not accept it if you want moksha.