SHANKARA CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN
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INTRODUCTION
CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN
NATURE OF BRAHMAN
CHARACTERISTIC OF BRAHMAN
CONCLUSIONS
Adavita Vedanta

- It believes that the ultimate reality is one.
- According to them Braham is the only reality
CONCEPT OF BRAHMAN

- The entire philosophy is expressed in beautiful half verse which runs as follows “Brahma satya Jagat Mithya Jivo Brahmaiva Na Parah”.
- Brahman is the only reality, the world is false.
NATURE OF BRAHMAN

In the Upanishads Brahman had been characterized from two points of view. These are essential and secondary, indeterminate and determinate or Svarupalakaa and Tatasthalakaa.

A) Svarupalakaa of Brahman: The sruti describes Brahman as “Satyam Jnanam Anantam” i.e. Brahman is Existence, Consciousness and Infinite.

1) Brahman is Satyam

It is not contradicted by any time.

It is always the same and does not undergo any change.
2) Brahman is Jnanam:
   - Knowledge means that which is beyond the duality of subject and the object knower and known.
   - Brahman is knoweldge itself.

3) Brahman is Anantam:
   - Brahman is Infinite, eternal and limited.
   - It is devoid of all considerations of time, space and causation.
Another definition of Brahman is SAT CIT and ANANDA. They are not the attributes of Brahman. They are the characteristics of Brahman.

1) Brahman is Sat: It means Brahman is truth.
2) Brahman is Cit: Brahman is consciousness itself. It is self luminous and shines by itself and in itself.
3) Brahman is Ananda: It is the bliss itself. Bliss is not predicate to Brahman like pleasure and happiness etc.

So Brahman is Nirguna.
CHARACTERISTIC

Brahman is free from all differences i.e. Bhedarahitam Bheda or differences of three types:

1) Sajatiya i.e. The difference between the object of the class. Ex- difference between one mango tree and other mango tree.

2) Vijataya. The differences between an object of one class and another Ex-difference between mango tree and neem tree.

3) Sagatah: it is the internal differences. Sagatah bheda refers to the same tree like root, trunk, branches etc.
Let us look that how Brahman is different from these

a) Brahman has no sajatiya bheda as there is not another Bṛahman from which it is not distinguished.

b) Vijatiya: There is nothing else other than Brahman.
Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman i.e. Brahman is all these.

c) Sagatah: Brahman is one and there is no multiplicity in it.
B) Tatatha lakaa of Brahman: The Tatathas lakaa or secondary characteristic is that which is not originally possessed by Brahman, but attributed to him by human beings. It is Saguna Brahman.

Thus we have seen in the Adavita Vedanta, Brahman manifest itself in two forms:

In itself is unqualified (nirvishesa) indeterminate (nirguna), indefinable (anirvacaniya). Brahman is associated with one power Maya, it appears as qualified (savishesa) determinate (Saguna). He is the Lord (Isvara) of the Universe. He is creator, preserver and destroyer.
Brahman manifest itself in the two forms:

- It itself is unqualified (Nirguna) but associated itself with Maya.
- It is qualified (Saguna). So in Advaita Vedanta there is two views regarding the Ultimate Reality: Higher and Lower forms of knowledge.

The higher form of knowledge is called Para and the lower form of knowledge is called Apara. Here Para is referred as Nirguna.

Apara is Saguna.
CONCLUSION

Thus Nirguna and Saguna are not two different realities. The same Brahman is Nirguna and Saguna from two different viewpoints. From the Transcendental point of view, Brahman is Nirguna and from the Phenomenal point of view it is Saguna.