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Study of the Ātmā[Soul] in Sanskrit and Nepali Literature

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Abstract

*This research article entitled **A Study of Ātmā [Soul] as God in Sanskrit and Nepali Literature** deals with the general concept of the Ātmā[Soul] which is called God too. The research questions are what is Ātmā and how it exists in the body of the organisms. The researcher mentions the following objectives for this study: 1. to define the Ātmā [Soul] 2. to study how it exists in the body of the organisms. This research follows qualitative method. Descriptive, comparative and deductive methodology is used in it. Nepali and some Sanskrit literary figures are studied in it and the researcher mentions how far they have gone to study about the Soul in their works. The literary figures have pointed out about the sense in the living beings and this sense is called psyche, Soul, Consciousness etc. The researcher also tries to show the universal Soul and its grandeur. Soul is called God because it is immortal and wide.*

Key words: atma, soul, immortality, spiritual Guru

Introduction

The *Ātmā* is called Soul in English language. Plato, Aristotle and Socrates mention that the Soul is called psyche, sense, spirit, God, immortal element etc. When the body of living being is senseless, it is called death. Why the body is senseless? This question cannot be answered easily. Many writers, philosophers and intellectual people have viewed that God Himself exists in the body of the living creatures in the form of the *Ātmā*(Soul) and when the Soul abandons the body, it is called the transformation of the Soul or death or departure of the Soul from the body of creatures. In this short article, the researcher tries to highlight the grandeur of the Soul.

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Research Questions

- a) What is the *Ātmā*[Soul] in the Sanskrit and Nepali Literature ?
- b) How does the *Ātmā*[Soul] exist in the body of the living beings ?

Research Objectives

- a) To define the Soul according to Sanskrit and Nepali Literature.
- b) To study the Soul that how it exists in the Organisms as described by different literary figures.

Significance of the Study

The Soul exists in the body of the living beings so they can eat, walk and they survive in the world. Not only humans, animals, insects, worms but also plants and one celled creatures exist because of the Soul. People don't care about it but without it, nobody has life. Many writers and poets have mentioned the existence of the Soul in their literary works. The present learners don't care the Soul so the researcher thinks that it is the subject for the study then prepares this article.

Research Methodology

The researcher uses qualitative research design and he uses comparative, descriptive and deductive methods for writing. APA Style 6th Edition is strongly followed in this article. For this purpose, he mentions the topic sentence at first in each paragraph which covers the detail description of the relevant paragraph. Then, he quotes the idea of some writers, writes its meaning into English, expresses the ideas, gives own view and; lastly he implies the conclusion in one sentence in each paragraph.

Delimitation of the Study

The researcher takes only Nepali books written by Nepali and Sanskrit books written by some authors then describes and compares that how the Soul is described in their texts. He cites the books of Bhanubhakta, Lekhanath, Kumar Bahadur Joshi etc. in this study.

Results and Discussion

A wise person must think that the *ātmā* [soul] is always in his inner heart. In the *Bhanubhaktako Ramayana*, written by Bhanubhakta Āchārya, the pioneer poet, Bhanubhakta states, “*Sarvātma ma chhu jo ta eti nabujhi pooja Sanaka gardachhan.... mrityu ko bhaya hunchha tina kana sadā sansāramā pardachhan.* [Sanata Kumār, a successful yogi and son of Lord Brahmā worships to gods and goddess without knowing the soul, he falls into the fearful world and won't get liberation]” (Bhanubhaktako Ramayan, 2039). The meaning of the *śloka* of *Bhanu Bhaktako*

Rāmāyanais that only worshipping cannot be fruitful but any how someone should acknowledge the universal *ātmā*, then one won't fall into the hell. "We must salute and respect to all by thinking that the *Jeevātmā* (organism) and *Paramātmā* [God] are one, if we have such feelings, then we can get peace" (2039). The other *ślokas* of the *Rāmāyana* told by Bhānubhakta mention that knowing the existence of the soul is the most important task for the worldly people. In this way, everybody should feel the Soul and its immortality.

Then after, after the death, the soul has to face the process of other bodies or go to the hell or heaven according to the worldly works done by someone during his life time. In the *Rāmāyana*, Bhanu Bhakta adds, "*Marga ta tarnalāi sajilo yehi ho chā estai gari. Sansāramā kati pāra gayā sahajamā sansār tari.* [To cross the path for liberation, the only way is to think that the *Jeevātmā* (organism) and *Paramātmā* (Supreme Soul) are the same]" (Bhanubhaktako Ramayan, 2039). Bhanubhakta states that *Paramātmā*[God] and *Ātmā*[Soul] are the same. The Soul doesn't feel the worldly happiness and sadness but "only the body feels such business. Because of the ignorance of the spirituality, the organisms feel that the world is true" (2039). Because of the ignorance of someone, he/she cannot identify the immortal soul inside of the body. Everybody must think that the soul and the supreme Soul are the same. This paragraph concludes that one must acknowledge the enlightened Soul to get worldly and heavenly freedom. (2039)

Likewise, the *ātmā* [Soul] is like the fire inside of a hot iron stick, and for identifying it, one must take an assistance from a good instructions of a spiritual *Guru* [preceptor]. In the *Rāmāyana*, Bhanubhakta elucidates, "*Ātmā sākshi chā prithaka pani chha, sabamā ghusyāko pani. Jastai ghusda chā agni loha harumā tastai prakārko bani.* [The Soul is like the fire inside of a hot iron stick. Similarly this Soul lives inside of all entities, either they are animal or plants"]. The fire of an iron stick is not seen although the heat of the iron is like the fire, similarly the soul is compared with the fire of the iron stick. *Gurus* [true preceptors] are able to teach about the soul. The other *ślokas* declare, "*yehi ātmā kana chinna parchā gurukā Vedakā vachanle gari. Ātmā lāi chin yo bhanyā bujhilinu tyo mukta bho tyas ghari.* [One must take the instruction by *gurus* (true preceptors) and the *mantras* of the *Vedas*. After that one will be grateful and the soul gets liberation]" The true preceptors encourage the disciples to make penance and meditation so one can be liberated. Thus, in the above *ślokas*, Bhanu Bhakta, the pioneer poet, emphasizes the liberation and universality of the Soul. (2039)

Moreover, one must concentrate his/her *mana* [mentality] by controlling the sensory organs and working organs for identifying the valuable soul. In the hundred and fortieth *śloka* of the same, the pioneer poet opines, "*Tasmāt ātmā vichāra garanu janale yesa rupa ka hun bhani. Agyāna nasta garāuna avara chhainan upāya pani.*

[Everybody must think that the soul is superior. When someone thinks like this, the ignorance will be destroyed and one can know the Soul]". For identifying it, one must concentrate his mind. One can omit the ignorance for identifying the soul. Bhānu Bhakta declares again:

Ātmā yes ritale chininchha pahile ekāntamā gai basos. Dash indriya Jitera mana pani jiti ātmāi vichārma paros. Jānos jo chha Jagat prakāsha sakala yo ho ātma satta bhani. Yehi tatwa bujhi tava purna rupako hoinchha āfu pani. [If we stay in a lonely place and perform concentration by controlling our sensory organs, at that time we must consider our inner spirit that is known as the soul. The inner and outer light is the soul itself. This truth is the most important. If we understand this truth, nothing is left for identifying]. (Bhanubhaktako Ramayan, 2039)

Meditation and concentration are needed for knowing the *ātmā*[Soul]. Real knowledge can omit the illusion. Thus, Bhanubhakta, the pioneer poet, clarifies that the universal light is the Soul itself. If somebody acknowledges it, he gets everything.

Besides, the wise scholars study the *Vedas* and concentrate their attention towards the soul because the soul is widely surrounded in the world. In *The Kṛṣṇa Charitamritam* written by Kṛṣṇa Prasad Sharmā, Ghimire explains, “*Vedānti noyat para tatwa chinmayani. Chopa sate brahma param Śrutim shruta. Nirasya chānte bhavarupa nāmani tadeka mewasta itiha nishchita.* [The *Vedānti* scholars pray and make concentration to the soul because the soul is called *Brahman* (God) in the universe. Those people who know this truth, they become more grateful”] (Ghimire, 2028). The scholars who study the *Vedas* are called *Vedāntis* and they get the soul by praying and thinking again and again. Sharmā’s book again describes the universal soul, “the soul and supreme soul are the unique power. When we get and identify the soul, we feel nothing to the worldly subjects. We can have *bairāgya* (no latent impression)” (2028). If a *Sādhaka* [practitioner] is successful for the identifying the universal soul, he can get the supreme soul also. Only the *Vedānti* scholars can feel this spiritual amusement according to Sharma. The idea of Sharmā follows the ideas of Bhanubhakta and the *Mahābhārata*. Thus, the knowledge about the soul is more important and the *Vedāntis* can acknowledge it.

Similarly, *Brahman* [super Soul] is one and from that one *Brahman* [God], more gods and goddesses were made so this knowledge is a truth. In the novel *Mādhavi*, Madan Mani Dikshit writes:

Ātmā le vāsa gareko sharira ko nimti prayatna dāsatawā bāta mukti ho. Parantu deha bāta mukti ko kāmana vishwātmā brahmako āntyatik nishedha chā. Prāchīna vrahmako eka anshabāta mātri rupa mā Aditi bhain ani unibāta devatā śriṣṭi bhae. [The body is the place of *ātmā* (Soul) so one must keep free to this body. The liberation is impossible from the *deha* (body) but when someone catches the path of spiritualism,

it is possible. From the supreme soul Brahman (God), Aditi was born and she gave birth to more gods]. (Dikshit, 2039 B.S.)

The lines of the *Mādhavi* written by Dikshit state that those people who want liberation, must follow spiritualism because this liberation is impossible through this body and materialistic thinking. When someone is free from the slavery, he can get the chance for spiritual practice. The idea of Dikshit is different from the ideas given above because he opines that slavery of everything is the obstacle of liberation. So, one must get worldly liberation from the slavery at first so that he/she can concentrate for the soul and spiritualism. The next paragraph goes ahead by addressing the wheel of more births and deaths.

Even though, the world is a *chakra* [wheel] in which the soul walks and the *Vedas* declare that this Soul is the universal father to save all from the wheel. In the *Lālitya*, an epic of Lekhanath Paudyal, a poet laureate of Nepal, defines the soul as, "*Fana fana ghumeko usha chakrako saba, sanchālanmā uhi Jāndachha. Usalāi hamro Veda sarva vyāpi pitā mānda chha.* [The world is like a *chakra* [wheel] in which the soul walks around of it. Because of his circling, the process of birth and death is continued. The *Vedas* tell that the soul is our father"] (Paudyal, 2044 B.S.). The poet laureate again states in his epic *Lālitya*, "*Na ta ādi ushako pāinchhakahān nata antya kahi mildachā. Jo garchā khoji ushako, usaiko sattā usaimā mildachha.* [The soul has neither beginning nor ending, a person who searches it, is mingled into its heaven]" (2044 B.S.). Paudyal explains that the soul doesn't have beginning and ending. If somebody tries to meet its state, he is mixed into the ocean of it. Mixing into the ocean means being liberated with the supreme power. The ideas of Lekhanāth are similar to the ideas of the scholars described above. The *sholaka* of Lekhanath concludes that the Soul has the large state so that it encourages to the entities taking thousand bodies as a wheel.

Similarly, the Soul is the supreme Soul God Śiva who lives in our *hridaya Kamala* [lotus like tender heart] and the *Yogi* who follows Him, is called a lucky person. The poet laureate further describes:

Vishwa vyāpi ujyālo hridaya kuharako kendramā chaitya chitta. Ekai pāri milāi chiti Jala nidhimā bhai soyam eka chhatta. Purnānanda prakāsha sthita Śiva Bhagawān bhaktiko vashya jāni. Gauri jhain bhakti garlā Juna Jana usako Janma ho bhāgyamāni. [The Soul lives in the *Hridaya Kamala* (tender heart), it is a supreme light. It lives in the *Chiti Jala nidhi* (ocean of the sensation). The lucky *Yogi* who practices the *sādhana* (effort to get the Soul) like *Māta* Goddess Gauri (Pārvati), he certainly gets the supreme Soul (2044 B.S.). The message of Lekhanath Paudyal in his *Lālitya* clarifies that one's main responsibility is to make *sādhana* [spiritual practice] and join the supreme Soul. Thus, the Soul makes enlightened to the mind *Hridaya Kamala* [tender heart] so that someone has consciousness.

However, the body and organs are not eternal objects, if somebody thinks that bodies and organs are everything, he dies as a larva of silk worm bound in a net. The Hindu pioneer religious preceptor Śaṅkaracharya, in his book *Veevek Choodāmanit* translated by Komal Nāth Tiwari states, "*Atrā nātamanyahamiti matirvandha eshoasya pumsa. Prāpto agyānāj Janana marana Klesha Sampāta hetu.* [If a man feels that the body and organs are only the main elements and the Soul is nothing, he gets death and resurrection]" (Tiwari, 2062 B.S.). The *śloka* of Śaṅkaracharya tells that the *ātmā* [soul] is separate from the body and organs. The *śloka*s again explains, "*Yenai vāyam vapurida masatsatya mityatmā buddhya. Pashatyu kshatyavati vishaeistantubhi kosha kridwat.* [A man who does not know the soul and thinks that the bodies and organs are the causes for conducting the body and *mana* (desire), he is trapped in a net like a silk worm]" (2062) A silk worm is trapped in a net made by itself. Similarly, an ignorant man without the knowledge of life and death is trapped in the bondage. This idea of Shankarāchārya is different from the others because ignorant people cannot identify the Soul and they are like larvae of silk worms. Thus, one should identify the immortal soul which conducts the whole universe as a sensation.

Hence, the soul is *Brahman* [God], it is truth, full of knowledge and eternal, it is *Paramātmā swarupa* [appearance of God] so that one must understand this reality. In the *Veeveka Choodamani*, Śaṅkaracharya informs again, "*Satyam gyānamanantam Vrahma vishuddham param swataha siddham. Nityānandaikarasam pratyaga bhinnam nirantaram jayati.* [The Soul is *Brahman* [God], it is true and eternal. It is purified, autonomous, and divine pleasure. It is united and progressive]" (2062) In fact the soul cannot be expressed and performed to others so Śaṅkaracharya further declares, "The Soul is non dual, it is a *swātma* [self], if someone identifies it, nothing is left for identifying" Here, identifying the Soul is more important. If somebody identifies the Soul, he doesn't take birth again and nothing is left to know. Śaṅkaracharya opines in this context, "*Brahman bhutastu samsritei, vidwān nāvartate punah. Vigyāta vyamata samyag, vrahma bhinnatwa māt mana.* [The *yogi* who knows the *Brahman* [Soul], does not fall in the wheel of the birth and death, so that everybody must acknowledge what the Soul is]. Because of the ignorance of the spiritual knowledge, one can fall into the wheel of the 84 thousand hells of birth and death. "The whole universe which is seen various but, in fact, it is the widest appearance of the Soul" (2062). It means, the whole universe is surrounded by the immortal Soul. Thus, the soul is superior element and it is available everywhere.

On the other hand, there are more and various type of pots made of soil- the vase, glass, pitcher in large and small sizes; all the pots made of soil are exactly only the soil. Similarly, all the entities either men, animals and plants are only the Soul. Śaṅkaracharya clarifies, "*Mrit kārya bhutoapi mrido na vhinna. Kumboasti sarvatra tu mrit swarupāt. Na kumbha rupam pritagati kumbha kuto mrisha kalpita nāma mātra.* [The pitcher is made of soil, so the soil and pitcher are not different. The pitcher

is not more than the soil, when the pitcher is broken, only the soil is left]" (2062). If somebody separates the soil from the pitcher, the pitcher is not remained because the soil is the pitcher and pitcher is the Soil. Similarly, the body is made of soul or because of the soul, the body is made. If the soul does not enter into the body, the body is not prepared. Therefore, the body is made by the entry of the universal soul. "The world is not separate from the *Paramātmā* [Soul] and the Soul is the witness of all subjects and works done by the entities" (2062). God stays in the body as the form of the soul so the body does the worldly tasks. This idea of Shankarāchārya is the key for the knowledge about the Soul. So, the beings and the Soul have a sharp relationship as the pitcher and the soil.

Similarly, the ego [self-pride] shades the Soul, so a successful *Yogi* must abandon the pride and make the soul enlightened for the eternal peace. Śaṅkaracharya argues, "*Kathamā rogyāya bhavetta dwada hantāpi yogino muktei*. [The yogi must abandon his egoism [self-pride] so that his Soul gets liberation and he does not face the obstacles]" (2062). If somebody tells that he can do some works or some worldly tasks without the power of the soul, it is his delusion. Nobody can do anything without the power of the Soul. "You must be separate from the *kartritwa* [done by men] and *bhoktritwa* [used by men], but everybody must be silent from the thought of *kartā* [agent]" (2062). The meaning of this idea is that the agent is the Soul but not the *jīva* or the body; the body and the sensory organs can work by the guidance and energy of the soul. So, the Soul is the master and agent of the sensory organs and the body.

Whereas, the knowledge about the Soul makes a man immortal so he| she never falls into the hell."The man who thinks that the body is the Soul itself, he cannot identify the Soul and falls into the hell after the departure of his body from the universal and immortal soul" (2062).Therefore, getting the spiritual knowledge is more important. In the *Veeveka Choodamani*, Śaṅkaracharya adds again, "*Sansāra bandha vichchhityei tadvayam pradahedhati. Vāsanā vridhhi retābhyam chintaya kriyaya bahi*. [The *yogi* (spiritual practitioner) who wants to be free from the worldly boundaries, should abandon the *visaya vāsanās* (passions of subjects) and worldly affairs so that he gets liberation]"(2062). Passions of worldly subjects lead to a man into death and bondage but not liberation. Thus, egoism [self-pride] and worldly passions are the main obstacles for the vision of the soul and one must not have such egoism.

On the other hand, the universal soul God Śiva is addressed as the *ātmā*[soul] of all creatures including the human beings but the mankind must search Him in side of the heart and mind. Śiva Datta Mishra refers a prayer to God Śiva from the Sanskrit texts and mentions the *mantras* in his book *The Śiva Rahasyam*, "*Ātmā twām Girijā mati sahachara prānā shariram griaham. Pooja te vishayopa bhogarachanā nidrasamadhithiti*. [Oh God Śiva ! You are the *ātmā* (Soul) of all creatures including

me. Goddess Pārvati is the sense of all. The *prāna* [vital breath] is your *ganas* (attendants) and the body is your temple (Śiva temple). May the worldly pleasures what I am getting be your *poojā* (worship). May my slumber be the meditation and penance for you]" (Mishra, 2004). In this prayer, there is dedication to God Śiva, this dedication is not only feeling but reality too. God Śiva is the cause of all causes and He exists in the body with the name of the Soul. So, the Soul is God and this God is Śiva only.

Same lines of the argument, all sensitive men must worship to the universal soul God Śiva for the benefit of life and after life. The prayer again clarifies in the same book, "*Sanchārapadayopradakchināvidhistotrānisarvā giro. Yaddyhatkarmakaromitatta dakhilam Shambhotavārādhanam*" [O God Śiva ! May my walking in the world be your *pradakshina* (walking by praying to you), may my speech be your pray and may all my worldly activities what I do be your *āradhana* (*pooja*) and sacrifice" (2004). The gist of the *mantra* is that if one is completely dedicated to God Śiva (the Soul of all Souls), he/she can be liberated from the harsh world by God Śiva because He is the universal soul. Thus, God Śiva makes his devotees liberated from the worldly sorrows and sufferings.

However, the word 'I' is the symbol of the *ātmā* [soul] that is called *Paramātma* [God]. In the book entitled *The Bhakti Sutra*, Narakanta Adhikari points out, "*Ātmaika parām bādarāyana*. [Veda Vyāsa points out that *Brahma Sakshatkāra* is the *Ātmāparaka sthiti* [selfness] and *Aham Brahmāsmi* [I am the Brahman] [Supreme Soul]" (Adhikari, 2055 B.S.). Adhikāri points out that Vedavyāsa has defined that the Soul is the *Brahman* [God] so it is not destroyed. "*Aham shabda [ma] sākshi chaitanya rupa ātmāvāchak ho. Purna paramātmā lai 'Vrahma' shabda le barnan gareko chha*. [The world *Aham* (I) is the witness and sense which is the symbol of *ātmā* (soul). This *Paramātma* (God) is called *Brahman* (supreme soul)" (2055 B.S.). Narakanta Adhikari declares that 'I' is the Soul or *ātmā* and that *ātmā* is called *Brahman*. According to him not only *ma* (I) but also *timi* (you) and 'u' or 'uni' (he, she) are also *Brahman* (God) because all of us have the same *ātmā* (soul). This God is the Soul. "In the soul and supreme soul, there is the light, but not only light, although there is depth, peace, rest, and eternal light and darkness also". According to Shandilya Rīṣi, the wholeness is the Soul and supreme Soul, therefore not only the Soul is light but it can have darkness also. The ideas of Adhikāri and Mahārṣi Sāndilya support the ideas of Sharmā, Shankarāchārya and Paudyāl in the previous paragraphs. Thus, the Soul is called *Paramātmā* [supreme Soul] and this Soul is light and dark both, the Soul is addressed as 'I' or 'self'.

Though, one cannot express the soul well; such expression is different by different people. Narakanta Adhikari further highlights in his book *Bhakti sutra* [devotion thread] in the following, "*Satya bhaneko ātmā ko nāma ho, ra yo samagrātā ko nāma ho. Paramātmā ko bāremājo jaslāi je jasto anubhava bhaeko chā, usale tehi*

prakārale āfno ānubhav byakta garchha. [The truth is the eternal soul. This name is the name of God. The people who have different views and concept about the eternal soul and *Paramātmā* (God), they express their view about the Soul what they have thought]"(2055 B.S.) Adhikari declares that the expression about God and Soul given by different people are thought to be different but they are the same. The style of expression is only different but their expression about the Soul is the same. "The Soul is in and out both, it is static and dynamic, it is very small so we cannot identify it" (2055 B.S). The above view of Sandilya Rīṣi is retold by Adhikaari. Therefore, the expression about the soul is different but the element [soul] is one, eternal and cannot be expressed with the materialistic thought and concept of the people.

Similarly, the soul is felt and identified if someone follows the celibacy and have positive thinking about the Soul and its grandeur. Jeetendra Basnyāt states in his book *The Hāmroo Vrahmacharya* [our celibacy], "*Brahma charya ko pālana nagari ātmānubhuti tathā ishwarānubhuti kahile pani Hūṇa sakdaina*. [If one does not control the sexual desire and does not follow the celibacy, he never feels the existence of the Souland God]" (Basnyat, 2040 B.S). Basnyāt further mentions his view that the state of feeling of the soul is the way to meet God. In the opinion of Jeetendra Basnyāt, one can find that celibacy is a principle rule for identifying the Soul. "Celibacy is a *tapasyā* [penance] from the thought so; we find the concept of the *ātmā* [Soul]" (2040 B.S). "The Soul is immortal and it is called *Iswara* [God], this God is in the heart of all entities" (2040 B.S). Celibacy is a penance and hard work but it can lead to someone to God and liberation. This strong idea of Basnyāt about the celibacy supports the ideas presented in the previous paragraphs by different philosophers and writers. Thus, the Soul is identified and felt if somebody controls the desire and sensory organs through the medium of celibacy.

Besides, if someone gets spiritual knowledge by studying the *Vedas*, *Puranas* and *Upaniṣaḍas*, he cannot make stable to this knowledge because of the weak concept. Kshitish Chandra Chakravarti mentions in his book *The Laghu Geetāmrit*, "*Brahman ra ātmā swarupakoekata vishayak pratyaksha gyānajasari dridha hunchā, tyahi kura pahile cheshtādwārāmumukshu le sampādangarnu parchā*. [The non-curious (wise) *yogi* must take the direct knowledge of the soul and supreme soul in his mind. This direct knowledge about the Soul is related to *ātmā swarupa* (selfness)]" (2040 B.S).

Chakravarti states that the internal knowledge is called *ātmā gyāna* [knowledge of the self]. The person whose *antakarana* [the internal feeling] is not joined into spiritualism, he cannot get the spiritual wisdom and knowledge even if he studies more books related to the *Vedas* and the *Purāṇns*. Because of the materialistic thought and greed of worldly affairs, a man cannot get the eternal happiness and fact pleasure. "Our desires run with our sensory organs so that the imagination does not capture the spiritual feelings. Therefore, our concept which flows with the mortal worldly

subjects, may not identify the Soul " (Chakravarti K., 2064 B.S). Materialistic people think that spiritualism is like a darkness but spiritual people think that the path of getting Soul is the light and materialism is the darkness " (2064 B.S). Chakravarti follows the ideas of the Soul with Lekhanath, Jeetendra, Shankarāchārya and Sharmā. Thus, the knowledge about the Soul is the true path for identifying it and one must leave the materialism.

Moreover, the Soul is the 'self' because all the worldly subjects are included in the soul. Kshittish Chandra Chakravarti again states that the climax of knowledge is the spiritual knowledge, "The tides of the ocean are mingled into the ocean at last; similarly, all the desires, concept and *vāsanās* [worldly false desires] are mingled into the Soul at last" (2064 B.S). Chakravarti opines that the person who follows the existence of the Soul is called a spiritual person. Such spiritual person is always involved in the internal world. In fact, if the spiritual people do not perform their duties about the spiritualism, they are neither affected positively nor negatively. They cannot get fact knowledge. "The whole universe is only the experience if one thinks deeply; that it is the game of the Soul. Someone can find that only *chaitanya ātmā* [sensitive soul] is expected" (26)." Those people who are full of spiritual knowledge must not be committed into worldly works and duties but if you don't have such knowledge, you must do the worldly duties and responsibilities." (2064 B.S). The new idea of Chakravarti is that the experiences play the vital role in the spiritual knowledge. Thus, one must have spiritual concept to know the soul.

Then after, the Soul is the concept of feelings so that one must consider that who 'he is' and what his responsibilities are. Chakravarti opines again in his book *Laghu Geetāmrit*, " *Ātmā* is only feelings, therefore you must think that what the sensory organs are and who 'I am'" (2064 B.S). Chakravarti adds that if someone does not stay in *chitanya avasthā* [sense stage], he always feels that all are *indriyas* [organs] as the body, 'I', 'he' etc. In fact, the concept of body, organ, 'I', 'You', 'He', 'She' is false. Everybody must stay in the stage of immortal spiritualism. "The feeling about the body is false. In fact, the body is only a shell of the soul. When the soul leaves the shell, it is invisible into the air and the body falls down" (2064 B.S). If someone has *vishaya vāsana* [love with worldly subjects], he gets egoism, this egoism is called pride. "This egoism always shades the soul so that one feels that all are only the bodies but not soul" (2064 B.S). Chakravarti again advocates, " *Ātmā shuddha ra sarvadā āfno swabhāvamā sthit hunchha. Ātmā mā aham furchā, tyasalāi jagat bhaninchā.* [The Soul is purified and existed in the selfness (egotism). The egotism is made in the Soul so that we start to think that the seen objects are the *Jagata* (world)]" (2064 B.S). Thus, the egotism shades the Soul; and the Soul is the core of the body, without the core, the external part is meaningless.

In the same way, nobody is separate from the soul and the soul is not separate from the supreme soul. Chakravarti describes the soul and its superiority, *Sārā*

padarthaharu ra prāniharu ushakai bhinna kalpit rupaharu hun. Ushalāi bhinna rupale kohi pani janna sakdainan. [All the elements and the entities are the various appearances of the *ātmā* and *Paramātmā* (Soul and supreme Soul). Nobody knows the soul separately”] (2064 B.S). Chakravarti declares that the Soul is as wide as the universe and it is the heart of the entities. This heart conducts the bodies and organs. The entities are not separate from it. "The Soul is reflected in *akhaṇḍakār chitta* [whole thought of everybody]" (2064 B.S). The Soul is between *prāna vāyu* and *apāna vāyu* (oxygen gas and carbon dioxide gas) in the body, it is existed peacefully]. The ideas of Chakravarti describe that the soul conducts the respiration by taking the oxygen and leaving the carbon dioxide in the body. Thus, the living beings have the life because of the soul.

Whereas, the *yogis* must meditate and think the reality of this Soul so that they are not suffered from the worldly pain and agony. "The *yogis* must practice the element of soul and make separate to the thought from truth and false" (2064 B.S). The person who is full of spiritual knowledge cannot be affected by sins and bad works. Chakravarti quotes the *ślokas* of the *Gītā* and claims, "*Shastra ko gyān pāepachhi agyana* (ignorance) *nāsha hunchha. Guru ra vedanta vākya mā vishwās garne prayatna vāta ashreddha ko vināsa hunchā.* [The ignorance is easily destroyed if someone gets the knowledge of the Soul, it is called the spiritual knowledge. If somebody believes the words of *Gurus* (true preceptors) and the words of the *Vedas*, the ignorance is easily destroyed and he can identify the soul]" (2064 B.S). From the above evidence, one can conclude that the main path for identification of the soul is true knowledge of the *Vedas* and *sat gurus* (true preceptors).

On contrary, Kumār Bahadur Joshi, in his book *Kurākāni, MritātmāSita Ra Arupani*, states that he encountered with a *tāntrik* named Kiran Shankar who told about Shankarāchārya who had met Goddess Vajrayogini face to face in Kathmāndu. According to Kiran Shankar, once the ancient yogi Guru Shankarāchārya visited Vajrayogini temple in Kathmandu. He was very tired of thirst and hunger. Joshi mentions, "He saw a beautiful lady carrying a water pot on her waist and crossing the path. Because of thirst, Shankarāchārya asked the beautiful lady for drinking water but the lady smiled and vanished immediately" (Joshi, 2066 B.S). In fact, Shankarāchārya thought that the lady was Goddess Vajrayogini (Durgā Mātā) so she appeared to Shankarāchārya then immediately vanished. Shankarāchārya thought Goddess Durgā graced him by being appeared. Thus, the Supreme Soul (Goddess Durgā) showed her face and body to Shankarāchārya near the temple.

Similarly, according to a retired Headmaster of Dinglā Sanskrit School, Bhojpur and philosopher late Ganesh Gautam for seeing the Soul and supreme Soul, one needs grace of God. Joshi implies his view in his book. Gautam argues, "*Iśwara lāi yathārtha rupamā anubhav garna divya shakti chāhichha ra tyo shakti Iśwara vātai prapta hunchha. Tapasyā ra shakti vāta prāpta hune gyānagni dwārā jeevātmā*

paramātmā mā lina hunchha. [Divine knowledge is needed for seeing the Soul and supreme Soul. This divine knowledge is received by the supreme Soul (God). The fire knowledge is gained by God through the penance"(2066 B.S). Gautam argues that without the *tapasyā*[penance] nobody can identify the Soul and God. If God blesses to the practitioner, he| she can identify the soul through the spiritual knowledge.

On the other hand, Joshi made a practical experiment for talking with the *mritātmās*[departed Souls] and he and his associates were able to talk with the Souls. Joshi further states, "We altogether seven family members, including two of my friends, prepared a white sheet of paper by writing from A to Z letters and 1 to 9 numbers. The room was perfumed with incense sticks, flowers and lamps. The time was 9.30 P.M. My friend Gyānuji put a small glass on the plain sheet and I called the departed soul of the great poet Laxmi Prasād Devkotā. The year was 2040 V.S. but Poet Devkotā had died in 2016 A.D." (2066 B.S). Joshi made an experiment about the soul at night in his residence in Kathmandu."I prayed the Soul of Devkotā then the glass started to move and run towards the alphabets as A to Z. We thought that the soul came. I asked, '*Kavijyu*, where are you? The glass moved and touched the English letters, 'In the Air'. I asked again, 'Will my wife get a job in government sectors? The glass pointed the letters, 'sure'. I asked 'Will the marriage of my sister in-law be held soon? The glass pointed the letters, 'No marriage'" (2066 B.S). Joshi mentions that what he asked and what the glass pointed were true. His wife got a job in Ministry of Education and the marriage of his sister in-law was cancelled. Thus, Joshi talked with the soul of Devakota; the Soul did not speak but pointed out the letters with the glass.

Moreover, Joshi also called the souls of his late father, late literary figure Bhairav Aryāl and some late politicians in his experiment. He states again, "I also called the *ātmā* of Bhairav Aryāl and asked, Aryāljiyu ! Where are you? The glass pointed, 'On the space'. I asked again, Are you well now? The glass was not moved. My friends told, 'if the Souls are angry, the glass does move and one must not ask any questions'. Thinking that, we stopped asking to late Aryāl. Then we asked to others"(2066 B.S). This idea of talking to Souls is really mysterious for the people of the materialistic age. From this experiment one can guess that the departed souls do not talk but sign or act as they moved the glass and indicated that what they liked to say. Thus, this experiment proves that the Souls exist in the air or space after the destruction of the bodies.

Conclusion

The ideas about the Soul in the *Bhanubhakta*, *sRamayana*, Śaṅkaracharya's *Veeveka Choodāmani*, Narakānta Adhikari's *Bhakti Sutra*, Lekhanath Paudel's *Lālitya* etc. are similar because all the views about the Soul seem similar. Śaṅkaracharya argues that the body is nothing. Without the guidance of the Soul, the body itself can't perform its duties. He declares that the spiritual practitioners should abandon

the *vishaya vāsana*, so they can get spiritual liberation. Lekhanath, the poet laureate opines that the Soul is fair and purified in all organisms. According to the poet laureate, the supreme soul is God and God is existed in the heart of the *jīvas* [entity]. The idea of Narakanta Adhikari about the Soul is the *Brahman* (God). God lives in the body in the form of invisible Soul. Celibacy is a proper work to identify the Soul; this idea is advised by Jeetendra Basnyat in his texts, *Hāmro Vrahmacharya*. Kshittish Chandra Chakravarti points out that the Soul is called 'self' and it is called 'ma' [I]. This 'I' is the Soul. One must search own self in the inner thought. According to Chakravarti, the Soul is felt really, when one visits his inner mind. The yogis must search the Soul in their purified mind and inner heart. The experiment of Joshi proves that the Soul does not die after the death of the body. He called with the Soul of some people. So, it is proved that the Soul is everything of the life. The Soul is invisible, small, and immortal. God and Soul have similarity.

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